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Tina Stones

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am most grateful to my supervisors: Dr Gale Macleod, Dr Ellen Boeren and Dr Amanda Martindale for all their support, guidance, comprehensive feedback and patience. There were times when I felt overwhelmed by the process and you kept me going. A special thank you to Dr Gale Macleod who made me a better researcher and practitioner. You made me critically engage in areas where I thought I was confident. I know my young people will have also benefitted from your wisdom. Thank you to Dr Malcolm Thorburn and Dr Jennifer Spratt for their guidance. Thank you also, to the young people who participated in the research. This is for you.

**‘WHAT DOES WELLBEING MEAN TO
YOUNG PEOPLE AND HOW DOES THIS
RELATE TO POLICY DISCOURSES?
A STUDY OF TEENAGERS IN ONE
SECONDARY SCHOOL IN SCOTLAND’**

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirement for the degree:

Doctorate in Education
School of Education
The University of Edinburgh
2019

ABSTRACT

Since the turn of the 21st century there has been a prolific interest in the wellbeing of children and young people globally, nationally and regionally. The interested parties have ranged from politicians, academics, educators and third sector organisations. The sometimes emotionally charged concern of the interested parties has resulted in education being given a greater responsibility for improving the wellbeing of children and young people. A plethora of interventions have been created and implemented to solve the 'problem' of childhood fragility, whilst the United Kingdom has experienced severe cuts to children's services. This study explored what wellbeing means to young people in one secondary school and how this relates to policy discourses on wellbeing.

The literature review provided insights into the research practices carried out in the area of wellbeing and schools and showed the different levels of participation in the chosen methods. Child centred practices emerged from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992) and participatory approaches with young people in schools have been embedded to various levels of authenticity in the research studies included in the review. The study illustrates the complexity of the wellbeing agenda and the need for policy making and research practices to be more authentically participatory in nature.

Following analysis of the discourses on wellbeing evident in key education policies such as *Getting it Right for Every Child* and *Curriculum for Excellence*, the case study design used a thematic analysis to explore how sixteen young people in one secondary school in Scotland understand the term 'wellbeing'. Young people firstly completed a creative task and then participated in four focus groups to explore their interpretation of the term 'wellbeing', specifically the eight wellbeing indicators of 'Safe; Healthy; Achieving; Nurtured; Active; Respected; Responsible; Included'. The participants were selected from the S1 and S2 cohort in one rural secondary school in the north of Scotland (mean age 12 years and one month in S1 and 13 years in S2). Eight females and eight males participated in the single sex focus groups. The study aimed to gain an insight into the participants' understanding of wellbeing and to explore how this compared to the definitions used in the Scottish policy context.

The policy analysis highlighted the complexity of the definitions used in the Scottish policy context and illustrated how the term 'wellbeing' is often ambiguous and interpreted in multifaceted ways, sometimes in one context. The study demonstrated that the young people participating in the focus groups and creative task were fully able to contribute to, and participate in, conversations with their peers which illustrated their understanding of the holistic term 'wellbeing'. The data analysis revealed that young people in this study referred to a multi-faceted definition of wellbeing with a strong focus on love and trust. Suggestions for the implications flowing from my research

data include that the contrasting narratives located in the policy discourses need to be critiqued more deeply to ensure that schools and other educational establishments are making the right choices for those they aim to serve. This could be explored more deeply in specific contexts through working in a participatory manner with those the wellbeing agenda impacts on, facilitating opportunities to capture minority voices.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the continuities and discontinuities between the understandings of wellbeing of sixteen young people (aged twelve and thirteen) and those uncovered through an analysis of key policy documents. The key policies examined were *Curriculum for Excellence* and *Getting it Right for Every Child*. The views of the young people were elicited through a creative method and focus groups.

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the complexities of wellbeing policies and outline how these complexities have interacted with my professional practice, which has resulted in me undertaking this research. To set the scene I briefly describe the problems of wellbeing definitions, and the historical and national context of the wellbeing agenda. This is followed by a short overview of Scottish curriculum development. I then introduce wellbeing policy discourses which illustrate the complexities, contradictions and issues of power and voice. This is framed through contrasting the narratives located within the wellbeing policies with the aims and ethos of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically Article 12. Through exploring these policies, it became apparent that the voices of children and young people are sometimes absent (Watson, Emery, Bayliss, Boushel and McInnes, 2012). These contradictions and complexities are problematised in more depth throughout the chapters. To provide clarity for the reader, a short outline of the thesis is also provided.

1.1 Wellbeing: a brief introduction

The definition of wellbeing is complex and frequently subject to interpretation depending upon the time, purpose, location and discipline. The topic and the concept are vast, spanning from ancient Greece with philosophers such as Aristotle, to the present day concerning numerous disciplines such as psychology, economics and education. A full analysis of all aspects of wellbeing, in relation to wider societal issues such as economics and medicine, is beyond the scope of this thesis. The main aspect of wellbeing explored in this thesis is in relation to the development of the wellbeing agenda for children and young people, which will be explored more fully in Chapter Two and Chapter Three. However, before exploring the current context of wellbeing in education it is worthwhile visiting the complexity of the definitions used to explain and describe the concept.

One of the early attempts to define wellbeing in the general population was in 1969 by Bradburn (Dodge, Daly, Huyton & Sanders, 2012), however, the wellbeing of children and young people has only more recently been of interest in relation to schooling in the last twenty years (Cassidy, 2018). The term is complex, and the literature vast, and the commonality is the overall agreement that there is no agreed definition of wellbeing (Cassidy, 2018). The concept is linked to a number of theories of wellbeing, Thorburn (2018), for example, outlines five theories of wellbeing highlighted by Tiberius and Plakias (2010) which includes: hedonism; desire fulfilment; life-satisfaction; human nature fulfilment theory; individually driven nature fulfilment theory.

Smith and Reid (2017) identify two contrasting approaches to research into wellbeing: the hedonic and eudaimonic. The former approach is concerned with 'happiness' while the latter is related to human flourishing. The way in which wellbeing policies are interpreted and enacted can be dependent on a number of interacting forces, such as the national and ideological climate at the time of creation (Humes, 2013a).

The Scottish policy context is significant as it has a reputation for being distinctive from the rest of the UK, and is strongly linked to national identity (Humes, 2013a). The policy context is also influenced by supranational bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), although there is stronger autonomy in policy making in Scotland since devolution in 1999. *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE) and *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC) are the areas of Scottish wellbeing policy under analysis in this research. Within these policy contexts the concept of wellbeing sometimes illustrates the mix and match approach to policy making, which Ball (1998) names the 'bricolage approach'. The complex and contrasting research, policy and practice arena poses interesting questions when considered in the context of contemporary schooling.

More recently, wellbeing is often used as a concept to describe the quality of people's lives (Dodge et al., 2012). Statham and Chase (2010) define childhood wellbeing as:

Wellbeing is generally understood as the quality of people's lives. It is a dynamic state that is enhanced when people can fulfil their personal and social goals. It is understood both in relation to objective measures, such as household income, educational resources and health status; and subjective indicators such as happiness, perceptions of quality of life and life satisfaction.
(Statham and Chase, 2010, p. 2).

Further, Watson et al. (2012) note the evolving, dynamic and socially situated nature of the term wellbeing: 'a social construct that is fluid in nature and has an ever evolving and contextual set of definitions' (Watson et al., 2012, p. 25). The concept of wellbeing and children and young people has been under more scrutiny in recent years with ardent adherents such as Layard and Dunn (2009) who argue that 'excessive individualism' (Layard & Dunn, 2009) is a primary threat to the wellbeing of children and young people. As noted by Layard and Dunn (2009):

But in Britain and the US the balance has tilted too far towards the individual pursuit of private interest and success. So it is excessive individualism, we believe, that is causing a whole range of problems for our children: high family break-up, teenage unkindness, unprincipled advertising, too much competition in education and, of course, our acceptance of income inequality.
(Layard & Dunn, 2009, p. 6).

There have been mixed responses to these well publicised concerns (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009) with debates about conceptual incoherence and attempts to find a middle way to balance personal wellbeing with the good of the collective (Thorburn, 2015). There are also complexities with slippery definitions of wellbeing and the impact chosen definitions can have on individuals (Ecclestone & Rawdin, 2016). Further, deficit models of wellbeing which represent children and young people as incomplete beings requiring

socialisation, can situate children and young people where they have little influence and voice in matters that affect them (Cassidy, 2018). There is little evidence to demonstrate a coherent and well-balanced approach which enables practitioners and young people to explore the meaning of wellbeing and being well. It is hoped that this research will provide an opportunity for practitioners to reflect on the concept of wellbeing and what it means to young people from their perspective in comparison to the Scottish wellbeing policy context.

1.2 The development of health and wellbeing in the curriculum

Since the turn of the 21st century there has been an increased commitment to the wellbeing agenda in education both nationally and internationally (Layard & Dunn, 2009; Palmer, 2015; Thorburn, 2016) with a concern about the damage being done to children in modern world (Palmer, 2015; Layard & Dunn, 2009). Governments have been more active in promoting the importance of a nation's happiness and wellbeing, and attempting to measure it at a time when children's services experienced severe cuts (The Children's Society, 2017). Supranational bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have been focussing on the measurement of wellbeing and the OECD launched the *Better Life Initiative* in 2011 (OECD, 2017). This resulted in published league tables measuring the wellbeing of young people which further increased political focus on this topic. Similarly, *Every Child Matters* in England and Wales in 2003 and *Getting it Right for Every Child* in Scotland in 2006 shaped how

schools were to approach wellbeing. This increased focus resulted in teachers being charged with the responsibility for developing the health and wellbeing of their young people. In Scotland, where this research was conducted, this was realised in the form of *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE). CfE consisted of three areas which became the responsibility of all teachers, these areas included literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing which were published in the form of a series of experiences and outcomes. Health and wellbeing the 'responsibility of all' experiences and outcomes in the Scottish curriculum was suggested by the Scottish Government (2013a) to have very strong interrelated links with *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC). GIRFEC is a policy aimed at promoting multi and interdisciplinary working to support children and young people with their wellbeing which is defined by the eight wellbeing indicators of 'Safe; Healthy; Achieving; Nurtured; Active; Respected; Responsible; Included.' (SHANARRI) also included in CfE. CfE, the four capacities (successful learner; confident individual; responsible citizen; effective contributor) and the eight wellbeing indicators specified in GIRFEC and CfE were suggested to provide a more rounded and progressive approach to education with a shared vision and common goal (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009a). The vision is captured in Figure 1.

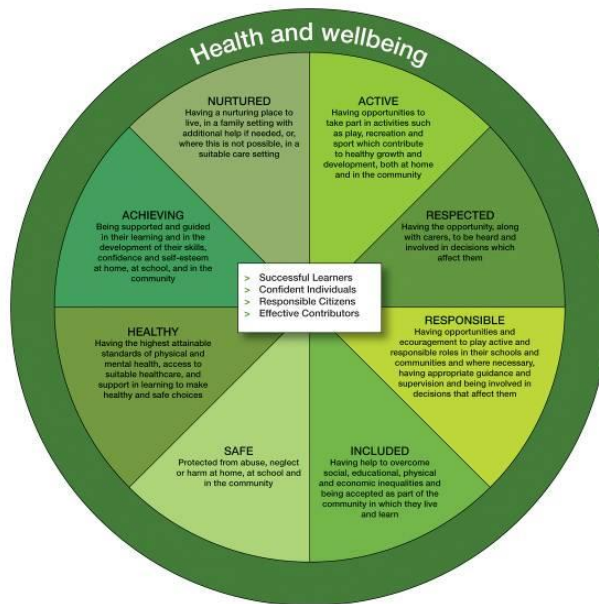


Figure 1. The shared vision and common goal.
(Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009a)

The initial CfE publications were a variety of documents to guide and inform national and local discussion around the new curriculum. The publication *Health and wellbeing across learning: responsibilities of all experiences and outcomes* outlined the areas of responsibility for all teachers across the curriculum (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009b). The health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes are structured in to six categories: the areas which are the responsibility of all teachers are highlighted in italics:

- *Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing*
- *Planning for choices and changes*
- Physical education, *physical activity and sport*
- Food and health
- Substance misuse

- *Relationships, sexual health and parenthood*

(Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009b, p. 2).

The commitment to develop an individual's and nation's wellbeing is not without critics (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009; Craig, 2007; Ecclestone & Rawdin, 2016) and concerns have been raised about the prominence of subject disciplines being reduced in order to deliver a social and emotional agenda (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009). The move to health and wellbeing being incorporated into the role and responsibility of all teachers in Scotland has not been straightforward with concerns about a lack of philosophically informed policy (Thorburn, 2014; Thorburn, 2015, Humes, 2013a), inconsistency and complexity with implementation (Thorburn, 2014; Priestly & Minty, 2013; Thorburn and Dey, 2018) and the vagueness and ambiguity around the concept (Thorburn, 2014).

There are different theoretical approaches in philosophy to thinking about wellbeing. For example, Crisp (2017) identified three types of theories of wellbeing: hedonist, desire theories and objective list theories (OLT), while Thorburn (2015) added human nature fulfilment theory and individually driven nature fulfilment theory to the list of objective list theories. Since the increased focus on wellbeing as an educational aim, different approaches to wellbeing theories have been used in the UK and Scottish wellbeing policy contexts in ambiguous ways. Within the UK and Scottish wellbeing policies, both subjective constructs and objective list theories have been used.

Subjective theories of wellbeing include hedonism, desire fulfilment and life-satisfaction theory (Thorburn, 2018). Examples of objective theories include human nature fulfilment theory and individually driven nature fulfilment theory (Thorburn, 2015). Subjective theories of wellbeing focus on personal experiences and individual fulfilment in contrast to objective lists theories. Objective list theory can be defined as ‘theories which list items constituting well-being that consist neither merely in pleasurable experience nor in desire-satisfaction.’ (Crisp, 2017, p. 8). The various types of OLT approaches provide different understandings of the concept of wellbeing. Utilitarian OLT approaches lack a strong philosophical foundation and concentrate on what is required for a good standard of living for groups of people in society (Watson et al., 2012). This is in contrast to more philosophically informed OLT approaches. Philosophically informed OLT approaches include those advocated by Nussbaum (2011) and Sen (1992), which could be viewed as Neo-Aristotelian capabilities approaches and provide more of a focus on values and principles (Watson et al., 2012), and Honneth’s (1995) Neo-Aristotelian OLT theory of wellbeing which includes the significance of love, rights and solidarity (Honneth, 1995).

There are complexities with these various approaches. A subjective theory such as life satisfaction is an important but not necessarily a sufficient condition for holistic wellbeing and, as observed by Stradling and MacNeil (n.d.) there are a multitude of factors that should be considered when making a judgement about wellbeing, such as the degree of resilience of the

individual, the social, emotional and cognitive resources of the individual and their context. There are also complexities with some variations of objective list approaches to wellbeing as this can raise issues of power and agency, with criticisms that variations of OLT approaches can be viewed as elitist (Watson et al., 2012). However, there are alternative ways of viewing the interactions between the different wellbeing theories and associated discourses located within the policy context. Nussbaum (2001), for example, argued that the development of capabilities should not be forced, but rather, should be open to democratic debate.

The Scottish wellbeing policy context illustrates a mix and match approach to wellbeing policy creation with evidence of both the subjective and objective approaches to thinking about wellbeing. The two main Scottish policies which drive how wellbeing is approached in Scottish schools are GIRFEC and CfE, and located within CfE more specifically the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes. The construction of GIRFEC, for example, included explicit references to Nussbaum's (2011) capabilities approach and also included the discourse of flourishing (Spratt, 2016). GIRFEC has links with the various objective list theory approaches to wellbeing, including within it a discourse based on Sen's (1993) writing on wellbeing. There is a specific focus on the concept of Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia. Eudaimonic happiness, as Spratt (2016) observes, provides educationalists with opportunities to consider how teaching and learning can provide learning experiences which children and young people find joyful and meaningful. In

GIRFEC, further complexity resides in the strong focus on children's agency and rights, showing links with Honneth's OLT approach which includes the importance of love and rights, contrasted with the potential power dynamic located within GIRFEC policy. The framework and indicators illustrate the influence of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and social pedagogy, whereby there is a humanistic balance between children being empowered to exert their rights but also to take responsibility. The significance of Article 12 in GIRFEC is also balanced by the importance of Article 3. Stradling and MacNeil (n.d., p.9) actively recognise this balance between agency and care when they state: 'Article 3 goes on to acknowledge that the child may not always be mature enough to identify what is in his or her best interest...'

As demonstrated in section 1.2 which specified the categories in the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes, the experiences and outcomes were presented as a list of statements which children and young people are expected to achieve. In this policy context, the discourse of flourishing is absent (Spratt, 2016), and there is a more predominant focus on themes concerned with social and emotional learning and physical health. This operationalised list approach is similar to the *Every Child Matters* agenda in England, which, as Ereaut and Whiting (2008) point out, utilises an 'operationalised discourse', which lacks a theoretical framework and has not been fully conceptualised. The CfE health and wellbeing policy could result in complex tensions for specific individuals when considered alongside the

needs of the child and their holistic wellbeing. For example, child with social anxiety when placed in an environment requiring participation with physical sporting activities or co-operative activities may experience further feelings of negative emotions, but there is a requirement for the child to develop their levels of fitness and co-operation.

Certain types of objective list approaches to wellbeing present complex tensions when considered alongside the drive for an increased focus on the rights of the child and the importance of a child's emotions and their feelings of happiness. Wellbeing policy making can result in those in positions of power and authority making judgments about what is good for the individual, even if the individual does not agree (Watson et al., 2012). Further, the approach can position some children as 'less than' other children, which can result in the normalisation of children. This viewpoint can be countered by enabling an individual to reflect on their own life to decide for themselves what constitutes a good life (Crisp, 2017).

Although there are areas of concern which need to be critiqued, the health and wellbeing agenda in Scotland *could* provide an opportunity to support more progressive and emancipatory practices. Watson et al. (2012) argue for a simultaneous focus on being and becoming when considering children's wellbeing and schooling. Ahonen, Alverby, Johansen, Rajala, Ryzhkova et al. (2008) explored a conceptual and theoretical description of wellbeing in a school context which promoted wellbeing through a focus on 'arts,

relationships and the environment' (Watson et al., 2012, p.205). However, there remained the complexity of a contradictory policy context similar to that already highlighted between GIRFEC and CfE, where the model could be seen as paternalistic and controlling but also placed a strong onus on values and children as beings. The wider rationale of CfE, rather than the more specific health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes, provides opportunities for children and young people to connect with their heritage and landscape, fostering and nurturing a sense of identity and belonging, which can counter the drive for globalisation and individualism (Watson et al., 2012). This approach links to, and has similarities with, social pedagogical approaches. As observed by Crisp (2017) an objective list theory does not have to involve an authoritarianism approach, and autonomy could be included in the list, as can be seen within some narratives located within the Scottish wellbeing policy context.

These complexities and contradictions illustrate interacting forces at work during curricular reform. Braun, Ball, Maguire and Hoskins (2011) argue that policies are shaped and enacted through specific factors related to the individual school and note that this issue tends to be neglected in central policy making and research. Policy they argue, should not be seen as an unproblematic way to address a problem, such as the wellbeing of children and young people, and they note that normative policy viewpoints are shaped by social values. Further, school communities create narratives about their schools based on their experiences of the environment but also based on

assumptions about the environment, such as school leaders making assumptions about the needs of the community based on their perceived knowledge of the community (Braun et al., 2011).

Thorburn (2018) argues that wellbeing can become a more prominent feature of everyday school life, from learning and teaching to school ethos and culture. This could include providing more meaningful opportunities to work with children and young people to access their views about health and wellbeing, and supporting young people to critically consider what it means to be well and what it means to lead a satisfying life. As noted by Thorburn and Dey (2018) it is only more recently that health and wellbeing programmes have been considered in terms of learners taking more responsibility for their learning and wider achievement, and this needs to take account of the young person's specific contexts and their views. Watson et al. (2012) argue for more research into the lived experiences of children and young people in specific contexts, providing rich and detailed accounts of 'minoritarian' voices to inform understandings of wellbeing.

1.3 Children's voices: United Nations Convention on the rights of the child

As a teacher and then later a senior manager I have always had a commitment to children's rights. Since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992) there has been increasing interest in researching with children and young people rather than doing research on children and

young people (Kellett, 2011; Fargas-Malet, Mcsherry, Larkin & Robinson, 2010). As noted by Groundwater-Smith et al. (2015):

Children do not have an official or defined role to play in mainstream politics and policy making. It is easy, therefore, for decision makers to overlook including children in these processes. And, if children are invited to 'sit at the table' their voices are rarely truly heard. (Australian Human Rights Commissioner, 2010, p. 5)

Further, Hart (1992) argued, in line with UNCRC, there are various degrees of participation in matters that affect the lives of young people. In *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship* (Hart, 1992) four imperatives are outlined which enable authentic participation. These are described as:

- 1) Children understand the intentions of the project;
 - 2) They know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why;
 - 3) They have a meaningful (rather than decorative) role;
 - 4) They volunteer for the project after the project was made clear to them.
- (Hart, 1992, p. 11).

In UNCRC Article 12 it stresses the importance of children's participation in matters that affect their lives, and in Article 13, the methods for accessing the views of children and young people are specified:

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice. (UNCRC, Article 13, 1992).

When considering wellbeing policy creation and implementation it is even more pertinent to consider the implications of omitting the voices of children and young people. Children's rights and empowerment form an aspect of

wellbeing policy discourse and to omit the views of those the policies aim to serve could result in the normalisation of children and young people in adultcentric ways. As noted by Watson et al. (2012) there are limited accounts of wellbeing from the perspectives of children and young people in the UK, and a need for accounts to: ‘provide a vehicle for the voices of all participants involved to emerge, be heard and valued, rather than relying on imported concepts and constructs from an uncritical and poorly conceptualised notion of wellbeing’ (Watson et al., 2012, p. 35). To date, there has been limited research in Scotland which has explicitly asked children and young people about what wellbeing means to them in comparison to the Scottish policy context. This research aims to provide an opportunity for young people to participate in research exploring what wellbeing means to them in their context in comparison to the policy context. It is also intended that those views will be used to improve how the wellbeing agenda is realised in practice in one secondary school in Scotland.

1.4 Policy

1.4.1 What is policy?

Policy is, like many complex concepts, open to numerous interpretations, with a general view that there is no one definition of policy (Spratt, 2014). Policy encompasses policy as text, but also involves the enactment of policy and policy as discourse (Ball, 2015). Policies involve representations of knowledge and power through the construction of the concept or topic (Maguire, Hoskins, Ball and Braun, 2011). What all types of ‘policy’ have in

common is they are usually a set of principles developed by those in positions of power which are intended to shape values and practice (see Ball, 1998 for further discussion). The reader of the policy is interpreting a text which has been presented as an action or actions to be adhered to; as observed by Ball (2015) policies can both change what we do and what we are although the realities are often messy and complex:

National policy making is inevitably a process of bricolage: a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere, drawing upon and amending locally tried and tested approaches, cannibalising theories, research, trends and fashions and not infrequently flailing around for anything at all that looks as though it might work.
(Ball, 1998, p. 126)

Within this complex environment of the outwardly benign agenda of improving the wellbeing of children and young people lies an 'unheard debate' from children and young people in specific contexts and locations (Watson, et al., 2012).

1.4.2 Policy processes and discourses

The complex process of policy creation through interpretation and enactment is illustrated in the slow and sometimes contested history of children's rights. The rights of children have been enacted to various degrees of authenticity (see Hart, 1992 for further information), and children's civil and political rights still require attention (Boushel, 2012). The health and wellbeing policies identified in the literature review position the child or young person in multi-faceted ways, revealing contrasting ideologies. Located within policy a child or young person might be positioned as someone to prepare for adulthood.

The policy is framed in a way that suggests the need to develop a specific set of skills and capabilities decided by those in positions of power, which need to be internalised by the child or young person in order for them to be judged a success. Also located within the same policy the child or young person may be positioned as an autonomous agent who can decide for themselves what it means to live a good life. These contrasting narratives are explored through the literature review and policy analysis.

1.5 Reflexive statement: professional context

I have had an interest in health and wellbeing for at least twenty years. As I embarked on the early stages of my teaching career I taught in a variety of special educational schools, including a residential school for young people on the autistic spectrum, many of whom had communication difficulties and highly specialised dietary needs. I also taught in a 3-18 day school for young people with moderate learning difficulties where I taught most subjects to a variety of year groups.

Later in my career I was appointed as a deputy head at a large mainstream secondary school in Scotland where my work then became heavily involved with discipline and exclusions. I was very dissatisfied with the way in which exclusions were usually related to young males (and occasionally females) who frequently experienced barriers to attending and learning, and often with a 'diagnosis' of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. I wanted to find a way to help young people manage the issues which were resulting in exclusions

to prevent future exclusions, and also support them with their attention, concentration and learning. I had always had an interest and personal practice of yoga and meditation, so I trained as a yoga teacher and began an MSc in Psychological Research Methods to explore how yoga and meditation may help these young people. It worked well for some young people, and for others, it was ineffective. I was conscious that a targeted intervention could be seen as unfair to others who may be interested in learning the techniques, and perhaps unfair to those who had been chosen for the intervention. I had not asked how they felt about it, although my intentions were good, and reflecting on the programme, it was 'done to' the young people, rather than with them.

Following this period, I was appointed as a head teacher in a small rural secondary school in Scotland and had a responsibility to build the curriculum with my partners (parents, teachers, pupils, staff and local links). I noticed an absence of authentic pupil voice in the process and began to reflect on the way in which I had 'implemented' programmes for young people and 'measured' the results rather than engage in authentic dialogue. As Thorburn (2018) observes wellbeing is often evaluated through easily measured constructions, such as attendance. I wanted to change my practice and ran focus groups with my young people to understand what they felt they needed in school to help them with their learning. Some young people asked for help building their resilience and to manage anxiety, although others felt that the short courses in resilience and wellbeing were not appropriate or relevant for

them. Until this point, I had unproblematically engaged with the health and wellbeing agenda motivated by the numerous 'hurrah' words (Watson et al., 2012) which I could not see as anything other than a sensible way to proceed. I read Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) and, initially, felt very unsettled. As a yoga teacher and leader who had always been committed to the wellbeing agenda, I found it hard to understand why the wellbeing agenda could possibly be detrimental to the educational development of young people. I also wanted to authentically engage with young people in my organisation to understand their views. I wanted to conduct research to explore what wellbeing meant to young people to enhance our school practice and improve my skills as a school leader. This led me to conduct this research project with the young people in my school.

There are critics of qualitative researchers, and indeed, when conducting an MSc in Psychological Research Methods I had a tendency toward statistics, which felt very safe and objective to me, and I would have been one of those critics. In many ways conducting qualitative research has provided me with a deeper and much more holistic understanding of research methods and aims. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2017) point out, the selection of research approaches is not about the preferred approach, but rather is concerned with the most appropriate methodology for the research questions. It is congruency of aims, purpose and approaches that matter. There are academic and policy arguments concerning the lives of people

who are not ever asked for their views, and the outcomes of their schooling are never really scrutinised before the next policy initiative is taken forward.

Kirby, Lanyon, Cronin and Sinclair (2003) ran a study to examine genuine participatory practice with children and young people in organisations. Their findings identified different approaches to participation each with different outcomes. They note that:

Listening needs to influence change. Taking account of what children say is what makes their involvement meaningful. Acting on children and young people's views brings positive outcomes: in service developments; increasing young people's sense of citizenship and social inclusion; and enhancing their personal development.
(Kirby, Lanyon, Cronin and Sinclair, 2003, p. 3)

Groundwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell (2015) argue that sustaining and developing opportunities for young people to be fully and authentically engaged with the organisations that govern their lives remains a challenge. They note that children and young people should be provided with opportunities to be genuine participants in research that explores areas of significance to them. Although this research project is small in scale, it is hoped that it will begin to fill the gap which is the absence of the voices of children and young people in issues that concern them.

2. Research questions

The professional and personal context outlined in section one of this chapter led me to explore the following research questions with sixteen young people in a secondary school in Scotland:

1. What does wellbeing mean to young people?

Research question 1 was answered through focus group activities and a creative method (gingerbread man). The methods can be found in Chapter Four and the findings in Chapter Five.

2. How is wellbeing conceptualised in current GIRFEC and CfE policy documents?

Research question 2 was answered through a review of GIRFEC and CfE policy. The policy review is located in Chapter Two and a more detailed analysis of each of the eight wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI) specified in GIRFEC can be found in Chapter Five.

3. To what extent do the findings from the review of GIRFEC and CfE policy match the perceptions of the young people?

Research question 3 was answered through a comparison of findings of the review of GIRFEC and CfE policy, a detailed analysis of each of the eight wellbeing indicators and the thematic analysis of the focus group activities and creative method. The findings are located in Chapter Five and discussion in Chapter Six.

2.1 Structure of the research

The chapters in this thesis take you through the process I followed to explore the topic of wellbeing and the voices of young people, in comparison to the Scottish wellbeing policy context of CfE and *Getting it Right for Every Child*, and then more specifically, the eight wellbeing indicators specified in

GIRFEC policy. There are seven chapters in total. In Chapter One, I introduce the complexities of the wellbeing agenda, my professional context and the research questions. Chapter Two is a policy review which outlines the international policy drivers of the wellbeing agenda, and then, more specifically the policy context in Scotland is explored providing a detailed overview and analysis of *Curriculum for Excellence* and *Getting it Right for Every Child*. A critique of the current definitions of wellbeing in use in the policy context is then provided with an analysis of the complexities this has created. In Chapter Three, I critique how the different definitions of wellbeing identified in the literature review impacts on the type of research conducted. I also analyse the extent to which the voices of children and young people are authentically captured. I provide an account of the current gaps in the research base and describe how the academic literature review informed the choices made in the design of this study. In Chapter Four, I outline the methodological choices made, the design, methods and analysis used to conduct the research. I also provide an in-depth section on reflexivity necessary for qualitative research. Chapter Five is an analysis which contains both an inductive and deductive analysis of the data provided from the young people and examples of verbatim extracts to illustrate the examples. In Chapter Six, I explore the views of the young people more deeply in comparison to the national policy context. I then compare the views of the young people in this case study against those outlined in the current policy context. This provides an opportunity for reflection and examples of where further work and action may be required. I conclude, in Chapter

Seven, with a brief synopsis of the findings, a summary of the strengths and limitations of this case study and suggestions for future research and action in the field of wellbeing and education.

CHAPTER TWO: POLICY REVIEW

1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to outline the international policy drivers of the wellbeing agenda, and then, more specifically focus on the policy context in Scotland providing an overview of *Curriculum for Excellence* and *Getting it Right for Every Child*. The chapter begins with a description of the various policies prior to critiquing the policy context. Following the policy context, I critique the key associated educational guidance, policy and legislation related to wellbeing currently informing Scottish education. A critical analysis of the key issues identified in the policies follows which includes the strong influence of supra-national bodies, such as the OECD; the early disconnect between CfE and GIRFEC; and a focus on physical and individual aspects rather than a more holistic view of wellbeing.

Scotland has the complex task of developing an agenda strongly influenced by international drivers as well as national priorities. In this chapter I argue that more recent Scottish policies relating to wellbeing are more detailed and innovative than in other policy contexts in the UK (Spratt, 2017), encompassing wider issues pertinent to wellbeing such as creativity, learning for sustainability and outdoor learning. I show that internationally and across disciplines there are multiple interpretations of wellbeing which display contradictory ideologies sometimes simultaneously in one policy. In addition, building on concerns raised by Ecclestone and Hayes (2009), I argue that the

very early policy guidance published in Scotland lacked depth, and due to the open and flexible nature of some aspects of *Curriculum for Excellence* could, if interpreted uncritically, result in an intervention approach (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009). The intervention approach has the potential to result in an over-emphasis on 'improving' the emotional aspect of wellbeing in the individual, rather than nurturing and facilitating the more complex and holistic definition of wellbeing which includes choosing how to live a life well. I also argue that we should move away from an over-emphasis on the emotional aspects of wellbeing which has concerned Ecclestone & Hayes (2009) and move toward high quality learning experiences which provide opportunities for young people to develop their resilience and reflect on what it means to lead a good life as a responsible citizen. While the United Nations and Scots Law committed to the importance of the voice of the child, I suggest that more local research is needed to understand what wellbeing means to young people in their context to complement the larger national and international studies.

The idea of the importance of the wellbeing of individuals and society is not new, with the first attempt to systematically explore the notion of a good life stretching back to Aristotle (Barrow, 1980). However, the turn of the 21st century marked a new era in the thinking about wellbeing and since then there has been an explicit policy focus internationally, nationally and regionally in both politics and education (Cummins et al., 2009; Hyland, 2011; Thorburn & MacAllister, 2013). There has also been a re-defining of the term

and a change in focus from the traditional approach of using income poverty as a proxy for poor health, to exploring the multi-faceted notion of wellbeing, including the subjective wellbeing of young people. This has been, in part, due to an increased drive to measure and improve the wellbeing of children and young people from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2001). One of the key influencing factors for education across the globe is the OECD's international comparison of education performance carried out by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The influence of supra-national bodies on educational systems has not been without its critics, with concerns about how the data from such studies is used to uncritically influence national policies and practices (Biesta & Priestly, 2013a).

Nevertheless, the influence of such bodies and publications has impacted upon the way in which wellbeing is understood and interpreted in policy contexts. In the 2001 OECD report, there were more explicit references to the importance of schools developing both human capital and social capital to develop economic growth and wellbeing. The report was followed, in 2007, with the influential publication from UNICEF (2007) with the re-defining of wellbeing to include a wider and more holistic perspective of wellbeing, it stated:

The true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to its children—their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born.
(Lajoie & Leveille, 2007. p 1).

Although the study was not conducted in Scotland, the ramifications of such publications has ripple effects across the UK (I will return to the Barnardo's research carried out in Scotland). In the 2007 report the UK ranked bottom of the 21 countries measured in six domains of wellbeing. In the 2013 publication *Child well-being in rich countries*, which ranked 29 countries on five domains of wellbeing (material wellbeing; health and safety; education; behaviour and risks; housing and environment) the UK ranked 16th of the 29, with education coming in the bottom third. Further, on the children's subjective report of life satisfaction the UK ranked 14th. In 2015 the PISA publication *Students' Wellbeing Volume 3* reported a variety of statistics measuring areas such as life satisfaction, stating that:

Anxiety about schoolwork is one of the sources of stress most often cited by school-age children and adolescents. On average across OECD countries, students who reported the highest levels of anxiety also reported a level of life satisfaction that is 1.2 points lower (on a scale of from 0 to 10) than students who reported the lowest levels of anxiety.
(PISA, 2005, p. 19)

Additional influential bodies for the wellbeing agenda in the education sector include UNESCO (since the UK re-joined in 1997), and the World Health Organisation, especially its work on sustainable development, such as *Sustainable development and health: concepts, principles and framework for action for European cities and towns* (WHO, 1997), and the on-going publications related to the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. The sustainable development goals included target 3.2 for child and adolescent health where it stated:

Therefore, the health and well-being of children and adolescents are essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2), particularly those targeting poverty, health security, education and the reduction of inequalities. Action is necessary across sectors and settings to support children and adolescents to survive, thrive and transform.
(WHO, 2017, p. 1)

These publications occurred at a time when government advisors internationally were suggesting the wellbeing of populations was the new concern of politics (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009) and from the interacting global, national and regional forces the education sector became the focus for the improvement of the wellbeing of young people. The more recent attempt to 'measure' wellbeing further embeds a climate of competition between countries and schools, and creates a narrative where league tables identify who is performing better than whom and who is therefore more successful at raising standards (Biesta, 2009).

Within this global context Scottish educational policy making is relatively independent to the rest of the United Kingdom (Paterson, 2009). Around the time the wellbeing agenda became prominent at the turn of the century Scotland had gained greater independence in policy-making against a backdrop of international, although non-legislative, pressure for increased convergence in educational aims (Humes, 2013a). This created the potential for conflicting trajectories for educational systems. The global publications led to further influential work being conducted in Scotland such as that carried out by Barnardo's Scotland (2007) *The Index of Wellbeing for Children in Scotland 2007*. The findings from the study indicated that Scotland scored

well for education, but poor for suicide rates, low birth rates and dental health, and very poor child poverty, non-positive post school destinations and teenage pregnancy. This was the first attempt to measure the wellbeing of Scottish children to provide further data to inform the position in comparison to the international perspective, demonstrating the strong influence of supra-national bodies on educational policy making. However, as noted by Spratt (2017) although the term 'globalisation' is often understood as having a predominantly market driven influence on public policy, many of the international influences noted here are also child centred.

Scotland was the first nation in the United Kingdom to establish in law the rights of children and young people to participate in their schooling within legislation through the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act (2000) (Scottish Government, 2000). More recently there have been a number of significant changes to policy and law that have impacted on the way practitioners are expected to work with young people and the way wellbeing is perceived, promoted and taught. In particular, the development of *Curriculum for Excellence* (Scottish Executive, 2004a) and *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* (Scottish Government, 2017) have had a significant impact on the way in which 'wellbeing' is understood in Scottish Education in the last fifteen years.

1.2.1 Curriculum for Excellence

In 2002 the Scottish Executive commissioned the National Debate in Education that identified concerns with the curriculum (Munn, Stead, Mcleod, Brown, Cowie et al., 2004). Following this a review of the 3-18 curriculum was commissioned in 2003, and by 2004, the Scottish Executive published *Curriculum for Excellence* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2006) which outlined the vision for the new curriculum. The document described the aim of enabling all children to develop four capacities as ‘successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors’, through a coherent and progressive 3-18 curriculum. As part of the new 3-18 curriculum, literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing became the ‘responsibility of all’ teachers. As outlined in Chapter One, health and wellbeing ‘responsibility of all’ included the eight wellbeing indicators which are also specified in GIRFEC (Safe; Healthy; Achieving; Nurtured; Active; Respected; Responsible; Included). The various components of CfE will be expanded upon in section 3 of this chapter. CfE was one component of a larger reform programme which aimed to improve outcomes for children and young people in Scotland. As noted by the OCED (2015) the new curriculum was not viewed in isolation, and was to be implemented along with additional reforms to teacher education and GIRFEC.

1.2.2 Getting it Right for Every Child

Getting it Right for Every Child is a national approach to child protection and child wellbeing which aims to improve wellbeing outcomes for all children and

young people in Scotland. The development work of the approach began in 2006 and included the eight wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI) which were specified in the 2004 3-18 CfE publication and the Ministerial Vision (Scottish Executive, 2004a). GIRFEC became the role and responsibility of the named person, which in education, is usually the head teacher in the primary sector, and the guidance teacher or deputy head teacher in the secondary sector. The named person is the individual in education or health who has the responsibility for the welfare of the children and young people in their context. The difference between this approach and the more traditional approach of child protection is that all young people are included in the named person scheme rather than those children and young people judged to be at risk. Therefore, the wellbeing indicators are relevant to *all* children and young people at *all* stages of their development. The approach is mandated by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 which is concerned with improving wellbeing outcomes for children and young people.

1.2.3 Problems with implementation

CfE and GIRFEC have been complex to implement. There is, after almost fourteen years, a lack of clarity in CfE policy implementation (OECD, 2015). In a recent OCED report *Improving Schools in Scotland* (OECD, 2015) it was noted that:

CfE's scope still needs clarification: sometimes it is understood as a wide-ranging set of reforms whereas it would be better if it were interpreted more strictly as curriculum and related assessment and pedagogy. There needs clarification of how the four capacities relate to the extensive Experiences and Outcomes. Clarification would help to build forward momentum and a clear narrative. (OECD, 2015, p. 11).

