

**“If you don’t have anyone in school that’s like you, regardless, you won’t feel like you belong there”; What It Means to Belong for Secondary-aged Pupils from Ethnic Minority Backgrounds, an Emancipatory Study.**

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## **Abstract**

### **Introduction**

Belonging as described by Baumeister and Leary (1995) is a fundamental psychological need. When one does not feel they belong, this can be correlated with negative outcomes such as poor mental health, stress, physical illness and suicide (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In schools, Goodenow and Grady (1995) defined belonging as the extent to which individuals feel accepted, respected and included in school. They also noted that adolescents who experience high sense of belonging also experienced high academic motivation and engagement in learning. This was especially true for Hispanic and African American students (Goodenow and Grady (1995).

### **Aim**

This research aims to explore young peoples' (secondary-aged) experience of belonging in a school setting and the contributions that shape their experience.

### **Method**

The researcher used an Emancipatory research paradigm and opportunistic sampling to recruit seven participants who were from an ethnic minority background. Five of these participants were male and two were female. Semi-structured interviews were conducted as well as a questionnaire completed with their primary parent/caregiver. Interviews were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (RTA).

### **Results**

Two dimensions of school belonging were found, general and ethnic belonging. The protective factors that contributed to these seem to be connected to how strongly one relates

to their ethnic identity. Two other contributions to the experiences of belonging were: being different from the majority and the school ecosystem. This highlighted the external and internal responses to being different from the majority as well as the influences from the school system such their policies and ethnic representation.

### **Conclusion**

Feelings of belonging in school are influenced by one's connection to their ethnic identity and being from an ethnic minority background in a school system that is Eurocentric.

Implications of these findings are considered in relation to educational psychology practice and support that schools can provide.

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## **Glossary of Abbreviations**

ASC – Autism Spectrum Condition

CR – critical realist

EP – educational psychologist

INA – International New Arrivals

RTA – reflexive thematic analysis

TA – thematic analysis

TEP – trainee educational psychologist

# 1. Introduction

This chapter will cover key definitions, the socio-political context, rationale for conducting this research and its relevancy to Educational Psychology (EP) practice.

## 1.1 Personal Background to The Research

This study has arisen from personal interest. Growing up as someone with mixed heritage (half White British and half Indo-Caribbean) and of first generation to the United Kingdom, the complexities of ethnic identity, race and where I belong have been an ongoing battle. A battle that seems to be shared with other ethnic minorities known to me.

My friends and I flippantly express that we are ‘misfits’, as we don’t quite fit in with our own communities and each of us identify differently from each other. The school we attended was very diverse with a prominent population from ethnic minorities. However, this was not mirrored in the school staff and a sense of school belonging was not shared amongst us. In terms of our peers, we noticed cliques that appeared to be grouped through race or ethnic identity. However, we did not seem to follow this trend. I recall my friends varied experiences of developing their ethnic identity and how they were faced with feeling different or othered very early on in their lives or on arrival at predominantly White universities questioning their belonging and looking for ways to fit in. The theme of belonging in education and questions about where I fit in followed me to my current place of study.

Interestingly, there was a pull or an affiliation with the other ethnic minorities on the course. I also found myself joining various associations and networks aimed at supporting Black Asian and Minority Ethnic trainee educational psychologists (TEPs)/qualified educational psychologists (EPs). I also became a core team member of the Trainee Educational

Psychologists' Initiative for Cultural Change (TEPICC) whose overarching aim is to better the outcomes for children and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds and to connect other TEPs interested in developing culturally responsive practice. Was this an attempt to find a space where I could belong? Did other ethnic minorities join for similar reasons? This led me to be curious about what contributes to a sense of belonging in education. Specifically, for individuals from an ethnic minority background who may often feel othered or that they do not fit in to wider society. What facilitates a sense of belonging for these groups?

## **1.2 Key Definitions**

### *Sense of Belonging*

Belonging was described by Baumeister and Leary (1995) as a fundamental psychological need; "the need to belong is powerful, fundamental and extremely pervasive motivation" (p.1). They went on to describe belonging as an intrinsic drive to form interpersonal relationships with others where there are frequent pleasant interactions and concern for each other's welfare (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). They also took an evolutionary standpoint and claimed that belonging to a group increases chances of survival. For example, for reproduction, protection, shared resources, and affection (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Those who do not feel part of a community or have a sense of belonging are more prone to negative outcomes such as poor mental health, suicide, stress, physical illness and in some cases criminality. Belonging was viewed as distinct from attachment theory. For example, having a sense of belonging can occur with any human being and the loss of someone can be replaced. However, they highlight how long this process takes and that interactions with strangers or new people does not elicit belonging straight away.

Belongingness was also described by Maslow (1943) in his paper on “A theory of Human Motivation”. He expressed that belonging is a psychological need that comes after physiological needs such as food, water, warmth and safety needs such as security are met. In line with Baumeister and Leary’s (1995) findings that belonging leads to better psychological outcomes, Maslow (1943) believed that to be able to reach self-actualisation (achieving one’s fully potential) a sense of belonging needs to be met. Additionally, belonging is a need humans possess which is linked to being accepted among others.

Chiu et al. (2016) similarly, expressed that a greater sense of belonging is achieved when an individual is in a stable social network such as having two parents and very close friends as opposed to no parents and no close friends. Building on Baumeister and Leary’s (1995) and Maslow’s (1943) ideas on belonging, Chiu et al. (2016), allude to context and culture. They explain that, a sense of belonging can also be context dependent as an individual’s sense of belonging is not singular and can exist in multiple environments and across various dimensions. For example, an individual may feel as though they do not belong in their family environment, however, they feel a sense of belonging in their social group. This highlights the dynamic nature of belonging. Chiu et al. (2016) also express that to understand an individual’s sense of belonging, one must examine the specific context they are exposed to. This was also expressed by Osterman (2000) who stated that functioning optimally and meeting belonging needs is context dependent, on-going and situation specific. The next section will explore how sense of belonging is defined in a school setting.

### ***Sense of Belonging within School***

Having a sense of belonging in school can often be used interchangeably with other terms such as school membership, school relatedness and a sense of community (Allen et al. 2016;

Osterman, 2000; Slaten et al., 2016). Although there are different terminologies used to describe a sense of belonging in school, the researcher will use the term school belonging or belonging in school. There are also many definitions of school belonging in the literature which include the following:

- School belonging is the “extent to which they feel personally accepted, respected, included and supported by others – especially teachers and other adults in school social environments” (Goodenow and Grady, 1993 p.61).
- School belonging is relating to others and feeling secure in this which in turns helps one to feel worthy of love and respect (Osterman, 2000).
- School belonging is a psychological construct which is underpinned by feelings of being accepted and valued by the school community as well as being attached to school (Willms, 2000).
- School belonging is having a belief that adults are interested in them as individuals, are able to support them academically and care for their learning (Blum and Libbey, 2004).

All definitions highlight that belonging in school is more than being liked or the presence of relational warmth but feeling respected, valued and included is also necessary. Slaten et al. (2016) reviewed current literature on school belonging and stated that Goodenow and Grady’s (1993) definition of belonging is most commonly cited. For the purposes of this

research, Goodenow and Grady's definition will be used when describing school belonging, as such, school belonging is defined as "the extent to which a young person feels personally accepted, respected, included and supported by others in the school environment" (pg.61). Furthermore, young people feel that others in school are there for them and that they are valued and count in school.

### ***Why School Belonging is so Important***

The outcomes related to school belonging appear to be similar across different cultures. Chiu et al. (2016) investigated students' sense of belonging at school in 41 countries. They expressed that a sense of belonging at school was the key to mental well-being and academic success which suggests that belonging in school is a universal need. Slaten et al., (2016) review of the literature on school belonging in Australia and United States of America found that school belonging was closely related to academic motivation and subsequently academic success. Allen et al. (2016) similarly expressed the importance of having a sense of belonging in schools. More specifically, they concluded that this is an important factor for adolescents and their psychosocial development. They emphasised the crucial role schools play in fostering a sense of belonging and that secondary schools in particular need to engage in interventions and strategies to do so.

Similarly, Osterman (2000) mentioned that this was especially important in secondary school where schools needed to consider how their cultural values, norms, policies and practices met the needs of their students. Osterman (2000) also concluded that commitment and engagement to school were closely linked to school performance and the quality of learning. She explained that there are differences in the way in which students express their belonging to school. Many students, although they gain acceptance from their peers, do not feel as

though the community in school can meet their needs. This highlights the systemic aspect of supporting belonging needs in school.

Allen et al. (2016) also took a systemic approach using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory and conducted a review to understand how belonging can be fostered with research conducted in Australia. For example, individually (identity, social and emotional competencies), in the microsystem (relationships with parents, peers, teachers), the mesosystem (interactions between schools and policies/practices), the exosystem (surrounding community) and macrosystem (broader legislation and government policies). It highlighted just how multi-faceted this concept is and the various socio-ecological factors that influence the facilitation of belonging in school. Greenwood and Kelly (2019) also recognised the importance of fostering school belonging through a framework and a whole school approach. They spoke to the school culture, sense of school community and classroom practices. This highlights the importance of fostering belonging through a systemic approach.

It is also necessary to consider Osterman's (2000) and Chiu et al's (2016) ideas about school belonging being specific, context dependent and ongoing when thinking of fostering belonging. For example, this ecological framework and whole school approach may not help us understand all students' experiences of belonging. It may be necessary to deepen our understanding of one aspect of this framework, with one particular group in one context. Slaten et al. (2016) and Allen et al. (2016) highlight the limited understanding and lack of research on what contributes to a sense of belonging in school, more specifically, the experiences of adolescents who are from marginalised backgrounds. This seems especially important to consider.

### ***Culture, Ethnicity, Race and Nationality***

It is necessary to distinguish what is meant by ethnicity and how it is distinct from other terminology such as culture, nationality and race which can be used interchangeably in research in this area. Nationality is defined as belonging to or being a citizen of a country, where as culture is defined as a group of people's customs or way of life involving rituals, food, dress and roles/interactions (Song, 2009). It is more challenging however to distinguish race and ethnicity as Song (2009) states "racial groups exist on a blurred continuum with ethnic groups" (p.188). This is because both are associated with physical characteristics of a person that link you to a certain region.

Cornell and Hartmann (2007) expressed that ethnicity is a way in which we distinguish ourselves from others and create a boundary, 'them' and 'us'. Ethnicity can be used to describe dominant groups (politically and numerically) as well as minority groups. Cornell and Hartmann (2007) expressed that ethnicity becomes subjective once a "population sees itself in ethnic terms, in response to the identity outsiders assign to it" (p.22). Additionally, ethnicity can be defined as having common ancestry, cultural practices, religious beliefs, memories of migration or colonisation.

Conversely, Cornell and Hartmann (2007) define race as "a group of human beings socially defined on the basis of physical characteristics such as skin colour, hair texture and facial features" (p.25). Another way ethnicity and race can be distinguished from one another is that ethnicity is related to culture whereas race is related to status and power. However, Song (2009) offers an example which illustrates how this distinguishing feature can seem oversimplified. Song questions whether the violence and harassment (Islamophobia)

experienced by individuals who identify as Middle Eastern, Arab, South Asian or Muslim is attributed to ethnicity or being part of a racial group? This highlights just how challenging it is to separate ethnicity and race. However, it is necessary to distinguish and use this terminology as using terms such as “culture” diverts the attention from inequalities that exist and are distinct to racial and ethnic groups.

### ***Ethnic Identity***

Every ten years the Office for National Statistics runs a census to gather information about the population. Part of this is determining ethnic groups present in the England and Wales. The last census was completed in 2021, however, the data is yet to be released and therefore, this research draws on the data from the census completed in 2011 (Office for National Statistics, 2016). From this, 18 ethnic groups were identified and are used by the government in England and Wales when asking for someone’s ethnicity. These 18 ethnic groups have been placed into five broad groups: White, Mixed/multiple ethnic groups, Asian/Asian British, Black/African/Caribbean/Black British and Other ethnic group (Race Disparity Unit, 2020). The 2011 Census revealed that 86% of the population identified as White ethnic (4.4% of which other White ethnic group), 7.5% were Asian, 3.3% were Black, 2.2% were Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups and 1.0% identified as other ethnic groups (Office for National Statistics, 2016). This categorisation can assume our ethnic identity is static in nature.

Kiang and Fuligni (2009) stated that ethnic identity has two dimensions, ethnic exploration and ethnic belonging. Ethnic belonging is defined as having an emotional value attributed to how one identifies and connects with their ethnic group. Ethnic exploration is defined as searching for what it means to belong to an ethnic group (one’s values, traditions and history) (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009). Ethnic identity is also described as a social construct and is

dynamic in nature (Kiang, 2014). Meaning that social, historical and political contexts influence the way in which individuals identify to an ethnic group. Kiang (2014) refers to Erikson's (1968) psychosocial development, specifically the identity and role confusion stage during adolescence, which highlights that identity is not static and evolves over time or is dependent on social situations. Yip and Fuligni (2002) offer an example of where adolescents expressed feeling more 'Chinese' during 'ethnic behaviours' e.g. speaking Chinese, eating Chinese food. It seems necessary therefore, to consider the socio-political context at the time of this research and how this may influence the dynamic nature of how one identifies (please refer to the Socio-political context section for more detail). However, firstly we will take closer look at how identity in general terms is formed, specifically in adolescence.

### *Adolescence and Identity*

Adolescents are plagued with questions of the present, past and future such as "Who am I?", "Where did I come from?" "Who do I want to become?". Erikson (1968) proposed a theory of development through infancy to adulthood that in part, explains adolescent development. This derived from psychoanalysis and was coined, psychosocial development. This is because during each stage a person experiences 'psychosocial crisis'. This means that individuals experience conflict not only in relation to themselves, but in relation to society. Erikson used 'identity versus identity confusion' to refer to the developmental stage in adolescence. He expressed that adolescents are curious about how they appear to others as opposed to how they feel towards themselves. They seek out sameness and continuity as part of identity formation. Adolescents clarifying their own identity and self-image can result in destructive behaviour such as excluding others who are different (Erikson, 1968). This can be in terms of skin colour, cultural background, tastes and things that make one an in-grouper or an out-grouper. Erikson (1968) expressed this was a necessary aspect of young people

forming their identity and defending against the sense of identity loss that occurs during this stage. Additionally, peer relations appear to dominate the experiences of forming one's identity during adolescence. This is because they go through a need to feel recognised and accepted by their peer group (Erikson, 1968). This highlights how important sense of belonging must be to adolescents and the importance of exploring these further for ethnic minority young people in particular.

### **1.3 Socio-political context**

Considering Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, to understand the individual, how they develop and their behaviour, one must consider the systems around them. In this instance, the macrosystem (cultural values, political and economic systems) and chronosystem (dimensions of time, societal change) may be hugely influential on the individuals who decided to participate in this research.

This research was conducted during the pandemic: COVID-19 which led to a substantial change in the way society functions; more specifically schools and therefore the EP role. The government released guidance on school closures from March-June 2020 and subsequent school re-opening in June (for vulnerable groups) and September 2020 (for everyone) (Department for Education, 2020). This has led to EP services working from home and making visits to school only when necessary. Subsequently more emphasis was placed on virtual working and connecting with others through virtual means such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

During this time, the government released information about the death rates and diagnosis rates of COVID-19 amongst different demographic groups. It revealed that after accounting

for sex, age, deprivation and religion people from ethnic minority backgrounds such as Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Caribbean and Other Black were between 10-50% more likely to be at risk of death compared to White British people (Public Health England, 2020). This brought to light the structural inequalities that exists for BAME groups. Alongside this pandemic, the inequality and ingrained systemic racism that exists for Black people was further brought to light in the United States of America following the murder of George Floyd, which was televised globally. George Floyd's death was a catalyst for widespread protests in the USA and in over 60 countries which has initiated change in institutions (Oriola & Knight, 2020). Egede and Walker (2020) expressed that these protests highlighted the history of discrimination for Black people which included 250 years of slavery, 100 years of Jim Crow laws, high rates of fatal shootings of unarmed Black Americans and high rates of incarceration.

When considering the macrosystem and chronosystem, COVID-19 has had an influence over societal change, political and economic change. Similarly, as described above the racial inequalities and disparities (that already existed) have been brought to a societal level of awareness with arguably more force than before. As Kiang (2014) identified, societal, historical and political events can influence how one identifies to an ethnic group. Therefore, these events may have further emphasised questions around belonging such as "Where do I fit in? Do I belong? Do I relate to the racial inequalities that are being brought to my awareness?" Therefore, as this research was conducted with individuals who were impacted by COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter protests, it is imperative that the socio-political context is considered.

## 1.4 Rationale

### *Mental Health*

Currently in England, children and young people appear to be living with mental health and well-being concerns more so than before (National Health Service, 2018). Data received from a national survey revealed that there has been a slight increase in the percentage of 5-15-year-olds with mental health disorders from 1999 to 2017 (NHS, 2018). In response to this widespread perception, the government have made mental health an area of priority, where they plan to place more funding into mental health provision such as a training a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health in schools (Department of Health and Social Care & Department of Education, 2018). One could argue that this will support children and young people classified as having a ‘social, emotional and mental health’ (SEMH) needs. In the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of Practice (Department for Education and Department of Health & Social Care, 2015, p.98), SEMH is described as “displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour” which may be underpinned by mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression.

Delving further into SEMH, Strand and Lindorff (2018) completed several analyses looking into the disproportionality of ethnic minorities in England and the SEN they are identified as experiencing. They also investigated whether age, sex, or socio-economic status could account for this disproportionality. Looking specifically at SEMH, they found that Black Caribbean and Mixed White and Black Caribbean (MWBC) pupils were substantially over-represented relative to White British pupils. Other ethnic minority groups such as Asian or White other were substantially under-represented in this category. This appears to have remained a consistent trend since 2005. Strand and Lindorff (2018) considered the fact that demographic (age, gender) and socio-economic factors (free-school meals, disadvantaged

neighbourhoods) can be strongly associated with SEMH. However, when these were controlled for, the over-representation for Black Caribbean and MWBC pupils remained (Strand & Lindorff, 2018). Equally, when prior academic achievement was accounted for, these groups were still over-represented. Similarly, when exploring the data in relation to exclusion rates, Black Caribbean, White and Black Caribbean, Irish Travellers and Gypsy Roma account for the highest exclusions rates (DFE, 2019). The most common reason for these exclusions is “persistent disruptive behaviour” which mirrors the language used to describe an SEMH need in the SEND code of practice (DFE & DHSC, 2015).

Considering the under-represented Asian or White other groups, when looking into this further, research indicates that they also experience poor mental health (the lowest levels of self-esteem compared to other ethnic groups) which may be overlooked due to their high academic achievement (Bankston & Zhou, 2002). Looking into the school attainment and academic success between groups, Pakistani, Mixed White/Caribbean and Black Caribbean pupils are the lowest achievers consistently since 2004 (Demie & McLean, 2017). Chinese, Indian, Bangladeshi and Black African pupils are the highest achieving groups at GCSE (Demie & McLean, 2017). The Race and Ethnic disparities report (2021) revealed that attainment and socio-economic status were closely linked highlighting that once this was controlled for major ethnic groups performed better than White British pupils. However, this did not include Black Caribbean pupils or Pakistani ethnic group (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, 2021). In addition, socio-economic disadvantage is higher among ethnic minority groups (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, 2021). Therefore, it can be argued that there is a distinct experience for some young people from ethnic minority backgrounds in relation to their social and emotional needs in school which may be having an impact on their academic success and wellbeing.

### *Sense of Belonging*

Demie and McLean (2017) focused on Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement and noted that the reasons for this underachievement was complex. However, they identified 24 factors of which four will be provided as examples: headteachers' poor leadership on equality issues, institutional racism, stereotyping and lack of diversity in the work force. It is necessary to look at all these factors more in-depth. However, the scope of Demie and McLean's study did not provide that opportunity. Focusing in on 'lack of diversity in the workforce', Demie and McLean (2017) highlighted that 91% of staff in leadership roles were White British, 0.8% were Black Caribbean and 8.6% were other ethnic minority groups, 86% of teaching staff were White British, 1% of teachers were Black Caribbean and 13.6% were other ethnic minority group in schools in England. This quote from one of their focus groups from a headteacher seemed to echo the importance of diversity in the workforce:

"In my school, I had teachers from Sierra Leone, Jamaica and an Irish male teacher. It really did pull everyone together. It should reflect the makeup of the local community" (p.41).

The sense of community which can also be described as a sense of belonging seemed important in this instance. In addition, the four factors described and identified by Demie and McLean (2017) that are attributed to their academic underachievement may also relate to their belonging needs as we know these two aspects are linked.

Amadi and Mohammed (2019) focused on the experiences of loneliness among people from ethnic minority backgrounds and wondered if those from this background are more vulnerable to these experiences. This research revealed distinct experiences for ethnic minorities in relation to loneliness and belonging. They found that diverse communities can potentially increase a sense of belonging for some and for others a more homogenous community can act as a protective factor. A quote from a participant highlights this well "The

good thing about Asian communities is you help each other” “Social inclusion is a real issue for British-born Black, Asian and Minority ethnic people who moved from areas like London to home counties” (p.21). Sixty-seven percent of those from an ethnic minority background who reported being lonely also expressed feeling that they didn’t belong in their neighbourhood. Factors such as feeling accepted, fitting in, feeling able to ask for help, interact and make social connections were necessary for creating a sense of belonging (Amadi & Mohammed, 2019). They also found that schools were amongst the places where there are opportunities to connect and form meaningful relationships. Therefore, it seems necessary to delve into this further.

Several studies have indicated a sense of belonging in school, specifically in adolescents, can lead to better outcomes such as more enhanced social emotional skills (Allen et al. 2016) and better academic outcomes (Osterman, 2000). A lack of this fundamental need to belong has been linked to psychological distress and loneliness (Allen & Bowles, 2012). Therefore, a sense of belonging in the school environment (especially for adolescents) appears to play a vital part in their social, emotional mental health. Goodenow and Grady (1993) concluded that adolescents with a high sense of school belonging were more likely to exhibit high academic motivation and engagement in learning. Interestingly, there were higher associations between belonging and academic motivation in Hispanic and African American students, suggesting a sense of belonging to school being necessary/important to these particular groups. Goodenow and Grady (1993) suggested this stronger association may be related to cultural values related to their ethnicity for example “communal and affiliative values as opposed to individualist or competitive values” (pp. 69). It was concluded that fostering a sense of belonging for these groups may be important in relation to their success

in school.

Similar to the research conducted by Amadi and Mohammed (2019), Mok et al. (2016) found that being part of a classroom where there were more individuals of the same ethnic origin, increased school connectedness and a sense of belonging. Similar findings were found by Morales-Chicas and Graham (2017) who found that the more ethnic representation in the school system the higher the sense of belonging and academic achievement. This suggests that greater school diversity can be perceived as a protective factor for sense of belonging. Morales-Chicas and Graham (2017) expressed that creating schools where the proportion of ethnicity is balanced is complex. However, in schools where there is less ethnic diversity, one's culture and ethnic identity should be recognised and celebrated to elicit more connection to school and subsequently increase academic success. It is important to recognise that data in this area is inconsistent and from a limited range of ethnic groups. Therefore, it seems necessary to understand the belonging experiences from a range of ethnic groups. Additionally, this will gain more understanding of what other protective factors there are for individuals from a minority background.

## **1.5 Conclusion and Relevance to EP practice**

Given the context described above, this elicits some curiosity around the social and emotional experiences related to a sense of belonging for pupils from an ethnic minority background in schools. More specifically, secondary schools and adolescents, as mental health concerns are more prevalent for 11-19-year olds (NHS, 2018). Adolescence is also a period in time where our identities form and there is more focus on how to fit in and queries around what group one belongs to (Erikson, 1968). Additionally, mental health concerns appear more predominant in ethnic minority groups: Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black Caribbean,

Irish Travellers and Gypsy Roma than any other ethnicity (Strand & Lindorff, 2018). Research also reveals significant mental health concerns for those of Asian heritage and White Other ethnic group who may not be identified as SEMH (Bankston & Zou, 2002). Furthermore, there appears to be a lack of ethnic minority representation in leadership and teaching roles in England (Demie & McLean, 2017). Amadi and Mohammed (2019) demonstrated that being in a homogenous or ethnically diverse community can both serve as protective factors for feeling one belongs. More specifically in schools and especially for adolescents, being in a school where there are high levels of ethnic diversity and having same-ethnic peer support, one's belonging needs and subsequent academic achievement is improved (Morales-Chicas & Graham, 2017; Mok et al., 2016). Therefore, this elicits curiosity around sense of belonging for students in spaces where they may not feel represented by their school community or where they are part of a diverse community. What else contributes to their sense of belonging?

Part of the EP role involves supporting children's social, emotional and mental health needs as well as their academic outcomes (British Psychological Society, 2019; Health and Care Professions Council, 2014). With research indicating that belonging in school is a protective factor and strong indicator of academic success and better well-being (Allen & Bowles, 2012; Allen et al. 2016), it seems necessary for the EP profession to deepen its knowledge of the role of belonging in schools. Further to this, research indicates poorer academic outcomes and poor mental well-being for those in ethnic minority groups. Therefore, it is necessary to explore belonging in school for these groups. Additionally, EPs are well placed to promote social justice (Power, 2008). There are also strong links between social justice and cultural competency which Shriberg and Clinton (2016) argued should not be seen as distinct from each other. They provided a helpful hypothetical example where by 50% of Latino(a)s are

referred to the school psychologist. The school psychologist may work in a culturally responsive manner, however, by not questioning the large proportion of Latino(a)s being referred, their work towards social change and commitment to social justice is compromised (Shriberg & Clinton, 2016). This highlights how important it is to work with a social justice and culturally competent lens which this research aims to support. The next chapter will review the current literature that exists for young people's experiences of belonging in school.

## 2. Systematic literature review

A systematic literature review was carried out to explore, analyse and synthesise the current research on school belonging for secondary-aged pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. This was also used to determine how comprehensive the evidence is in this area. The question that it aims to answer is:

- *What are the experiences of belonging in school for secondary aged pupils who are from ethnic minority backgrounds and what contributes to this?*

### 2.1 Search Strategy

A literature search was conducted using PsychINFO (via EBSCO host) on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020\* with the following search terms combined with the title field selected:

1. Belong\* OR “Sense of Belonging” OR Relatedness
2. “Ethnic minorit\*” OR “minority groups” OR “ethnic groups” OR majority OR “ethnic majority”
3. classroom OR “educational experience” OR school OR “primary school” OR “secondary school” OR pupil\*

This rendered 5 results, all of which did not meet the specific requirements for this literature search. The search was broadened to gain an understanding of the current literature around school belonging in general and any articles from this search that related to ethnic minorities were to be drawn upon.

A literature search was conducted using APA PsychINFO, APA PsycArticles and ERIC (via EBSCO host) on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020\* with the following search terms combined using the title field:

1. Belong\* OR “Sense of Belonging” OR Relatedness (4,921 results)

2. classroom OR “educational experience” OR school OR “secondary school” OR pupil\* OR education (2,211,133 results)

This combined search rendered 1,742 articles. The following articles were then limited by their publication date to articles in the last 5 years for the most up to date research in this area. Articles were also limited to ones which were peer-reviewed which rendered 683 results. Publication was also limited to the following: international journal of educational psychology, school psychology, professional school psychology, international journal of school & educational psychology, educational psychologist, educational psychology, educational and developmental psychologist and educational and child psychology. This rendered 39 articles. Articles were included and excluded based on their abstract (please see appendix 1 for excluded articles). This left 14 articles to be reviewed. Please see Table 1. for inclusion and exclusion criteria.

This literature search was also supplemented with articles from education journals to gain a broader view of belonging for ethnic minority young people in secondary school. This included some of the following journals: journal of educational research, research papers in education, review of research in education, international journal of psychology and educational studies, international journal of evaluation and research in education, international education studies, European journal of teacher education. This rendered 36 articles. Articles were included and excluded based on their abstract as well as the inclusion and exclusion criteria in Table 1. This rendered 2 relevant articles. Therefore, collectively, 16 articles were to be reviewed.

\*Another search was conducted on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2021. No new or additional papers were found that fit the inclusion criteria of this systematic literature review.

Table 1 seen below contains the inclusion and exclusion criteria that was used to filter the articles found in the literature search. This table also contains the rationale and type of criteria considered.

**Table 1**

*Inclusion and Exclusion criteria*

<b>Type of Criteria</b>	<b>Inclusion</b>	<b>Exclusion</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b>Year of publication</b>	Studies which were published between 2015-2020.	Studies which were published prior to 2015.	To obtain up to date articles that were relevant to the current context and generation of children and young people who were of interest to this research.
<b>Peer Reviewed</b>	Peer reviewed articles.	Articles that were not peer reviewed.	To obtain articles that have been quality controlled.
<b>Participants</b>	Secondary-aged pupils.	Primary aged or college aged students	To obtain articles that represent the views and experiences of children and young

			people who were secondary school age.
<b>Publication</b>	Publishers that relate to the field of Educational Psychology.	Publishers that are not related to the field of Educational Psychology.	To obtain articles relevant to the field of Educational Psychology as EPs have a specific role in supporting inclusion, diversity, and equality. They can also take a social justice approach to the role. Therefore, articles from EP journals will raise awareness of the current understanding of school belonging in the EP profession from the perspective of inclusion.
<b>Research Area</b>	Must include sense of belonging related	Articles that make reference to sense of	To obtain articles that explored sense

	to school experience, factors that contribute to this and any articles that relate to being part of an ‘outer’ group or ethnic minorities.	belonging that was not related to secondary school experience. Articles where sense of belonging was not the sole focus of the research.	of belonging in relation to education and/or ethnic minorities.
<b>Types of articles</b>	Articles that pertain to the experiences of young people and their belonging needs. Articles that highlight the factors that contribute to a sense of belonging. Articles that investigate experiences or relationships to belonging for young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.	Articles that look at the relationship between school belonging and other factors (expect individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds). Editorials.	To obtain articles that speak to experiences, factors and provide a deeper understanding of belonging above and beyond its association with other factors such as academic achievement. To obtain empirical studies or reviews that appraised current literature.

Due to the limited articles found related to ethnic minority experiences, it seemed necessary to include the overall research on school belonging and the factors that contribute to this. Therefore, this systematic review will be split into two parts. The first part will review the overall literature found on school belonging and the second will review the papers found related to experiences of those who could be described as in the minority or an ‘outer’ group.

Although there is no ‘golden standard’ appraisal tool for the critically appraising literature, it is recommended and advised in order to structure one’s review and add more depth (Katrak et al. 2004). Therefore, the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) for qualitative and quantitative research was used.

## 2.2 School belonging for Secondary Aged pupils

### 2.2.1 Aims and Rationale

Table 2 seen below contains the names of the articles that were chosen to be reviewed and their aims for the first part of the literature review.

**Table 2**

*Aims of the articles*

<b>Article</b>	<b>Aims</b>
Shaw, E. (2019). ‘How do I know that I belong?’ Exploring secondary aged pupils’ views on what it means to belong to their school. <i>Child Psychology</i> , 36(4), 13.	To gain a deeper understanding of the individual experience of belonging and capture their voices.

<p>Riley, K. (2019). Agency and belonging: What transformative actions can schools take to help create a sense of place and belonging? <i>Educational and Child Psychology</i>, 36(4), 13.</p>	<p>To gain more understanding of how school culture can be created to meet belonging needs</p>
<p>Midgen, T., Theodoratou, T., Newbury, K., &amp; Leonard, M. (2019). ‘School for everyone’: An exploration of children and young people’s perceptions of belonging. <i>Child Psychology</i>, 36(2), 15.</p>	<p>To gain more understanding on how schools can increase inclusivity and belonging in the system.</p>
<p>Green, M., Emery, A., Sanders, M., &amp; Anderman, L. H. (2016). Another path to belonging: A case study of middle school students’ perspectives. <i>The Educational and Developmental Psychologist</i>, 33(1), 85–96. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2016.4">https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2016.4</a></p>	<p>To investigate belonging needs in school in relation to academia and capture the voices of young people.</p>
<p>Gowing, A. (2019). Peer-peer relationships: A key factor in enhancing school connectedness and belonging. <i>Child Psychology</i>, 36(2), 16.</p>	<p>To investigate school connectedness in specific relation to peer-peer relationships.</p>
<p>Allen, K.-A., Vella-Brodrick, D., &amp; Waters, L. (2016). Fostering school belonging in secondary schools using a socio-ecological Framework. <i>The Educational and</i></p>	<p>To gain an overall understanding of belonging needs and map belonging onto a socioecological framework.</p>

<p><i>Developmental Psychologist</i>, 33(1), 97–121.</p> <p><a href="https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2016.5">https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2016.5</a></p>	
<p>Slaten, C. D., Ferguson, J. K., Allen, K.-A., Brodrick, D.-V., &amp; Waters, L. (2016). School belonging: A review of the history, current trends, and future directions. <i>The Educational and Developmental Psychologist</i>, 33(1), 1–15.</p> <p><a href="https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2016.6">https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2016.6</a></p>	<p>To gain an overall understanding of belonging needs, the related variables, predictors and how belonging is defined.</p>
<p>Keyes, T. S. (2020). A qualitative inquiry: Factors that promote classroom belonging and engagement among high school students. <i>School Community Journal</i>. 29(1), 171-200.</p>	<p>To explore the voices of young people who are from diverse backgrounds to contribute to our understanding of promoting classroom belonging.</p>

Shaw (2019), Green et al. (2016), Riley (2019) and Midgen et al. (2019) all express the importance of belonging related to mental health needs and engagement to learning. Especially, Shaw (2019) whose rationale focused on the value of feeling a sense of belonging in school and the array of positive outcomes from this. Midgen et al. (2019), however, demonstrated less focus on the individual internal state of young people but more on inclusivity as an overarching concept for young people, specifically related to increasing inclusivity in mainstream provision. Midgen et al. (2019) took a systemic approach considering the impact of the wider system such as the local authority and their provision policy as well as government legislation. Riley (2019) similarly, spoke to school belonging from a systemic approach and in relation to inclusivity, more specifically exclusions. She

described schools a “shared social institution” (pp.92) where a sense of belonging can be created or where one can be excluded. Her aim was to understand how schools can create a culture of belonging and inclusivity. Midgen et al. (2019) and Riley (2019) placed an emphasis on community and school culture. Whereas, Shaw (2019) sought to delve deeper into the individual experience and capture the voices of young people. Her aims/rationale appear to come from an exploratory and emancipatory place.

Green et al. (2016) similarly aimed to gain the rich picture of the lived experiences of young people in the United States of America and capture their voices. It differs in a sense to the other studies as Green et al. (2016) took a different perspective of belonging and investigated school belonging in relation to academic environment. For example, does sharing intellectual standards and academic interests add to the dimensions of school belonging? Keyes (2020) also investigated belonging in the classroom in line with academic engagement in the United States of America. More specifically they focused on the need to belong in a learning community to support academic mindset. They similarly were interested in using the voices of students from diverse backgrounds this appeared to be missing in research on belonging.

Gowing (2019) took a closer look at school belonging and a factor that appears to contribute to this. She used the term ‘School connectedness’ to describe the relationship young people have to school which can be interchangeable with school belonging. However, Gowing (2019) appeared to present this as a concept that one may perceive as separate from school belonging despite its similarly reported positive outcomes and definition. Gowing (2019) provided clear rationale for her research that highlighted peer-peer relationships have not been extensively researched in relation to school connectedness and further information is required. Both, Gowing (2019), Keyes (2020) and Green et al. (2016) delved into one

dimension or contributor to school belonging as opposed to school belonging in general terms.

Similar to Midgen et al (2019) and Riley (2019), Allen et al. (2016) took a systemic approach to belonging. They aimed to put forward a conceptual framework for school belonging based on Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model of human development. Compared to the previously discussed studies, Allen et al. (2016) placed more emphasis on adolescent development and identity formation which is prevalent during this stage. Additionally, they emphasised how limited frameworks for school belonging are and the importance of using a multi-layered approach. This is due to how multidimensional belonging is as a construct. Finally, drawing evidence together, Slaten et al. (2016) completed a literature review on school belonging in Australia and United States of America with the aim to determine the theoretical foundations, discuss the variables related to school belonging as well as what predicts it, future research and what school belonging is.

Despite the differences between these articles, all desired an understanding on what contributed to a sense of belonging in school. Additionally, they agree that the concept of school belonging, as being essential for academic achievement/motivation and mental well-being is not new knowledge. They clearly stated their rationale to delve deeper into belonging needs themselves as opposed to focusing on the associations and predictive factors alone. Their research aimed to add to this research area and create a richer understanding of school belonging.

### 2.2.2 Methodology

Table 3 seen below contains the details of the methodology used in each article reviewed in the first part of this literature review. This includes, the geographic location, the research design, the data collection method, participants, and the appropriateness of this methodology to the aims of the articles stated above.

**Table 3**

*Details of Methodology used in articles.*

<b>Article and Geographic Location</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Appropriateness</b>
Shaw (2019) – United Kingdom	Mixed methods	Semi-structured interview and questionnaire.	184 – Year 7-10 (51% male, 49% female). Two schools.	Shaw’s (2019) research design addresses the aims of her research to capture young people’s views and explore differences in perceptions on belonging.
Green et al. (2016) – United Kingdom	Longitudinal study	Semi-structured interview at 3 stages over a year.	9 participants (6 female).	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aims of the research:

States of America			11-13 years of age.	to capture the views of the young people as well as their experiences of belonging in relation to their academic experience.
Riley (2019) – United Kingdom	Educational design research framework	Synthesis of two studies	90 children and young people	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aims to determine what can be done to create a sense of belonging.
Midgen et al. (2019) – United Kingdom	Mixed methods	Semi-structured interview and questionnaire.	84 children and young people – 3 to 16.  176 teachers and 5 head teachers.	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aims for the research: to gain a better understanding of the factors that contribute to a sense of belonging.

Gowing (2019) – United Kingdom	Mixed methods	Focus groups (student and staff), Student diaries and researcher developed questionnaire.	336 students aged 12 to 18 (187 female, 149 male) and 71 staff (43 female, 28 male).	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aim to identify factors that contribute to school connectedness in more depth (using qualitative means) and a general understanding of SC through the quantitative method (questionnaire).
Allen et al. (2016) – Australia	Literature review	N/A	N/A	The methodology is unclear, however, the article demonstrates that it meets its aims to use evidence from previous articles to create a framework of school belonging.
Slaten et al. (2016) – United	Literature review	N/A	N/A	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the

States of America and Australia				research aim of gaining a greater understanding of a sense of belonging from the current literature.
Keyes (2020) – United States of America	Qualitative design	Semi-structured interviews	31 racially and ethnically diverse 9 <sup>th</sup> grade students	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aims of the research: to capture the views of the young people as well as their experiences of belonging in relation to their academic experience.

Looking a bit closer into the methodology used in these articles, it is necessary to note that this research conducted by Keyes (2020), Green et al. (2016), Allen et al. (2016) and Slaten et al. (2016) was conducted in United States of America or Australia therefore may not be representative of the experiences of school belonging in the UK for young people. The rest of the articles, however, were conducted in the UK and provide further insight. Shaw (2019) chose schools that were willing to participate in her research and therefore may produce views that are of those who value belonging in school. Shaw (2019) also used semi-structured

interviews which were conducted in groups to gain further in-depth understanding of belonging needs. However, this could limit the voices of some students who may have found it harder to express their views in a group setting. This is especially true for students whose voices may ordinarily be oppressed. It remains, however, an opportunity for rich, qualitative data to be collected.

Similarly, Green et al. (2016) and Keyes (2020) used semi-structured interviews with a view to capture the voice of young people. Green et al. (2016) conducted individual interviews over time which captured the voices of those who may not have had the opportunity to express their views. It also provided an insight of views over time as opposed to Shaw (2019) and Keyes (2020) which provided an insight at that moment in time. Gowing (2019) also aimed to capture qualitative data and in-depth understanding of factors that contribute to belonging so conducted student and staff focus groups. Similarly to Shaw (2019), this method can leave uncertainty about what is voiced and unvoiced by individuals as they can be effected by group dynamics.

Shaw (2019) took care to ensure the questionnaire on school belonging was a standardised measure that has been well researched and that the interview questions she used derived from previous research. It is unclear whether Green et al. (2016) took a similar approach. Gowing (2019) also used a questionnaire, explicitly stating that this was developed by the researcher while drawing on a previous measure for school connectedness. They also used a visual analogue scale which Gowing (2019) explains has been used in health research extensively. However, it is unclear how easily it can be transferred and applied in EP research.

Riley (2019) and Allen et al. (2016) used a method of synthesising findings from previous studies to come to a framework or to offer an insight into what helps create a sense of belonging. Riley (2019) clearly states the method used to synthesise the two papers. Conversely, Allen et al. (2016) does not explicitly state the method undertaken to synthesise the research into a framework. However, they confirm that articles were sourced from English-speaking countries and published in the last 20 years through EBSCO's discovery. Similarly, Slaten et al. (2016) did not explicitly state their methodology for their literature review. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain where and how articles were sourced.

All studies focus on children and young people, with many of the participants being in secondary school. Interestingly, some of the studies sought to involve teachers and other members of staff in their attempt to gather views and understand what contributed to school belonging. Other participants such as parents have not been involved in the studies mentioned above.

### ***2.2.3 Findings and Discussion***

Shaw (2019) generated the following themes from the interviews: familiarity, reciprocity, membership, inclusion, support and identification. She expressed that these themes highlighted the importance of relationships between pupils and their school. Although there was overlap between the themes such as familiarity and identification, Shaw (2019) expressed that pupils felt that feeling similar or having commonality was distinct from knowing the environment and people in their school. This demonstrates the importance of similarity in the school environment which young people from an ethnic minority background may find more challenging and therefore needs investigating. It is important to highlight however, that these themes have derived from one school and are therefore, indicative of this

school only. Similarly, Keyes (2020) conducted her research in one school in Chicago, therefore, making it challenging to generalise the results. However, she conducted a large number of semi-structured interviews (31) which revealed the importance of fostering relationships with teachers and students, building trust, feeling valued, listening and incorporating student's ideas, having honest feedback and providing academic support.

Shaw (2019) and Keyes (2020) highlighted that a longitudinal study may provide more information regarding belonging needs and that their results are a snapshot in time. However, Green et al. (2016) highlighted that belonging needs are maintained over time and found that belonging could be split into social belonging and academic belonging. Similarly to the previously mentioned studies, belonging was characterised by relationships with peers and staff. However, Green et al. (2016) noticed that some pupils attributed academia and opportunities provided by the school to a sense of belonging. Social and academic sense of belonging were not always felt together, some students felt more belonging in terms of their social environment and vice versa. Interestingly, students who were not able to perform to the academic standards of the school felt more out of place. A sense of belonging also appeared to influence motivation. Parallel to Shaw (2019), this research has been conducted on one school. A school which has a specific and distinct context and therefore, may only represent the belonging needs of the students in this school as opposed to those across other school settings.