There have been concerns as to whether the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes specified in CfE, which are the responsibility of all teachers, are congruent with the aims of GIRFEC (Thorburn, 2016). Further, the named person was a controversial component of GIRFEC, with concerns being taken to the European Human Rights Laws by campaigners against the scheme, although changes were made to the process in 2017 to mitigate the concerns. Ecclestone & Hayes (2009) suggest an over-emphasis on the emotional aspect of wellbeing creates a preoccupation with viewing children and young people as emotionally fragile based on a therapeutic ethos. Biesta (2013) also noted a discord between the notion of personal wellbeing outlined in some of the policy documents and the significance of moral goodness, with the former having an apparent primary focus. These concerns raise important questions about how wellbeing is understood and enacted in the policy context; an appealing term can be interpreted in numerous ways which have differing consequences (Spratt, 2017). An over-emphasis on personal emotional management to prepare young people for the adulthood could dilute the importance of creating school environments which enhance human flourishing. This will be explored in more depth in section 3 of this chapter.

The next section begins by examining the policy changes and complexities beginning with the earlier publications in education and health from 2000, which include Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act (2000); *For Scotland's Children* (2001); *The Children's Charter* (2004b); Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act (2000a); *Equally Well* (2008a). As

outlined in the Chapter One, the early 2000s was the time the wellbeing agenda began to take a stronger position in education, and is interconnected with the way in which *Curriculum for Excellence* and health and wellbeing policies developed.

In the section on CfE I explore the early publications including *Building the Curriculum 1* (Scottish Executive, 2006a); *Health and Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009a); *Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009b) and critique the definitions of health and wellbeing used in the early policy documents. I then discuss the concerns raised by Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) related to the notion of emotional vulnerability represented in some of the wellbeing policy discourse and explore the development of the holistic view of wellbeing outlined in later publications such as *Creativity across learning 3-18* (Education Scotland, 2013). This follows with a discussion of the individualistic wellbeing narrative located in early CfE publications and the lack of focus on the spiritual aspects of wellbeing. I conclude that change is messy and complex and, as noted by Biesta and Priestly (2013b) in which direction the new curriculum will develop is yet to come to a conclusion, and it is therefore important that there is ongoing research and discussion about the various components of curriculum policy.

2. Policy selection

2.1 Method of selection

As outlined in the introduction, in Scotland two key policies have influenced the way wellbeing is understood in Scottish education: *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE) and *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC). CfE is a Scottish educational reform and GIRFEC is a wider societal reform to improve the wellbeing of children and young people. Both CfE and GIRFEC employ the eight wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI). These documents were used as a starting point from which I identified other related documents. In order to check my selection and to ensure that no significant documents had been overlooked I consulted the Education Scotland website under the 'legislation' section and 'policies' section. Finally, I checked my selected documents with two local head teachers to ensure I had included those which they used in their practice. I then critically analysed the themes and definitions of wellbeing from the selected documents.

2.2 The legislative background

In this section I provide a summary of the key publications linked to CfE and GIRFEC and outline how this impacted on the curriculum, and how wellbeing is understood, in Scottish schools. The purpose of this section is to provide a chronological outline to demonstrate the links between health and education in various policies over the last two decades and illustrate the influences of the trajectory. A more detailed critique will follow in section 3 on *Curriculum for Excellence*.

From 2000 onwards there was an increased focus on the rights of the child, child health and child protection both nationally and internationally. This agenda gathered momentum as the Labour Government in the rest of the UK, and, at the time, the Scottish Executive (now the Scottish Government) introduced *Every Child Matters* and GIRFEC. During this time, in Scotland, a number of policy initiatives were developed which had a strong focus on improving partnership working between health, education and social services and placing the child at the centre. The Acts and publications aimed to improve children's rights and quality of education and were strongly linked to Article 29 in the UNCRC. In the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act (2000) it stated that education should be directed toward: 'the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential' which illustrated an emerging support toward the development of the whole child and their personal fulfilment. The Act was quickly followed by *For Scotland's Children (2001)*; a Scottish Government report which aimed to better integrate health, education and social services to improve outcomes for young people. This Act was followed by *The Children's Charter* in 2004.

The creation of *The Children's Charter* (Scottish Government, 2004b) introduced the notion of the named person and was linked to the voice of the child and child protection. *The Children's Charter* emerged during the early stages of *Curriculum for Excellence* which introduced the eight wellbeing indicators (Safe; Healthy; Achieving; Nurtured; Active; Respected;

Responsible; Included) later embedded in GIRFEC, and, in 2005, were part of the Scottish Government's Ministerial Vision for Scotland's Children. This was followed by the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act (2007a) which placed a strong focus on the importance of health promotion in schools and was to be used alongside the *Health and Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes* outlined in CfE published in 2009.

In 2008 the Scottish Government launched *Equally Well*, (Scottish Government, 2008a) a government strategy which aimed to tackle health inequalities through sectors working together and schools re-designing their curriculum to improve the destinations of young people and to focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as a 'responsibility of all' teachers. This was around the same time that Barnardo's published the previously mentioned report about the wellbeing of Scottish children. *Building the Curriculum 3* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2008b) was published which expanded on skills for learning, life work raising the profile of 'twenty first century key competencies for lifelong learning' (Sinnema & Aitken, 2013) that were apparent in the curricular narrative of numerous developed countries around the globe, such as Australia, USA, New Zealand and Wales (Sinnema & Aitken, 2013).

In 2008 the Scottish Government also published *A Guide to Getting it Right for Every Child*, following the Highland Pathfinder in 2006, which resulted in the creation of the National Practice Model (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d.). The

Highland Pathfinder was a pilot of the new GIRFEC policy initiative to inform the development of GIRFEC, which involved addressing all needs of children and young people outlined in the eight wellbeing indicators from birth until eighteen. The concept of the named person, children's rights and the eight wellbeing indicators was later embedded in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, and the Education (Scotland) Act 2016. This will be expanded upon in section 5 of this chapter.

In summary, from the early 2000s there has been an increased international and national political agenda to improve children's rights, child protection, and wellbeing, and to use integrated services as a vehicle to achieve this aim. As noted by Humes (2013a) when exploring the nature of any curriculum reform it is important to recognise the range of interacting forces at work, which in this case included an increase in global pressures from international studies such as those undertaken by the OECD, resulting in an increased drive for international convergence at a time when Scottish education had more autonomy. As policies have developed over the last two decades there has been an increased focus placed upon schools to improve a multi-faceted definition of the health and wellbeing of all young people in their care. Government policies and a new vision for curriculum development were occurring simultaneously which resulted in a number of policies and initiatives which are now part of Scottish law. This process has not been without its critics, with concerns about the dilution of subject content and an over-emphasis on the emotional aspect of wellbeing (Ecclestone & Hayes,

2009), a concern with a lack of depth in the wellbeing curriculum policy (Thorburn, 2015), and a tension between economic concerns and democratic concerns (Biesta & Priestly, 2013a).

3. Health and wellbeing in Curriculum for Excellence

3.1 The definition of health and wellbeing

In the publication *A Curriculum for Excellence The Curriculum Review Group* (Scottish Executive, 2004a), the four capacities (Successful Learner; Confident Individual; Responsible Citizen; Effective Contributor) and eight wellbeing indicators (Safe; Healthy; Achieving; Nurtured; Active; Respected; Responsible; Included) were introduced, although the explicit reference to health and wellbeing as a 'responsibility of all', alongside literacy and numeracy, was introduced fully in *Building the Curriculum 1* (BtE 1) (Scottish Executive, 2006a) where health and wellbeing was described as:

Health and wellbeing includes experiences and outcomes for personal and social development, understanding of health, physical education and physical activity, and elements of home economics. It also includes approaches and activities such as physical activity and nutrition, planned by pre-school settings, schools or colleges to promote the health and wellbeing of their learners and the wider community. (Scottish Executive, 2006a, p. 8).

The lack of a precise definition is evident in the early documentation as the nouns 'health' and 'wellbeing' are used in the singular, and are not separated out to explain the difference between the two concepts (Spratt, 2016). It is interesting to note that the focus was more concerned with the physical, mental and social aspects of health and wellbeing and lacked any depth in terms of the philosophical questions the wellbeing agenda raises, such as the

importance of critical thinking, democracy and working out for oneself what it means to be *well* and live a good life. Thorburn (2016) notes that a feature of early documentation is the lack of precise definitions and proposes that 'wellbeing, learning and teaching in schools would benefit from a clearer engagement with recent theorising in wellbeing values' (Thorburn, 2018, p. 39). Further, Thorburn and Dey (2018) go on to highlight that from 2017 onwards national and local authority data collection plans for literacy and numeracy (also the responsibility of all) are more advanced than the health and wellbeing plans. The way in which health and wellbeing is described in the Scottish Government's (2016a) *National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education: Achieving Excellence and Equity* is more concerned with personal wellbeing. For example, in the section outlining the evidence to be gathered on the child or young person's health and wellbeing it states: 'Data from a range of surveys on health and wellbeing showing changes over time' which is explained as providing an opportunity to assess the health and wellbeing of young people: 'This will give us information about a range of children's health, attitudes, behaviours and wellbeing' (Scottish Government, 2016a). This illustrates the need to critically reflect on the policy aspirations and purpose of the curriculum as there appears to be a lack of clarity about personal wellbeing and the wider aspects of wellbeing linked to citizenship.

In 2009 the *Health and Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009a) were published. The health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes covered six areas as outlined in the introduction

chapter of this thesis, and four sections are the responsibility of all teachers. The four areas which are the responsibility of all teachers are: Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing; Planning for choices and changes; Physical activity and sport; Relationships (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009b). The two areas 'Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing' and 'Planning for choices and changes' are the more detailed of the four areas which are the responsibility of all teachers, and are a relatively new way of working for teachers (Thorburn, 2016). The experiences and outcomes were a selection of generic statements, for example, under the title of 'Mental and emotional wellbeing' it states for every level in the broad general education (nursery to age 15):

I am aware of and able to express my feelings and am developing the ability to talk about them.
HWB 0-01a/HWB 1-01a/HWB 2-01a/HWB 3-01a/HWB 4-01a

I know that we all experience a variety of thoughts and emotions that affect how we feel and behave and I am learning ways of managing them.
HWB 0-02a/HWB 1-02a/HWB 2-02a/HWB 3-02a/HWB 4-02a

I understand that there are people I can talk to and that there are a number of ways in which I can gain access to practical and emotional support to help me and others in a range of circumstances.
HWB 0-03a/HWB 1-03a/HWB 2-03a/HWB 3-03a/HWB 4-03a

I understand that people can feel alone and can be misunderstood and left out by others. I am learning how to give appropriate support.
HWB 0-08a/HWB 1-08a/HWB 2-08a/HWB 3-08a/HWB 4-08a
(Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009a, p. 2)

These generic statements relate to how an individual should manage their emotional and mental wellbeing stretch from a very young age to the secondary school, and could be viewed as an example of an objective list

theory approach to wellbeing (Watson et al., 2012). The statements are also situated in a policy discourse which promotes the reduction of central prescription (Ecclestone, 2013) providing the professional with more autonomy in curriculum implementation, through the use of prescriptive statements. Although the ambiguity and complexity surrounding the definition of wellbeing in the policy documents is not uncommon, the way the policy is interpreted and enacted in specific contexts does impact on the way young people develop their wellbeing, with potentially unintended or unhelpful consequences. For example, an over-emphasis on providing interventions, rather than providing high quality learning experiences to develop internal qualities such as resilience and determination, could result in the realisation of the concerns raised by Ecclestone and Hayes (2009), where children and young people are viewed as fragile and incapable of shaping their own world. This will be explored more fully in the next section.

3.2 Positioning the young person as emotionally fragile

There is a debate about the overemphasis of a 'therapeutic ethos' (Ecclestone, 2004) in education with a perceived policy discourse of vulnerability. There have been concerns regarding the absence of an academic debate about the educational implications of the development of the emotional wellbeing agenda on a liberal humanist education (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009) with a plethora of interventions being developed to address the issue of young people's emotional wellbeing. The evidence base for emotional wellbeing interventions remains inconclusive (Watson et al., 2012),

and as noted by Schumer (cited in Waterhouse, 2006) unproven interventions may be employed to correct the problem of childhood wellbeing for a range of reasons, including making those in positions of authority feel in control and providing instant solutions and easy explanations to highly complex and prolonged problems. There is an evident complexity between loving and caring for children and young people and respecting them as individuals in their own right, which requires a balance between viewing young people as 'beings' and 'becomings' in preparation for adulthood (Watson et al., 2012). These contradictions, complexities and issues of control and power are evident in the wellbeing policy discourse.

In section 1.4.2 the complexities of policy processes and discourses was outlined and the problems of power, adultcentric values and the normalisation of individuals was introduced. Watson et al. (2012) argue that there is the danger when an intangible concept is reduced to a set of indicators this could result in conceptualising wellbeing as therapy and pathology. As Humes (2013a) and Ecclestone (2013) argue, aspects of the discourse are 'slippery and mantric' (Ecclestone, 2013, p. 77) and require critical scrutiny. Spratt (2017) in her scrutiny of wellbeing policy revealed five different wellbeing narratives in the wellbeing policy discourse (physical; social and emotional; care; flourishing; sustainability) and argued that parallel and contrasting narratives could both hide ideological purposes and provide opportunities for young people to explore what it means to lead a life well (Spratt, 2017).

There have been suggestions that the cognitive and affective domains of education need not be seen as separate but rather should be viewed as interconnected and 'there is a cognitive aspect of all emotions and an affective dimension of cognitive' (Hyland, 2011, p. 5) and that Ecclestone's (2004) concerns with the over-emphasis on emotions do not take into account a wider range of educational contexts nor recognise the impact an over-emphasis on standards, skills, competencies and employability objectives has had (Hyland, 2011). When wellbeing policy is linked to a variety of learning experiences across the curriculum in subjects such as the arts and religious and moral education, there are opportunities for shifting the focus from the representation of the 'emotionally fragile' child or young person to developing critical thinking and young people deciding for themselves what it means to be well. Thorburn (2018) suggests bringing together the subjective and objective wellbeing theories to inform educational planning, and that by doing so young people can be supported to recognise that wellbeing is connected to flourishing as a person and with making a contribution to society. This is described by Shah and Marks (2004) in *A well-being Manifesto for a Flourishing Society* as: 'Well-being is more than just happiness. As well as feeling satisfied and happy, well-being means developing as a person, being fulfilled, and making a contribution to the community' (p. 2). This approach to wellbeing can be seen more evidently in later CfE publications, specifically those concerned with creativity, outdoor learning and learning for sustainability.

3.3 The development of wellbeing in later CfE publications

In the earlier section of this chapter I outlined the influence of supra-national bodies on the wellbeing agenda in the Scottish context and the lack of clarity in the health and wellbeing CfE publications. The absence of rigorous definitions for a well-intentioned agenda creates tensions and questions regarding the purpose of education. Cassidy (2018) argues that it is helpful to consider how children and young people are perceived in the policy discourse, and focuses on children and young people as 'beings rather than as becoming' (p. 23). Cassidy goes on to note that by critically exploring with children and young people how to promote a good life that leads to thoughtful actions, schools can develop children and young people's wellbeing as part of their 'valued and valuable relationships' (p. 23). Whilst the importance of basic relationships was evident in CfE 'health and wellbeing' publications, later publications provided more depth which made explicit references to critical thinking, fulfilment and flourishing and the significance of contributing to the wellbeing of others. The publications include *What is Creativity?* (Scottish Government, 2013b); *Curriculum for Excellence through outdoor learning* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010) and the General Teaching Council for Scotland *Learning for Sustainability*. However, it is borne in mind that, as argued by Spratt (2017): 'Government policy is an important platform for gaining power over discourses' (p. 15) and is open to multiple interpretations.

3.3.1 Creativity

What is creativity? (Scottish Government, 2013b) was published in 2013. This publication championed the importance of creativity in education and provided more holistic references to the multifaceted nature of wellbeing than the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes. For example, in the vision statement it notes:

We want to be proud of who we are and where we live. We want to feel fulfilled, healthier, happier and stronger as a community. To achieve this, we need to be creative. We need to generate the ideas that will allow us to rise to the challenges of a global economy and an endangered environment. We need to be able to invent and develop our science and technology. We need to be able to write the poems and stories that reflect and enrich who we are. We need to express that through the visual arts, music, through theatre and dance, through film. And in doing so, we need to eradicate the false demarcation lines between the expressive arts and every other subject. Creative learning and teaching is the most fulfilling route to both deep learning and a rounded adulthood.
(Scottish Government, 2013b, p. 9).

It goes on to detail the importance of skills such as questioning, curiosity and exploration and notes that 'knowledge is important but not enough' (Scottish Government, 2013b, p. 9). Although produced in the same aspirational vision style as previous publications, the document is more detailed than the previous health and wellbeing publications and includes a definition and a series of examples of good practice. Nevertheless, the narrative can be interpreted in differing ways to support contrasting ideologies, as argued by Spratt (2017). The follow up publication *Creativity across learning 3-18* (Education Scotland, 2013a) made explicit references to the interrelated nature of creativity and the capacity 'successful learner'. The capacity links in

with the wellbeing indicator 'achievement', which could be interpreted as reflecting a more progressive and child-centred discourse in the curriculum publications than other publications such as the experiences and outcomes. Further, there were explicit references to the interconnected nature of creativity, empowerment and individual and collective wellbeing:

As well as fulfilling the very human need to explore and make new, creativity skills can support increased empowerment, resilience, self-discipline and increased involvement in society. In other words, being creative can have an impact on individual self-esteem, wellbeing and a sense of control. This can impact positively on communities, cultural, sporting and environmental activities, social awareness, health and relationships.
(Education Scotland, 2013a, p. 7).

It was noticeable that depth, references to research, clear definitions and links were much more apparent in later documentation than in earlier publications. However, there is no precise mention of creativity in the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes 'responsibility of all' publication, which is confusing given the philosophical links to happiness, wellbeing and human flourishing which needs to be considered in the context of the wellbeing of children and young people. Nevertheless, the links between creativity, outdoor learning and sustainable development were evident in the creativity documentation.

3.3.2 Outdoor learning

Curriculum for Excellence through outdoor learning (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010) provided a basic overview of the importance of outdoor learning to developing the four capacities specified in CfE. Statements

included in the documentation made explicit, although brief, references to the links between outdoor learning and the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes. The links between outdoor learning and sustainable development were mentioned, although there was a missed opportunity to explicitly explore the relevance to teaching and learning and empowerment.

Realising this vision will contribute to the wellbeing of our children and young people and enable them to become resilient, responsible citizens and successful lifelong learners, who value our landscape and culture and contribute effectively to our local and global society.
(Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010, p. 7).

The document also contained brief references to the impact on mental and physical health:

There are associated health benefits to learning outdoors. Research indicates that the use of greenspace or 'green exercise' improves health. In particular, learning outdoors generally results in increased levels of physical activity. In addition, interacting with greenspace (walking, gardening, etc) improves emotional wellbeing and mental health.
(Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010, p. 15).

There is a body of evidence to illustrate the importance of outdoor learning to physical and mental health, attendance levels and school attainment (Stan, 2018), although this was not explored as thoroughly as it could have been in the documentation in order to enhance the connections between wellbeing and learning. As noted by Spratt (2017) the theme of learning for flourishing has a noticeably low profile in the CfE publications. The outdoor learning agenda, when delivered as part of a well-integrated curriculum which includes connections to learning for sustainability and creativity, can provide numerous opportunities to develop a range of high-quality experiences for

children and young people. In *Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning* (Learning & Teaching Scotland, 2010) it states: 'Learning outdoors can be enjoyable, creative, challenging and adventurous and helps children and young people learn by experience and grow as confident and responsible citizens who value and appreciate the spectacular landscapes, natural heritage and culture of Scotland' (p. 5). This is perhaps a slightly more explicit discourse outlining the importance of high-quality experiences to support and develop the growth of young people, to contribute to their wellbeing, in contrast to the basic level of physical and psychological wellbeing illustrated in the CfE experiences and outcomes. However, it still requires more depth and analysis, and can be interpreted as treating childhood as a time to prepare for adulthood, rather than seeing childhood as an important period in its own right and enabling children and young people to develop as beings.

Although the benefits of outdoor learning are significant, there will be a variation in how publications are enacted in specific contexts. Thorburn and Allison (2013), for example, analysed attempts to support outdoor learning in schools and found limited evidence of innovation in schools. They also raised concerns about the absence of explicit references to outdoor learning in the revised core themes of professional development for teachers (Thorburn & Allison, 2013). Ernst (2014, cited by Stan 2018) highlighted that teachers provide limited opportunities for outdoor learning for a number of reasons including time and safety. With these concerns in mind, there needs to be

more critical scrutiny in how the health and wellbeing agenda is being realised in specific contexts and how the young people themselves view the importance of outdoor learning.

3.3.3 Individual and collective wellbeing: the absence of spiritual wellbeing

The health and wellbeing 'principles and practice' document published shortly before the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes paper provided information for practitioners to use as a starting point for discussion. Although the latter publication of the experiences and outcomes set out more explicit statements (Thorburn, 2016), the principles and practice paper made references to the wider national and international landscape, such as the relevance of UNCRC, Health Promotion and Nutrition (Scotland) Act (2007a), positive school ethos, trust and relationships, the importance of robust child protection procedures. The publication included a diagram linking in with the eight wellbeing indicators, which was confusingly missing in the experiences and outcomes publication. Further, the experiences and outcomes appeared disjointed when considered against the eight wellbeing indicators and the wider aims of the globally emerging understanding of health and wellbeing education. A copy of the diagram can be found in Figure 2.

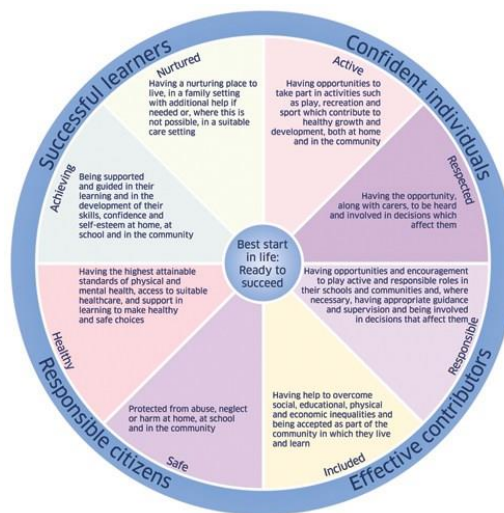


Figure 2. The shared vision for health and wellbeing in *curriculum for excellence*. (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009b)

It was also interesting to note that on page 1 of the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes 'responsibility of all' it states: 'I can expect my learning environment to support me to understand and develop my physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing and social skills' (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009a) and this is the only reference to spiritual wellbeing in the document. It is an interesting omission, especially when considered against the importance of the four capacities and the strong links between critical thinking, citizenship, values and spirituality. The wellbeing publications were later developed and, in 2013, Education Scotland published the *Health and wellbeing curriculum impact report* (Education Scotland, 2013b) which aimed to share examples of what was working well in schools but also highlighted areas for improvement. In this document it re-stated the significance of a culture of support for young people and systems which are nurturing for young people. This was then followed by *Health and wellbeing; responsibility of all. Making the links...making it work* (Education Scotland, 2014) which

was intended as a professional tool for self-evaluation and improvement in the health and wellbeing curriculum area. The latter of these documents did provide advice on how to make the links with UNCRC and GIRFEC which was much more detailed, and missing in the earlier publications. The links with professional learning and professional standards with the General Teaching Council for Scotland were now explicit. These publications came at a time where concerns had been raised about the over-emphasis on a therapeutic ethos rather than a 'common sense strand in a general ethics of care for students' (Ecclestone, 2013, p. 77), and that limited progress had been made due to a lack of robust conceptual critique and poor evaluations of practice (Ecclestone, 2012 cited by Thorburn, 2014).

There are crucial questions to be explored in terms of the aims of education. It is clear from the numerous publications that wellbeing is an aim, and from my interpretation of the four capacities and other related documents, this does include the importance of moral dispositions and 'leading a good life' which includes contributing to the wellbeing of others (De Ruyter, 2015). This approach to wellbeing is perhaps more explicit in the more recent publications concerned with learning for sustainability.

3.3.4 Learning for sustainability

In 2012 the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) published new professional standards for teachers. The standards were wide ranging in scope and linked with the requirement for teachers to prepare young people

with the skills they require for the 21st century (GTCS, 2017). A detailed account of the full standards is beyond the scope of this chapter, although one particular area will be explored in more depth which is relevant to the health and wellbeing agenda as described in this chapter and previous chapters. The concept of 'Learning for sustainability' underpins and permeates the new professional standards. As noted on the GTCS website:

Learning for Sustainability is embedded throughout the Professional Standards. It is a whole-school, system wide commitment that focuses on developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and practices needed to take decisions which are compatible with a sustainable future in a just and equitable world.
(GTCS, 2017).

The title on the GTCS website is taken from UNESCO and is defined as: 'Learning for Sustainability is learning to live within the environmental limits of our planet and to build a just, equitable and peaceful society. It is essential for the well-being of all and is an international priority'. (UNESCO, 2013). This definition is more concerned with the notion of how to live a good life and less concerned with the over-emphasis on emotional and personal wellbeing.

Figure 3 is used on the GTCS website to illustrate the ways in which learning for sustainability is, and can be, approached in schools and shows the links with various aspects of wellbeing. It goes on to outline how core themes in CfE are interlinked with learning for sustainability: 'In schools, sustainable development education, global citizenship, outdoor learning and health and well-being are firmly embedded within Curriculum for Excellence. Learning

for Sustainability weaves together and builds upon these themes' (GTCS, 2017).

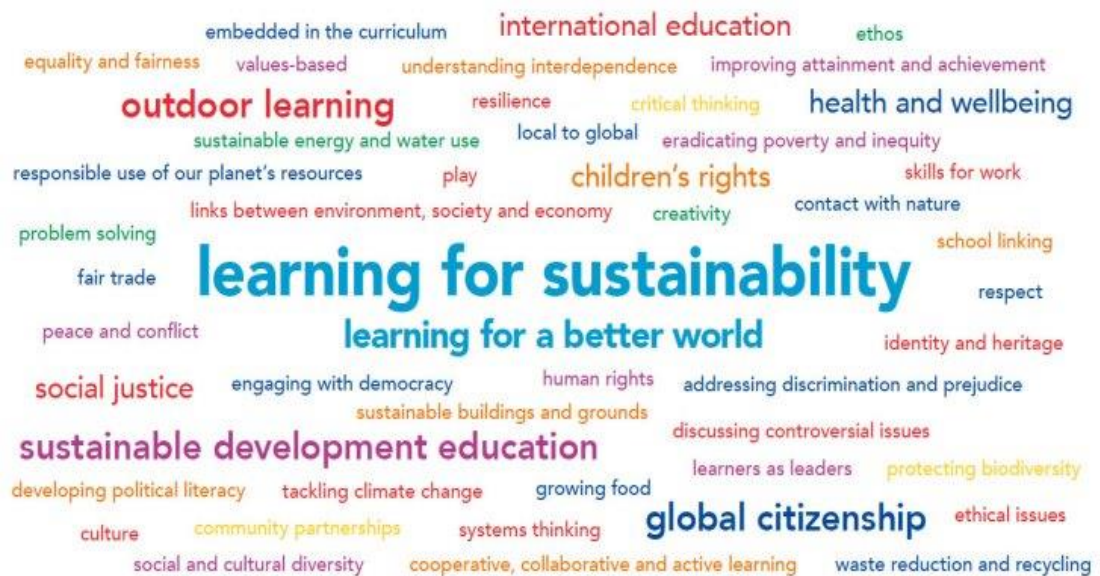


Figure 3. Learning for Sustainability.
(The General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2017)

As noted by Spratt (2017) the concept of sustainability is a relevantly new emergent theme in wellbeing discourse. This is evidently, in part, due to the influences of supra-national bodies, such as UNESCO and WHO. As discussed in previous sections, the early 2000s marked a critical turning point for the wellbeing agenda. In 2002, for example, WHO held the World Summit on Sustainable Development where the keynote speaker outlined the interrelated nature of sustainability and health. Since this time, sustainability has become a more prominent theme in policy and academic discourse. Spratt (2017) noted the emerging discourse between sustainability and happiness in the *World Happiness Report* (Helliwell, Layard & Sachs, 2012), which outlined the contrasting picture across the globe with significant developments in technology and the injustice of the number of people still

going hungry. In the report the terms happiness and sustainable development were argued to be strongly interlinked, in the report it stated: “Sustainable Development” is the term given to the combination of human well-being, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. We can say that the quest for happiness is intimately linked to the quest for sustainable development.’ (Helliwell, Layard & Sachs, 2012, p.3).

Shortly after this, in 2015, Heads of State, Government leaders, UN Representatives and civil society met, at the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, and adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (UNESCO, 2017). Education was seen as a key driver for achieving change and the aim of education was described as to: ‘ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’ (UNESCO, 2017). If we return for a moment to the previous sections which explored the underlying discourse and purposes of education, it would appear that as the health and wellbeing theme has developed since the inception of CfE and GIRFEC, there has been a stronger rhetoric about the importance of both individual wellbeing and the wellbeing of the communities, including the global community in which we live. This is more convergent with the purposes of welfare-liberalism in so far as there is a greater concern for mutual responsibilities (Spratt, 2017). The complexity lies with the lack of clarity in the initial policy developments and how this links with developing learning environments that authentically embed health and wellbeing within the curriculum.

The concept of learning for sustainability brings together the other aspects of health and wellbeing identified in the policy context to create a more holistic definition of health and wellbeing described in the CfE documents. Having learning for sustainability as a core theme in professional standards raises the profile and importance of wellbeing and 'happiness' or life satisfaction of oneself, but also and more explicitly than in other documents, describes the importance of the wellbeing of all in a just and equitable society.

4. Summary

The earlier CfE publications presented vague and ambiguous descriptions of health and wellbeing as a responsibility of all, which appeared to be more focussed on what children and young people should become in order to prepare for adult life. At the basic level, health and wellbeing is concerned with physical and social and emotional health located in the context of a caring school environment (Spratt, 2016). As noted by Spratt (2016) the focus on high quality learning and teaching to enhance the lives of children and young people now and in the future is dominated by the social and emotional discourse. However, later publications in Scotland provide a more robust representation of wellbeing which included references to the importance of learning and teaching experiences to support and develop human flourishing. The links between the newly emerging themes, such as creativity and sustainability, perhaps need to be more fully explored in the context of spirituality, in consultation with teachers and young people themselves.

5. Getting it Right for Every Child and the eight wellbeing indicators

In the early section of this chapter I detailed how GIRFEC and CfE emerged in the policy context and how the eight wellbeing indicators became interrelated with GIRFEC which are now part of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The GIRFEC definition of wellbeing is explored in more depth in Chapter 5 where I conduct a thematic analysis to compare the eight wellbeing indicators against the views of the young people. In this section I will outline how wellbeing is understood in GIRFEC policy and explore the philosophical and discursive themes.

The GIRFEC definition of wellbeing is, in my view, a more holistic definition than the definition used in the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes. The latter is more concerned with health promotion and social and emotional literacy and, if interpreted in a narrow sense could result in the 'normalisation' of children (Spratt, 2017), focussing on the individual and their self management. The GIRFEC approach to wellbeing provides scope to explore the wider aspects of wellbeing discourse identified in the numerous CfE publications, such as outdoor learning (active), the four capacities (respected and responsible), school ethos (nurtured), global citizenship (included) and creativity across the 3-18 curriculum (achieving). Figure 2 on page 55 of this chapter illustrates the eight wellbeing indicators in GIRFEC. Further, as can be seen in Figure 4 the '*My World Triangle*' (Scottish Government, 2015), which is used as an assessment tool to assess the strengths and wellbeing needs of the child or young person under the

GIRFEC framework, clearly and explicitly cites spirituality as one aspect of wellbeing, which is notably absent in the health and wellbeing ‘responsibility of all’ experiences and outcomes.

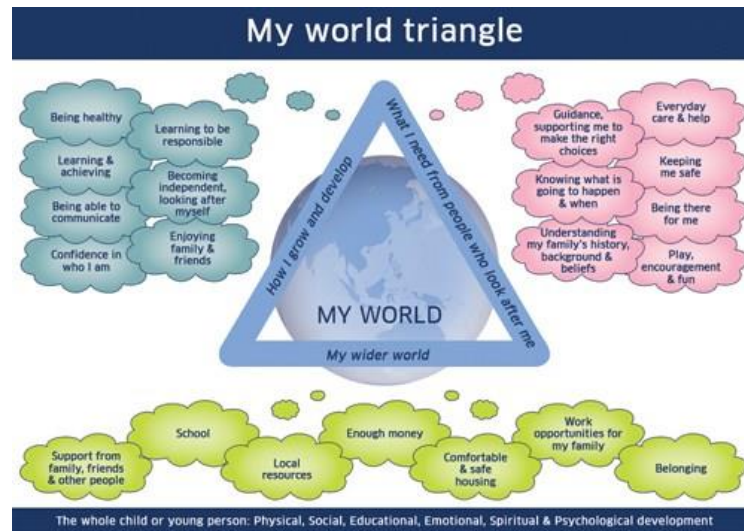


Figure 4. My World Triangle.
The Scottish Government (2015a)

The notion of wellbeing in the GIRFEC framework has been influenced by child development theories. The GIRFEC documentation, specifically *A framework for measuring children's well-being* (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d.) outlined a thorough analysis of the definition of the term wellbeing, and, as discussed in the previous chapter and highlighted by Stradling and MacNeil (n.d.), there is no agreed definition of wellbeing. Depending upon the context and purpose of use, a range of definitions, such as life satisfaction, happiness, quality of life, welfare and so on, are used interchangeably.

The limitations of previous definitions were noted in the GIRFEC literature, and a more holistic stance was taken which aimed to include needs-based

approaches and functioning and capabilities approaches. The needs-based approaches linked with Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs and Max-Neef, Elizables & Hopenhayn (1991) taxonomy of human needs. The functioning and capabilities approach is concerned with the welfare economist, Sen's (1992) view of human potential and 'the emphasis is on the individual's potential, building on their strengths and expanding the choices they can make in order to live full and creative lives and be active agents of their own development and wellbeing.' (p. 5). The understanding of wellbeing in this context is not only concerned with human capital but also views childhood as an important phase of life in its own right, is concerned with their current functioning and potential, their rights, personal growth, life satisfaction, and views children as being 'active contributors to their own development' (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 8). As previously discussed, this approach to wellbeing is concerned with children as beings with rights, rather than their preparation for adulthood. This is an important point to note: there have been criticisms about potential discursive themes in the wellbeing literature which could be oppressive, rather than progressive, such as the theme of 'care', for example (Spratt, 2017). The 'interventionist' approach has also been criticised by Ecclestone & Hayes (2009), and, as noted by Spratt (2017), in order for young people to be authentically supported with their wellbeing (and not just their well-becoming) they have to be active participants, rather than passive 'empty vessels in need of socialisation by adults' (p. 47). Tisdall (2015) also argues that care needs to be taken with the terms children's rights and children's wellbeing which are often paired together and require

deeper scrutiny; the policy context can be contradictory often imposing a professional agenda onto children and young people.

There are links with the overall discursive themes located in progressive literature about the aims of education (e.g. White, 2011) and in the various CfE documents when taken as a whole, rather than individual documents. The health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes, for example, focus on a very narrow definition of wellbeing, and in contrast, *Creativity across learning 3-18* and *Learning for sustainability* has a more holistic viewpoint of wellbeing. As noted by Thorburn (2016) Reform Scotland and Centre for Scottish Public Policy (2013) was disappointed with the lack of progression in the health and wellbeing 'responsibility of all' documents and suggested that 'more sharply focussed progressive outcomes for health and wellbeing might allay the monitoring of standards concerns of the OECD' (p. 6).

As identified in the previous section there is a narrow focus of wellbeing in some of the CfE literature. The eight wellbeing indicators are specified in the most two influential reforms (CfE and GIRFEC). Due to the significance of the eight wellbeing indicators, I use the eight wellbeing indicators specified in GIRFEC as the definition of wellbeing to explore what wellbeing means to young people in comparison to the GIRFEC and CfE policy context.

6. Conclusion

The 21st century has been a turning point for educational policy internationally, nationally and regionally due to a multitude of interacting forces explored in this chapter. The wellbeing agenda has been a key theme in the new policy discourse with often complex definitions and underlying purposes. As observed by Humes (2013a) CfE emerged at a complex time both internationally and nationally due to the political and ideological landscape of educational reform at the time of its inception. The OECD places a strong focus on outcomes, exams and marketable skills (MacAllister, 2018), which can influence the way in which Scottish policy is constructed and enacted. The OECD focus on measurement of outcomes (or outputs as debated by MacAllister, 2018) is contrasted against aspects of Scottish policies that could provide opportunities for developing a curriculum and pedagogy which is sensitive to the needs of the children and young people.

The publications were suggested to be values based rather than objectives based, but the lack of deep scrutiny and justification (Humes, 2013a), especially in the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes, illustrated the often-confused mixed messages located within policy contexts (Ball, 1998), which can be further exacerbated when taken into schools and explored as policy enactment. This process of policy creation and enactment in schools was further complicated by the tension between the rhetoric of the change process with teachers and the wider school community being the co-

creators of the curriculum (Humes, 2013a), which could be seen as contradictory when viewed in the context of the experiences and outcomes.

The publication of the *health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes* illustrated an absence of engagement with wellbeing philosophy and concentrated, in a simplistic way, on individual wellbeing, with a focus on skills development. Later CfE publications provided an overarching vision which could be seen within the CfE literature, presenting wellbeing as an interacting theme with global citizenship, health and wellbeing, learning for sustainability, creativity and outdoor learning. The more holistic narrative located in the wider range of CfE publications provided opportunities for engagement with philosophically informed thinking, such as the consideration of Nussbaum's (2011) writing on the development of capabilities through engagement with the humanities and critical thinking, and with the concept of flourishing. This viewpoint contrasted with more limited understandings of wellbeing, such as the *Every Child Matters* agenda in England which, as noted by Watson et al. (2012), is a discursive practice which ran the risk of pathologising children by positioning the child as in need of an intervention to ensure their success in adulthood. The EMC agenda in England had some similarities with GIRFEC, the Scottish equivalent.

In relation to GIRFEC, the documents created by Stradling and McNeil (n.d.) explained how GIRFEC had been constructed through a mix of philosophically informed frameworks to understand childhood wellbeing, with

a specific focus on viewing children as beings as well as becomings, and a commitment to listening to the voices of children and young people. There was evidence to suggest that GIRFEC provided a hybrid of values based, as is the case with aspects of values-informed life-satisfaction theory (Thorburn, 2018), and a more utilitarian capabilities approach to wellbeing policy. Although the narrative of GIRFEC has a core theme of flourishing, the breakdown of the eight wellbeing indicators, and the language used in the documentation, could also be viewed as a list of targets a young person should achieve to be judged as 'normal', illustrating the complexity of policy interpretation (Ball, 1990). As Humes (2013a) notes simply stating that a document is learner-centred and using language to support such claims does not ensure that progressive and learner-centred pedagogy is occurring.

The early lack of clarity, and apparent tensions between developing the health and wellbeing of the children in preparation for adulthood, against developing and facilitating notions of empowering children and young people to consider, as active participants, what it means to be and live well, requires further discussion and debate. The debate needs to include gathering the views of the young people themselves.

In the next chapter I conduct a literature review in the field of wellbeing in education to explore how the term is operationalised in different contexts. I also explore and assess the extent to which the voices of children and young people are represented in research studies and analyse which methods are

most appropriate for authentically accessing the voices of children and young people.

CHAPTER THREE: Wellbeing in Education Literature Review

1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a brief introduction to the historical context of wellbeing in education and then summarise and critique the relevant research in the field of wellbeing in schools. This chapter is broken into four parts. Part one explores the development of wellbeing in education. Part two details the method of conducting a literature review and part three reviews the literature in the field of wellbeing in education. The final section of the chapter summarises the pertinent matters for the design of this research.

2. The historical context and educational debate

2.1 The 1800s and early 1900s: the experience of children and young people

In the early 1800s the debate around wellbeing in education was becoming more apparent and by the 1820s there was emerging interest in the concept of wellbeing in infant education and in the development of the 'heart' rather than purely 'knowledge' (Dixon, 2012). The emerging awareness was later mirrored in contemporary literature such as *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens. In 1854 Dickens wrote about the consequences of excluding emotion from the classroom (Dixon, 2012) and introduced readers to the character of Mr Gradgrind and his view of rational, calculating animals with only self-interest, to act as a reminder of what the world may become without empathy and emotional connections with others.

Shortly after this period, the Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 was introduced, which was a legislative turning point for the rights of children and young people and their wellbeing. However, it would be twenty years before almost all British primary aged children would benefit from primary schooling (Boos, 2017). At this time, the experience of children and young people was still vastly different depending upon the social class one was born into (Cunningham, 2006). Many working-class children were a source of income for families (Monies, 1974), leaving less commitment from families for children and young people to be educated, as the family required the additional income to live. There was still a significant difference in opportunities provided for females in comparison to males, and for those females who managed to secure a place at one of the newly created schools for girls from the 1870s onwards, the experience was very different to that of their male peers with females being taught to be 'delicate, womanly refinement, a high-toned courtesy, a gentle manner...' (Cunningham, 2006, p. 148). For those who were attending school, the experiences of children and young people in the classroom were still reported to be harsh in the context of their holistic health.

Classrooms were also cold and the learning regime tended to inhibit self-expression in favour of merely repeating the received wisdom of the teacher. In schools it was written that there 'should be sustained quietness and instantaneous obedience'. In spite of improvements, Scottish education in the 19th century was far from democratic and open.'

(Knox, n.d., p. 6)

Whilst the influence of literature and legislation related to the wellbeing debate was continuing to emerge in the minds of members of society, and

concerns about the standards of health and education were becoming more apparent, changes were slow to be realised in practice. It was also noticeable that, although the rhetoric about rights was developing, the voices of children and young people were noticeably absent during this period.

2.2 The First World War to the 1990s: the influence of legislation and supra-national bodies

Following the First World War the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1924) was created which provided basic rights to children and young people. All men and women had a duty to develop children and young people, including the child being the first to receive relief when in times of distress, and should be protected from every form of exploitation. In Scotland, The Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937 was created. The 1937 Act continued to develop legal concern for the welfare of children and young people including providing a duty on adults to protect children under the age of sixteen from being used for begging (The National Archives, 2017), illustrating how far society still had to develop thinking and practice around children and their wellbeing, education and children's rights.

Toward the end of the Second World War until the 1960s post war reconstruction was taking place which resulted in the British Welfare State. At the same time the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) was introduced which represented the first international agreement on the basic principles of human rights, based on dignity, equality and fairness (Equality

and Human Rights Commission, 2018). The Education (Scotland) Act of 1945 was introduced which continued to progress the health and wellbeing agenda as a *right* for all children and young people. Part 1, Section 3 of the Act, for example, illustrates the recognition that children and young people have a right to play and recreation:

It shall be the duty of an education authority to secure that the facilities for primary, secondary and further education provided for their area include adequate facilities for recreation and social and physical training. For that purpose an education authority, with the approval of the Secretary of State, may establish, maintain and manage, or assist the establishment, maintenance and management of camps, holiday classes, playing fields, play centres and other places (including playgrounds, gymnasiums and swimming baths not appropriated to any school or college) at which facilities for recreation and for such training as aforesaid are available for persons for whom primary, secondary or further education is provided by the authority. They, may also organise games, expeditions and other activities for such persons, and may defray or contribute towards the expenses thereof.

(The Education (Scotland) Act of 1945 p. 4)

However, the reasoning behind the focus could equally have been interpreted as in the interest of military and economic survival (Lloyd, 1979), with the impact of two world wars sharpening a perceived need for a fit and healthy workforce. The potential underlying contrasting motives, which can be open to multiple interpretations, illustrates the emerging complexity with wellbeing policy discourse. As observed by Watson et al. (2012) the purpose of policy is to start change and underlying that process of change is the regulation of the lives of citizens.

The Education Scotland Act in 1980 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 were significant developments for children and

young people. The latter provided fifty-four articles to which children and young people were *entitled*, including the right to an education and the former in Section 1 of the Act provided the duty of each education authority to ensure adequate and efficient provision of school education. Further, Article 12 in UNCRC stated a child or young person has a right to be heard in matters which affect them in accordance with their age and maturity. This marked a further shift and development from basic child protection in supra-national and national policy and legislation, to an emerging rhetoric of *rights* for children and the importance of their health and wellbeing. However, the focus was still more concerned with physical health and child protection, and as late as 2011, there were still difficulties with policy implementation, as noted by Lansdown:

However, although much progress has been made in many countries, with countless positive examples of legislation, policy and practice, it remains the case that for too many children across the world, the right to be heard remains unrealised. Those from more marginalised groups are disproportionately denied the opportunity – for example, girls, children with disabilities, children from indigenous groups, children with undocumented parents, children in conflict with the law, and those living in extreme poverty.
(Lansdown, 2011, p. 6)

Watson et al. (2012) argue that in order to avoid a majoritarian discourse, dominated by policy makers and those in positions of power, the quiet voices should also be understood and reported. It was not until the turn of the 21st century that children and young people's wellbeing became a more prominent focus and more recognition was given to the importance of the

voices of children and young people, and the impact on the wider definition of wellbeing.

2.3 The turn of the 21st century

Although national and international ideals about children's rights and wellbeing have been evident for years, the implementation of political initiatives is more recent (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009). Children's rights and wellbeing, although often taken as one issue, are not unproblematic concepts (Tisdall, 2015) and also require deeper scrutiny. In England, in 2003, the *Every Child Matters* agenda was introduced, linked to the wellbeing of children from birth to aged nineteen (White, 2011) and, in Scotland, in 2006 the *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* agenda was introduced. As discussed in Chapter Two, the Scottish policy context operationalised wellbeing in more holistic terms than purely psychical health and child protection as had been the case in the past. In Scotland GIRFEC was linked to *Curriculum for Excellence*, (see Chapter Two for further information) the new Scottish curriculum, which explicitly recognised that young people could achieve if they are healthy, emotionally fit and psychologically well (Thorburn, 2018). At this time and in these policy documents, there were various descriptions of wellbeing which could be interpreted differently depending upon the reader and the context.

In England, an interventionist approach concerned with social and emotional wellbeing appeared more prevalent in schools (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009)

with the Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCFS) advocating the importance of the emotional aspects of wellbeing (SEAL). The SEAL agenda in England attempted to model, teach and manage children's emotions through the school curriculum (Watson et al., 2012), and had been influenced by Tony Blair's agenda to eradicate the 'antisocial behaviour that damages communities' (Blair, 2002, cited in Watson et al., 2012). In Scotland, there was less clarity about the precise definition of health and wellbeing, which linked in with various policy guidelines such as the *Health and Wellbeing 'responsibility of all'* and the four capacities of 'successful learner, confident individual, effective contributor and responsible citizen' (Scottish Executive, 2006b). The Scottish context created more ambiguity about the wellbeing agenda, but also more opportunity for discussion and debate about the need for greater philosophical clarity about the wider aspects of wellbeing, such as personal growth and engagement in learning (Thorburn, 2014). Against the differing policy backgrounds in England and Scotland, it is not surprising that the research focus for wellbeing in schools in England and Scotland were different. Research conducted in England often explored the effectiveness of interventions to build resilience in children and young people with a focus on emotional intelligence. In contrast, in Scotland, there was more interest in various aspects of wellbeing, such as analysing attempts to support outdoor learning in Scottish schools (Thorburn and Allison, 2013).

Located within these different contexts, policy frameworks sometimes employed an operationalised list or medicalised OLT approach to wellbeing (Watson et al., 2012). The various approaches to thinking about wellbeing present complexities with power and autonomy. As argued by Watson et al. (2012) the policies are created by those who have the power to speak and the languages employed in the documents create a sense of pride in the policy population for tackling the problem of the lack of wellbeing in children and young people. What is sometimes overlooked in the drive to make children well is the potential for an underlying aim to control individuals. Through reading the policy literature it became apparent that, to an extent, the operationalised list and medicalised OLT approach was evident in both the English and Scottish policy context, and in the wider international landscape.

The international landscape, influenced by supra-national bodies such as UNESCO and the OECD, which include countries in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), at the turn of the 21st century, had commonalities in curriculum reform. This involved sharing common goals and emphases in the curriculum with a new focus on improving the wellbeing of learners, as specified in PISA (2015):

PISA is best known for its data on learning outcomes, but it also studies students' satisfaction with life, their relationships with peers, teachers and parents, and how they spend their time outside of school. PISA results show that students differ greatly, both between and within countries, in how satisfied they are with their life, their motivation to achieve, how anxious they feel about their schoolwork, their expectations for the future, and their perceptions of being bullied at school or treated unfairly by their teachers. Students in some of the

countries that top the PISA league tables in science and mathematics reported comparatively low satisfaction with life; but Finland, the Netherlands and Switzerland seem able to combine good learning outcomes with highly satisfied students. (PISA, 2015, p. 3).

The curriculum was becoming a lever for improvement and serving the equity agenda, with an emphasis on competencies, values and student agency (Sinnema & Aitken, 2013). The competencies, values and student agency agendas are particularly significant to wellbeing in education, especially the concept of learning for sustainability promoted by UNESCO. As specified on UNESCO *Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future*, a UNESCO programme for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, there is a strong and explicit focus on values education and citizenship education. In the section related to teaching ethics for example, it states:

Ethics do not give easy answers to the dilemmas of life, but they can encourage people to choose the options that serve the best interests of others as well as themselves. Ethics can also motivate people to make the sacrifices such choices often require. (UNESCO, 2010, online).

The supra-national agendas both involve a narrative of what children and young people should become, with some criticisms about an over-emphasis on the emotional aspects at a cost to the curriculum (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009) and a significant focus on participation and voice. There is also complexity and contradictions around student voice with how it is enacted in practice (Sinnema & Aitken, 2013). Research in the domain of the wellbeing

of children and young people has often been undertaken without the voices and perspectives of children and young people, as noted by Watson et al. (p. 35, 2012) 'there is a need to access lived realities and find a language for sharing and communicating these realities'. The lack of authentic voice from children and young people has resulted in the measurement of the wellbeing of young people in 'adultcentric' ways (Rees, Bradshaw, Goswami & Keung, 2010), where the notions of what wellbeing means are imposed upon children and young people through creating measurements based on concepts which originated from the study of adult wellbeing (Rees et al., 2010). The research base revealed a range of methods used to access the voices of young people, which will be explored in more depth in the following section. Authentic voices are captured through young people being asked to specify what wellbeing means to them and superficial approaches purport to do so but often impose a pre-defined definition through the chosen measurement and methodology.

3. The method of conducting a literature review

The primary purpose of the review is to determine what is known about the topic of wellbeing in schools and to identify the gaps and inconsistencies in the literature. As noted by Carnwell and Daley (2001) the purpose is 'to demonstrate insight into the current state of knowledge in the field and to 'critically appraise and synthesize the current state of knowledge relating to the topic under investigation, as a means of identifying gaps in the knowledge that a new study would seek to address' (p. 57). The initial

literature review was carried out in 2015 which generated over 50,000 results including over 1,000 books and 37,000 peer reviewed articles, and then further literature reviews were conducted between 2015 and 2017. In the final review a timeframe of 2000 to 2017 in peer reviewed journals in English language were used as inclusion/exclusion criteria for the review. The time frame was due to the political landscape and marked shift in the focus on wellbeing in education from 2000. Several databases were searched, including ProQuest Social Sciences, Taylor and Francis online and Science Direct. Over 37,000 research articles were located which were within the broad subject area. The search results were then narrowed down to the most relevant studies for the appraisal and synthesis sections of the thesis to inform various chapters. The most relevant research papers to the research study were then selected for inclusion in the literature review.

4. Literature review

This section is broken down into the key themes identified through the literature review. These include: the sustainability narrative; an interventionist approach; school ethos and learning and teaching; and the extent to which there are authentic or superficial voices of children and young people.

4.1 The definitions and narratives of wellbeing in educational research

As outlined in the previous section, internationally and nationally there is a strong interest in wellbeing in schools, although the way in which the term has been operationalised differs depending upon the intended purpose, time

and location of the research. Historically, the term wellbeing was related to concepts such as welfare, utility and happiness (Thorburn, 2018), although more recently there is a wider and more diverse range of themes located within the discourse used, often interchangeably, including the new emerging discourse of sustainability (Spratt, 2017). There is little agreement or consensus on the place of wellbeing in schools, and there has been a rise in the number of programmes designed to fix the perceived problem of poor wellbeing in children and young people, although this development has been relatively unchallenged in educational contexts with an outwardly benign agenda being unproblematically accepted as a positive (Watson et al., 2012). The various approaches to wellbeing position children and young people in different ways, which can range from empowering young people to flourish in their contexts, to a more controlling approach which positions the child or young person as fragile and requiring adult intervention (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009).

The definitions used in wellbeing research represent a multitude of understandings of the term, which can result in a sense that the term is ambiguous. Further, as argued by Watson et al. (2012), wellbeing is contextually located in a range of situations which are in a constant state of flux, and as the circumstances change, so does wellbeing, illustrating the fluid nature of the concept. Research into wellbeing in education straddles different academic disciplines, and it is suggested that the progress of wellbeing in education has been hindered by the differing ways in which the

concept has been understood in the various contexts (Watson et al., 2012). Thorburn (2018) also observes that an improved and deeper conceptual awareness of wellbeing may support educators to ensure that young people's lives are more fulfilling and meaningful.

The following section provides insight into the diverse way wellbeing has been understood. There were various definitions and themes in identified research studies under the umbrella term of 'health and wellbeing'. Spratt (2017) created five overlapping wellbeing discourses relevant to schools which she named: discourses of physical health promotion; psychological discourses of social and emotional literacy; discourse of care; discourses of flourishing; the emergent discourse of sustainability. The literature search highlighted examples of Spratt's (2017) multiple wellbeing definitions and discourses. Ereaut and Whiting (2008) also explored the discourses used in relation to wellbeing in UK government departments and identified five overlapping discourses which they named: medical heritage; operationalised discourse; sustainability discourse; discourse of holism; philosophical discourse. With these points in mind, the following sections provide a critical analysis of the ways in which wellbeing has been understood in the various research contexts, and illustrates the complexity of the term and potential consequences of the various understandings if accepted without critique in educational settings.

In *Children's social and emotional wellbeing in schools. A critical perspective*, Watson et al. (2012) challenged the uncritical approach to children's social and emotional wellbeing that has been adopted in school contexts. Their book illustrated the dangers of uncritically accepting an 'operationalised list' approach to objective list theory which has the potential to position children and young people as emotionally fragile and in need of an intervention. This way of positioning children and young people could result in the type of therapeutic ethos debated by Ecclestone and Hayes (2009). As discussed in Chapter One, when a simplistic operationalised list approach to wellbeing is created by those in positions of authority, which is sometimes perceived as a representation of a 'majoritarian discourse' (Watson et al., 2012, p. 195), there is a danger that policy approaches can result in wellbeing being 'done to' children and young people rather than enhancing and developing authentic and engaging learning experiences. Watson et al. (2012) provided an alternative pathway for researchers, practitioners and policy makers to consider when working with children and young people and their wellbeing. The authors suggested a move toward social pedagogical models, which have less focus on traditional understandings of wellbeing, and move toward a focus on the adult-child relationship. The social pedagogies aim to unite care and education, characterised by a reflective practitioner who demonstrates authenticity. Social pedagogies often include a focus on children's rights and responsibilities, the creative arts, outdoor activities and sports and provide recognition of the desire fulfilment approaches to wellbeing, which as Watson et al. (2012, p. 204) note: 'value the perspective

of the subjective body in deciding what is good for themselves. This is a right we have excluded children from, where the exertion of desires/hedonism has been viewed as inappropriate by paternalistic practices'. This meeting of care and education to form social pedagogy has similarities to Spratt's (2016) identification of the 'discourse of care' located with the philosophy of GIRFEC, and Ereaut and Whiting's (2008) philosophical discourse, which recognises the importance of subjective wellbeing. The discourse of care is not without critics, as with the operationalised objective list approach, there is the risk that the approach could result in professionals making decisions on behalf of the child or young person which may not be in the best interest of the child and, like Watson et al. (2012), Spratt (2016) also stresses the importance of the dialogical encounter between the adult and child.

The critical review of the research papers in the following section explored the extent to which children and young people have been provided with a voice in the process, and considered how wellbeing had been understood in the research context and the ramifications of the chosen definitions and approaches. Watson et al.'s (2012) critical analysis of the social and emotional aspect of wellbeing was considered, alongside Spratt's (2016) identification of the multiple and interacting discourses present in the Scottish wellbeing policy context. These key issues are reflected upon throughout the literature review. The remainder of this chapter is divided into four sub-sections. In sub-section 4.1.1 the research with a dominant theme of sustainable development is explored, sub-section 4.1.2 looks at the research

with a dominant theme of the interventionist approach to wellbeing and sub-section 4.1.3 critiques research with multi-dimensional wellbeing narratives which includes school ethos and learning and teaching. Finally, in section 4.1.4 I explore the extent to which the research methods have enabled authentic voices of children and young people to be captured.

4.1.1 Sustainable development and wellbeing

In 2002 the United Nations General Assembly confirmed the years 2005 to 2014 as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development with the aim of improving the quality of life for all (Michalos, Creech, MacDonald & Hatch Kahlke, 2011). In 2015 improving mental health was included as one of the sustainable development goals, and UNICEF (2016) committed to sustainable development goals, referred to as global goals, for a better future. Sustainability was defined by UNICEF as: 'Sustainability or sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' (UNICEF, 2016), illustrating a concern with justice and environmental awareness. The term health and wellbeing was becoming more interconnected with the narrative of sustainability promoted by these supra-national bodies. Further, Scotland is in a unique position internationally as it has incorporated Learning for Sustainability within teachers' professional standards.

Ereaut and Whiting (2008) describe this approach to wellbeing as 'super-holism – perhaps a next-generation holism that includes all physical environments, and ultimately the planet' (Ereaut and Whiting, 2008, p. 12). The sustainable development narrative includes a learner-centred pedagogy and promotes the importance of developing young people who are able to engage critically and creatively in debates and become active citizens (Sewilam, McCormack, Mader et al., 2015). This approach to health and wellbeing is more closely related to philosophical theories advocated by thinkers such as Nussbaum who provided ethical principles by which to live, ranging from 'living a long life and having bodily health' to 'living in a fruitful relationship with animals and the environment' (Nussbaum, 1992 cited by Watson et al., 2012, p. 20).

In relation to the sustainability narrative, research conducted by Michalos et al. (2011) based in Manitoba, Canada, used exploratory surveys to ascertain the participants' understanding of aspects of sustainable development which included environmental education, but also the values inherent in the concept of sustainable development, such as democracy and active citizenship with a view to working towards standardised measures. The quantitative study asked true/false questions of adults and young people, such as 'Education for sustainable development promotes gender equality' and 'Education for sustainable development includes education for a culture of peace' (p. 407) which are also specified in Article 29 in UNCRC. The study acknowledged the complexity of the agenda, and the vast areas of significance such as

human rights education, peace and questions about how to live to lead a good life, although the study omitted to capture the actual voices of children and young people. This omission left a sense of incongruency in the research especially in connection with the vision for sustainable development education and research, which includes a focus on UNCRC Article 12 and 13. For example, the research conducted by Michalos et al. (2011) the authors reflected on their student survey and commented: 'In spite of our efforts to simplify the language, we suspect some of the younger students in the sample might have found some of the concepts and sentences difficult to understand' (p. 405). This reflection from the researchers highlights the importance of pilot studies which I explore in more depth in Chapter Four, section 4.2. Through a pilot study there are opportunities to ask children and young people for their views prior to survey construction, and to develop a better understanding of how children and young people interpret policy definitions.

Research conducted in Egypt also explored a sustainable development project called 'EduCamp', a European-Egyptian project which aimed to introduce key sustainable development principles into teaching and learning in Egyptian schools (Sewilan et al., 2015), through partnerships with stakeholders, changing pedagogical practice, teacher development, developing public awareness and understanding of sustainable development goals. The study was concerned with the more complex aspects of teaching and learning which influence wellbeing, such as active learning

methodologies and learner-centred pedagogies, and aimed to develop teaching resources for teachers and students. As noted by Sewilan et al. (2015) one of the most significant aspects of sustainable education is the development of critical thinkers who are empowered as responsible citizens, so it was unfortunate that the voices of children and young people were absent from the study. In the section outlining the principles of education for sustainable development it noted: 'The UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2005) highlights the need to direct educational practices towards participatory and solution-orientated methods which would facilitate the development of systemic, critical and creative thinking'. (p. 224). There was a missed opportunity to apply the same approach into the research methodology and provide opportunities for young people to actively participate in the research. As noted by Boushel (2012, in Watson et al., 2012) meaningful participation with children's rights is suggested to be variable, with little impact in the school life of young people.

There were examples of international research with the purpose of accessing the voices of children and young people to improve their wellbeing in schools. Awartani, Whitman and Gordon (2008) carried out research on behalf of the Universal Education Foundation (UEF), an organisation which works in partnership with public and private sector organisations across the world to answer the question: 'How can we create learning environments that nurture the well-being of children and young people?' (p. 51). The research reviewed the steps taken to administer a survey in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan and

then presented the findings from Palestine. UEF defined wellbeing as the 'realization of one's physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual potential' (Awartani et al., 2008, p. 51) and used the voices of children and young people to develop research tools and methods to capture their perceptions of their wellbeing. The information was then used to inform policy makers of the gap between the rhetoric in policy and the reality in practice. This approach supports Watson et al.'s (2012) call for more research to access minoritarian accounts of wellbeing which challenge the traditional meta-narratives. Through the development of a research project which enables children and young people to present their views, traditional accounts and practice in education can be challenged and improved to enhance the wellbeing of children and young people in their contexts.

In Awartani et al.'s (2008) study, a mixed methods approach was used which was an aspect of the *Voices of Children Programme*. The aim of the programme was to engage young people and enable them to reshape their learning environments to develop their holistic wellbeing (Awartani et al., 2008). This research provided young people with a variety of ways to have their voices heard, and the results illustrated nine domains for young people and their wellbeing in school including 'pleasure and joy in learning, inner strength and spirit, sense of connection with all of life, and overall satisfaction with life' (p. 63). An example provided by the researchers included reference to the importance of being part of a global community and nature:

When schools provide opportunities for students to learn about and engage with the global community, to interact with nature, and

encourage students to see positive opportunities in their future, students report more positive feelings of meaning in their life and well-being. (p. 63).

This viewpoint is in line with writers and thinkers such as White (2011), who argues for schools to provide opportunities for young people to explore a range of pursuits such as friendship, nature, the arts and helping others, and Layard and Dunn (2009) who raise concerns about the effects of consumerism on young people and argue for young people to 'be helped to develop the spiritual quality of wonder and inner peace – and for the sense of something greater than themselves' (p. 86). The vantage point could be viewed as more empowering as the aim is to support children and young people in influencing and changing their learning environments to develop their holistic development and wellbeing, which also positively impacts on others through a mutual sense of something more important than their own desires. This approach resonates with the overarching vision of learning for sustainability and the UNCRC, and illustrates underlying philosophical frameworks which contain both objective and subjective accounts of wellbeing.

The newly emerging sustainable development narrative offers a new direction in education. This approach provides an opportunity to deconstruct the various components of wellbeing policy, and to explore with young people, and other stakeholders, what can be done in different contexts to improve the wellbeing of children, young people and wider communities. The sustainable development approach to wellbeing includes the importance of

learner-centred approaches, peace, democracy and children and young people developing as critical, active citizens and is in the spirit of UNCRC Articles 12, 13 and 29. This approach to wellbeing in schools differs from the medicalised or operationalised list approach to wellbeing and instead provides opportunities for young people to grow and flourish in their learning experiences. There is 'space to do something different' (Watson et al., 2012) when moving away from the medicalised and operationalised list approaches to wellbeing and moving towards a values-based approach. The values-based approach, which acknowledges the significance of the adult-child relationship, focuses on children and young people being listened to, which enables new understandings of wellbeing to develop (Watson et al., 2012). The influence of supra-national bodies is still evident, although, as MacAllister (2018) highlights, schools should help learners develop marketable skills, but in order to enhance their wellbeing these skills should be developed as diverse capabilities, which enable young people to consider their own long-term wellbeing and that of others.

Although the sustainability narrative was similar in the research studies, the voices of children and young people were not represented in all studies. This created a sense of incongruence between aims and values in the research and needs to be considered in future research studies. This will be explored more fully in section 4.1.4 where I discuss the methods selected for capturing the voices of young people.

4.1.2 The interventionist approach

In the studies critiqued in this section there was a focus on the individual. As observed by Watson et al. (2012), the intervention approach appears to have an underlying assumption that if a system of early intervention is in place, the pathology (of the individual) will be eradicated. This type of narrative has a medicalised heritage which does not encompass the wider wellbeing discourses, such as sustainability narratives and other philosophically informed approaches (Watson et al., 2012). In the interventionist approach, there was a much stronger focus on the social and emotional aspects of wellbeing, which Spratt (2017) describes as five broad categories of: emotional self-awareness; managing emotions; harnessing emotions productively; reading emotions; and handling relationships. The categories originate from Goleman's (1996) work on emotional intelligence in the 1990s, and as Watson et al. (2012) highlight, this psychologically framed approach would traditionally have been provided by a specialist with the relevant remit. Placing the onus on an intervention for the individual takes the focus away from the promotion of holistic wellbeing and utilises an operationalised objective list approach or medicalised model of wellbeing. The social and emotional way of understanding wellbeing was in line with Ereaut and Whiting's (2008) 'operationalised discourse' which Watson et al. (2012) describe as:

Operationalised discourse – whereby wellbeing is only known and understood in respect of a set of indicators and measures such as the five Every Child Matters outcomes. Wellbeing is understood as ECM, and does not need to be theorised, conceptualised or challenged as the outcomes provide indicators and arenas for measurement that are all shared and understood. (Watson et al., 2012, p. 28)

The approach to developing emotional resilience in school children has been largely unchallenged until recently. Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) raised concerns about the therapeutic ethos dominating in schools and creating a culture where young people are seen as fragile and vulnerable requiring a plethora of interventions to develop their self-esteem and ability to cope. An intervention approach could, if applied uncritically in schools, change the focus from empowering young people to develop as critical and creative citizens, to disempowerment of agency and autonomy (Ecclestone, 2004). In some instances, the interventions were also delivered by 'new types of psych experts' (Ecclestone and Rawdin, 2016) which included peer buddies and teaching assistants. It is interesting that this happened at a time when in England there were cuts to children's services, as noted by Ecclestone and Rawdin (2016):

The removal of government sponsorship for centralised social and emotional learning programmes, together with an intensification of moves to privatise and outsource education providers, including specialist services such as local authority-run educational psychology, have expanded ideas about who can be counted as psych-experts. (p. 382).

Research conducted by Hills (2016) provided an illustration of the interventionist approach. The research aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of an 'Emotional Literacy Support Assistant' (ELSA) project developed by educational psychologists in a primary school setting and suggested to capture the perspectives of young people. Pupil support assistants, who are on a much lower pay scale than educational psychologists, had been trained to implement the intervention with primary aged children to develop their

social, emotional and mental health needs. In contrast to Ecclestone and Rawdin (2016) Hills (2016) presents the intervention as a solution to the mental health needs of children:

Accessibility and availability of mental health services is seen as a key factor in successfully targeting children's mental health difficulties. The role of schools in both signposting and delivering targeted mental health work is of growing interest, as teachers are recognised as being the first people outside the family to potentially identify children's mental health problems. (p. 50).

The design of the study was mix-methods which included the researchers going to the schools to deliver a questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The questionnaire was completed by fifty-three children (aged between six and eleven years) and the semi-structured interview was completed by nine children (aged between seven and ten years of age) who had experience of ELSA. The research paper suggested the views of the children were captured to inform knowledge and understanding of the perceived effectiveness of the project, although the questionnaire used could have produced biased responses in favour of ELSA. The way the questions were worded and the general organisation of capturing the views of the children may not have provided opportunities for children to respond in full. Questions cited in the questionnaire ranged from 'ELSA has helped me to make friends' to 'I enjoyed going to ELSA'. The qualitative phase provided more opportunity for a balanced response and included questions such as 'What did you really like about ELSA?' and 'Was there anything you didn't like about ELSA?'. The responses to the questionnaire were mainly positive which could possibly be due to the way the questions were worded and presented to the children,

with a researcher going in to the school to administer the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with the children. 34% of children responded to the question 'What would make ELSA better?' with 'It is already good'. 30% stated 'Nothing would make it better' (Hills, 2016, p.54) and 13% of children said they would like more ESLA. It would have been useful if children had been offered the opportunity to participate in focus groups with a facilitator and some other method of data collection to authentically have the opportunity to have their views heard, although the researcher did acknowledge this in the 'implications' section of the paper. The research did provide an opportunity for the children to draw their views on the project, and the thematic analysis of the qualitative data provided insights into the experiences of the children.

The findings generated through the thematic analysis were interesting. The research indicated that children were unsure of the reasons why they had been selected for the intervention and felt worried when they were informed of their involvement (Hills, 2016). Children specified the importance of the ESLA teachers being 'Kind and showing them unconditional positive regard' (Hills, 2016) and the researchers identified the significance of the personal characteristics of the ESLA teacher and the impact on the perceived effectiveness of the intervention. This is not unique to children and young people who have been deemed by an adult to require an emotional therapeutic intervention. The significance of the adult-child relationship on wellbeing has been evidenced as an important factor in other research

studies (Kuurme and Carlsson, 2010; General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2018), and the adult-child relationship is evident in social pedagogical models (Watson et al., 2012). The interventionist approach is not specific to teaching assistants, and peer interventions have also been used in educational contexts to support young people with their emotional wellbeing (James, Smith and Radford, 2014).

An example of the 'peer support mechanism' approach was a study carried out by James et al. (2014) who explored, through a single semi-structured focus group, the experiences and perceptions of a small selection of young people who had been a peer mentor in a specific secondary school setting. Peer mentors were pupils aged sixteen and seventeen who were used in place of support staff to support younger people in the secondary school who 'require support in some way, for example, with school adjustment or personal and social difficulties'. (James et al., p. 105), and offer one-to-one guidance, support and buddying for younger pupils. Seven peer mentors were selected for the focus group. Five of the participants were already mentors and two of the participants were about to begin the role. The voices of these peer mentors were gathered, in order to capture their views and feelings about being a peer mentor. The authors created categories from the responses of the young people such as 'being on the same level' and 'nurturing relationships'. Quotes illustrated how the wider school ethos could have been impacting on the wellbeing of the young person, for example, a young female stated: 'Knowing you're in their environment as well, where

they feel comfortable. It helps a lot because I don't think, I think with the mentees they don't, a lot of them don't feel comfortable at school at all'. (Girl) (James et al., 2014. p.109). It was notable that in this study the views of those who had been selected for the intervention had not been offered the opportunity to have their voices heard. However, recognition was given to the latter omission in the limitations section of the research paper.

These research studies were narrowly focused on the social and emotional and definition of wellbeing and with providing an intervention to solve the problem. The problem was also often represented as being located within the child or young person and therefore supported the normalising agenda. For example, in the James et al. (2014) study, the authors noted that previous research into peer approaches illustrated that 'At-risk mentored pupils showed gains in self-esteem, moving 80% closer to the national norm' (p. 105), this could be understood to be a discourse of 'normal' childhood versus 'disordered' childhood (Watson et al., 2012). Although the research studies were well intentioned, it was evident that the emotional reactions experienced by children and young people in response to the school environment were seen as something which could potentially be corrected with an intervention, rather than exploring with the young people why the school environment made them feel the way they did. Although the narrative in the two research papers supported the notion of UNCRC, especially in the right to have their voices heard, neither research project provided access to or insights into the minoritarian voices advocated by Watson et al. (2012).

The significance of school ethos, the adult/child relationship and teacher engagement with the wellbeing agenda are important to the experiences of young people, and there were research papers that explored this area. A strong example of research conducted in England which aimed to explore the views of teachers and staff in terms of their perception of their capacity to support the emotional health and wellbeing agenda in the context of English policy was undertaken by Kidgar, Gunnell, Biddle, Campbell and Donavan, (2010). The researchers used semi-structured interviews with fourteen school staff across eight secondary schools in England. The findings indicated that the teachers and staff interviewed perceived the agenda as a whole school approach, and one that not all colleagues were supportive of (Kidgar et al., 2010). Colleagues interviewed also stressed the importance of the quality of the adult/child relationship, noting that the way the teacher responds to the young person could have an impact on the emotional health of the young person (Kidgar et al., 2010). Further, the research findings elucidated the lack of clarity in policy implementation in England and illustrated existing studies in the field of health and wellbeing often fall into two different and contrasting fields; the therapeutic approach, as illustrated by Hills (2016) and James et al. (2014), or a whole school approach which will be explored in more depth in section 4.1.3. The study was worthy of inclusion because it did highlight the complexities of policy implementation, the lack of confidence in some schools in supporting the wellbeing agenda, and the need for more evidence from a range of interested parties. It was also interesting that Kidgar et al. (2014) highlighted the significance of whole school approaches,

including developments in curriculum and pedagogy, with the aim of making the school more supportive for all.

In summary, the social and emotional wellbeing narrative is heavily influenced by the emotional intelligence movement advocated by Goleman in the 1990's (Spratt, 2017). This was realised in English policy in 2001 when the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) set out their agenda for all schools to be supporting mental health (DfEE, 2001). This was followed by policy drivers focussed on emotional literacy, such as *Social Emotional Aspects of Learning* (SEAL). This approach to wellbeing has a tendency to position children and young people as fragile and often utilises a traditional model of operationalising wellbeing (Watson et al., 2012). Until more recently, the narrative was left unchallenged in educational contexts due to the outwardly benign perception of supporting the wellbeing of children and young people as an unproblematic aspect of education. However, when explored and critiqued more deeply, there is an underlying risk that policy makers, educators and researchers may be further disempowering those they aim to help. The interventionist approach could support a discourse of fragility and pathology in childhood and youth, whereas in contrast, whole school approaches to support children and young people to participate fully, critically and creatively in all aspects of their school life, provides opportunities for improving a child or young person's holistic wellbeing. As argued by Ecclestone and Rawdin (2016) policy, research and practice in England needs to consider the wider aspects of wellbeing,

including a holistic understanding of wellbeing rather than labelling people as vulnerable and requiring an intervention. The Scottish policy context provides more opportunities to explore these wider aspects of health and wellbeing, which is critiqued in the next section.

4.1.3 A multi-dimensional wellbeing narrative: school ethos and learning and teaching

In the early stages of CfE health and wellbeing in education was influenced by the 2007 Health Promotion and Nutrition (Scotland) Act and the *Health Promoting Schools* initiative which outlined a requirement for all staff to be involved in developing a supportive environment that encourages health promotion (Scottish Government, 2007a). Health promotion in this context was described as promoting the mental, emotional, social and physical health and wellbeing of all children and young people and was closely linked to the CfE health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes. It is not surprising that some of the wellbeing research conducted in Scotland explored the impact of these initiatives on the wellbeing of children and young people.

Research conducted by Levin, Inchley, Currie and Currie (2012) was one of the first to measure the impact of a *Health Promoting School* ethos and aimed to examine the impact of the *Health Promoting Schools* initiative on adolescent wellbeing. The quantitative study analysed data from the 2006 *Health Behaviour in School-aged Children* survey on outcome measures of happiness, confidence, life satisfaction, feeling left out, helplessness, multiple

health complaints and self-rated health (Levin et al., 2012). The findings suggested that, for most outcomes measured, the mean number of young people reporting positive wellbeing were higher for those who attended a school with *Health Promoting School Status* or a school working towards *Health Promoting School Status* in comparison to those schools without. Girls were also less likely to report feeling left out or helpless which may be linked to a more explicit focus on inclusion in a *Health Promoting School*. However, *Health Promoting School Status* may not have influenced life-satisfaction, confidence or happiness in girls, and girls were also less likely to report as having excellent health. Although the study had numerous strengths, such as large sample sizes and robust analyses, there were also a number of limitations. The sample did not include a number of smaller rural schools with a school roll of less than 341, and the results were more representative of less rural areas (Levin et al., 2012), which was acknowledged by the researchers. The school selected for exploration in this research would not have been represented in this analysis of Levin et al.'s (2012) research. The method of data collection was a self-report questionnaire under teacher supervision, and did not provide an opportunity to capture the voices of young people as the categories were provided for the young people. It would have been interesting to explore the findings in more depth through pupil focus groups to understand how young people experience health and wellbeing in their context and provide young people with an opportunity to have their experiences understood more fully. One finding, for example, was: 'The findings suggest that, over and above the impact of school activities and

facilities, the HPS (Health Promoting Schools) can lead to increased feelings of social inclusion, as well as increased health awareness among girls' (p. 180). This is an important finding for understanding the wellbeing of young people, especially when considered alongside the findings from other studies included in this literature review, which have indicated the importance of a sense of belonging to the wellbeing of young people. The research did provide opportunities for further debate and discussion about how wellbeing is understood in specific contexts, and the impact of the school context on the young person's subjective feelings at school. This could have been further strengthened through exploring this finding in more depth with groups of pupils from selected schools to understand the why and how of the reported findings. If the HPS school ethos does make young people feel more included, then it would be a strong argument for working with young people in their contexts to understand their experiences and make changes in their contexts to develop a sense of belonging. Further, it would provide an opportunity for children and young people to contribute to the wellbeing policy agenda, and avoid the majoritarian approach to policy making.

There were examples of research which aimed to explore, from the perspectives of children, what Scottish policy definitions mean to them. Miller and Gillies (2013) aimed to capture children's understandings of the term 'successful learners' in the Scottish policy context using a *Philosophy with Children* approach (Education Endowment Foundation, 2018). The group of children comprised of seventeen boys and fourteen girls aged between ten

and twelve at a primary school in the west of Scotland. The *Philosophy for Children* approach involved a facilitator working with the group of children to develop engagement in an individual written task to explore the term 'successful learner' and then to explain their choice. This activity was followed by a tally system to track the most popular responses and then the children were encouraged to reflect on their response to the question: 'Successful Learner: What does this mean?' (Miller & Gillies, 2013, p. 70). The children's dialogue was transcribed from the recording to ensure accuracy and the researchers used coding to generate themes and categories. The written findings indicated a vast number of interpretations of the term 'successful learner' which included sixty-six points from the children, and the dialogue between the children showed a range of agreements and disagreements which illustrated the ambiguous nature of the term. Researchers concluded that there were some similarities between the policy definition of the term and the views of the children, especially in terms of the importance of effort and persistence. Children placed great importance on 'wanting to do well in school' and 'openness to new thinking and ideas' (Miller & Gillies, 2013, p. 79). It was interesting to note that the findings suggested children viewed successful learning as an independent endeavour and there was no mention of collaboration (Miller & Gillies, 2013). CfE promotes the importance of collaborative learning (The Scottish Government, 2009), so the research findings uncovered a discord between the perceptions of the young people and the policy aspirations. This finding highlights the importance of

researching policy interpretation and enactment in specific contexts with the young people themselves.