Gowing (2019) derived themes from their data using thematic analysis, similar to Shaw (2019). Learning, relational and extra-curricular opportunities were identified as sub-themes from the qualitative data of the students. School staff also identified membership of a friendship or peer group as a key component for school connectedness. They expressed the

volatile nature of this and how it can also serve as a disconnect from school. Therefore, isolation was being perceived as a threat to their connection to school. It was revealed that relationships with peers for some students served as their main source of connection to school. It is unclear however, how groups who may experience more isolation in general feel connected to school where making friendships is more challenging for example within marginalised groups. Similarly, to the other research discussed, the data also derived from one school meaning that it is not representative of the views of all staff and students across various settings.

Midgen et al. (2019) however conducted their research across multiple schools in England and found almost identical themes: relationships, school environment, teaching and learning and extra-curricular activities. They also spent time with children to explore what belonging means before investigating what it means to belong. Additionally, relationships proved to be the most important factor in belonging for these students. This also aligns with the data found in Gowing's (2019) research. As the data was collected through focus groups, this may mean that children who are quieter or finding it difficult to vocalise their views in front of others were not accounted for. The sample was also dominated by White British pupils. Therefore, there is some curiosity about the views of pupils who are in the minority of this sample.

Riley (2019) found that physical and emotional safety, being understood, seen and having positive relationships with teachers and peers were important for feeling a sense of belonging. These findings differ slightly to the previous discussed studies which could be explained by the cohorts of students who were refugees or had experienced isolation in school due to behavioural needs. Therefore, it is important to investigate groups whose belonging needs may differ based on their experiences of isolation or societal rejection. Riley (2019)

concluded that building trust, growing young people's sense of agency and drawing on their communities' strength contribute to feeling they belong. It is necessary to note, however that the two papers used for synthesis were written by Riley. This suggests they know the studies well, however, there may be some researcher bias in the conclusions drawn.

Considering the literature review carried out by Allen et al. (2016) they concluded that the socio-ecological framework can provide some insight into what schools could do to support belonging at various levels such as microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and the macrosystem. However, due to much of the research being causal relationships, Allen et al. (2016) expressed that interpretations need to be used with caution. Slaten et al. (2016) also carried out a literature review and concluded that the literature highlights a strong sense of belonging is correlated with positive student outcomes including mental health, academic achievement and adaptive behaviour. Factors that appear to contribute to belonging are the relationships students have with teachers, parents and peers. However, it is important to recognise the gaps in this data that prevent a broader understanding of school belonging. For example, the limited information on the experiences of marginalised groups.

#### ***2.2.4 Value added and future research***

Shaw's (2019) research highlights the importance of developing meaningful programmes to improve school belonging. More specifically and related to EP practice, investigation into young people's belonging needs could provide better outcomes, recommendations, and an opportunity to advocate for them. This research may also provide a space where the young people feel listened to. As their research covered a general sense of belonging across all groups, Shaw (2019) suggested that future research could investigate the school belonging needs of those from different cohorts such as, special educational needs, gender or ethnicity.

Green et al. (2016) also expressed the importance of developing support for young people's school belonging. More specifically supporting students who are finding learning challenging as their sense of belonging (academically) appeared to influence their motivation and self-efficacy. In addition, it emphasises the role of teachers and how they can be supported to create an environment where a students' social and academic belonging can be nurtured. With regards to future research, Green et al. (2016) suggested investigation into other academically accelerated environments and across a wider age range (later adolescence and early adulthood).

Gowing's (2019) research highlighted the importance of schools nurturing positive relationships between students and where possible reducing isolation. A key role for EPs is in preventive engagement with schools to promote relational aspects as opposed to just academic. Although Green et al. (2016) also highlighted the importance of supporting the academic side of learning. This was also demonstrated in Midgen et al's (2019) research which highlighted the importance of supporting learning, relationships and the school environment. Midgen et al (2019) used the data to create top ten tips that schools can employ to ensure students feel connected to their school. Interestingly, the data highlighted most children felt they belonged in school except for those who with additional needs such as autism spectrum condition (ASC) or SEMH. This further highlights the importance of determining what factors contribute to belonging for children with specific characteristics such as ethnicity, special educational need or any other 'othering' characteristic. This was also highlighted by Allen et al. (2016) and Slaten et al. (2016) who noticed the lack of research on under-represented minorities, students with disabilities and other characteristics or marginalised groups alongside belonging. They also noted the abundance of studies that looked at relationships between belonging and other factors as opposed to the experiences of

belonging itself. This suggests that gaining an understanding of lived experiences is needed.

## 2.3 School Belonging related to “outer” groups

### 2.3.1 Aims and Rationale

Table 4 seen below contains the names of the articles that were chosen to be reviewed and their aims for the second part of the literature review.

**Table 4**

*Aims of the articles described.*

Article	Aims
Myles, O., Boyle, C., & Richards, A. (2019). The social experiences and sense of belonging in adolescent females with autism in mainstream school. <i>Educational and Child Psychology, 36</i> (4), 14.	To gain an understanding of the belonging needs for adolescent females with a diagnosis of autism.
Craggs, H., & Kelly, C. (2017). School belonging: Listening to the voices of secondary school students who have undergone managed moves. <i>School Psychology International, 39</i> (1), 56-73. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034317741936">https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034317741936</a>	To gain an understanding of what support can be put in place for the belonging needs of young people who have experienced a managed move.
Cartmell, H., & Bond, C. (2015). What does belonging mean for young people who are International New Arrivals? <i>32</i> (2), 89-101.	To gain an understanding of the belonging needs of international new arrivals.

<p>Due, C., Riggs, D. W., &amp; Augoustinos, M. (2016). Experiences of school belonging for young children with refugee backgrounds. <i>The Educational and Developmental Psychologist</i>, 33(1), 33–53.</p> <p><a href="https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2016.9">https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2016.9</a></p>	<p>To provide information on how to support refugees and their experiences of belonging</p>
<p>Frehill, N., &amp; Dunsmuir, S. M. (2015). The influence of sense of school belonging on traveller students' secondary school completion. <i>Educational and Child Psychology</i>, 32(2), 10-21.</p>	<p>To understand the impact of belonging for traveller and non-traveller students.</p>
<p>Schachner, M. K., Schwarzenthal, M., van de Vijver, F. J. R., &amp; Noack, P. (2019). How all students can belong and achieve: Effects of the cultural diversity climate amongst students of immigrant and nonimmigrant background in Germany. <i>Journal of Educational Psychology</i>, 111(4), 703–716.</p> <p><a href="https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000303">https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000303</a></p>	<p>To understand the impact of the school culture and climate on belonging needs for immigrant and non-immigrant children</p>
<p>Gray, D. L., Hope, E. C., &amp; Matthews, J. S. (2018). Black and belonging at school: A Case for interpersonal, instructional, and institutional opportunity structures. <i>Educational</i></p>	<p>To provide information to better understand the belonging needs of Black students and what researchers and</p>

<p><i>Psychologist</i>, 53(2), 97–113.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2017.1421466">https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2017.1421466</a></p>	<p>schools can do in light of this information.</p>
<p>Caudenberg, R.V., Clycq, N., &amp; Timmerman, C. (2020). Feeling at home in school: Migrant youth’s narratives on school belonging in Flemish secondary education. <i>European Educational Research Journal</i>, 19(5), 428-444.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904120923184">https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904120923184</a></p>	<p>To gain further understanding of school belonging through the experiences of young people with a migration background (first or second generation) and what contributes to feelings of belonging for these young people.</p>

Caudenberg et al. (2020) expressed that it is less clear how belonging is experienced by students from an ethnic minority or migration background in Belgium and wanted to explore this further. Similarly, Myles et al. (2019) expressed the lack of clarity on experiences of belonging for outer groups, specifically females with a diagnosis of autism. They highlighted their desire to gain an understanding of the social experience of adolescent females with autism and their sense of belonging. Conversely to the research on sense of belonging in general terms, there was more focus on exclusion, social isolation and being distinct from the majority. Craggs and Kelly (2017) also considered the social rejection/isolation as part of their rationale for research on school belonging. They aimed to determine what could support a sense of belonging for young people who have experienced a managed move.

Cartmell and Bond (2015) and Caudenberg et al. (2020) highlighted the challenges of not being part of the majority. More specifically, when the national culture differed greatly for those who had immigrated from a different country or had a migration background. Cartmell and Bond (2015) highlighted the ‘Western’ tools that had been used in previous research to gain an understanding of belonging and their desire to understand what belonging meant for

international new arrivals (INA). Due et al. (2016) were also interested in INAs, specifically refugees. Similarly, they mentioned the potential social isolation and discrimination this group may face. They aimed to provide information on how refugees experienced school belonging with a view to use this data to guide policies for refugee's educational experience.

Alternatively, Frehill and Dunsumir (2015) and Schachner et al. (2019) were more interested in investigating the difference between two groups, which can be perceived as an 'outer' group. For example, Frehill and Dunsmumir (2015) were curious about Traveller and non-Traveller students. They sought to investigate the relationship between school variables and a sense of belonging for Traveller students in Ireland and United Kingdom. Schachner et al (2019) were interested in students of immigrant and non-immigrant background. They aimed to understand the relationship between the climate created in school (cultural diversity and pluralism) and students' sense of belonging.

Gray et al. (2018) also took a slightly different approach to the previously discussed studies and expressed how critical it is for researchers to acknowledge race and identity in understanding school belonging. They investigated the opportunities for Black students to establish a sense of belonging in a school system. This was especially important given that Black people were historically prohibited from receiving formal education (Gray et al. 2018).

All the studies reviewed provided a rationale that highlighted the need to understand the distinct experiences that relate to being different from the majority. They all also demonstrate the potential social isolation, poor outcomes and poor mental well-being that can be associated with being part of an 'outer' group such as being female with a diagnosis of autism, being a refugee, an immigrant, a Traveller, INA, of a migrant background, a Black

student and a student who has experienced a managed move.

### 2.3.2 Methodology

Table 5 seen below contains the details of the methodology used in each article reviewed in the first part of this literature review. This includes, the geographic location, the research design, the data collection method, participants and the appropriateness of this methodology to the aims of the articles stated above.

**Table 5**

*Details of Methodology used in articles.*

<b>Article and Geographical Location</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Appropriateness</b>
Myles et al. (2019) – United Kingdom	Qualitative design	Semi-structured interview.	8 females aged 11-18 years old with a diagnosis of autism or Asperger syndrome.	Myles et al. (2019) research design addresses the aims of their research to capture the views of adolescent females with autism and understand their experiences of belonging.

Due et al. (2016) - Australia	Qualitative and part of a broader study on migrants and refugees.	Focus groups, photographs and individual interviews.	15 children from a refugee background. 7 male and 8 female aged 5-13.	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aims of the research: To understand the lived experiences of refugee children.
Craggs and Kelly (2017) – United Kingdom	Qualitative design	Individual interviews	4 students who had experienced a managed move.	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aims to gain an in- depth understanding of the lived experiences for students who have undergone managed moves.
Cartmell and Bond (2015) – United Kingdom	Qualitative, exploratory design. Part of a broader case study looking at the development	Semi-structured interview.	5 students from two schools.	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aims for the research.

	of a sense of belonging for INAs.			
Frehill and Dunsmuir (2015) – United Kingdom and Ireland	Wait list control design – Quantitative	Questionnaires – Belonging Scale, the School Connectedness Scale and the Sense of School Community Scale, Affective Engagement Perspective Scale (teachers).  School attendance records.	37 traveller and 41 non-traveller students – across three secondary schools.	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aim to look at differences between traveller and non-traveller students.
Schachner et al. (2019) - Germany	Quantitative design: Part of a larger study on acculturation and intercultural	Questionnaires on life satisfaction, academic self-concept, sense of school belonging, cultural pluralism climate and equality and inclusion	1,971 students from 22 secondary schools.	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the aim to understand the association between the perceived climate around equality and

	relations in culturally diverse classrooms.	climate. Other data from: classroom ethnic composition, socioeconomic status, immigrant background, achievement data.		inclusion and the cultural diversity and belonging.
Gray et al. (2018) – United States of America	Literature review	N/A	N/A	The chosen methodology is appropriate for the research aim of gaining a greater understanding of a sense of belonging from Black students in the United States.
Caudenberg et al. (2020) - Belgium	Qualitative design	Semi-structured interviews over a two year period – 9 months to 1.5 years between each.	34 young people in mainstream secondary education analysed in depth with thematic	The methodology chosen is appropriate for gaining an in-depth understanding of experiences of young people from migrant backgrounds.

			narrative analysis	
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It is necessary to note that not all the research reviewed has been conducted in the UK. This includes, Gray et al. (2018), Schachner et al. (2019), Due et al. (2016) and Caudenberg et al. (2020) whose research takes place in the United States of America, Germany, Australia and Belgium. Therefore, conclusions drawn from these articles were treated with caution as it may not be representative of the experiences of young people in the United Kingdom. However, data from these studies provide insights into the belonging needs for outer groups which need attending to.

Despite a small sample, Myles et al. (2019) was able to gain participants from three different schools to broaden their understanding of school belonging for females with autism. The researchers also took the needs of the young people into account by ensuring that they met with them on two separate occasions to build trust and rapport. This also provided an opportunity for participants to reflect which it can be argued will provide more rich and detailed information. Due et al. (2016) also took care to build rapport and trust with their participants by spending a term at each school. This was also to ensure children's assent in the process. Craggs and Kelly (2017) and Cartmell and Bond (2015) both highlighted in their inclusion criteria the need for the participants to have been in their setting for a period of time. It can be argued that this would provide the schools and the young people with opportunities to develop a sense of belonging which would have guided the data collected and provide a stronger picture of their sense of belonging in school.

Caudenberg et al. (2020) drew on data that was collected over two years as part of a large-scale project which provided rich and in-depth information about belonging in school over a

period. However, they chose to focus on three cases which limits the generalisability of this data.

Interestingly, the majority of these studies take on a qualitative methodology which can be explained by the inappropriateness of Westernised quantitative measures that currently exist for school belonging (Cartmell and Bond, 2015). This is especially true for research that is investigating those from a different culture to Western society. Schachner et al. (2019) and Frehill and Dunsmuir (2015) rely on these measures in their methodology which may challenge the validity of the findings. However, Schachner et al. (2019) also uses a variety of other quantitative measures which take into account the cultural climate. Frehill and Dunsmuir's (2015) participants are Irish Travellers, therefore the questionnaires can be deemed appropriate.

### ***2.3.3 Findings and Discussion***

Themes of reciprocal friendship, feeling safe and supported, encouragement and inclusion and establishing and adhering to social expectations came from Myles et al. (2019) study on females with autism. It highlights the distinct factors that are related to belonging for these young people. For example, participants reported feeling ignored, the need to adapt their behaviour and feeling underestimated in their ability to do things. However, it is necessary to recognise that the reflections in interview may not reflect their lived experiences due to social desirability or other factors that can influence interpretation and delivery of reflections.

Therefore, these results should be treated with caution. Cartmell and Bond (2015) found similar themes of 'fitting in' which included friendships and adjusting to the new context and 'support from others'. However, Cartmell and Bond (2015) depicted quite distinct themes for INAs such as personal development, and positive emotions which related to the child as

opposed to their environment. They concluded that some factors that contribute to a sense of belonging for INAs were intrinsic to the child and others in the schools' environment.

Cartmell and Bond (2015) recognised that they did not get a holistic view of the perceptions of INAs as there were confounding variables that were not taken into account such as reason for migration. However, both studies indicate the importance of investigating belonging needs of distinct groups due to the themes that are dissimilar to the general belonging needs described in the previous section.

Caudenberg et al. (2020) also found that 'fitting in' was important for belonging in school. This was in terms of the school setting or place as well as the school community. Similar to other research discussed, relationships with staff and students were also seen as important to develop a sense of belonging. Caudenberg et al. (2020) expressed that participants experienced feelings of being an 'outsider'. It is important to note however, that this study was conducted in Belgium, therefore, the experiences may be unique to the social structures and education processes that exist. However, themes that derived from this research are aligned with other UK based research such as Cartmell and Bond (2015) and Myles et al. (2019).

Schachner et al. (2019) attempted to consider various variables such as immigrant background, socioeconomic status, achievement, and various others. They found that school belonging positively predicted achievement, academic self-concept and life satisfaction as did socioeconomic status. It was concluded that perceptions of equality and inclusion approach as well as cultural pluralism were positively associated with higher school belonging and better outcomes demonstrating the importance of these approaches for young people (Schachner et al. 2019). Interestingly there was no difference between students of immigrant and non-

immigrant background and their association with cultural diversity and belonging. It is necessary to note that this study took place in Germany and they may well have a different approach to creating a culturally diverse climate. Therefore, it is unclear of whether these findings would be replicated in schools in the UK, so further investigation is required.

Similarly, to Schachner et al. (2019), Frehill and Dunsmuir (2015) found no difference from the belonging scales for Traveller and non-Traveller students. However, there was a significant difference in the school connectedness for non-Traveller and Traveller students, with non-Traveller students feeling more connected to school. However, Frehill and Dunsmuir (2015) reflected on their data and recruitment process and felt that they may have received positive findings due to the schools that volunteered to take part. These schools appeared to effectively carry out their Traveller inclusion policies and practices.

Questionnaires were also completed in the family home and therefore, may have led to further bias in responses. However, a strength of this research is the large number of travellers that were able to participate which historically has been challenging to achieve and therefore furthers our understanding of this community.

Similar to Myles et al. (2019) and Cartmell and Bond (2015), Due et al. (2016) friendship (under the theme of attachment to school) was found to be important for refugee students from Australia. More specifically, this being with someone they could identify with and were of similar cultural, ethnic or linguistic backgrounds to themselves. Due et al. (2016) expressed that their significant finding was that refugee students formed their own sense of belonging in a unique and distinctive manner. For example, having posters and activities that depicted refugee experiences seemed important for fostering a sense of belonging. Despite some themes being similar to previous research on school belonging, Due et al. (2016)

expressed the nuances to themes such as relationships and inclusion for the refugee students in this study. This further indicates the need to explore belonging needs for those from groups who may be 'othered' or different from the majority as their experiences are distinct. It is important to recognise however, that this study took place in an Intensive English Language Program (IELP) and therefore may not reflect the same pressures as a mainstream class.

Craggs and Kelly (2017) also found themes of friendship and safety which has been found in previous studies (Cartmell & Bond, 2015; Due et al. 2016; Myles et al. 2019). This was especially prominent for students who had undergone a managed move. Similarly, to Cartmell and Bond (2015) being understood and supported was found and as Due et al. (2016) found, having opportunities for extra-curricular activities was deemed important. However, this was based on a small sample size and therefore limits its potential to be generalised as a finding, despite the homogeneity of the participants experiences.

Gray et al. (2018) described the distinct experiences of Black students in the United States of America (USA). They go into great depth and detail regarding race-based frameworks that highlight what opportunities exist for Black students to belong in school. Gray et al. (2018) also stressed the importance of not separating the Black students experience from the political (historical and present) and cultural experiences. They emphasised how necessary it is for Black students to explore their racial identity and understand their cultural heritage. In addition, to ensure the curriculum is not mono-cultural or taking a colour-blind approach. Finally, they express it is necessary for teachers to be culturally competent and provide a space for cultural distinctiveness in the curriculum, for schools to acknowledge the racially oppressive conditions Black students face and to teach ways to understand where this has

come from and how to change this in the future.

#### ***2.3.4 Value Added and Future Research***

Myles et al. (2019) expressed the importance of looking beyond the neuro-typical understanding of belonging when supporting females with autism. As a small sample was used, it seems important to investigate this further with participants from other mainstream schools and perhaps other age groups beyond 12-17 years of age. Having an ethnographic element to research would also be helpful in understanding the real lived experiences of young people and to reduce the effect of social desirability bias. Cartmell and Bond (2015) concluded with how complex belonging is for INAs and the importance of identity, acculturation and enculturation. They expressed the importance for EPs to be culturally aware. Frehill and Dunsmuir (2015) also highlighted to the importance of promoting a sense of belonging for pupils who are different from the majority. They felt that it would be important to extend their sample in the future to other geographical locations and in a larger more diverse sample to broaden our understanding.

Similarly, Schachner et al. (2019) expressed how necessary it is for schools to explicitly acknowledge diversity and foster contact and cooperation between different ethnic groups (equality and inclusion) as this was found to be linked to sense of belonging and in turn positive outcomes. Creating inclusive spaces in education was also highlighted by Caudenberg et al. (2020). Future research could look into the different ethnic groups as there may be differences in their perceptions of acculturation. Gray et al. (2018) also highlighted the importance for future research on belonging to take into consideration the cultural and political aspects of academic environments. Due et al. (2016) stressed not only the importance of forming relationships with teachers but teachers being culturally competent to

support and build relationships with refugee students. They also stressed the importance of being part of extra-curricular activities as well as the school supporting the ability for these students and families to participate. This will in turn support their belonging needs.

The majority of these studies highlighted that feelings of being accepted, included and forming meaningful relationships are important for fostering a sense of belonging as well as needing to fit in. In addition, the importance of recognising the distinct and unique experiences of individuals in a marginalised or minority group as well as being culturally competent/creating a culturally diverse climate. However, much of this research was conducted outside of the UK and has not substantially looked at ethnic minorities specifically.

## **2.4 Summary**

This chapter highlights the current research that explores belonging in school for secondary aged pupils. There are currently gaps in the research as to the experiences of different ethnic groups, more specifically the experiences of young people from different ethnic groups in the UK. Current research is based on education systems in countries such as Australia, Germany and the USA. Although this literature review highlights the distinct nature of belonging when being part of an ‘outer’ group and the contributors to belonging for young people in general, there is still limited information on belonging in relation to ethnicity. It therefore seems important to gain a sense of how belonging is experienced for these groups in UK secondary school systems. The next chapter will demonstrate the research process as well as the aims, research question and epistemological position.

### 3. Methodology

This chapter provides an account of how this research was undertaken, the epistemological position, aims and research question. It also shares an account of the procedures, recruitment of participants, how data was collected, analysed and who was involved in this research.

#### 3.1 Current Research

##### *Epistemological position*

An epistemological position is governed by epistemology; how we come to know about reality or the truth and ontology; our understanding of what reality or the truth is. For example, the belief that there is one reality versus multiple realities and discovering this through empirical (cause and effect), interactive or subjective (context dependent, interpretative) means (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). There are multiple epistemological and ontological paradigms such as positivism, constructionism, pragmatism and critical realism. Considering ontology, the existence of reality, it can be described on a continuum with realism on one end and relativism on another. Realism describes reality that is independent of human interpretation and knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Relativism describes reality that is dependent on human interpretation and knowledge. Realism believes there is only one true reality that can be discovered while relativism believes there are multiple constructed realities and one truth may not be possible.

Critical realism (CR) sits in the middle between relativism and realism (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The same can be applied to epistemology, how we come to understand reality. For example, a realist epistemology would believe it is possible to obtain one truth whereas a relativist epistemology would believe this is impossible. CR, however, accepts that there is

one reality, however, believes this is difficult to obtain due to human interpretation and knowledge.

A CR position was taken as it is believed that there is one reality that can be discovered. However, it acknowledges that it is difficult to obtain an objective truth due to the subjective nature of discovering knowledge (Mertens, 2014). CR differs from positivism as it believes reality cannot be solely empirically known. Positivism seeks objective (unbiased) data as a demonstration of reality. It uses scientific methods with control variables to remove as much bias as possible (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This was deemed as inappropriate for this research as the researcher is seeking to understand the experiences of ethnic minority secondary-aged pupils. Therefore, the aim to gain rich, qualitative data does not complement the objective nature of positivism.

CR also differs from constructionism as it believes that reality cannot be entirely constructed through human knowledge (Gray, 2013). Constructionism believes that what we know of the world is socially constructed and that there is no one truth, multiple knowledges exist. It may be guided by previous data or knowledge, however, does not seek a foundation for knowledge. This was deemed inappropriate for this research as the researcher is seeking to explore one reality or foundation for knowledge. Although the researcher understands that reality is constructed by human interpretation and experience, she believes that one truth can be discovered. Therefore, CR was deemed appropriate for this research.

### ***Critical Realism***

CR recognises that it may be challenging to reveal the reality that is being sought after, as observable information is often masked by experience and interpretation (Fletcher, 2017). CR

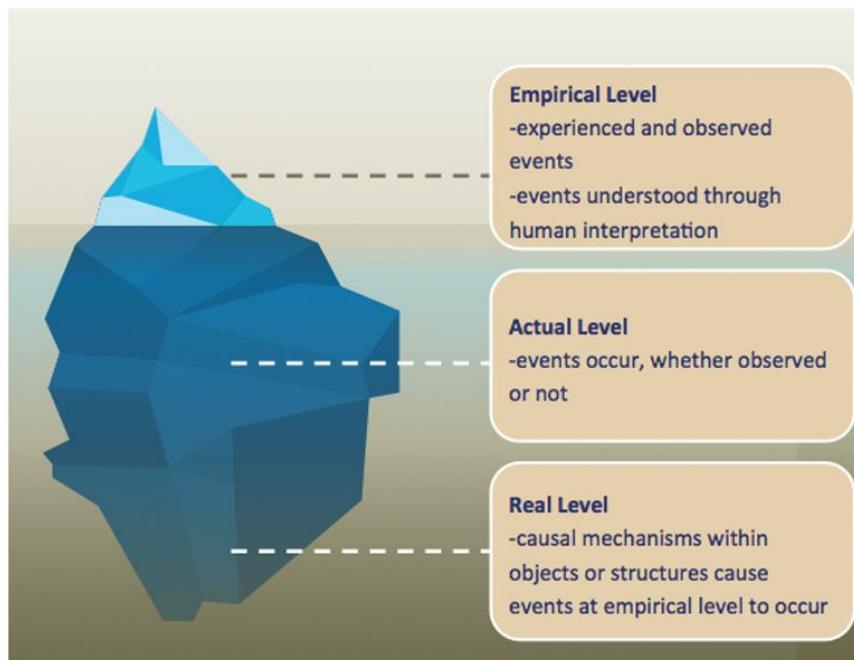
also understands that some research can get closer to reality than other types of research as opposed to the positivist and constructionist view which are polarised (Gray, 2013).

Fletcher (2017) expressed that CR can be useful for analysing social problems to inform solutions for social change which fits in with the researcher's aims and questions (expressed later in this chapter). They also described the iceberg metaphor (figure 1.) to explain the CR position. In relation to this research, young people from ethnic minority backgrounds will have their own unique understanding and interpretation of their experiences of belonging in school. This is described by Fletcher (2017) as the empirical level, whereby knowledge is a product of human experience and interpretation.

The CR position also claims that the experiences of ethnic minorities belong to a reality outside of their own interpretations. This is described as the actual level, events that occur whether observed or not. There is no human filter and events differs to what is observed in the empirical level. The third and final level that is used to illustrate the CR position is the real level. This is described as the causal mechanisms or structures that can be understood through the empirical level. In relation to this study, the experiences and interpretations that ethnic minorities describe are linked to a mechanism or structure that the researcher is interested in investigating further.

**Figure 1**

*Iceberg metaphor for CR ontology and epistemology (Fletcher, 2017)*



### ***Researcher positionality***

Milner (2007) refers to the danger of taking a colour and culture-blind approach to research, explaining that individuals and communities of colour can be misrepresented when this approach is taken. Milner (2007) outlined a framework for researchers to adopt a non-colour and non-culture blind approach. The questions which are part of the framework are vital in understanding what is consciously known, unknown and unanticipated.

Dillard (2000) also expressed that a researcher needs to ‘research’ themselves to understand another. Some example questions are “What is my racial and cultural heritage?” and “What do I believe about my race and culture in society and education?” “How do I attend to my own convictions and beliefs about race and culture in my research?” (p.395). Milner (2007)

also described in his framework the importance of researching the self in relation to others. Tilman (2002) emphasised this and stressed the importance of cultural knowledge over who is conducting the research. Some example questions are “What are the cultural and racial heritage and the historical landscape of the participants in the study?” and “How do I negotiate and balance my own interests and research agendas with those of my research participants which may be inconsistent with or diverge from mine?” (p.395). Thirdly, Milner (2007) expresses the importance of engaging in self-reflection and ensuring that both the researcher’s and participants’ voices are reflected in the interpretation of the data to ensure that one voice is not privileged over the other. Finally, Milner (2007) expressed shifting from self to system.

This means considering the historical, political, social, economic, racial and cultural realities that exist for the participants in the study. Example questions are “What systemic and organisational barriers and structures shape the community and people’s experiences, locally and more broadly?” and “What is known socially, institutionally and historically about the community?” (p. 396).

Considering Milner’s framework, the researcher takes the position as a mixed-race, female with a British Guyanese cultural background. There is a strong affiliation with social justice and racial equality that guides the researcher’s practice as a trainee educational psychologist. The researcher also feels very strongly connected to her ethnic identity. Nandi and Platt (2020) indicated that there is a link between ethnic and political identity especially with second generation individuals who appeared to have stronger ethnic and political identities. They also concluded that women from ethnic minority backgrounds tended to have stronger connection to their identity than men (Nandi & Platt, 2020). The researcher is aware of her

strong beliefs and that this may not be the same for every ethnic minority as they may not feel strongly or as close to their identity. It was necessary for the researcher to reflect throughout this process to not force her own agenda/hypothesis.

The researcher also considered the current and historical context that the majority of the participants in this study are associated with. For example, the researcher recognises at the time of this research, socially, politically and economically the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected the communities that took part in this study. For example, taking the view that ethnic identity is fluid, participants may have considered their ethnicity in relation to the questions asked in the interview even more in this period due to the heightened exposure of racial inequalities in the media.

### **3.2 Aims of research**

This research takes an exploratory and emancipatory approach. It aims to seek more information about the experiences of young people and sense of belonging in school. More specifically, what factors contribute to feeling a sense of belonging in secondary school. Previous research has discovered various contributing factors for general populations. However, this research looks more closely at adolescents who identify as an ethnic minority in the UK. The research also aims to explore parents' views of their child's belonging to provide context and further understanding of the experiences of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. The research does not aim to provide any conclusive solutions as it is felt that more exploration and information is needed to define the experiences of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds and their school belonging in the UK. However, the research aims to provide information that can be used in a practical manner to support the

belonging needs of this population and bring light to issues that may not routinely be heard.

### ***Research Question***

- What are the experiences of belonging in school for secondary aged pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and what contributes to this?

### **3.3 Research Design**

In light of the researcher's epistemological and researcher position, a qualitative design was used. This was to enable the researcher to explore the lived experiences of young people and gain an in-depth understanding of school belonging needs. Semi-structured interviews were used which provided an opportunity for the participants to correct assumptions or ask clarifying questions during the interview process, leading to more detailed and potentially accurate answers. Researcher reflexivity and taking a non-colour/culture blind approach was also an important part of this research as the researcher is reasonably close to the topic.

Therefore, a qualitative design provided the opportunity to scrutinise one's own role in the research. A small sample was decided upon due to time constraints. This also complemented the researcher's aim of gaining rich, deep and complex data. A large sample size would provide more data that could arguably be more generalisable. However, this would provide relatively 'shallow' data that only touches the surface of the experiences of individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Due to the exploratory and emancipatory nature of this research design the researcher felt a smaller sample would generate much data from each participant to attempt to understand the 'truth' behind the data. In addition, it might reveal key information that may not come from a large sample and can be used to benefit marginalised groups such as those from ethnic

minority backgrounds. The exploratory and emancipatory paradigm of this research meant that the researcher aimed to discover and produce information that can benefit marginalised or disadvantaged groups (Noel, 2016). The key principles of this research paradigm include openness, participation, accountability, empowerment, and reciprocity (Noel, 2016). The researcher aimed to achieve these by ensuring that participants were engaged actively and empowered in the process from the recruitment stage through to the end of the interviews. This was through using opportunistic sampling where those who felt the research applied to them volunteered to participate, using an interview schedule with carefully chosen questions that encouraged the participants to share their views without pre-conceived ideas and providing a debrief sheet with information on organisations that can empower their voices further such as ‘race reflections’ and ‘the winch – take back the power’.

Danieli and Woodhams (2005) also argue that active participation in the research process itself can be transformative and potentially emancipatory. In addition, the researcher aimed to hold accountability to the participants by recognising the emotions that may have arisen from discussions about belonging in school and therefore, ensured that there was a ‘check in’ process after the interview and contacts were provided if the participants were impacted by the discussion during the interview. Furthermore, the researcher continued to embed an emancipatory approach through the chosen method of analysis, orientation and approach to this as well as how the data was shared. For example, choosing an inductive approach, using quotes from young people themselves in the themes as well as the dissemination of data (please see 3.7 Data analysis and Chapter 4, Research Findings for more details). Danieli and Woodhams (2005) described this as giving “voice to the personal while endeavouring to collectivise the commonality of disabling experiences and barriers” (p.285).

Groat and Wang (2001) also describe emancipatory research as promoting social justice as they note that the majority of research is Western focused with a particular dominance towards racial, ethnic and gender biases. This aligned with the researcher's aims of gaining further understanding of the belonging needs for ethnic minorities through the voices of young people themselves.

Corbett (1998) noted the importance of conveying the 'voice' accurately to avoid undermining, distorting or misinterpreting voices that are already oppressed or silenced. Noel (2016) also noted that with emancipatory research, the 'helper' should not undermine or patronize the 'helpee' in a way that fixes their problems. In terms of this research, Mathers (2014, p1.) shares a powerful message in relation to the history of colonialism:

"consequences continue to echo through ongoing inequalities that determine who gets to be the saviour and who has to be saved". This can be a criticism of emancipatory research. The researcher attempted to minimise this by ensuring that support from this research comes in the form of empowerment and the potential removal of any barriers. This complemented the researchers sampling method where opportunistic sampling was used. Potential participants were encouraged to contact the researcher to express interest in participating. This was with the aim of providing participants with autonomy and to reduce the feeling that participants needed to be 'saved'.

## **3.4 Procedure**

### ***3.4.1 Ethical considerations***

Ethical approval was received from the T&P NHS foundation Trust (see Appendix 2). The British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018) as well as the Code of Human Research Ethics (2014) were abided by throughout this process. Consent was

received from the parents for their child to participate in this research alongside the child's assent through consent and assent forms. They were also provided with an information sheet (a parent and young people version) to ensure that both participants were making an informed decision to take part in the research. Participants were reminded of their right to withdraw throughout their participation and that any information they provide will be kept as confidential as possible. All data received was destroyed following analysis and efforts were made to keep information anonymous such as ensuring no identifiable information was present. This was also achieved through using pseudo names and removing information such as school name and location. Participants were verbally debriefed and a debrief sheet (parent and young people version, Appendix 5) was sent containing information on what happens following their involvement and where they can get support.

### ***3.4.2 Recruitment***

#### **Inclusion criteria.**

The inclusion criteria for this study were as follows:

- young people in Year 7-Year 13
- young people who identify themselves as being from an ethnic minority background
- Parent(s) of the young people who can comment on their belonging needs

The study was initially aimed at Year 7 students. However, due to challenges gaining a sufficient number of participants, this was extended to all year groups. This also allowed the researcher to gain an overall understanding of sense of belonging for secondary-aged pupils. It is understood that experiences of belonging may differ between year groups with some years perhaps feeling more established in their school (Year 13) and other year groups only just beginning their secondary school experience (Year 7). However, this also assumes that pupils in Year 13 have attended this school for an extended period which may not be the case.

Therefore, due to the variables which could be considered, the researcher felt it was necessary to capture belonging in a broad sense before looking more closely at specific year groups or other specificities that may influence belonging needs. The researcher also decided to involve parent(s) in the inclusion criteria as it was felt that they may provide further insight into the belonging needs of their children. More specifically, it was felt that they may provide insight on aspects of belonging that their child is not able to communicate.

The researcher decided to explore the belonging needs of those from a variety of different ethnic minority backgrounds as opposed to a specific ethnicity. This was with the aim to widen the scope of which participants volunteered and to provide the opportunity for minority groups who may not usually be heard or called upon in research. The researcher recognises that there are other minorities within school communities that relate to other aspects of one's identity such as children with ASC for example. However, the distinct experience connected to ethnic identity and belonging has not previously been explored. Given the systemic inequalities that exist for those who are from Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority communities and the associated academic and mental health outcomes, it seemed necessary to investigate.

### **Recruitment Procedure.**

Secondary school headteachers and Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCo's) were contacted in one local authority (LA) through an emailed letter and later through phone correspondence (see Appendix 6). There were significant challenges during the recruitment stage with schools either withdrawing their interest following the pandemic and school closures or parents withdrawing their interest due to personal circumstances. The significant stress and pressure that schools and parents were under during the time of this study cannot

be underestimated. It is important to note that all the schools and parents contacted felt this was necessary research and would have liked to be involved had they felt they had capacity to do so.

Out of the six schools contacted two agreed to take part. Participants were recruited from these two schools located in the same LA. They will be referred to as School A and School B. The designated person from School A and School B discussed with the researcher how they communicate with their parents. It was decided that it would be most appropriate to compose a message (Appendix 7) that school A and B would send out on the researcher's behalf via their own methods of correspondence with parents. School A advertised this research via the school newsletter and School B shared this via email correspondence. Both schools also attached the parental information sheet (Appendix 4). School A and B then agreed to share the contact details of parents who expressed interest for the researcher to contact. This was shared with all parents in all year groups (Year 7-Year 13) in both schools. This provided the opportunity for parents and young people to self-identify as opposed to the researcher working with schools to identify participants who fit into the 'ethnic minority' bracket. This is due to the complex and individual nature of how one identifies with their ethnicity, as well as its fluid and dynamic nature (Kiang & Fuligini, 2009). This was highlighted by Phinney (2004) who quoted the views of an Armenian young adult. It also demonstrates how important it is for the individual to identify themselves and just how variable it can be when others choose what ethnic category one fits in:

“When I was living in Iran, we were seen as Armenians, which is correct. However, when I was living in India ...and now in the U.S., we are considered White... But living in Glendale

[predominantly Armenian community near Los Angeles], it's quite clear that I am seen as an Armenian" (p.11).

Seventeen parents expressed interest, thirteen of whom were from School B. These parents were contacted individually via email and phone correspondence depending on the contact details provided. Parents were sent the information sheets, consent/assent form for themselves and their child and a participant information sheet to ascertain their ethnic identity (parent and child) and their child's year group (Appendix 3 and 4). Of these seventeen parents, seven returned the consent forms and interviews were arranged after school with the young people. Parents were sent the questionnaire via email to complete.

### 3.5 Participant Information

School A is a Catholic comprehensive girl's school from age 11 through to 18. School B is a Grammar school for boys with an attached sixth form that is mixed (boys and girls). The tables show the demographic groups of the participants for young people (Table 6) and for parents (Table 7).

**Table 6**

*Demographic details of participants – young people*

<b>Participant Number</b>	<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>School</b>
1	7	Female	Black British African	A
2	8	Male	Black African	B
3	10	Male	Black Caribbean	B

<b>4</b>	10	Female	Mixed – White and Black African	A
<b>5</b>	11	Male	Black British Caribbean	B
<b>6</b>	11	Male	Asian – Indonesian	B
<b>7</b>	13	Male	Mixed – Black Caribbean and Asian Caribbean	B

This table shows the demographic details of the young people who took part in this study where by 71% are male (5 participants) and 29% are female (2 participants). In terms of ethnicity, 29% are of mixed ethnicity (2 participants), 28% Black African (2 participants), 14% Asian (1 participant) and 29% Black Caribbean (2 participants).

**Table 7**

*Demographic details of participants – parents*

<b>Participant Number</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>School</b>
<b>1</b>	Female	Mixed – Indian Caribbean and Afro Caribbean	B
<b>2</b>	Female	Black British Caribbean	B
<b>3</b>	Female	Black British African	A
<b>4</b>	Female	Asian – Indonesian	A
<b>5</b>	Male	Black African	B
<b>6</b>	Female	White European	A
<b>7</b>	Female	Black Afro-Caribbean	B

This table shows the demographic details of the parents who took part in this study where by 14% are male (1 parent) and 86% are female (6 parents). In terms of ethnicity, 14% are of mixed ethnicity (1 parent), 14% Asian (1 parent), 29% Black African (2 parents), 14% White european (1 parent) and 29% Black Carribean (2 parents).

### **3.6 Data Collection**

Information for this research was collected through semi-structured interviewing with young people and questionnaires with their parent(s). Semi-structured interviews were used as the researcher wanted to gain information that was specific to school belonging needs and the themes that have been previously related to belonging needs in school. Therefore, an interview schedule was created that was used for all participants (Appendix 10). The questionnaire (Appendix 8) was used with parents to gain further information on their child's belonging needs in school with the view to share information that the young people may not have been able to articulate or verbalise. Therefore, the questionnaire and interview were linked in terms of the questions and themes as much as possible.

#### ***Semi-Structured Interview and Questionnaire***

It was decided that the semi-structured interview and the questionnaire used in this study was to be based on a questionnaire that had already been used in previous research. This was with the view to gather information from a questionnaire that had been previously researched and where the validity and reliability had previously been considered. The researcher considered the scales that have previously been used to measure school belonging needs in current research. These included but are not limited to: The Belonging Scale (Frederickson et al, 2007), School Connectedness Scale (Resnick et al. 1997), The Psychological Sense of School Membership (Goodenow & Grady 1993), Milwaukee Youth Belongingness scale (Slaten et

al., 2016) and the Simple School Belonging Scale (Whiting et al., 2018). Some researchers had created their own questionnaires and stated the scale which inspired their questions.

The researcher decided to use the Psychological Sense of School Membership (PSSM) to structure the questionnaire and interview. In terms of the semi-structured interview, the researcher took a further step when developing the questions which was to consider what themes derive from current research on ‘outer’ groups or those considered in the minority and which questionnaire aligned more closely to these. For example, themes such teaching and learning, relationships, similarity, inclusion, support and identification were similar across the current research on belonging and appeared to align closely with the statements in the PSSM. The PSSM also has reportedly good internal consistency and has been used widely in research on adolescents and their belonging in school (Ye & Wallace, 2014). Frehill and Dunsmuir (2015) highlighted that other scales such as the School Connectedness Scale measures happiness, belonging, safety and closeness to others at school. It was therefore felt that the PSSM questionnaire targeted inclusion and identification slightly more than the other scales, which is more aligned with understanding the experiences of young people from an ethnic minority background. Questions specific to belonging that were created from the PSSM were kept generic and did not specifically relate to participant’s ethnic identity for example “are there people at school who are similar to you?”. This was to avoid leading questions and provide participants with an opportunity to voice their experiences without feeling they are required to answer in a specific way. This also aligned with the emancipatory approach to my research, whereby empowering participants voices was deemed important as well as understanding their experiences.

When developing the interview schedule, the researcher grouped the 18 items from the PSSM into themes and re-worded the statements into questions. For example the statement “There’s at least one teacher or adult in this school that I can talk to if I have problem” was placed under the theme relationships and re-worded as “Do you get on with the teachers and staff in school? If yes/no, why?”. For the parent questionnaire, this was re-worded to “My child has at least one adult in school like them that they can talk to.” The researcher also included a question in the parent questionnaire about the impact of the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement as the impact of the socio-political context could not be ignored. In addition, considering the researcher’s positionality as discussed earlier and Milner’s (2007) framework for non-colour-blind approach to research, this ensured that participants’ social, political, racial and cultural reality was considered.

### ***Procedure***

Interviews were conducted via Zoom following the COVID-19 pandemic and guidance from the government to cease face-to-face interactions. The interviews were recorded using Zoom’s inbuilt recording and a dictaphone for later transcription. Following the interviews, the researcher kept a log of her initial thoughts and reflections in keeping with researcher reflexivity. Interviewees were told that these recordings would be destroyed after data analysis. They were also re-assured that their information would be kept confidential as their data would be combined with other participants making it challenging to identify them in the results. Questionnaires were completed by the main contact for the young people (in this case, usually the young people’s mother). This was also completed virtually through a link to the Google Form, which was sent to them for completion via email correspondence.

Following each interview, the researcher kept a diary of her initial reflections. This continued

through the transcription phase where the researcher built upon her initial reflections.

Braun and Clarke (2006) highlight the importance of ensuring that transcripts contain a verbal account of the interview and are as close to the original nature as possible. This includes punctuation, all verbal utterances and checking back against the original audio for accuracy. They also express that the transcripts do not require the same level of detail as other forms of analysis such as discourse analysis. However, they emphasise the importance of spending time transcribing interviews as it helps the researcher develop a thorough understanding of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Interviews were transcribed verbatim i.e. the words that were being said as well as any pauses in speech and any other utterances. Interviews were initially transcribed using Otter.ai and then transcribed further by listening to the interview recordings and checking the accuracy of what had been transcribed as well as adding pauses and other utterances. This helped the researcher familiarise herself with the data and gain an overall sense of the experiences being described.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

#### *Analysis of Questionnaire*

The questionnaire completed by parents was analysed qualitatively using descriptive analysis. This was with the aim to describe the basic features of the data derived from the questionnaires. The answers parents gave to the Likert statements were put into similar themes and then displayed in a bar chart to highlight the amount of parents who strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or had a neutral response. This aided the researcher's description.

## *Analysis of Interviews*

### **Method of Analysis Deemed most Suitable for this Research**

The researcher decided to use reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019) to analyse the data derived from interviews. This was because the researcher was interested in the meaning and patterns that existed across data sets and aligned with the researcher's epistemological paradigm, critical realist. Other qualitative methods of analysis such as Interpretative Phenomenological analysis (IPA) were not chosen. Research that uses IPA are also interested in the lived experience and argues that analysis is interpretative, and assumptions of meaning are inevitable (Willig, 2013). It also aims to capture the individual experience through the researcher's interpretations by engaging with individual cases with intensity and detail. IPA is used to gain themes from each data set which are then clustered together to make sense of participants' experiences (Smith et al., 2009). It generates a more detailed description of participants experiences as opposed to explaining their experience or understanding why these experiences take place (Willig, 2013).

The researcher felt that with this study taking an emancipatory approach, she wanted the data to be used in a more active manner than to be purely descriptive or based on personal experience (Braun & Clarke, 2020). The researcher wanted to produce information that may support the ethnic minority community and produce information with implications for practice. The researcher's interest in the experiences of the participants is located within the wider socio-cultural contexts and she'd like to use the information derived from this research to influence this.

It can be argued that Grounded Theory may be a suitable choice for this aim as it produces an explanatory framework/theory to a phenomenon being investigated (Willig, 2013). It aims to

be analytic as opposed to descriptive. However, the research question in this study pertains more to 'what' statements as opposed to 'how' which relates to an action or process and is more compatible with grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). Grounded Theory is also used when the phenomenon being investigated has been explored but not explained convincingly. In addition, it is best used to investigate and explain social processes that occur in everyday life (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014). It was felt that there has been little to no research exploring the belonging needs of ethnic minority communities in schools and therefore, it can be argued that social processes are yet to be identified. The researcher believes before applying an explanatory framework or theory, more information is needed in this area of research.

A critique of Grounded Theory is also that it is less reflective as an approach, meaning that it is limited in the way in which it incorporates the researcher as part of data analysis (Willig, 2013). As the researcher feels relatively close to this research, it seemed important to choose a method of data analysis where reflexivity is a key component to ensure that the researcher is aware of their own role in the production of knowledge and how this may influence the meaning derived from the data. Therefore, RTA was deemed most appropriate to determine what patterns exist to make meaning of the phenomenon being investigated in a self-critical manner.

### **Reflexive Thematic Analysis**

It is well established that assumptions and positionings are part of conducting qualitative research and are challenging to avoid (Willig, 2013). Therefore, using a reflexive approach is vital. This involves, identifying, understanding and interrogating your own assumptions. Braun and Clarke (2019) specified their preference for the term reflexive thematic analysis (RTA). They believe that it captured the distinct nature of this approach compared to other

versions of thematic analysis (TA). They also stressed the importance of acknowledging one's own theoretical assumptions that inform their data analysis. They stated, "the researcher's role in knowledge production is at the heart of our approach" (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p.7). It therefore felt an appropriate method to use, especially as the researcher is closely connected to the research and therefore thoughtful engagement with the data was required.

RTA has a number of strengths which make it a suitable method of data analysis for this research. However, it also has its limitations as a form of data analysis which will be discussed in more detail here. RTA is a flexible approach as the researcher can tailor this method of analysis to fit in with their own epistemology and the theoretical framework that they work within (Braun & Clarke, 2013). It can be argued that other methods of analysis such as IPA and Grounded Theory contain more substance as they are governed by theoretical approaches and therefore provide more direction for the researcher. However, the researcher found the flexibility necessary for her research. This is due to the emancipatory nature of this research which allowed the participants voice to shine through and as much as possible to be independent of pre-conceived ideas, theories, and concepts.

As a researcher with little qualitative research experience, this approach is deemed as an accessible method for beginners (Braun & Clarke, 2013). However, it can be easy for novice researchers to fall into a descriptive analysis of participants experiences as it is not bound by an existing theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Therefore, interpretation of data is limited. It is important for the researcher to have a strong sense of their own approach to using RTA and how to ensure that they are analytical in their analysis as opposed to producing descriptors of participants experiences. The researcher ensured that they were

aware of this RTA pitfall and used their research supervision and peer group to gain further understanding on utilising more interpretative power.

RTA is described as accessible to wider audiences (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This appealed to the researcher as its emancipatory approach meant that data would generate information that could be of use to teachers, other school staff, educational settings and the educational psychology field. Therefore, the researcher required data that can be accessed by others who could implement and make use of the information generated. A drawback of using RTA is the loss of the individuals' voice as patterns are collated across individual accounts. However, the researcher's approach to this study was to find the underlying factors that underpin belonging needs for ethnic minority pupils. Therefore, capturing the voice of an individual was not the main objective, capturing the voice of the collective was.

### **Approach Taken when using Reflexive Thematic Analysis**

Braun and Clarke (2006) express that RTA does not confine itself to a particular epistemology or theoretical paradigm. Therefore, it is very flexible in its approach and allows the researcher to fit the analysis around their own position (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Willig (2013) also highlights that questions that examine people's ways of thinking about a social phenomenon are well suited to RTA.

The researcher chose to position themselves within a CR epistemology as they believe one reality exists that is challenging to obtain due to human interpretation. She wanted to understand the underlying factors or processes that governed the experience of belonging for secondary students who were from ethnic minority backgrounds. Further decisions were made to how the researcher applied RTA to the data sets. For example, Braun and Clarke

(2013) expressed that RTA can be applied in a critical or experiential way. The researcher took more of a critical approach as opposed to an experiential one. This was because she was interested in what concepts underpinned the experiences of belonging for ethnic minority pupils in secondary school as opposed to describing their experiences alone.

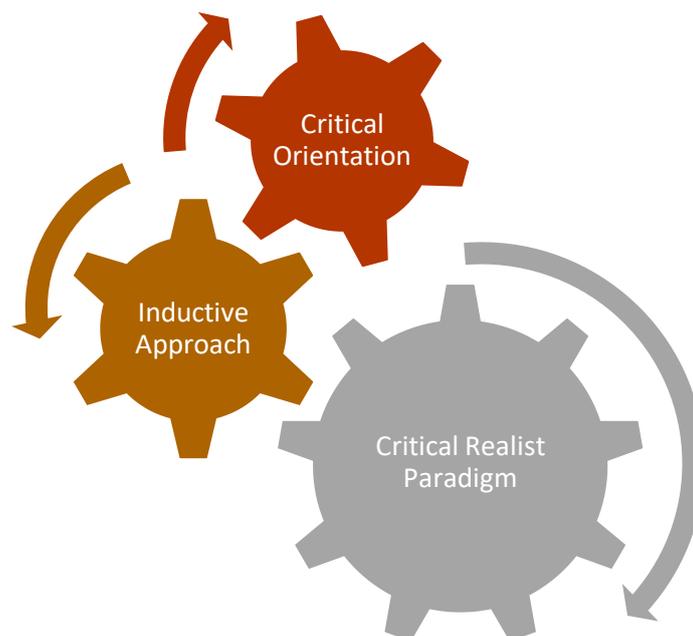
Another aspect to using TA was whether a deductive or inductive approach was taken. A deductive approach is described as 'top down' where meaning is driven by a theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Whereas an inductive approach is described as 'bottom up' where the researcher works on what meaning is grounded in the data and believes that the data should not be analysed through the lens of the researcher's theoretical interest in this topic (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The researcher took a predominantly inductive approach to RTA as she wanted to give voice to information that has been shared in an emancipatory way. As Patton (1990) expressed, the inductive approach ensures that the themes are strongly linked to the data and that the researcher does not try to fit codes into a pre-existing framework or pre-conceptions.

However, the researcher could not completely rid herself of pre-conceptions or attempts to fit the data into pre-existing frames (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This highlighted further the importance of using a reflexive approach to analyse data to ensure that the researcher's own theoretical interests and pre-conceptions did not drive the data analysis but the data itself drove the analysis. Furthermore, a deductive approach may have taken away from the empowering nature of viewing young people as experts on their experience. It may not have provided them with a platform where their voices could be heard without attributing a prescribed meaning.

It is important to note that on reflection of their work Braun and Clarke (2019) expressed that they do not intend these choices to be ‘either/or’ for example inductive or deductive, experiential or critical. They express that they view these orientations as a continuum where you may be a mix of the two or slightly more influenced by one than the other as opposed to being on polar ends or ‘either/or’. Figure 2 demonstrates the position taken by the researcher and the orientations that they were influenced by.

## Figure 2

*Researcher’s approach to using reflective thematic analysis*

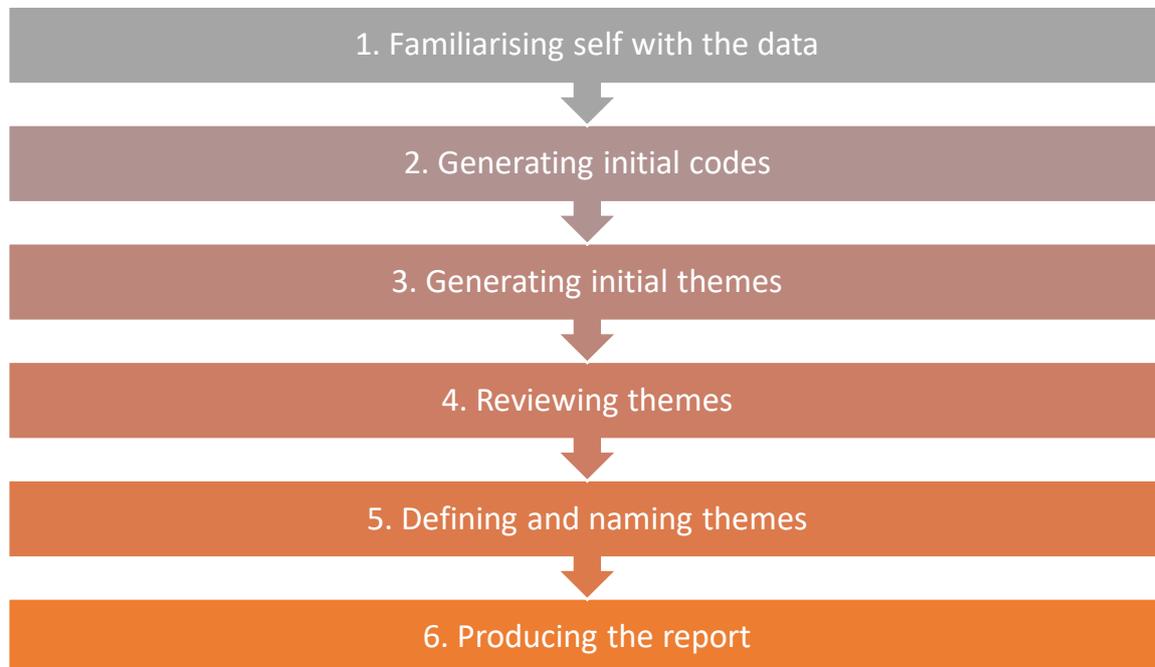


### **How Reflexive Thematic Analysis was Used to Analyse Data**

The researcher conducted the data analysis using the following six step process seen in figure 3. This section will explain the procedure used in further detail.

**Figure 3**

*Steps taken to undertake reflexive thematic analysis*



**Phase 1: Familiarising self with the data.**

Braun and Clarke (2006) express the importance of immersing oneself with the data to gain a sense of familiarity with the data. They emphasise the importance of ‘repeated reading’ and actively engaging in this by searching for meanings and patterns. The researcher immersed herself in the data by transcribing and collecting the data herself. Following each interview, the researcher demonstrated active engagement with the data by keeping a reflective diary containing her initial thoughts. She also actively engaged with the data by transcribing the interviews which involved listening to the recorded interviews multiple times. The researcher made notes as she was transcribing and added to her initial reflections by recording what initially leapt out to her. As part of the reflective process, the researcher also reflected on any assumptions that she made by questioning what she brought to the interpretation. For

example, being strongly connected to her ethnic identity and having a passion for social justice. When a participant expressed views that either aligned with or opposed this, it was important to notice and be aware of how the researcher was pulled to interpret this.

***Phase 2: Generating initial codes.***

With the initial ideas and general sense-making completed, the second step to this process is described by Braun and Clarke (2006) as the production of initial codes. These codes can be semantic, latent or both. They are described as a label that captures something interesting in the data or the meaning identified (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Codes can be determined through an inductive or deductive approach. Inductive where the researcher captures the meaning of the extract that comes from data itself and deductive where the researcher captures meaning through an identified interest or pre-existing framework (Willig, 2013).

The researcher used the computer software NVivo to generate codes by highlighting aspects of data extract and assigning a code. The extract was analysed through its surface meaning, the meaning of the word itself (semantic) or the underlying meaning, the implicating and unconscious thought (latent). It was necessary for the codes to work independently from the data. Therefore, the codes generated were not formed of one word but a sentence which captured something interesting about the data. As the researcher decided to take an inductive approach (data-driven) with a critical orientation to interpreting the data, she focused on unpicking the underlying meaning and rules that emerged from the data itself. The datasets generated a large number of codes which were integrated into “higher-level codes” or sub-codes (Willig, 2013).

### *Phase 3: Generating initial themes.*

Braun and Clarke (2006) explained that once all the data has been coded and collated, the researcher is then ready for a broader aspect of the analysis which is sorting different codes into potential themes. The sorting process involves analysing the codes created in Phase 2 and deciding the overarching theme that links the codes together. The researcher thought about shared ideas, concepts or meanings that cut across the datasets. She also tried to avoid 'domain summaries' which is more descriptive in its nature as opposed to capturing meaning and patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Braun et al., (2015, p.9) identified three important questions that the researcher kept in mind when carrying out this phase:

1. Is the theme relevant to the research question?
2. Is the potential theme evident across different data items?
3. Is there a central organising concept that underpins the potential theme?

The researcher extracted 900 codes from her data set which she organised using NVivo 12 (2021 code) by moving them into sub-codes and then potential themes. Using this software to do so was found to be quite challenging. Therefore, she moved to a manual approach by printing out all the codes and sorting them into similar codes to form sub-codes. These sub-codes were then sorted into potential themes, sub-themes and superordinate themes. This supported the creation of an initial thematic map which visually represents the relationship between different themes (superordinate themes, themes and sub-themes). Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest a theme called 'miscellaneous' for codes that don't seem to belong anywhere. The researcher found this helpful in organising the various codes she had extracted for the datasets. The researcher also continued to demonstrate reflexivity by becoming more aware of her own assumptions and checking her themes with a peer.

***Phase 4: Reviewing themes.***

In this phase, the researcher generated a set of themes which needed further refinement (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This involved themes being combined, refined, separated, or discarded. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that there are two parts to this phase, reviewing the coded data extracts and looking at the dataset as a whole to determine its validity. The researcher therefore read through the extracts for the sub-codes and then themes to determine whether the pattern was coherent. This may be due to the theme not holding a central organising concept or the codes not belonging within the theme. The researcher, therefore, separated some themes, combined and discarded others so that it represented the coded data. The second part involved the researcher checking the accuracy of the thematic map that had been refined in part one of this phase against the whole data set. Once the researcher felt confident with this part, she moved onto Phase 5.

***Phase 5: Defining and naming themes.***

This phase involved naming each theme to provide a skeleton structure to the analysis. Braun et al., (2015) express that these names can be descriptive titles or a brief title that captures the essence of a theme. The researcher, checked that the names generated provided a clear indication on what the theme represented and at times used the words of the young people.

***Phase 6: Producing the report.***

Braun et al., (2015, p.11) describe this phase as “building a convincing, evidenced and interpretative story of the data that answers the research question”. They explain that the data quotations that are presented need to tell the reader how it relates to the research question, the importance of the data and what was in the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) stress that simply presenting the data is not enough and that the analysis should be presented in a manner that

provides supporting evidence to the research question. The researcher presents the analytic narrative in Chapter 4.

### **3.8 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness can be described as how much the findings can be trusted and whether they are beneficial to those concerned (Angen, 2000). The criteria used in quantitative research to determine the quality of one's research such as internal validity, generalisability, reliability, and objectivity is not well suited to qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) provide criteria for quality in qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and reflexivity. This was used to establish trustworthiness in this study.

#### ***Credibility***

This is defined as how confident one is that the research findings are a true representation of the original data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). A number of strategies are involved to ensure this such as prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing and member check (Korstjens & Moser, Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Refining one's hypotheses is also part of this process as well as checking preliminary findings and interpretations against the original data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Korstjens and Moser (2018) expressed that these strategies to check credibility may not apply to all research and is dependent on the methodology used. In this study, due to limited time, the researcher's prolonged engagement in the data extended to long interviews and immersion in the data analysis. This allowed opportunity to become familiar with the data and build some degree of trust with the interviewees to reduce instances of misinformation. This was also built through being clear regarding their role in the research, their consent, anonymity, confidentiality and right to withdraw. The researcher also ensured that her themes were 'checked' by a peer who was not

part of the research as part of 'peer debriefing'. Triangulation in this research was achieved through collecting data from more than one source such as parents and young people. This provided a broader understanding of the data. Unfortunately, the researcher was unable to use member checking at the end of the analysis due to time restraints. However, interpretations were checked explicitly throughout the interview which they either confirmed or adapted.

### ***Transferability***

This refers to the degree to which the research can be transferred to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The way in which this is achieved is through provided 'thick description' which means providing information that pertains to context and research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is argued that by providing a rich and detailed description of the research process, the reader can make the transferability judgement and determine if it applies to their setting (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). This research aimed to provide a thick description throughout these chapters to enable readers to determine its transferability.

### ***Dependability and Confirmability***

Lincoln and Guba (1985) express that this entails how much the research is consistent, repeatable, and objective. For example, ensuring that interpretations are grounded in the data as opposed to the preferences of the researcher. In this study, the researcher kept a reflective diary when conducting the research, examining the data as well as her interpretations and subsequent recommendations. This included the raw data (questionnaires, transcripts and video recordings of interviews), any notes and initial reflections from the interviews, synthesis of the data (constructing and reconstructing themes and relationships) as well as reflective notes on the decisions made. This supported the researcher's capacity to remain objective and ensure decisions were thoughtful throughout.

***Reflexivity***

Willig (2013) expresses that the researcher has an influence on the research process from not only their personal selves but also as a theorist which they called personal and epistemological reflexivity. The researcher acknowledged her closeness to the research and her own personal biases as well as naming her epistemological and researcher positionality. She also ensured that she questioned her decisions throughout the process and continued to review her role in the research to reduce instances of imposing her own beliefs onto the research. This is covered in more details in the Discussion chapter.

**3.9 Summary**

This chapter highlights the researcher's epistemological position as well as their positionality as a researcher. This has influenced the methodology, aims and research question chosen. Data collection and analysis were also described in great detail alongside the steps taken to ensure the research has been conducted ethically and can be trusted. The next chapter will include the researcher findings that have derived from the processes described above.

## 4. Research Findings

This chapter provides an analytic narrative of the data and aims to answer the following research question:

*What are the experiences of belonging in school for secondary aged pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and what contributes to this?*

*The names have been changed and pseudo names are used to protect the identity of those who took part in this study.*

### 4.1 What are parental views on their child's sense of belonging in school?

It is necessary to share the parental views on their children's belonging which will provide a helpful frame and context to the data from young people themselves that will be discussed later in this chapter. Parents were provided with a questionnaire to complete which consisted of statements that utilise a Likert scale and three open-ended questions to broaden the researchers understanding of the context of belonging in school for these participants. The data from this were grouped into similar statements and named the following: feelings related to others, oneself and the environment. The findings from this questionnaire are presented in Figures 4, 5 and 6.

#### 4.1.2 Parental Views on their Child's Sense of Belonging

##### **A Sense of Belonging in School.**

All parents expressed that their child has a sense of belonging within their school, with most parents relating this to the school's value system, ethos and community feel. One parent

attributed their child's sense of belonging to the diverse ethnic composition of the school and another made specific reference to their peer group:

*"Yes... the school has a strong sense of community and is largely diverse"* (Respondent 2)

### **Connection to their Ethnic Identity in school.**

There were mixed views as to whether their child felt connected to their ethnic identity in school with the majority expressing that their child does not due to a lack of representation in the school or in the school curriculum. Parents who expressed that their child felt a strong connection to their ethnic identity attributed this to forming friendships with peers of the same ethnicity.

*"Yes, I think so, because he has a lot of black friends at the school"* (Respondent 3)

*"Not really. The school should include topics on other cultures or ethnic group instead of focusing only on British culture"* (Respondent 1)

### **The Impact of Black Lives Matter Movement.**

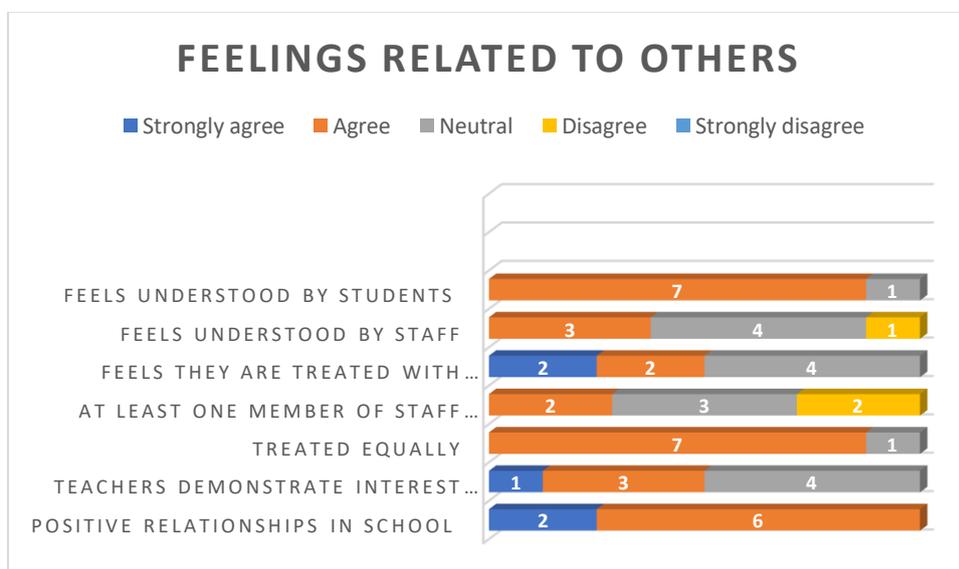
All parents mentioned the profound impact that the events of summer of 2020 such as George Floyd's murder and the increased media coverage of the Black Lives Matter movement had on themselves and their child. Some parents expressed how it reminded them that very little has changed in response to racism over the years. While others took a more hopeful stance and expressed that more discussions were occurring, and the movement has brought about change and awareness. In terms of its impact on their children, these events seemed to trigger more discussions about race and racism.

“Yes, for me it brought to the surface thoughts and feelings around how little things have changed over the last 30 years. For my children, this made them aware of the more severe consequences that can arise from racial prejudice, which created more discussion as a family” (Respondent 5).

**Sense of Belonging in Relation to Others.**

**Figure 4**

Bar chart representing parental views on their child’s sense of belonging in relation to others.



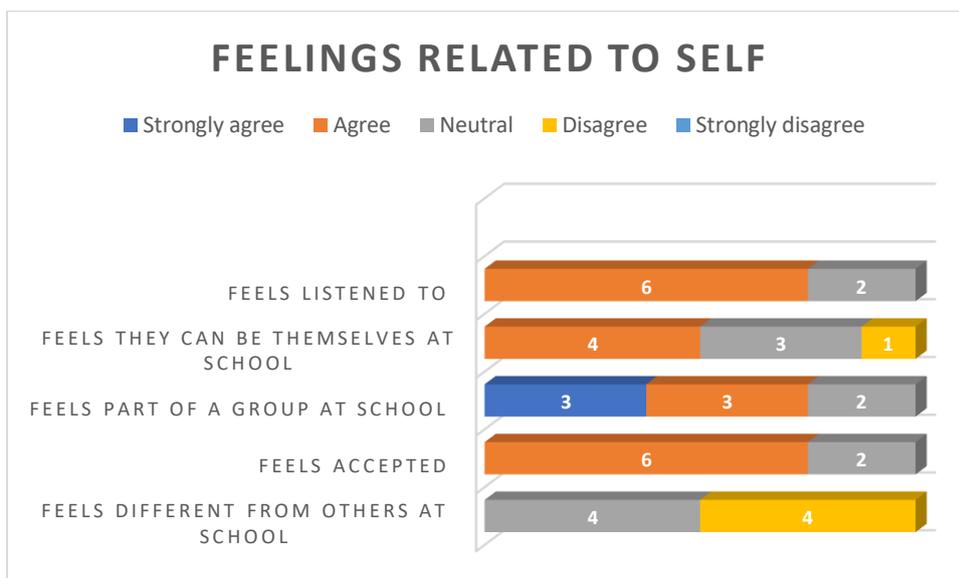
All parents expressed an agreement that their child has positive relationships in school, especially in relation to their peers. The majority felt their child was treated equally and were understood by their peers. Where there seemed to be some neutrality or disagreement was in relation to members of staff. For example, feeling understood, respected or demonstrating authentic interest in their child. Parents either couldn’t comment on this, hence the neutral response or expressed a concern here “I don’t think enough teachers show they genuinely care”. “He’s never said otherwise, nor reported being disrespected.” The majority of parents

also felt that there was not a member of staff who is like their child or were unsure about this. Overall, parents appeared to suggest that their children are having a positive experience in relation to others at their school. However, how their child relates to members of staff seems to be an area of uncertainty.

### Sense of Belonging in Relation to Oneself

**Figure 5**

*Bar chart representing parental views on their child's sense of belonging in relation to the self.*

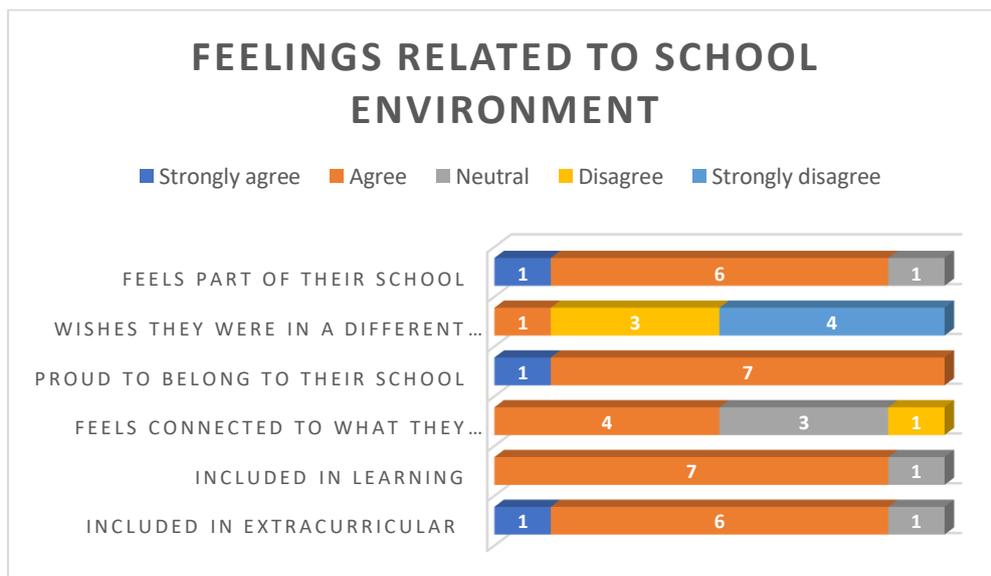


Most parents reported that their child felt listened to, accepted and part of a group at school. Half of the parents also felt that their child did not feel different from others at school whereas the other half responded with a neutral response. There also appeared to be a split between parental views on whether their child felt that they could be themselves at school.

## Sense of Belonging in Relation to The School Environment

**Figure 6**

*Bar chart representing parental views on their child's sense of belonging in relation to the school environment.*



All parents felt that their child was proud to belong to their school with the majority expressing that their child felt a part of their school, included in learning, in extracurricular activity and felt connected to what they learn about.

Overall, from the parents' viewpoint, the young people who participated in this study feel a sense of belonging to their school. The majority feel listened to, included, accepted, respected, and treated equally. They appear to have strong foundations with other students which contribute to their sense of belonging. However, their relationships with staff in relation to their belonging needs is uncertain. Parents also revealed that most of the young people in this study do not relate to their ethnic identity in school despite feeling a part of the

school. The following section aims to shed a light on this further.

## **4.2 What are the experiences of belonging in school for secondary aged pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and what contributes to this?**

### ***4.2.1 Reflexive Thematic Analysis***

To answer this question, RTA was carried out using the transcripts from the seven interviews. Chapter Three provides a detailed account of not only the process but the positionality of the researcher and the approach to the process of thematic analysis taken. The researcher generated four overarching themes which corresponded to several themes and sub themes. These will be discussed in turn alongside a thematic map. However, firstly, the researcher will discuss the overview of the thematic analysis and the relationships that were found between the four overarching themes that attempt to answer the research question.

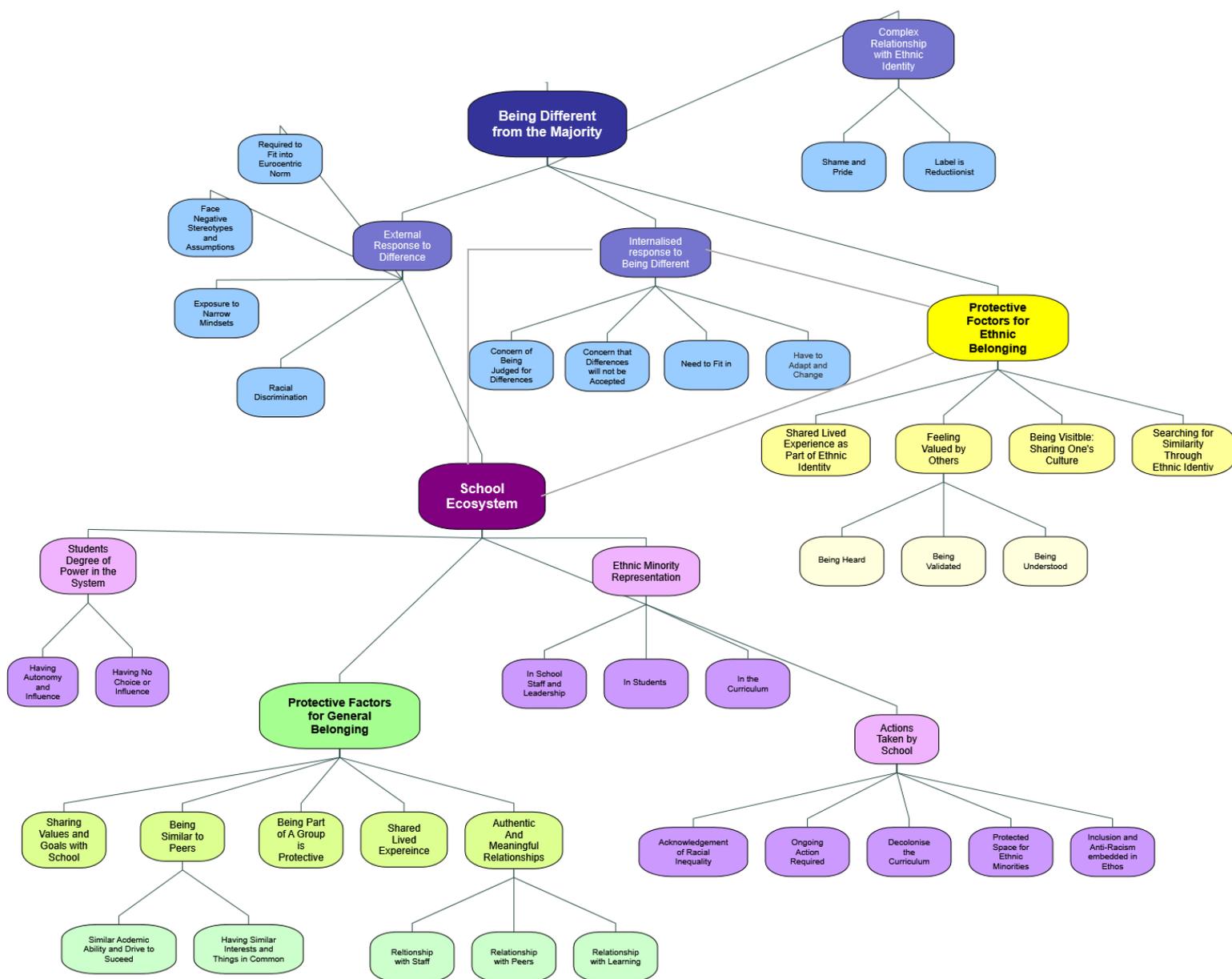
#### **Overview of Themes.**

The four overarching themes found were: **‘Being Different from the Majority’**, **‘Protective Factors for Ethnic Belonging’**, **‘Protective Factors for General Belonging’** and **‘School Ecosystem’**. Figure 7 demonstrates an overview of how the overarching themes connect with one another as well as the other themes and sub-themes that were generated from this thematic analysis. The overarching themes have been highlighted. There was a noticeable relationship between Being Different from the Majority and Protective Factors for Ethnic Belonging as the way in which individuals internalised being different have the potential to be mitigated by the protective factors that derived from this analysis. Similarly, a relationship with the School Ecosystem was also noticed as the system in the school can have an influence on the external and internal response that comes from being different from the majority. The

School Ecosystem related to both Protective Factors for Ethnic Belonging and Protective Factors for General Belonging demonstrating the influence the school system has on nurturing that sense of belonging for young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Not only does the school system appear to nurture general sense of belonging; it can also influence young peoples' sense of belonging connected to their ethnic identity which is unique to these participants. General and Ethnic Belonging remain distinct from each other as participants highlighted an isolated need to belong that relates to their ethnic identity. In addition, the way in which participants respond to being different from the majority and the way in which others respond to them indicate a distinct need which requires supporting.

**Figure 7**

*Overview of thematic analysis: the four subordinate themes in the largest boxes*

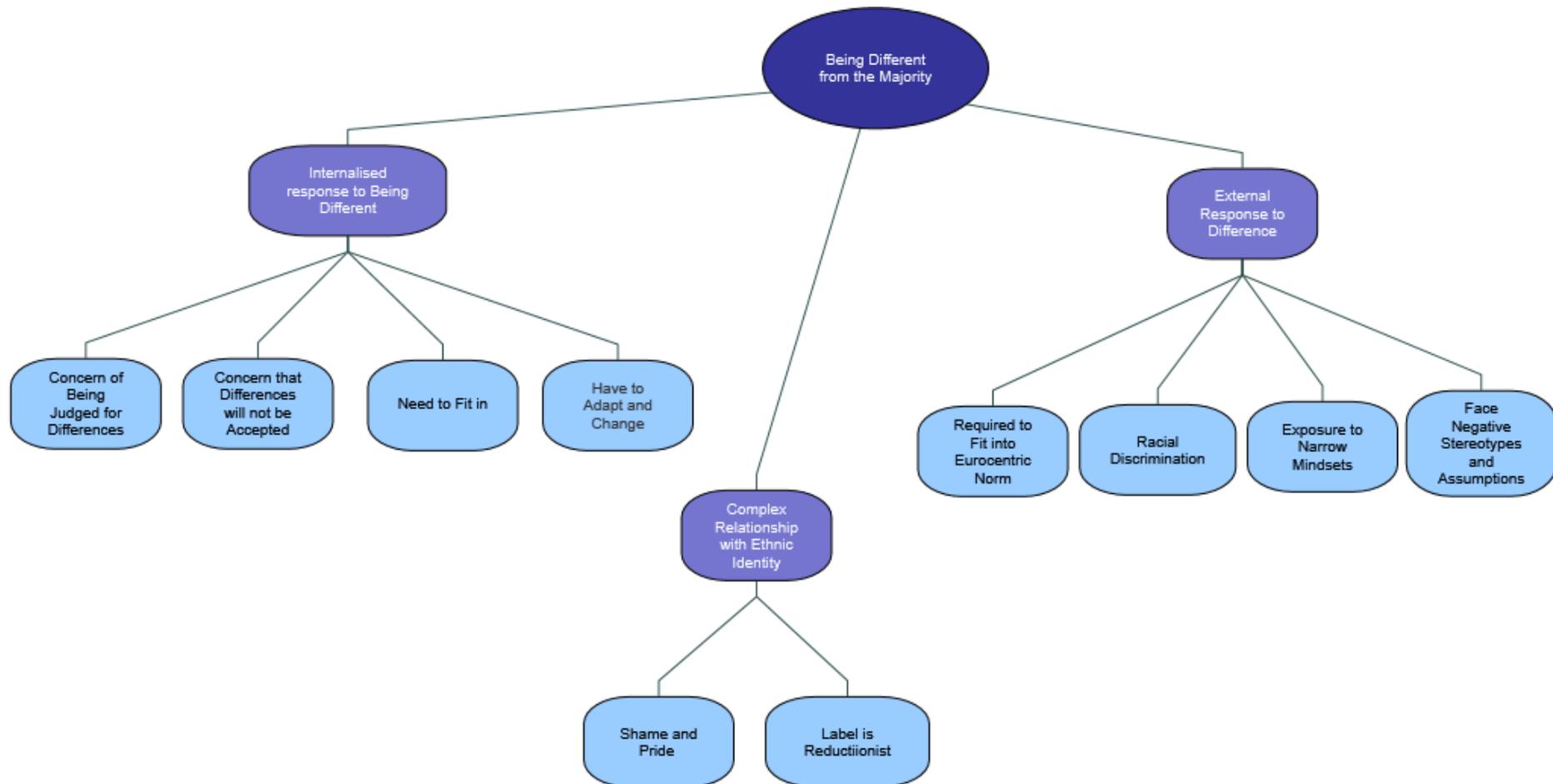


### **4.3 Overarching Theme One: Being Different From the Majority**

This overarching theme captures the internal and external responses to being from an ethnic minority background which appears to have some influence on the relationship one has with their ethnic identity (as illustrated in Figure 8). It contains three themes: *'Internalised Response to Being Different'*, *'External Response to Difference'* and *'Complex Relationship with Ethnic Identity'*. This occurs outside of the school ecosystem as the internal and external responses to being different from the majority appear to be at societal level and not the school system alone. This is also true for the complex relationship one has with their ethnic identity. However, internal and external responses from the outside world are brought into the school ecosystem which then influence how young people from an ethnic minority background relate to school. This will be explained in further detail as each theme is discussed in turn.

**Figure 8**

*Overarching Theme One: Being Different from the Majority with its interrelated themes and sub themes*



### **4.3.1 Theme: Internalised Response to Being Different**

Participants appeared to internalise their experience of being different ethnically from the majority. This seemed to result in the following internalised responses which are named:

**‘Concern of being judged for differences’, ‘Concern that differences will not be accepted’, ‘Need to Fit in’ and ‘Have to Adapt or Change’.** These will be described in more detail below.

#### **4.3.1.2 Sub theme: Concern of Being Judged for Differences.**

Many young people described feeling a sense of belonging to school as not being judged by others. Others mentioned building friendships with people who were non-judgemental. Some young people also spoke about needing to feel confident and less worried about being judged, especially when representing their culture in a visible way through food and or traditional clothes. This suggests that young people can be exposed to judgements from others in relation to their differences which they may have internalised and are therefore concerned about judgement in spaces where their differences are noticeable.

*“They’re not judged by their differences. They feel like everybody is treated equally and respected” (Miriam: 12, Appendix 11).*

*“They’re accepting. They’re pretty understanding. And... Oh yeah, they’re not very judgemental of things” (Saif: 251, Appendix 12).*

*“So then like for stuff like that “wear your own like cultural clothes day” is quite important for like some other people to feel confident in it like not feel like they’re getting judged all the time by their by their clothing and, like, same principle for like the food you know some people will look at other cultures foods and think, oh you know that smells weird or that looks that doesn’t look nice” (Jacob: 443, Appendix 13).*

#### **4.3.1.3 Sub theme: Concern that Differences will not be Accepted.**

Young people spoke about feeling accepted in their schools. However, there was a sense that being accepted was not typical for them. This was derived from latent meanings behind their views. For example, in Miriam and Malachi’s quote below, although they express feelings of

acceptance, their views also indicate that being accepted in all spaces is not the case and perhaps there is a need for them to be accepted by others. Being accepted is also spoken about in relation to culture and ethnic background. This can indicate that there is an internalised belief they may not be accepted in spaces where they are different from the majority. This sub theme also highlights the outside world coming into the school system as although the schools have provided an environment where they feel accepted, the outside world is less so.

*“I feel, that I am accepted in some places and that not many people will judge my culture” (Miriam: 32, Appendix 11)*

*“When in my old school there were more just people from a vast majority of backgrounds. Like, maybe in my new school. It's a bit narrowed but I feel like they're very accepting” (Malachi: 18, Appendix 14).*

#### **4.3.1.4 Sub theme: Need to Fit in.**

In relation to feeling a sense of belonging, many young people attributed this to being able to fit in and being similar to those around them. This was also described as a way to avoid being an “outsider”. Some young people also expressed their challenge with finding a group they belong to or finding common interests in relation to their ethnic identity as they can hold different beliefs or have a different world view to the majority. They also expressed beliefs that being different or not being able to fit in can be alienating or isolating. Therefore, finding a group where you can fit in is imperative to avoid being an ‘outsider’.