The discord between policy aspirations and practice is not uncommon, as noted by Thorburn and Allison (2013) in their research which aimed to analyse the attempts to support outdoor learning in Scottish schools. Thorburn and Allison (2013) collected information from sixteen semi-structured interviews with national, local authority and school level stakeholders in order to analyse outdoor learning policy implementation. Their findings indicated that, although there was an increased agreement on the aims of outdoor learning, there was limited innovation and examples of policy stasis (Thorburn & Alison, 2013). The findings require further investigation, especially when, in *Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010) it states:

Well-constructed and well-planned outdoor learning helps develop the skills of enquiry, critical thinking and reflection necessary for our children and young people to meet the social, economic and environmental challenges of life in the 21st century. Outdoor learning connects children and young people with the natural world, with our built heritage and our culture and society, and encourages lifelong involvement and activity in Scotland's outdoors. (p. 9)

Here the links can be seen between the various components of wellbeing policies. There is evidence of the influence of the OECD, through the reference to economic challenges, and also links with the sustainability narrative, which was explored in the previous section. Recognition is given to the significance of critical thinking, but there is a clear focus on what children and young people need to be in the future for society to flourish. These

complexities and contrasting narratives can result in issues with power and agency if accepted uncritically. As Watson et al. (2012) acknowledge, the complexities of listening and rights are not unproblematic and: 'it is an active process of communication involving hearing, interpretation and construction of meanings that is not limited to the spoken word' (p. 112).

Stan (2009) conducted an ethnographic study at a residential outdoor centre in England to explore the outdoor education learning process. Primary school pupils' interactions were observed and uncovered the power relations evident in the learning process which could hinder the learning process. Due to time limits, the views of the children themselves were not accessed in this study. However, the initial study was built on and Stan and Humberston (2011) later conducted an ethnographic study (The Wellbeing Project) to explore teaching and learning in the outdoor learning environment and investigated primary school children's understanding of risk, body image, wellbeing and participation. In the study parents, teachers and children were asked what wellbeing meant to them. The research illustrated that there were different approaches to outdoor learning, which Stan (2009) named empowering and controlling. The former approach benefited the wellbeing of the children and the latter approach hindered (Stan, 2018). As argued by Stan (2018) simply providing well-constructed and well-planned outdoor learning as an embedded part of the curriculum is insufficient in developing and improving the wellbeing of young people; the way in which teaching is delivered has an impact. This is a significant point and could be considered alongside the

sustainability narrative and the objective and subjective philosophical approaches to thinking about wellbeing, which were explored in Chapter One. As Watson et al. (2012) argue, there is a need for children to experience choice in activities and for them to experience enjoyment in the learning. These views support the recommendations made by Thorburn (2015) who argued that a hybridised mix of subjective and objective influences which supports teachers and young people to work on the moral dimension of education and on flourishing, can enhance curriculum planning and pedagogical practice in relation to the wellbeing agenda. The significance of pedagogy, and the impact of controlling pedagogy on wellbeing, was also demonstrated in research studies carried out outside of the United Kingdom, illustrating the emergent commonalities across countries and in various contexts.

Kuurme and Carlsson (2010) explored the school experiences of one hundred and eighty-five Estonian and one hundred and sixty-one Finnish students through an open semi-structured questionnaire. The authors suggest a direct link between happiness and sustainability noting that: 'if we first care for people, they will themselves take care of the rest' (p. 71) and argue that authentic happiness can only really be authentic if the happiness is self-determined and not manipulated by socially generated desires (Kuurme and Carlsson, 2010), which again, highlights the contradictions and complexities between agency and autonomy and power and coercive agendas (Watson et al., 2012). Kuurme and Carlsson (2010) analysed the

reflections of the school children to understand what made a good school for them (described as pleasantness and unpleasantness) and data was analysed through content analysis. The findings for the students' view of unpleasantness revealed negative themes related to the absence of meaningful and challenging learning experiences, which illustrates the importance of providing learning experiences which engage children and young people as full participants in their learning. As Doddington (2018) notes, 'Wellbeing is feature of a person's life where there is a desire to continue having experiences that are meaningful and have value for that person' (p. 193).

Kuurme and Carlsson (2010) also found, similar to findings in the previously mentioned research studies, concerns regarding problems with relationships between students and teachers and the impact on the learning experiences. Young people commented about feeling bored, tired, stressed and living through routine. This is an interesting point and highlights the significance of the adult-child relationship and the importance of the teacher's wellbeing and joy in their role. Recent research undertaken by Children in Scotland and the GTCS (2018) with five hundred and ninety-one children and young people across the five to eighteen age range generated interesting themes around this topic. The findings from the Children in Scotland study revealed the importance of the teacher's embodiment of kindness in their interactions with children and young people, and the significance of positivity, where: 'teachers need to show their love of teaching and an enthusiasm for the role. This will

be shown by being engaging, interesting, creative and inspiring in the classroom' (General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2018, p.3). Kuurme and Carlsson (2010) found similar views, where they noted: 'Kindness, understanding, being helpful, equality and humour helps teachers to improve the young people's quality of life at school' (p.77).

The research undertaken by Kuurme and Carlsson (2010) provided an interesting insight into how the learning environment, and the impact of a rushed and hurried educational experience impacts on the student/teacher relationship and their wellbeing. This also supports the reflections of Sewilam et al. (2014) who noted the impact the emphasis placed on passing exams in Egyptian schools had on the teaching of values, and development of creativity and critical thought. As Kuurme and Carlsson (2010) highlighted, the meaningfulness of school was seen to be the most pertinent issue for young people when they evaluated their learning experiences. Doddington (2018) also argues that authentic learning experiences which enhance learning and flourishing are diminished through the demands of pace, time limits and learning experiences which are constrained by the need to pass tests and exams. These factors can reduce the possibility for children and young people to engage with their learning critically and creatively which is advocated in several themes within the CfE framework.

In connection with the relationship between creativity and wellbeing, Galton and Page (2015) investigated the impact of creative initiatives on primary

school pupils' wellbeing. Case studies were carried out at two primary schools in England. Interviews and observations were completed with teachers, pupils and creative practitioners to explore hedonic (personal feelings) and eudemonic (self-actualisation and growth) aspects of wellbeing. Children were interviewed in groups of five or six and asked about aspects of school they liked or disliked. Galton and Page (2015) argue that creative approaches impact on the wellbeing of young people due to there being more scope for exploratory pedagogy rather than transmission pedagogy based on outcomes. The authors also suggest that young people have more opportunities to actively participate in matters that affect them through their voices having authority, and a co-operative, rather than competitive learning environment. Further, the research supports the notion that a flexible curriculum that enables pupil choice supports pupil wellbeing in contrast to a controlling environment that can hinder wellbeing (Galton and Page, 2015). These findings support the recommendations made by Thorburn (2014) who proposed a holistic model of learning and teaching of wellbeing. The model included the importance of interest, perspective, optimism and self-awareness to subjective wellbeing, and supported teacher agency as an active curriculum designer rather than 'passive receivers of policy' (Thorburn, 2014, p. 215). This is an important point for stakeholders to consider when implementing wellbeing policy in specific contexts.

Simmons, Graham and Thomas (2015) aimed to advance knowledge in how wellbeing is understood and responded to in schools to improve wellbeing

outcomes for children and young people. The researchers explored a sub-component of the large-scale mixed methods study conducted in Australia. The sub-component was an aspect of the focus group interview and an activity that enabled children and young people to imagine, draw and discuss their ideal wellbeing school (Simmons et al., 2014). It was interesting that younger children opted to draw their ideal school and older students usually chose to write about their ideal school, which is important for the design of my research and the age range and activities used to capture the young people's views about wellbeing. This will be explored in more depth in Chapter Four. The activity was followed by focus group discussions which supported and facilitated the participatory ethos of the research process. The data was transcribed and coded for themes. The findings illustrated that values important to children and young people were sharing, respect, co-operation, participation and equality (Simmons et al., 2014), which mirrors the findings of Galton and Page (2015). Four core themes were also identified in the analysis: pedagogy; school environment; relationships; opportunities to have a say. It was interesting that, similar to findings in other research included in this review, love, happiness, nature and the outdoors, and good quality, relevant learning experiences were important to the children and young people and their view of a 'wellbeing school'.

These studies illustrate the complexity of wellbeing policy construction, interpretation and enactment in specific contexts. The studies also highlight the importance of clarity, theoretical thinking and the voices of people in their

contexts informing wellbeing policy construction. An exploratory research study carried out by Spratt (2016) aimed to provide a critical analysis of policy discourse of wellbeing in Scottish schools. Spratt applied Critical Discourse Analysis of Scottish health and wellbeing policies and interviews with nine policy actors and sixteen teachers. The findings illustrated how varied the understandings and interpretation of health and wellbeing policies were, which leads to a diverse range of experiences for children and young people. As noted by Spratt (2016) the gap between policy intentions and policy enactment can sometimes be quite significant which creates a need for further clarity about health and wellbeing policy aims. Until there can be further in-depth dialogue as to the purpose and definition of wellbeing in education, there is unlikely to be coherence between policy and practice, and in order to establish coherence, the voices of children and young people also need to be heard.

4.1.4 Authentic or superficial voices of children and young people?

As outlined in the previous sections and chapters, from the turn of the 21st century there was an increased political interest in the voice of the child in response to the United Nations on the Conventions of the Rights of the Child (1989), and numerous policy initiatives in response to the Labour government's *Every Child Matters* (2003) agenda, and in Scotland, *Getting it Right for Every Child* (2006). Over time, there also became a stronger focus on participatory research techniques (Kellett, 2011) as a push against purely quantitative methods and a recognition that the voice of the child is often

missing in the national and international debate on child wellbeing (Rees et al., 2010). Watson et al. (2012) also note the importance of accessing the voices 'outside the central tendency' (p. 85) in order to overcome some of the complexities of authenticity and power, through understanding the 'multi-layered, embedded and contextual nature of children's wellbeing' (Watson et al., 2012, p. 111). As a result of these changes in thinking, the importance of student voice in wellbeing research was becoming more apparent (Anderson and Graham, 2016). Within the reviewed research papers the way in which the voices of children and young people were captured varied in terms of degree of authenticity. In some cases, creative methods were used to capture the views of children and young people, and in contrast, in other cases the definition of wellbeing was imposed upon them, often using the traditional medicalised or operationalised list model to approach wellbeing. As explored in the previous sections of this chapter, several research studies were well intentioned with a narrative in support of UNCRC, specifically providing young people with a voice in matters that concern them. However, there were weaknesses in some of the identified studies, such as the absence of pilot studies with children and young people, the methods used often imposed meanings rather than providing opportunities to explore meanings, and did not provide opportunities for spontaneous responses from young people. In this section, I explore some stronger examples of research which overcame some of these limitations.

Research conducted by Mmari, Blum, Sonenstein, Marshall, Brahmhatt et al. (2014) explored, using a variety of creative methods, what wellbeing means to young people in different contexts and countries. The research was a global study of young people living in disadvantaged and urban communities, and a variety of creative methods were used to explore the perceptions of young people such as community mapping and focus groups, and training young people in photography to enable them to illustrate their understanding of 'health' in their communities (Mmari et al., 2014). The voices of the young people indicated that gender was a significant factor in terms of how young people viewed their health challenges. The study also illustrated how the location in which the research was conducted interacted with the young people's perceptions of wellbeing, for example, for young people in Baltimore and Johannesburg, safety was a top concern. The findings provided authentic information from young people and highlighted the importance of context when considering wellbeing. The research also demonstrated how important it is to provide young people in a variety of contexts with opportunities to have their voices heard. It was interesting that some of the concerns raised by young people were also highlighted in *The Good Childhood Report (2017)*.

The Good Childhood Report (2017) is sixth in a series of annual reports about how children in the UK feel about their lives (The Children's Society, 2017). The report is concerned with capturing children's self-reported holistic wellbeing and more specifically their life satisfaction. The researchers used a

self-report questionnaire including ten domains which had been constructed through qualitative research with 8,000 children in 2005. In response to the researchers' open-ended questions about 'a good life' a thematic analysis indicated ten key topics, recorded in order of frequency: '1. Family, 2. Friends, 3. Leisure, 4. School, education and learning, 5. Behaviour, 6. The local environment, 7. Community, 8. Money, 9. Attitudes, 10. Health' (Rees et al., 2010. p. 16). The researchers also reported cross cutting themes which included a strong emphasis on four themes linked to the quality of their relationships which included love and care, support, fair treatment and respect, and themes related to safety and stability (Rees et al., 2010). The identified themes, such as love, respect and the significance of relationship-based practice, have been mirrored in the research identified in the review (Graham et al., 2017; Kuurme and Carlsson, 2010; General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2018). This approach to understanding wellbeing connects to Watson et al.'s (2012) description of an ethics of care as an underlying value basis for working with children and young people. An ethics of care approach is positioned as a way of being as a practitioner which 'involves the interplay of complex interpersonal skills that are reflected upon and challenged by practitioners in their everyday practice' (p.198). The viewpoint highlights the significance of practitioners employing a form of professional love in thoughtful and considered ways when working in professional contexts. The notion of pedagogical love was evident in other research studies (see Kuurme and Carlsson, 2010) where the focus was on the process of drawing out human potential through a loving attitude and a

'respect for what is already in the child and does not define the final result' (Kuurme and Carlsson, 2010). The research evidence suggests that relationships and love are key factors to wellbeing, and this finding is worthy of deeper exploration in specific contexts and over periods of time, including the voices of the children and young people in their own settings and contexts.

The importance of research in children's own school contexts was shown through an exploratory single school case study conducted by Hall (2010), which was in response to a primary school identifying the need to listen to and act on children's views to improve their emotional health and wellbeing at whole school level. An educational psychology service worked with a local primary school on a small-scale project to explore the social and emotional experiences of eighteen children from age five to seven through four focus groups. Children were asked about features that improved or hindered their mental health and wellbeing. They were also asked to comment on environmental quality; self-esteem; emotional processing; self-management skills and social participation. The responses from the children were scribed by a researcher verbatim and collated into themes, although no method of analysis was described, such as a thematic analysis or grounded theory. The findings from the project indicated that children felt good about being in school when they had access to outside areas and time to play, good supportive relationships, extra-curricular activities and equality of opportunity.

The strengths of the project included a critical approach and a recognition that wellbeing was a slippery concept. The authors provided an explanation of their position which included recognising the importance of the wider aspects of wellbeing. Their wider explanation identified the importance of individuals, communities and nations being empowered as creative and active citizens and they aimed for congruency of aims and methods throughout the research process. The study's aims and methods were informed by a rigorous literature review. The focus group method, for example, was chosen as a way of authentically accessing the views of young people. The review also identified Kirby, Lanyon, Cronin and Sinclair's (2003) three different 'cultures of participation' which explained the various approaches to pupil participation in schools. It was also noted that peer support mechanisms can result in adult approaches being 'done to' children and young people. As noted by Todd (2007, cited by Hall, 2010) 'the majority of this participation is based on 'adult views of how such systems should work, rather than (pupils) participating themselves in the development' (p. 325). The researchers recognised this issue throughout and took appropriate steps to maintain congruency of aims and methods throughout their study. The design of the study, and the researchers, clearly recognised the importance of participation on wellbeing, which is in contrast to some of the other approaches identified in the review, and the research was much more concerned with empowerment and wellbeing than other studies. As noted by Spratt (2017): 'As a noun, wellbeing becomes something that can be 'done to' children, something that can be 'improved' or 'boosted', measured and

recorded, rendering it ripe for a policy intervention' (p. 37). The research carried out by Hall (2010) explicitly recognised this complexity and took steps to ensure the young people were authentically represented. There were other examples of research projects that evidenced a critical awareness of the complexity of the wellbeing debate and the importance of the authentic participation of young people.

Kendal, Keeley and Callery (2011) worked with a project advisory group consisting of young people, educators, health professionals and academics who established a topic for discussion with young people in schools related to emotional health and wellbeing policy. The topic for exploration was the scope of difficulties people in their peer group might be facing; which of those difficulties they might consider seeking help for in school; what kind of help they would find most useful; and how the young people viewed a valid change in their emotional wellbeing (Kendal et al., 2011). The researchers chose a qualitative design using a focus group method to access the perceptions of young people. They selected three secondary schools in the north of England for the project and arranged six focus groups of young people (two groups in each school). The groups were mixed gender with the exception of the two focus groups in the girls' school and the ages were fourteen to sixteen years in group one and eleven to fourteen years in group two. The focus group consisted of between six and twelve participants in each group with facilitators who guided the group discussion. Fifty-four young people in total participated. Through rigorous analysis of the data using a

thematic content analysis, the voices of the young people were collated. A snapshot of some of the complexities of the intervention approach to enhancing emotional wellbeing in a secondary school setting was then captured. The findings indicated that some of the young people did not find teachers the most appropriate people to support them with their emotional wellbeing, and some suggested that peer mentors were also unsuitable. These findings are interesting to note in connection with the research explored in section 4.1.2 in this chapter, and has ramifications for the wellbeing agenda in terms of the suitability of some teachers in supporting the emotional wellbeing agenda in schools. The research findings accessed information from young people which can be used to improve outcomes for the young people and progress the wellbeing debate critically, rather than unquestioningly.

A further example of research which authentically captured the voices of young people to contribute to critically reviewing the wellbeing in education agenda was provided by Coombes, Appleton, Allen and Yerrell (2013). The qualitative design and focus group method employed eight focus groups in five secondary schools in England to explore the young people's experiences of emotional health and wellbeing in the context of secondary education in the UK. Key questions were devised and presented to young people, examples included: 'How does the school respond to pupils from different religions and cultures?' and 'How does the school take account of the views of all young people in what happens at school?' (Coombes et al., 2013, p.

223). The questions provided an opportunity to capture the views of the young people in relation to the wider issues which can impact on the health and wellbeing of young people, such as school ethos. Although it would have been interesting to provide an additional activity which also captured spontaneous responses, such as draw and write as a starter activity (Bradding and Horston, 1999; Piko and Bak, 2006). The data was analysed using framework analysis and the findings indicated that the term 'emotional health and wellbeing' meant different things to different people. Teachers were not always seen as the most appropriate people to deliver pupil support in specific areas, which is a finding also mirrored in other research reviewed in this chapter. Further, there was no mention of young people learning about values and environmental and political issues across subjects which would be interesting to explore in more depth.

The literature review revealed that the relationship between student participation and wellbeing was becoming more apparent. Anderson and Graham (2016), for example, explored the links between student voice and wellbeing. Their findings uncovered that young people understood wellbeing as a complex concept which included the importance of having a voice, being respected and having rights. It is interesting to note that similar conclusions were drawn from the findings of the research undertaken by Children in Scotland and the GTCS (2018), where it was recommended that rights-based approach continue to be developed in Scottish schools. Graham, Powell, Thomas et al., (2017) reported on the findings of a large mix-methods study

in Australia which explored wellbeing policy, student and colleagues' views on wellbeing. The study included an analysis of wellbeing policy, focus group interview with six hundred and six students in four age ranges (6-7; 11-12; 14; 17), interviews with eighty-nine teachers and principals and an online survey. The study was conducted from the theoretical vantage points of Childhood Studies and Recognition Theory which treats children as beings in their own right and capable of self-actualisation (Graham et al., 2017). Graham et al. (2017) argue that understandings of wellbeing policy are enhanced through bringing the voices of students into dialogue with policy and professionals. The study was a rigorous, coherent and in-depth exploration of what wellbeing means to young people in Australia in comparison to the Australian policy context. The findings revealed that both students and teachers understood the term 'wellbeing' to be a multidimensional concept which included physical, social, emotional, psychological and spiritual aspects (Graham et al., 2017). However, both students and teachers placed more onus on the social and emotional aspects of wellbeing. Young people's definitions were categorized as 'being, having and doing' with relationships and agency being a strong feature throughout all categories (Graham et al., 2017). The importance of relationships and agency was also evident in the Scottish studies explored in the literature review, as the Children in Scotland GTCS report stipulated: 'Relationship-based practice and a rights-based approach will support personalised learning, which was central to the learning experience that children and young people identified they wanted in our research' (p. 19). Graham et al.'s

(2017) study also demonstrated that the views of teachers and young people were more complex and holistic than those specified in the policy context, illustrating the importance of understanding the views of those the policies aim to serve in their specific context.

5. Summary

The purpose of the literature review in this chapter was to outline the historical context of the topic, to explore relevant research conducted in the field of wellbeing in education, and to identify the gaps and inconsistencies in the academic literature. In this literature review two areas were explored: the historical and political context and the academic research. The historical context demonstrated how the interconnected notion of rights and wellbeing had slowly emerged in legal and educational documents over the years, but as late as 2011 there were still concerns about the policy and practice discord. As Kuurme and Carlsson (2010) have observed 'the consumer society based on new-liberal values has put children into a contradictory reality' (p.71). The research review revealed that there are various approaches, and contrasting wellbeing narratives in policy and practice. From the research papers identified, key themes emerged including the often complex and diverse range of definitions used to explore 'wellbeing' in education with a lack of clarity in many areas resulting in a policy and practice discord. The research review uncovered a variation in the degree to which the voices of children and young people were authentically accessed. A range of methods were used to explore the views of young people with the

purpose of improving wellbeing outcomes for children and young people. Some research did not provide methods which would enable young people to influence the wellbeing agenda but other methods, such as the focus groups and creative methods, did facilitate the voices of children and young people.

It has been recognised that there is limited research which explores the views of young people and their experiences of wellbeing (Coombes et al., 2013; Hills, 2016; Hall, 2010). It has also been argued that there is a need to access the quiet voices and minoritarian views to avoid a majoritarian discourse (Watson et al., 2012). There is a need for a more robust debate, clearer aims and coherent definitions in policy implementation which leads to change in educational settings (Hyland, 2011; White, 2011; Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009). It is hoped that this research project will address some of the limitations in the research explored in this chapter. It is also anticipated that this research will provide further information to explore what wellbeing means to young people in Scotland from their perspective in comparison to the Scottish policy context, using methods which provide an opportunity to capture the voices of the young people.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

This chapter begins with an exploration of the epistemological and ontological issues related to wellbeing research. I then explain the decisions made when designing this research study, and discuss the impact these decisions had on the methods. A case study design is defined, the methods used to generate and analyse the data are also explored, including the use of a creative method, focus group, GIRFEC policy review and thematic analysis. The methodological section also includes an outline of the ethical implications of the chosen design, including reflexivity specific to the context, and the limitations of the chosen approach.

2. Epistemology, ontology and design rationale

In Chapter One the different philosophical approaches to thinking about wellbeing were outlined and, in Chapter Two, the different ways wellbeing has been operationalised in the policy contexts were discussed. In this section, the design rationale and ontological and epistemological position are explored in the context of the historical, theoretical and philosophical development of wellbeing research. Research into the lives of children was historically located within the positivist domain with a strong use of quantitative measurement tools and statistics (Hill, 2005) with a focus on children as objects of research. During this time children were often viewed as too unreliable or immature to provide data that could be of use in the research community (MacDougall & Darbyshire, 2018). In the mid-1990s

there was a slow shift toward qualitative studies to explore the experience of children's lives, although it is only in recent decades that researching the voice of the child has become a field of interest (Greene & Hill, 2005). The shift in thinking was influenced by movements such as feminism and the Disability Movement that promoted different epistemologies to positivism, such as constructionism (MacDougall & Darbyshire, 2018). There were suggestions that the ontologies of both domains were incompatible, which led to further developments in fields of enquiry (Cupchik, 2001).

Critical realism and social constructionism have grown in popularity as philosophical frameworks since the 1980s when there was much disagreement between positivist and constructivist approaches to research in the social sciences (Fletcher, 2017). In wellbeing research specifically, there has been a growing dissatisfaction with the use of economic proxies as a measurement tool (Smith and Reid, 2017) and with this dissatisfaction a debate about the ontological complexity of the concept of wellbeing has emerged. Critical realism developed as an attempt to come to terms with the nature of reality (Andrews, 2012) in social science research. A critical realist accepts and acknowledges that there is a real social world but also that the social world is experienced and interpreted. A social constructionist epistemology acknowledges that concepts are constructed rather than discovered yet it is possible to hold this view along with the ontological position that they correspond to something real in the world (Andrews, 2012). In relation to the definition of wellbeing, this has particular relevance. As

Ereaut and Whiting (2008) highlight, the term wellbeing is currently unstable in public policy and is 'a cultural construct and represents a shifting set of meanings' (p. 1).

This combination of a more realist ontology with a more relativist epistemology has been termed 'constructivist realism' by Cupchik (2001). The constructivist realism approach provides an alternative ontology to positivism and constructivism and supports the aims of the study. Constructivist realism recognises that social phenomena, such as wellbeing, are perceived in a specific time and are meaningful when understood in their context (Cupchik, 2001). The aim of this research was to understand what wellbeing means to young people from their perspective in relation to the policy context in a specific time and place, rather than to measure or quantify their wellbeing (Lewis-Beck, Bryman & Futing Liao, 2004). As the literature review revealed, wellbeing, as a concept, is ambiguous, and it is unlikely there will be consensus on one definition (Cassidy, 2018), through deconstructing the wellbeing policy definitions with young people, greater insights into the understandings of wellbeing in a specific time and place can be developed. For the purposes of this research, wellbeing is understood as a situated concept, which is contested and reconstructed through social actions over time and place, although it does represent something real in the world.

The ontological and epistemological framework of this research is therefore constructivist realism, utilising a social constructionist epistemology and a more realist ontology. This viewpoint is similar to Elder-Vass (2012) who argues that the potential of social constructionism is best realised when 'separated from the anti-realist baggage it is expected to carry, and linking it instead to an explicitly realist ontology of the social world..' (p. 9). This 'middle way' the 'realist constructionist' (Elder-Vass, 2012), or Hammersley's (2008) 'subtle realism' best describes the approach taken in this research. The qualitative methodology used in this research can generate assumptions about the validity of the data generated through the chosen approaches. Descriptions provided by thinkers such as Richardson (1994) cause debate and dialogue about the position of the knowledge gained through the qualitative research process. Richardson (1994) described the qualitative approach as a crystal; any representation created through the qualitative design is one of many possibilities and 'creates different colors, patterns, arrays, casting off in different directions (Richardson, 1994, p 523), and whilst this description is one perception of the qualitative approach, it can create ontological and epistemological confusion.

Descriptions such as this have the potential to generate an anti-realist understanding of qualitative research which is could be unhelpful to the research endeavour, and could result in the usefulness of the research being brought into question (Atkinson, E., 2000; Hammersley, 2008). Stewart, Shamdasani and Rook, (2009) describe a continuum of data collection

activities, ranging from etic, which is highly quantifiable, to emic which is highly specific and naturally occurring. Each approach has its own strengths and limitations, but each method has its usefulness, in terms of contribution to a knowledge base, when applied appropriately and for the intended purpose. As Cupchik (2012) observes, in order to progress knowledge, the researcher should engage in deep processes of reflexivity and recognise the similarities and differences between the ontologies.

The epistemology employed in this research design acknowledges that the research questions are influenced by personal views and interests (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994), and this issue cannot be overcome, it has to be recognised, documented and explored, placing reflexivity at the centre of the research process. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2017) highlight the importance of recognising the researcher's own biography and prior knowledge in the area of interest. This viewpoint is more pragmatic than the two extremes of relativism and realism; the former suggesting multiple realities none of which can be trusted and the latter suggesting an external reality which can be known for certain and which ignores the influence of the researcher, instead aiming for a clean and objective research design. The middle way previously described is best suited to the purposes and aims of this research; as the aim is to understand rather than establish causation, reflexivity plays a significant role. Banister et al. (1994) describe this complexity as 'working through the horrors'. The horrors are described as: indexicality, inconcludability and reflexivity. These are explored in more

depth, as part of the rigour of the research process, in section 2 of this chapter.

Qualitative inquiry and constructivist realism facilitate the development of knowledge in the domain of wellbeing research through providing a 'thick-description' (Cohen et al., 2017) of context specific cases which challenges potentially hidden ideologies. Specifically, for this research study the definitional challenge of wellbeing is explored through giving voices to the young people participating in the case study and aims to offer authentic participation and consultation with children as genuine active participants with agency (MacDougall & Darbyshire, 2018). This study, through utilising a qualitative approach and social constructionist epistemology, provides a contribution to knowledge which may provide a way forward that does not enforce the dominant discourse located in wellbeing policy (Watson et al., 2012). Qualitative inquiry involves a critical component which enables the uncovering of potential issues of power and injustice (Cohen et al., 2017). In order to ensure the voices of the young people were accurately represented, the views of the young people and the wellbeing policies are analysed through the use of thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis originated from grounded theory, which is a qualitative methodological tradition based in the social sciences. Historically, research analysis of narratives, discourse and forms of qualitative data was dominated by a realist ontological perspective. The area of interest to researchers was

more focussed on what was stated by participants, and as social constructionist approaches developed, more significance was afforded to the context of the research (Lal, Suto & Ungar, 2012). Constructionist (rather than constructivist) approaches viewed qualitative data as a social action and located the data within the context of the influences of societal discourse, language and other socio-cultural factors (Lal, Suto & Ungar, 2012). However, as knowledge of research practices developed, two contrasting approaches emerged: objectivist and constructivist. The objectivist approach positioned the researcher as non-biased and neutral in contrast to the constructivist approach which was associated with a relativist ontology and transactional epistemology (Lal, Suto & Ungar, 2012). Neither of these two positions facilitate the aims and purposes of this research. Constructivist realism offered researchers a middle way between these two positions, employing an ontological realism with an epistemic relativism. The case study approach used in this research design recognises that our knowledge about reality is historically, socially and culturally situated, that accounts of reality are fallible, but also enable social scientists to refine and advance knowledge and understanding (Archer, Gorski, Little Porpora and Rutzou et al., 2016) in areas of exploration.

A case study was chosen to explore and understand what wellbeing means to young people because a case study, like qualitative inquiry, provides the researcher with an opportunity to take a snapshot of the contexts and circumstances situated in a certain time and place. As the aim was to

understand and explore what wellbeing meant to young people in comparison to the policy context this was the most appropriate design for the purpose of the research. The 'case' for the purposes of this research is the specific group of young people in a specific school context in Scotland.

2.1 Design: case study

There is an historical debate around how a case study is perceived; whether it is an approach, method or design (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Different advocates of case study also promote different epistemological approaches (Yazan, 2015) ranging from a more positivistic approach to an interpretivist approach. The vantage point undertaken for this research design support the ontological position which rests somewhere between Yin (2002), who advocates four imperatives for design 'quality' (construct validity; internal validity; external validity; reliability), and that of Stake (1995) who is more relativist in approach and promotes the multiple possibilities of representing the case, suggesting there is no real way of establishing the best view (Stake, 1995). In line with my broadly realist ontological position, I take a middle way between the two positions in order to generate data which can be of benefit to the wellbeing agenda, through accessing the voices of young people, but I make no claim of generalisability or truth in the positivistic sense. I do, however, agree with Yin's definition of 'design' which he describes as: 'the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions' (Yin, 2002, p.20). Other important factors advocated by Yin (2002), which I employ

in this research, are running a pilot prior to the research proper, in order to ensure robust and rigorous preparation prior to undertaking data collection, and the importance of conducting a literature review prior to collecting data (Yazan, 2015). When defining the 'case' to be explored, the theoretical background underpinning the research is, again, somewhere between Yin (2002) who is quite meticulous (Yazan, 2015), and Stake (1995) who has a much more open definition of the term case or case study. I agree with Yin (2002) that, as a researcher, I should be able to demonstrate a degree of conformity, and certainly congruency, between the theoretical vantage point and the definition of the case. The definition of the term 'case' used for the purpose of this research is: 'a person, a programme, a group, a specific policy' (Yazan, 2015, p. 139).

2.2 Reflexivity

The design and methods used for the purpose of this research required a deep engagement with the reflective process. As Schreier (2018) observes, the topic of sampling in qualitative studies, for example, has been neglected and is an important aspect of the reflective process in qualitative work. Authenticity, credibility and rigour have specific meanings in qualitative research and these are explored in more depth in the following section.

The themes of indexicality, inconcludability and reflexivity proposed by Banister et al. (1994) emerge in various forms in qualitative literature and link in with various aspects of the research process. Banister et al.'s (1994) views

facilitated my thinking in developing the reflexive, ethical and methodological aspects of the research. Indexicality, for example, is described by Banister et al. (1994) as recognising the organic nature of meaning and explanation in relation to the context, and *re-considering* the notion of validity and reliability. Kidd and Parshall (2000) also note the complexity of reliability and validity in qualitative research. They suggest that specificity is of interest rather than replicability and in terms of my research design it meant that I had to re-learn the concept of validity in qualitative research. Having been trained in an MSc in Psychological Research Methods I needed to focus more on accuracy of account and trustworthiness.

Inconcludability, as described by Banister et al. (1994), argues that sampling is not a guarantee of generalisability. Although, the conclusions drawn from this study, and the generalisations that could be made, are interlinked with the sample (Schreier, 2018). The ability to confidentially draw conclusions based on a very small sample requires careful reflection on the selected sample (Schreier, 2018) and a detailed account of the context as context-specificity often precludes generalisation (Cohen et al., 2017). Recent reconceptualising of generalisability in qualitative research has highlighted the concept of transferability (Schreier, 2018). Transferability does not depend on particular conditions for a theory to be judged as valid (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014) and enables the researcher to determine whether the findings uncovered in one case are valid in another context, and to do this detailed information about the context in which the research was undertaken is

needed (Schreier, 2018). Maxwell and Chmiel (2014) propose that the focus is then placed on the reader of the research findings to judge for themselves if the findings are applicable in alternative contexts. This understanding of transferability has been termed 'reader generalisability' (Misco, 2007 cited by Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014) and requires the researcher to provide a detailed description of the research context. Banister et al. (1994) argue that the sample selection in qualitative research should be documented, explored and understood. The important issue when considering selection in this research was based on the transparency of documentation, or explicitness (Whittemore, Chase & Lynn-Mandle, 2001) which I needed to ensure throughout the research process. In this specific case, decisions were made about removing young people from the sample due to concerns about the potential for distress during the process. The decision to remove those young people impacted on the transferability of the findings and the conclusions that could be drawn and applied in alternative contexts. With this in mind, it is important that the demographic omitted from this study are provided with opportunities to explore what wellbeing means to them. As noted by Watson et al. (2012) adults need to listen to different wellbeing narratives of children which then then contribute to an increased consciousness of how a particular child in a particular context experiences wellbeing.

This leads to the importance of reflexivity; and some have suggested that qualitative research is a reflexive process (Hughes, 2002). Reflexivity, as defined by Banister et al. (1994) is the exploration of contexts and the impact

context can have on the research design, findings and interpretation. The subjective context of the research is used to provide a greater depth of knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon in question, as opposed to being a hindrance to be removed from the research process, as desired in positivist research. In this research design it is an active part of the research process (Connolly, 1998). My position in the research process is documented and commented upon throughout the process; the description of that position is in itself a subjective account and the identities and positions in the research context require reflexive analysis (Connolly, 1998; Banister et al., 1994). Mason (1996) also notes the importance of critical self-reflexivity as one of the five imperatives in qualitative research and Hughes (2002) notes: 'the researcher should be constantly asking questions about her or his role in the research process' (Hughes, 2002). Again, this is an important aspect of the research design, process and final write up, and is expanded upon later in the chapter.

3. Context

The research was conducted in a small mainstream secondary school in the north of Scotland, further details are provided in the later section on participants. In order to protect the anonymity of the young people involved in the study, the specific dates (i.e. the year in which the data was collected) are not provided. In place of the specific year, Year 1, Year 2 and the relevant months are used to provide a timeline of events. Sixteen young people who were in S1 and S2 in Year 1 of the study took part in the

research. In April of Year 1 young people participated in groups of four in same sex groupings; the rationale for this choice is expanded upon in the following section. At the time of data collection in April in Year 1, the school has the national average attendance figures, low exclusion rates, and the school had a much lower than average percentage of free school meals. The school had a higher than average number of young people classed as having an additional support need with almost a quarter of the school having some form of additional need. The legal definition of 'Additional Support Need' is defined as:

1. (1) A child or young person has additional support needs for the purposes of this Act where, for whatever reason, the child or young person is, or is likely to be, unable without the provision of additional support to benefit from school education provided or to be provided for the child or young person.
(Scottish Government, 2010)

The school scored low on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation for 'Access' due to its rurality. The researcher was also the head teacher of the school and the implications of this are explored in the ethics section (section 5) and 'addressing the issue of power' in section 7.4 of this chapter.

3.1 Participants

Sixteen young people participated in the creative task and focus group. Eight from S1 (mean age 12 years and 1 month) and eight from S2 (mean age 13 years). Each group comprised of four males or four females; some literature recommends same sex groupings (Vaughn, Shay & Sinagub, 1996) and previous experience of drama teaching over the years has supported the

academic literature used for this study. The young people were all white British and English was their first language, which is the typical of the school population. Three of the participants had a recognised additional support need which, when taken in the context of the selection, is slightly below the number of young people in the school classed as having an additional support need. Three of the young people were entitled to free school meals which, when taken in the context of the selection is almost 20% of the selection. The school has a much lower than average percentage of free school meals and so this percentage is higher than the school population. None of the participants were receiving specialist input from external services and none had a need for a Child Plan or a Co-ordinated Support Plan, in line with the *Getting it Right for Every Child* policy and practice previously discussed in Chapter One. In summary, at the time of selection, none of the participants could be classed as having a level of need which would require specialist input or specialised adaptations to the delivery of the activities. The selection does not therefore represent the voices of young people who require specialist input/adaptations and further research should be undertaken to represent their views.

3.2 Recruitment and sampling

In early February in Year 1, ten weeks before the data was due to be collected, the sixteen participants were selected from the S1/2 cohort using an on-line random number generator (eight participants per year group and eight participants per sex). Sampling in this research context is the selection

of sources of data generation from a number of sources (Given, 2008). The definition of sampling in qualitative inquiry is very different to the definition quantitative data collection activities as the purposes of sampling are different (Conrad, 2006). For the aims of this research design a purposive sampling approach was employed because the focus was on the exploration of specific situations rather than generalising across large populations (Given, 2008). The criteria for the selection of participants in the school included being in the S1 or S2 cohort, their willingness to participate in the project, not experiencing any significant adverse event which may have caused distress, and parental agreement. The impact of the sampling choices is critically reflected on in section 5.

Each pupil in the cohort was provided with a number, based on the alphabetic register, and then random numbers were generated through the software. The first eight females were selected and then the first eight males. Four young people were removed from the cohort due to recent family difficulties and it was felt that the research activities were not appropriate for the young people at this time. The potential impact of this decision is critically considered in section 5. Once the young people were selected, I emailed the names and groups to the pupil support team and asked if there were any issues in the groupings. There were no specific issues which would negatively impact the young person.

Following the responses from the pupil support team the guidance teacher spoke with the young people in early April of Year 1 to explain the research and ask if they would like to consider participating. The role of the guidance teacher as moderator in this research is expanded upon in section 4.1. The young people and their parents were then provided with copies of the consent/informed consent forms and given time to consider their consent. Copies of the consent forms can be found in Appendix 1 and 2. Upon informed child and parental consent the first focus group ran in the Healthy Living Centre in the school in late April of Year 1. The Healthy Living Centre is a small comfortable room in the school which is used for meetings and focus group activities. The focus groups were held over two days: S1 on the Monday and S2 on the Tuesday. Although child and parental consent were confirmed prior to the day of data collection, two young girls did withdraw on the day. A further two young people were selected, following the same selection procedure, and the group reconvened with the moderator to participate in the focus group in early May of Year 1.

4. Methods

In order to explore any potential difficulties in the research proper, prior to undertaking the research an interview schedule was created and a pilot group arranged during March in Year 1. The literature review in Chapter Three illustrated the importance of conducting a pilot study and a pilot to pre-test materials is recommended by Vaughn et al. (1996). A copy of the interview schedule can be located in Appendix 3. I wrote the schedule based

on my experience of running focus groups in school and in the drama classroom. The interview schedule, labelled as 'moderator guide' in the next sections, was amended in response to the views of the pilot group. This is expanded upon in the next section.