*“I think it's quite important because when you are in a minority... You can't really relate, because maybe you don't have certain characteristics and things. So, it can feel a bit hard to, to be who you are because you need to change in order to fit different characteristics of groups you don't belong to” (Vanessa: 90, Appendix 15).*

*“I feel accepted anywhere as long as people see me as their equal and not as different to them” (Miriam: 38, Appendix 11).*

*“Err, To me it's um, well sort of, to be in a, like, ethnic minority, your sort of your culture or your beliefs in a sense are often different to the majority of the people around you. So like, it's*

*not just, like back to that fitting in you don't, you can't really find common interests of other people due to the fact that, you know, you might have a complete different view of the world or stuff like that” (Jacob: 48, Appendix 13).*

#### **4.3.1.5 Sub theme: Have to Adapt and Change.**

This sub theme highlights the way in which young people have responded to being different from the majority. They seemed to adapt and change in three ways, adapting themselves to fit in with others, adapting their behaviour to avoid being picked on by teachers and adapting to the curriculum. This suggests that as part of being different from the majority, some young people feel as though they are unable to be their true selves as they feel the need to adapt who they are to make friends or fit in with the majority. In other ways, young people have found themselves adapting by putting in more effort to achieve higher grades to understand the curriculum language that is not attuned to their background. Another way young people have found themselves adapting is through keeping a low profile to avoid “getting into trouble” or being picked on in relation to their ethnicity.

*“Um, not particularly I don't think. Not particularly. I think I'm kind of um. Not like adapting but like, with different groups I interact differently if that makes sense” (Saif: 341, Appendix 12).*

*“I had to adapt to a lot of the different things that we learn about, like, the different just, you know, different. A lot of the texts that they had in the exam, they were all written to a certain extent to the fact that they were stressed on one certain background. So, like, when I heard certain words I'd have to learn them cause, I didn't understand it but a lot of people in the actual background, who are reading these text, it'd be like reading themselves, like it's not anything to worry about” (Malachi: 551, Appendix 14).*

*“So my advice from my dad, my mom was to just make sure that I don't chat in his class. That's kind of work, but he always tries to find a way” (Malachi: 176, Appendix 14).*

#### **4.3.2 Theme: External Response to Difference**

This theme encapsulates the responses young people have experienced from others in relation to being different from the majority. These are also depicted as aspects related to the belonging needs for these young people that are outside of their locus of control. This

includes the sub themes ‘**Required to Fit into Eurocentric Norm**’, ‘**Racial Discrimination**’, ‘**Exposure to Narrow Mindsets**’ and ‘**Face Negative Stereotypes and Assumptions**’.

#### **4.3.2.1 Sub theme: Required to Fit into Eurocentric Norm.**

This sub theme encapsulates the external pressure to fit in to the Eurocentric standards of society and therefore the Eurocentric norm in the school ecosystem. For example, one participant expressed their frustration with certain school rules that don’t consider cultural differences. For example, the school’s uniform policy made it more challenging for them to style their afro-textured hair. Another young people expressed feeling under confident wearing clothes that are representative of their culture as it differed from the clothes that everyone typically wears in Western society. Additionally, young people are required to engage with a curriculum that has not adapted to increased diversity of ethnic backgrounds in the UK. Therefore, the curriculum is largely based on past British culture that they may not feel they can relate to and engage with especially the language, texts, stories, and figures that are used to support their learning.

*“not confident about my own culture sort of like the idea again of like fitting in you didn't really want to, you know, wear stuff that, you know, everyone around you didn't wear” (Jacob: 441, Appendix 13).*

*“So, the rules at school, I find that a bit, but concerning like stuff like hairbands that’s for my hair. Since, it’s part of my culture to have different hairstyles, sometimes in school we’re not allowed to wear a black hairband, we’re only allowed to wear brown, and since my, has the darker pigment of hair colour, so the brown hairband doesn’t really match the hairband, if you get what I’m saying. So, that’s something that I really don’t agree with” (Miriam: 296, Appendix 11).*

#### **4.3.2.2 Sub theme: Racial Discrimination.**

This sub theme highlights the experiences young people have had in relation to racism. Not all participants expressed experiencing racism themselves. However, all referred to racism

indirectly or directly in relation to their experiences of belonging in school or the discussions they have been having in school. Some participants made specific reference to their fortune in not experiencing racism directly. This suggests that participants expect to experience racism. Other participants made specific reference to their own experience of racial discrimination inside and outside of school. There seemed to be a sense of young people feeling that they had fabricated their experiences and doubted whether it did happen. In addition, young people tended to internalise the racist behaviour of others, attributing some of this experience to their own behaviour to control its occurrence.

*“As in have I experienced racism in school? Errr, I’m luckily, personally haven’t. That’s probably because I’m like the good guy in the classroom I don’t really get into trouble inside the classroom, outside the classroom, maybe, but inside the classroom, kind of just the more the well-behaved guys” (Michael: 235, Appendix 16).*

*“some people are just going to be racist all the time anyway. But I can’t really change that, if they’re racist, they’re racist” (Joshua: 43, Appendix 17).*

*“But sometimes also you’ll people feel like, when you say something, it feels racist in the moment. And then when you like, listen to yourself saying is that? It’s like could that be racist or are they just being rude?” (Joshua: 440, Appendix 17).*

#### **4.3.2.3 Sub theme: Exposure to Narrow Mindsets.**

This sub theme encapsulates the exposure young people have to how their ethnicity and culture is viewed by others. There appeared to be particular exposure to narrow mindsets. It was also apparent that the background of people contributed to their perceived narrow mindset. This further demonstrates the influence of the outside world coming in to the school ecosystem. For example, Malachi highlighted this when explaining an interaction from a teacher who behaved in a racist manner:

*“I don’t think that he’s a bad person I just don’t think his mindset is right. It might be because of where he’s grown up, who has influenced him” (Malachi: 193, Appendix 14)*

#### 4.3.2.4 Sub theme: Face Negative Stereotypes and Assumptions.

There was a sense that young people experience others making assumptions about their ethnicity based on their visible characteristics. This seemed to occur outside and inside the school environment. Many participants expressed stereotypes that can be perceived as negative. It also seemed that others are not able to look past the stereotypes that are associated with people from a certain race or ethnicity which young people must adapt to and manage. There also appeared to be some pressure to fit into certain stereotypes that are placed on them.

*“Like on my way to school people will just like, not sit next to me and stuff. Cause I’m... I’m not even doing any.. I’m not even wearing anything scary, like a mask or anything, I’m just sitting there, either on my phone or like, doing work, or reading a book or something. And people just like, some people would prefer to stand up or sit next to me. But you know, you can’t really change them because they’re stuck in their ways being ignorant about stuff like that” (Joshua: 456, Appendix 17).*

*“Well, it’s that people, people often like have this image of what like a certain religion is, in a sense. So, if you’d like, sorts of people, that if they relate, so Hinduism they’ll think, you know people, like are Indian background and stuff like that. When people think of a Muslim background they think of, you know, like a Middle Eastern, bearded man. Or a Christian as like, you know, this normal white person in a sense. So people always have this image at the back of the mind of what they expect someone to look at” (Jacob: 72, Appendix 13).*

*“I’m not. I don’t enjoy, not I don’t enjoy. I kind of don’t fit my stereotype into it I don’t know how big there is a stereotype of mixed people from the Caribbean, but I feel like I don’t fit that stereotype that much” (Saif: 96, Appendix 12).*

#### 4.3.3 Theme: Complex Relationship with Ethnic Identity.

This theme highlights the relationship these young people have with their ethnic identity.

Two sub themes were generated from this: **‘Shame and Pride’** and **‘Label is Reductionist’**.

It encapsulates the complexity experienced with connecting to their ethnic identity, whether they connected to it at all, their ongoing and changing feelings that have derived from forming their identity and how others identify them.

#### 4.3.3.1 Sub theme: Shame and Pride.

Young people shared conflicting feelings in connection to their ethnic identity. Many explicitly expressed their pride in being part of their ethnic group when they were asked to share how they identify. Implicitly, it can be argued that there may have been shame connected to who they are either from the external responses to being different or their internalised response. Perhaps in some ways, young people were protecting or defending against the negative perceptions that can be associated with their ethnicity and therefore strongly state their pride in the ethnic group they belong to. Other participants spoke about the shame they felt in connection to their identity and their attempt to ‘blend’ in with the majority seemingly to make their difference less visible.

*“But I’m still very proud of who I am” (Miriam: 34, Appendix 11)*

*“Um, it’s kind of like the sense of pride that you’re a bit different than a lot of other people” (Michael: 23, Appendix 16)*

*“I don’t know about you but like when I was growing up sometimes I’d feel like a little bit like shameful about my... not shameful but like not confident about my own culture sort of like the idea again of like fitting in” (Jacob: 441, Appendix 13)*

*“I, It’s like, it’s pretty good. I dunno. I’m not ashamed that like. I don’t really.. right now in.. it’s not too bad being black” (Joshua: 42, Appendix 17).*

#### 4.3.3.2 Sub theme: Label is Reductionist.

Young people explained their identity in detail and at times spoke to the history, their family’s heritage, their religion, and other aspects that make up part of how they identify to their ethnicity. There was a sense that the labels provided are reductionist, simplistic or do not encompass the complexity of how one identifies. Some young people appeared to be unable to place themselves into a ‘box’ or give themselves a label. They spoke to the complexity of not knowing where they belong and seemed to require space to explain or provide more detail about their ethnic background than just one label.

*“But because they've obviously spent like a couple generations in Trinidad. I'd say it's, it probably be different from like your typical um, East Asian culture. So, I'm not really sure how to describe my ethnicity. I'd say maybe it's like mixed Caribbean, you might say, but I don't know” (Saif: 65, Appendix 12).*

*“Probably Afro Caribbean. My mum's from Jamaica, my dad's from Nigeria. Yeah, that's, that's how I describe it... It's really confusing when you have two of the same family and they're just different people” (Michael: 36, Appendix 16).*

*“I think, I would describe my ethnicity, as mixed. I think it means that I come from lots of different cultures and backgrounds and I can belong to different ones if I want to” (Vanessa: 39, Appendix 15).*

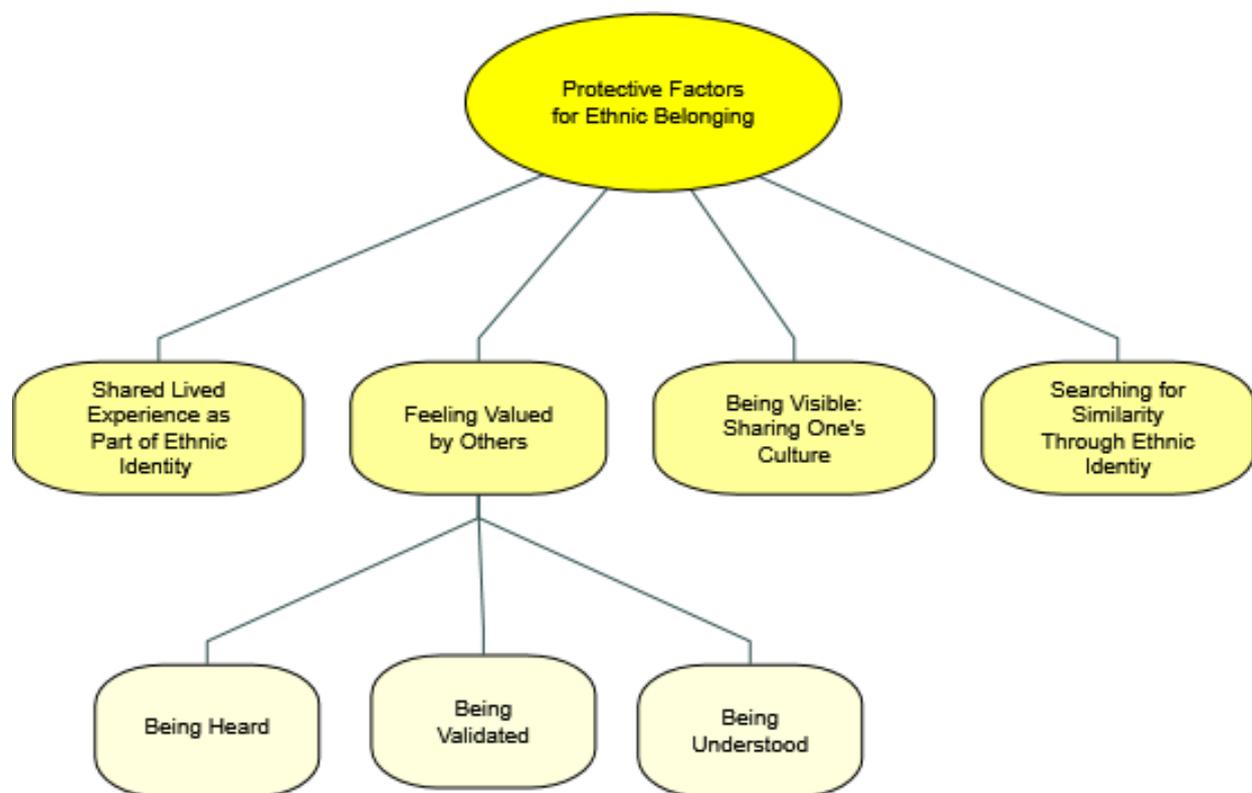
*“So I identify as Ghanaian and Jamaican. My mom's mum is Jamaican, and everyone else is Ghanaian. So, I like know a wide range, you know, I have an I have quite a broad knowledge of different cultures. I know that in England, you know, that I know about the food here, the stuff that we wear here. And I also know about that stuff in Ghana. I also know, and same in Jamaica” (Malachi: 135, Appendix 14).*

#### **4.4 Overarching Theme Two: Protective Factors for Ethnic Belonging**

This overarching theme highlights a distinct feature to belonging in school for young people from a minority ethnic background (Figure 9). Participants demonstrated a need to experience and feel a variety of unique components that relate to their ethnicity to feel that they belong in school. This overarching theme also captures the various factors that may contribute to belonging to school in connection with their ethnic identity. There also appeared to be a link between how strongly one felt connected to their ethnic identity and how much these components to ethnic belonging were required to protect them from being different from the majority. It is important to note that these belonging needs are separate and distinct from the typical belonging needs that are often described in relation to school belonging. The themes that make up this overarching theme are: **‘Shared Lived Experience as Part of Ethnic Identity’**, **‘Feeling Valued by Others’**, **‘Being Visible: Sharing One’s Culture’** and **‘Searching for Similarity Through Ethnic Identity’**. These will be discussed in more detail below.

**Figure 9**

*Overarching theme two: Protective Factors for Ethnic Belonging and its interrelated themes and sub themes.*



#### ***4.4.1 Theme: Shared Lived Experience as Part of Ethnic Identity***

This theme highlights that young people see value in being able to share lived experiences with others that relate directly to their ethnicity. For some young people the function this served was around support and guidance. For others, it was simply just sharing the same or similar experiences and being able to relate to each other on aspects that perhaps are not shared with the majority. Sharing humour in relation to their ethnicity was highlighted as

another aspect of sharing experiences. Sharing lived experiences also seemed to validate young people's feelings as they vocalised uncertainty as to whether they experience the same things in relation to their ethnicity.

*"I think it's important because, if there is like an issue concerning like someone that is maybe the same background as you. It's very important as they can relate to your issues and problems and can help you out with it" (Miriam: 101, Appendix 11).*

*"Um, like, there are a lot of people of ethnic minority in the whole school, in the students. And um, yeah, a lot of them go through the same things I have to, like racism or just like stuff to do their their race or what they're interested in. So, I guess they're similar to me. It just depends on whether like they're sharing it with me, like all the time. Cause sometimes you just don't ask sometimes you just don't" (Michael: 219, Appendix 16)*

*"You can live in like similar lives I guess so you have more to talk about, each other and like you can relate to more of the same stuff when you're with the same people as your race I guess" (Joshua: 154, Appendix 17).*

#### **4.4.2 Feeling Valued by Others**

This theme highlights the importance for young people to feel valued in connection to their ethnic identity. This is captured through the sub themes: **'Being Heard'**, **'Being Validated'** and **'Being Understood'**.

##### **4.4.2.1 Being Heard.**

Some young people appeared to feel at times, not listened to or heard by their peers or school staff in relation to racial equality issues. Others reported being in a school system where there was no mention of the events from Summer 2020 and the murder of George Floyd which felt upsetting as it had a significant emotional impact.

*"Yes. I think that it was quite shocking. Because I've got family in America. So it was a bit, a bit alarming. I was actually really concerned because. Yeah, it's just the level of brutality is a bit scary because you just don't know who will be next and yeah, it's really scary" (Vanessa: 392, Appendix 15).*

#### 4.4.2.2 Being Validated.

There was a sense from young people that felt their views, opinions or selves were dismissed by those around them and named experiences where this had happened in relation to their ethnicity. There was a sense that they wished to be validated and listened to.

*“So, for example if I say like, something related to, like my religion then some people would like, people are very quick to just dismiss it. So, they weren't they weren't really like, maybe they'd understand it, but they won't really, they just dismiss it and just carry on and then. There's like small things like that, which have happened like throughout the years” (Jacob: 302, Appendix 13).*

*And they always every time we try to tackle, things like slavery segregation, Black Lives Matter, they always say, “it's always the white person” who is racist and stuff. Or “It only happens in America”. And when we say oh this happened in England a week ago, they just say “Well, that's just like an oddity, like it's not, doesn't happen in our country” (Malachi: 434, Appendix 14).*

#### 4.4.2.3 Being understood.

There was a sense that feeling understood by others in friendship was important to their feelings of belonging in school. At times young people felt that it was challenging for their experiences to be understood as the majority experience can dominate. However, this seemed to be reduced in schools that held specific spaces to discuss issues related to their experiences with people who are from the same or similar background as them.

*And I don't feel like, I think that it's nice that people can understand you, but then you don't can't expect everyone to understand you because they don't come from the same place as you. But it's nice when you have people who just understand you to a certain extent (Malachi: 370, Appendix 14).*

*“Like you have people like that understand you like a bit more because they'll be in situations that would be in. Determining race and stuff like that” (Michael: 24, Appendix 16).*

#### 4.4.3 Theme: Being Visible: Sharing One's Culture

This theme demonstrates the emphasis young people placed on making their culture visible. young people made several references to food and clothes throughout the interviews when

discussing their belonging in school. There was sense that having the opportunity to share their culture and raise awareness in school, helps them feel included and creates feelings of pride belonging to that culture. It also seemed to help build connections with others and provide opportunities to learn more about their heritage.

*“There’s a big thing about like cultures and different ethnic groups is. It was literally like the food and the clothing right like it’s very... it’s something that is very like tangible like you can show people that... So like, I think is pretty good those two things” (Jacob: 427, Appendix 14).*

*“We have a, um, in the summer we have like a food festival thing. So you can do something like that for Black History Month where you get everyone to cook some food, and everyone can have some try stuff” (Joshua: 326, Appendix 17).*

*“And so it’s nice like that we can all relate. Sometimes you have friendly beefs like, for example, Nigeria and Ghana both make Jellof and we always are saying like all ours is better, no ours is better and stuff. So it’s very funny” (Malachi: 314, Appendix 14).*

#### **4.4.4 Theme: Searching for Similarity Through Ethnic Identity**

This theme was quite prominent and seemed to come up repeatedly through the interviews with young people. The majority described forming groups or becoming friends with people from similar and different ethnicities to them. However, there appeared to be a distinct sense of searching for or looking to find others who are from the same background as them. When this was not possible, some young people searched for belonging in a group of people from neighbouring cultures. This seemed to create a further sense of feeling included in school. In addition, searching for similarity through ethnic identity seemed more important in relation to peers than staff. However, there was a sense that having staff that are from the same ethnic background provided support in the form of guidance and/or a role model to aspire to.

*“Because, like, obviously I wasn’t with any black people in primary school. So, I’m, I, if, I’m now imagining me like going through my whole, whole of my like school life almost, like never like having good friends with two or more black people. It’s like changed how I think about the world entirely” (Michael: 253, Appendix 16)*

*“When I joined the school I didn’t really feel like included, in a sense, because back then it was there wasn’t really much like awareness of seeing a different, ethnicities” (Jacob: 480)*

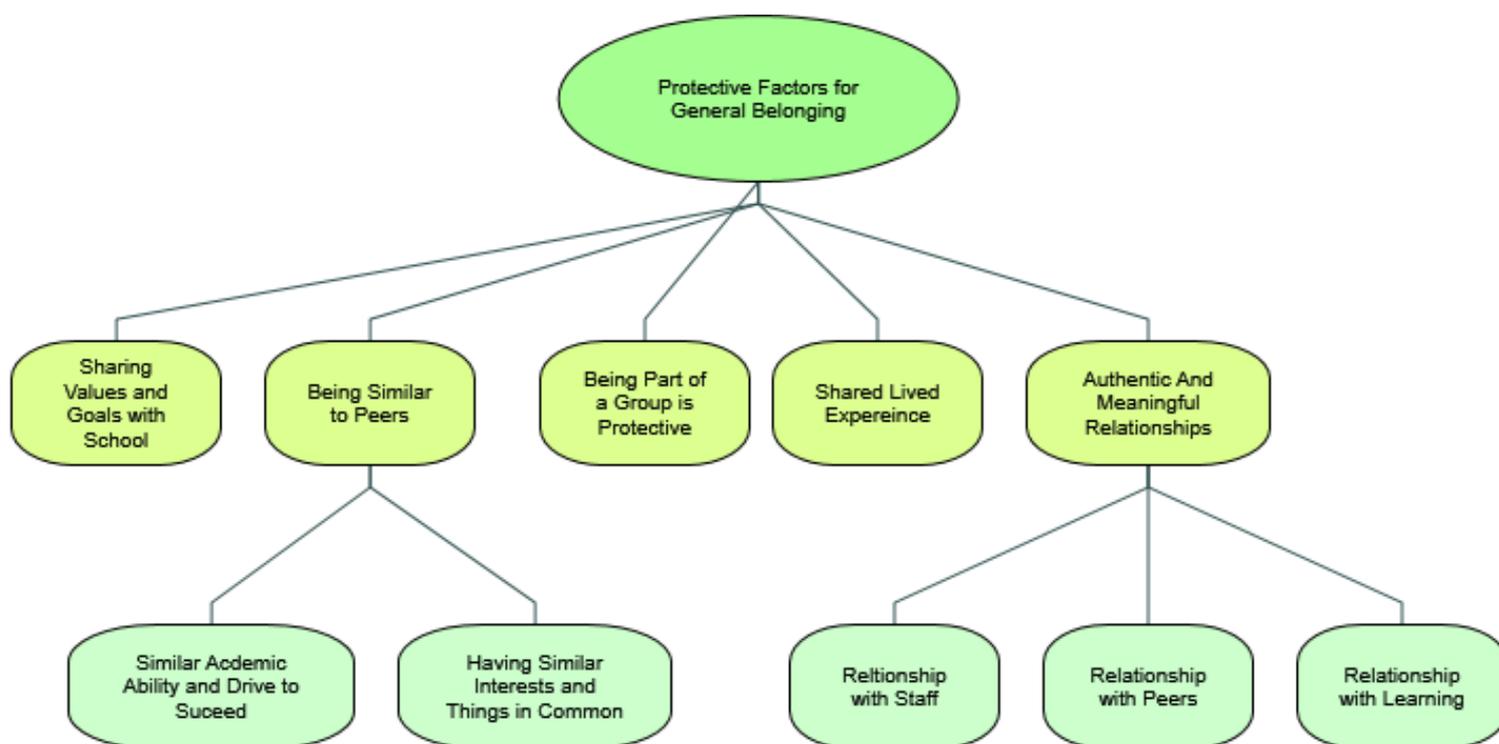
*“If your peers in your school are from your background, they can help you to a certain extent. Also, your teachers are much wiser so if you have a teacher that's kind of like he or she, they like relate to you, they can help you a lot, just like your parents can. So, like that's, that's what I'd say. It's important to a certain extent” (Malachi: 506, Appendix 14).*

#### **4.5 Overarching Theme Three: Protective Factors for General Belonging**

This overarching theme (Figure 10) highlights aspects that contribute to a sense of belonging that are separate to one's ethnic identity. Where one does not feel a strong connection to their ethnic identity, these factors may be more prominent in developing a sense of belonging at school. However, where one does feel a strong connection to their ethnic identity, these factors may provide a ‘buffering’ effect when aspects that contribute to ethnic belonging are not present. This overarching theme includes the following themes **“Sharing Values and Goals with School”**, **“Being Similar to Peers”**, **“Being Part of a Group is Protective”**, **“Shared Lived Experience”** and **“Authentic and Meaningful Relationships”**. Each theme will be described in turn.

**Figure 10**

*Overarching theme three: Protective Factors for General Belonging and its interrelated themes and sub themes.*



#### ***4.5.1 Theme: Sharing Values and Goals with School***

All young people expressed a sense of feeling connected to the values and goals of their school. They specifically referred to this developing through their time at school where they grew to appreciate and become more connected to the values of the school. It also appeared to bring a sense of community, especially being connected to the school's ethos.

*“I think, though, they are. They seem quite good, and the ethos, yeah the ethos is quite good like, um. It's quite reasonable, I think that the rules. Yeah, they're, they're quite, reasonable” (Vanessa: 335, Appendix 15)*

*“I'd say like, an eight, seven, eight. Around there. It's pretty, pretty. Fits with how I am as a person” (Joshua: 377, Appendix 17).*

*“Yeah values, they're very good values to have, but I kind of feel. I feel more attached to some extent to certain ones than others. If I make sense” (Saif, 556, Appendix 12).*

#### **4.5.2 Theme: Being Similar to Peers**

There was a sense from all young people that being similar to others or finding similarities with others was important for belonging. Some participants also mentioned that if you are unable to connect with someone from the same culture as yourself, there are other ways you can connect through things such as pop culture references and common interests. There were two ways of being similar to their peers, having similar attitudes to learning and having similar interests.

*“I've also felt like it's very important that you have groups of people that are similar to you because if they aren't similar to you, I mean, like, it's, if you have no people that are similar to you as a very upsetting kind of thing because you don't feel like you belong there” (Malachi: 338, Appendix 14).*

##### **4.5.2.1 Sub theme: Similar Academic Ability and Drive to Succeed.**

All young people referred to academic ability and being successful as part of their sense of belonging in school. They spoke to the values of the school system and its emphasis on achievement which seemed to create a sense of seeking similarity through academic ability and work ethic.

*“It's very, very community like it's very like everyone knows each other... you have the fact that it's like a grammar school so then, everyone's like in terms of like academics everyone's really smart everyone. Everyone wants, well not wants the same thing but everyone like wants to be successful in their own sense” (Jacob: 469, Appendix 13).*

*“Um, for example with interests. Just people who do similar things to me so maybe someone who might do a little bit extra work with like maths or physics and has a deep interest in that.*

*So, I don't know. I might talk to someone a little bit more about that” (Saif: 323, Appendix 12).*

#### **4.5.2.2 Sub theme: Having Similar Interests and Things in Common.**

All young people referred to finding similarities with others through common interests in things such as music, movies, gaming food, pop culture and hobbies. This seemed to support the formation of friendships and a sense of belonging in school.

*“Cause’ see some of my friends hate football and they’ll never talk about it, but at the same time it's nice to just like talk about football have banter about each other's favourite teams and stuff like that. So it's good to have people that are interested in the same things as you” (Joshua: 193, Appendix 17).*

*“Someone who is someone who might just enjoy like the same forms of entertainment/media as me. So maybe they watch the same type of TV shows or they enjoy like watch movies or something. Um, somebody who plays the same type of games as me or something or might be in some of my classes” (Saif: 326, Appendix 12).*

#### **4.5.3 Theme: Being Part of a Group is Protective**

There was a sense that being included in a group provided some safety, comfort, and security. At times groups were described as being exclusive and closed making it seem challenging to join a group once it was already established. At other times, groups were described as being open and inclusive. Some felt that there were specific criteria involved in joining a group such as certain characteristics or interests. However, no matter how a group was described, young people expressed that being part of a group was important and prevented feelings of isolation. young people also expressed the importance of mixing with others and not just belonging to one group. It is necessary to also note that many young people made specific reference to forming groups with other ethnic minorities.

*“Yeah, it's important to be part of a group because if you're not in any groups, it's kind of just gonna feel a bit like gonna feel lonely. Like, you’re gonna feel like, because a lot of time in school as well, people aren't really friends with people outside of their groups. And they don’t really talk to people outside their groups, they kind of like stick together. So, if you're not in one you're gonna feel left out the whole time” (Joshua: 110, Appendix 17).*

*“I’ve always been like enjoyed rugby because it’s a team sport. You’re with your team. You win, lose together. It’s not like you’re alone or anything. It just gives you like that confidence that you have that you don’t have when you’re alone. So, that’s why it’s really important to group” (Michael: 136, Appendix 16).*

#### **4.5.4 Theme: Shared Lived Experience**

There was a sense that sharing the same experiences can be connecting and create a sense of belonging. This was especially true for young people who played a sport such as football or rugby. Connecting with others through shared lived experience helped them feel connected and relate to each other.

*“So like, I relate to um, lot of my friends who play basketball and football. Because, like, I mean, they are my favourite sport. So when I go outside to and play in the park, I can play with them and I can talk to them about what happened in the latest game and stuff like that” (Malachi: 262, Appendix 14).*

*“I mean, yeah, um, yeah, I’ve got couple friendship groups. And I guess rugby would be another group that you’re in, even though I don’t play it. But it’s like when I’ve been there, the couple times everyone’s quite close together and it’s just fun playing rugby together” (Joshua: 119, Appendix 17).*

*“So, in some ways you don’t really understand the different cultures. But in other ways you connect, in the way that we’re like the same age group so understand for example that different pop culture references and answers” (Vanessa: 138, Appendix 15).*

#### **4.5.5 Theme: Authentic and Meaningful Relationships**

This theme encapsulates the relationships young people have in school not only to peers and members of staff but also to their learning. The following sub themes will be described in turn **“Relationship with Staff”**, **“Relationship with Peers”** and **“Relationship with Learning”**. A consistent thread that connected these themes was authenticity and a sense that a deeper connection is a part of the relationships where meaning could be derived.

#### 4.5.5.1 Sub theme: Relationship with Staff.

Young people seemed to consider friendships and their peers as more important to their belonging. However, they also highlighted the importance for their relationship with staff being authentic and genuine. They got on best with teachers who demonstrated an interest in them, were warm and approachable and used a restorative approach to managing behaviour as opposed to punitive. There was a sense that young people valued relationships with staff where they were able to be autonomous and have some degree of responsibility over their behaviour and learning. In terms of academic support, young people spoke highly of teachers who were able to support them and guide their understanding.

*“But they're fairly understanding and willing to spend their time to improve their teaching but also improve your knowledge and stuff so yeah” (Saif: 171, Appendix 12).*

*“They understand everything but also like, they kind of they respect you, but they don't think like you're stupid or something like your, your child, like, they kind of expect you to like almost be an adult in school” (Michael: 86, Appendix 16).*

*“They help you to learn different stuff and usually they're there to like help. So yeah, that's why I get along with teachers at school” (Miriam: 52, Appendix 11).*

#### 4.5.5.2 Sub theme: Relationship with Peers.

Young people expressed the importance of their relationship with their peers to their sense of belonging in school. They highlighted that there were a number of peer groups that they were part of such as their sports team or other hobbies, friends who were of close proximity (get the same public transport or in the same class), friends with history and friendships based on having similar ethnicities or being from ethnic minority communities. young people also expressed the challenges forming relationships with their peers and that there at times seemed to be a set criterion to belong to groups. Similarly, being of the same generation or age was binding as they could relate to similar experiences. Other young people spoke about the importance of trust, feeling supported and being likeable. It also seemed important for young

people to having similarities but also differences with their peers. This seemed to enrich their friendships.

*“Um, I guess, the more ethnic minority people with my school. Like, that's kind of a group in itself. The people I go home with on the train. The people who have known since like primary school. Like my rugby, any like sports I do, I'll belong to those types of groups. That's like, like, if I see them I know that I can go up to them and like have a genuine conversation rather than just like hi or bye” (Michael: 143, Appendix 16).*

*“Because, I have loads of friends that are similar to me, but I also have closer friends that are completely different to me and don't listen to the same music. Don't watch football. Not interested in the same stuff I am, but we still get along, still have jokes and stuff, so it's not that important. Like I'm not only friends with people that are similar to me” (Joshua: 203, Appendix 17).*

#### **4.5.5.3 Sub theme: Relationship with Learning.**

It was unsurprising that meaningful and authentic relationships did not only apply to staff and peers but also applied to learning for young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. This was also not solely based on learning in the academic sense but learning as a part of one's development into adulthood. young people expressed a difference in being interested in a subject and connected to learning. Both appeared to increase engagement in the subject. However, there was a sense that learning about something that has had a direct impact on you can be more influential in increasing engagement. In terms of personal growth, there was a sense that learning about difference developed skills that can prepare you for the outside world.

*“It can help you learn about new stuff as well. Like I've learnt a lot from like, friends that aren't similar to me to me” (Joshua: 211, Appendix 17).*

*“I feel like if you're not already, particularly engaged or interested in it, you could be way more interested and engaged in it, if you feel like you're more connected in the sense that something like the fiscal policy or how. Or example, maybe, near the end of the Cold War or something, I feel like that's more interesting, because you feel like it affects you, to some extent, for example a Cold War, okay. It doesn't exactly affect you, but it's like recent history. So, the decisions and stuff made during that period of time would affect you today. So I feel like those type of things. If I wasn't already interested in the subject, I would be interested in it, because I can relate to it more sort of” (Saif: 638, Appendix 12).*

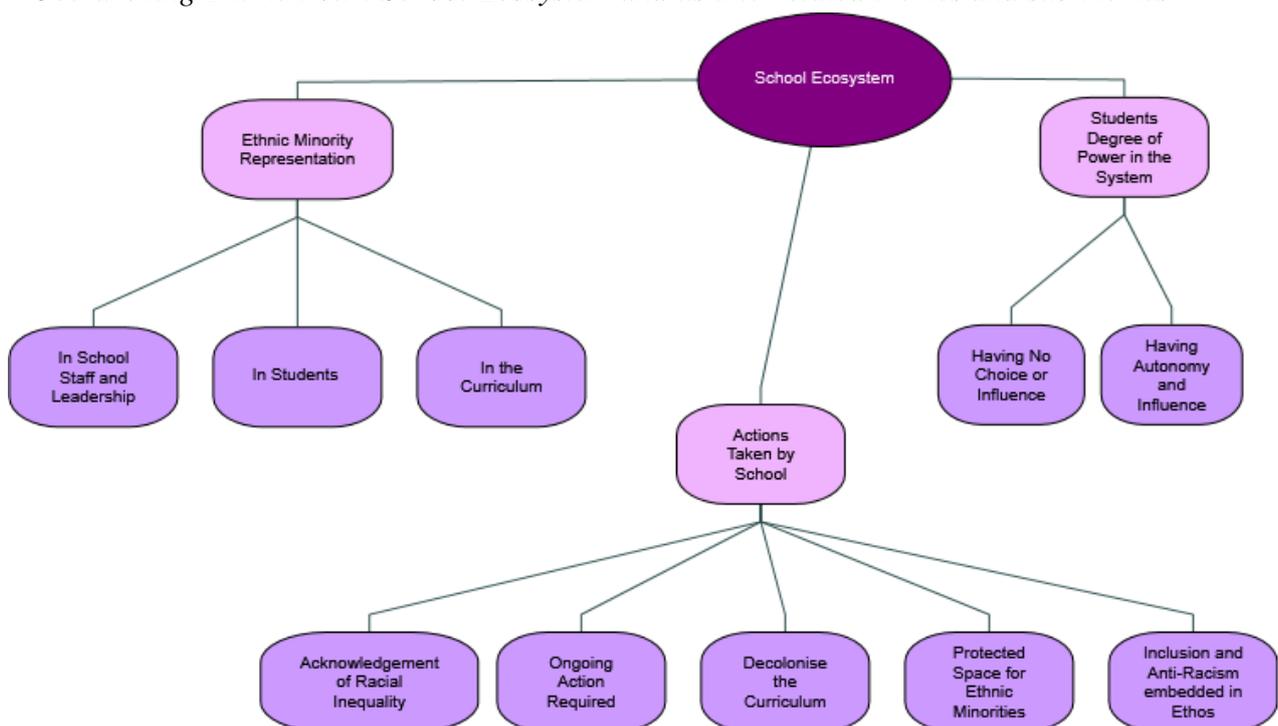
## 4.6 Overarching Theme Four: School Ecosystem

The final overarching theme (Figure 11) encapsulates the perceived influence from the school system on the sense of belonging felt by young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

This incorporated the following themes “**Ethnic Minority Representation**”, “**Actions Taken by School**” and “**Students Degree of Power in the System**”. These will be described and explored in turn.

**Figure 11**

*Overarching Theme Four: School Ecosystem and its interrelated themes and sub themes*



#### **4.6.1 Theme: Ethnic Minority Representation**

This theme highlighted the lack of representation young people felt they had in their school environment alongside their desire for more. They spoke to representation with their peers being a supportive part of the school environment and wished for more of this in the curriculum and school staff/leadership.

##### **4.6.1.1 In School Staff and Leadership.**

No young people expressed feeling they had someone in school staff who was like them or that they could relate to. In terms of relating to school staff this was something many young people had not thought about and was deemed not as important as relating to their peers. However, young people spoke to the importance of having representation in school staff, more so than representation in the curriculum as they provided guidance or someone to aspire to be like.

*“And like, I like, the teachers I all respect. I all respect them as like human beings but they’re not really much like me. Because, I don’t think there’s any black teachers in my school so” (Michael: 127, Appendix 16).*

*“I do think that’s important because then you’ve got like someone, you can see who’s doing well in the world, and you can see that you could also do that same thing. Like, I, obviously it’s good to have like, influential who people they look up to or like role models, but it could be good to have it like right in front of you. Like telling you like. This is all the knowledge I know, I’ve got this many degrees and you can do that too” (Michael: 295, Appendix 16).*

*“Yeah, I’ve noticed that and, like, it’s been, I never really thought of the teachers but then, when, when I did realise that like we don’t have any black teachers, other than like we have cleaners and stuff” (Malachi: 60, Appendix 14).*

##### **4.6.1.2 In Students.**

When discussing and describing their school environment, young people referred to the ethnic composition of their school and made specific reference to the abundance or lack of representation. This was also mentioned when discussing relationships with their peers within

the school environment. There seemed to be a sense that ethnic representation in students was something that they paid attention to and recognised as part of their belonging to school.

*“A very well relaxed place where a lot of ethnic minorities and like white kids get together and just do whatever they want to do really” (Michael: 5, Appendix 16)*

*I think that it's a very good school. Um, it's quite diverse, um... there's a lot of um.. inclusivity (in terms of races and ethnic backgrounds) (Vanessa: 10, Appendix 15)*

*“I'd say my school is quite multicultural. Well, it's got, to be honest, in my year it's mostly black and Asian people, and then there's not that many white people but I think the school overall is pretty white. I think our year is kind of an anomaly” (Joshua: 6, Appendix 17).*

#### **4.6.1.3 In the Curriculum.**

There was a sense from young people that it was important to share their culture and for their culture to be visible in the school environment. This seemed to apply specifically to the school curriculum as well as through events that may be connected to this such as ‘Black History Month’. However, there was a sense of a lack of representation in the curriculum. For example, young people expressed their wish for the curriculum to include more representation of important figures from their background who have contributed to society or have achieved something. They expressed a wish for more diversity within the curriculum to learn and expand their knowledge but most importantly to feel represented.

*“Talk about like the lesson in, like, inventors and black people that have had an impact on society but there are no reports about that much” (Joshua: 283, Appendix 17)*

*“When you learn about, when you learn about history. I feel like we only focus on English history obviously. We need to learn about different cultures and ethnicities and maybe have cultural day. We need to really understand different cultures. Because we can actually a good connection with each other, with other students and with staff as well so. I think it would be good to learn about different cultures” (Miriam: 146, Appendix 11).*

*“I don't feel like that's what they need to do because it's nice. It's raising awareness and we don't also, it's a big issue because there's no one that, when we go to school, there's no black authors that we can read. But there's always for the Caucasian white people there's, there's white authors that they're reading all the time, but we don't have that yet so it's nice that they do that” (Malachi: 476, Appendix 14).*

#### **4.6.2 Theme: Actions Taken by School**

This theme encapsulates the actions that schools have already taken that seemed to support the belonging and feelings of inclusion in school for young people. young people also referred to their own ideas, desires, wishes and what they hoped school could pursue as well as their thoughts on what has already been done.

##### **4.6.2.1 Acknowledgement of Racial Inequality.**

There was a sense that acknowledging the racial inequalities that exist inside and outside of the school environment supported young people's sense of belonging. It seemed that by acknowledging racial inequality, young people felt validated, heard and understood which links to one of the protective factors 'Feeling Valued' for ethnic belonging. There was a sense that it is something schools should and must talk about with some schools starting to do so. However, when these inequalities were not mentioned by the school, this left one young person in particular feeling disappointed.

*"I think it was just a general, a general shift in you know how society was. And you know like different, like, especially like recent events. There's been like a big like shift, like in terms of, like, attitudes towards racism attitudes towards different cultures about the school. Like, they just started this like only now. They've had like they had like different groups for everything but only now they started at anti-racism, like task force" (Jacob: 542, Appendix 13)*

*"I think the school could have been a bit more inclusive, because they didn't touch on Black Lives Matter. They didn't actually mention it. But they are quite diverse, but they didn't really mention. Yeah, they should have done something about it" (Vanessa: 367, Appendix 15)*

##### **4.6.2.2 Ongoing Action Required.**

There was a sense that young people feel the actions taken by school are one-off, tick-box exercises and for some young people they were fed up or unsatisfied with these efforts.

Although there seemed to be small changes that have occurred in some of their schools, young people felt the momentum needed to continue and this should be ongoing. It seemed

that there was a fear that actions would cease and were just part of the ‘hype’ from the events in the summer of 2020. Young people also expressed disappointment that the actions being taken by schools have only just occurred. There was a sense that these actions should have been taken long before they started.

*“Which I personally I feel like I should have started back a while ago if you have like anti-bullying ambassadors if you have, like, the e-safety ambassadors and obviously I feel like the anti-racism ambassadors should have been like a really long time ago, even though it's only introduced last week or a couple of weeks ago” (Jacob: 553, Appendix 13).*

*“Um, I mean, I think Black History Month is a bit trash to be honest. It's not very like hopeful at all. Like they did like one assembly on one thing and then that's it done. Like this year over. So I feel like, like especially through this black lives matters movement now. Black history month should be a lot better than it is, but apart from that not really” (Joshua: 316, Appendix 17).*

#### **4.6.2.3 Decolonise the Curriculum.**

Young people expressed a desire for a change in the curriculum. More specifically related to English and History. It was felt that books young people are exposed to are difficult to relate to and use language that perhaps young people from ethnic minority communities are not readily exposed to. In addition, young people believed that the history of colonialism should be shared in a less glorifying more accurate light. Some young people expressed feeling lied to and felt that the British Empire was seen as something to be proud of which they did not relate to. young people also felt there should opportunities to learn about different cultures and broaden their world view.

*“Because of history learn about different, different cultures are different sides of the story. So, they're not just teaching you just one side they have to believe in. They let you decide it for yourself, which I think is quite good” (Vanessa: 364, Appendix 15).*

*“I think History about like um, about British Empire, and just colonisation in general, like being taught in history, is the fact that it's made it sound like it's good. Like for example, like myself and like most of my other friends have such... their, their past family have had like so many bad like things to do with colonisation and then. Then when all of a sudden in school you're being taught that it was really good for you know the different economies and stuff that was really good for the whole world. Then you suddenly feel like this, conflicting ideas between, you know, what's actually happened. And then what school is teaching you. And I*

*think that's why that issue is like quite like important" (Jacob: 592, Appendix 13).*

#### **4.6.2.4 Protected Space for Ethnic Minorities.**

Young people referred to spaces that were specifically for sharing, learning and discussing the experiences of people from ethnic minority backgrounds. This appeared to be student led. It seemed that students attending these schools were attempting to create a space that didn't exist in the system to share their culture, make it visible, find support by sharing similar experiences and form connections. There was a sense that these spaces served the protective factors mentioned above for ethnic belonging and may have derived from the feelings of being different from the majority.

*"Well, they have a bunch of assemblies and stuff. Like talking about how, like, they just try and include everyone in everything. Like, if you're having um, what's it called? Clubs and societies about stuff they invite everyone. So even if like, it's not for me, but they have Afro Caribbean society but it's not just only African Caribbean people can come anyone can come and learn and talk about what we're talking about so it's quite good for that" (Joshua: 323, Appendix 17).*

*"Well, they do offer some, some groups where you can, um. That has, related to BAME people. There was this one time where they offered this Art group. It was a minority ethnic to go to that art group session" (Miriam: 169, Appendix 11).*

*"This has been happening, a little bit more recently but like this wasn't really run, like in year seven, year eight, maybe a little bit of year nine. But like, in terms of, to like, sort of, bring different ethnicities, to err, closer. They've been introducing like more like specific, special days, sort of like the international food festival day that they started at my school where, you know, you get to try other people's food, assuming you never like tried in your whole lifetime and you get to show maybe your food and stuff like that and then you're exposed to these different cultures" (Jacob: 360, Appendix 13)*

#### **4.6.2.5 Inclusion and Anti-Racism Embedded in Ethos.**

This sub theme highlights perceived actions taken or not taken by schools to embed inclusion and anti-racism into their ethos. Some young people made specific reference to feeling connected to their school through their ethos when it explicitly demonstrated inclusive and anti-racist practice. It seemed that for other young people there was a desire for anti-racism to be even more embedded in the school's ethos.

*“but I feel like when you feel like your culture or anything like that is included you have like maybe like a more positive attitude to learning and actually being at the school. Because like, like, Back when I was, like, younger, I didn't, I didn't really. Because I didn't really identify to most of the people at that school. I wasn't really feeling anything. So that I didn't really like learning was learning at that point for when you actually have like a genuine attachment to the school” (Jacob: 526, Appendix 13)*

*“Yeah, so I think that, yeah, they should definitely talk more about it and draw more attention to it. Yeah, I think they should also, um, at least maybe have like a moment of remembrance. Maybe, um. Maybe just, yeah do more work, and pay more attention to source things are happening. And maybe bigger ones well, and maybe working on race, even in like the small like, small community” (Vanessa: 378, Appendix 15)*

*“Well, they have like these things like, um, racism task force and um, cyber bullying ambassadors and bullying ambassadors and those sorts of stuff. I guess with my ethos, I don't want anyone to go through those sorts of things so. Them trying to fix it. I guess is a good thing” (Michael: 434, Appendix 16)*

#### **4.6.3 Theme: Students Degree of Power in the System**

This theme demonstrates the degree of power young people felt they have in their school environment. In what instances they felt a degree of control or influence related to their belonging needs and in what instances they had no choice or influence.

##### **4.6.3.1 Having No Choice or Influence.**

Young people expressed having very little to no choice over who they were surrounded by in terms of making friends with people from the same ethnicity as themselves. They responded by adapting and mixing with people from different backgrounds due to a lack of or limited choice. young people also seemed to find that sharing their culture or talking about shared lived experiences in relation to their ethnicity was a rarity. They expressed gratitude for any opportunity where this arose. This suggests they feel little control over whether these discussions take place and are reliant on the school system to provide them with this power. Some schools provided this through an anti-racism task force, protected time to discuss racism and providing autonomy to young people to create their own spaces.

*“I mean, ethnically like lots of them are very different to me as I'm like I'm, in terms of like from a like ethnic standpoint, I'm like one of. I'm like the only person, like, from like where I*

*am. So I had to like communicate with like others, like communities, like already from the start. Because I couldn't find someone straight away" (Jacob: 163, Appendix 13).*

*"It means that you have to mix with a lot of different backgrounds. So, even though. In my old school for example, there were more. I'd say a quarter of the year or a third of the year were black, but now it's like, I'd say a 10<sup>th</sup> if you're lucky, and so I feel like it's, it's something that, it shows that if one 10th of the year is black, then you have to mix with other different backgrounds" (Malachi: 85, Appendix 14).*

*"And in the end, turn out however you turn out really. You just get popped out, back into the real world and that's where you are" (Michael: 7, Appendix 16).*

*"And that means that that we are like lucky enough. Cause every time we have that two times, or three times a week, we have the, we like educated about racism" (Malachi: 494, Appendix 14).*

#### **4.6.3.2 Having Autonomy and Influence.**

Having power and autonomy seemed important to young people. This was expressed through the friends they make, maintaining their independence, taking responsibility for their behaviour and having a voice in the school system. young people also expressed the importance of having a level of responsibility for their own belonging needs and ensuring that they don't feel left out. There was less emphasis on the school system and more emphasis on young people holding the responsibility to include themselves. This was also noticed in the voice that is provided to students in the school and their own societies that are created which are student led. In terms of supporting inclusion, for some young people this felt more natural and less forced when it was student led. However, there seemed to be a sense that these young people needed to actively pursue belonging and it wasn't something that came organically to them.

*"I haven't felt like left out because I've actively tried to, you know, include myself in these things" (Jacob: 338, Appendix 13).*

*"The environment is whatever you want to make almost. Like if you want to do something, you can do it. Look. Yeah, it's more of a choice rather than. Like if you want to be excluded you can be. It's just your choice. No one's gonna stop you. No one's gonna force you. It's just your choice, you can be included if you want to" (Michael: 372, Appendix 16).*

*“I guess some people feel left out of some friendship groups but that's not really the school's fault because you can't really like, people pick and choose their friends, they don't” (Joshua: 303, Appendix 17).*

*“If they add more, it will be, it would appear like they're trying to put you together and like nobody, like nobody wants that” (Michael: 391, Appendix 16)*

## **4.7 Summary**

This chapter has provided an analytical summary of the research findings and attempted to answer the research question: ‘What are the experiences of belonging in school for secondary aged pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and what contributes to this?’ The next chapter will explore these findings further and consider implications for the EP profession.

## **5. Discussion**

This chapter aims to address the research question using the findings described in the previous chapter. This will begin with a summary of the overall findings and then further detailed exploration of the research findings and how it relates to previous research. The implications of these findings will be shared and their dissemination. The methodological limitations will also be discussed alongside possibilities for future research. Finally, the chapter ends with self-reflection on the researcher's positioning and undertaking of this research as someone who identifies as an ethnic minority.

### **5.1 Summary of Research Findings**

In summary, the young people who participated in this research all felt a sense of belonging in their school. This was also noted by their parents. However, their sense of belonging in school in relation to their ethnicity was less evident. The research found that being different from the majority in terms of young people's ethnicity elicited internal and external responses which has influenced their feelings of belonging in school. These included feeling the need to fit in, having to adapt and change, feelings of concern about being accepted and being judged by others. Young people's experiences also highlighted the influence of external responses on their belonging in school such as racial discrimination, exposure to narrow mindsets and negative stereotypes and requiring them to fit in to the Eurocentric norm. This highlighted the potential contributions to experiencing a sense of belonging in school for young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Two dimensions of belonging in school were noted from the experiences of young people: General and Ethnic belonging. Young people felt a sense of general belonging through feeling connected to the school's values and ethos, being part of a group, sharing experiences

with others, having similar interests/academic motivation, and having authentic relationships with staff, peers and learning. Other contributors to belonging appeared to fit into a separate dimension which was named Ethnic Belonging as these contributors related to one's ethnicity. This included, sharing lived experiences as part of ethnic identity, feeling valued by others, being visible by sharing one's culture and searching for similarity in others through one's ethnic identity.

The way in which this sense of belonging can be or has been achieved was described through the experiences of young people. The school ecosystem appeared to be key to this whereby giving young people a sense of autonomy and power in the system as well as there being ethnic representation in the staff, students and curriculum was necessary. There were also actions that schools can take to support belonging needs for these participants which included embedding inclusion and ant-racism in their ethos, acknowledging racial inequality, decolonising the curriculum, ongoing actions and holding protected spaces for young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Table 8, seen below provides a further summary of the research findings, the overarching themes, themes and sub-themes.

**Table 8**

*Summary of Research Findings*

<b>What are the experiences of belonging in school for secondary aged pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and what contributes to this?</b>	
<b>Overarching themes</b>	<b>Themes and Sub-Themes</b>
Being different from Majority	There are external and internal responses to being different from the majority (ethnically). These include feeling concerned about being accepted in spaces and judgements from others, needing to fit in, having to adapt and change. External responses include exposure to negative stereotypes and narrow mindsets and feeling

	required to fit in to the Eurocentric norm. Young people also experience a complex relationship with their ethnic identity.
General Belonging	Young people feel a sense of general belonging in school through sharing values and goals with the school, being similar to their peers, being part of a group, sharing experiences and having authentic and meaningful relationships
Ethnic Belonging	Young people feel a sense of belonging in school through ethnic belonging. This involves sharing lived experiences as part of ethnic identity, feeling valued by others, being visible by sharing one's culture and searching for similarity through ethnic identity.
School Ecosystem	Belonging in school can be supported through the school ecosystem. This includes ethnic minority representation in staff, students, and the curriculum. Schools can take several actions to facilitate feelings of ethnic and general belonging as well as the internal and external responses experienced by young people such as embedding inclusion and ant-racism in their ethos and holding protected spaces for young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

### ***5.1.2 What are parental views on their child's sense of belonging in school?***

Gaining parental views was devised to support the researcher's understanding of the belonging needs of the participants in this study. Therefore, this section aims to provide a helpful context for the subsequent research findings and position the researcher's perspective on the views of young people. Parent's views mirrored the views of young people on their belonging needs and nothing appeared to contradict. There were areas of uncertainty or unknowns from parents. However, there was a clear understanding and similarity of their perception of their child's belonging needs to young people's own perspective on their belonging needs. Allen et al. (2016) expressed the important role parents play in their child's sense of belonging. Similarly, Slaten et al. (2016) noted the influence of parents on school

belonging for adolescents in Australia and United States of America. This suggests a potential influence of the home environment on the belonging needs in school of young people who took part in this study. However, this study did not explore this in detail. In addition, it is unclear, whether the Slaten et al.'s (2016) findings included experiences of parents from ethnic minority communities. Therefore, exploring parent's own belonging needs and its influence on their child's belonging in school may be a potential avenue for future research.

Overall, the findings suggest that parents perceive their child to have a sense of belonging in their child's school. The response from parents was overwhelmingly positive for their children's relationship to their peers with some uncertainty around the relationship they have with the staff members at their respective schools. This may suggest that their children do not discuss or attend to the relationship with staff at this stage of their development. Belonging to a peer group is more significant. Erikson (1968) confirms this as he states that peer relations dominate adolescence experience especially when forming their identity. Adolescents have a strong desire to feel recognised and accepted by their peer group (Erikson, 1968). On the other hand, the uncertainty around student-staff relationships from the parental perspective may highlight a potential area which contributes to belonging that needs further understanding.

The majority of parents expressed that their child's connection to their ethnic identity in school was lacking and that more could be done to develop this. This appeared to be dependent on how strongly they connect to their ethnic identity in their home environment. For example, not feeling connected to their ethnic identity meant that this was perhaps not

required in the school environment. However, for most, this suggests that despite their child's sense of belonging, there is a way in which their child can further connect to school.

It is imperative to also consider the context in which this research took place when considering connection to school through one's ethnic identity. Taking Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory there are external influences that can help us understand the individual. The macrosystem (cultural values, political and economic systems) and the child's microsystem (relationship with parents, peers, teachers) will undoubtedly influence the research findings and the conclusions that follow. This was demonstrated by parents' expressions on the events of summer 2020, George Floyd's murder and the Black Lives Matter protests. Parents expressed that it had brought about further discussion as a family and in some instances re-surfaced past pain and challenging experiences. In addition, identity formation already being a heightened stage of development for adolescents as described by Erikson (1968), suggests that further questions about their child's heritage and which group to they belong to would be raised for these participants. Furthermore, Kiang (2014) described ethnic identity as a social construct which is dynamic in nature, meaning that connection to your ethnic identity can fluctuate depending on the social, historical, and political context. This may suggest that around the time of this research, young people's sense of ethnic identity was heightened.

Considering parents perceptions of their child's belonging further, many felt that their child had feelings of being listened to, included, accepted, respected, and treated equally. There was some uncertainty around their child's perception of being different, being able to be themselves at school and being connected to what they learn about. This information provides a helpful context to the way in which parents perceive their child to belong in school. To

understand what exactly contributes to these positive feelings of belonging described by their parents will be explained the next section.

### ***5.1.3 What are the experiences of belonging in school for secondary aged pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and what contributes to this?***

The responses from parents on their child's belonging, mirrored the responses of young people where there was a sense that they all felt they belonged to their school. Similar to parents, young people also spoke to their experiences in a positive manner which meant that the researcher was able to draw on 'what currently works'. This provided an opportunity to determine what exactly was contributing to these feelings of belonging and what specifically belonging to school meant for these young people from ethnic minority communities. For these participants, contributions came from four main areas: being different from the majority, the school ecosystem, and protective factors within the school ecosystem. This research highlighted that for these young people, there were risks to their sense of belonging, for example, being different from the majority and these had been protected through various factors implemented by the school system and young people themselves. Despite, the positive manner in which these participants spoke about their belonging in school, there were still aspects of their belonging that could be further protected or considered by the school system. For example, Chiu et al. (2016) expressed that belonging is context dependent and can exist across different dimensions. Therefore, this suggests, individuals can belong in multiple ways as opposed to a singular way to belong. This was also highlighted by Green et al. (2016) who found that belonging in school could be split into social and academic belonging for young people from the United States of America. For the young people in this study, there were two ways in which young people experienced a sense of belonging in school: a general sense of belonging and ethnic belonging within the school environment. There was a strong sense that

ethnic belonging was a separate and distinctive dimension to belonging in school that young people themselves attempted to cultivate.

#### **5.1.3.1 Being Different from the Majority.**

Being different from the majority, a term which many young people used to describe their understanding of being an ethnic minority, is a key contributor to how belonging is cultivated. Cornell and Hartmann (2007) describe ethnicity as a boundary that exists between groups to help you distinguish between ‘them’ and ‘us’ which seems to explain the way young people perceive their ethnicity; ‘us’ being different from and ‘them’ being the majority. Cornell and Hartmann (2007) also express that ethnicity becomes subjective when ‘outsiders’ in the population attribute aspects of identity to an ethnic group. This seemed to complement the research findings which revealed the external and internalised responses to being different as well as the complex relationship these young people have with their ethnic identity. The complexity appeared to come from needing to explain or describe their ethnic identity in reductionist terms. For example, using a clear label or box that they could neatly fit into. However, this was not the case for some young people evidenced by their lengthy descriptions of their heritage, race, religious beliefs, and family background. Indeed, some young people felt that they did not fit the stereotypes associated with their ethnic group, were unsure about their heritage and therefore were at a loss regarding how to describe their ethnicity. This seemed to have an influence over how connected they felt to their ethnicity and therefore how they perceived their ethnic belonging. However, their internalised response to being different from the majority appeared to remain. This seems to suggest that regardless of how one connects to their ethnicity, the influence of external responses to being different prevails.

Young people also demonstrated a push and pull between feeling pride and shame in relation to their ethnicity. This seemed to be influenced by the external response to being different from the majority. For example, feeling pride in one's ethnicity was more evident in young peoples' accounts of their experiences when schools made aspects connected to their ethnicity visible. Shame was more evident when young people felt different from the norm or there were negative associations with their ethnicity. These examples potentially highlight the feelings of shame and pride that can be evoked from external responses and the internalised response such as needing to fit in. Feelings of shame and pride in connection to belonging only appeared in connection to feeling proud to belong to one's school (Shaw, 2019) as opposed to their own ethnic identity. Gray et al. (2018) however, highlighted the pride that the Black community in the United States of America convey which can influence their ethnic identity formation and subsequently their connection to school. Therefore, to my knowledge, the feelings of shame and pride as part of ethnic identity and belonging appears to be a unique contribution to belonging for ethnic minority individuals that requires further exploration.

Internalised and external responses were found that contributed to the belonging of these young people. Internalised responses highlighted the individual response to being different such as needing to fit in, having to adapt and change and concern of being judged or not accepted by others. It can be argued that these are related to environmental or external factors such as racial discrimination, exposure to narrow mindsets, facing negative stereotypes and being required to fit into the Eurocentric norm. These external factors were not solely connected to their schools but appeared to also be wider societal responses to ethnic minorities that young people had internalised. Cartmell and Bond (2015) similarly, found internal and external responses as part of belonging for those who are not part of the majority

(INAs). They also noted the interaction between the internal and external factors that informed feelings of belonging. This demonstrates the influence of the 'outside' coming in to schools which influences belonging needs.

Through listening to the voices of young people it was apparent that needing to fit in and adapt to their environment was part of their experience of being in the minority. This was also apparent in research that investigated the belonging needs of other minority groups such as ASC, and INAs (Cartmell & Bond, 2015; Myles et al, 2019). This suggests that being different from the majority can make it challenging for young people to fit in or be themselves. This can also be linked to feelings of being accepted and not being judged for differences which came from the accounts of young people. Although not necessarily related to differences or being in a minority group, Midgen et al. (2019) also found the importance of feeling accepted as part of belonging in school. Cartmell and Bond (2015) recognised that support from others in relation to their attitude towards international new arrivals was an important contributor to their sense of belonging. Similarly, in this present study, young people spoke to their feelings of not being judged by others as part of their belonging in school. This suggests that they had been exposed to judgement and perhaps is connected to their experiences of being exposed to narrow mindsets and faced with negative stereotypes. This was not widely apparent in the recent literature on belonging and therefore, may be unique to the belonging experiences of these young people from ethnic minority backgrounds or other minority groups.

Most young people expressed indirect or direct experiences of racial discrimination as well as positive actions taken to eliminate this by the school. Racial discrimination appeared to be something that was the norm for these young people and something that they are used to

discussing and have considered managing as part of their lives. This also appeared to be something that young people took responsibility for. For example, adapting their behaviour or questioning their own experiences of racism. Gray et al. (2018), also highlighted that racial discrimination that exists for Black students in school as well as the biases and assumptions held by school staff have an influence on the belonging needs of these students. They expressed the significance of support from schools adopting an anti-oppressive approach to increase belonging and for “Black students to affirm their Blackness” (Gray et al. 2018, p.108). Schachner et al. (2019) also express the challenges to belonging that come from ethnic discrimination and express that a strong ethnic identity can serve as a protective factor as well as the classroom climate.

This emphasises the important role the school system plays in managing the external responses from others to reduce the burden carried by young people. In addition, it is important for schools to affirm their ethnicity which will regulate their internalised responses which in turn may increase their sense of belonging.

#### **5.1.3.2 General and Ethnic Belonging in School.**

Two other key contributors to the sense of belonging for these young people are the protective factors that come under the broad terms ‘General Belonging’ and ‘Ethnic Belonging’. These were found to be distinct and valuable in contributing to the belonging needs of these young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. These findings indicate that young people can feel both dimensions of belonging simultaneously or feel one without the other. For example, young people can feel a general sense of belonging in the absence of ethnic belonging and vice versa. However, the mass of codes that were generated in relation to ethnic belonging indicates just how important these belonging needs are. Therefore,

general belonging should not be used as compensation for the lack of ethnic belonging in schools. Similarly, evoking a general sense of belonging should not be abandoned if ethnic belonging has been cultivated. The degree to which young people require these aspects of belonging also appears to be dependent on their connection to their ethnic identity. In addition, it is important to hold in mind the stable yet dynamic nature of belonging which is innate to us yet largely dependent on our context. Therefore, as these dimensions of belonging are discussed in turn, it is necessary to be reminded that some aspects may be essential, and others more changeable.

### ***Having a Sense of General Belonging.***

Having a sense of general belonging to school incorporated a number of factors which young people reported as part of their experience: being part of a group, having shared lived experiences, being similar to their peers, having meaningful and authentic relationships and sharing values and goals with their school. In line with the current literature on belonging, young people demonstrated the significance of relationships with peers and teachers as a protective factor (Allen et al., 2016; Gowing, 2019; Midgen et al., 2019; Riley, 2019; Shaw, 2019; Slaten et al, 2016). These relationships were described as needing to be meaningful and authentic suggesting that having positive relationships required a deeper connection and genuineness for belonging to be cultivated. Meaningful relationships was a term used by Amadi and Mohammed (2019) to highlight factors that can tackle loneliness for minority ethnic individuals. Although less specific to relationships being meaningful, Gowing (2019) also highlighted the importance of relationships, noting that peer-peer relationships were significant for adolescents and more central to their belonging than their relationships with staff.

This also complements Erikson's (1968) understanding of adolescent development where belonging to a social group was deemed a significant part of their identity formation.

However, this study argues that although peer-peer relationships were also found to be central to young peoples' belonging, young people noted their lack of thinking around their relationships with staff. Once this was brought to their attention, young people expressed the importance of this relationship as a contributor to their belonging in a different capacity. This included supporting their learning, taking a genuine interest in them, providing them with autonomy and responding to behaviour with fairness. Allen et al. (2016) also found similar elements through their review of literature on belonging as being part of positive student-teacher relationships. This further cements the importance of these relationships for belonging.

Another meaningful and authentic relationship that was found and perhaps mentioned less in the current literature, is young peoples' relationship to learning. There seemed to be a need for transparency in their learning and a deeper connection to learning than simply being interested in the subjects. young people seemed to want to understand how they can personally relate to subjects, especially English and History. Green et al. (2016) and Due et al. (2016) similarly found students relationship with their learning or academia a contributor to belonging for students in the United States of America and Australia. However, this was based on academic success or engagement in academic work as opposed to how they related to learning. Therefore, it can be argued that for these ethnic minority pupils, being able to relate to what they learn about is important to their general belonging as opposed to just solely engaging in academic work.

Another protective factor that was found from the data was being part of a group which provided a sense of protection and safety. young people felt that not belonging to a group was a contributor to being at risk of isolation. They also expressed that not belonging to a group would suggest you are an outsider which was something to be avoided. This ties in with young peoples' internalised response that of needing to fit in, adapt and change to ensure they belong to a group. Young people also spoke about the different groups that one can belong to and the importance of finding a group as most groups "stick together" making it harder to join one that is already formed. Similar findings were found by Shaw (2019) and Gowing (2019) that highlighted the risks of not having a peer group to belonging. Other studies placed more emphasis on duo relationships as opposed to belonging to a group. This finding goes beyond peer-peer or student-teacher relationships as being part of group is being connected to an entity as opposed to belonging one-to-one which can be an individual experience.

Goodenow and Grady (1993) also noted the significance of belonging to smaller groups within a school had a larger influence and tended to override positive peer or teacher relationships. Baumeister and Leary (1995), express that belonging to a group increases one's chance of survival and provides benefits such as protection and shared resources. This may explain why being part of a group was described as providing safety and protection for these young people and why it was separate and distinct from relationships in school. Furthermore, there may be a significance of belonging to a group for ethnic minorities as Amadi and Mohammed (2019) found that minority ethnicity and religion contributes to a risk of experiencing loneliness. This mirrors the findings of young people needing to belong to a group to avoid being alone or being perceived as an 'outsider'.

Shared lived experiences is another protective factor for general belonging to school. This is evident from Baumeister and Leary's (1995) theory of belonging which states that we have an innate evolutionary basis to survive. This involved sharing resources, food, labour and information. Baumeister and Leary (1995) also mentioned that sharing negative experiences increased attraction and bonding as well as simply sharing general experiences. However, this appeared to a process of accumulation over time. For these participants sharing experiences involved sharing pop culture, guidance, laughter and hobbies such as sport. It seemed that young people felt sharing similar experiences helped them connect or form close bonds with others and therefore contributed to a sense of belonging. In the current literature, this did not appear to be a common or distinct contribution to belonging and therefore may be unique finding of this research for young people from ethnic minority communities.

Linked to shared lived experiences is another protective factor found for general belonging which is being similar to peers. young people expressed being similar to others in relation to their approach to academia and their common interests. This was also described as identification, sharing academic interests in other literature on belonging, where researchers found that pupils looked for commonality and similarity not only in their peers but in the schools values and academia (Green et al., 2016; Shaw, 2019).

Shared values and goals is the final protective factor found for general belonging which encompasses how connected young people feel to the school ethos. For young people in this research, it seemed that all expressed feeling connected to their school which brought about a sense of community and undoubtedly contributed to their sense of belonging. This is demonstrated by Goodenow and Grady (1993) who highlighted that a sense of membership to school involves feeling connected to its values. They also claimed that this is heavily

influential for belonging needs, more so than relationships in school (peer and staff). Recent research also highlighted this important finding. Riley (2019) described this as social capital, Shaw (2019) as identification and Due et al. (2016) as belief in the school. This emphasises the importance of feeling connected to the school's ethos and feeling as though it reflects your own values to feel a part of the system and subsequently belong. The way in which this appears to have been cultivated for these young people will be discussed further in the section 'The School Ecosystem'.

These protective factors for general belonging affirm the recent literature on school belonging such as the importance of peer and teacher relationships as well as feeling part of a school through identifying with their ethos. Being similar to peers and sharing lived experiences appears to be relatively significant for these young people and does not appear overtly in the previous literature. This may be a consequence of being different from the majority which makes needing to fit in through being similar to others and sharing experiences more necessary than previous research has emphasised. Similarly, being part of a group as part of general belonging does not overtly appear in recent literature and may be of significance to ethnic minority groups.

### ***Having a Sense of Ethnic Belonging.***

Through young peoples' accounts of their belonging, many spoke to this in relation to their ethnic identity and experiences as an ethnic minority in their school. Only one young people did not feel a connection their ethnicity, nor did they perceive themselves to be a minority which appeared to have an influence on their ethnic belonging in school. In fact, the factors explained in this section were not necessarily vocalised by this young people as needs for their belonging. Yip and Fuligni (2002) concluded that adolescents who made their ethnic

heritage central to their overall identity experienced more positive well-being than those who placed their ethnicity as less important to their overall identity. This demonstrates that ethnic identity is a significant part of young peoples' well-being and how they relate to their environment. Yip and Fuligni (2002) also recognise that older adolescents seem to be more grounded in multiple social identities as opposed to a single aspect. In addition, the findings from this research indicate a potential relationship between how strongly one connects to their ethnic identity and the degree to which they require ethnic belonging in school. Therefore, further exploration is needed to understand the contributions to belonging for young people whose ethnic identity is not central to their overall identity and where other aspects of their identity are more influential.

The majority of young people in this research appeared to place their ethnic identity as central to their experiences in school and made references to their ethnicity throughout. The following protective factors were derived from these accounts: searching for similarity through ethnic identity, being visible: sharing one's culture, feeling valued by others and shared lived experience as part of ethnic identity. In some ways, it can be argued that two of these protective factors, shared lived experience and searching for similarity are also contributors to general belonging. However, these factors were distinct and related largely to aspects that are associated with one's ethnicity. Therefore, they are stand alone and separate as contributors to ethnic belonging. The factors that are listed here were quite dominant throughout young peoples' accounts of their experiences in school suggesting a need for ethnic belonging.

Young people expressed the importance of being able to share lived experiences with others. This appeared to serve the function of support, guidance and having people that they can

relate to. This research has also highlighted that being different from the majority can elicit responses where your differences may be judged or there is a concern of not being accepted. Therefore, being able to share lived experiences with others appears to counteract these feelings by providing a validating space. As some lived experiences may not be widely shared due to being different from the majority, young people expressed some uncertainty about the validity of their experiences. This protective factor appeared to provide a space where young people could normalise their experiences in a system that perhaps does not readily normalise it for them.

Another protective factor that was prominent in young peoples' accounts of their experiences was forming relationships with people from the same ethnic background as them and when this was not possible, from neighbouring cultures. This was more significant for young people in relation to peers and forming friendships as opposed to staff members in school. Young people reported that they are not 'trying to be friends' with teachers. However, they did express the importance of having staff members who are representative of their ethnic background. This required its own theme ethnic representation in school which is covered in more detail in 'The School Ecosystem' section. This suggests, that whilst young people are not necessarily searching for similarity in relation to their ethnicity in staff, there is a contribution to belonging that can come from representation in school staff.

In line with Erikson's (1968) theory of identity formation in adolescents, how young people relate to their peers is of significance as part of their belonging. Therefore, as young people question where they fit in, it seems fitting, that young people who are from ethnic minority backgrounds and feel connected to their identity would search for others who are similar to them to make sense of where they fit in. Due et al (2016) also found that children searched for similarity (cultural, ethnic and linguistic background) as part of forming friendships to

build their sense of belonging at school. Gray et al. (2018) encouraged this and felt that opportunities to form connections with individuals from their same racial or ethnic background was vital to their belonging.

Feeling valued by others in school was another contributor to a sense of ethnic belonging. It can be argued that this can also be associated with general belonging. However, young people made specific reference to their ethnic identity alongside feeling understood, validated, and heard. Therefore, it seemed unique and distinct for feeling a sense of ethnic belonging and perhaps serves a protective function from the external responses to being different from the majority.

Some young people expressed feelings of being heard, validated and understood by others at school in relation to racial equality issues. This was due, in part, to the school system and their approach to discussing racism and celebrating difference. Although, not directly linked to feeling valued in relation to ethnicity, Goodenow and Grady (1993) found that when students felt liked and valued in their environment this increased their engagement in school settings. In addition, Myles et al. (2019) and Craggs and Kelly (2017) also found the importance for students to feel listened to, understood, and valued. Although these were experiences of girls with ASC and students from managed moves they reported similar experiences to the young people in this research of being misunderstood, not heard and devalued in relation to their identity.

Therefore, this may suggest that young people whose experiences are different from the majority, will require support to feel like a valued member of their school. This can be done through ensuring these young people feel listened to, understood, and validated.

The final contributing factor to ethnic belonging was being visible. For these young people this meant sharing their culture and representing their heritage and ancestral history. In addition, this included learning and expanding their knowledge of their culture. The most prominent aspect of this factor was young people needing to be seen or be visible in their school. Gray et al. (2018) express the potential impact of Black students from the USA being in classrooms that are culturally affirming i.e. that make their culture visible. They believe this would allow Black students to explore their racial identity and generate feelings of pride as they form more connections to people who look like them. Schachner et al., (2019) also demonstrate the importance of cultural pluralism in Germany which can be described as embracing diversity through minority groups maintaining their unique identity and differences. When this is utilised in the school environment, this can increase levels of school belonging for ethnic minority groups (Schachner et al., 2019). This further demonstrates the importance of visibility and the impact of sharing one's culture to support their belonging in school. It can be argued that this factor can function as a way to respond to the internalised responses of concern of being judged for differences and not being accepted by others which may have arisen from external responses such as racial discrimination and the negative stereotypes young people have faced.

These protective factors for ethnic belonging compliment recent literature found for other perceived minority groups, especially feeling valued, understood and listened to (Due et al., 2016; Cartmell & Bond, 2015 & Caudenberg et al, 2020). This research also affirms recent literature that has explored ethnic minority experiences, specifically in relation to being visible and the importance of sharing one's culture (Due et al, 2016). Overall, these factors demonstrate the importance for young people to feel valued, understood and listened to in relation to their ethnic identity. Finding and forming friendships with those from a similar

ethnic identity is of importance as it seems to provide opportunities to share similar lived experiences and deepen one's feeling of being understood. In addition, being able to share one's culture and be visible in the school system is another important contributor to ethnic belonging in school. For young people who feel a strong connection to their ethnic identity, it can be argued that these factors are vital to increase their sense of belonging in school. This may be even more important in schools where the ethnic composition is less diverse or where the school system does not compliment these protective factors.

### **5.1.3.3 The School Ecosystem.**

The final key contributor the belonging in school is the system in which these young people reside which was named 'The School Ecosystem'. young people spoke to many aspects of the school system which seemed to have an influence on their belonging in school. These were named the following: Ethnic Minority Representation, Students Degree of Power in the System and Actions Taken by School. These were generated from the accounts young people gave on their experiences of belonging in school which included not only their inner world but the influence from the school system. These included many positive aspects that they noticed as well as what could be hindering belonging needs.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) demonstrates through his ecological framework for human development the influence of systems in society on the individual. It contains systems of influence such as the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and the chronosystem. Allen et al. (2016) applied this framework to feeling a sense of belonging in school and applied current research to each stage. In this research, the same framework can be applied. For example, the contributor being different from the majority indicates influence from the macrosystem (government-driven initiatives, culture and social climate) as well as

the student themselves (relationship with ethnic identity). This also includes the external responses to being different and the context in which this research took place where racial inequalities were further exposed. The protective factors for general belonging and ethnic belonging may also cover the microsystem (peer and teacher support). The school ecosystem can be associated the exosystem and mesosystem of the ecological framework. Allen et al. (2016) defined this as the whole-school vision (exosystem) and the school policies, staff development, rules and practices (mesosystem). Although, each contributor found in this research may overlap into the different systems in the ecological framework, the findings demonstrate the multi-layered influence of belonging for young people and the systemic influence. The school ecosystem as a contributor to belonging will now be discussed in more detail.

### ***Ethnic Representation.***

Young people referred to representation in their schools and described their school in terms of its ethnic composition. This demonstrates that young people pay attention to the levels of diversity within their system. This may be connected to the protective factor, searching for similarity through ethnic identity. Not only was ethnic minority representation spoken about in relation to ethnic composition, but it was also noticed in the curriculum. This can be connected to the protective factor 'being visible and sharing one's culture'. Young people felt that they would feel more connected to the curriculum if it was more representative of them. For example, the type of language used in books, books representing real-life experiences that they can relate to, diversity in the histories shared and/or key figures in history who are from the same background as themselves.

Representation of staff who are from a similar or the same ethnic background became more significant here than in previous contributors to belonging where the focus was more on friendship building. Here, young people recognised the need for staff who looked like them to function as a role model or for guidance and support. Young people appreciated that they could talk to staff who were not necessarily from their ethnic background about race related issues (perhaps cultivated through the school ethos). However, they described the unique contribution of seeing someone that looks like you succeed or speaking with staff who truly *know* your lived experience as opposed to *knowing about* it. Current literature into contributors to belonging did not make specific reference to ethnic representation. However, research looking into the effects of ethnic composition find higher degrees of belonging in classrooms where there is a higher proportion of diversity and ethnic representation (Mok et al. 2016; Morales-Chicas & Graham, 2017). The representation of staff in leadership roles in England are 8.6% other minority ethnic individuals and 0.8% Black Caribbean (Demie & McLean, 2017). Representation of teachers is 1% for Black Caribbean teachers and 13.6% for other ethnic minorities (Demie & McLean, 2017). The statistics of ethnic minority groups in the total population of England and Wales highlight that Asian ethnic groups make up 7.5% of the population, Black ethnic groups 3.3%, mixed ethnic groups 2.2% and other ethnic groups 1% (Office for National Statistics, 2016). Regionally, London has the smallest percentage of White British people (44.9%) and individuals from Black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic groups are most likely to live in London (Office for National Statistics, 2016). Therefore, consideration of ethnic representation in schools compared to regional data is necessary. However, given these statistics and the findings from Mok et al. (2016) and Morales-Chicas & Graham (2017), it can be argued that young people are may feel lower levels of belonging when ethnic representation is low. Therefore, building representation in students, staff and the curriculum are necessary steps that schools can take to support the

belonging needs of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

*Students Degree of Power in the System.*

Young people spoke to a push and pull between having no choice and having autonomy in their school system. This was often in relation to forming friendships, having a voice in the system and the way in which teachers perceived and managed their behaviour. For example. Young people felt some degree of control over making friendships yet also felt they had no choice over the people that they were surrounded by (specifically in relation to ethnicity). Young people also felt they had no control over the responses from others in the system especially in relation to racial discrimination and narrow mindsets. In the same line of thought, some Young people felt a degree of control over this as the school provided space where these external responses to difference can be tackled such as an anti-racism task force.

Young people also described their appreciation for being able to have a voice in the school system through various roles such as school council and anti-bullying and anti-racism ambassadors. In the current literature, this theme was not something that appeared overtly when discussing belonging needs in school. Osterman (2000) referred to adolescents need for autonomy and research that highlighted the awareness children have over their ability to influence decisions in the classroom. However, this is not specifically linked to belonging. Song (2009) highlighted that ethnicity and race have implications in relation to power and status where certain ethnic and racial identities hold more power and status than others. Gray et al. (2018) alluded to the lack of power and status in relation to race and ethnicity through expressing that anti-oppressive practice should be adopted in schools for those who are often othered by society such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and/or ability.

The combination of adolescent development and their need for autonomy as well as power associated with ethnic and racial groups may explain this theme. Perhaps this demonstrates that young people from ethnic minority backgrounds value having autonomy as they find themselves in an oppressive system where they are not usually afforded this. Therefore, it seems of importance to provide young people from ethnic minority backgrounds with a sense of autonomy and power in the system not only to negate the oppression experienced but support their adolescent development.

### *Actions Taken by School.*

Young people spoke about a number of actions that their schools had taken which appeared to cultivate their sense of belonging in school. They also highlighted areas where schools could do more. These actions include schools acknowledging racial inequality, ensuring there is ongoing action, decolonising the curriculum, holding protected spaces for ethnic minorities and embedding inclusion and anti-racism within the school's ethos.

When racial inequality was recognised by the school, young people felt more included and part of the school. In cases where this was not acknowledged, it seemed that young people felt disappointed and that this was something schools ought to do. In addition, although schools have taken a number of actions to support young people from ethnic minority backgrounds, Black History Month, incorporating Black figures in the curriculum, holding discussions about racial inequality in form time to name a few, there was a sense that this is not enough. young people felt that these were one off or a 'tick box' exercise. Perhaps this demonstrates the lack of trust in the system and that support or real differences will be made. This echoes the thoughts of parents who felt tired and frustrated that not much has changed since when they were in school. Young people also felt that actions should have been taken

sooner and were expecting the actions that have been taken since the events of Summer 2020. Osterman (2000) highlighted that at times schools can adopt practices that may undermine students experience of school membership. Therefore, it seems important for schools to consider and pay attention to how their practices uplift or undermine their students. For these young people, by not acknowledging racial inequality, this may undermine their sense of belonging to the school.

Young people also shared their thoughts on the curriculum and in particular expressed a desire to change aspects of how English and History is taught so that it demonstrates the diversity that exists in the UK at present. Gray et al., (2018) argue that the curriculum cannot be race-neutral, it is cultural. They suggest that when the curriculum does not acknowledge cultural differences it creates a sense that Eurocentric ethnic groups are more important. Gray et al. (2018) believe that this can have an impact on self-perception and self-concept. Similarly, Schachner et al. (2019) highlight the importance of creating a climate where diversity is utilised and engaged with. Current literature on belonging needs for young people did not appear to refer to the curriculum. This may therefore be an aspect of belonging that is unique for ethnic minority young people to help them feel a part of the school community, valued and accepted.

Similar to the protective factor sharing school values and goals, young people spoke about their connection to their school ethos through a lens of inclusion and anti-racism. In cases where this was not embedded, there was a sense that more should be done to create a culture where issues around racial equality are spoken about. Schachner et al. (2019) used the term cultural pluralism alongside equality and inclusion. This is where diversity is embraced and used as a resource to increase learning for all students. They found that through schools

acknowledging diversity (cultural pluralism) there were higher belonging needs and argued that this created feelings that pupils are valued. They expressed that efforts to support young people from ethnic minority communities should not just extend to non-discrimination and equal opportunities (Schachner et al, 2019). Therefore, they deemed it necessary that schools implement policies to support multiculturalism as well as equality and inclusion.

Protected spaces for ethnic minority individuals is another school action that was generated from the accounts of young people. There seemed to be a need for a collective space where ethnic minorities could share their culture, lived experiences, learn from each other and look for guidance or support. In some ways it seemed that this also functioned to find a space to belong. Cartmell and Bond (2015) and Due et al. (2019) also note the important role schools play in providing protected spaces for minority groups such as international new arrivals and refugees. More specifically, they expressed that schools have a role in being culturally sensitive to different perspectives on belonging and incorporating these in school's support, for example, hosting culturally important festivals. This study adds to these findings and argues that by providing protected spaces for ethnic minority communities may increase their feelings of being valued by the school.

Overall, the impact of the school system on the belonging needs of ethnic minority young people is evident here. By taking actions to demonstrate an authentic and meaningful interest in the experiences of ethnic minority young people, this may increase their sense of belonging in school. It is clear that peer and teacher support is not enough to guarantee a sense of belonging in school (Osterman, 2000). Therefore, as part of a holistic approach and considering the ecological framework Allen et al. (2016) applied to school belonging, the approach by the school system is vital. Furthermore, Osterman (2000) also highlight that

organisational practices and policies have an impact on students sense of school community. The specific challenge in secondary schools to meet student's belonging needs through policies, norms, values and practices requires drastic change (Osterman, 2000). However, despite its challenges, these actions are necessary to support the belonging needs of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

## **5.2 Dissemination and Implications for the EP profession and beyond.**

### *Dissemination*

These key findings listed below can be used by the EP profession and school staff in addressing the belonging needs of young people from ethnic minority communities. They will be disseminated to the EP profession, schools and the local authority containing various educational support services that would benefit from having access to the key messages from this research.

1. *Being different from the majority*: the internal and external contributors that influence young people's belonging experiences in school
2. *General and Ethnic Belonging Protective factors*: the contributors that protect young people from these experiences in school
3. *The School Ecosystem*: The systemic contributors to the belonging experiences of young people in school

Currently, there are plans to communicate these findings and key messages through a presentation to the EPS which will function as supporting information in their business plan regarding culturally responsive practice. In addition, a one-page profile summary to the schools involved will be created and 'a top tips' list that can be disseminated to various secondary school settings in England. It is hoped that this research can be published as a journal article. Due to the wider audience that these findings appeal to, advice will be sought

as to which journal would be most appropriate to publish this research in. For example, the researcher would like to ensure that it is disseminated in the EP profession as well as other appropriate educational professions such as secondary school staff including headteachers, teachers and SENCo's.

### *Implications for the EP profession*

EPs are well placed to support the needs and build on strengths of children and young people through individual, group or systems work in education settings. The five key functions of the EP role highlighted in the Currie Report (Scottish Executive, 2002) are consultation, assessment, intervention, training, and research. These will be used to structure the reporting of implications for the EP profession from these research findings.

### **Consultation and assessment.**

Osterman (2000) highlighted the challenge of shifting values and policies of a school system, making specific reference to secondary schools. However, EPs are well placed to support schools on a systemic level and are skilled in eliciting organisation change. This can be conducted through consultation and collaborative problem solving (Lee & Woods, 2017). Therefore, during planning meetings or consultations with key members of staff, EPs can use systemic, solution focused and Socratic questions in a sensitive and curious manner to challenge the support that is in place for students from ethnic minority backgrounds. Other evidence based and more structured ways that can facilitate these discussions are solution circles, work discussion groups and reflecting teams.