4.1 Communication and the role of the moderator

The skills and abilities of the moderator when communicating with young people are significant to the success of the research (Cohen et al., 2000; Gibson, 2007; Vaughn et al., 1996). Initially I was to take this role but the power imbalance needed to be addressed (Dahl, 2014). I spoke with my personal support team in the school and the guidance teacher, who has experience of running focus groups in personal and social education, offered to run the groups. However, the guidance teacher had not been involved with research of this nature and so in early March of Year 1 a pilot was arranged with me, the guidance teacher and members of the pupil council. This provided an extra degree of training for the guidance teacher, and enabled me to clearly communicate the structure of the group whilst also providing an opportunity for the guidance teacher to alter the language of the moderator guide to suit his personal approach. A moderator guide, as suggested by Vaughn et al. (1994), was then created and used for the pilot. The purpose of the guide was to provide clear guidelines for the moderator and to create an opportunity to amend the guide in response to the views of the young people, moderator and researcher in terms of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the language used. Rapport, feeling comfortable in the context and

establishing a relationship based on trust and mutual respect are important components (Danby, Ewing & Thorpe, 2011; Gibson, 2007; Cohen et al., 2000; Vaughn et al., 1994) and I ensured this was clearly communicated during the pilot and my guidance teacher (moderator) did the same in the research proper by speaking with young people prior to working through the guide.

4.2 Pilot

A small-scale pilot study was employed in early March of Year 1, prior to conducting the data generation activity using the creative task (the gingerbread man) and the focus group. Using a pilot group prior to running the research is recommended (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004) and was highlighted as a weakness in some studies included in the literature review. As I wanted to be participatory in the research process, it was important that young people had an opportunity to respond to the research design prior to running the research. I conducted the pilot for a number of additional reasons, including to test the interview schedule, provide an opportunity for the moderator to contribute to amending the wording, to test out the method of recording, to test the data collection techniques and provide opportunities for amending the techniques and questions following feedback from the young people.

The pilot group involved me -I acted as the moderator using the moderator guide - the guidance teacher who supported me, and four volunteers from the

school pupil council (mean age 16.5). I recognise that the young people were three years older than the selection of participants but I wanted a frank and honest view of the materials, and I was confident my seniors would feel comfortable being critical if needed. I also did not want the purpose of the research to be discussed with young people in the year group prior to the research being conducted. I ran the pilot in my office. Throughout the pilot the guidance teacher and young people fed back on various aspects such as the language used in the moderator guide, the structure of the focus group method and the task itself, including the gingerbread man and placemat activity. Young people reported that they felt it was a worthwhile activity, but some of the language needed to be simplified (such as the term 'nurtured') for the task to be easily accessible by all young people. The guidance teacher also altered some of the language used in the moderator guide to sound more natural and in keeping with his own style of working with young people. The members of the pilot group felt that a neutral location should be used for the actual focus groups, and the Healthy Living Centre in the school was seen as an appropriate location as it was not a teaching space and was already used for numerous focus group activities. A speech recognition software package, Dragon, was used to record the pilot group and was unsuccessful, producing text which was indecipherable. After a second unsuccessful attempt at using Dragon, I decided to use Audacity, a digital audio recording software, for the actual focus groups because I had successfully used the software before.

4.3 Procedure

Following the initial cancellation of the first focus group in late April of Year 1 the focus groups met in groups of four on two consecutive days in early May of Year 1. Each session lasted no longer than an hour but was not time limited. The two methods were used in the one session to generate data. The first was a creative method, which I named the gingerbread man, and the second was the focus group facilitated through a placemat activity, where young people had an opportunity to engage in dialogue with one another, facilitated by the moderator. The first method enabled young people to think and work independently, and the second method provided an opportunity to expand upon individual thoughts and responses by engaging in dialogue and debate with their peers.

At the start of the session the moderator read the script verbatim (a copy can be found in Appendix 3) when communicating the research instructions to the participants. However, one of the key aspects of leading a successful focus group is establishing rapport at the start of the process (Gibson, 2007; Vaughn et al., 2007), and for this reason, the moderator informally reminded the young people about the aims of the research and provided the young people with an opportunity to ask any questions prior to individual task commencing. After the participants had been given the opportunity to ask further questions, and the moderator was confident that the participants were at ease, the moderator began the audio-recording using Audacity. The main questions raised by the young people were about the way in which the

information was being recorded (the use of the software), as some of them had not used Audacity before.

4.4 The creative method

The ethos of this research project was to capture the views of young people in a way that was empowering and participatory. Creative methods facilitate inventive and imaginative processes and enable participants to represent their experiences in their own personal way. The creative method was used as the first activity to capture the spontaneous and individual ideas of the young people. In Chapter Three I argued that some of the methods used by researchers failed to authentically capture the voices of children and young people, such as questionnaires which had not been piloted. The more successful approaches included opportunities for young people to spontaneously record their views. Researching with children and young people has become more child friendly and child focused in recent years (Kellett, 2011) with a stronger onus on capturing the views of the young person rather than imposing a passive role on the young person. Research into children's understanding of illness and wellbeing often uses creative techniques such as 'draw and write' (Bradding and Horston, 1999; Piko and Bak, 2006). Other researchers have solely used drawings to analyse children's perceptions of illness and health (Mouratidi, Bonoti and Leondari, 2016). The creative task of the gingerbread man was for older children (aged 12-13 years) to represent their individual views prior to the focus group interview and to generate thoughts about internal and external needs. I

believed that young people aged between twelve and thirteen years old would not respond as well if asked to draw a picture to represent wellbeing and the responses from the young people in the pilot group confirmed this. Further, the literature review in Chapter Three also illustrated that older children preferred to write, rather than draw their responses. I have used this approach, the gingerbread man, for the previous sixteen years of drama teaching. An example can be seen in Figure 5, below. Young people were asked to individually record what wellbeing means to them. On the inside of the figure, the young person was asked to record the internal needs and, on the outside, the external needs.

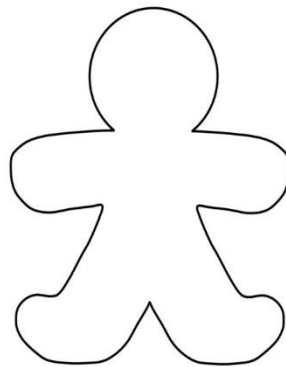


Figure 5. The gingerbread man exercise.

Following the completion of the gingerbread man, the young people were then asked to complete the placemat activity in the focus group.

4.5 Focus groups

A focus group is a form of group interview (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000), although the dialogue is between the participants, rather than between the interviewer and interviewee. The use of focus groups with children and

young people to access perceptions, attitudes and understanding of concepts are frequently used in psychology and education (Vaughn et al., 1996). For the purpose of this research a focus group was defined as 'a discussion involving a small number of participants, led by a moderator, which seeks to gain an insight into the participants' experiences, attitudes and/or perceptions' (Hennessy & Heary, 2005, p. 237 in Greene, & Hogan, 2005).

This approach allows the attitudes, perceptions and ideas of the participants to emerge more freely than a semi-structured or structured interview and is a very useful method for exploratory research (Stewart, McCormack, Mader & Abdel Raouf, 2009). I believed that, following the gingerbread man, which elicited individual responses, it would be most beneficial to then hold a structured focus group with a facilitator rather than impose a semi-structured interview on the young people. I believed this would provide more authentic responses from the young people and was consistent with the overall aims and values of the research.

After young people individually completed the gingerbread man activity, they then worked together to bring their initial thoughts about each of the eight wellbeing indicators (Safe; Healthy; Achieving; Nurtured; Active; Respected; Responsible; Included) to a placemat activity, see Figure 6, below. A different placemat was used for each wellbeing indicator. A completed example of a placemat activity is in Appendix 8.

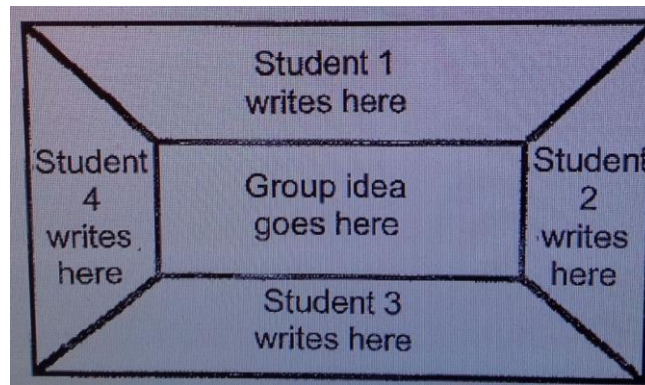


Figure 6. An example of the placemat used to gather the view of young people.

Young people were asked: 'What does active mean to you? What do you need to be active?' Each participant recorded their initial responses to the question then the moderator facilitated the group discussion.

An excerpt from the transcript when young people were asked to consider the wellbeing indicator 'active' is outlined below:

M: Is that it? OK. And we now move onto active. So again, ask yourself what does active mean to you? What do you need to be active?

[girls writing individually].

M: OK. On you go.

R: I think active is like exercise.

R: Seeing the outdoors. Seeing different people and meeting different people. Like health.

R: Maybe put a little dash, because it comes under exercise. But it doesn't matter. Animals, because if you have got a dog you have to walk it.

After the group had discussed the term, they would come together to summarise their collective thoughts in the centre of the placemat. After completion of the exercises, which lasted around fifty minutes, young people were asked if they had any further questions. Only one question was asked upon conclusion which was raised by one male who asked about using Audacity. Young people were advised that they could see a summary of the results in the new session.

4.6 Policy review: Getting it Right for Every Child

The purpose of this review (reported in Chapter Five) was to analyse how wellbeing is defined in *Getting it Right for Every Child* policy documents. GIRFEC policy was selected because the concept of wellbeing is very clearly articulated in the GIRFEC literature and it is a very influential aspect of wellbeing policy. The dates of GIRFEC policy in Scotland ranged from 2006, when the *Highland Pathfinder Model* was rolled out (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d.) to the time the policy review was completed in 2016. GIRFEC refers to an overall approach to supporting children and was not brought together into one policy until legislation in 2014. Since 2006 there have been numerous documents issued and information posted on the Scottish Government website. Although there are many other policies which could be explored such as *Better health, Better Care (2007)*, and *Equally Well (2008)* for the purpose of this section of the research, I deemed the following core documents to be sufficient to allow a deep understanding of how wellbeing is conceptualised in GIRFEC.

- *Getting it right for every child and young person: A framework for measuring children's well-being (Stradling & MacNeil n.d.).*
- *Mapping policy, strategic practice developments to the Getting it right for every child well-being indicators (Stradling & MacNeil n.d.).*
- *A Guide to getting it right for every child (The Scottish Government, 2014)*
- *Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill 2013.*
- *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*

Following the identification of the relevant studies, I then began to identify the codes and themes in each of the wellbeing indicators in the GIRFEC policy in order to answer question 2. I broadly followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) method of thematic analysis, outlined in more detail in section 8 of this chapter.

Following an initial recording of codes in the data, I then identified themes. A thematic map was generated, a copy of which can be found in Appendix 11 (alongside the thematic map for the views of the young people in Appendix 10). Once I had generated the codes, themes and thematic map, I created a summary sentence for each of the wellbeing indicators. I then completed a table (see Appendix 12), showing each of the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators and, using the codes and themes from the policy and from the views of the young people. I recorded the similarities and differences between them and

then compared the similarities and differences for each of the indicators, and for the overall view of wellbeing defined in the thematic map.

5. Ethics

As an educational researcher I followed the ethical principles outlined in the British Educational Research Association's *Ethics and Educational Research* (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012), especially in the areas of minimising harm, recognising autonomy and privacy, and treating people with equity in the research process. It is recognised, however, that this is not always simple or clear cut.

Ethics is a significant part of conducting research with young people and especially so when, as is often the case in qualitative designs, there is a complexity of dual role and power imbalance in the organisation. Warin (2011) undertook a 14-year qualitative longitudinal research study with young people aged three to seventeen and articulates the complexity, power imbalance and exceptional sensitivity to the potential for exploitative relationships in such a research design. Warin (2011) made a number of recommendations for incorporating ethical mindfulness in the process of informed consent in child-centred research. These include: acknowledging the complexity and understanding that consent is a continual process; awareness of gatekeeper's agendas and potential conflicts with the child; the importance of child consent rather than gatekeeper's consent; incorporating participatory research methods which are less intrusive and more egalitarian;

understanding the significance of self in the process; ensuring accurate recording and analysis of data including ethical dilemmas and blind spots; using the rich complex data to gain a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences between self and other. During the research process these principles were adhered to as far as possible, and reflected upon throughout through a research journal. These reflections appear both informally and formally within all chapters of the research dissertation.

The most significant ethical issues in this research were my dual role of head teacher and researcher, and the importance of minimising harm. For example, as the head teacher of the establishment, I am fully aware of any child protection issues in the school and was faced with the ethical dilemma of whether to include or exclude the young people in the initial selection activity. As noted in section 3.2 there were two occasions where a decision needed to be made which required critical reflection on consent, participation and power. The first significant decision was to omit any young person in the cohort who had recent experience of an adverse event that may have caused distress, and the second was to remove four young people who were experiencing family difficulties. Following a discussion with the pastoral team it was viewed that to include the young people carried the high risk of further distressing a young person who was experiencing a difficulty. Removing young people from the sample would influence the types of data generated and involved making a decision on behalf of a young person which is in conflict with the ethical principle of respecting autonomy. Further, as argued

by Watson et al. (2012) there needs to be a dialogic encounter with young people about their wellbeing, and by removing the young people from the sample their voices were silenced. In these circumstances, my role as a head teacher took priority over my role as a researcher and I acted in accordance with those expectations, where the child's needs and welfare were placed at the centre. The paternalistic method of ethical decision making employed in this study does highlight the need for further research with a range of children and young people in a variety of settings to further develop understandings of wellbeing. As noted by Watson et al. (2012) minority and 'quiet voices' are also important to document: 'If policy is built around the central tendency, then individuals outside of this may be ill-served by a normalising process that does not take into account their (subjective) variance from the norm' (Warnick, 2009 cited by Watson et al., 2012, p.85). Through providing a detailed and rich description of the specific context, the reader is able to make an informed judgement about the external validity of the research findings (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014).

When conflicting issues along the journey of this research project arose, each time the decision was informed by my primary duty of care. The design is therefore flawed in some areas, which are expanded upon in Chapter Six and Seven, but it is hoped that any flaws can be understood and accounted for through an accurate and rigorous documentation of process in honest and transparent conditions. The ethical philosophy underpinning this research preparation permeates the entire research endeavour; all decisions and

subsequent actions were made in the best interest of the young people. As discussed in this section, ethics is a much wider topic than passing through an ethics committee and permeates the entire research endeavour; it is an on-going process, in dialogue with all participants involved with the research process. However, in practical terms the following procedure was followed: participants were invited to participate after receiving approval from the University of Edinburgh ethics committee. Approval was granted from the Area Office at the Council. Parents were contacted by letter with information regarding the project and given the option to opt out should they wish (Appendix 2). The young people were provided with an informed consent form based on the format used by the Local Authority Educational Psychology Team (Appendix 1). It was made clear, verbally and in the consent forms, that whilst the research was confidential, an on-going careful analysis of child welfare was a part of the project. If at any point in the research process a young person experienced an emotionally disturbing event they would be asked if they wished to continue involvement with the project and would be offered relevant support. In practice, none of the young people appeared to be distressed by their participation. All young people knew the guidance teacher well and were free to advise if they wished to withdraw at any point in the research process. The fact that two young women decided not to participate suggests that the young people understood the voluntary nature of their participation and were confident with exercising their right to withdraw.

6. Validity in qualitative research

The need for 'truth' and 'validity' in qualitative research has been suggested to be synonymous with a need for an established ethical code of conduct which ensures honesty and transparency. This need for trustworthiness in place of any one definition of validity was promoted by Lincoln and Guba (1985), and later a call for credibility in place of validity (Eisner, 1991). Through an established code which includes recognition of self, the consumers of research can 'trust' the research evidence.

For the purpose of this research design, validity is based on the primary and secondary validity criteria posited by Whittemore, Chase and Mandle (2001), specifically with the aim of supporting the notion that flexibility when applying the secondary criteria will enable the scientific and the creative to be simultaneously applied. Whittemore et al. (2001) define criteria as standards to be upheld as ideals in qualitative research. I believed that Whittemore et al.'s (2001) criteria were congruent with the aims, purposes, epistemology and design of my research and most appropriate to inform my thinking. The viewpoint also complemented the theoretical position of Braun and Clarke (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', which provided a step by step account of conducting a thematic analysis whilst giving due recognition to the importance of flexibility.

Whittemore et al. (2001) outline the following primary and secondary criteria: 'Credibility, authenticity, criticality and integrity are considered primary

criteria, whereas explicitness, vividness, creativity, thoroughness, congruence, and sensitivity are considered secondary criteria' (p. 529). The following section primarily uses the concepts outlined by Whitemore et al. (2001), although numerous other academics and researchers have suggested alternative criteria, I have chosen to follow Whitemore et al. (2001) for a number of reasons. Firstly, qualitative research is more unique than quantitative research and the documentation of the research process is similar to recording a map of a journey I have taken; there may be several routes to the destination, but a clear and precise breakdown of the directions will enable other travellers to follow the same path. Secondly, many of the criteria overlap with recommendations made by other sources which will also be referenced, and which I have alluded to in the previous paragraph. I felt it important to have congruency between the academics and sources I have used to construct the design and execution of the research. The primary and secondary criteria are now discussed in turn.

6.1 Primary criteria

Credibility and authenticity refer to the degree to which the findings of the research can be trusted to represent reality outside the experience of the researcher, and represent the multiple voices involved with the research process (Whitemore et al., 2001). As an example, audio recording the contributions of the young people during the focus group and using an independent transcriber to document the interviews verbatim supports this endeavour as it enables the researcher to report the words of the young

people, rather than attempting to recall or summarise from memory. Again, this also links with Lincoln & Guba's (1985) concept of credibility which they describe as 'truth value'. Criticality and integrity enables the researcher to demonstrate and acknowledge, through reflexive awareness, the various interpretations possible (Richardson, 1994) with a critical and systematic method of doing so (Hammersly, 1992). So, for example, when a thematic analysis is conducted, a detailed recognition of self and one's position is incorporated into the analysis (Gavin, 2008) and a thorough recognition of, and reporting of, the weak areas in the research (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012).

6.2 Secondary criteria

The secondary criteria of importance to this research study are congruence, sensitivity and thoroughness. Congruence, for example, is the coherence between the research aims, the design of the study and the academic literature used to inform the study. This study was designed in response to the literature review, gaps in the knowledge base, and the absence of the voices of the young people. As the purpose of the research was to explore and understand, a qualitative study was deemed most appropriate. Sensitivity is also linked to congruence; the study serves the needs of the young people, rather than merely serving the needs of the researcher or academic community (Lincoln, 1995). The ethical and reflective aspects of the research process are also key components of this particular research design, due to my dual role as the researcher and head teacher (Guest et al.,

2012). Finally, thoroughness needs to be a strong thread throughout the research design, analysis and interpretation as this component relates to understanding how the situated nature of the research process impacted upon the findings and outcomes.

7. Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a significant aspect of a qualitative design and the term is problematic to define. For the purpose of this research the definition of reflexivity is taken from the writing of Bolton (2010): '*Reflexivity* is finding strategies to question our own attitudes, thought processes, values, assumptions, prejudices and habitual actions, to strive to understand our complex roles in relation to others' (p. 13). When using this definition, I found the forms of reflexivity described by Wilkinson (1988) a useful starting point in breaking down the different aspects of self. These forms proposed by Wilkinson (1988) encompass personal, functional and disciplinary reflexivity. Within each of these reflexivities my identities are recognised as impacting upon the narrative structure of the account (Hughes, 2002). In this section, I focus on the practical reflexive process concerned with the methods.

7.1 Reflexivity in action: the research diary

In order to develop the various levels of reflexivity required in qualitative research (Hughes, 2002), I kept a research diary throughout the process. This process enabled me to use my notes to inform the following section which is concerned with the implications for the practicalities of the research

process such as the location, size of the groupings and power issues relevant to this particular research study. The issues are under the headings of location, grouping, communication and role of the moderator, addressing the issue of power and constructing the moderator guide.

7.2 Location

The location needed to be appropriate for the purpose of the research and the intended participatory ethos of the focus group. Although an appropriate size, my office was not an appropriate location as it could communicate a power imbalance between the young people and the research process. A classroom was too large, as noted by Vaughn et al. (1996) a room too large could be perceived as overpowering. The Healthy Living Centre in the school was a medium size room, not used as a classroom but used for focus groups. It was believed, by me, the guidance teacher and the pilot group of young people, that the room had the appropriate connotations; the room was for the use of the young people in a non-formal learning environment.

7.3 Grouping

The size, age and gender mix of the young people also required consideration. From the academic literature and from my years of drama teaching, year groups were seen separately (S1 and S2). The gender of the groups also required thought and single gender groupings were employed. Eight young people from each year group (n= 16 in total) were randomly selected. The possible relationship and power issues within the group were

also considered once the young people had been selected, fortunately no concerns were identified, such as bullying issues and conflict.

7.4 Addressing the issue of power

Dahl (2014) argues that, as adults, there are experiences, specifically childhood experiences that we cannot access without the first-hand knowledge of those we seek to understand. In order to do this, we have to find ways of listening to children 'in their own time and their own terms' (Dahl, 2014, p. 595). Addressing the issue of power was the main concern for me throughout the research process as a researcher and head teacher.

Power and the critical understanding of adults' representation of children is complex to define and can be interpreted and understood in numerous ways (Hill, Davis, Prout and Tisdall, 2004). It has been argued that knowledge generated through researching with children is designed to feed into processes by which children and young people are governed (Gallagher, 2009), and to an extent, it is recognised that this is the case in this research design as the school system, national legislation and local policies cannot be ignored. However, this complexity is balanced against the aims of the project, which is to listen, understand and explore the views of the young people in comparison to the policy context to achieve tangible outcomes for young people in the school setting (See Hill et al., 2004 for further discussion). As noted by Gallagher (2009) there are no easy answers in the practice of ethics

and power relations and continual problematization is both challenging and necessary.

The power relations evident in this research were particularly challenging and required close scrutiny, critique and reflectivity throughout the research process. The most significant power relation was my dual role and the issue of consent being truly voluntary, although the withdrawal of two participants did provide a degree of reassurance. Seen negatively, my role in a hierarchical environment as an actor who holds power over others can be balanced through a reconceptualised vantage point. In an alternative view of power, it operates as a process whereby: 'power is diffused throughout society and is generated in such a way that the benefits and costs may be shared by many different actors. Thus, what matters is not only who has power but how power operates.' (Hill et al., 2004, p. 89). The additional complexities of power dynamics were evident in the process of data collection; these included the role of the guidance teacher as a teacher researcher, his gender, sampling and the choices made when sampling, and the use of GIRFEC as an analytical tool. Each of these points will be taken in turn.

Firstly, the role of the guidance teacher as a male in a position of responsibility in the school setting did present a power dynamic that required close scrutiny. The position of a male as a moderator could have resulted in young people not exploring more deeply sensitive issues related to their

gender, such as issues related to sex and development. However, this could just have easily been the case if a female were in the room. I proceeded with the guidance teacher as the moderator because of his close relationships with young people in the school and the very open, frank and progressive relationships he has with the pupils. For example, he has overall responsibility for teaching all aspects of the personal and social education programme, and does so in a very effective way, supporting young people to explore issues such as the meaning of consent in a sexual relationship.

One further reason I was more comfortable with the guidance teacher as the moderator was interconnected with the aims and purposes of the research. This project was not undertaken for purely academic reasons, or to support a government policy; the research was undertaken to explore and understand in a specific context, and to take forward health and wellbeing policy in the school setting. Therefore, one aim of the research was to serve the interests of the young people in the school. As noted by Groves (n.d., cited by Gallagher, 2009) on the importance of young people feeling that the researcher cares about them when collecting data:

Use lots of eye contact, smiles, warm heart, fun and laughter (if appropriate): children figure out in a split second whether you are really interested in them as people or just extracting information from them. They need to see you care, that you can engage with them as they would like to be engaged with. They need you to understand why they may/may not be responding.
(Groves, n.d., cited by Gallagher, 2009, p. 26)

Through allocating the guidance teacher to the role of moderator I provided a trusted adult to facilitate the focus groups in contrast to allocating a stranger who may not have been able to support the young people to the same extent. It is not a perfect situation as either choice made would have had benefits and drawbacks.

There was also the complexity of the dual role of teacher as researcher. The position of the teacher as the researcher in this thesis required deep reflection for reasons of validity and also due to the power dynamic in the research process. As noted by MacDougall and Darbyshire (2018) historically fields such as education have often framed children as objects of adult study although progressive movements have offered new understandings. There are strengths when conducting research from the position of teacher as researcher. Teacher researchers present opportunities for deep scrutiny of their own beliefs, contribute to the development of local knowledge and work toward social justice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009), challenging the viewpoint that knowledge can only be generated by individuals outside of the educational establishment (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). However, there are complexities with this approach and especially so when the method of data generation used in the research design was a focus group. The focus group method is traditionally controlled by the researcher (Morgan, 2011), although to create a more participatory ethos in this research design the focus group was facilitated by the moderator, rather than controlled by the researcher. Nevertheless, having the researcher or moderator in the room

during the process of the focus groups does require acknowledgement that the interactions and discussions may not have been as naturalistic as they would in an alternative setting (Morgan, 2011). The young people may have provided different responses had the teacher as moderator not been in the room at the time of the discussions.

In section 2.2, 3.2 and section 5 in Chapter Four sampling, generalisability and transferability were explored. The sample in this case study did not include young people who experienced barriers to attendance and decisions were made, in the best interests of the young people, to remove young people from the sampling due to recent family difficulties they had experienced. It is important to reflect on the impact of this, and recognise that the voices of these young people were not represented in this case study. The reader transferability of the findings from the young people in this case study should be assimilated with this caveat in mind. The impact of the context on the nature of the results generated does present questions about the validity of the data. However, as Morgan (2011) highlights, the potential for generating different results in different circumstances raises more questions about the nature of contexts than it does about validity. It may be interesting to explore what wellbeing means to young people in different contexts and through alternative methods to enable an exploration of the contrasting and similar themes identified through the research questions. Due to the demographic of the sample included in this case study, it would be

important to access the voices of a wider and more diverse demographic in future studies.

A further significant complexity was the use of GIRFEC as an analytical tool in the design of the study. When problematizing wellbeing discourses in schools Spratt (2017) highlighted the socialising agendas can become coercive. This occurs by agendas being hidden within caring terminology (such as the eight wellbeing indicators) employed to normalise the child or young person (Spratt, 2017). This complexity is recognised, and although the eight wellbeing indicators are used as a framework to encourage discussion and debate between the young people, there were additional opportunities to explore any other aspects of wellbeing the young person viewed to be important to them. The first activity was intentionally open for the young person to respond in an open and unstructured way to enable private thoughts to be developed. The young people then offered *their* interpretation of the eight wellbeing indicators followed by a question about whether they felt any aspect of wellbeing was missing. Part of this thesis was to explore the views of the young people in comparison to the eight wellbeing indicators, and the use of the framework enabled their detailed responses to each individual indicator in comparison to the GIRFEC sub-components. It is recognised that through inserting government policy into the data collection process the power dynamic is evident, but this is balanced with the way in which the data was collected (through focus groups and a creative method). The data produced, and what then happens with the findings, is just as

important as the method of collection. As noted by Hill et al. (2004) 'Only if genuine dialogue occurs between children and the adults in power will policies directed at social inclusion respond to children's felt needs, rather than the needs attributed to them' (Hill et al., 2004, p. 80).

7.5 Constructing the moderator guide

A pilot study was carried out using the moderator guide for a variety of reasons. Firstly, Danby et al., (2011) and Vaughn et al., (1996) suggest that a pilot should be used to trial the method of data collection and resolve, amend and improve the process prior to the actual collection of data. Secondly, the researcher was not the moderator in the design of the research so it was important that a framework for constructing the interview, based on previous experience of running focus groups, working with children and young people, and academic literature, was used to interview the young people. The moderator guide was amended in response to feedback from all participants in the pilot.

8. Thematic analysis

The guidance on analysing focus group research has historically been limited (Flick, 2014) with no one best approach identified. The need for flexibility to suit the aims of the research (Flick, 2014) but employ a system with identifiable and replicable stages (Gavin, 2008) is evident in the academic guidance. The focus group method has been seen as the middle of the continuum between realism and relativism; Hammersley's (1992) 'subtle

realism', sometimes referred to as a relativist epistemology and a realist ontology (Flick, 2014). Thematic analysis is one way of making explicit the meanings co-constructed between the participants during the focus group activity (Gavin, 2008).

There are numerous books and articles on thematic analysis, for example, Ayres, 2008; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Lapadat, 2010. Descriptions and definitions include: 'Thematic analysis is a data reduction and analysis strategy by which qualitative data are segmented, categorized, summarized, and reconstructed in a way that captures the important concepts within the data set' (Ayres, 2008 p. 867) and: 'Thematic analysis is a systematic approach to the analysis of qualitative data that involves identifying themes or patterns of cultural meaning; coding and classifying data, usually textual, according to themes; and interpreting the resulting thematic structures by seeking commonalties, relationships, overarching patterns, theoretical constructs, or explanatory principles' (Lapadat, 2010, p. 926) also: 'Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail' (Braun & Clarke, 2006 p. 79). All of these definitions have similarities in that each outlines the need for a strategy for making meaning from a range of complex data in a systematic way. I wanted to find an approach that provided a clear outline of a procedure but provided a degree of flexibility within the process. I found Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach

to be most suited to my needs and congruent with the overall research endeavour.

The thematic analysis was conducted on the qualitative data gathered through the focus groups, creative method and SHANARRI wellbeing indicators in the GIRFEC policy review. This data included the completed 'gingerbread man', a transcription of the audio-recording from Audacity, the written focus group placemat activity, and the definitions of wellbeing in the GIRFEC policy. In the following section I detail how I analysed the data from the young people in depth. The GIRFEC policy review was much more straightforward as the themes and sub-themes were explained in some of the GIRFEC documentation (see Appendix 10). This is expanded upon in Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

The method of thematic analysis used in this research followed the six-phase model of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). I explored other methods of qualitative analysis such as Mason's (2002) writings on reading data 'literally, interpretively and reflexively, and her writing on creating categories. The Braun and Clarke (2006) model had been successfully used by the Educational Psychology services (Alexander et al., 2014) and I was familiar with the process. Preparation is also a key aspect of a successful analysis (Guest et al. 2012), as is employing a systematic approach which is also flexible (Gavin, 2008) and enables the researcher to 'argue what we know based on the process by which we came to know it'

(Agar cited by Guest et al., 2012, p. 4). For this reason, the process I followed is outlined, below.

8.1 The six-phase process of thematic analysis: step by step

The following six phases are taken from Braun and Clarke (2006). The data gathered from the two activities were different (one was spontaneous and the other was structured) so there were slight variations in the approach, however, the purpose of thematic analysis is to allow for flexibility based on the aims of the research, which in this case, was to explore what wellbeing means to young people. It is also worth noting that, although there are six stages, this was not a linear process and I switched between the phases at different points in the analysis.

8.2 Familiarity with the data

This is the active reading of the data repeatedly in order to begin to establish any themes which emerge. This process took several weeks. The data generated from the research were recorded and written so there were two analyses of data for each focus group in the first instance. The verbal data derived from the focus group activity was lengthy and required an initial transcription and reading before the note taking of initial ideas began. I took two approaches with the transcribed data. I collated the transcriptions into the eight wellbeing indicators for all year groups and also created an initial list of codes for each year group. I then looked at the spontaneous written responses and created an initial list of codes unrelated to the eight wellbeing

indicators. Memos were created from using chunks of the data from the transcript. At the same time as writing the memos, I also maintained a research journal to record any personal responses. I sat in the room for several days working through and with the information noting impressions. Due to the transcription of the data, the recording was also listened to as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006). A copy of the initial data set can be found in Appendix 4 and 5.

8.3 Generating initial codes

A list of first impressions was used to create the initial codes. Codes are described as a way of organising the data into meaningful groups (Tuckett, 2005), and is a feature of the data that appears interesting to the analyst (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At this point in the thematic analysis there is no interpretation of the data, the codes are specified as units, rather than themes. Coding the responses from the young people enabled the development of themes. The approach undertaken involved sections of the data being separated from the original data set and collated, so that the data selected could be inspected together (Ayres, 2012). This was a lengthy process. Appendix 6 and 7 illustrates examples of how the initial codes were generated from the data from the focus groups. The following excerpts are a section taken from the initial coding which was then saturated into the sub-themes of trust, relationships and support. These were then compared with the other sub-themes. The transcripts provided data from each focus group

and following reading and re-reading post it notes were used to move quotes into codes (see Appendix 6 for an example).

Example 1. Trust and relationships

'I think like having trust, and parents and a safe environment' (Talia)

'Always having someone there through bad times and good times'(Talia)

'And people who trust you and you trust them' (Tilly)

'Caring for people and you have close family members and people encourage you and there are always people you trust around you.' (Tilly)

'Feeling relaxed and trusting' (Thalassa)

'Being trustworthy, people who like you, people who understand you' (Thalassa)

'Not pushing people too far' (Thalia)

'Being a trustworthy person and don't tell anybody's secrets' (Thalia)

'We have all said being trustworthy and being responsible' (Thalia)

Example 2. Support and relationships

'Friends just in case you have been hurt or someone else isn't being nice to you' (Andy)

'Be nice to people because if you are mean to people it is a problem and you are not really going to achieve anything, are you?' (Adam)

'When you do something good for yourself, or someone else, you need help from others. Need support. Like you can do this.'(Adam)

'People listen and talk to you, you have lots of friends'(Andrew)

'Treat someone the way you would want to be treated. Respect other people and they might respect you. Give them space, don't over-respect them. Don't creep them out by being over respectful, by, like getting in their bubble'.(Arnold)

From this process repeated patterns emerged which, in phase 3, were established as themes. As noted by Braun and Clarke (2006) coding depends upon whether the themes are data driven or theory driven; for this research both were relevant. In the creative task, the themes emerged from the data and in the focus group work, the interview questions were linked to the codes.

8.4 Searching for themes

The list of codes generated in phase 2 was used to identify themes in the data. This process involved considering how each of the codes could fit into a theme. The examples provided in section 8.3 illustrate how the codes of trust, support and relationships were collated to develop a sub-theme. Each sub-theme was compared against other sub-themes using the codes to saturate into an overarching theme. In the case of the sub-theme 'trust, support and relationships' this formed part of the themes 'The importance of having loving relationships' and 'The importance of being a good person'. A summary sheet was used to establish the themes and sub-themes, and an example is provided in Appendix 7.

8.5 Reviewing themes

This was the process of reviewing the themes and sub-themes identified in phase 3 which required re-visiting the codes to refine the themes, and ensuring there is sufficient data to substantiate a theme. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest there are two levels to reviewing and refining themes which involves reviewing the coded data extracts to ensure patterns are apparent, and then a thematic map was finalised. The second level involved revisiting the codes and themes in relation to the thematic map ensuring congruence. At this stage, any re-coding was completed to ensure that all data was accurately represented.

8.6 Defining and naming themes

The thematic map was used to define and refine the themes established through the level one and level two work completed in phase 4. A copy of the thematic map is in Appendix 10. This involved identifying and describing the key aspects of the data each theme demonstrated by revisiting data extracts for each theme (post it notes were used to enable movement between themes) and organising the interpretation of each extract. The narrative accompanying the codes enabled a detailed analysis of each theme. The story for each theme was then summarised into two short sentences. When the analysis for each theme was brought together the story of the data emerged.

8.7 Producing the report

Phase 6 was the final write up of the final working document which included extracts taken from the transcription (verbatim) and a detailed analysis of the thematic map. Phase 6 can be located in the analysis chapter, and also the discussion chapter, as it included elements of critical discussion in support of the interpretation made from the process of thematically analysing the data.

9. Conclusion

During the process of collecting and analysing the data a number of issues arose which encouraged me to reflect on the process and consider changes I would make in the future. The first issue that arose for me was the responses to the creative task; responses were limited and I felt that, whilst a creative task was important for generating individual responses prior to the group work, I should have explored a variety of tasks in pilot groups prior to choosing the gingerbread man. Time was the issue here and I wanted to use an activity that I was familiar with and confident that young people in secondary school would not see as childish. I think the task was perhaps too complex for some young people in the groups, judging by the responses. I would also consider following up with semi-structured interviews on an additional selection of young people to explore some of the comments made in more depth. However, I do believe that the use of a focus group as a participatory method for accessing the views of the young people was the best approach for limiting the influence of adults, and enabling young people to generate their response through dialogue.

This study has a number of benefits and limitations. The design and methods enable a deeper understanding of real contexts (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier, 2013), and facilitates new understandings of the unique and contextualised nature of wellbeing for children and young people. This research provides young people with a voice in matters that concern them in their context. Wider generalisations cannot be made in the traditional sense, and reader transferability requires a reflection on the context of the research. To expand on this point, the school is located in a rural community with a homogenous sociodemographic. Further, decisions were made during sampling due to the personal circumstances of the young people, and the voices of these young people were not represented. The school-based study does not lend itself to accessing the voices of children and young people who experience barriers to attendance, and this also requires further research and exploration. However, the use of focus groups in a small and caring school allowed for rich data to be generated from the activities which can be used for the school's improvement planning priorities, and provides an insight into understandings of wellbeing for other stakeholders. Further, the analysis of policy and the comparison against the views of the young people uncovers areas for consideration during policy creation and enactment for the various stakeholders in education. This point is expanded upon in the discussion chapter and specific recommendations for stakeholders are made in the conclusion.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS

1. Introduction

This chapter is presented in four parts. Part one revisits the understandings of wellbeing specified in the *Getting it Right for Every Child* policy context in Scotland. Part two is a deductive analysis of the views of the young people under each of the wellbeing indicators specified in the *Getting it Right for Every Child* documentation. Part three is an inductive analysis of the spontaneous responses of the young people that have been collated into themes. Finally, in part four, the views of the young people are presented and explored.

2. Getting it Right for Every Child: policy review

2.1 How is wellbeing defined in the policy context?

As discussed in the previous chapters, historically research into the lives of children and young people was located in the positivist domain with a strong focus on statistics (Hill, 2005). The definition and measurement of wellbeing was previously more focused on income poverty (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d.). The Scottish Government (2008c) used Bradshaw, Hoelscher & Richardson's (2007) definition to reflect the contemporary perspective of children's wellbeing in the academic world; which is summarised as:

Well-being can be defined by the realisation of children's rights and the fulfilment of the opportunity for every child to be all she or he can be in the light of a child's abilities, potential and skills. The degree to which this is achieved can be measured in terms of positive child outcomes, whereas negative outcomes and deprivation point to the neglect of children's rights. (p. 135).

This view of child wellbeing is mirrored in the UNICEF (2007) vision for children and young people:

The true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialisation and their sense of being loved, valued and included in the families and societies in which they are born.
(UNICEF, 2007, p. 3).

Two important ideas evident in these descriptions are 'children's rights' and 'sense of being loved' which were less explicit in government policies and supra-national bodies in the past. Historically, the idea of wellbeing and children was more concerned with child protection and basic needs, such as safety, as discussed in Chapter Two and Chapter Three. However, the policy rhetoric of children's rights and the importance of love have been more explicit for over two decades. The GIRFEC literature aimed to promote and ensure the wellbeing of all children and young people in the eight wellbeing domains which are described below. In the literature it was also explicit that operationalising each of the wellbeing indicators is complex, as each is broad and multi-faceted (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d.). The sub-domains for each of these wellbeing indicators are provided, which can be seen in Appendix 13.