When young people are referred to EPs who are from ethnic minority backgrounds, EPs can consider these research findings in preparation for their assessment. For example, during pupil interviews, providing a space where the young people can share their culture and ethnic

identity. This can be through Personal Construct Psychology such as the ideal-school or ideal-self drawing where culture and identity can be included. Careful consideration should also be taken with the assessment tools that we use and how representative it is of them. Is this a way that we require young people to fit into a Eurocentric norm? Using dynamic assessment which is arguably more culturally sensitive may be less discriminatory and culturally biased than standardised assessments (Deutsch & Reynolds, 2000). In addition, as previous research highlighted there is a link between belonging in school and academic success and good mental health (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Therefore, it is imperative that EPs consider this as part of their assessment. Not only exploring their general sense of belonging but also ethnic belonging and if the protective factors are available to them in their environment. EPs should see the young people as a cultural being and take a non-colour-blind approach. This will also include the recommendations and advice given to schools.

### **Intervention and Training.**

EPs are well placed to support schools through intervention and training. This can be in the form of supporting school staff to feel more comfortable having conversations about diversity and encouraging this as being part of their practice. Holding reflective spaces which are facilitated by EPs can provide a containing space for this to be delivered. EPs can support schools through increasing their understanding on the importance of belonging for children and young people. This can be done through training that shares the key psychological theory and research findings related to belonging for these young people. Schools can then reflect on these key ideas and how they can implement these in their setting.

As reflective practitioners it is vital that we as EPs challenge our own stereotypes and assumptions that we have that may be contributing to how we practise. This can be through,

not only engaging in continuing professional development (CPD) that raises our own awareness of unconscious biases but ensuring the learning is implemented and ongoing. This may be in the form of having race, equity and inclusion as a standing item in team meetings, considering how we can embed culturally responsive approaches in our policies and having a working group that can focus more specifically on actions that the EPS can take in becoming more culturally responsive practitioners. To take this further, course providers for the Educational Psychology doctorate could adapt their curriculum to consider and learn more about how we can work in culturally responsive ways and consider other forms of psychology that are less Westernised. This should be a golden thread throughout the course as opposed to a one-off.

### **Research.**

EPs also have a role in research. This can be through action research or conducting research with the view to being published. EPs can conduct an audit on the demographic groups of the referrals received. EPs can also collect data from schools on support they have in place for belonging with the view to gain more information and a broader picture of the needs in their borough. Careful consideration will be needed to understand belonging needs of young people in schools and what support is already in place. EPs can also conduct future research that looks into evidence-based interventions which are representative of culturally diverse communities, so we are not expecting young people to fit into the Eurocentric norm.

### ***Implication for Schools***

This research highlights the important role that schools have in cultivating a sense of belonging for young people from ethnic minority communities. A number of factors were generated from the accounts of young people that appear to provide them with a sense of general and ethnic belonging. In addition, implications can derive from the research findings

of the school ecosystem.

### **General and Ethnic Belonging.**

Schools can consider these protective factors when supporting young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. For example, cultivating authentic and meaningful relationships with staff, students and learning. This can be through ensuring lessons are relatable to the demographic groups of the young people in the school. In addition, schools can create spaces in the school day which provide opportunities to form close bonds with other students. This can be through extracurricular activities, lunch time clubs and/or working on projects in pairs or groups. Considering ethnic belonging more specifically, spaces where young people can celebrate and explore their ethnicity with others from the same or similar background is equally as important. One example of this can be through clubs and societies with specific reference to Black, Asian or other ethnic minority background. young people reported feeling a sense of belonging when sharing goals and values with their schools. Therefore, schools may wish to consider involving young people in the creation of the school values. This may also provide them with a sense of power and autonomy in the system.

### **School Ecosystem.**

In instances where there is lack of representation, schools can consider how else representation can be created in the school environment. This can be through open discussions with pupils about ethnicity, race and culture which can also serve to challenge the narrow mindsets of others as well as stereotyped views that may exist in the school system. Schools can also seek to provide students with opportunities to have a voice within the school system. This can be in the form of anti-racist ambassadors, being part of a school council or

asking for young people's views when there are changes in the school system that have an impact on them.

Young people felt they belonged most when they were able to share their own heritage, feel valued, listened to, understood, and validated. Therefore, the school environment should encourage young people from ethnic minority backgrounds to celebrate their heritage through self-expression. Gray (2017) noted that when individuals can "stand out while fitting in" they feel a greater sense of belonging in their classroom and identification with others. This is also reportedly linked to greater feelings of pride and less shame (Gray, 2017).

Schools should also consider interrogating their behaviour policy and rules that may be considered Eurocentric. In fact, all school policies should acknowledge diversity and promote a culturally diverse climate. However, Schachner et al. (2019) note the discomfort that may come with discussing issues around cultural diversity and the rarity of discussions that aid learning. An intervention that may be necessary prior to any systemic change is making these discussions the norm and more comfortable for not only school staff but also EPs. Schachner et al. (2019) suggest that it may be necessary to make this part of the curriculum for teacher training. The researcher echoes this recommendation and believes this should also be implemented by course providers of the Educational Psychology doctorate.

#### *Implications derived directly from young people*

Young people made some suggestions for actions that schools can take to support inclusion and belonging. Here are some implications that are taken directly from the young people that took part in this research:

- Opportunities to discuss and draw attention to current events that involve racial inequality.

- Holding a moment of remembrance in school for George Floyd or other figures who have suffered at the hands of racial inequality.
- Workshops to educate students and staff about different cultural backgrounds.
- Having a food festival during Black History Month.
- Multiple assemblies and ongoing discussions that address racial inequality.
- Make learning more relatable and applicable to real life. For example, instead of relying on classics that are harder to understand, use books that contain experiences that young people can directly relate to.
- Have a policy that ‘comes down hard’ on bullying and discrimination.
- Create societies and clubs that relate to Black, Asian and Minority ethnic communities, such as African Caribbean Society.
- Create diversity in learning, learn about different cultures in history and different religions in religious education.
- Provide more opportunities to celebrate culture and different ethnic groups through food festivals and ‘wear your own cultural clothes day’ for example.

The implications above cover aspects that can contribute to ethnic and general belonging as well as changes to the school ecosystem. These will be adapted into a top tips sheet that can be shared with schools and empower the voice of the young people.

### **5.3 Limitations and Future Research**

The researcher recognises that there are a number of limitations that prevent these findings from being generalised to all young people from ethnic minority communities. The researcher chose four main limitations that she deemed important to discuss in detail. In addition, due to the scope of this research and its purpose being a doctoral thesis there were aspects of this study that the researcher could not explore due to time constraints. This leaves possibility for

future research that can build upon the existing findings and develop understanding of the experiences of young people from ethnic minorities in relation to their belonging in school. These will be discussed alongside the aspects of this research that are potentially limiting.

For instance, the sample is small, and data has been taken from two secondary schools, one of which is a grammar school which may have implications on the nature of belonging needs. Grammar schools typically have an academic focus and are often smaller in size. Therefore, a community feel may already be created due to its size and similar academic level, making it easier to form connections with others. However, the belonging needs that were apparent from the findings do not suggest that they are solely unique to grammar schooling. Future research could determine if these findings exist in other larger school settings or where academic ability is mixed. In relation to the small sample size, although this makes it challenging to generalise findings, it provided the opportunity to carry out in-depth interviews and draw on the emancipatory element to this research. This meant that the researcher could empower the voices of those who are often unheard and analyse their experiences to provide a significant level of detail and insight in the hope of bringing about change.

The researcher also recognises that a large proportion of the participants are boys. Therefore, contributions to belonging for girls who are from ethnic minority communities may not be represented as largely. However, the experiences that girls provided through this research were consistent with the experiences described by boys in this research and there did not appear to be an apparent gender difference. This may be because young people referred to their ethnicity as a dominant part of their identity which may have a stronger influence on belonging than gender. In addition, the literature review conducted did not reveal gender

differences in the experiences of belonging. However, future research could determine whether a gender difference does exist by exploring the belonging needs of girls from ethnic minority backgrounds.

In fact, considering this further, other identities such as special educational needs, class, ability, age, religion, gender, sexuality and many more which come under the protected characteristics (Equality Act, 2010) and John Burnham's (2012) Social GRACES were not considered. It may have been necessary to explore the overlapping identities that are part of individuals experiences. This can be described by the term Intersectionality which views various categories such as special educational needs, class, ability, age, religion, gender, race, ethnicity and more, as interlinked and connected factors that shape human experiences as well as their social world within various structures of power (Hankivsky, 2014). It is important to note that these identities are not mutually exclusive and interact with each other. In addition, intersectionality argues that inequality is not the result of a single factor but of interrelated factors due to the multi-dimensional lives of humans (Hankivsky, 2014). Therefore, further research is required to determine the interrelated factors and influence of other dimensions of identity that hold power which may contribute to the experience of belonging for young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. However, the scope of this research was to explore the experiences of belonging for young people from ethnic minority communities as opposed to the intersectionality of their identities. This allowed the researcher to explore the contributions to belonging in more detail and determine the patterns that exist in young peoples' accounts of their experiences. Furthermore, from a social justice lens and the racial and ethnic disparities exposed following COVID-19 as well as the multitude of events highlighting racism that exists within institutions, this felt even more necessary to explore.

Furthermore, Intersectionality argues that individuals can experience both privilege and oppression depending on the power dynamics, geographic settings, situation or specific context (Hankivsky, 2014). This suggests that some aspects of identity may hold more power than others and can be context specific. Therefore, the way aspects of one's identity interacts with the environment and context may not necessarily be equal and can hold different weighting in power. In this research, most participants appeared to centralise ethnicity as part of their identity. Therefore, the influence of ethnicity on their experience of belonging appeared stronger than other aspects of their identity such as gender or class for example. However, this does not mean that these aspects of identity do not have an influence on belonging in school. This provides a potential avenue for future research which can explore the belonging needs of those from ethnic minority communities who do not centralise ethnicity as part of their identity. In addition, exploration of the competing social categories that they identify with and the influence on their belonging in school. Exploring this further would diversify our understanding of the individual differences that exist in ethnic minority communities and the influence of intersectionality.

It is also important to consider the context in which this research took place where feelings in relation to one's ethnic and racial identity may have been heightened and therefore could have an influence on the types of experiences young people shared. Nonetheless, these inequalities and experiences in relation to being an ethnic minority have existed prior to the events that occurred when this research took place and therefore, the findings may still be valid. Future research could carry out a longitudinal study to explore the dynamic nature of ethnicity and its influence on belonging in school and whether the contributors found in this research are consistent over time or whether they are changeable.

Exploring the belonging needs of primary-aged children from minority ethnic communities is another potential avenue that can build upon these findings. Although, identity formation is less dominant at this stage developmentally, primary-aged children are still exposed to the school system and external responses to being different from the majority. Therefore, the unique contributions that were found in this study that appear to relate specifically to ethnicity may also be important for primary-aged children. However, further exploration is needed.

Overall, although this research did not seek to understand the complexities of human identity, it sought to recognise patterns and rules that exist in the belonging experiences of young people from ethnic minority communities. This was with the aim to provide knowledge and information that can be used to serve a social justice and an emancipatory purpose.

#### **5.4 Researcher's Reflections**

As someone who identifies as an ethnic minority, I recognise my closeness to this topic of ethnic minority young people and their belonging needs. In addition, I take a social justice approach in my role as a TEP in the EP profession. Therefore, it was important for me to be reflexive in this research to recognise the role I play and the potential impact I have had on data gathering, analysing, and reporting.

My own ethnicity and research positionality have undoubtedly shaped this research. For example, it has provided me with an opportunity to deeply engage with the data to highlight injustices as well as report on the data using the voices of these young people where possible. Being from an ethnic minority background myself, I believe, this strengthened my data

gathering, analysis and reporting. This is because, I have my own lived experience to draw on.

Admittedly, I also noticed its drawbacks as without reflexivity, I could have made decisions that serve my own belonging needs and beliefs in relation to race and ethnicity. However, where possible, I tried to use the words of young people in the coding and naming of themes as opposed to projecting my own thoughts and ideals onto the data. I also paid attention to my own emotional responses to the answers provided by young people, especially when their experiences differed to my own. This was supported by the decision to use semi-structured interviews and to consider the wider societal and historical influences on this community. In addition, the interview questions were based on previous research and understanding of belonging as opposed to my own beliefs on belonging. This helped to raise my awareness and shift the attention from myself to the system.

I also noticed my emotional response to some answers of young people where I related to their experiences. Having noticed this, I kept follow-up questions open and curious to gain some neutrality. Finally, where possible, I paid attention to information that did not necessarily fit my schema or belief and questioned my own responses. This was to challenge my own perceptions and balance my own interests with those of the participants. Lastly, I found that this research exposed and questioned my own beliefs about ethnicity and belonging. It answered some questions but left me with many more questions that are yet to be explored.

My social justice positionality influenced the way I gathered data, analysed and reported it, for example, I used methodology that would meet the emancipatory and exploratory approach

of this research. I found that using thematic analysis provided a flexible approach where I could use a critical orientation to look for rules and patterns across data. When reflecting on the loss of individual lived experience, I felt that this was outweighed by the benefit of gaining an overall understanding of the patterns that exist for belonging. This also complemented the social justice values I hold as the reported data could be translated into strategies and guidance. I believe this is more practical and gives EPs or schools who seek to implement this research an opportunity to do so.

## 6. Conclusion

A sense of belonging is vital to a young people's well-being and academic achievement (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This has been a notable finding in literature exploring a sense of belonging in school for children and young people. However, there has not been much exploration into the contributions of school belonging, especially among those from marginalised groups. One of these groups are individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds. Secondary aged young people from ethnic minority background were either under or over-represented in the social emotional and mental health category of special educational needs (Strand & Lindorff, 2018). Exclusion rates were also notably higher for these groups (DFE, 2019). In addition, attainment for ethnic groups vary with those from Chinese and Indian ethnic groups attaining at the highest levels compared to Black Caribbean and Pakistani students from low socio-economic status (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, 2021). In line with the definition of belonging, these statistics may suggest that sense of belonging in school is at risk for young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Therefore, this research aimed to answer the question of what contributes to a sense of belonging in school for young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. This exploration was also governed by an emancipatory motive to provide information that can empower young peoples' voices and be used practically to support this group.

There were many contributors to a sense of belonging which included the school ecosystem, being different from the majority and various protective factors such as sharing one's culture and having meaningful relationships. These findings highlighted the complexity of belonging to school and how multifaceted it is. In addition, it highlighted the different domains within which young people from ethnic minority communities find belonging. The two main ones that were generated from this research were general belonging and ethnic belonging. It

seemed that feeling a sense of belonging in both of these domains were necessary for those who were strongly connected to their ethnic identity. However, regardless of young peoples' connection to their ethnic identity, they were still influenced by the school ecosystem, being different from the majority and the general sense of belonging protective factors. This study also highlighted the importance of school's involvement at a systemic level to support the belonging needs of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds and how EPs are well placed to facilitate these changes. These findings also have implications for the practice of EPs who play an important role in supporting young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. EPs can consider utilising the internal and external responses young people experience to being different from the majority to shape their approach to consultation, assessments and intervention. To name a few, this would include reflecting on our own stereotyped and Westernised views, truly listening to the young people and validating their experiences through pupil voice tools. Finally, the young people themselves provided a number of suggestions that are necessary to consider and put into action to ensure their belonging needs are met. It can be argued that this will have a positive impact on their mental wellbeing and academic achievement.

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## 8. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Excluded Articles from Systemic Literature Review

Excluded Study	Rationale
1. Systematic phonics instruction belongs in evidence-based reading programs: A response to bowers.	Not relevant to research – not about belonging
2. Fostering a sense of belonging at an international school in France: An experimental study.	Primary aged pupils

3. Perceived autonomy support, relatedness with students, and workplace outcomes: An investigation of differences by teacher gender.	Not about belonging – about perceived autonomy
4. Psychological Capital Is Associated with Higher Levels of Life Satisfaction and School Belongingness	Focus is on psychological capital rather than exploring sense of belonging needs, factors or experiences.
5. Pupils attending a shared placement between a school and alternative provision: Is a sense of school belonging the key to success?	Not looking at special provisions. Focus is on mainstream education.
6. A narrative exploration of the impact of belonging on the educational experiences of teenage fathers.	Retrospective, not explaining sense of belonging in secondary school and characteristics that contributed. Overall story rather than specific secondary school experiences.
7. Understanding the relationship between youth's belonging and bullying behaviour: An SEM model.	Rather than looking at experiences of belonging, this looks at the link between bullying and belonging.
8. Understanding the connection between youths' belonging, resilience and self-regulatory learning.	Focus is not on belonging alone, it looks at other factors such as resilience and self-regulatory learning. Focus is on understanding student self-regulatory learning self-efficacy.
9. Assessing perceived school support, rule acceptance and attachment: Evaluation of the psychometric properties of the School Belonging Scale (SBS).	Evaluation of belonging scale as opposed to experiences of factors that contribute to belonging.
10. The Milwaukee Youth Belongingness Scale (MYBS): Development and validation of the scale utilizing item response theory.	About the scale rather than belonging experiences of secondary aged pupils
11. Adolescent students' psychological needs: Development of an existence, relatedness, and growth needs scale.	Not related to belonging – for validity of a new measure about psychological needs.
12. Perceptions of competence, control, and belongingness over the transition to high school: A mixed-method study	More focus on competence, control than belongingness specifically.
13. School attachment and relatedness with parents, friends and teachers as predictors of students' intrinsic and identified regulation.	Not about belonging
14. School Values: A Comparison of Academic Motivation, Mental Health Promotion, and School Belonging with Student Achievement	Looked specifically at a student academic achievement as opposed to belonging itself.
15. A multilevel examination of racial disparities in high school discipline: Black and white adolescents' perceived equity, school belonging, and adjustment problem	Although related to ethnicity – it's about the discipline gap as opposed to belonging experiences.

16. The relationship between school belonging, sibling aggression and bullying involvement: Implications for students with and without disabilities.	Focus on bullying and sibling aggression as opposed to experiences of belonging.
17. Exploring the Contributions of School Belonging to Complete Mental Health Screening	Mental health focus – well-being and internal distress after completing mental health groups. In relation to belonging as opposed to belonging as a focus.
18. Establishing the effectiveness of a gratitude diary intervention on children's sense of school belonging.	School belonging as an intervention as opposed to experiences and factors that contribute to a sense of belonging
19. Computing whether she belongs: Stereotypes undermine girls' interest and sense of belonging in computer science.	Gender disparity as a focus as opposed to belonging to school. Belonging to a particular topic.
20. Sense of relatedness boosts engagement, achievement, and well-being: A latent growth model study.	Not related to factors that contribute to a sense of belonging. More cause and effect.
21. The mediating role of social relationships in the association of adolescents' individual school self-concept and their school engagement, belonging and helplessness in school.	Cause and effect relationship between belonging and helplessness as opposed to experiences
22. School belonging in Adolescents: Exploring the associations with school achievement and internalising and externalising problems	Cause and effect and validity for a scale as opposed to exploring experiences of belonging.
23. It feels good to learn where I belong: School belonging, academic emotions, and academic achievement in adolescents.	Cause and effect – not exploring experiences.
24. Pathways to belonging	Editorial – opinion based, has not rigorously appraised current literature.
25. Somewhere I belong: Long-term increases in adolescents' resilience are predicted by perceived belonging to the in-group.	Not about factors that contribute to belonging. More about what belonging contributes to an individual. Association study.

## Appendix 2: Ethics Form and Approval

The Tavistock and Portman   
NHS Foundation Trust

### Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)

#### APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

**This application should be submitted alongside copies of any supporting documentation which will be handed to participants, including a participant information sheet, consent form, self-completion survey or questionnaire.**

Where a form is submitted and sections are incomplete, the form will not be considered by TREC and will be returned to the applicant for completion.

For further guidance please contact xxxxxxx ([academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk))

### **SECTION A: PROJECT DETAILS**

<b>Project title</b>	<b>Exploring the factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in secondary-aged students who identify as BAME</b>		
<b>Proposed project start date</b>	<b>April 2020</b>	<b>Anticipated project end date</b>	<b>July 2021</b>

### **SECTION B: APPLICANT DETAILS**

<b>Name of Researcher</b>	Ilesha Ginn
<b>Email address</b>	Iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk
<b>Contact telephone number</b>	XXXXXXXX

### **SECTION C: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

<p><b>Will any of the researchers or their institutions receive any other benefits or incentives for taking part in this research over and above their normal salary package or the costs of undertaking the research?</b>  <b>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></b>          If YES, please detail below:</p>
<p><b>Is there any further possibility for conflict of interest? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></b>          If YES, please detail below:</p>

### **FOR ALL APPLICANTS**

<p>'Is your research being commissioned by and or carried out on behalf of a body external to the trust? (for example; commissioned by a local authority, school, care home, other NHS Trust or other organisation).  <small>*Please note that 'external' is defined as an organisation which is external to the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust (Trust)</small></p>	<p><b>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/></b></p>
<p>If YES, please supply details below:</p>	
<p>Has external* ethics approval been sought for this research? (i.e. submission via Integrated Research Application System (IRAS) to the Health Research Authority (HRA) or other external research ethics committee)</p>	<p><b>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></b></p>

*Please note that 'external' is defined as an organisation/body which is external to the Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)	
If <b>YES</b> , please supply details of the ethical approval bodies below <b>AND</b> include any letters of approval from the ethical approval bodies:	
If your research is being undertaken externally to the Trust, please provide details of the sponsor of your research?	
Do you have local approval (this includes R&D approval)?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **SECTION D: SIGNATURES AND DECLARATIONS**

<b>APPLICANT DECLARATION</b>	
I confirm that:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and up to date.</li> <li>• I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research.</li> <li>• I acknowledge my obligations and commitment to upholding our University's Code of Practice for ethical research and observing the rights of the participants.</li> <li>• I am aware that cases of proven misconduct, in line with our University's policies, may result in formal disciplinary proceedings and/or the cancellation of the proposed research.</li> </ul>	
<b>Applicant (print name)</b>	IESHA GINN
<b>Signed</b>	Iesha Ginn
<b>Date</b>	11.02.20

### **FOR RESEARCH DEGREE STUDENT APPLICANTS ONLY**

<b>Name of Supervisor</b>	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
<b>Qualification for which research is being undertaken</b>	Educational Psychology Doctorate Degree

<p><b>Supervisor –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the student have the necessary skills to carry out the research? YES x<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>▪ Is the participant information sheet, consent form and any other documentation appropriate? YES x<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>▪ Are the procedures for recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent suitable and sufficient? YES x<input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>▪ Where required, does the researcher have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance? YESx <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>
---

<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

<b>COURSE LEAD/RESEARCH LEAD</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposed research as detailed herein have your support to proceed?  <b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

#### **SECTION E: DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH**

<p><b>1. Provide a brief description of the proposed research, including the requirements of participants. This must be in lay terms and free from technical or discipline specific terminology or jargon. If such terms are required, please ensure they are adequately explained (Do not exceed 500 words)</b></p>
<p>The proposed research is looking to explain how a sense of belonging is facilitated amongst ethnic minority and white British pupils in secondary school. Specifically looking at what contributes to the feelings of belonging in these groups and how these factors have elicited a sense of belonging. I will be collecting this information through interviewing students in Years 7-11 who identify themselves as an ethnic minority. Participants will be recruited through two secondary schools in the local authority that I am doing my placement in. They are schools that I have been allocated to. The participants will be invited to take part in this study and selected through random sampling. If this is unsuccessful, I shall use opportunistic sampling.</p>
<p><b>2. Provide a statement on the aims and significance of the proposed research, including potential impact to knowledge and understanding in the field (where appropriate, indicate the associated hypothesis which will be tested). This should be a clear justification of the proposed research, why it should proceed and a statement on any anticipated benefits to the community. (Do not exceed 700 words)</b></p>
<p>Currently, in England there is a perception that children and young people are living with mental health and well-being concerns more so than before (NHS, 2018, DfE, 2018). Data received from a national survey reveal that there has been a slight increase in the percentage of 5-15-year olds with mental health disorders from 1999 to 2017 (NHS, 2018). Eleven to nineteen-year olds were three times more likely to have a “mental disorder” than 2 to 4-year olds (NHS, 2018). In education, these children and young people may be classified as having a ‘social, emotional and mental health’ (SEMH) need (SEND code of practice, 2015, p.98). In response to this widespread perception, the government has made mental health an area of priority, where they plan to place more funding into mental health provision such as a training a Designated Senior Lead for</p>

Mental Health in schools (Department of Health and Social Care and Department of Education, 2018)

It seems that when pupils have an identified SEN such as SEMH they are also underachieving in school (Brännlund, Strandh, Nilsson, 2017) Looking into the school attainment and academic success between groups, Pakistani, Mixed White/Caribbean and Black Caribbean boys are the lowest achievers consistently since 2004 (Demie & McLean, 2017). Additionally, not only are these groups the lowest attainers, there is a large gap between the achievement of these groups and White British pupils. Demie and McLean (2017) focused on Black Caribbean pupils underachievement in this study and noted that the reasons for this underachievement was complex. However, they identified 24 factors including of which I will highlight three for this study: Headteachers' poor leadership on equality issues, institutional racism, stereotyping and lack of diversity in the work force. Focusing in on "Lack of Diversity in the Workforce", Demie and McLean (2017) highlighted that 91% of staff in leadership roles are White British, 0.8% are Black Caribbean and 8.6% are ethnic minorities, 86% of teaching staff are White British, 1% of teachers are Black Caribbean and 13.6% are ethnic minorities in schools in England. They also reported this from one of their focus groups from a headteacher: *"In my school, I had teachers from Sierra Leone, Jamaica and an Irish male teacher. It really did pull everyone together. It should reflect the makeup of the local community"*

The sense of community for ethnic minorities as well as white British pupils and relating with staff and other pupils in their school seems necessary to explore. Considering the sense of community within school environment further, Baumeister and Leary (1995) highlighted belonging is a fundamental psychological need, they stated that "the need to belong is powerful, fundamental and extremely pervasive motivation (p.1)". Since this, several studies have indicated; a sense of belonging in school can lead to better outcomes such as more enhanced social emotional well-being in adolescents specifically (Allen, Vella-Bodrick & Waters 2017). A lack of this fundamental need to belong has been linked to psychological distress and loneliness (Allen & Bowles, 2012). Therefore, a sense of belonging in the school environment (especially for adolescents) appears to play a vital part in their social, emotional mental health.

There are distinct lack of role models or "likeness" in education (leadership and teaching) of ethnic minorities and themes of being 'othered', different, isolated in the current worldwide literature (Arday, 2018; Coleman and Campbell-Stephens, 2010; Biggart, O'hare and Conolly, 2013, Bhopal, 2014). Conversely, in the literature it is assumed that there is a greater sense of belonging amongst majority pupils (although this remains unclear). A lack of belonging has been linked with poor health, low self-esteem, low academic achievement and poor psychological well-being (Allen et al, 2017). With the current national prioritisation on well-being (Department of Health and Social Care and Department of Education, 2018) it seems pertinent to focus on belonging needs of secondary aged pupils. As Bankston and Zhou (2002) emphasised; doing well in school is different from *being* well. There also seems to be a lack of current literature in the UK exploring ethnic minorities lived experiences of belonging in secondary school. It is of interest to explore what and how a sense of belonging is facilitated in this group.

It is hoped that the findings will provide further insight into the belonging needs of adolescent ethnic minorities in UK. What contributes to a sense of belonging and how belonging is cultivated in ethnic minority groups Additionally, how the Educational Psychology Service and school itself can better support ethnic minority communities It may also inform potential interventions for these demographics and feeling a sense of belonging in school.

**3. Provide an outline of the methodology for the proposed research, including proposed method of data collection, tasks assigned to participants of the research and the proposed method and duration of data analysis. If the proposed research makes use of pre-established and generally accepted techniques, please make this clear. (Do not exceed 500 words)**

The proposed methodology is qualitative and exploratory using Thematic Analysis. The researcher is taking a critical realist epistemology with a relativist ontology. Young people in Years 7-13 who take part in this study will be asked to attend a semi-structured interview guided by the question: What facilitates a sense of belonging in ethnic minorities. Due to the current circumstances and COVID-19, the following options will be considered in terms of data collection. In the event that schools are open in September and face to face interactions can resume; interviews will take place in their school and will be recorded using an audio recorder for later analysis. Open ended questions will be used, guided by 'Talking Stones' an interview technique derived from personal construct psychology (Wearmouth, 2007). It is a pedagogic tool that uses stones of different textures, sizes and colours to engage individuals and represent their thoughts and feelings onto inanimate objects that have no previous connotations or meaning. Parents will also be part of the study to complete a questionnaire on their child's belonging needs at school. If schools are not open and face to face interactions are not resumed, interviews will be conducted using a video conferencing software such as Zoom and 'Talking Stones' will be replaced with a semi-structured interview using questions within the same themes.

#### **SECTION F: PARTICIPANT DETAILS**

**4. Provide an explanation detailing how you will identify, approach and recruit the participants for the proposed research, including clarification on sample size and location. Please provide justification for the exclusion/inclusion criteria for this study (i.e. who will be allowed to / not allowed to participate) and explain briefly, in lay terms, why this criteria is in place. (Do not exceed 500 words)**

Participants will be recruited from secondary schools that the researcher is already connected with from the local authority they are completing their placement in. Two schools have been approached and have expressed interest in completing this study at their school. Further permission will be sought from the schools Head Teacher through email or in person.

Participants will be recruited on voluntary basis through emails sent to all year groups to parents of young people, along with a participant information sheet. All year groups have been selected as identity and belonging needs are prevalent in adolescents. Equally, given the current national context COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter movement a varied view from different ages is deemed appropriate.,

Those who identify themselves from an ethnic minority group and meet the inclusion criteria below will be invited to participate in this research at random. Following this, the researcher will contact parents once the desired number of participants has been reached and provide a consent form electronically to be returned to the researcher. A child-friendly information sheet about the study will also be sent to potential participants via their parents virtually. Once the parents provide permission for their child to partake in this research their child will be sent an assent form to return to the researcher before interviews commence. If the desired about of participants (10-12 young people and parents) are not reached, the researcher will use opportunistic sampling and speak to the

pastoral leads of different year groups to identify and directly contact participants who may be interested.

Those who are not invited to participate in this research will be sent a letter/email to thank them for considering participation.

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Pupils who are secondary aged	
Pupils who identify themselves as BAME – Black, Asian Minority Ethnic (Government definition)	Pupils who do not identify themselves as the government definition of BAME
Pupils whose parents have consented	

These inclusion and exclusion criteria were chosen as this study aims to determine what facilitates belonging among in ethnic minorities who are secondary aged. Sample size will be a minimum of 8 and maximum of 15 (ideally between 10-12).

**5. Will the participants be from any of the following groups? (Tick as appropriate)**

- Students or staff of the Trust or the University.
- Adults (over the age of 18 years with mental capacity to give consent to participate in the research).
- Children or legal minors (anyone under the age of 16 years)<sup>1</sup>
- Adults who are unconscious, severely ill or have a terminal illness.
- Adults who may lose mental capacity to consent during the course of the research.
- Adults in emergency situations.
- Adults<sup>2</sup> with mental illness - particularly those detained under the Mental Health Act (1983 & 2007).
- Participants who may lack capacity to consent to participate in the research under the research requirements of the Mental Capacity Act (2005).
- Prisoners, where ethical approval may be required from the **National Offender Management Service (NOMS)**.
- Young Offenders, where ethical approval may be required from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS).
- Healthy volunteers (in high risk intervention studies).
- Participants who may be considered to have a pre-existing and potentially dependent<sup>3</sup> relationship with the investigator (e.g. those in care homes, students, colleagues, service-users, patients).
- Other vulnerable groups (see Question 6).
- Adults who are in custody, custodial care, or for whom a court has assumed responsibility.
- Participants who are members of the Armed Forces.

<sup>1</sup>If the proposed research involves children or adults who meet the Police Act (1997) definition of vulnerability<sup>3</sup>, any researchers who will have contact with participants must have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

<sup>2</sup> 'Adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, or a reduction in physical or mental capacity, and living in a care home or home for people with learning difficulties or receiving care in their own home, or receiving hospital or social care services.' (Police Act, 1997)

<sup>3</sup> Proposed research involving participants with whom the investigator or researcher(s) shares a dependent or unequal relationships (e.g. teacher/student, clinical therapist/service-user) may compromise the ability to give informed consent which is free from any form of pressure (real or implied) arising from this relationship. TREC recommends that, wherever practicable, investigators choose participants with whom they have no dependent relationship. Following due scrutiny, if the investigator is confident that the research involving participants in dependent relationships is vital and defensible, TREC will require additional information setting out the case and detailing how risks inherent in the dependent relationship will be managed. TREC will also need to be reassured that refusal to participate will not result in any discrimination or penalty.

**6. Will the study involve participants who are vulnerable? YES  NO**

For the purposes of research, 'vulnerable' participants may be adults whose ability to protect their own interests are impaired or reduced in comparison to that of the broader population. Vulnerability may arise from the participant's personal characteristics (e.g. mental or physical impairment) or from their social environment, context and/or disadvantage (e.g. socio-economic mobility, educational attainment, resources, substance dependence, displacement or homelessness). Where prospective participants are at high risk of consenting under duress, or as a result of manipulation or coercion, they must also be considered as vulnerable.

Adults lacking mental capacity to consent to participate in research and children are automatically presumed to be vulnerable. Studies involving adults (over the age of 16) who lack mental capacity to consent in research must be submitted to a REC approved for that purpose. Please consult [Health Research Authority \(HRA\)](https://www.hra.nhs.uk/) for guidance: <https://www.hra.nhs.uk/>

**6.1. If YES, what special arrangements are in place to protect vulnerable participants' interests?**

If **YES**, the research activity proposed will require a DBS check. *(NOTE: information concerning activities which require DBS checks can be found via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-check-eligible-positions-guidance>)*

**7. Do you propose to make any form of payment or incentive available to participants of the research? YES  NO**

If **YES**, please provide details taking into account that any payment or incentive should be representative of reasonable remuneration for participation and may not be of a value that could be coercive or exerting undue influence on potential participants' decision to take part in the research. Wherever possible, remuneration in a monetary form should be avoided and substituted with vouchers, coupons or equivalent. Any payment made to research participants may have benefit or HMRC implications and participants should be alerted to this in the participant information sheet as they may wish to choose to decline payment.

**8. What special arrangements are in place for eliciting informed consent from participants who may not adequately understand verbal explanations or written information provided in English; where participants have special communication needs; where participants have limited literacy; or where children are involved in the research? (Do not exceed 200 words)**

A child-friendly version of the information sheet will be created and sent to participants virtually via email and/or shared through phone consultation. This will include the purpose of the study, their role in the study should they agree to take part, their right to decide whether they would like to part in the study and their right to withdraw at any point. It will also be made explicit that even if their parents have consented, that does not mean they too have consented to take part in the study.

Children will also be informed of the study and their right to withdraw in person prior to interviews. They will also be encouraged to ask any questions as well as acknowledging that they may be fearful or unsure of what to ask. Therefore, an environment where curiosity is encouraged will be created to support this. They may also request someone they trust being in the room with them during this informative stage and if needed the interview itself. This will only occur if schools re-open in September and whether face to face interactions resume.

## **SECTION F: RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **9. Does the proposed research involve any of the following? (Tick as appropriate)**

- use of a questionnaire, self-completion survey or data-collection instrument (attach copy)
- use of emails or the internet as a means of data collection
- use of written or computerised tests
- interviews (attach interview questions)
- diaries (attach diary record form)
- participant observation
- participant observation (in a non-public place) without their knowledge / covert research
- audio-recording interviewees or events
- video-recording interviewees or events
- access to personal and/or sensitive data (i.e. student, patient, client or service-user data) without the participant's informed consent for use of these data for research purposes
- administration of any questions, tasks, investigations, procedures or stimuli which may be experienced by participants as physically or mentally painful, stressful or unpleasant during or after the research process
- performance of any acts which might diminish the self-esteem of participants or cause them to experience discomfiture, regret or any other adverse emotional or psychological reaction
- investigation of participants involved in illegal or illicit activities (e.g. use of illegal drugs)
- procedures that involve the deception of participants
- administration of any substance or agent
- use of non-treatment of placebo control conditions
- participation in a clinical trial
- research undertaken at an off-campus location (risk assessment attached)
- research overseas (copy of VCG overseas travel approval attached)

### **10. Does the proposed research involve any specific or anticipated risks (e.g. physical, psychological, social, legal or economic) to participants that are greater than those encountered in everyday life? YES NO**

If **YES**, please describe below including details of precautionary measures.

**11. Where the procedures involve potential hazards and/or discomfort or distress for participants, please state what previous experience the investigator or researcher(s) have had in conducting this type of research.**

For my undergraduate degree in psychology, I worked with children and schools to conduct a research project looking into recognition of body language and emotions. Therefore, careful consideration was taken in how to conduct research with children

Having worked in schools for a number of years as a teaching assistant and then as an assistant psychologist, I have worked with children and young people in various capacities. Often as an assistant psychologist, I worked with children and young people with sensitive backgrounds. As part of the Educational Psychologists' assessment I carried out individual interviews using various assessment tools such as personal construct psychology (ideal self-drawing, laddering). I have continued to develop my interviewing skills over my training as an Educational Psychologist and work on placement, as well as using supervision to develop them further.

As trainee educational psychologist (TEP), I have regular research supervision, personal supervision at the Tavistock and supervision on placement. This is supportive in considering potential ethical and practical components of conducting this type of research as well as managing my other work as an TEP.

**12. Provide an explanation of any potential benefits to participants. Please ensure this is framed within the overall contribution of the proposed research to knowledge or practice. (Do not exceed 400 words)**

**NOTE:** Where the proposed research involves students of our University, they should be assured that accepting the offer to participate or choosing to decline will have no impact on their assessments or learning experience. Similarly, it should be made clear to participants who are patients, service-users and/or receiving any form of treatment or medication that they are not invited to participate in the belief that participation in the research will result in some relief or improvement in their condition.

The overall contribution that this proposed study hopes to provide some understanding of how a sense of belonging for secondary aged pupils is cultivated taking into account their ethnicity. The interview process itself may provide participants with a space where their voice can be heard and where they can explore aspects of themselves that they have not been able to before. This may elicit feelings of empowerment in groups that can often feel oppressed (BAME).

Participants will be contributing to research and the literature base of belonging specifically in BAME communities with an aim to contribute towards a positive change and possible interventions of support. This in turn may support them in relation to their own belonging needs. Furthermore, by knowing how belonging amongst these groups is cultivated, further action can be taken to increase this feeling. In turn, this may impact positively on mental health needs (which belonging has been linked to).

**13. Provide an outline of any measures you have in place in the event of adverse or unexpected outcomes and the potential impact this may have on participants involved in the proposed research. (Do not exceed 300 words)**

***In the event of COVID-19, the following measures will be modified to purely verbal unless it is advised by the government that face to face interactions can resume and schools reopen in September.***

Information about the study will be shared with parents and the child themselves. They will also be informed again of the study at the beginning of the interview to remind them

of the process, their right to withdraw and what their involvement involves. If a participant decides to withdraw at any point in the research study their data will be destroyed.

Interviews will be conducted in the child's school setting before or after school so that they are in an environment that is familiar to them. The researcher will identify a key person that the child can contact in the school if the study becomes too distressing or uncomfortable and make this known to the child at the beginning of the interview. The interview will be terminated if they feel too distressed to continue. Participants may also have the option to have the chosen adult with them outside of the room while the interview is conducted.

If a participant experiences distress during the interview where it needs to be terminated. The researcher will follow up with the key person at school to monitor their well-being. If there appears to be significant distress, the researcher will signpost to an appropriate service or intervention.

The researcher will leave her contact details (email address) with the child's parent and the key adult in school so contact can be made regarding any adverse outcomes from this research.

The researcher will meet with the young person and the parent before consenting to any involvement if deemed necessary and if asked for, for a discussion about the study and an opportunity for any concerns in relation to participation.

**14. Provide an outline of your debriefing, support and feedback protocol for participants involved in the proposed research. This should include, for example, where participants may feel the need to discuss thoughts or feelings brought about following their participation in the research. This may involve referral to an external support or counseling service, where participation in the research has caused specific issues for participants. Where medical aftercare may be necessary, this should include details of the treatment available to participants. Debriefing may involve the disclosure of further information on the aims of the research, the participant's performance and/or the results of the research. (Do not exceed 500 words)**

Following the interview session, checks will be made by the researcher with the preferred adult in school after one month and three months to establish how the parent/care and young person is doing in terms of their emotional well-being following the interview. During this time period contact can be made with the researcher by the preferred adult and parent/carer if there are any concerns following the interview session. If concerns continue after three months, the researcher will signpost to appropriate support services.

An opportunity to speak with or meet with the researcher will be offered to parents and the young person should they want to discuss the findings following analysis.

**FOR RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN AWAY FROM THE TRUST OR OUTSIDE THE UK**

**15. Does any part of your research take place in premises outside the Trust?**

- YES**, and I have included evidence of permissions from the managers or others legally responsible for the premises. This permission also clearly states the extent to which the participating institution will indemnify the researchers against the consequences of any untoward event

**16. Does the proposed research involve travel outside of the UK?**

- YES**, I have consulted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for guidance/travel advice? <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/>
- YES**, I am a non-UK national and I have sought travel advice/guidance from the Foreign Office (or equivalent body) of my country of origin
- YES**, I have completed the overseas travel approval process and enclosed a copy of the document with this application

For details on university study abroad policies, please contact [academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

**IF YES:****17. Is the research covered by the Trust's insurance and indemnity provision?**

- YES**    **NO**

**18. Please evidence how compliance with all local research ethics and research governance requirements have been assessed for the country(ies) in which the research is taking place.**

**NOTE:**

For students conducting research where the Trust is the sponsor, the Dean of the Department of Education and Training (DET) has overall responsibility for risk assessment regarding their health and safety. If you are proposing to undertake research outside the UK, please ensure that permission from the Dean has been granted before the research commences (please attach written confirmation)

**SECTION G: PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND WITHDRAWAL**

**18. Have you attached a copy of your participant information sheet (this should be in *plain English*)? Where the research involves non-English speaking participants, please include translated materials. YES    NO**

If **NO**, please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below:

**19. Have you attached a copy of your participant consent form (this should be in *plain English*)? Where the research involves non-English speaking participants, please include translated materials.**

YES  NO

If **NO**, please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below:

**20. The following is a participant information sheet checklist covering the various points that should be included in this document.**

- Clear identification of the Trust as the sponsor for the research, the project title, the Researcher or Principal Investigator and other researchers along with relevant contact details.
- Details of what involvement in the proposed research will require (e.g., participation in interviews, completion of questionnaire, audio/video-recording of events), estimated time commitment and any risks involved.
- A statement confirming that the research has received formal approval from TREC.
- If the sample size is small, advice to participants that this may have implications for confidentiality / anonymity.
- A clear statement that where participants are in a dependent relationship with any of the researchers that participation in the research will have no impact on assessment / treatment / service-use or support.
- Assurance that involvement in the project is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw consent at any time, and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
- Advice as to arrangements to be made to protect confidentiality of data, including that confidentiality of information provided is subject to legal limitations.
- A statement that the data generated in the course of the research will be retained in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy.
- Advice that if participants have any concerns about the conduct of the investigator, researcher(s) or any other aspect of this research project, they should contact Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance ([academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk))
- Confirmation on any limitations in confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm to self and/or others may occur.

**21. The following is a consent form checklist covering the various points that should be included in this document.**

- Trust letterhead or logo.
- Title of the project (with research degree projects this need not necessarily be the title of the thesis) and names of investigators.
- Confirmation that the project is research.
- Confirmation that involvement in the project is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw at any time, or to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
- Confirmation of particular requirements of participants, including for example whether interviews are to be audio-/video-recorded, whether anonymised quotes will be used in publications advice of legal limitations to data confidentiality.
- If the sample size is small, confirmation that this may have implications for anonymity any other relevant information.
- The proposed method of publication or dissemination of the research findings.
- Details of any external contractors or partner institutions involved in the research.
- Details of any funding bodies or research councils supporting the research.
- Confirmation on any limitations in confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm to self and/or others may occur.

**SECTION H: CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY**

**22. Below is a checklist covering key points relating to the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Please indicate where relevant to the proposed research.**

- Participants will be completely anonymised and their identity will not be known by the investigator or researcher(s) (i.e. the participants are part of an anonymous randomised sample and return responses with no form of personal identification)?
- The responses are anonymised or are an anonymised sample (i.e. a permanent process of coding has been carried out whereby direct and indirect identifiers have been removed from data and replaced by a code, with no record retained of how the code relates to the identifiers).
- The samples and data are de-identified (i.e. direct and indirect identifiers have been removed and replaced by a code. The investigator or researchers are able to link the code to the original identifiers and isolate the participant to whom the sample or data relates).
- Participants have the option of being identified in a publication that will arise from the research.
- Participants will be pseudo-anonymised in a publication that will arise from the research. (i.e. the researcher will endeavour to remove or alter details that would identify the participant.)
- The proposed research will make use of personal sensitive data.
- Participants consent to be identified in the study and subsequent dissemination of research findings and/or publication.

**23. Participants must be made aware that the confidentiality of the information they provide is subject to legal limitations in data confidentiality (i.e. the data may be subject to a subpoena, a freedom of information request or mandated reporting by some professions). This only applies to named or de-identified data. If your participants are named or de-identified, please confirm that you will specifically state these limitations.**

YES  NO

If **NO**, please indicate why this is the case below:

**NOTE: WHERE THE PROPOSED RESEARCH INVOLVES A SMALL SAMPLE OR FOCUS GROUP, PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE ADVISED THAT THERE WILL BE DISTINCT LIMITATIONS IN THE LEVEL OF ANONYMITY THEY CAN BE AFFORDED.**

**SECTION I: DATA ACCESS, SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT**

**24. Will the Researcher/Principal Investigator be responsible for the security of all data collected in connection with the proposed research? YES  NO**   
If **NO**, please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below:

**25. In line with the 5<sup>th</sup> principle of the Data Protection Act (1998), which states that personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes for which it was collected; please state how long data will be retained for.**

1-2 years  3-5 years  6-10 years  10> years

**NOTE:** Research Councils UK (RCUK) guidance currently states that data should normally be preserved and accessible for 10 years, but for projects of clinical or major social, environmental or heritage importance, for 20 years or longer.  
<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/reviews/grc/grcpoldraft.pdf>

**26. Below is a checklist which relates to the management, storage and secure destruction of data for the purposes of the proposed research. Please indicate where relevant to your proposed arrangements.**

- Research data, codes and all identifying information to be kept in separate locked filing cabinets.
- Access to computer files to be available to research team by password only.
- Access to computer files to be available to individuals outside the research team by password only (See **23.1**).
- Research data will be encrypted and transferred electronically within the European Economic Area (EEA).
- Research data will be encrypted and transferred electronically outside of the European Economic Area (EEA). (See **28**).

**NOTE:** Transfer of research data via third party commercial file sharing services, such as Google Docs and YouSendIt are not necessarily secure or permanent. These systems may also be located overseas and not covered by UK law. If the system is located outside the European Economic Area (EEA) or territories deemed to have sufficient standards of data protection, transfer may also breach the Data Protection Act (1998).

- Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers.
- Use of personal data in the form of audio or video recordings.
- Primary data gathered on encrypted mobile devices (i.e. laptops). **NOTE:** This should be transferred to secure UEL servers at the first opportunity.
- All electronic data will undergo secure disposal.

**NOTE:** For hard drives and magnetic storage devices (HDD or SSD), deleting files does not permanently erase the data on most systems, but only deletes the reference to the file. Files can be restored when deleted in this way. Research files must be overwritten to ensure they are completely irretrievable. Software is available for the secure erasing of files from hard drives which meet recognised standards to securely scramble sensitive data. Examples of this software are BC Wipe, Wipe File, DeleteOnClick and Eraser for Windows platforms. Mac users can use the standard 'secure empty trash' option; an alternative is Permanent eraser software.

- All hardcopy data will undergo secure disposal.
- NOTE:** For shredding research data stored in hardcopy (i.e. paper), adopting DIN 3 ensures files are cut into 2mm strips or confetti like cross-cut particles of 4x40mm. The UK government requires a minimum standard of DIN 4 for its material, which ensures cross cut particles of at least 2x15mm.

**27. Please provide details of individuals outside the research team who will be given password protected access to encrypted data for the proposed research.**

**28. Please provide details on the regions and territories where research data will be electronically transferred that are external to the European Economic Area (EEA).**

29. Will this research be financially supported by the United States Department of Health and Human Services or any of its divisions, agencies or programs? YES  NO

If YES please provide details:

#### **SECTION J: PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

30. How will the results of the research be reported and disseminated? (*Select all that apply*)

- Peer reviewed journal
- Non-peer reviewed journal
- Peer reviewed books
- Publication in media, social media or website (including Podcasts and online videos)
- Conference presentation
- Internal report
- Promotional report and materials
- Reports compiled for or on behalf of external organisations  Dissertation/Thesis
- Other publication
- Written feedback to research participants
- Presentation to participants or relevant community groups
- Other (Please specify below)

Presentation to Educational Psychology Service and Schools that participated.

#### **SECTION K: OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES**

31. Are there any other ethical issues that have not been addressed which you would wish to bring to the attention of Tavistock Research Ethics Committee (TREC)?

#### **SECTION L: CHECKLIST FOR ATTACHED DOCUMENTS**

**32. Please check that the following documents are attached to your application.**

- Letters of approval from any external ethical approval bodies (where relevant)
- Recruitment advertisement
- Participant information sheets (including easy-read where relevant)
- Consent forms (including easy-read where relevant)
- Assent form for children (where relevant)
- Evidence of any external approvals needed
- Questionnaire
- Interview Schedule or topic guide
- Risk Assessment (where applicable)
- Overseas travel approval (where applicable)

**34. Where it is not possible to attach the above materials, please provide an explanation below.**

**The Tavistock and Portman** 

NHS Foundation Trust

Quality Assurance & Enhancement  
Directorate of Education & Training  
Tavistock Centre  
120 Belsize Lane  
London  
NW3 5BA

Tel: 020 8938 2699  
<https://tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/>

Ilesha Ginn

**By Email**

5 June 2020

Dear Ilesha,

**Re: Trust Research Ethics Application**

**Title:** Exploring the factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in Year 7 students who identify as BAME

**Please be advised that any changes to the project design including changes to methodology/data collection etc, must be referred to TREC as failure to do so, may result in a report of academic and/or research misconduct.**

If you have any further questions or require any clarification do not hesitate to contact me.

I am copying this communication to your supervisor.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

**Paru Jeram**

Secretary to the Trust Research Degrees Subcommittee  
T: 020 938 2699  
E: [academicquality@tavi-Port.nhs.uk](mailto:academicquality@tavi-Port.nhs.uk)

cc. Course Lead, Administrator

### Appendix 3: Participant Screening Tools and Consent/Assent Forms

#### Young Person Assent form

**Research Title:** Exploring the factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in secondary aged students who identify as BAME

**Please initial the statements below if you agree with them:                      Initial here:**

1. I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the chance to ask questions.	
2. I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and I am free at any time to withdraw permission to participate or any unprocessed data without giving a reason.	
3. I agree for my interviews to be recorded.	
4. I understand that my data will be anonymised so that I cannot be linked to the data. I understand that the sample size is small.	
5. I understand that there are limitations to confidentiality relating to legal duties and threat of harm to self or others.	
6. I understand that my interviews will be used for this research and cannot be accessed for any other purposes.	
7. I understand that the findings from this research will be published in a thesis and potentially in a presentation or peer reviewed journal.	
8. I understand that in the event of COVID-19 this study may be conducted remotely using video conferencing software such as Zoom or Skype, email correspondence and phone consultation.	
9. I am willing to participate in this research.	

Your name: .....

Date...../...../.....

**Thank you for your help.**

## **Young Person Screening**

**PARTICIPANT SCREENING STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL:**  
Young Person Participant Screening.

All participants will be asked the following questions to screen for inclusion criteria of the study. Please complete the questions below.

Was verbal consent obtained from the potential participant before asking the questions below? Yes/No

1. What is your ethnic group? Choose ONE section from A to E, then the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group.

### **A White**

- British
- Any Other White Background – please write in

---

### **B Mixed**

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any Other Mixed background – please write in

---

### **C Asian or Asian British**

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Any Other Asian background - please write in

---

### **D Black or Black British**

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black background – please write in

---

### **E Chinese or other ethnic group**

- Chinese
- Any Other – please write in

---

2. What year group are you in? \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent consent form**

**Research Title:** Exploring the factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in secondary aged students who identify as BAME

**Please initial the statements below if you agree with them:** **Initial here:**

1. I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the chance to ask questions.	
2. I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and I am free at any time to withdraw consent or any unprocessed data without giving a reason.	
3. I understand that my data will be anonymised so that I cannot be linked to the data. I understand that the sample size is small.	
4. I understand that there are limitations to confidentiality relating to legal duties and threat of harm to self or others.	
5. I understand that my questionnaire will be used for this research and cannot be accessed for any other purposes.	
6. I understand that the findings from this research will be published in a thesis and potentially in a presentation or peer reviewed journal.	
7. I understand that in the event of COVID-19 this study may be conducted remotely using video conferencing software such as Zoom or Skype, email correspondence and phone consultation.	
8. I am willing to participate in this research.	

Your name:.....

Signed.....

Date..../...../.....

Researcher name: Ilesha Ginn

Signed.....

Date...../...../.....

**Thank you for your help.**

## **Parent Screening**

**PARTICIPANT SCREENING STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL:**  
Parent/Carer Participant Screening.

All participants will be asked the following questions to screen for inclusion criteria of the study. Please complete the questions below.

Was verbal consent obtained from the potential participant before asking the questions below? Yes/No

3. What is your ethnic group? Choose ONE section from A to E, then the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group.

**A White**

- British  
 Any Other White Background – please write in

---

**B Mixed**

- White and Black Caribbean  
 White and Black African  
 White and Asian  
 Any Other Mixed background – please write in

---

**C Asian or Asian British**

- Indian  
 Pakistani  
 Bangladeshi  
 Any Other Asian background - please write in

---

**D Black or Black British**

- Caribbean  
 African  
 Any other Black background – please write in

---

**E Chinese or other ethnic group**

- Chinese  
 Any Other – please write in

---

4. What year group is your child in? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 4: Participant Information Leaflets

### Parent/Carer

#### Information Sheet for Parents/Carers

### **Exploring the factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in secondary aged students who identify as BAME**

You and your child are being invited to take part in a research study which has received formal approval from Tavistock Research Ethics Committee (TREC). Before you decide whether to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and if you wish to discuss it with your child. Do not hesitate to contact the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.



***In the event of COVID-19, it is important to highlight that anything that involves face to face interaction below will be modified to purely verbal (e.g. use of skype or Zoom for interviews, phone consultation and email correspondence) unless it is advised by the government that face to face interactions from outside visitors in schools can resume .***

#### ***Who is doing the research?***

My name is Iesha Ginn and I am a trainee Educational Psychologist in my second year of studying for the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. I am carrying out this research as part of my course.

#### ***What is the purpose of the research?***

The purpose of this research is to understand how a sense of belonging in secondary school is cultivated amongst different ethnic groups; Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups (BAME). It is hoped that information derived from this study will inform secondary schools in the UK with factors that contribute to a sense of belonging. This may lead to support for belonging needs of young people of different ethnicities and it is hoped to subsequently support their mental well-being and academic achievement.

#### ***Why have myself and my child been invited?***

Your child meets the criteria for participants taking part in this study; currently in Years 7-13. Your child may provide helpful information that can support the researcher in answering some of their questions around sense of belonging in ethnic minority groups. You have been invited as it is believed your perspective and views on belonging will clarify the factors that contribute to your child's sense of belonging in school.

#### ***Do I have to take part?***

It is entirely your decision and your child's decision to decide whether to take part. If you are happy for your child to take part and they are happy to participate, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to return a consent form. Your child will receive an information sheet that they can read about the process and also be asked to return a form granting their permission to take part. If you change your mind you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw or not to take part will not affect you and your child in any way and all data collected in relation to your child will be removed.

#### ***What will happen to me if I take part?***

You will be contacted, and your child will be offered an interview that will take place before or after school. You will also be provided with a questionnaire to complete as part of the research to understand your child's sense of belonging to their school from your perspective. The interview with your child will last for approximately 40-60 minutes but they can ask to stop at any time. The researcher will ask your child questions about their experiences of belonging in school. The interviews will be recorded on audio tapes and transcribed. If you change your mind about taking part later, you can ask for the transcript to be removed from the study. All information will be completely anonymous and your child and yourself will not be identifiable in any way.

#### ***What are the possible benefits and risks?***

It is hoped that overall young people will benefit from this as the research will contribute to the development of effective support for BAME pupils relating to belonging needs. The researcher realises that your child may find it upsetting thinking about their sense of belonging in school. Therefore, it is important that there is support available which is as follows:

- If schools re-open, the researcher will establish a contact person in school that your child names as someone who they are familiar and comfortable with who will be made available should your child show or indicate distress during the interview session. Your child will be made aware that this person is available to them should they want to see them and they will be the person who takes them to and from the interview session. If your child would like that person to remain outside whilst the interview takes place, that can also be arranged.
- Following the interview session, checks will be made by the researcher with the preferred adult in school after one month and three months to establish how your child is doing in terms of their emotional well-being following the interview. During this time period contact can be made with the researcher by the preferred adult and carer if there are any concerns following the interview session. If concerns continue after three months, the researcher will signpost to appropriate support services.
- The researcher also realises that yourself and your child taking part in this research may bring up themes you both have not thought about before which may be distressing. Should you be interested in allowing yourself and your child to participate in the research, the researcher would meet with you before consenting to any involvement, for a discussion about the study, but also as an opportunity for you to talk about any concerns you have either in relation to your child taking part.

***Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?***

All information collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Names and personal details will be removed from all information so that no one can be recognised from it. The transcripts, audio files, questionnaires and any other data will be destroyed when the research is completed. Given the small sample size of this study, there may be implications for confidentiality and anonymity. This means that you or your child may be able to identify yourself in the data. However, all efforts will be made to ensure the information is anonymised as much as possible. Data collected from this research will be grouped into themes as opposed to individual accounts making it challenging to identify yourself or your child in the information. In some cases where there is a disclosure of information that may cause imminent harm to the self or to others, confidentiality will be breached. All data will be stored in accordance with the Local Authority and Tavistock and Portman NHS data protection policy and in line with British Psychological Society guidance.

***What will happen to the results of the research study?***

Parents/carers and children who took part will be invited to meet with the researcher so that they can receive a verbal summary of findings which will be done on an individual basis to preserve confidentiality. A summary of findings from the interviews and questionnaire with the children and young people will then be sent to you and your child and you will both be asked for comments which you can give if you want to. A summary of the overall findings of the research will be available on request. A summary of the overall findings will be shared with the local authority Educational Psychology Service and the schools that take part. There may also be potential for future publication of this data. You will not be identified in any report or publication.

***Contact for Further Information***

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher, Iesha Ginn, Trainee Educational Psychologist, for more information [Iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:Iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

If you have any concerns about the conduct of the, researcher or any other aspect of this research project, please contact Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance ([academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk))

Thank you for reading this leaflet

## Young Person

### Information Sheet for Young Person

#### **Exploring the factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in secondary aged students who identify as BAME**

Hello, my name is Iesha and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist. I'm excited to invite you to take part in my research study which has received formal approval from Tavistock Research Ethics Committee (TREC).



Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand that you cannot participate without your parent/carer(s) consent. It is also important to understand why the research is being done and what will happen. ***Please have read the following information carefully*** and talk about it with others if you wish.

Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like some more information. Take your time to decide whether you want to take part and ***thank you for reading this!***

***In the event of COVID-19, it is important to highlight that I will not meet with you face to face. All interactions we have will be modified to purely verbal (e.g. use of skype or Zoom for interviews, phone consultation and email correspondence) unless to face interactions can resume and schools reopen.***

#### ***What is the aim of the research?***

I am interested in understanding how students who are secondary-aged and identify as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic feel a sense of belonging in school. I hope that this information will help inform secondary schools on how those from an ethnic minority group feel a sense of belonging.

#### ***What would I be asked to do if I took part?***

- I will invite you to an interview with myself which will last approximated 40-60minutes. This will take place before or after school.
- I will ask you some questions related to your experiences of belonging in school.
- If schools re-open, you will have access to an adult you are familiar with to take you to and from the interview and can wait for you outside if you wish. If not, I will interview you via video conferencing software such as Zoom or Skype.
- The interviews will be recorded so that I can analyse them.
- Your parent(s)/carer(s) will also be contacted to take part in this study and complete a questionnaire.

#### ***What happens to the data collected?***

The data will be analysed by myself. I will identify themes from the interviews of students and the questionnaire of their parent(s)/carer(s). All the interviews will be audio recorded and the data will then be written up and submitted to the Tavistock and Portman as a thesis in 2021. There may also be potential for future publication of this data. The themes will also be shared with your school and to the Educational Psychology Team I work with. All information will be anonymous, and efforts will be made to ensure you will not be identifiable in any way. Data will be destroyed once the research is completed.

Given the small sample size of this study, there may be implications for confidentiality. This means that you or your parent/carer(s) may be able to identify yourself in the data. However, all efforts will be made to ensure the information is anonymised. Data collected from this research will be grouped into themes as opposed to individual accounts making it challenging to be identifiable. If you reveal information during the interview that may put you at risk of harm to yourself or others, this information will be shared with relevant individuals.

***What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?***

It is up to you whether you would like to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

***Who can I contact for further information?***

I will be happy to answer any additional questions you may have about this research. You can contact me, Iesha Ginn via email at: [Iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:Iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk)  
Thank you very much for considering taking part in this research!

## Appendix 5: Debrief Sheets

### Parent/Carer

## Debrief Sheet

The Tavistock and Portman   
NHS Foundation Trust

*The factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in secondary aged students who identify as BAME.*

Thank you for your time and contributions to this research. This sheet contains information about what will happen next and what support is available if you have been affected by your participation in this research.

### ***What happens if I do not want mine or my child's data to be included anymore?***

Please contact the researcher no later than XXXXX 2020. Your data will be withdrawn from the study and will not be included in the subsequent analysis and write up. After the proposed date, you will not be able to withdraw your data.

### ***I feel uncomfortable by some of the issues discussed in the questionnaire and am concerned about my child, what support is available for us?***

- There will be a key person established by the school who your child can speak to following the interview.
- The researcher will check in with this key person and with you one month and 3 months after participation. If uncomfortableness persists, the researcher will signpost to relevant agencies of support.
- Alternatively, you may wish to seek support yourself and may feel more comfortable discussing this with someone impartial to the researcher. You may wish to contact the following organisations for further support:

[British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy](http://www.bacp.co.uk) – Professional association for counsellors and therapies. Visit [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)

[British Psychoanalytic Council](http://www.bpc.org.uk) – Professional association for therapists using psychoanalytic thinking and psychotherapy. Visit [www.bpc.org.uk](http://www.bpc.org.uk)

[Samaritans](http://www.samaritans.org) – Telephone consultation line, run by volunteers. Call 116 123 (available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year) or visit [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### **What will happen to the results of the research study?**

- You can request to meet the researcher themselves or request a written summary of the findings.
- The results will be written in a doctoral thesis with the potential for future publication. You will not be identified in any report or publication
- Results will be shared with the school and the Educational Psychology Service. You will not be identified in the delivery of this information.

***Further information and contact details***

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the research, please contact me:

**Researcher:** Ilesha Ginn

**Email:** [iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

*If you have any queries regarding the conduct of the programme in which you have participated, please contact:  
Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance ([academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk))*

**Debrief Sheet**

*The factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in secondary aged students who identify as BAME.*



Dear XXXX,

A massive thank you from me to you for taking part in this research! You have helped me find out more information on how young people who are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic community feel about belonging in school. This research may help your school, other schools and other educational psychologists like me understand what it is like for you and what we can do to support and dismantle oppressive systems to bring about better outcomes for minority groups.

If you feel you or someone you know would like more information or support, here are some organisations and contacts:

- <https://racereflections.co.uk/> - information and support. A place to re-think inequality, injustice and oppression.
- <https://thewinch.org/services/take-back-the-power/> - For young people who are passionate about challenging injustice.
- [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org) – Telephone consultation line, run by volunteers. Call 116 123 (available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year) for mental health support.

***Further information and contact details***

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the research, please contact me:

**Researcher:** Ilesha Ginn

**Email:** [iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

## Appendix 6: Letter to Headteacher

Dear Headteacher,

Thank you for your potential interest in my research. Please find below some information for the research I would like to conduct at XXXX School. If you would like to contact me directly, my contact details can be found at the bottom of this letter. I am more than happy to discuss any queries you have!

### Proposed Research

#### **Exploring the factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in secondary aged students who identify as BAME**

***In the event of COVID-19, it is important to highlight that anything that involves face to face interaction below will be modified to purely verbal (e.g. use of skype or Zoom for interviews, phone consultation and email correspondence) unless it is advised by the government that face to face interactions can resume and schools reopen.***

#### ***Who is doing the research?***

My name is Iesha Ginn and I am a trainee Educational Psychologist in my second year of studying for the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. I am carrying out this research as part of my course.

#### ***What is the purpose of the research?***

The purpose of this research is to understand how a sense of belonging in secondary school is cultivated amongst different ethnic groups; Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups (BAME). It is hoped that information derived from this study will inform secondary schools in the UK with factors that contribute to a sense of belonging. This may lead to support for belonging needs of young people of different ethnicities and it is hoped to subsequently support their mental well-being and academic achievement.

#### ***Who will be invited to take part?***

Young people and their parents/carers who are currently in Year 7-13 and identify as BAME. Young people will be invited to an interview that can support the researcher in answering some of their questions around sense of belonging in ethnic minority groups. It is believed that their perspective and views on belonging will clarify the factors that contribute to your child's sense of belonging in school.

#### ***Do they have to take part?***

It is entirely the parent/carer(s) decision and subsequently the young person to decide whether to take part. If they are happy for their child to take part and their child is happy to participate, they will be provided with an information sheet to keep and be asked to return a consent form. If they change their mind, they are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw or not to take part will not affect them in any way and all data collected in relation to the parent/carer(s) and their child will be removed.

#### ***What will happen if participants take part?***

Parent/carer(s) will be contacted, and their child will be offered an interview at school. This will take place before or after school hours. Parents will also be provided with a questionnaire to complete as part of the research to understand their child's sense of belonging to their school from a parent/carer perspective. The interview with their child will last for approximately 40-60 minutes but they can ask to stop at any time. The researcher will ask their child questions about their experiences of belonging in school. The interviews will be recorded on audio tapes and transcribed. If the participants change their mind about taking part later, they can ask for the transcript to be removed from the study. All efforts will be made to ensure data is anonymous.

#### ***What are the possible benefits and risks?***

It is hoped that overall young people will benefit from this as the research will contribute to the development of effective support for BAME pupils relating to belonging needs. The researcher realises that some children may find it upsetting thinking about their sense of belonging in school. Therefore, it is important that there is support available which is as follows:

- If schools re-open, the researcher with the help of the school will establish a contact person in school that the child names as someone who they are familiar and comfortable with who will be made available should the child show or indicate distress during the interview session. They will be made aware that this person is available to them should they want to see them and they will be the person who takes them to and from the interview session. If the child would like that person to remain

outside whilst the interview takes place, that can also be arranged.

- Following the interview session, checks will be made by the researcher with the preferred adult in school after one month and three months to establish how the child is doing in terms of their emotional well-being following the interview. During this time period contact can be made with the researcher by the preferred adult and carer if there are any concerns following the interview session. If concerns continue after three months, the researcher will signpost to appropriate support services.
- The researcher also realises that taking part in this research may bring up themes participants have not thought about before which may be distressing. Should the participants be interested in participating in the research, the researcher would meet with them before consenting to any involvement, for a discussion about the study, but also as an opportunity to talk about any concerns in relation to taking part.

***Will taking part in this study be kept confidential?***

All information collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Names and personal details will be removed from all information so that no one can be recognised from it. The transcripts, audio files, questionnaires and any other data will be destroyed when the research is completed. Given the small sample size of this study, there may be implications for confidentiality and anonymity. In some cases where there is a disclosure of information that may cause imminent harm to the self or to others, confidentiality will be breached. All data will be stored in accordance with the Local Authority and Tavistock and Portman NHS data protection policy and in line with British Psychological Society guidance.

***What will happen to the results of the research study?***

Parents/carers and children who took part will be invited to meet with the researcher so that they can receive a verbal summary of findings which will be done on an individual basis to preserve confidentiality. A summary of findings from the interviews and questionnaire with the children and young people will then be sent. A summary of the overall findings of the research will be available on request. A summary of the overall findings will be shared with the local authority Educational Psychology Service and the schools that take part. Participants and schools will not be identified in any report or publication.

***Contact for Further Information***

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher, Iesha Ginn, Trainee Educational Psychologist, for more information [Iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:Iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

If you have any concerns about the conduct of the, researcher or any other aspect of this research project, please contact Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance ([academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk))

Thank you for reading this information.

Kind regards,

Iesha Ginn

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020

EPS Email: [Iesha.Ginn@XXXX.org.uk](mailto:Iesha.Ginn@XXXX.org.uk)

University Email: [iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:iginn@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

Contact number: XXXXXX

## Appendix 7: Email Sent to Parents by Schools

*Dear Parent/Carer,*

*I hope this email finds you well. My name is Ilesha Ginn and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist who is conducting research on **'The factors that contribute to a sense of belonging in BAME secondary aged students'**. I believe that yours and your child's views are so important and would like to offer the opportunity to share these with me as part of my doctoral thesis and as part of the process of improving outcomes for the BAME community. Please find attached more information if you are interested in taking part.*

*I unfortunately only have a limited number of spaces for participation. Therefore, if you are interested in this research please reply ASAP to this email with your preferred contact details expressing that you would like to participate and I will be in contact.*

## Appendix 8: Parent/Carer Questionnaire

# Factors That Contribute to a Sense of Belonging in BAME Secondary-aged Students

Trainee Educational Psychologist - Iesha Ginn

1. Please state your ethnic group

---

2. What year is your child in?

---

3. Do you feel your child has a sense of belonging within their school? If yes OR no what contributes to this?

---

---

---

---

---

4. Does your child feel a strong connection to their ethnic identity within school? If yes OR no please explain.

---

---

---

---

---

5. Has the 'Black Lives Matter' movement impacted you and your child? If so how?

---

---

---

---

---

6. My child has positive relationships in school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7. Comment:

---

8. My child feels part of a group at school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. Comment:

---

10. The majority of the teachers at my child's school demonstrate interest in my child

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

11. Comment:

---

12. My child is treated with as much respect as other students

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

13. Comment:

---

14. My child feels that they can be themselves at school with staff and students

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

15. Comment:

---

16. My child feels listened to at school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

17. Comment:

---

18. My child has at least one teacher or adult in school like them that they can talk to

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

19. Comment:

---

20. My child feels very different from other students at school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

21. Comment:

---

22. My child feels understood by staff at school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

23. Comment:

---

24. My child feels understood by other students at school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

25. Comment:

---

26. My child feels included in extracurricular activities in school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

27. Comment:

---

28. My child feels included in learning activities in school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

29. Comment:

---

30. My child feels that people like them are accepted at this school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

31. Comment:

---

32. My child is treated as equally as their peers

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

33. Comment:

---

34. My child wishes they were in a different school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

35. Comment:

---

36. My child feels proud to belong to their school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

37. Comment:

---

38. My child feels connected to what they learn about in school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

39. Comment:

---

40. My child feels part of their school

*Mark only one oval.*

- Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

41. Comment:

---

42. Is there anything else you would like to share?

---

---

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---

---

**Appendix 9: Parent/Carer Responses**

**Respondent 1**

## Factors That Contribute to a Sense of Belonging in BAME Secondary-aged Students

Trainee Educational Psychologist - Iesha Ginn

Please state your ethnic group

What year is your child in?

.....

Do you feel your child has a sense of belonging within their school? If yes OR no what contributes to this?

Yes

.....

Does your child feel a strong connection to their ethnic identity within school? If yes OR no please explain.

Not really. The school should include topics on other cultures or ethnic group instead of focusing only on British culture

.....

Has the 'Black Lives Matter' movement impacted you and your child? If so how?

Yes. The movement is about bringing change and awareness about racial injustices and how it affects black and other minority groups. It encourages people to speak up about these injustices and not ignore it.

.....

**Respondent 2**

## Factors That Contribute to a Sense of Belonging in BAME Secondary-aged Students

Trainee Educational Psychologist - Ilesha Ginn

Please state your ethnic group

Asian (Indonesian)

What year is your child in?

Year 12 (September 2020)

Do you feel your child has a sense of belonging within their school? If yes OR no what contributes to this?

Yes, from active participation in school life encouraged by the fact that the school has a strong sense of community and is largely diverse.

Does your child feel a strong connection to their ethnic identity within school? If yes OR no please explain.

Not particularly so from an ethnic identity perspective, I believe there is only one other student who has Indonesian heritage.

**Respondent 3**

## Factors That Contribute to a Sense of Belonging in BAME Secondary-aged Students

Trainee Educational Psychologist - Ilesha Ginn

Please state your ethnic group

Black british caribbean

What year is your child in?

Y10 at time of research

Do you feel your child has a sense of belonging within their school? If yes OR no what contributes to this?

Yes because he is sociable and has a lot of friends at school

Does your child feel a strong connection to their ethnic identity within school? If yes OR no please explain.

Yes I think so because he has a lot of black friends at the school

Has the 'Black Lives Matter' movement impacted you and your child? If so how?

It has just upset us the whole George Floyd murder and everything after, protests etc. Personally I feel a lot of organisations and individuals are jumping on the bandwagon and don't truly care about racism or equality. Racism is not a new phenomenon but suddenly everyone is interested in the plight of "Bame" people.

**Respondent 5**

Has the 'Black Lives Matter' movement impacted you and your child? If so how?

Yes, for me it brought to the surface thoughts and feelings around how little things have changed over the last 30 years.

For my children, this made them aware of the more severe consequences that can arise from racial prejudice, which created more discussion as a family.

My child has positive relationships in school

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comment:

My child feels part of a group at school

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

## **Appendix 10: Interview Schedule**

### Starter question(s)

If you were speaking to a friend who doesn't attend \_\_\_\_ (school name), how would you describe it to them?

If a friend said that when they were at school they felt like they belonged what would they mean?

What does it mean to be in a minority group?

How would you describe your ethnicity? How do you feel about being \_\_\_\_\_ (insert ethnic label of their choice). Tell me your experiences.

### Interview question themes

#### Relationships

Do you get on with the teachers and staff at school? If yes/no – why

Is it important to be part of a group?

Tell me about your friends at school. Tell me about the people you like to spend time with at school? (Are they from your community? Do you mix with anyone who is not from your community?)

#### Identification

Are there people at school who are similar to you?

Is it important for you to be similar to other people at school? Explain

Do you feel people at school understand you? Explain

#### Inclusion/Exclusion (othered)

Do you ever feel left out at school?

What does school do to help you feel connected or included?

Is there anything you think school could do to help children like you feel included?

#### School environment

Tell me about your school

How much do you feel the school ethos and values fit with your own? Rating scale – 1-10

Do you feel connected to what you learn about? E.g. about your heritage, religion, history etc.

**Appendix 11: Transcript: Miriam**

- 1 **Interviewer:** Yep. Great okay, so, let me just get it on. I've got this little thing called a  
2 dictaphone, and it records things as well so just gonna get it up on here. And then we can  
3 start. Great. Okay. So, Miriam. If you were speaking to a friend who doesn't attend your  
4 school, how would you describe the school to them?  
5
- 6 **Miriam:** I would say, it's a good school. It, um, it's a very welcoming. So and um, the  
7 students and staff are very nice so um, yeah.  
8
- 9 **Interviewer:** Great, okay, thank you. And if, if a friend said to you that when they were in  
10 school they felt like they belonged. What would they mean?  
11
- 12 **Miriam:** I think they meant that they feel welcomed and they're not judged by their  
13 differences. They feel like everybody is treated equally and respected.  
14
- 15 **Interviewer:** That's really helpful. Thank you. Okay, the next question is, what does it mean  
16 to be in a minority group?  
17
- 18 **Miriam:** Um, I think it means that you're from different ethnicities and cultures and that you,  
19 you have differences in religions, with culture and stuff but you still live in the UK and stuff,  
20 so yeah.  
21
- 22 **Interviewer:** Thank you. And what would you say your ethnic label is? How do you  
23 identify?  
24
- 25 **Miriam:** I am, black African British.  
26
- 27 **Interviewer:** And how do you feel about being black African British?  
28
- 29 **Miriam:** Hello, hello?  
30
- 31 **Interviewer:** How do you feel about being... Can you hear me? I can hear you.  
32
- 33 **Miriam:** Yeah.  
34
- 35 **Interviewer:** And how do you feel about being black African British?  
36
- 37 **Miriam:** I, I feel, I, sorry. I feel, that I am accepted in some places and that not many people  
38 will judge my culture and that I'm accepted. But you, sometimes when people say like,  
39 certain stuff like my colour and stuff might be affected. But I'm still very proud of who I am.  
40 So yeah.  
41
- 42 **Interviewer:** And when do you feel accepted?  
43
- 44 **Miriam:** I, I feel accepted at school, I feel accepted anywhere as long as people see me as  
45 their equal and not as different to them. Yeah. That's it.  
46
- 47 **Interviewer:** Okay, what year are you in?  
48
- 49 **Miriam:** I'm kinda in Year 7, but I'm going to be in Year 8 from September.  
50
- 51 **Interviewer:** From September, okay. Thank you. Okay, so we're gonna move on to the  
52 themes now. So I'm gonna ask you about your relationships in school. So, do you get on with  
53 your teachers at school.  
54
- 55 **Miriam:** Yeah

50 **Interviewer:** Can you tell me why you get on with them.

51

52 **Miriam:** Well, I get on with them because. They help you to learn different stuff and usually  
53 they're there to like help. So yeah, that's why I get along with teachers at school.

54 **Interviewer:** Okay, and are there any teachers in particular that you feel you get along with  
55 best?

56 **Miriam:** Yeah, I get along with my RE teacher and I get one with my teacher and, and, mmm  
57 yeah.

58 **Interviewer:** What do they have in common?

59 **Miriam:** They are both very friendly and nice.

60

61 **Interviewer:** Do you feel it's important to be part of a group?

62

63 **Miriam:** Yeah, well. Not really, because it's good to mix with a variety of people so that you  
64 can learn about different opinions on stuff. You can have a group but it's good to mix with  
65 others as well.

66

67 **Interviewer:** Okay. Can you tell me a little bit about your friends at school.

68

69 **Miriam:** I have a lot of friends. Some I've known since primary school. Others that I met at  
70 secondary school. And although we all come from a variety of backgrounds, we're very  
71 different. When I'm with them I feel accepted and stuff.

72 **Interviewer:** What, what do you think it is that makes you feel accepted with them.

73 **Miriam:** I can be myself around them and I know that they're always there for me if I have a  
74 difficult time and I'll always be there for them. They look up to me and it feels like we're  
75 equal.

76

77 **Interviewer:** Great, thank you. And are they? You said they're from different backgrounds,  
78 what backgrounds are they from?

79 **Miriam:** Well, some are Asian, other are mixed with different cultures. Some are same  
80 culture as mine. Some are from the Caribbean and Africa and some from other different  
81 countries as well so.

82

83 **Interviewer:** And are there people you feel that you don't really mix with or you don't really  
84 have friends?

85

86 **Miriam:** Uh, well, not really.

87

88 **Interviewer:** Cool, thank you. Okay, so we're going to move on to the next theme which is  
89 identification. Okay. So, are there people at school, who are similar to you?

90

91 **Miriam:** Yeah, a lot.

92

93 **Interviewer:** how are they similar to you?

94

95 **Miriam:** Because, there are people. A lot of people are from Africa like me or the Caribbean.  
96 There are lot of people that come from the same country as me as well or a country that is  
97 near to mine. So yeah.

98

99 **Interviewer:** Great, okay. And is it important for you to be similar to other people at school?

100  
101 **Miriam:** Yeah, because, I think it's important because, if there is like an issue concerning  
102 like someone that is maybe the same background as you. It's very important as they can  
103 relate to your issues and problems and can help you out with it.  
104  
105 **Interviewer:** Yeah, that's a really good point. Can you think of an example when someone's  
106 had something similar to you?  
107 **Miriam:** Well, if like, if like, there's, someone may be excluded. They can always go to  
108 someone who is similar to them and talk about it. And they may think that person has  
109 experienced something like that aswell. So they could help eachother and give advice for that.  
110  
111 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, so it's helpful when someone can share an experience.  
112 **Miriam:** Yeah.  
113 **Interviewer:** Yeah, okay. And do you feel, do you feel understood at school do you feel that  
114 people understand you?  
115 **Miriam:** Yes, because yeah.  
116 **Interviewer:** Do you think it's staff that understand? Is it staff and students?  
117 **Miriam:** Staff and students, yeah.  
118 **Interviewer:** What helps you to feel that you're understood? what helps?  
119  
120 **Miriam:** Well when people listen to you and look at your views and accept them and accept  
121 your opinions and that if you have a problem, you feel that you could, you feel that you could  
122 go to someone and that they can help you so yeah.  
123 **Interviewer:** Okay, so, you mentioned, if people respect you, and you feel equal to them. Is  
124 that right?  
125 **Miriam:** Yeah  
126  
127 **Interviewer:** Okay  
128 **Miriam:** Hello?  
129  
130 **Interviewer:** Can you hear me.  
131  
132 **Miriam:** Hello?  
133  
134 **Interviewer:** Hi, I can hear you.  
135 **Miriam:** Okay, now. Yeah yeah.  
136 **Interviewer:** Thank you for being so patient.  
137  
138 **Miriam:** I can hear you now.  
139  
140 **Interviewer:** it's not great is it the internet, so I appreciate that you're being very patient with  
141 it. So, thank you. Um, okay. So was there anything else you wanted to say about that? About  
142 being understood?  
143 **Miriam:** No yeah, I feel understood so.  
144 **Interviewer:** Okay, so the next theme is about inclusion or exclusion. So, have you ever felt  
145 left out at school?  
146 **Miriam:** No, well, in terms of learning. When you learn about, when you learn about history.  
147 I feel like we only focus on English history obviously. We need to learn about different  
148 cultures and ethnicities and maybe have cultural day. We need to really understand different  
149 cultures. Because we can actually a good connection with each other, with other students and

150 with staff as well so. I think it would be good to learn about different cultures.

151

152 **Interviewer:** yeah, yes, sometimes it feels like you feel left out when it's not, it's a focus on  
153 just one culture and it would be better if there was a mix of different cultures in things that  
154 you learn about.

155

156 **Miriam:** Yeah.

157 **Interviewer:** Is there a particular lesson that you feel included in.

158 **Miriam:** Included, yeah, there is maths, RE. There's geography. There's, there's a lot of  
159 classes that I feel included. So maybe RE and Maths and Art.

160 **Interviewer:** Art, yeah. Do you get to do a mix of things in Art. You mentioned culture. Is  
161 that something you can do in Art as well?

162 **Miriam:** Yeah because, during this quarantine we learned about staff specific art. We learned  
163 about different cultures of Native American art. I really enjoyed that topic. We learnt how to  
164 do different styles of art.

165

166 **Interviewer:** That sounds really interesting. It would be great to have been there myself, to  
167 learn about it. Okay, so what does, what does school do to help you feel included?

168

169 **Miriam:** Well, they do offer some, some groups where you can, um. That has, related to  
170 BAME people. There was this one time where they offered this Art group. It was a minority  
171 ethnic to go to that art group session. It was for year 8, year 9 and year 10. So yeah. If it was  
172 offered to Year 7 obviously I would go.

173

174 **Interviewer:** Okay, That sounds really interesting I hadn't heard of that type of group before.  
175 What kinds of things do you do in the, in the group?

176

177 **Miriam:** Well, it's for year 8, 9, 10 and 11, so I haven't been before.

178

179 **Interviewer:** Oh, so you couldn't go?

180 **Miriam:** Yeah

181 **Interviewer:** That's a shame. That's a shame. Do you know anything about what they do in  
182 year 9, 10 and 11.

183 **Miriam:** I think it was because, I don't know. I don't know. It was an art thing. Because I  
184 heard about it as I have an older sister in year 11 now. I think it would be art related. Like  
185 black or Asian culture.

186

187 **Interviewer:** So that's something that school does to bring about connection for people who  
188 are in the BAME community?

189 **Miriam:** I think it was outside of school.

190

191 **Interviewer:** Okay, so it wasn't related. Was it a teacher who was running it, or was it  
192 students?

193 **Miriam:** I'm not really sure. It was from a long time ago. So I'm not really sure.

194

195 **Interviewer:** That's fine. I'm very curious about it so I'm asking lots of questions. Okay. And  
196 is there anything that school does where you feel less connected or not included?

197 **Miriam:** Not really, to be honest.

198

199 **Interviewer:** Do you think there's anything that your school could do to help people from the

200 BAME community to feel more included in school?

201

202 **Miriam:** They could do more clubs that um, that are interested in black, asian minority  
203 ethnic. Like, they could do a club where anyone is interested comes. And, like, yeah and  
204 bring your culture and stuff. And it can contribute to anything that can help the Asian, black  
205 and minority ethnic community and stuff. And can recognise clubs outside that relate to the  
206 BAME community. So yeah.

207

208 **Interviewer:** Some lovely ideas! Okay, So we're coming to the last theme now, which is  
209 about school environment. So thinking about your school, and the environment that it, that  
210 it's in. So tell me a bit about your school and the environment, What's it like?

211 **Miriam:** The school environment, it's, it's nice and it it, helps you and it's welcoming and it  
212 helps like students to learn about stuff and even though we don't have a lot of rules. It's still  
213 really helpful for the students and stuff. And they people learn, so yeah.