SAFE	Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.
HEALTHY	Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare, and support in learning to make healthy and safe choices.
ACHIEVING	Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self esteem at home, at school and in the community.

NURTURED	Having a nurturing place to live, in a family setting with additional help if needed or, where this is not possible, in a suitable care setting.
ACTIVE	Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport which contribute to healthy growth and development, both at home and in the community.
RESPECTED	Having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions which affect them.
RESPONSIBLE	Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles in their schools and communities and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision and being involved in decisions that affect them.
INCLUDED	Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.

(The eight wellbeing indicators, Stradling & MacNeil, n.d.).

These definitions attempted to transcend the conceptions of wellbeing used in medicine or economics and aimed to provide a more holistic framework from which to judge the wellbeing of young people. This arose from a merging of disciplines and an amalgamation of viewpoints from a variety of thinkers such as Maslow (1943), who based his idea of wellbeing on a hierarchy of needs, with basic needs at the lower end and self-actualisation at the top. Max-Neef, Elizabel and Hopenhayn (1991) promoted the importance of human needs as a taxonomy, rather than a hierarchy and Gough (1994) who provided a varied outline of human needs which included basic health needs and relationships (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d.). These thinkers were used to inform the conceptualisation of the term wellbeing in the literature. In *Getting it right for every child and young person: A framework for measuring children's well-being* Stradling and MacNeil (n.d.) summarise this amalgamated vision as:

All children and young people have certain basic needs that are central to their welfare and well-being. These include the need for love and nurturing, a safe and secure home and community environment, a basic level of economic security, appropriate health care, appropriate education, opportunities for enjoyable and stimulating recreation, adequate and appropriate nutrition, clothing and accommodation, the need to be valued and respected and the need to feel that they belong. (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 11).

As described in the summary, this vision of wellbeing is concerned with basic needs, such as good nutrition and health care, but also love and security. From a cursory look at the domains outlined in the document, the eight wellbeing indicators could be interpreted overly simplistically, especially when read with the basic statements outlined in the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes. On a basic level, without a deeper exploration of the sub-domains, the term 'active' for example, does not make the important links to active learning explored in the literature review or recognise the importance of voice and active participation to the wellbeing of the young person. However, they go on to note:

However, well-being is more than the absence of poverty, illness, incapacities and negative experiences and conditions. It is also a positive psychological and social state that enables the child or young person to flourish. It includes: a positive outlook on life, a sense of purpose, a realistic expectation of the goals they can achieve, a feeling of being connected to a network of carers and friends, and the capacity and confidence to cope with new challenges and risk factors in their lives. (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 12).

This expansion on wellbeing demonstrates the shift in thinking from a deficit model to a model which includes human flourishing. As the literature review revealed, implementation is complex, messy and context specific. With so

many different definitions and interpretations of wellbeing in one policy context, without deeper analysis there is a danger of inadvertently diluting the opportunities for human flourishing by creating situations where young people are represented as vulnerable, as argued by Ecclestone and Hayes (2009).

In the next section, I present and analyse the key points identified in each of the documents identified for the review (the documents were specified in Chapter Four) for each of the eight individual wellbeing indicators.

3. The eight wellbeing indicators

Safe

I identified five broad themes for the wellbeing indicator 'safe'. These were: protection; appropriate behaviour; positive mindset; rights; resilience. For example, in the literature it stated:

Finally, being safe is also a positive state of mind. The child or young person is not only objectively safe (the risk of significant harm has been removed or considerably reduced) but also feels secure and protected within trusted relationships where adults are not only acting in the child's best interests but also listening to the child or young person and taking account of their views, preferences and feelings. (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 28).

I created the following summary sentence to encapsulate the wellbeing indicator 'safe': in order to be safe a young person should be protected from avoidable harm and provided with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves throughout their lifetime.

Healthy

I identified three broad themes for the wellbeing indicator 'healthy': rights; holistic health; flourishing. For example, in the sub-domains of healthy, which can be seen in Appendix 13, it stated:

Has a well-developed sense of identity and belonging', 'is actively involved within his or her family, social networks, school and community', and 'feels empowered to express their wishes (where possible) and makes decisions for themselves irrespective of any disabilities or chronic conditions.
(Strandling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 32)

I created the following summary sentence to encapsulate the wellbeing indicator 'healthy': in order to be healthy in life a young person should have access to all they need in order to fully develop all aspects of their holistic health and enable them to contribute fully in society and flourish.

Achieving

I identified four broad themes for the wellbeing indicator 'achieving': resilience; rights; self-determination; successes. For example, the following quote supports the themes of rights and self-determination: 'Here it is rooted in the concept of children's rights, particularly the right of every child to fulfil his or her potential' (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 32). They go on to note:

It also applies to their development as a social being with a fully- formed and autonomous personality who feels they belong and can navigate their way through life with skill and confidence in their ability to cope with new and different challenges.
(Stradling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 33).

I created the following summary sentence to encapsulate the wellbeing indicator 'achieving': in order to fulfil potential in a variety of contexts and circumstances young people should have their rights promoted, be provided with a varied range of educational, recreational and sporting/cultural opportunities and be empowered to follow their own path.

Nurtured

I identified three broad themes for the wellbeing indicator 'nurtured': the right to safety and care; a strong sense of self-worth, identity and belonging; love, appropriate and caring relationships. In the documentation 'nurtured' is seen as a strongly interrelated and interconnected indicator which overlaps with the other wellbeing indicators. This is reflected in the similarities in the themes running throughout the wellbeing indicators, such as children's rights and empowerment. For example, in the explanation for nurtured it states: 'Nurturing continues into adolescence only here the emphasis increasingly shifts to a less directive approach to parenting based on guidance and the recognition that the young person needs to develop into an independent, respected and responsible young adult' (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 35).

I created the following summary sentence to encapsulate the wellbeing indicator 'nurtured': children and young people have the right to support, caring relationships, an appropriate environment and access to all aspects of services to ensure their growth and development in all aspects of their life.

Active

I identified four broad themes for the wellbeing indicator 'active': learning and growing; self-esteem, identity and belonging; holistic health; resilience. Historically the term 'active' has been viewed as a physical concern although the GIRFEC literature provides a much wider viewpoint which includes resilience and participation:

In other words, being active has an important role to play in developing other areas of the child's well-being: a sense of inclusion and belonging, their physical and emotional health, their sense of achievement from facing new challenges and developing new skills, their self respect and their sense of responsibility.
(Stradling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 36).

I created the following summary sentence to encapsulate the wellbeing indicator 'active': the young person has a right to be supported to engage in a range of activities which will develop their physical, emotional, spiritual and mental health, developing resilience and their wellbeing and well-becoming.

Respected

I identified four broad themes for the wellbeing indicator 'respected': rights and empowerment; self-worth and belonging; health; resilience. It was evident in the documentation that there was a focus on the child or young person's wellbeing, rather than well-becoming, and clearly identified childhood as a period in its own right, rather than preparation for adulthood. As stated in the documentation: 'Feeling listened to and taken seriously by those around them; being treated as individuals in their own right with their own needs, expectations and aspirations' (Scottish Government, 2015b).

I created the following summary sentence to encapsulate the wellbeing indicator 'respected': young people should have self-worth, a sense of belonging, be empowered and have their voice heard.

Responsible

I identified four broad themes for the wellbeing indicator 'responsible': appropriate behaviour and conduct; holistic wellbeing; resilience; judging wisely. It was interesting that the contrast between adults teaching children and young people how to behave, and supporting and facilitating children and young people to think for themselves was well balanced in GIRFEC, and notably so in comparison to the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes. For example, it stated:

Responsibility is a complex concept. Potentially, it can encompass a diversity of behaviours, values and ways of thinking and feeling. It is about accountability, but it is also about leadership and decision making and understanding the rules, norms and parameters which guide how we live alongside each other. It is about the capacity for moral judgement and taking a principled stand.
(Stradling and MacNeil, n.d., p. 40.)

I created the following summary sentence to encapsulate the wellbeing indicator 'responsible': the young person is supported to develop appropriate behaviours which continue to enhance all aspects of health and wellbeing, including a resilient and self-determined character.

Included

I identified four broad themes for the wellbeing indicator 'included': rights and empowerment; love, care and trust; resilience; acceptance and belonging. The importance of rights and equality was very evident in the literature and the links with school ethos were clear. Statements included: 'being listened to and views being taken seriously', 'establishing meaningful and supportive friendships', and 'being included meaningfully in their class/year group' (Scottish Government, 2015c).

I created the following summary sentence to encapsulate the wellbeing indicator 'included': young people should feel secure in their sense of attachments, belonging and acceptance. They should know they have a voice and are empowered and resilient.

From these eight wellbeing indicators I created a thematic map, which can be located in Appendix 11.

The core themes I identified were:

- Strong sense of self and belonging
- Holistic health
- Learning and growing
- Love, care and protection
- Children's rights
- Resilience

As can be seen from the themes identified, the eight wellbeing indicators cover a broad range of factors believed to be required to develop a healthy sense of self and function well in the world. There was a strong focus apparent within the themes of resilience, children's rights and flourishing. The themes were concerned with the child or young person's wellbeing now as well as in the future, which is in contrast to the historical context where the onus was in preparation for adulthood. These are interesting findings which reveal the conflicting and simultaneous narratives in wellbeing policy contexts, and which I explore in more depth in the discussion chapter. In the next section I explore and analyse the themes from the young people.

4. Identifying codes and themes in the data from the young people

Braun and Clarke (2006) provide a fifteen-point check list of criteria for good thematic analysis and under the section for coding there are five points for consideration. These include: each data has been given equal attention; ensuring that themes have not been generated based on a few vivid examples; extracts for each theme have been collated; themes have been checked against each other and with the original data set; themes are internally consistent, and are clear and distinctive. As I created the codes, I referred back to these criteria to ensure I was systematic in my approach. A decision also needed to be made regarding the analysis of the data generated from the young people. I needed to decide whether to undertake a rich analysis of one particular aspect or a detailed account of the entire set. The latter was more suitable for this research question, which was to explore

what wellbeing meant to young people in comparison to the policy context. To focus on one aspect of the data would be detrimental to answering the research question as a whole, as each aspect of wellbeing needed to be explored. Therefore, the analysis undertaken was based on an entire data set which included the response to the creative task, the written response to the placemat activity and the focus group transcript, to provide the reader with an understanding of the important themes across the entire data set.

The information presented in this chapter provides excerpts from the data and an analysis of the data. The reason for this is that I wanted to provide sufficient examples from the transcript to provide transparency. Where an individual sentence has been used from one young person, the sentence was chosen as it represented the views of other young people in the groups. The purpose of the sentences at the end of the section was to provide a brief summary of the overall theme which then informed the comprehensive narrative of the data set as a whole. Again, Braun and Clarke (2006) stress the importance of a balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts.

5. Thematic analysis: deductive analysis of the data by exploring the eight wellbeing indicators

5.1 The placemat activity

The data generated through the placemat activity produced detailed responses. This could be linked with the specificity of the questioning and

exploring each of the eight wellbeing indicators in turn. So, for example, young people were asked: 'What does safe mean to you? What do you need in order to be safe?' From this question young people recorded their individual responses on a section of the placemat and then discussed their individual responses to come to a mutually agreed overall response to the question, which was then recorded in the centre of the placemat. A copy of a completed placemat can be seen in Appendix 8.

In the following section a snap shot of individual responses to each of the wellbeing indicators is provided as there were too many individual responses to report them all here. I chose one individual response from each placemat which typically reflected the general views of the young people. I then provided the collective response for each group and finally summarised each section with my own sentence to represent the collective views of the young people, as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006). I included those views that were unique and not represented elsewhere to avoid reinforcing a 'majoritarian discourse' (Watson et al., 2012); these quotes are named 'quiet voices' and can be found in section 5.2.

Response to 'safe'

Individual responses were considered first and these typically ranged from 'A loving family, somewhere to live, friends and good smoke alarms' (Davey, S1 male) to 'Protection from nearly everything. Being able to do what you want without getting hurt or injured' (Andy, S2 male). Also, 'Home, family, friends,

school, hospitals and doctors' (Cosmina, S1 female) and 'Having a secure and loving home that can take you away from troubles' (take your mind off it) (Talía, S2 female).

The collective responses from each year group were as follows:

Collectively the S1 boys summarised safe as: 'A family and a house'.

The S2 males summarised safe as: 'Protection from disease, roads, house hazards, social media and strangers'.

The S1 females summarised safe as: 'Home, doctors, hospitals, medicine, health, school, friends and family.'

S2 females summarised safe as: 'A safe home with family you can talk to when feeling upset or worried or if you want to talk'.

The response to this question was more detailed from the S2 males and S1 females who demonstrated a more holistic understanding of the concept 'safe'. All young people recognised the importance of family. I summarised the collective views of the focus groups in the following sentence: 'Having a safe environment with responsible people to guide and care for you'.

Response to 'healthy'

The second of the eight wellbeing indicators discussed with young people was 'healthy'. Young people were asked by the moderator what it meant to them to be healthy. Initial individual responses ranged from: 'Clean water, good food, socialise and exercise' (Adam, S2 male) to: 'Good diet, vegetables, exercise, don't be stuck inside all the time and clean clothes'

(Donal, S1 male); another young person stated: 'Food, exercise, friends, family, fresh air, socialising and cleanliness' (Tilly, S2 female) and: 'Going places outside, eating healthy, learning, exercise, fitness and getting enough sleep' (Corin, S1 female). The answers differed in level of sophistication with older females demonstrating a much deeper understanding of the wider issues of 'health' although all young people did acknowledge the importance of something more than the basics. There were examples of young people comprehending the importance of others in their lives and the significance of learning, demonstrating a wider knowledge and understanding of the term.

The collective responses of each focus group were as follows:

S1 females collectively summarised 'healthy' as: 'Healthy eating. Exercise, fresh air, socialising, love, cleanliness and health checks'.

The S2 females summarised as: 'Have a good diet and keep fit. Have a good lifestyle, do things you enjoy as well as working hard.'

The younger boys had the least sophisticated understanding of the term and their collective summary was: 'Keep fit and stay healthy by eating fruit and veg'.

The older boys summarised healthy as: 'Socialise. Fruit, veg and water. Exercise and wash your body.'

As I read each summary it became very clear that the boys had a more basic, although developing, understanding of the term 'healthy'. The S2 boys did include 'socialise' and the NHS in their work. The girls demonstrated a

more comprehensive view and it would be interesting to explore this gender difference in more depth in terms of outcomes in later life, but that is beyond the scope of this research. I amalgamated the ideas of each of the summaries from the focus groups and created the following sentence to encapsulate the views: 'Leading an active, healthy and balanced life with opportunities to be outdoors, good quality food and a supportive network'.

Response to 'achieving'

The third of the wellbeing indicators discussed was 'achieving'. Individual responses included: 'Don't drop out of something if you fail' (Donal, S1 male), illustrating a recognition that resilience was an important factor. Another young person wrote: 'Getting better at something' (Andy, S2 male), suggesting an understanding that learning is a process one embarks on in order to achieve rather than a traditional viewpoint of being 'clever' at something. A third young person wrote: 'Do what you want to do (dreams)' (Talia, S2 female) and a fourth wrote: 'School goals' (Corin, S1 female); both comments indicate a recognition of the importance of having aims and flourishing.

Collectively young people agreed on the following statements to capture the meaning of achieving:

S1 males summarised as: 'Be nice to people. Stay in school.'

S2 males summarised as: 'Getting your goal. Revising and training and help from other people etc teachers.'

S1 females summarised as: 'Challenges. Goals. Targets. Jobs/work. School stuff.'

S2 females summarised as: 'Working hard and knowing you have succeeded with what you were trying to do'.

Similar statements were made across the four focus groups, although for the S1 males the onus was more on the type of person one was. For example, the following was recorded for one individual in the group: 'Someone to help you along the way. Don't drop out of something if you fail.' (Donal, S1 male). In the same group another boy wrote: 'Be nice to people and stay in school.' (Dan, S1 male). Collectively the four boys decided on the following to encapsulate 'achieving': 'Be nice to people and stay in school', which is a much more basic viewpoint than the views of the S2 females, who demonstrated a more long-term vision, less related to school but recognising the importance of perseverance. However, all young people were considering, at a differentiated level, how to lead a life well.

The four focus groups produced different slants on the concept of achieving. I looked at these themes together and produced the following sentence to represent the thoughts of the young people across the groups: Achieving means reaching goals with people supporting you and being a good person.

Response to 'nurtured'

The next indicator to be explored was 'nurtured'. Individual responses included: 'Help, caring, NHS' (Andy, S2 male), which illustrated an understanding of the significance of services as well as people; 'Care for people. A family' (Dick, S1 male); 'Pets, things that belong to you, friends, family, parents' (Catrina, S1 female); 'Parents, close family, being cared for' (Thalassa, S2 female).

The collective response from the S1 males was: 'Food, care for people, doctor, someone to stay by your side if you are not well.'

The collective response for the S2 males was: 'Caring, foster carers, doctors, friends and family.'

The collective response from the S1 females was: 'Getting essentials. Presents. Responsibility. Looking after yourself.'

The collective response from the S2 females was: 'Knowing that you have a happy and caring environment around you'.

The responses to this question were limited in comparison to the other seven of the wellbeing indicators, suggesting that the young people struggled with this concept the most. This was apparent in the pilot group; the response to this was for the moderator/guidance teacher to provide an example to aid discussion and check comprehension before proceeding. The most comprehensive response was provided by the S1 girls whose answers ranged from family, pets and responsibility to having presents. The boys,

however, although providing limited responses, were very clear about the importance of young people having appropriate care in the absence of parents. I created the following sentence to represent the views of the young people: To be nurtured you are loved and cared for.

Response to 'active'

The next concept to be explored was 'active'. Individual responses to the question 'What does active mean to you?' typically ranged from: 'Don't stay inside all day. Go out and play. Don't sit in front of a TV.' (Dick, S1 male), to: 'You do a lot of things. Not stay inside.' (Arnold, S2 male), illustrating the significance of being outdoors. This viewpoint did reoccur throughout, which could be linked to the location of the school, or the impact of the outdoor learning aspect of health and wellbeing policy in Scotland. Cosmina, an S1 female said: 'Moving around, sleep, meeting people, everyday life, exercising, reading'. It was interesting to note that young people recognised the importance of sleep and rest when considering the term active. Tilly, an S2 female said: 'Being fit, healthy and happy. Having motivation.'

All young people demonstrated a holistic understanding of the concept 'active' and did not describe it as purely 'being sporty' or 'doing sport'. Individual and collective responses included sleep, learning, motivation, being outdoors, friends and challenging oneself. The collective responses recorded by the young people were as follows:

S1 males summarised as: 'Sports. Play outside more than inside. Less TV. Play with friends.'

S2 males summarised as: 'Sporty. Pushing yourself. Support from family, trainers, teachers and more.'

S1 females summarised as: 'Exercise. Health. Lots of sleep. Energy. Meeting people. Pets/looking after things. School.'

S2 females summarised as: 'Having a happy and healthy lifestyle which helps get you motivated.'

As can be seen from the summaries and snap shots of the individual quotes, young people interpreted 'active' as a wide-ranging concept which included learning, motivation and challenge. I created the following sentence to encapsulate their views: To be active you have a balanced and stimulating life and enjoy a range of activities.

Response to 'respected'

Individual responses to the concept of respected included: 'Be kind to people. Treat people the way they like to be treated' (Dick, S1 male). Arnold, an S2 male said: 'Liked, loved. Listen to you and talk to you. Lots of friends'. Catrina, an S1 female said: 'Listening. Kind. Trust. Looking after someone/friends/family. Responsibility.' Thalia, an S2 female said: 'Don't be selfish. Be a trustworthy person. Be respectful to others and they'll respect you.' The comments clearly demonstrated recognition of the importance of behaving in respectful ways in order to be respected, rather than seeing

respect as an entitlement regardless of one's actions toward others, and illustrated young people reflecting on what it means to live life well from their perspective.

The collective responses from the young people were as follows:

'Be nice. Treat people how you would like to be treated.' (S1 males)

'Be nice/liked. Authority.' (S2 males)

'Respect others. Responsibility. Listening. Body language. Facial expressions. Trust. Rules. Being nice.' (S1 females)

'Being responsible and trustworthy and not being afraid to be different.' (S2 females)

The key sub- theme running throughout each of the placemats on the concept of respected was linked to the type of individual one was and how to live life, either described by the young people as 'being nice' or being 'responsible and trustworthy'. The boys struggled to respond to this question more so than the girls, although both male groups made a reference to 'being nice' in their responses. I created the following sentence to represent the collective responses from all four focus groups: Be who you want to be and treat people as you would like to be treated.

Response to 'responsible'

Individual responses to the concept of 'responsible' varied and examples included: 'Look after people. Look after things.' (Dick, S1 male). 'Take care of

something. If you can be trusted.’ (Arnold, S2 male), and: ‘Looking after pets/people/belongings. Trustworthy. Things you do/say. Family/friends. Homework. Helping out.’ (Corin, S1 female). Also: ‘Caring for people’s things. Generally being quite caring. Don’t betray people’s trust in you.’ (Thalia, S2 female). The comments indicated that young people recognised the internal characteristic required in behaving and acting responsibly with a strong focus on trust and care.

The collective responses were as follows:

‘Don’t bully and look after people’s stuff. AKA- don’t be stupid.’ (S1 males)

‘To show what you should or what you should not do. Act your age.’ (S2 males)

‘Proving that you can do the task that has been set for you without giving up or going against what they’ve told you to do.’ (S2 females)

The young people in the focus groups responded to this question in a way that demonstrated their ability to consider how to behave towards other people and what is important to them in interacting with others. I created the following sentence to represent the views of the young people: To be responsible is to behave in a trustworthy manner.

Response to ‘included’

The final of the wellbeing indicators to be explored in the focus group work was ‘included’. Individual responses ranged from: ‘To be involved with stuff. Don’t be left out. Don’t leave people out’ (Dan, S1 male) again, illustrating

recognition of the importance of appropriate behaviour toward others as well as being concerned with the way one is treated, to: 'Friends, social life, be a part of things' (Andrew, S2 male). Also: 'Friends, family, school, clubs, work' (Catlin, S1 female), which illustrated a wider understanding of how an individual is included in society, i.e. to be a functioning member of society one requires a place in the workforce, and: 'Having caring friends. People believing in you' (Thalassa, S2 female).

Collectively the S1 males summarised the concept of included as: 'Introduce yourself to people, join in with clubs and games'.

S2 males summarised as: 'To be nice to people/the boss of the group. Friends, socialise on-line and off'.

S1 females summarised as: 'Friends, clubs and activities. New ideas, family, school, work/jobs. Group work, including other people. Kindness.'

S2 females summarised as: 'Being a part of things and not being left out by anybody'.

As I looked at the individual responses, I recognised that the girls demonstrated a more sophisticated understanding of the concept of included, although all young people indicated the importance of friends. It was particularly interesting to see that young people viewed the concept of included as an ability to perhaps think independently and creatively, where they had reflected on the importance of creativity and thinking for oneself. I recorded the following sentence to represent the collective views of the

young people across the focus groups: To be included is to have close relationships, be flexible in thinking, and be a part of things.

5.2 The quiet voices

In this section I provide the direct quotes which were unique to the individual. This provides an opportunity to explore the individual understandings of wellbeing which did not form part of the collective summaries provided in the findings section. The following quotes were taken from either the placemat activity or the transcription, and provide an opportunity to deepen understandings of the contextual nature of wellbeing.

Davey had a specific interest in possessions and protection from serious crime, such as gun crime. This was an unusual response for the rural and relatively affluent location in which the research was carried out. His views can be seen in the following two quotes.

'Given stuff for birthdays and Christmas' (Davey)

'Protection from guns and stuff' (Davey)

Arnold had an interest in the importance of foster parents, and he explored the reasons an individual might need a foster parent. Arnold illustrated a mature outlook in this specific area which stood out in comparison to other responses. Arnold also had a concern with stalkers and highlighted the importance of private social media accounts.

'Stalkers...private social media' (Arnold)

'Foster carers, they can help out. If you have a bad Mum and Dad, they are like alcoholics then you are put to a bad foster parent' (Arnold)

Dick had an interest in peer pressure and the types of activities that might get a young person into trouble. This was more evident from Dick than the other young people in the group.

'Wait, I just thought of something. You were saying 'don't be stupid' like going into a construction thing, or jump off things that are high, wouldn't that lead to peer pressure?' (Dick)

It was worth noting that the responses from the girls were more cohesive than the boys and it would be interesting to explore this finding in more depth in further school-based action research, which includes a wider demographic in the sample.

5.3 Summary of the eight wellbeing indicators

In summary, the responses to each of the wellbeing indicators proposed in GIRFEC were typically very holistic and varied. Young people who participated in the focus groups demonstrated a well-rounded understanding of the concept, ranging from the need for medical services, to the importance of foster families in the event of not having someone there to look after you, recognition of the importance of behaving in appropriate ways, being able to think and contribute to society, and having a well-rounded and balanced life. Young people were evidently reflecting on how they should live their life in

order to live well, and made references to the importance of creativity and the outdoors. There were differences in the sophistication of understanding, and this was more apparent between gender and age. This will be expanded upon in the discussion chapter.

6. Thematic analysis: inductive analysis of the data

6.1 The creative task: the 'gingerbread man'

Responses to the gingerbread man activity were less detailed than those to the placemat activity although responses did demonstrate an understanding of the difference between internal and external needs. In hindsight I may not have used this task to begin the research process as some of the young people struggled to respond and provided very limited responses. Other research with young people has employed using drawings as a way of gathering young people's views of health (Mouratidi et al., 2016). I felt that the creative task provided a middle way between drawing and writing, which would enable an individual response, and an opportunity for young people to consider the topic of wellbeing prior to the focus group activity, which was shaped around the eight wellbeing indicators. It may be that the creative task did clarify thoughts prior to the focus group and, although the initial responses were limited, the contribution to the group discussion was more thorough. Nevertheless, the data were very clear: the main internal need was love; every young person cited love on the inside of their gingerbread man. The main external need was, to summarise in my words 'basic needs'. This included shoes, clothes, water, food and sleep, which were recorded on the

looked for patterns in the responses across the focus groups. The following four themes were very strong across all groups and in most responses.

‘The importance of being a good person’

The theme ‘being a good person’ was demonstrated through the generation of several sub-themes and codes which included: being nice and kind, behaving well and being trustworthy. Being nice and being kind was a strong sub-theme throughout and was a response provided by young people when asked about the meaning of several of the eight wellbeing indicators. Below is a snapshot of examples of some of the individual statements from young people in the focus groups.

‘Stay in school, be nice. Being nice, you wouldn’t respect someone if they were horrible to you.’ (Arnold, S2 male)

‘Being nice and not being silly.’ (Dick, S1 female)

‘People who trust you and you trust them.’ (Cosmina, S1 female)

‘Looking after something yourself. Being kind to people.’ (Thalassa, S2 female)

These examples illustrate how the young people saw the importance of treating people well and behaving in socially acceptable ways towards other people. Young people had a good understanding of how social relationships, and their own interactions with others, can impact on a more holistic definition of wellbeing. It was interesting that both males and females in both

year groups identified the importance of treating people well and behaving well, which was linked to the next theme 'The importance of having loving relationships'.

'The importance of having loving relationships'

The theme 'having loving relationships' also included sub-themes generated through the coding process such as having family, friends and pets; being a part of something/a group; loving people and being loved; having a nice secure home. Examples typically included:

'Friends, just in case you have been hurt or someone else isn't being nice to you.' (Andy, S2 male)

'You need help from others. You need support like 'you can do this'.' (Davy, S1 male)

'Always having someone there through bad times and good times. A family that support you and are there for you if you are troubled.' (Thalassa, S2 female)

'Family, friends and family, someone you can rely on.' (Catrina, S1 male)

These quotes and others included in the transcript indicated how young people recognised the importance of healthy and emotionally nurturing relationships with those around them. There was also a recognition that life does not always go well, and during those times help and support from people is needed. Key issues included were those of people being there

when needed, and being a part of a group where one has a sense of belonging and being cared for.

'Learning and growing'

The theme 'learning and growing' developed from sub-themes which included: being motivated and involved with what you do; setting and reaching goals; working hard; doing your best; getting qualifications. Below is an example of comments from the focus groups.

'Stay in school and get a good education. If you want to have a dream job you'll need the qualifications to get that.' (Davey, S1 male)

'Getting your goals, practise, exercise and doing well in school. Getting a medal. Getting better at something, winning a game of FIFA.' (Arnold, S2 male)

'Challenges. Goals. Doing something to achieve it.' (Cosmina, S1 male)

'Learning new things. Being good at something. Succeeding.' (Talia, S2 female)

'Having an active mind, having motivation and stimulation.' (Thalia, S2 female)

There was diversity in the range of achievements young people believed were important, such as exercise and sport, as well as setting and reaching other personal and academic goals. The comments included in the transcript suggested that young people had a clear understanding of the importance of

aiming for targets and growing in a variety of ways, not just academic achievement, although academic achievements were mentioned by all young people and obtaining qualifications was one of the more frequently mentioned points. This could possibly reflect complexities with the continuing implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence*, where achievements and attainment should be equally celebrated and recognised.

‘Being healthy’

The theme ‘being healthy’ included several codes and sub-themes, such as: proper food and water; limiting time on social media; getting enough exercise; being outdoors; having access to public services; being hygienic. Below is an example of comments from all the focus groups.

‘Play outside more than stuck inside on electronics, basically keep your body awake so that it doesn’t fall asleep in a chair watching Youtube, Netflix, any of that stuff.’ (Arnold, S2 male)

‘The eat well plate.....you need to eat vegetables, do some exercise as well.’ (Donal, S1 male)

‘Em, keeping clean so you are not getting diseases. Keep your teeth clean so then you can eat.’ (Dick, S1 male)

‘Clean your body to make sure it is healthy and wash your hands.’ (Dan, S1 male)

'Being outside and being active. Fresh air. Being outside. Seeing the outdoors. Not good to stay inside all day. Food as well. Fitness but like exercise. Eating healthy, exercise and fitness.' (Adam, S2 male)

'Getting enough sleep. A place to go and exercise, eating healthy food, having an active mind and having a healthy lifestyle, being fit'. (Thalia, S2 female).

The comments around the theme of 'being healthy' clearly demonstrated that young people had assimilated a broader definition of health and wellbeing rather than a narrow view of purely getting enough exercise which one may have expected from younger pupils (Springer and Ruckel, 1992). It was interesting to see that being outdoors was of significance to all young people, which could be linked to the location of the school being situated in rural Scotland. It could also be linked to the more active promotion of outdoor learning under *Curriculum for Excellence*.

7. Re-visiting the themes: what does wellbeing mean to young people?

Braun and Clarke (2006) recommend that each theme should be re-visited to ensure that there is not overlap between the themes, and also to identify sub-themes within each theme. This task was completed through reading and re-reading the data and creating a thematic map (a copy can be found in Appendix 10). Phase five, as discussed in the methods section, involved the creation of sentences for each theme. In this phase I then tested the themes

by trying to encapsulate the content of each theme in a simple sentence (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The sentences are outlined below:

- 1) **Being a good person.** It is important to behave well by being kind, trustworthy, respectful and caring.
- 2) **Having loving relationships.** It is important to love and be loved and to be a part of a family and wider social circle.
- 3) **Learning and growing.** It is important to be motivated and challenged, and to work hard at setting and reaching goals.
- 4) **Being healthy.** It is important to have access to everything one needs to keep healthy, including being outdoors, limiting time on social media and having appropriate nutrition.

The four sentences represent the typical common views of the young people. The identified themes reoccurred in the views of the majority of the young people in all focus groups and in all tasks. In summary, in answer to question 1 'What does wellbeing mean to young people?' the narrative of the data could be captured as: 'Young people in this case study understand and recognised the importance of the multi-faceted and often interconnected components required to experience a good quality of life. These components include, school, home, family and friends and also, challenge, enjoyment, activity and growth.'

In the next chapter I explore the policy context in more depth, and compare the views of the young people with those in the GIRFEC policy and the wider aspects of health and wellbeing outlined in CfE.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the research outcomes arising from the study, and to discuss the implications of the findings for policy and practice. The chapter is presented in two main sections. Section one considers the findings of the study in relation to the research questions, beginning with exploring what wellbeing means to the young people in the case study, and then more specifically, analysing the views of the young people and the GIRFEC policy approach. Section two discusses the implications of the study for policy and practice.

1.1 What does wellbeing mean to young people?

In this thesis I aimed to uncover the views of a group of young people in a secondary school in Scotland and compare them against the policy approach. The young people in this case study illustrated, through their spontaneous responses to the creative task and contributions to the focus groups, that they were able to articulate a holistic view of wellbeing. The responses from the young people were concerned with being a 'good person' and having loving relationships which included the importance of love, kindness, trust, respect and care. Their understanding of wellbeing was concerned with school, home, family and friends and also, challenge, enjoyment, activity, creativity and growth.

A key finding from the analysis of the voices of the young people in this study was the narrative of the importance of love and connection with others. All young people who participated in this study cited love as an internal need and there was a strong narrative from the young people that recognised the importance of feeling and being accepted in the various communities the young people belonged to. The literature review highlighted research by Awartani et al. (2008) whose findings indicated that young people viewed feeling connected with others as an important factor to their holistic wellbeing, which included a strong theme of spiritual wellbeing. It is interesting that the views of the young people in this case study reflected similarities when compared against the explanation of spiritual health provided in the Awartani et al. (2008) study, which they described as:

The term 'spiritual' refers to the life energy reflected in the diversity, uniqueness, and interconnectedness of all that exists; it includes the expression of meaning and life purpose, inspiration, peaceful presence, empathy and connection to the whole. Though these aspects each play a role, well-being represents a pervasive feeling about oneself, one's life, and one's environment. (pp. 59-60).

Further they note that the WHO *School Health Information Series* states that student social and emotional wellbeing is improved in a school environment where bullying and harassment are reduced. The literature review also highlighted the findings in Levin et al.'s (2012) research which indicated that, especially girls, who attended schools with *Health Promoting Schools Status* were less likely to feel helpless or left out. James et al. (2014) identified that some young people felt disconnected from their schools. The views of the young people in this study revealed that young people need to feel as though

they are valued and belong to their communities. This could possibly be less likely to happen with an intervention that imposes skills training on to young people, without enabling authentic participation. (Authentic participation was outlined in section 1.3 in Chapter One. See Hart, 1992 for further discussion). Further, meaningful participation with children's rights is suggested to be variable, with limited impact on school life (Boushel, 2012 cited in Watson et al., 2012), although there is evidence for a rights based approach, when developed in a holistic way to improve children's relationships and self-reported happiness (See Sebba and Robinson, 2010 for further discussion).

In the following section I explore the theme of gender as the literature review revealed significant differences in gender. In contrast, the analysis of the views of the young people in this study revealed some differences, but also many similarities.

1.2 Gender differences

In this case study the findings indicated there were some gender differences in the responses from the young people. In response to the eight wellbeing indicators, often females explained their understanding of the terms 'healthy', 'achieving' and 'included' in more complex terms than the males. The responses from females included recognition of the importance of learning when they described their understanding of the term 'healthy', whereas the males discussed the importance of activity. Further, the females described the importance of a longer-term plan in their response to the concept

'achieving' which was not evident from the males. The females described planning their future whereas the males described succeeding in an activity. Also, in response to the term 'included' the females spoke about the importance of the quality of their relationships and how the relationships made them feel with individual statements such as 'Nobody leaving you out or putting you down' (Tilly, S2 female) and 'Friends that don't shut you out' (Talia, S2 female). Whereas, the responses from the males was more concerned with participation and inclusion in activities such as rugby or football, with comments such as 'Be involved with clubs' (Arnold, S2 male) and 'Include people in games' (Andrew, S2 male). It was also interesting to note that the males in this study made more references to the importance of limiting the amount of time spent on social media than the females. It would be interesting to explore these findings in more depth with more young people in the school, to look at the equalities and diversity policy, and how young people choose their subjects and extra-curricular activities. These findings, especially linked to relationships and social media, were mirrored in the literature review, which suggests there may be differences in how males and females experience school culture, and perhaps bullying and cyber bullying.

There were also strong similarities between the responses from the males and females. The responses to the creative task were very similar, with all young people citing love as an internal need, also, when asked about the wellbeing indicator 'respected' both males and females were very clear about

the importance of being a trustworthy person and treating people well. This is an interesting finding and supports the findings of other studies such as Levin et al.'s (2012) study, specifically, the impact of feeling included to wellbeing (Kuurme and Carlsson, 2010), the importance of healthy relationships between teachers and students, and the significance of respect and participation on the wellbeing of young people (Simmons et al., 2014; Galton and Page, 2015).

1.3 To what extent do the findings from the review of GIRFEC and CfE policy match the perceptions of the young people?

The outcomes of the policy and literature review uncovered the multi-faceted definitions and interpretations of wellbeing, which were sometimes contradictory, illustrating the bricolage approach the policy making (Ball, 1998). The key narratives explored in the review included the emotional wellbeing narrative based on an intervention approach, and a more holistic narrative which included learning for sustainability, and the associated themes, such as creativity, spirituality and outdoor learning. The research revealed young people viewed love, connection, growth and safety as key to their wellbeing, illustrating an understanding of holistic health and provided an opportunity for a dialogic encounter with young people to understand what wellbeing means to them, as advocated by Watson et al. (2012).

Outdoor learning was a particularly strong theme in the responses from the young people. For example, young people repeatedly made comments which

referred to the importance of being outdoors and not spending too much time watching the television or being on the internet. Further, young people made references to creativity and the importance of leading a life that is suited to the individual, but still being a caring person towards others, illustrating a philosophical understanding of the various facets and complexities of wellbeing.

The views of the young people in this study are in contrast to some of the interpretations of wellbeing which, as identified by Ecclestone and Hayes (2009), presents young people as fragile and requiring support. Young people in this study did not present their views in a way which suggested they were in need of interventions and support with their emotions, rather they presented a holistic understanding of wellbeing which linked in with love and loving relationships, learning for sustainability, outdoor learning and creativity. It is worthwhile to note that the school where the research was undertaken appointed a creativity champion, and had been slowly incorporating creativity into the whole school curriculum. Further, there is a robust *Personal and Social Education Programme* in place, young people often deliver their own assemblies on issues they feel passionate about, and contribute to all aspects of school life, from the school curriculum to teaching and learning. The school is also located in rural Scotland and outdoor learning is a part of school life. These factors may have impacted on the findings and it is worthy of further consideration in other research projects in different contexts.

This section explored the outcomes of the analysis of the broad policy approach in comparison to the views of the young people, and highlighted important differences in the young people's discourses and the policy approach. In the next section I look more closely at the definition outlined in the GIRFEC policy context, which formed part of the in-depth thematic analysis, exploring each of the eight wellbeing indicators against the views of the young people, gathered through the focus group activity.

1.4 The eight wellbeing indicators

Safe

In the GIRFEC literature the term 'safe' is defined as: 'Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community' (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d., p.10) with a strong emphasis on the child being safe and feeling safe. As I previously outlined in Chapter Five, several key themes emerged in the policy discourse. One narrative focussed on protection and 'appropriate behaviour' as seen by the policy creators and authorities. For example, there is a focus on the way in which a young person *thinks* in order to keep themselves safe and this is linked in with a policy view on the type of knowledge and skills a young person needs to develop a 'positive mindset' (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d., p. 28). The 'mindset' included the child or young person's relationships with trusted adults and friends, and also included the importance of behaving appropriately towards others, such as not bullying or discriminating against others and having 'a well-developed sense of identity

and belonging' (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d., p.29). Young people in this study also focussed strongly on the importance of protection and relationships when asked about the term safe.

As outlined in Chapter Five, individual responses from young people included the importance of a loving family and trusting relationships. Young people also understood the value of a healthy mindset and relationships, including the significance of a support network. Young people focused much more on the importance of close and loving relationships than the policy context, which for this wellbeing indicator, was more concerned with how young people act and behave. This was an aspect of the GIRFEC policy that revealed the contrasting narratives of preparing young people for adulthood and empowering young people through participation. Young people in response to this wellbeing indicator did not expand more fully on the importance of identity, but this may have been due to the method of data collection, and a follow up with a semi-structured interview may have facilitated more dialogue. Further, there was an emphasis on the rights of the child in the policy context and this was not apparent in the responses from the young people to the term safe. This is an interesting finding and mirrors the findings from other studies, where it was found that children tend not to use the term 'rights' when considering their understandings of the term wellbeing (Boushel 2012, in Watson et al., 2012), although the importance of being treated with respect was a re-occurring theme. In the findings of this study, young people did touch upon rights in their response to the term

respected, illustrating the interconnected nature of the eight wellbeing indicators and mirroring the findings from other young people.

Healthy

The term 'health' historically in a policy context would have referred to the medical perspective, which meant the absence of disease (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d.). The definition now includes the importance of mental health and wellbeing in the present, rather than solely a focus on developing physical health habits for the future. In the GIRFEC policy context health is defined as: 'Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare, and support in learning to make healthy and safe choices' (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d., p.10) and is broken down into five categories which includes physical, mental, emotional health and wellbeing, sexual and social. There is also a strong emphasis on the voice of the child, and the influence of UNCRC article 12 can be seen in the policy documents, for example, statements such as:

Then he or she has the right to appropriate treatment, care, education, training or practical support to enable them to manage their condition, be empowered to make decisions for themselves and participate fully and effectively in school and within the community.
(Stradling & MacNeil, n.d., p. 29).

This is a complex statement and links in with one of CfE's four capacities the 'effective contributor'. This raises many questions, such as: How do we measure full and effective participation in school? Who determines what that is and what it looks like? If the school decides then how is that congruent

with the spirit and ethos of UNCRC? These questions are beyond the scope of this research but do illustrate how some of the statements in the policy context require critique and also need to include the voices of children and young people. When the young people answered the question of what health meant to them, their focus was on the holistic viewpoint of health in terms of describing the importance of basic needs but also, they noted the significance of other aspects of one's life such as learning, socialising and leading a balanced life between work and play. The responses from the young people did suggest they had an understanding of important questions about how to lead a good life and what that means to them.

In the GIRFEC policy the wellbeing indicator health did not include spiritual wellbeing, and explored the concept under the five sub-domains of physical, mental, emotional, sexual and social (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d.), which is an interesting omission as the *My World Triangle* in Chapter Two, section 4 (Figure 3) included the sub-domain spiritual. In the *Health and wellbeing across learning: responsibilities of all experiences and outcomes* on page one it states: 'I can expect my learning environment to support me to.....understand and develop my physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing and social skills', and then spiritual wellbeing is not referred to in the document again. For example, page two describes the 'four aspects of wellbeing' which are mental, emotional, social and physical'. Spirituality is explored in the *Religious and Moral Education (RME) Experiences and Outcomes*. For example, in the *RME Experiences and Outcomes* it states that learning

through the subject enables learners to 'develop the skills of reflection, discernment, critical thinking and deciding how to act when making moral decisions' and 'make a positive difference to the world by putting my beliefs and values into action' (Education Scotland, 2017b). This viewpoint is mirrored in the *3-18 Creativity Impact Report* (Education Scotland, 2013a) which states that through the development of creativity skills young people become increasingly 'motivated and ambitious for change for the better, including in their own capabilities' and 'confident in the validity of their own viewpoint' (Education Scotland, 2013a, p. 6) and in the learning for sustainability (LfS) section on the GTCS website it states LfS is 'A whole school approach that enables the school and its wider community to build the values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and confidence needed to develop practices and take decisions which are compatible with a sustainable and equitable world' (GTCS, 2017).

Achieving

The definition used for the wellbeing indicator achieving in the GIRFEC literature is described as: 'Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self-esteem at home, at school and in the community' (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d., p.10) and links in with the CfE capacities 'confident individual', 'successful learner', 'effective contributor' and 'responsible citizen'. The term achieving in GIRFEC is intended as a more holistic concept than in previous educational eras where the term was almost synonymous with attainment; as noted by Stradling and

MacNeil (n.d.) in the GIRFEC and CfE literature the focus is on children's rights and more specifically the child or young person's right to fulfil their potential. There is also a strong onus on softer skills and internal characteristics such as motivation, self-awareness, skills development, self-esteem and resilience. It is an interesting concept to explore in more depth with young people in a school setting as it was only a decade ago that some secondary schools solely focussed on academic or sporting prowess as a means for developing self-esteem and identity.

When the young people were asked about the term achieving in this study, they responded with a range of answers which suggested they had a more balanced view, rather than seeing high grades or sporting excellence as the only area of their life to celebrate as a success. The responses included viewing learning as a process rather than just an outcome, recognising and understanding the importance of motivation and determination in the face of failure, and setting and reaching goals and challenges. However, there was also a strong focus on the importance of achieving high marks and passing tests and exams. There was less of an explicit reference to children's rights and a strong focus on the type of person one was (there were several references to being nice or a good person) although more generally young people did specify the importance of having people to support them. This could be due to the school ethos, which has always employed a strong discipline system within a caring and nurturing environment. It is only more recently that children's rights have become a more explicit focus of the

school improvement planning process, where authentic participation is becoming a part of the of the whole school ethos (See *How good is OUR School*, Education Scotland, 2018 for further information).

Nurtured

The Scottish Government (2008c) defined 'nurtured' as: 'Having a nurturing and stimulating place to live and grow'; 'Having a nurturing place to live, in a family setting with additional help if needed or, where this is not possible, in a suitable care setting'. These statements are similar to those of the young people in this study who responded to the question 'What does nurtured mean to you?' with comments such as: 'Caring, foster carers, doctors, friends and family' (Arnold, S2 male) and: 'Family, friends, brothers and sisters, animals, home' (Donal, S1 male). Although the responses to the wellbeing indicator nurtured generated the most limited answers in both depth and scope during the focus groups with the young people, the themes in the GIRFEC policy were apparent in other comments made by young people under different wellbeing indicators. This finding shows the interrelated and slippery nature of the concept of wellbeing. On the Scottish Government GIRFEC webpage, for example, where each of the wellbeing indicators is explained, examples for each indicator are provided. Examples for the term nurtured included: 'Experiencing appropriate boundaries and supervision at home', and: 'Receiving the appropriate care and guidance from parents/carers'. Although young people did not consider these points when asked about the term nurtured, when asked about the 'respected' wellbeing

indicator young people said: 'Respecting others and following rules, rules that you need to respect' (Andy, S2 male), and: 'Looking after someone friends or family' (Tilly, S2 female). This indicated a recognition of the importance of being taught to behave appropriately.

However, there were some differences in the responses from the young people to this particular wellbeing indicator, potentially because the young people have not had the opportunity to reflect on experiences that may have influenced (either helped or hindered) the various aspects of wellbeing. The most significant difference was the importance of a healthy identity, resilience and rights. For example, two key sub-domains of the concept 'nurtured' in the GIRFEC policy context are: 'Has a well-developed sense of self-esteem and self-respect' and 'Is confident and competent when faced by problems and new challenges in their everyday lives' (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d.). The young people seemed to have a different understanding of this particular wellbeing indicator than the other seven indicators, and this was noted in the pilot study with the senior pupils where they felt that an explanation would be required for younger pupils. The moderator did provide an explanation for this indicator, although the responses were still limited in comparison to other responses. Nevertheless, every single young person cited love as a key factor to their wellbeing in the creative task, which illustrates their implicit understanding of the term. It would be interesting to explore this in more depth with a larger sample of young people and the links with the term and school ethos, and it would also be important to access the views of a more

diverse population to ensure a wider range of young people were represented.

Active

Under GIRFEC the concept of 'active' is described as: 'Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport which contribute to healthy growth and development, both at home and in the community' (Scottish Government 2008c), and the sentence used to encapsulate the views of the young people for 'active' was: 'Having a balanced and stimulating life enjoying a range of activities'. Both the GIRFEC literature and young people recognise the importance of a variety and range of activities in order to be active. The concept in the policy literature is connected to the notion of 'activity and resilience' (Scottish Government 2008c), which is defined as: 'The ability of a person to bear and grow through adversity'. This definition of resilience is linked with comments above, which young people identify in the creative task as 'Learning and growing'. Also, the policy context notes that resilience can be developed through a sense of belonging and supportive relationships in both home and school, which is also linked with the theme 'Having loving relationships' specified by the young people in the creative task. The sub-theme of resilience was very explicit in the GIRFEC literature and more subtle in the perceptions of the young people. Statements made by young people across the eight wellbeing indicators suggested they had an understanding of the importance of resilience, although the actual term was not explicit in their vocabulary. Under the term 'achieving' for

example, Donal in S1 said: 'Don't drop out of something if you fail' and under the term 'responsible' the females in S2 collectively said: 'Proving that you can do the task that has been set for you without giving up or going against what they've told you to do.'. This illustrates the theme of resilience but described in language more relevant to the young people themselves.

The concept of active in the GIRFEC literature is further expanded upon to include links with activity, healing and personal growth (Scottish Government, 2008c), which is related to the importance of good attachment experiences and a belief in one's own ability to succeed in achieving one's goals. This latter point is echoed in the views of the young people when responding to active, especially the quote: 'Being fit, healthy and happy. Having motivation'. This suggests that young people recognise the significance of internal characteristics, such as being motivated and 'happy', although it would be interesting to unpack the term happy to explore what was meant in more depth.

Respected

The term respected is defined as: 'Having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions which affect them' (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d., p. 10). In the GIRFEC literature there was an explicit focus on empowerment, self-worth and belonging, which mirrors themes in other wellbeing indicators such as 'active' and 'nurtured'. The definition of the term could be connected to earlier Scottish legislation around children's rights,

specifically the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, which had a strong emphasis on children's rights. The indicator and the Act are linked to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992) Article 12 and 29. Article 12 states: 'When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account' (UNCRC, p. 2). Article 29 states: 'It should encourage children to respect others, human rights and their own and other cultures. It should also help them learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people' (UNCRC, p. 3). This illustrates the theme of reciprocal respect in the literature which was also clearly evident in the views of the young people, who specified the importance of 'Treating people how you would like to be treated', and 'Being responsible and trustworthy and not being afraid to be different'. It was interesting that young people focussed more on *behaving* in respectful and responsible ways rather than having *rights*. It was also interesting that the focus of respectful behaviour was toward other people rather than including the environment and other cultures. This could be for a number of reasons, firstly, the school is more recently focussing on participation and rights whereas historically the school had a strong focus on discipline. The school is also beginning to explore a whole school approach to learning for sustainability rather than it being experienced as a discrete part of the curriculum.

Responsible

As noted by Stradling and MacNeil (n.d.) the term 'responsible' is probably the most complex of the eight wellbeing indicators for a number of reasons. It is complex because it includes values and ways of thinking and feeling, and is linked to numerous other aspects of CfE and children's rights. The concept is linked to the four capacities, especially the capacity 'responsible citizen', and the four contexts of learning which includes the ethos and life of the school as a community and opportunities for wider achievement (BTC 3, Scottish Government, 2008b). The wellbeing indicator and how it fits in with the other aspects of CfE creates complex questions about whose values and ways of thinking should be employed, and in what ways should young people be taught about their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. In the GIRFEC literature 'responsible' is defined as: 'Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles in their schools and communities and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision and being involved in decisions that affect them' (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d., p. 10).

Young people understood and viewed the term as a proper way of behaving towards people, pets and belongings with a strong focus on being trustworthy and caring for others. Their views were similar to the GIRFEC literature in so far as the importance of behaving in certain ways and having certain values. The sub-domains in the GIRFEC literature were very focussed on the expectations of a child or young person by a certain age and stage, which

included items such as 'understands the consequences of not following school rules', and 'engages in age-appropriate voluntary activities' (Stradling & MacNeil, n.d., p. 42).

Included

There were further differences between the views of the young people and the policy context in the wellbeing indicator 'included', for example, in *Mapping policy, strategic and practice developments to the Getting it right for every child wellbeing indicators*, (Stradling and MacNeil, n.d.) there is a strong focus on the importance of receiving help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities, which will be much more pronounced since the introduction of the Pupil Equity Funding in 2017 (Scottish Government, 2017), which is Government funding provided to schools to close the attainment gap in Scotland. This aspect of wellbeing is also linked to Public Sector Equality Duties 2017 whereby all public authorities have responsibilities to ensure equality of opportunity and all schools have a responsibility and duty to have an equalities and diversity policy in their organisation. It is understandable that the young people would have a different understanding of the term than the policy context if the policy context is interwoven with complex legislation.

The responses from the young people to the wellbeing indicator were connected to the importance of everyone being treated fairly and well. Typical responses from the young people included: 'People believing in you;

friends that don't shut you out; having friends where nobody is better than anybody else', illustrating a concern with friendships and relationships which are equal, rather than a social and political comprehension of social justice. This could be for a several reasons. Firstly, the young people participated in a creative task and focus group which lasted around an hour. If a further method, such as a semi-structured interview, had been employed following the focus groups, additional information may have been revealed. Further, this could be a policy issue for the school, for example, the school's equalities and diversities policy may not be thoroughly and explicitly referred to as part of a whole school approach to this aspect of wellbeing. It would be interesting to explore this more deeply with groups of young people of different ages in different schools across Scotland from diverse populations.

1.5 A summary of key findings

When young people in this case study were asked what wellbeing meant to them their responses revealed a strong focus on the importance of love and belonging. The young people illustrated their capacity to reflect on what it means to live well, and were very aware of factors that could be detrimental to their wellbeing. The analysis also revealed a disconnect between the various health and wellbeing policies and highlighted the need for clarity around the various components and sub-components of wellbeing, and the implications for practice. This poses a number of questions which need to be explored more deeply, as noted by Biesta (2013) located within the CfE documentation is a particular position related to citizenship in a Scottish

context. The notion of 'community' for example, is depicted as unproblematic (Biesta, 2013) and related to sameness; the documentation does not unpack plurality and democratic politics, or recognise differing views and values on what it means to lead a good life. The ambiguity in the policy context, the findings from the literature review and the responses from the young people, illustrates the importance of re-visiting curriculum planning and learning, teaching and assessment to explore in depth the wellbeing agenda and potential impact on the wellbeing of children and young people.

2. Implications for policy and practice

As noted by Thorburn (2018) a key purpose of analysing wellbeing policy is trying to understand the thinking behind the policy. In relation to GIRFEC, the philosophical rationale behind the policy was well articulated and also demonstrated a focus on improving outcomes for young people. The rationale was based on a shared understanding of a holistic definition of wellbeing, which included a recognition of young people learning to consider what it means to be 'well' rather than purely 'healthy'. Although the rationale for GIRFEC was clearly explained and justified, when problematized the approach revealed the complexity of power and autonomy. The CfE health and wellbeing 'responsibility of all' experiences and outcomes were also operationalised as a list which lacked depth and rigour in comparison to later CfE documents related to wellbeing, such as creativity and learning for sustainability. These later publications provided more robust opportunities for

children and young people to develop their holistic wellbeing through meaningful experiences.

The four themes generated by the young people in response to the creative task in this research also touched upon the importance of spiritual health which young people described as 'being a good person', 'learning and growing' and 'being healthy', which included references to the importance of connecting with nature and having an active mind. Creativity and learning for sustainability are the responsibility of all teachers and it may be helpful to re-visit the health and wellbeing 'responsibility of all' experiences and outcomes and explore more deeply the philosophy behind the various policies and how they are interconnected. As noted by MacBride (2018), we need to move away from the notion of 'effective delivery' of health and wellbeing and move towards the fostering of wellbeing of all, which requires discussion with all those involved in the school system.

The complexity and problems of policy implementation suggests that the early documentation could be re-visited in light of more recent changes which have provided an opportunity for a developing understanding of the wellbeing agenda, internationally, nationally and locally.

The young people in this study had a very robust understanding of many aspects of health and wellbeing, and demonstrated a more sophisticated level of understanding including reflecting on what it means to live well and

live well with others. It would be interesting to explore this in more depth, and perhaps more specifically, look at how young people come to shape their understanding of wellbeing, especially the influence of peers, family and social media. Opportunities for young people to be creative in art and drama, to be critical and reflect on what it means to lead a life with meaning in history and literature, and to be reflective in religious and moral education, provide opportunities for fostering wellbeing (Ecclestone and Rawdin, 2016). Doddington (2018) also argues for the importance of using imagination in specific subjects, such as history, to develop meaning in learning which then impacts on engagement and wellbeing.

The young people in this study, and in the studies identified in the literature review conducted in different contexts and using different methods, identify the significance of love and acceptance- of feeling that you belong- as an important part of an individual's wellbeing. This is important for the wellbeing agenda and for schools to consider when exploring and establishing the school ethos and how wellbeing is understood in their school context. The responses from the young people in this study revealed young people were less aware (or less explicit) about their rights. It would be interesting to see if this were similar in a primary and secondary setting; the rights agenda may be more explicitly taught in the primary sector and less so across learning environments in the secondary sector. The difference in the experiences of children and young people in the primary and secondary sector in relation to children's rights was noted in *Quality and improvement in Scottish education*

2012-2016 (Education Scotland, 2017). In relation to secondary schools the report stated:

While most young people felt they are treated fairly and with respect in the secondary sector, inspectors found that some schools had a narrow view of young people's rights. Such schools need to consider new, creative ways of supporting all young people to express their views, and to take these into account.

(Education Scotland, 2017c, p. 20).

Rights Respecting Schools has been suggested to develop positive attitudes to diversity and inclusivity, and increase children's capacity to discuss complex and difficult issues (Boushel 2012, in Watson et al., 2012). It would also be interesting to conduct qualitative research in primary and secondary schools which have achieved the UNICEF *Rights Respecting Schools Award* and compare the results against those schools which have not achieved the award, to build on the research undertaken by Robinson (2014). The *Rights Respecting Schools Award* has been developed by UNICEF to support schools to continue to place children's rights at the centre of their practice and ethos. In the guidance it notes: 'The Rights Respecting Schools Award recognises achievement in putting the UN Convention on the Right of the Child (UNCRC or CRC) into practice in your school to improve wellbeing and help all children and young people realise their potential.' (UNICEF, accessed 2018) which is mirrored in the ethos of the GIRFEC literature when exploring the concept of 'achieving'. In the spirit of the UNCRC and child-centred pedagogy, more research should be carried out with young people to explore how they can feel more connected with school and explore what needs to happen to facilitate the change. The key issues arising from the

findings of this research are unpacked in Chapter Seven where the implications for stakeholders are explored.

2.1 The complexity of definitions and understandings

It became apparent in the literature review and findings chapters that there are different understandings of wellbeing in the policy context which have been expanded upon over a decade. The early CfE literature, which influenced the way in which schools implemented curriculum change, provided aspirational statements describing the four capacities which were evident in the GIRFEC rationale. For example, under the capacity 'responsible citizen' it stated that young people should be able to 'evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues' and 'develop informed ethical views of complex issues' (Scottish Government, 2009, p. 4), and as an 'effective contributor' it stated that young people should 'apply critical thinking in new contexts' (Scottish Government, 2009, p.4). However, the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes provided a slightly different understanding of wellbeing than in other policies, such as GIRFEC, learning for sustainability and creativity. The focus in the health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes, was more concerned with one's health rather than being *well*, which Cassidy (2018) describes as 'how one *is* in the world in terms of one's engagement and interaction with it and those who inhabit it' (Cassidy, 2018, p 17) and, described by Thorburn (2018) as 'wellbeing is more than happiness and something which connects with flourishing as a person *and* with making a positive contribution to the community and wider

society' (Shah & Marks, 2004 cited in Thorburn, 2018). So, whilst in the CfE health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes wellbeing is more focussed on the individual, GIRFEC does provide scope for the more holistic definition of wellbeing which includes flourishing as a person and making a contribution to society.

Generalisations cannot be made from these observations due to the small selection of young people involved in the case study, although as explored in Chapter Four, reader transferability in different contexts can be beneficial for other stakeholders. The information does provide the school with knowledge about how young people may experience their school life, and how they may perceive these various aspects of wellbeing. Belonging, being respected and showing respect are important to the wellbeing of the young people. It would be interesting to explore with young people from a more diverse group how they experience and perceive these wellbeing indicators. The research identified in the review, and the participants in this case study, did not, to the researcher's knowledge, explore how, gay, lesbian, non-binary and transgender young people experience these wellbeing indicators. Stonewall youth notes that 84% of trans young people have self harmed, 92% of trans youth have thought about taking their own life and 45% of trans youth have tried to take their own life (Stonewall Youth, 2018). Further research with a more diverse group of young people will enable the school to develop their school ethos to include experiences that satisfy the needs of all young people.

2.2 Summary

In summary, there are many similarities between the views of the young people and the GIRFEC literature when exploring the concept of wellbeing and the eight wellbeing indicators. The similarities are predominantly linked with the importance of behaving in appropriate ways, being a good and well-rounded person who can be trusted and relied upon, and being and feeling loved. There was also congruency in the area of health and activity, especially with the importance of services and a safe home environment. Young people spoke at length about the importance of the outdoors and limiting time on social media, illustrating a mature outlook in terms of their understanding of the importance of being active and offers interesting insights into the significance of outdoor learning to these young people. The main differences between the literature and the views of the young people were in the area of rights, inclusion and empowerment: young people did not recognise (or did not state that they recognised) the importance of rights and empowerment. These differences could be for a multitude of reasons, such as school ethos, the influence of family views about schooling and school policy implementation. Young people in this study were not as explicit about UNCRC and their empowerment, although they were concerned with exploring what it means to live well. The findings from the research also reveal that educators and policy makers need to consider more deeply how wellbeing policy is interpreted, enacted and experienced by young people, including how young people can be supported to be active participants in all aspects of their school life.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

1. Introduction

This chapter is presented in three parts. Part one is a synopsis of the history, context and literature in the field of wellbeing in education to briefly re-visit the trajectory of the agenda. Part two is an outline of the contribution to knowledge the thesis makes, acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the research. Part three reviews the implications of the study and recommended actions for: class and subject teachers; teachers with a pastoral remit; school Senior Management Teams; local authority Quality Improvement staff; and national stakeholders such as Education Scotland.

2. Synopsis

Legislation, policy and practice in the area of child protection, child wellbeing and education gathered momentum from the 1800s to the present day. Historically, the term was concerned with child welfare and protection from harm. In 1992 the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child came into force and slowly permeated the way children's rights and wellbeing were perceived and understood, focussing more on children's rights and their empowerment. This was a slow process and organisations are still engaging with the agenda to greater and lesser extents with diverse outcomes (Landsdown, 2011; Watson et al., 2012).

The turn of the 21st century was a further significant milestone in the history of child wellbeing with a strong focus from supra-national bodies, politics and education. The term wellbeing became a new concern and responsibility for educators, with numerous policy drives and differing definitions interacting in various policy contexts (Spratt, 2016). The agenda appeared to create arduous adherents and few critics with a seemingly benign agenda not requiring critique (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009). As the agenda developed in various disciplines such as education, politics and psychology, more research was conducted in the field which highlighted the complexities of definitions. Numerous definitions were used, sometimes interchangeably, and the ramifications of the chosen approach could, if applied uncritically, impose a narrative of fragility onto those it aimed to serve. As this occurred, the voices of those caught in the new wave of wellbeing policy contexts were captured with various degrees of authenticity and superficiality (Hall, 2010).

The history of research methods followed similar pathways, with positivism traditionally favoured as a gold standard for research continuing the 'what works' agenda of evidence-based policy making (Oancea & Pring, 2008). As children's rights emerged in new discourses, research methods also began to evolve to include more participatory and child centred approaches. Research approaches which aimed to be participatory and capture the authentic voices of children and young people (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2015) became more prominent in contrast to measurements in adultcentric ways (Rees et al., 2010). These developments enabled practitioners to access the views of

children and young people in order to improve outcomes for those they serve.

3. Contribution to knowledge which this thesis makes

This case study comes at a time when the OECD (2015) report stated CfE was at a 'watershed' moment (p.10) and made a recommendation that, through collaboration, practice across the country was strengthened. At the same time the GTCS is seeking to refresh the Professional Standards having recently undertaken research with children and young people in Scotland to explore values (GTCS, 2018). During the last decade Scottish education has experienced a significant transition which has yet to reach a conclusion. This thesis provides knowledge that can be of use to class and subject teachers, Senior Management, Quality Improvement Officers and national stakeholders such as Education Scotland, in order to continue to deconstruct the various policies linked to wellbeing, and to understand the potential consequences of various conceptions. Through the process of deconstruction and deeper understanding, learning and teaching and curriculum can be developed to meet the needs of children and young people.

3.1 The importance of wellbeing philosophy in educational policies

In a similar style to the research undertaken in England for the Department for Children, Schools and Families by Gill Ereaut and Rebecca Whiting in 2008, this thesis explored the ambiguity of Scottish wellbeing policy definitions and provides information for stakeholders to use in their contexts.

The findings from the policy analysis and the literature review revealed contrasting narratives in the policy context and in wellbeing in education research, but also highlighted a chance for the different components of health and wellbeing to be critiqued more deeply. Through a more in-depth critique, including the voices of children and young people, there is an opportunity for the various aspects of wellbeing to impact more directly on whole school approaches and learning and teaching. Through engaging with the various philosophical constructs of wellbeing as advocated by Thorburn (2014; 2015), and understanding the various degrees to which wellbeing philosophy has or has not influenced policy, stakeholders can reflect on the links between learning for sustainability, outdoor learning, creativity, GIRFEC and the CfE health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes. This could potentially facilitate the advancement of a curriculum rationale and pedagogical approaches that enable the development of personal wellbeing and the development of values. As noted by Thorburn (2015) there is a need to critically consider the curriculum and pedagogy to enable learning establishments to enhance the subjective experiences of young people and for objective content to be taught.

3.2 Authentically engaging with children and young people to understand contexts

The purpose of the research was to explore and understand wellbeing from the perspective of the young people in contrast to the Scottish policy context. This finding from this research facilitates stakeholders' understanding of how

young people perceive wellbeing policy in their context, and enables the identified gaps between policy rhetoric and the views of the young people themselves to be addressed. This process of uncovering the views of young people in their own contexts provides opportunities for authentic understandings of wellbeing to be developed (Watson et al., 2012). There are different methodological approaches to participation in research (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2014) and the different methods and understandings of participation in research studies capture the voices of children and young people to differing degrees of authenticity. The importance of the individual deciding what a flourishing life is themselves is based on an approach which listens to minority voices through relational ethics (Watson et al., 2012). Relational ethics enables greater complexity as it recognises the multi-faceted and conceptualised nature of wellbeing narratives (Watson et al., 2012). It is anticipated that the findings could support those concerned with wellbeing in education to better understand the complexity of the agenda in situated contexts and to encourage deep scrutiny of the agenda in other environments.

A creative method was used in this research with the aim of enabling young people to express their inner self individually prior to the facilitated discussion. Creativity can be seen as an expression of the creator's inner world and, approaches such as drawing, enable an inquiry into human experience (Broussine, 2008). The focus group method was used to aid how the complex information could be recorded in a way that did not impose

views on young people, and was facilitated, rather than managed by an adult. Focus groups are an effective way of supporting and facilitating a natural conversation, rather than creating an environment where there may be a fear of getting the answer wrong or being judged. This research was small in scale, and the extent to which the findings can be generalised is therefore limited (see Chapter Four). To develop and build on the findings from this study, further research with young people in different contexts would be necessary, potentially with larger sample sizes and including marginalised groups, to provide a broader understanding of how wellbeing is understood in different environments.

Through employing a social constructionist epistemology, the voices of the young people represented in this study illustrated they had a holistic and wide-ranging understanding of the term wellbeing. The findings generated through the methods used contribute to the wellbeing knowledge base, illustrating understandings of wellbeing in a specific time, place and context. As Andrews (2012) highlights, the data generated through such research endeavours provide a representation, and not reproduction of social phenomena, which is communicated through the researcher. Through utilising this epistemological approach, the data indicated that young people reflected on what it meant to them to live a life well, and all of the young people stressed the importance of love, relationships and feeling as though they belong. The importance of feeling loved and as though one belongs was not a unique finding specific to this case study and was evident in other

studies which explored the wellbeing of children and young people (Reece et al., 2010; Graham et al., 2017). It is worth noting that the young people who participated in this study did not represent all marginalised groups. As the findings from the young people revealed love was the most important factor to their wellbeing, and the literature review and the views of the young people illustrated the importance of love and a sense of belonging, it is important that a wider demographic have their voices heard, especially children and young people who experience barriers to attending school.

3.3 Developing an understanding of wellbeing and whole school policies

The young people in this research identified with the significance of leading a balanced life between work and play, limiting their time on social media, being outdoors, thinking creativity and being a 'good person'. The findings from the young people clearly illustrated the importance of outdoor learning to their wellbeing, and illustrated a difference between government and international views on rights, the environment and empowerment, in comparison to the young people who were less aware of the importance of their rights. This is not surprising as the findings in *Quality and improvement in Scottish education 2012-2016* (Education Scotland, 2017c) illustrated some secondary schools had a narrow view of children's rights and more creative and robust approaches were required. At the time of concluding this research, the Children's Parliament published their report on the *Children's Parliament consultation on the Progressing Children's Rights in Scotland Action Plan 2018-2021* and found significant variation in children's

awareness and understanding of human rights. The authors note: 'it appears that there is no consistent, strategic national approach or framework to informing children about their human rights' (Children's Parliament, 2019, p. 19). My findings from the policy analysis carried out in this research, which illustrated the prominence of rights, and the views of young people in the focus groups, support the findings of the Children's Parliament report and illustrate the need for schools to develop systems which embed right's-based approaches into school cultures. At a time of transition in Scottish education, these findings provide an opportunity to consider the implications for schools, and how the various components of wellbeing can be authentically and robustly planned in pedagogy and curriculum design. These points will be explored in more depth in the following section, exploring the implications and recommendations for various stakeholders.

4. The implications of the study for: class and subject teachers; teachers with a pastoral remit; school Senior Management Teams; local authority Quality Improvement staff; and national stakeholders such as Education Scotland

This section explores the implications for the various stakeholders and provides recommendations for practitioners and leaders in their specific roles. Sub-section 4.1 highlights the need for teachers to reflect on pedagogical approaches and the importance of developing learning experiences which facilitate children and young people finding meaning in their learning. Sub-section 4.2 identifies the need for pastoral staff to explore

the intervention approach with children and young people and to unpack how GIRFEC is understood in their context. Sub-section 4.3 suggests that head teachers should provide time for whole school meetings focussed on wellbeing and the associated implications for curriculum and pedagogical planning. Sub-section 4.4 highlights the need for Quality Improvement Officers to look at how local authorities are approaching outdoor learning and children's rights and calls for a deeper and more consistent commitment to the agendas. Sub-section 4.5 concludes that national stakeholders should re-visit the various publications and draw together the key components to promote a more coherent and philosophically informed wellbeing narrative.

4.1 Class and subject teachers

The introduction of CfE and GIRFEC has seen differing speeds of implementation (OECD, 2015), and has been criticised for the lack of a theoretical basis (Humes, 2013a). During this time of complexity and change, teachers have been provided with more autonomy and agency (Priestly, Biesta & Robinson, 2013). With these points in mind, this thesis provides an opportunity for class and subject teachers to reflect on the various components of CfE and GIRFEC, and consider the implications for their learners' wellbeing, the structure of the curriculum and teachers' pedagogical practice in their own setting.

As was highlighted in the policy analysis and the literature review, there are various ways of understanding and conceptualising wellbeing, each with

differing consequences for children and young people. The importance of a sense of love and belonging to a young person's subjective feeling of wellbeing was mirrored and evidenced from many of the young people involved in research, including those young people participating in this study. Young people in this study were very explicit about the importance of showing and receiving respect. Social pedagogical models, such as those highlighted by Watson et al. (2012), pay close attention to the adult-child relationship, and the findings from the *Review of the Professional Standards* (GTCS, 2018) indicates that teachers who are engaged with relationship-based practice support and improve the educational and wellbeing outcomes of children. This thesis provides information which can facilitate reflective practice for class and subject teachers, as they evaluate how the adult-child relationship is conceptualised in their context.

Young people in this study demonstrated a holistic understanding of wellbeing which included reflecting on how to live a life well, creativity, growth and treating people with respect and care. The young people in this study also highlighted that the need to develop resilience when faced with challenging learning experiences in order to achieve their goals. The literature review indicated that the wellbeing of young people, under the learning for sustainability approach to wellbeing, can be improved through learner-centred pedagogy and active participation in learning experiences. The literature also supported the importance of children and young people experiencing joy in learning, a finding that was also mirrored in the views of

the young people in this case study. The findings generated from this research provide teachers with information which can be used to reflect on the various aspects of learning, teaching and assessment and curriculum. For example, as discussed in the literature review, teachers often feel under immense pressure to deliver assessment outcomes, and curriculum change generates workload implications for teachers. This was especially the case during the inception of CfE, when there were concerns from head teachers about increased teacher workload (Thorburn, 2016). The focus on assessment can create a feeling of a hurried experience in the classroom which is reduced to a focus on passing assessments (Doddington, 2018). When the main concern of teaching is based on passing assessments this can limit opportunities for young people to be creative in their learning and experience personalisation and choice. The findings from the young people in this study support Doddington's call for subject and class teachers to consider how they can draw out meaning in their teaching activities to engage children and young people in the educational experience, which could then create subjective feelings of joy and the development of flourishing in learning (see Doddington, 2018 for further discussion and examples of practice).

4.2 Teachers with a pastoral remit

The findings from the policy analysis and the literature review revealed the contrasting ways in which wellbeing can be understood in educational contexts and the potential ramifications of mix and match approaches which

have not been philosophically considered. For teachers with a pastoral remit it is important to reflect on current practice and understand the diverse ways in which wellbeing can be understood. The young people in this case study stressed the importance of feeling as though they belong, having people to trust, and having healthy relationships. The literature review indicated the significance of young people feeling included to their wellbeing, and the impact of not feeling included. The literature review revealed the potential for unhelpful consequences arising from certain interventionist approaches, which need to be carefully considered prior to implementation. As noted by Watson et al. (2012) what is required are opportunities for dialogue with children and young people as often the voices of those selected for an intervention remain unheard. It would be interesting to explore the impact of interventions and whole school approaches to wellbeing in more depth, using a range of methods in a variety of contexts. It would also be helpful to explore inclusion and wellbeing from the perspectives of marginalised groups in order to understand how organisations can change systems so that all children and young people feel included in school life. This should result in less onus on the intervention model, which aims to 'fix' the problem in the individual, and more focus on developing inclusive schools.

The findings from the policy analysis, literature review and the focus groups with the young people illustrated how important it is to question how GIRFEC has been interpreted and employed in specific school contexts, and explore if GIRFEC has been approached through a simplistic operationalised list. The

findings from the young people showed a holistic understanding of wellbeing, although a different understanding of rights. Through the process of deconstructing wellbeing policy in specific contexts, it is necessary to consider the extent to which children and young people are authentically consulted when their wellbeing is discussed. During this process, Hart's *Ladder of Participation* (1992), *How Good is OUR School* (Education Scotland, 2018a) and the *Review of the Professional Standards* (General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2018) should be considered. I would argue that when wellbeing is being explored with the child or young person, consideration needs to be given to the degree of authenticity of the dialogical encounter with the child or young person. In addition, the way in which wellbeing is framed requires deep scrutiny in individual settings. If, for example, a child or young person is experiencing a difficulty in the school context, reflection on how the difficulty is framed is required. Is the problem seen as located within the individual which can be fixed with an intervention? As noted by Watson et al. (2012) 'Wellbeing is not about giving (programmes, policies in schools), it is about engaging with children and young people in dialogic encounters' (p. 223).

4.3 School Senior Management Teams

The review of the literature suggested that not all practitioners are comfortable the wellbeing agenda. The views of the young people highlighted the importance of respect and relationships, and of experiencing growth and challenge in their learning. Further findings from the young people illustrated

the importance of outdoor learning and creativity to their understanding of wellbeing. It would be beneficial for senior management teams to provide whole school training on wellbeing to facilitate confidence in this area and develop a shared understanding of responsibilities, based on a robust philosophically informed framework. Further, in light of the on-going debate about the structure of the curriculum, it would be beneficial if teachers and other practitioners could be provided with opportunities for reflection in this area and time to construct learning experiences which enhance the learners' wellbeing and provide opportunities for capturing outcomes (see Thorburn, 2015 for further discussion). Keeping in mind the importance of interdisciplinary projects being well-considered, and not misrepresenting or distorting the core themes (Humes, 2013b). It would be beneficial if consideration is given to how the eight wellbeing indicators and GIRFEC could be holistically incorporated into curriculum and pedagogical planning (Thorburn, 2016), which would also facilitate the authentic embedding of children's rights within these areas.

The findings from this research also indicated that the young people in this study were less clear on children's rights than might be expected given the prominence of the rights discourse in policy. This was also evident in the *Health and Wellbeing: The Responsibility of All 3-18 Curriculum Impact Report* (Education Scotland, 2013b) which specified that further development work would be beneficial in this area, such as young people actively contributing to the construction of health and wellbeing learning experiences,

and pupil councils and committees having more of a perceived impact by children and young people. It would be interesting to consider the development of *Rights Respecting Schools* across clusters of schools to develop progression in this area from age three to eighteen, and provide more authentic opportunities for active participation from children and young people.

The literature review revealed the significance of the sustainable development narrative when considering wellbeing in education, and the young people in this study touched upon many aspects of learning for sustainable development within their responses, such as the importance of the outdoors, creativity and care and respect for others. The research also showed that sustainable development is a complex and multi-faceted agenda which includes outdoor learning, creativity (and the four sub-components of creativity –curiosity; open-mindedness; imagination; problem solving skills) (Education Scotland, 2018b) and children’s rights. Learning for Sustainability forms part of the standards for registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (2018) and is a core theme running through *How Good is Our School? 4* (Education Scotland, 2015). It will be important to work with school communities to explore how whole school settings are taking this forward with children and young people and exploring how the four contexts of learning specified in CfE (curriculum and subject areas; interdisciplinary learning; Ethos and life of the school; personal achievement) (Education Scotland, 2018c) are being used. As noted by Humes (2013b)

interdisciplinary, multi-context learning, collaborative, problem-based learning and action-research based learning are seen as enabling higher-order skills which facilitates the development of critical thinking.

4.4 Local authority Quality Improvement staff

The research findings and the literature review demonstrated the significance of the outdoor learning agenda to the wellbeing of young people, but it was also noted in the literature that policy enactment is complex due to specific school and local authority variables (Thorburn and Allison, 2013). The policy review also illustrated the importance of exploring the interconnected nature of the various agendas and associated links to wellbeing, such as creativity, children's rights and learning for sustainability. There was evidence from the literature review which highlighted the need to consider the pedagogical approach undertaken in outdoor learning, and how this also impacts on the wellbeing of the young person (Stan, 2018). Although the pedagogical approach taken was not as explicit in the views of the young people in this study, the importance of outdoor learning to their wellbeing was very strong. When outdoor learning activities are approached through interdisciplinary learning experiences several elements, such as creativity and challenging social and ethical issues, can be brought together to provide holistic and relevant learning experiences for children and young people (Humes, 2013b). This would provide learning experiences that are more meaningful and engaging for learners, and would enable the development of critical thinking. Further, as noted by Allison, Carr and Meldrum (2012) there could also be

scope for exploring the moral qualities required to be a good citizen and lead a meaningful life, which was also significant to the young people in this study.

The importance of and significance of children's rights was evident from the literature review, and as discussed in several chapters in this thesis, was an area young people were less explicit in when asked about their wellbeing. The findings from my research further support the findings from Children's Parliament consultation on the *Progressing Children's Rights in Scotland Action Plan 2018-2021* who note: 'Children intuitively and instinctively use language reflecting empathy, trust, kindness, respect and safety when discussing human rights. They speak of these as essential to building a just and fair society and feel that all people should demonstrate these characteristics in their relationships with others' (Children's Parliament, 2019, p. 21). More qualitative work needs to be carried out in schools and local authorities to explore how the outdoor learning agenda and the children's rights agenda are understood and have been realised in practice, including the teaching and curriculum approaches undertaken. The findings of work undertaken in schools and local authorities could then be used to develop a training programme in the various areas for consideration.

4.5 National stakeholders such as Education Scotland

This research highlighted the complex and multi-faceted way 'wellbeing' could be interpreted and enacted in different contexts. This complexity comes at a time when practitioners have more autonomy and agency with

curriculum and pedagogy in Scottish education (Priestly, Biesta & Robinson, 2013). With this new autonomy there is also a perceived ambiguity about which curriculum model is leading CfE (Humes, 2013a). The research has shown that wellbeing is a core theme running throughout the numerous Education Scotland publications, but the links could be lost when the connections are not made explicit and are not provided through a philosophically informed framework. It would be beneficial if a refreshed wellbeing narrative is provided that draws the various components together into a cohesive framework, which illustrates the links between pedagogical approaches and curriculum designs, that foster the wellbeing of children and young people.

The findings from the policy analysis illustrated the interconnected nature between wellbeing and rights, although this has become more evident in later publications. GIRFEC policy has a strong focus on rights and this was not as explicit in the responses from the young people in this case study. This is possibly a common theme in some secondary schools in Scotland, in comparison to the primary sector where there are been deeper engagement with UNCRC, which was also identified in *Quality and Improvement in Scottish Education 2012-2016* (Education Scotland, 2017c). As noted by Boushel (2012, in Watson et al., 2012) having a voice in matters that affect them is an important issue for children, and the rights agenda is often contested. The way in which the agenda is understood and enacted in specific contexts is likely to impact on the wellbeing of children and young

people. It may be beneficial for educators and various stakeholders if, following the recent publication of *How Good is OUR School* (Education Scotland, 2018a), examples of successful implementation of a rights-based agenda, in relation to curriculum and pedagogy, could be published. As I noted in the previous chapter, it would be useful to explore how young people understand wellbeing in those schools with *Rights Respecting Schools* status and compare against those who have not, and build on the work carried out by Carol Robinson, who in 2014 published a report for the Cambridge Primary Review Trust, to review research literature which reported on the perspectives of children and their experiences of school.

In conclusion, definitions are complex and without critique, including capturing and understanding the experiences of those the agendas are aimed to serve, there is a danger that benign agendas can result in unhelpful or even unintended harmful consequences. Although well meaning, each definition of the term 'wellbeing' raises complex questions about the purpose of education and the way in which narratives depict children and young people. More research is needed to both assess and understand the wellbeing of children and young people locally, nationally and internationally, providing opportunities to capture the unheard voices.

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APPENDIX

1 Child consent form

Dear.....

At.....we wish to support you by making sure that we provide the experiences to help you with your learning and life. To help us to do this we are running group discussions to find out what 'wellbeing' means to you.

We would like you to take part in this project which will take place during the school day. Your responses will be treated in confidence and you won't be able to be identified from what you say. The discussion groups will be recorded but will only be used and written up for academic purposes and the recordings will be destroyed after completion of the project. The information will also help us improve the range of educational experiences we provide for you.

If you are happy to take part please in the discussion group and give your permission to have your comments recorded please sign the permission slip below and hand it in to..... You can change your mind about taking part at any time. Just let me know.

Thank you

I am happy to take part in the discussion group and to be recorded, and for the information to be used for academic purposes and school improvement planning.

Signed
(Name) (Date)

2 Parental consent form

Dear Parent/Carer

At.....we wish to support our young people with a wide and varied curriculum which is based on evidence and informed by our pupil voice. To help us to do this we are running focus group discussions to find out what 'well-being' means to our learners.

Your child has been invited to take part in this project which will take place during the school day. His/her responses will be treated in confidence and he/she won't be able to be identified from what they say. The discussion groups will be recorded but will only be used and written up for academic purposes and the recordings will be destroyed after completion of the project. The information will also help us improve the educational experience of our young people.

If you are happy for your child to take part you need not take any further action. If you would like further information or would rather that your child didn't participate then please contact me at the school.

3 Interview schedule

Safe...
Healthy...
Achieving...
Nurtured...
Active...
Respected...
Responsible...
Included...

Some people suggest that these 8 areas cover all aspects of a young person's well-being. There are also brief examples of the definition of each of these areas, which have been written by professionals.

Working with your group, can you describe what each of these areas mean to you? Take each area in turn. Begin with 'safe' and ask 'What does it mean to me?' 'What do I need to be safe?' Write your own response on the placemat and then, when you have all written your response/s have a discussion with your group. Share each of your ideas and then agree on one response, which number 1 will record in the centre of the placemat.

Now do the same with 'healthy'. Ask yourself 'What does it mean to me?' 'What do I need to be healthy?' Again, write your response on the placemat and then, when you have all written your response/s have a discussion with your group. Share each of your ideas and then agree on one response, which number 1 will record in the centre of the placemat.

Do the same for the remaining areas: achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

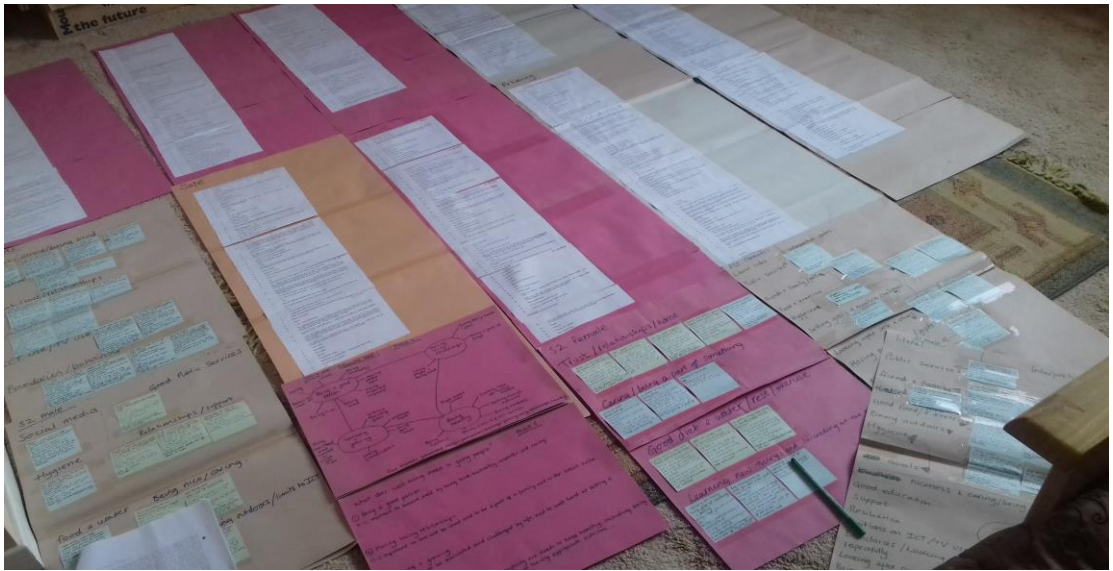
Once you have completed all of the 8 areas, discuss with your group if you think there are any areas missing.

Once you have completed the placemat activity for each of the areas, have a discussion in your group and agree upon which areas you believe are the most important to your well-being. Try and place the card in order of importance, with the most important need at the top, and the less important needs under the most important.

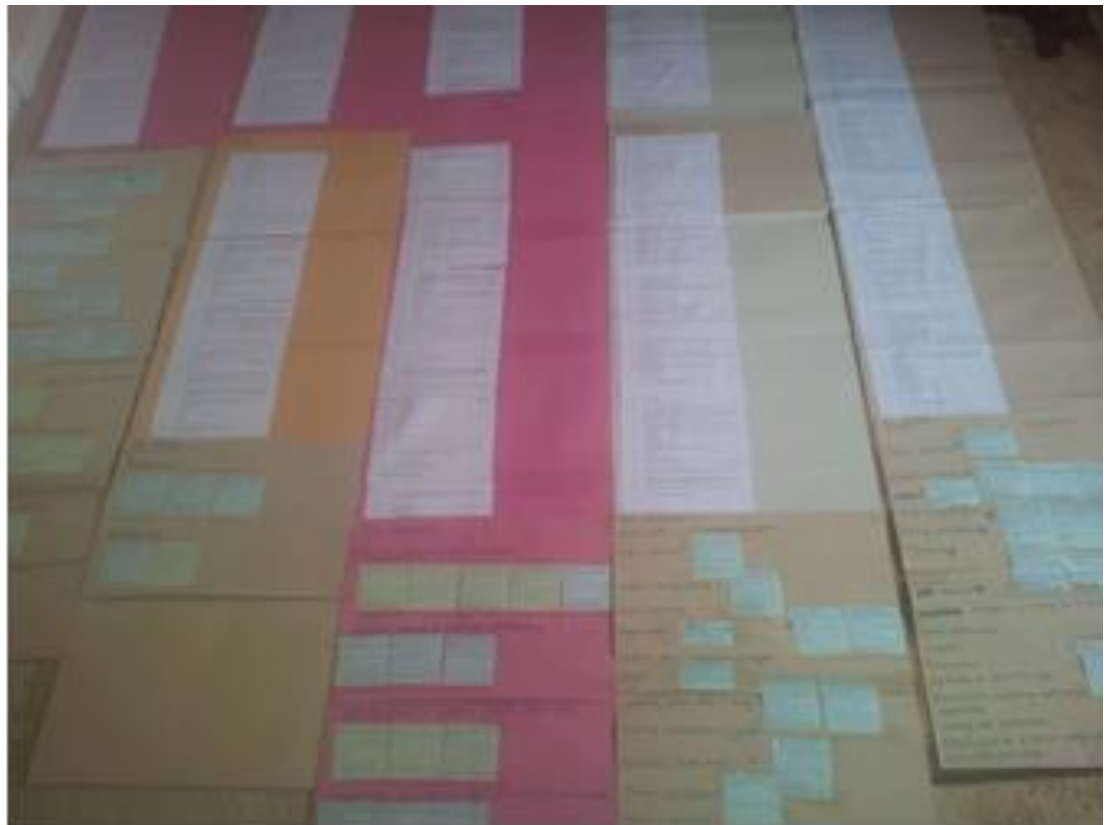
Thank you for participating in the group. If you have any questions, please ask.

4 Initial data set

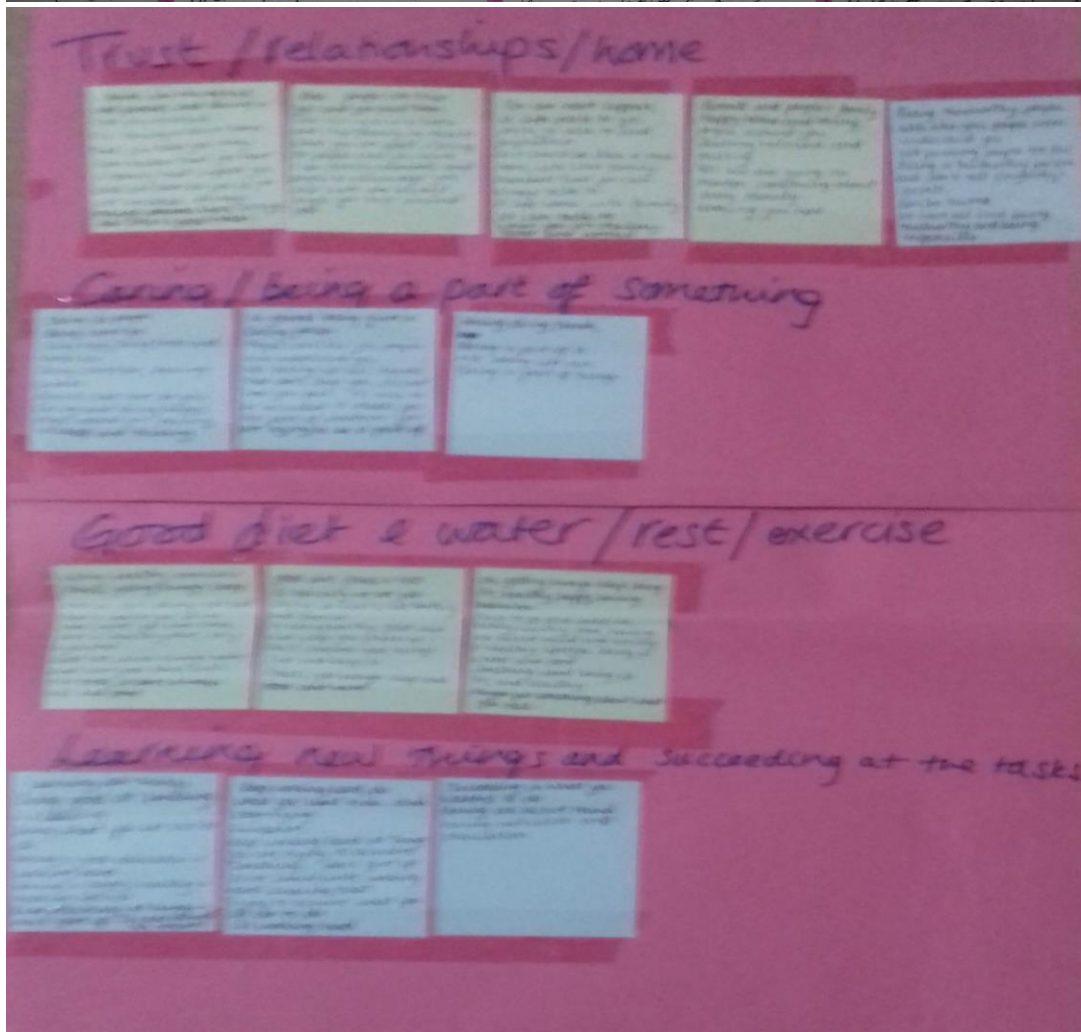
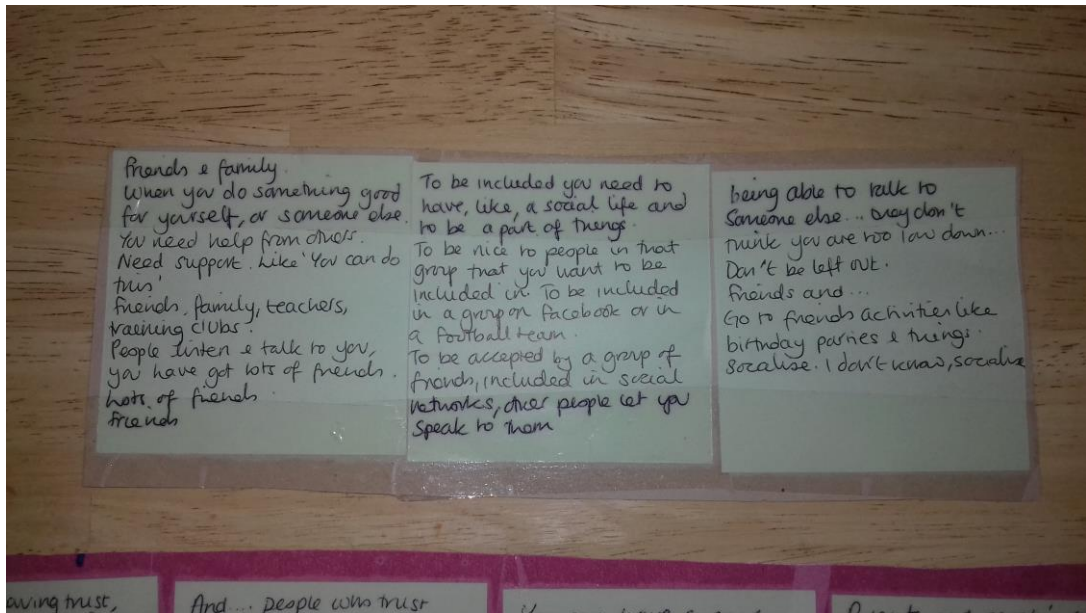


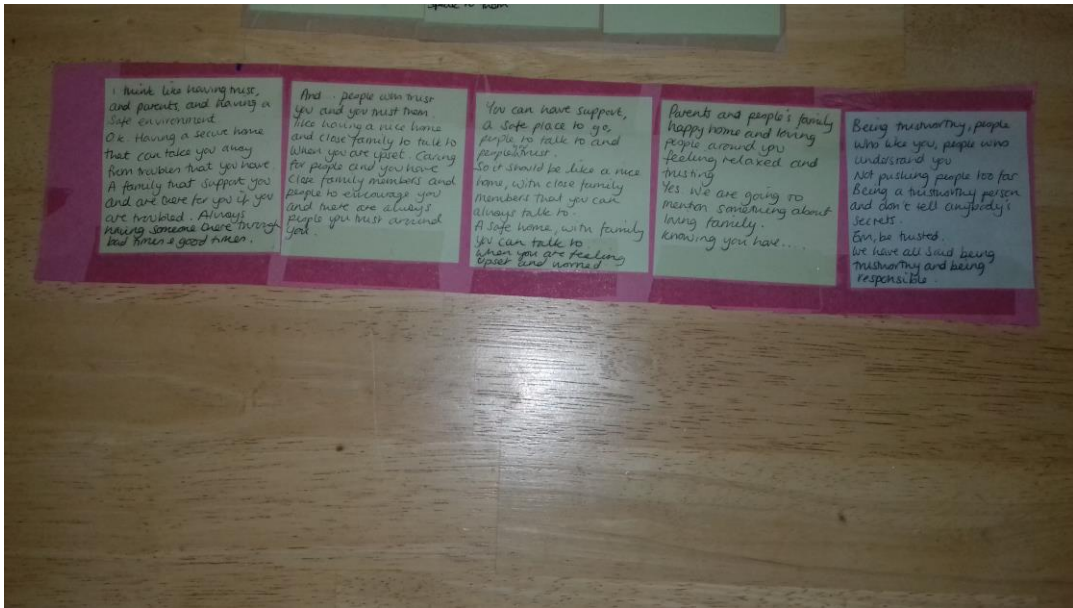


5 Developing the themes

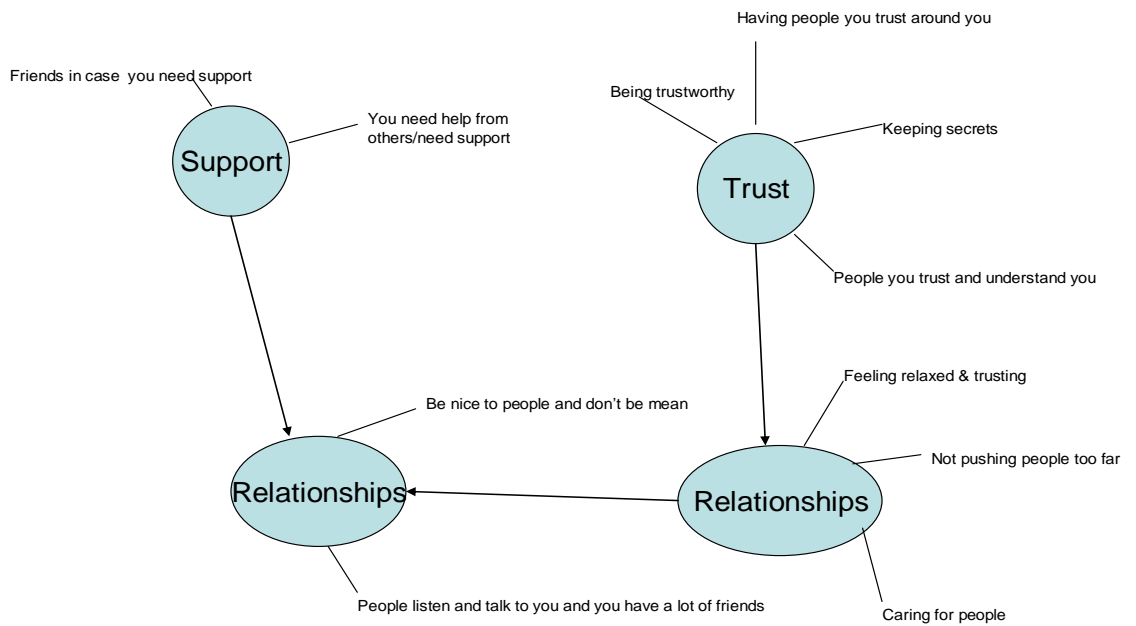


6 Refining the codes

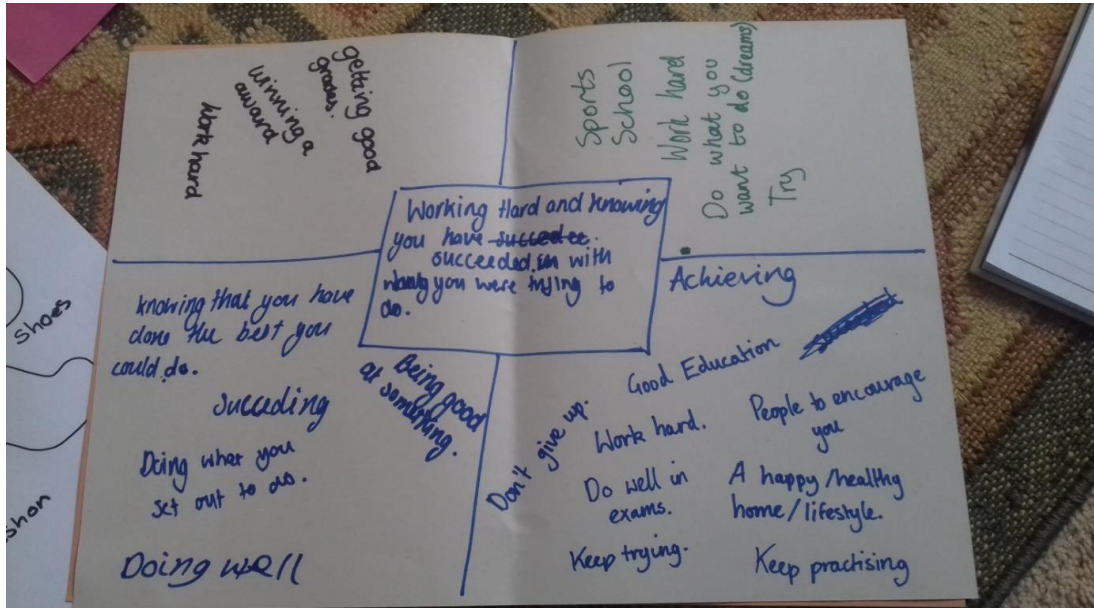




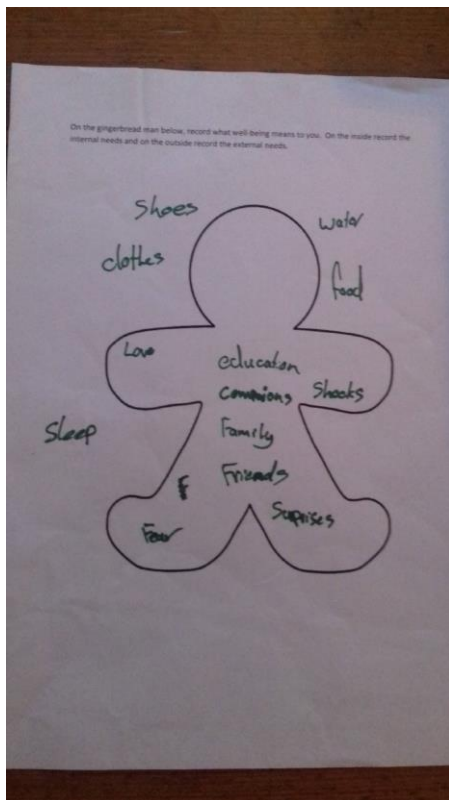
7 Developing and refining the themes



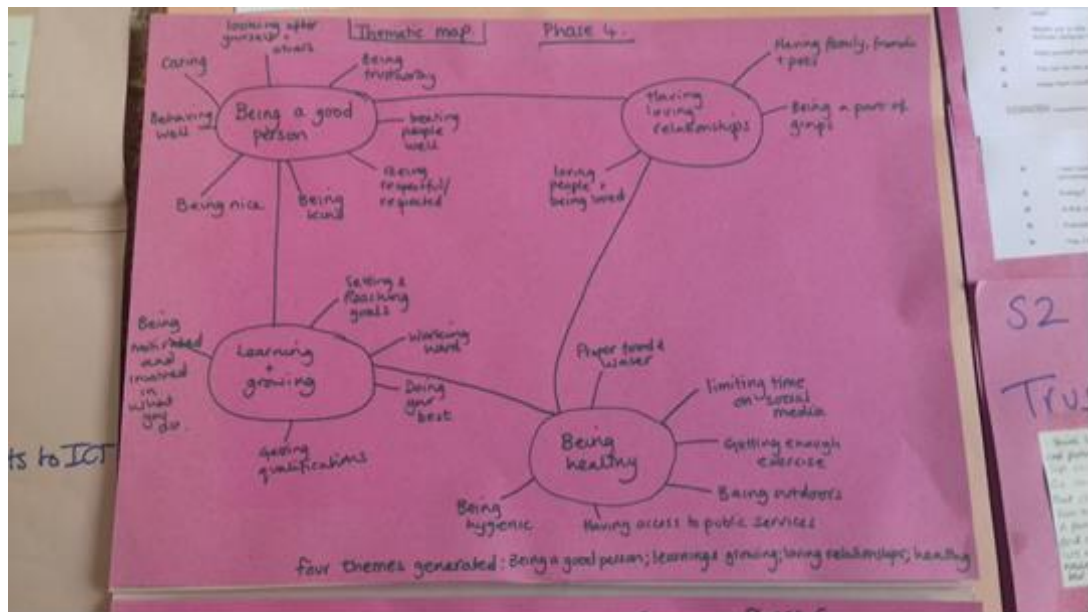
8 An example of one completed placemat



9 An example of one completed gingerbread man



10 A copy of the thematic map for the young people



11 A copy of the thematic map for the GIRFEC policy



12 A copy of the summary table comparing the wellbeing indicators with the views of the young people

Wellbeing Indicator	Similarities	Differences
Safe	Protected and guided by others	Equipped with knowledge (G)
Healthy	Basic health and healthy practices	Rights and empowerment, meaning in life, human flourishing (G)

Achieving	Perseverance and resilience Being determined	Being nice and being a good person (YP) Rights (G)
Nurtured	Love and family Environment Caring and being cared for	Identity (G) Rights (G)
Active	Play Exercise Learning and growing Subjective well-being	Resilience (G)
Respected	Voice Trust Responsibility	Being nice and kind (YP)
Responsible	Behaving and acting appropriately Honesty and trust	Resilience (G) Being nice (YP) Voice of the child (G)
Included	Support Love Relationships Trust	Being nice (YP) Children's Rights (G)

13 Stradling and MacNeil (n.d.) sub-domains of the eight wellbeing indicators

The Scottish Government: sub-domains

Key Sub-domains of SAFE
<i>The child or young person:</i>
Is free of exposure to physical abuse and violence within the home or the threat of it (<i>i.e. hitting, shaking, kicking, throwing, scalding</i>).
Is not at risk of avoidable physical dangers and health hazards within the home.
Is not at risk of avoidable physical dangers and health hazards outside the home.
Is free from exposure to the threat of physical or sexual abuse and violence.
Does not have a history of self harm or attempted suicide.
Does not experience bullying or discrimination by peers or adults at school.
Does not experience bullying or discrimination in the local community.
Is free from exposure to persistent emotional abuse within the home (<i>i.e. is not constantly criticised, ignored, humiliated, exposed to domestic abuse within the family</i>)
Behaves in a sexually appropriate way for their age and stage of development.

Is free from exposure to sexual abuse or exploitation (<i>i.e. is not subjected to indecent assault, under-age or non-consensual sexual intercourse, inappropriate sexual behaviour or language, sexual grooming via the Internet</i>).
Is free from physical neglect by parents or carers (<i>i.e. through providing adequate food, shelter and clothing, ensuring good hygiene or ensuring access to appropriate medical and dental care</i>).
Key Sub-domains of HEALTHY
The child or young person:
Is not exposed as a foetus to nicotine, alcohol or drug misuse during pregnancy.
Is not exposed to other choices by the pregnant mother that might harm the foetus and newborn baby (e.g. poor diet and nutrition, excessive dieting or exercise, not taking medication).
Birth weight is satisfactory.
Is breastfed during the first 6-8 weeks after birth.
Has strong loving attachment with primary carer(s).
Completed childhood immunisations by 24 months.
[Along with parents/carers) is compliant with treatment for any illnesses, diseases, chronic conditions and impairments.
Is registered with a dentist and receives regular check-ups.
Is free of dental decay.
Is not at risk of avoidable physical injuries in the home.
Is not at risk of avoidable physical injuries outside the home.
Is free of physical neglect by parents or carers (<i>i.e. through providing adequate food, shelter and clothing, ensuring good hygiene or ensuring access to appropriate medical and dental care</i>).
Key Sub-domains of ACHIEVING
The child or young person:
Displays age-appropriate physical and motor skills and development.
Displays age-appropriate language and cognitive skills development.
Displays age-appropriate intellectual development.
Displays age-appropriate psychological and emotional development.
Displays age-appropriate social development.
Has self-care and life skills appropriate to age and stage.
Has a level of independence or autonomy appropriate to age and stage.
Is motivated to attend and participate in learning at pre-school then school.
Is meeting or exceeding age-appropriate levels of educational attainment in writing.
Is meeting or exceeding age-appropriate levels of educational attainment in mathematics.
Is meeting or exceeding age-appropriate levels of educational attainment across curriculum.
[With impairments, disabilities and chronic conditions] is meeting or exceeding appropriate learning targets with additional support.

[With impairments, disabilities and chronic conditions] enjoys and is motivated to attend school.
[With impairments, disabilities and chronic conditions] is participating as fully as possible in the non-academic areas of school life with additional support.
[With impairments, disabilities and chronic conditions] is developing skills for coping with and managing their disabilities and long-term conditions.
[With impairments, disabilities and chronic conditions] is responsive to any additional support provided.
Is learning about themselves and what they can and cannot do.
Is learning new skills and applying them to meet new challenges.
Expresses a sense of achievement from what they are learning.
Is developing aptitude in one or more cultural activities.
Key Sub-domains of NURTURED
<i>The child or young person:</i>
Is not exposed as a foetus to nicotine, alcohol, drug misuse or domestic violence and abuse during pregnancy.
Is not exposed to other choices by the pregnant mother that might harm the foetus and newborn baby (e.g. poor diet and nutrition, excessive dieting or exercise, not taking medication).
Lives in a household where parents/carers and other family members understand the primacy of the needs of the infant or child.
Attends health care services and medical screenings when necessary.
Receives a level of physical care that ensures that the child is clean, adequately and appropriately clothed and kept warm.
Receives sufficient and appropriate nutrition.
Has strong loving attachment with primary carer(s).
Experiences consistent love and emotional warmth within the natural or placement family.
Feels loved and trusted.
Is mostly happy and satisfied with life.
Emotional and developmental needs are not neglected.
Is not subject to physical neglect by parents or carers (<i>i.e. through providing adequate food, shelter and clothing, ensuring good hygiene or ensuring access to appropriate medical and dental care</i>).
Receives regular praise and encouragement.
Lives in an environment which promotes their cognitive and emotional development through age-appropriate stimuli.
Is not left unattended when too young to properly take care of herself or himself.
Is not left in the care of an immature or inappropriate carer.
Is free of exposure to persistent emotional abuse within the home (<i>i.e. is not constantly criticised, ignored, humiliated, exposed to domestic abuse within the family</i>).
Is free of exposure to the threat of physical or sexual abuse and violence.
Is free of exposure to serious misuse of alcohol and drugs by family members or others in local community.

Key Sub-domains of ACTIVE
The child or young person:
Gets regular time in the early years and childhood for playing and interacting with parents/carers.
Is encouraged to be curious and to explore her or his environment.
Is encouraged to play with other children.
Receives appropriate stimulus and encouragement to develop their interests.
Responds positively to physical challenges in recreational and play-related settings.
Is as physically active as his or her capacities permit.
Is actively involved within his or her family, social network, school and community.
Actively engages in sporting and recreational activities at school.
Actively engages in sporting and recreational activities within the community.
Actively participates in stimulating activities regardless of disabilities or chronic conditions.
Is learning new skills and applying them to meet new physical and psychological challenges.
Is developing aptitude in one or more cultural activities.
Is developing aptitude in one or more sporting activities.
Is developing aptitude in one or more recreational activities and hobbies.
Demonstrates positive achievement in one or more non-academic activities.
Is learning about themselves and what they can and cannot do.
Is learning how to assess and manage risks in recreational and play-related settings.
Expresses a sense of achievement from their activities.
Receives regular praise and encouragement.
Has a well-developed sense of self esteem and self respect.
Is confident and competent when faced by new challenges in their chosen sports or recreational activities.
Receives appropriate support and coaching in their chosen sports or activities.
Key Sub-domains of RESPECTED
The child or young person is:
Free from exposure to physical abuse and violence within the home or the threat of it (<i>i.e. hitting, shaking, kicking, throwing, scalding</i>).
Free from exposure to the threat of physical or sexual abuse and violence.
Free from exposure to persistent emotional abuse within the home (<i>i.e. is not constantly criticised, ignored, humiliated, exposed to domestic abuse within the family</i>).
Free from exposure to sexual abuse or exploitation (<i>i.e. is not subjected to indecent assault, under-age or non-consensual sexual intercourse, inappropriate sexual behaviour or</i>
Has a positive and respectful approach to his or her own sexuality.
Does not have a history of self harm or attempted suicide.

Does not experience bullying by peers or adults at school.
Does not experience bullying in the local community.
Does not experience discrimination, labelling or stereotyping by peers or adults at school or in the community on the grounds of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, disabilities, learning difficulties, where they come from or live.
Feels safe at home.
Feels safe when out with friends.
Feels loved and trusted.
Experiences consistent love and emotional warmth within the natural or placement family.
Receives regular praise and encouragement.
Has a well-developed sense of self esteem and self respect.
Has a well-developed sense of identity and belonging with which they feel comfortable.
Mostly happy and satisfied with life, smiles and laughs a lot.
Feels that parents/carers, friends and the professionals with whom they come into regular contact will support them to fulfil their potential.
Generally optimistic and realistic about what they can achieve.
Confident and competent when faced by new challenges.
Feels that parents/carers, friends and the professionals with whom they come into regular contact with will support them through challenges and difficulties.
Feels listened to and taken seriously by parents/carers.
Feels listened to and taken seriously by friends and siblings.
Feels listened to and taken seriously by the professionals with whom they come into regular contact.
Feels that parents/carers and other family members respect their privacy and personal space.
Feels that they are treated by parents/carers as individuals in their own right with their own needs, expectations and aspirations.
When in contact with specialist or targeted children's services: Is provided with sufficient and appropriate information to make informed choices; is asked for their consent to information about them being shared between named agencies for a specific purpose which is explained to them and not simply as a matter of course; Has confidence that the information is handled and stored in a secure manner; Feels that any information they provide about themselves will be treated in confidence and that its further dissemination, handling and subsequent disposal will be appropriately controlled; Understands that if they are at serious risk of harm any information they provide may be shared with those who can help to keep them safe; Is made aware of the possible consequences of any decisions affecting them; Is actively involved in any assessment, planning or review process affecting

<p>them;</p> <p>Is helped to prepare for meetings where decisions will be made that directly affect them;</p> <p>Has access to independent advice on how to complain about their treatment or challenge any decisions by services which they feel do not take full account of their needs and wishes.</p>
Key Sub-domains of RESPONSIBLE
By the time the child is ready to attend primary school he or she:
Can follow simple rules and instructions and begin to internalise them.
Play and work cooperatively with other children.
Show concern and compassion for other children when they are hurt or upset.
Exercise some degree of age-appropriate self control over their emotions and behaviour.
Recognise when they are behaving badly and respond positively to correction.
Show some degree of age-appropriate remorse after wrongdoing, especially where this has hurt or upset others.
Show some understanding of the consequences of their actions.
Show some willingness to take responsibility for their actions.
Show respect for other children's possessions.
Show respect for school materials and equipment.
Behave in ways that are appropriate for their age, stage of development, environment and capabilities.
From 0 – 16 the child or young person experiences responsible care and appropriate role models to ensure they:
Attend all appropriate health screenings and medical appointments.
Receive appropriate care and guidance from parents/carers.
Have their emotional and developmental needs addressed.
Are free from physical neglect by parents or carers (<i>i.e. through providing adequate food, shelter and clothing, ensuring good hygiene or ensuring access to appropriate medical and dental care.</i>)
Live in an environment which promotes their cognitive and emotional development through age-appropriate stimuli.
Are not left unattended when too young to properly take care of herself or himself.
Are free from exposure to the threat of physical, emotional or sexual abuse.
Are free from exposure to serious misuse of alcohol and drugs by family members or others in local community.
Depending upon age and maturity, the school-aged child or adolescent:
Attends school regularly.
Is aware of the school's rules and generally abides by them.
Understands the consequences of not following school rules.
Understands the social norms and mores operating in the school.
Is generally clean and appropriately dressed when attending school.

Exercises some degree of age-appropriate self control over their emotions and behaviour.
Recognises when they are behaving badly and responds positively to correction.
Shows remorse after wrongdoing, especially when it has hurt or upset others.
Understands the consequences of their actions.
Takes responsibility for their actions.
Shows respect for others' possessions.
Shows respect for school materials and equipment.
Behaves in ways that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.
Does not engage in activities which could lead to school exclusion.
Is not considered by staff to be disruptive.
Is considered by professional staff and parents/carers to be generally honest and reliable.
Understands the social norms and mores operating in his or her network.
Has self-care and life skills appropriate to age and stage.
Has a level of independence or autonomy appropriate to age and stage.
Shows concern and compassion for others.
Is not involved in bullying or discrimination against others.
Is confident and competent when faced by problems and new challenges in everyday life.
Participates in age-appropriate school and voluntary activities to develop responsibility, leadership, social networking and decision making skills.
Engages in age-appropriate voluntary activities.
Does not engage in anti-social or criminal activity within the community.
Key Sub-domains of INCLUDED
The individual child or young person:
Has strong loving attachment with primary carer(s).
Experiences consistent love and emotional warmth within the natural or placement family.
Feels trusted.
Is mostly satisfied with life.
Feels listened to and taken seriously by parents/carers.
Has someone they can turn to, trust and rely on when anxious or disturbed.
Has a secure and supportive network of family members or carers and friends.
In regular contact with significant, supportive adults whom they trust.
Receives appropriate protection and guidance from parents/carers.
Has the resilience to cope with adverse circumstances at home (e.g. <i>parental separation, bereavement, parent or carer with psychiatric disorder, long-term health condition or impairment, etc.</i>)
Has the resilience to cope with traumatic events such as separation and bereavement.

Has well-developed sense of identity and belonging with which they feel comfortable.
Has a well-developed sense of self esteem and self respect.
Copes with the normal stresses of everyday life without undue or persistent anxiety, depression, withdrawal or aggression.
Confident and competent when faced by problems and new challenges in everyday life.
Generally optimistic and realistic about what they can achieve.
To minimise the potential impact of social and economic exclusion the child's family:
Lives in accommodation suitable for the size and needs of the child and family.
Lives in a well-maintained, safe and secure home environment.
Has an income level adequate to meeting day-to-day needs and special needs.