214 **Interviewer:** You said it was welcoming, what makes it welcoming?

215

216 **Miriam:** Well at the start of the year, they are really nice. They showed you around the  
217 school and they have activities for year 7 to do and showed you to the classes you're  
218 supposed to go so, yeah.

219 **Interviewer:** So you got some extra help at the beginning, so you knew, where you were  
220 going, what you were doing, is that right?

221

222 **Miriam:** Yeah

223 **Interviewer:** Did you meet anyone else. Does anyone come from your old school, or was it  
224 just you that was starting?

225 **Miriam:** Yeah there was a lot of people that came from my old school.

226 **Interviewer:** Do you think that helped?

227

228 **Miriam:** Yeah.

229

230 **Interviewer:** Okay. And can you tell me a little bit about the school ethos, do you know what  
231 I mean when I say ethos?

232 **Miriam:** No

233 **Interviewer:** So it's a bit, it's bit like the schools values. So, how they're, what their values  
234 are like, some schools value, for example, some schools ethos their values, very much like  
235 academic or very much about respect, or some schools very much about connectiveness,  
236 collaboration. Do you think you could tell me a bit about your school's ethos? what values  
237 they have?

238

239 **Miriam:** Yeah, we actually have, um a list of school values as well and it's like, some of the  
240 key values like kindness, respect, happiness, achievement working with others and there are a  
241 lot of key values and you know feeling like respecting different religions and um also  
242 connecting. And welcoming different people. So there are a lot of key values.

243 **Interviewer:** Okay, do you? How, um, on a scale of one to 10, so one is, I don't really feel  
244 connected to the school values, and then 10 is, I feel really connected to the schools values  
245 work, where do you feel you are?

246 **Miriam:** I'm a nine or eight, something like that.

247 **Interviewer:** So why a nine or an eight.

248 **Miriam:** Because I don't really have any issues concerning my race, or my religion or any of  
249 my differences. I feel like that, I don't think they'll be a problem with our differences in this

250 school. But like, some people are individually, some people don't act nice and stuff but still.  
251 But I don't, I feel like

252

253 **Interviewer:** And the last question. In this theme is, do you feel connected to what you learn  
254 about?

255 **Miriam:** Yeah in some cases.

256 **Interviewer:** And what, in what cases do you feel connected?  
257

258 **Miriam:** So like, there's obviously, there's RE, I feel connected and there's Art, Maths,  
259 there's Drama, there's a lot, there's geography, there's DT. There's a lot of subjects so.  
260

261 **Interviewer:** What is it specifically, could you tell me about RE maybe, specifically what,  
262 What about it makes you feel connected to it?

263 **Miriam:** It teaches about different religions as well. It gives great advice on how you can get  
264 closer to god or. And like. It really, it's really helpful to. It teaches about, it teaches about  
265 Christianity and other religions as well. So if I get told there's different, particular type of  
266 religion, it will be helpful because you have learned about their religion and that's very  
267 helpful. So yeah.  
268

269 **Interviewer:** So it's important for you to feel that there's lots of different to learn about  
270 different religion. And then you can understand somebody else's religion as well as your own.  
271 And you mentioned this before as well with different cultures, and the importance of learning  
272 about different, and that being important for you.

273 **Miriam:** Yeah

274 **Interviewer:** Okay. Okay, so that's the end of those questions. I was just curious about your  
275 thoughts on the staff members in your school, and how you feel. Do you feel there's anybody  
276 there that you could talk to if you had a difficulty related to your experiences?  
277

278 **Miriam:** So do you mean like anyone that is similar to my background? Like specifically if I  
279 have a racial issue?

280 **Interviewer:** Yeah

281 **Miriam:** Um, I feel like I can speak to anyone about it. In terms of racial injustices, I think  
282 that. I don't know anyone that I know of. Maybe there's some teachers across the school.  
283 Teachers that I know of, I don't think there's anyone similar to me that I could speak to. But I  
284 still think that, if I had a racial issue I could go and see another teacher as well.

285 **Interviewer:** Okay. Thank you. And you, you mentioned earlier that you feel, you feel happy  
286 at school, you feel connected to school, and you feel that you belong in school, is that right?  
287

288 **Miriam:** Yeah.  
289

290 **Interviewer:** Yeah? You looked a bit hesitant.

291 **Miriam:** No, I do feel, I do, yeah.  
292

293 **Interviewer:** Okay. All right. Well, that is it for the questions. Um is there anything else,  
294 this is the final question, is there anything else that you would want to say to me? Or you  
295 would think is important for me to know about your experiences?

296 **Miriam:** So, the rules at school, I find that a bit, but concerning like stuff like hairbands  
297 that's for my hair. Since, it's part of my culture to have different hairstyles, sometimes in  
298 school we're not allowed to wear a black hairband, we're only allowed to wear brown, and  
299 since my, has the darker pigment of hair colour, so the brown hairband doesn't really match

300 the hairband, if you get what I'm saying. So, that's something that I really don't agree with.  
301 But that's probably it, so yeah.

302

303 **Interviewer:** So there's some rules, um, that the school have that don't match with your um,  
304 how you can have your hair? Is that right?

305 **Miriam:** Yeah

306 **Interviewer:** And that feels a bit. How does that feel for you?

307 **Miriam:** I kinda feel like a bit annoyed. Because if, I want my hairband to match my hair. I  
308 wouldn't be allowed to. So.

309

310 **Interviewer:** Okay. Thank you for sharing that that's a really helpful bit of information  
311 there. And something that I can see is really important to you and your identity, so I  
312 appreciate you sharing that with me. Was there anything else before we finish?

313 **Miriam:** No

314 **Interviewer:** Well, It's been a pleasure. I hope you've enjoyed this experience too. Um, I  
315 will, what, what I'll do is after this, um, I'm going to put all the recordings. What I do is I  
316 transcribe the recordings I put it into words. And there'll be other, other students who are  
317 interview as well. And I'll be putting their interview into words. And all those words I'm  
318 going to put together, muddle together and make some themes okay. So, for example from  
319 what you said something that came out to me was feeling equal and feeling respected seemed  
320 important and difference appreciating. Can you hear me?

321 **Miriam:** Um, you broke up again.

322 **Interviewer:** Oh no! Did I break up again?

323 **Miriam:** Yeah

324 **Interviewer:** Um, well I said appreciating difference, feeling respected and feeling equal  
325 seemed to come out from what what you were saying, and also being respected, maybe linked  
326 to having things like a variety of different cultures to learn about an acceptance of your hair.  
327 And, um, yeah and other students may feel similarly so. So we'll see what comes up, but I  
328 wanted to thank you for being so honest. I wanted to remind you again that this is  
329 anonymous. So you won't be linked to the data. Your name won't be in there anywhere.  
330 Okay. And what I'm going to do is send your mum a little sheet with some contact details on  
331 there if you were interested in talking about these kinds of topics about inequality, there are  
332 some contacts that I can share with you and your mom if you wanted to be part of that, okay  
333 and it's just a little thing for me to say thank you so much for for being part of my research I  
334 really appreciate that.

335

336 **Miriam:** Thank you.

337 **Interviewer:** Did you have anything else you wanted to say. Any questions.

338

339 **Miriam:** No

340

341 **Interviewer:** no? Okay. All right. It was nice to meet you, and I hope you have a lovely  
342 summer, and good luck with XXXX.

343 **Miriam:** Thank you, you too, bye

344 **Interviewer:** Bye

**Appendix 12: Transcript: Saif**

1 **Interviewer:** Okay, so. First question. If you were speaking to a friend, he doesn't attend  
2 your school. How would you describe it to them.

3  
4 **Saif:** Erm, I'm not sure. Um, probably. I don't know. I think it's hard to, to, like, I don't think  
5 you could say that it's like good or above average or bad, because you don't have anything to  
6 compare it to but I mean I've only been to one to one, secondary school. So, I'd say it's hard.  
7 Um, I think, in comparison, like if I'm, if I'm doing sports or something, say I go to a  
8 different school to, to compete or whatever. I feel like my school is a little bit smaller than  
9 other schools. But, I mean, that's basically all I can say that, basically judge. So, yeah.

10  
11 **Interviewer:** Could you say anything, could you say anything about the people in your  
12 school or the general feeling about the school?

13  
14 **Saif:** I don't specifically talk to people that many people outside of my year group but in  
15 terms of my a group itself, I'd say. People are fairly inclusive and get on well with each other  
16 like most people might not get on well with like a maximum of 10 people, most people. Um  
17 and, but the thing is, as well I'd say, from what teachers have said is that we're supposed to be  
18 one of the smarter and more well-behaved year groups, so it's kind of hard to really tell. So,  
19 Yeah.

20  
21 **Interviewer:** Quite, subjective to your experience.

22  
23 **Saif:** Yeah, obviously, but, I mean, yeah,

24  
25 **Interviewer:** Okay, so if, if a friend said that when they were at school they felt that they  
26 belonged. What would then mean? what do they mean by that?

27  
28 **Saif:** Um, give me a second to think, why would I interpret. Um, I think it'd kind of say to  
29 me, that they were really kind of enjoying themselves at that moment in time, or, in general, I  
30 mean, I'd say most people, they have like, they feel like they have a place in the school if that  
31 makes sense. There's not a lot of people who are often by themselves. So, I don't really know  
32 what I, I guess it depends on the context because the only time that I would think that would  
33 happen is if someone would say they didn't belong but that would probably have to be like an  
34 external so someone who's not part of the school who assumes but that was the only time I  
35 could say, think of someone saying that they feel like they don't belong. So in that context,  
36 yeah, I guess it just be them, saying that they get on well with people and they enjoy  
37 themselves. It's a comfortable environment for them.

38 **Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. What does it mean to be in a minority group?

39  
40 **Saif:** Um, Ah, in terms of my school or?

41  
42 **Interviewer:** Could be in terms of your school could be in terms of self.

43  
44 **Saif:** I don't really feel like too much of a minority I won't lie. Because I think, for example in  
45 my school, um, I think the majority of people are of Asian descent, and then next would be  
46 white and then black. And then, of um east. So like, people from China and Japan and Korea  
47 and stuff that would be the lowest. But um, I don't know I just don't really feel that  
48 marginalised if that makes sense. Yeah. So I just kind of feel fairly included. I mean, yeah.

49  
50 **Interviewer:** Yeah. So in terms of your school in your school environment, you don't feel

51 that...

52

53 **Saif:** No, I don't just mean school. I think, okay well in terms of my school environment yeah  
54 but when I'm on the bus or on the high street or just walk in home or something I don't really  
55 feel particularly excluded or different, if that makes sense.

56 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah, how you describe your ethnicity?

57

58 **Saif:** I think it's kind of difficult because I'm from um, I'm from Trinidad and Tobago, and  
59 I've lived more than half my life there. Um, I would, I think I'm three quarters. Um, so like,  
60 from East Asia, so it'd be like, I'm not actually sure where because um, my, my mother's  
61 father didn't really spend like he wasn't in the pictures for like three months or something, not  
62 three months but like a year or something near that, and then my mother's never spoken to  
63 him, basically. So, I don't really know much about him. But, my grandmother is from  
64 Trinidad, and she's of African descent and then on my dad's side, both his parents are from. I  
65 assume Indian descent. But because they've obviously spent like a couple generations in  
66 Trinidad. I'd say it's, it probably be different from like your typical um, East Asian culture.  
67 So, I'm not really sure how to describe my ethnicity. I'd say maybe it's like mixed Caribbean,  
68 you might say, but I don't know.

69

70 **Interviewer:** it's hard to put it into one word, it's not as simple

71 **Saif:** Yeah,

72 **Interviewer:** I'm, this is not this it's, it's more. It's something that he needs to sort of describe  
73 the maybe the history of or.

74

75 **Saif:** Yeah, cuz I'm not really too sure. Because I'd also say, I don't really, actually I don't  
76 know, I don't know.

77

78 **Interviewer:** what, what, what we're you gonna say, then?

79

80 **Saif:** No, I think I was thinking more for some reason I was thinking more rather than  
81 ethnicity. I was thinking more about something else right. Sorry.

82

83 **Interviewer:** Okay, something related or just unrelated to ethnicity?

84

85 **Saif:** I was thinking more like culture rather than ethnicity.

86

87 **Interviewer:** Okay. Yeah.

88

89 **Saif:** Because I don't know if. I don't know what type of cultural, I belong to exactly, is more  
90 what I was thinking more of.

91

92 **Interviewer:** What do you mean when you say cultural group? What do you mean by  
93 cultural group?

94

95 **Saif:** Right. Okay, it's probably more. My point is more that I don't know I feel like in  
96 comparison, in, in. I'm not. I don't enjoy, not I don't enjoy. I kind of don't fit my stereotype  
97 into it I don't know how big there is a stereotype of mixed people from the Caribbean, but I  
98 feel like I don't fit that stereotype that much. Well, maybe it's not that. It's more like for  
99 example, what I'm thinking of right now is I don't like a lot. It's not that I don't like. Well, I  
100 don't enjoy, for example, some of the foods or tradition almost as much as some people, I

101 think.

102

103 **Interviewer:** Yeah, okay, so their other, other people that share the same ethnicity or cultural  
104 group, as you?

105

106 **Saif:** Well, not a lot of people that I know of. Most of the people that I know from the  
107 Caribbean, like basically, um, just completely of one race not really mixed so.

108

109 **Interviewer:** black Caribbean or?

110 **Saif:** Oh yeah, yeah.

111 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah that's that's interesting to hear about, can relate in a way because I  
112 am also from Indian descent Caribbean mix.

113 **Saif:** Oh, okay, fair enough.

114 **Interviewer:** It is confusing. It's really confusing. So I can, I could relate to what you were  
115 talking about in a different in a different sense. And I guess you kind of answered this  
116 already. How do you feel about being in your ethnic group? How does it feel to you?

117

118 **Saif:** I mean, I don't think it really affects me too much, so it's just, it's just there, in my  
119 opinion.

120

121 **Interviewer:** All right, we're gonna move on to the themes which are more related to school.

122 **Saif:** Okay

123 **Interviewer:** And, and is it, you're in year 13 Am I right?

124 **Saif:** Uh yeah.

125 **Interviewer:** Yeah. And you've been in your school since year seven?

126 **Saif:** Yep.

127 **Interviewer:** Yeah, okay. So I guess if you can, be helpful to think of across, how it's now  
128 but also across your experience in school, when I ask you these questions.

129 **Saif:** Yep.

130 **Interviewer:** So, um, do you get on with the teachers and staff at school?

131

132 **Saif:** For the most part, yeah. Yeah.

133

134 **Interviewer:** Tell me about the ones that you got on with.

135

136 **Saif:** Um, I think in general a lot of the teaching staff tend to be quite understanding like it's  
137 kind of like they're strict to a point, as in they won't. They'll do what's best for you but it's not  
138 like, it's never anything harmful. It's just kind of, um. They'll ensure that you you. It's kind of  
139 like they'll ensure that you do what's best for you but I don't think that's describing it right I  
140 feel like that's making it sound too strict. Um, for the most part they have enjoyable,  
141 entertaining lessons. Yeah.

142

143

144 **Interviewer:** And the ones that you don't get on with so much or don't have a relationship  
145 with?

146

147 **Saif:** I think those tend to be more, almost like snappy teachers. But, I think they still kind of  
148 fit into that category where, I think they just kind of. They're a little too far, like they're not as  
149 understanding, that's the problem but they're not like bad teachers. If that makes sense.

150

151 **Interviewer:** you just don't feel that they demonstrate that they understand you as much as  
 152 some of the other teachers show that they're probably understanding.

153  
 154 **Saif** Yeah, kind of, yeah. Yeah.

155  
 156 **Interviewer:** Can you think of any examples?

157  
 158 **Saif** Um, yeah, I felt like, I don't know if this is stereotypical of language teachers, but I felt  
 159 like the language teachers tend to be a little more snappy and irritable, if that make sense.

160  
 161 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay. And the ones who you get on with what, how would, you know  
 162 what examples, do you have for those?

163  
 164 **Saif:** Um, I feel like my physics teachers are pretty good like, they they make sure that they  
 165 aren't, like they try and get as much feedback from the class as possible, so that they can do  
 166 the best job that they can. And they're fairly understanding if you, you don't understand any,  
 167 something, but they're also fairly like critical of you, if because, they give you as many  
 168 opportunities as, as you, as possible to try and understand something but there'll be a little bit  
 169 critical if you kind of go like, ah I didn't do this homework because I didn't understand it  
 170 because you have, would have had ample opportunities to come to them and like do it. So  
 171 they're critical enough to make sure that you get stuff done. But they're fairly understanding  
 172 and willing to spend their time to improve their teaching but also improve your knowledge  
 173 and stuff so yeah.

174  
 175 **Interviewer:** So there's more opportunity to sort of build more of a, more of a, interaction  
 176 with them than the other teachers.

177  
 178 **Saif:** Yeah, I think they're also quite wary of, like, how much they want to spend, teaching  
 179 and how much they want to spend asking questions and how much they want you to be  
 180 practising questions, and, they. What I'm saying is they have a good mix I think of almost  
 181 like getting the best out of you to some extent. I don't know if that's because physics is a  
 182 harder subject in that sense, so they kind of need to be like that but yeah.

183  
 184 **Interviewer:** Okay, it's important to be part of a group?

185 **Saif:** In what sense?

186  
 187 **Interviewer:** Any group, any group that comes to your mind first.

188  
 189 **Saif:** Um, I guess it's not important, but I think it'd be important to be included, I guess. I, I'm  
 190 not 100% sure on understanding the question

191  
 192 **Interviewer:** The question, so I'll give you an example then. It could be, it could be a  
 193 friendship group. It could be just a sports group, there are different, I guess there are different  
 194 groups that you can experience it could be a group of people who share similar culture to you,  
 195 when we mentioned, cultural before, part of a cultural group, ethnic group. So just those  
 196 different types of groups, is it important to be part of?

197 **Saif:** I think, in my opinion, it's important to have the opportunity to, but I don't think it's  
 198 particularly important to be in a group.

199  
 200 **Interviewer:** Tell me a bit more about that.

201  
202 **Saif:** I think you need to be kinda like fair with everyone. As in give everyone an equal  
203 opportunity to be like part of a group. I think if someone wants to do whatever they want to  
204 do by themselves they're entitled to that and I don't think they should. My, I'm kind of  
205 thinking that it's not essential to be in almost every single friend group or anything, it's just.  
206 Uh, I just don't think is as important I don't think it's important to be in every group, or a  
207 group, because I think you can do a lot by yourself. Sort of, I think. Not too sure actually.  
208

209 **Interviewer:** Not too sure, yeah. What do you think, being in a group means like what, what  
210 does it bring, do you think?

211  
212 **Saif:** I think there's a level of. So, um, things that you might get, things that you might benefit  
213 out of from a group is probably trust and understanding, because these are people who know  
214 you better. So, they have a better grasp of. I guess you, because they know more about you.  
215 But also I think they're more, they're easier to be comfortable around. And um, they tend to  
216 be people you enjoy being around more because obviously you know each other better, so  
217 yeah.  
218

219 **Interviewer:** And how does it compare to not being a group, what, what would you say, not  
220 being in a group could bring you?

221  
222 **Saif:** Um, I feel like you might be more isolated and less comfortable. Um, I'm not, I'm not  
223 100% sure. I mean, maybe you might just feel more determined, I, I'm not too sure.

224 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Cool. Well, um there's no, like I said, there's no right or wrong. So don't  
225 need to be sure, that's just fine as well. If you're not too sure. Um, these are weird questions  
226 as well, things that maybe don't normally get asked. They can be hard to think about. So,  
227 okay. So tell me about your friends at school. What are they like?

228  
229 **Saif:** Um, um, give me a sec. I think most of them are, they're not. They have a couple of  
230 things in common, but for the most bit, there's kind of a range of them to some extent, as in  
231 personalities. But I think for the most bit they're very accepting. And what's the best word? I  
232 don't want to say calm, but they're like, maybe relaxed is the best word? Yeah they're kind of  
233 fairly relaxed for the most bit.  
234

235 **Interviewer:** Do you mean, I'm wondering, do you mean laid back? Like kind of, is laid back  
236 what you mean?

237  
238 **Saif:** No, I kind of mean like, you can say and do stuff and for the most bit they're not too  
239 bothered? If that makes sense.  
240

241 **Interviewer:** Okay, so maybe non-judgmental.

242 **Saif:** Yeah, they're not super judgmental and they're fairly understanding as well.  
243

244 **Interviewer:** And do they say they have some things in common with you but not much?

245 **Saif:** No No, I meant as a group, as a group, like they don't have, they don't have everything  
246 in common with each other. Like they're not. I mean, it depends on how wide you talk and  
247 when you say, um. Cause like loosely talk to most people. But I don't think I can include  
248 about 80 or 100 people right? I mean if I'm talking about specifically my closest friends, it's a  
249 little bit like. Probably, it's still probably about 20 of them. But, it's more like. I'd still say  
250 they have like a range of personalities still. There's not a lot of. The most thing, the thing that

251 most of them have in common is they're fairly relaxed. They're accepting. They're pretty  
252 understanding. And I think you said something as well which kind of described them fairly  
253 well. But yeah. Oh yeah, they're not very judgemental of things.

254

255 **Interviewer:** Um what other things would you say you have in common with them? Do have  
256 the same interest, do you have similar backgrounds? Families? That kind of thing.

257

258 **Saif:** So, a couple of my friends we kind of like we don't have super close to each other.  
259 Well, yeah actually we don't live super close to each other. But like, we have similar routes to  
260 go home. And then some of my closest friends are, friends that, like, a couple of them had in  
261 common. And then we just grew closer over the years. So, like, in year seven, for example,  
262 I'd be friends with the people who I take the bus home or to school with right. And then those  
263 people might have classes with someone else who doesn't live anywhere near me, but because  
264 they're close with my close friends. I just became really close to them as well. So, yeah.

265

266 **Interviewer:** Proximity, kind of in close..

267

268 **Saif:** Kind of, um. Proximity but also like classes and stuff. For example, one of my closest  
269 friends who lives probably like two miles away. In year 7 and stuff, because I like  
270 alphabetical order we sat next to each other for a longer time and also we had all the same  
271 classes, basically, and then we did rugby as well after school so we'd spend a lot of time  
272 together.

273

274 **Interviewer:** Yeah, so you had opportunities where you could spend time together, and the  
275 friendship developed that way.

276

277 **Saif:** Yeah, a decent amount of my friends are also probably, I'd say a decent amount of them  
278 are also from rugby. But a decent amount of those same friends also live kind of close to me.  
279 So it's like a bit hard to tell. But yeah

280 **Interviewer:** okay, and who would you say that you don't really mix with or don't hang out  
281 with? Could you tell me about them?

282

283 **Saif:** Um, so mainly people that I feel a bit too. Like the main person who comes to mind, I  
284 think it's kind of like a specific example so probably won't find it, like too often anywhere.  
285 So, yeah.

286

287 **Interviewer:** What, what are they like is it just one person you're thinking of or?

288

289 **Saif:** Yeah, in particular is one person I'm thinking of. They kind of, they kind of make me  
290 feel a little bit uncomfortable so I don't really, um yeah.

291

292 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay. Okay, something about them makes you feel comfortable?

293

294 **Saif:** Um, well, they are, um. What's the word. It's like, I don't know, I don't know if they're  
295 joking. I genuinely don't know if they're joking or not, but it's like they. So okay, they are um.  
296 They're gay right but they kind of like act like I'm in a relationship with them for some  
297 reason. And I'm like, errrr, okay, what?! Like, and that kind of makes me feel uncomfortable  
298 because obviously I'm not so I'm kind of like, yeah.

299

300 **Interviewer:** yeah. Okay, so

301  
302 **Saif:** I don't know why that person does that but yeah.

303  
304 **Interviewer:** So makes you feel uncomfortable because they're putting you in a position  
305 which is breaching a boundary of yours.

306 **Saif:** Yeah.

307  
308 **Interviewer:** Which is not something you're connected to.

309 **Saif:** Yeah, yeah.

310  
311 **Interviewer:** Okay. Okay, we'll move on from relationships to identification. So, are there  
312 people at school who are similar to you?

313  
314 **Saif:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

315  
316 **Interviewer:** Tell me about them, how are they similar?

317  
318 **Saif:** Um, it depends, um. You can talk about like some interests in terms of like friends. And  
319 then you could talk about maybe like personality, for example.

320  
321 **Interviewer:** Yeah, you can tell me either, or or both.

322  
323 **Saif:** Um, for example with interests. Just people who do similar things to me so maybe  
324 someone who might do a little bit extra work with like maths or physics and has a deep  
325 interest in that. So, I don't know. I might talk to someone a little bit more about that.  
326 Someone who is someone who might just enjoy like the same forms of entertainment/media  
327 as me. So maybe they watch the same type of TV shows or they enjoy like watch movies or  
328 something. Um, somebody who plays the same type of games as me or something or might  
329 be in some of my classes. Um, I guess that's already. I mean, the classes bit may not be  
330 similar to me in that sense, but the other ones I'd say, are, um. Yeah. Yeah.

331  
332 **Interviewer:** And do you feel, there are quite a few people like that? Or is it just one or two?

333  
334 **Saif:** Erm, I'd say there's, there's a decent amount of stuff. A decent amount of people who  
335 might tick all of those boxes. Probably about, give or take twelve. I would even say most of  
336 the people in my closest friends, but, a decent amount, like maybe like three of them, I'm  
337 quite close with so.

338  
339 **Interviewer:** Is it important for you to be similar to other people at school?

340  
341 **Saif:** Um, not particularly I don't think. Not particularly. I think I'm kind of um. Not like  
342 adapting but like, with different groups I interact differently if that makes sense. Well, it kind  
343 of does make sense cause it's pretty obvious, but um, I can easily change my mood I guess,  
344 depending on the people and groups.

345  
346 **Interviewer:** Could you give me an examples of when you've had to change and adapt.

347  
348 **Saif:** Well, for example. Um, I don't know I might be more. As in, I think, kind of like my  
349 jokes or um, my behaviour my behaviour exactly. But obviously, for example with the people  
350 that I'm comfortable with, I behave in a certain way, because I feel like anything I say or

351 anything I do, I'll kind of be regarded as the same with. Right? But with certain people, for  
352 example, if someone's more. I don't want to say edgy, for example, I'd be I'd react kind of  
353 more like. I dunno, obviously, if they're like edgy or something if they're making like, if they  
354 say, if they make more edgy jokes for example you might react differently or because their  
355 personality in general is more serious. So you might respond or act differently than if  
356 someone who was more serious and uptight would say the same thing.

357

358 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay. So depending on how someone's personality is you might have to  
359 adapt yourself a little bit. And how well they know you.

360 **Saif:** Yeah. Yeah.

361 **Interviewer:** Okay. Okay. And do you feel, people at your school understand you?

362

363 **Saif:** Um, I think they understand me as much as I want them to understand me if that makes  
364 sense.

365

366 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. So when you, when you've given them a chance to understand you,  
367 they'll understand as much as you've shared.

368

369 **Saif:** I think so, yeah.

370

371 **Interviewer:** It's important to be understood.

372

373 **Saif:** Um, I think so. I think it's important to be understood. Yeah, yeah.

374

375 **Interviewer:** Why?

376

377 **Saif:** I think it's important that people understand where you're coming from so they can have  
378 a better relationship with you.

379

380 **Interviewer:** Do you feel there are teachers in school who are similar to you? Because I'm  
381 assuming that when we were talking about similar people to, you know, thinking about peer  
382 group, people in your, in your peer group but I wonder about teachers, adults.

383

384 **Saif:** Yeah, it's not something I ever really thought about, um. I think it's hard to tell because  
385 you pay attention to their personality a little bit, but a decent amount but I don't have, I think  
386 gained enough information because, the main thing you can you can see about is maybe some  
387 of the comments or, like, how they react to certain stuff, how laid back, but I don't know if  
388 you can get a.

389

390 **Interviewer:** It's difficult to know.

391

392 **Saif:** Yeah, it's it's difficult because I don't think we know them well enough to say that.

393

394 **Interviewer:** Maybe this question is more, do you feel you can relate to teachers, maybe not  
395 the fact that, they're similar. It's hard to know they're similar but are you able to relate to your  
396 teachers?

397

398 **Saif:** Yeah, yeah I'd say I'd say most of them. Like you kind of understand where they're  
399 coming from and stuff. With most of the stuff they say and it's fairly logical. But I don't know  
400 if that's just because it's logical or whether that's because we have similarities. Because for

401 example, if you haven't done the homework you can get that logic as to why they'd be upset  
 402 right. But in terms of how similar they would deal with what, what they need to deal with if  
 403 you, if they were in your position. I mean, I'm like, I don't know.

404  
 405 **Interviewer:** yeah, Yeah. Okay. We'll move on to inclusion. Do you ever feel left out at  
 406 school? Or have you ever felt left out at school? In the years you've been there.

407  
 408 **Saif:** Not particularly. Not really I wouldn't say because I feel like I'm fairly. I think most  
 409 people enjoy my company to some extent. So, they don't really mind me too much so, it  
 410 doesn't matter what percentage of the year group I'm with. The likelihood is they'd be very  
 411 comfortable with me and so.

412  
 413 **Interviewer:** You said, not really. Does that imply that there's been a time when you have  
 414 felt left out?

415  
 416 **Saif:** Um, no, it's more that I feel like I don't really feel left out, but like, as in, if I'm with my  
 417 closest friends, I'd say that I don't feel left out at all in fact if that was the case, every single  
 418 time. But, I kind of feel like, um, if you're not with someone you're not super close to but you  
 419 like to talk to them a bit you can talk to them and you feel comfortable around them and stuff.  
 420 I don't know if I feel like you could have a better relationship with them, and as a result,  
 421 maybe you're missing out a little bit. In that sense.

422  
 423 **Interviewer:** Because you can't be as close to them perhaps.

424  
 425 **Saif:** yeah because yeah you can't have as good of a relationship with them, because you just  
 426 don't know them as well. Like you can't relate to them as much.

427  
 428 **Interviewer:** Is there anything that school does that helps you feel included and connected to  
 429 school? Makes you feel left, so that you don't have these experiences of being left out?

430  
 431 **Saif:** Well, yeah, I mean, well I think the school, the school organised it so that your  
 432 timetable has as many different people as possible. But I could see how that could be a big  
 433 negative as well, because if you're not, if you if you decide not to be, if there's if there's no  
 434 one that you're close with, to start with, right, then you can kind of isolate yourself from  
 435 everyone else, because rather than the intention of being mixed with everyone else is to  
 436 become closer with more, a greater variety of people. So, um, that could be a negative to that,  
 437 but yeah.

438  
 439 **Interviewer:** Is there anything else that they do that, do they do they have any systems in  
 440 place any, I don't know, clubs or?

441  
 442 **Saif:** Oh there are clubs and societies, but obviously because of the pandemic it's kind of  
 443 been

444  
 445 **Interviewer:** put on hold.

446  
 447 **Saif:** Kind of yeah, there's kind of like specific to year groups but as we're like um, as we're  
 448 upper 6<sup>th</sup> we don't have um, the. Basically I think clubs and societies, they started to have  
 449 like, um, like they change your timetable to ensure that as many clubs and societies start to  
 450 get like as much recognition as possible like last year. But the problem with that is, we our

451 year, because we get to go at lunch. Most people wanted a longer lunch so instead of going to  
452 clubs and societies, a lot of them just went out for longer if that makes sense? Whereas the  
453 lower years they can't go out for lunch so they would have had to go to clubs and societies.  
454

455 **Interviewer:** So maybe something about being in the 13 it's not really needed as much?  
456 Maybe for the younger years it's something that's helpful for them?  
457

458 **Saif:** No, I think it'd be really helpful for every year, I think we just kind of got a bit. In terms  
459 of. I mean you can kind of say, we got a bit unlucky. But I think most people would say they  
460 are fine without clubs and societies, no I mean it's, it depends on who you ask, I guess.  
461

462 **Interviewer:** And when you started at the school what helped you to sort of form these  
463 connections with people? Can you remember?  
464

465 **Saif:** I think just being talkative and also, um, being relatively nice, I guess you could say.  
466 Like I was very relaxed about what people did and stuff. And I was fairly understanding, with  
467 most people with whatever they were saying. As in, I made it, like, even if I think I did 100%  
468 agree with them. I kind of like almost like I thought of a relatable situation that was similar  
469 to this and say, Well, I don't really agree with that but like I get where you're coming from,  
470 because XYZ. Yeah, I think that makes you made me, almost like more trustworthy and  
471 likable, so it was easier to form relationships with almost everyone.  
472

473 **Interviewer:** Was there anything that school did, or was it mostly what you were doing  
474 yourself?  
475

476 **Saif:** No, no, before, as I was saying before, like, with the mixed timetables. Obviously my  
477 school, there weren't a lot of people knew each other before primary school because it's like a  
478 grammar school right so you got to do a test, get in and stuff. So as a result, they're weren't  
479 already formed groups so it wasn't super hard to get into different groups and stuff and talk to  
480 people, because everyone was basically new.  
481

482 **Interviewer:** Yeah, is there anything that you think the school could do extra that they're not  
483 doing already to help children like you completed young people like you?  
484

485 **Saif:** I think we do a good job of mixing people together so that they have an opportunity to  
486 talk to new people and talk to people in new groups and stuff. I don't really know if there's  
487 anything you can do to make. I'm not, I'm not really too sure.  
488

489 **Interviewer:** Sounds like they do enough? Maybe?  
490

491 **Saif:** I think they do a fairly decent job. I think they, I know that not everyone. I get that  
492 people tend to be more comfortable in their group so you won't, the likelihood is a lot of the  
493 time if the opportunities there. They won't find certain people, mixing, if they could just go to  
494 their normal friend group. So, Yeah, it's still. It's difficult. Yeah.  
495

496 **Interviewer:** It's hard to think of new things when things are being done well or when you  
497 feel that, that, that you know you're being, you're feeling included. It's hard to then think  
498 what, could you do to feel included, that is tricky. Um, we're gonna move on to the last  
499 section, which is a about school environment. You kind of spoke to it a little bit at the start,  
500 but if you had anything extra to add. Tell me a little bit about your school.

501  
502 **Saif:** Wait, what specifically about my school?

503  
504 **Interviewer:** Maybe, you mentioned the size of it earlier, but perhaps the ethos, or, you  
505 know, if I was coming there what would I expect to see? What things might I be learning  
506 about, who might I see around me. To get a picture of it.

507  
508 **Saif:** I think it has a fairly good ethos and a pretty good system in terms of, um. As in, I think  
509 they do a very good job of trying to educate people to make sure that okay you're not just  
510 coming here to learn about whatever subjects you're doing. You also here to learn about.  
511 Almost like, I don't want to say community, but like you do you have like meaningful  
512 discussions about things like, whether that be talking about your opinion on culture or  
513 someone's sexual orientation or learning about contraception, or um, bullying or um, human  
514 rights. As in, I mean I'm mixing things as in, for example you. We had a assembly of  
515 bullying, but it wasn't because. Actually I don't know if it was because of something that  
516 happened in the younger years but I doubt it but, my point is, you get. They ensure that you  
517 are aware about stuff like. Okay, so you will have a, you'll have a general assembly, in which  
518 everyone will have. So that would be for. So year seven, year eight, 9,10 and 11, but also a  
519 year 12 and year 13 and they basically, they basically repeat the same thing but it's it's kind of  
520 like specific to that week. So maybe they might be talking about remembering saying the  
521 importance of that, or maybe they'll be talking about, maybe it's anti bullying week or  
522 something, or um, black history month or something specific in that week right? But then  
523 also general assemblies, more things that are more specific to your year group. So, because  
524 we're in year 13. I think we had one, we had we had one before on. I think consent or maybe  
525 like understanding harassment. I can't really remember exactly what they wanted that to be  
526 about but those were the two things that I kind of got out of that and also um. I had it before  
527 in my head, like before I started talking about the. I can't remember, to be honest. But um, I  
528 think they do a good job of ensuring that you have a good understanding and good morals,  
529 going into adult life. But I also think it's a fairly like not super hard working, but it's quite  
530 competitive in terms of work and stuff like it's not the most expensive school you'll find but  
531 it's still pretty competitive.

532  
533 **Interviewer:** Okay. So you say there's like an academic focus and a focus on achievement.  
534 But also, not just getting learning and learning things but also thinking about life, things that  
535 go on in the world being things that are topical, important for life skills, the understanding  
536 about people from different identities, how they identify their race, sexuality, but also things  
537 around bullying and harassment those kind of really important life issues that are always  
538 going to be there but how do we think about this. How much do you feel the school ethos and  
539 values fit with your own? So, on the scale of one to 10, 10 is it fits exactly, and then one is  
540 not at all. Where would you place yourself?

541  
542 **Saif:** Maybe like eight or nine I think. I don't think i completely agree, but I think I agree  
543 with like the general idea of stuff. I think.

544  
545 **Interviewer:** What things make it not a 10 then what kinds of things do you feel you're not  
546 too connected to?

547  
548 **Saif:** Um, so I'd say the, the, um. I think the ethos now is, it's like it used to be like um, self-  
549 discipline, endeavour, excellence and now it's something like courage compassion, creativity  
550 and something esle. Maybe it's commitment, I think it's commitment. And for the most bit,

551 I'd say I kind of agree with those as in I think there's a very good, I don't know if morals is  
 552 the right word but like I can't remember the word, but things to go by. Maybe it's morals, but

553

554 **Interviewer:** Do you mean values?

555

556 **Saif:** Yeah values, they're very good values to have, but I kind of feel. I feel more attached to  
 557 some extent to certain ones than others. If I make sense.

558

559 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Which ones, would you say you feel more or less connected to?

560

561 **Saif:** I think I'm probably more of an emotional person so I'd say I'm probably more  
 562 committed, um, commitment and compassion, but, for example, I'm not very creative at all. I  
 563 do think creativity is very important because it, it makes, it allows you to see from like  
 564 different perspectives, but I am not. I feel like that's less important in my opinion. To  
 565 something like, commitment, or, um, courage. Courage is still, I'd say, commitment and  
 566 compassion are more important to me, than, courage, creativity.

567

568 **Interviewer:** So it's an eight nine. Did you say eight or nine? Or seven/eight?

569 **Saif:** Yeah eight/nine

570 **Interviewer:** So eight/nine because you connected to some things such as commitment and  
 571 compassion more than courage and creativity. Yeah okay, and do you feel connected to what  
 572 you learn about?

573

574 **Saif:** In what sense?

575

576 **Interviewer:** So, if you're learning about history, for example, do you feel connected to what  
 577 you're learning about. Say art, do you feel connected to there? Which, do you feel that you're  
 578 connected to learning in school?

579

580 **Saif:** As in I'm engaged? Or as in, I, I'm not really, I feel like, I feel like your questions,  
 581 easier to understand if it's. But because it's subjects I do like chemistry, physics and maths  
 582 and they quite, um. In comparison with something like history, or economics or, I feel like  
 583 you can feel more connected to those in the sense that you're part of it. Whereas, with Maths,  
 584 Physics and Chemistry, I think you could only say that you're, you're part of it, to some  
 585 extent.

586 **Interviewer:** If you were maybe interested in that subject you might feel more connected to  
 587 it whereas the other ones..

588 **Saif:** Oh, in that sense yeah. No, I mean, I'm fairly interested in my subjects I thought you're  
 589 talking more like how much you, you almost feel involved in what you're learning.

590

591 **Interviewer:** No yeah that's that's what I was asking Yeah, yeah.

592

593 **Saif:** No but, maybe maybe I'm interpreting this wrongly, but I think with maths, for  
 594 example, I enjoy what I'm learning a lot. But, as in, I, I'm very interested in it, and how it  
 595 works and well not how it works but like how I can apply it stuff. But it's it's in my opinion  
 596 it's different than if I'm learning about, If I'm learning about something like a couple. If I'm  
 597 learning about fiscal policy and economics and that, because I feel like it's happening around  
 598 me. Like I know if I'm learning calculus in maths or something, that's happening around me,  
 599 but I feel less impacted by that and I thought what you were talking about specifically was  
 600 whether I feel like, when you send engaged. Did you say engaged?

601 **Interviewer:** Connected.

602 **Saif:** Oh, yeah. Well, when you said that I thought you meant more like what I was talking  
603 about when I was looking at like the fiscal policy and economics, which is like a government  
604 policy, which I mean, it's kind of being. It's a policy that the government enacts, so it kind of  
605 feels like it directly affects me all the time, and. In that sense I feel, I'd feel more engaged  
606 because, it's physically happened around me. Whereas with something like calculus, I'm still  
607 fairly interested in the use of differentiation in finding out, um, I dunno, how could it how it  
608 could be applied in like economics or something from supply and demand but less engaged in  
609 that because it's not happening around me.

610

611 **Interviewer:** Yeah, no, that's what I was asking, definitely.

612 **Saif:** Oh, okay

613 **Interviewer:** Yeah. I was curious about how you feel personally connected to learning and it  
614 is harder to connect to things like maths, I was wondering about more. The subjects which  
615 you could probably connect to which is like English, like you were saying, economics,  
616 religion, history. Trying to think what other subjects.

617

618 **Saif:** Oh okay, sorry, I thought you were talking about specifically what I was doing like the  
619 last two years because, yeah.

620

621 **Interviewer:** Yeah because you do different subjects.

622 **Saif:** Yeah,

623 **Interviewer:** No that's fine, to talk about that too. It's whatever comes to mind first really,  
624 because there's so many things that that you could probably talk to me about

625 **Saif:** Okay, well I'd say in the subjects that were more wordy, I felt I did feel like more  
626 connected to them for example like economics and history and stuff, but with physics and  
627 maths and chemistry. I still have a deep interest in them, but I don't feel, like obviously  
628 physics and stuff is happening around you but I feel like some of the things you learn, just  
629 don't feel like, like. I don't feel the effect of the spinning at all right?

630 **Interviewer:** yeah, yeah,

631 **Saif:** For example, that kind of stuff. So it's kind of like

632

633 **Interviewer:** So for the subjects that you connected to or engaged with. Do you think it's  
634 important to have that connection to those subjects, do you think it helps or you don't need to,  
635 like, feel connected to them?

636

637 **Saif:** I think it has it's benefits, but it's not necessary. Yeah, because I feel like if you're not  
638 already, particularly engaged or interested in it, you could be way more interested and  
639 engaged in it, if you feel like you're more connected in the sense that something like the fiscal  
640 policy or how. Or example, maybe, near the end of the Cold War or something, I feel like  
641 that's more interesting, because you feel like it affects you, to some extent, for example a  
642 Cold War, okay. It doesn't exactly affect you, but it's like recent history. So, the decisions and  
643 stuff made during that period of time would affect you today. So I feel like those type of  
644 things. If I wasn't already interested in the subject, I would be interested in it, because I can  
645 relate to it more sort of. Whereas in physics if I wasn't interested in particle physics, I  
646 probably wouldn't look too deep into it.

647

648 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. Okay. Well, that was the last question. So thank you. Really  
649 appreciate you taking the time and being really thoughtful with your answers.

650 **Saif:** That's fine.

651 **Interview:** What will happen next is, I'll go away and analyse all of this data and bring all of  
652 your, all of the people I've interviewed together. Um it will be, it does take time. So, if you  
653 were interested in, to know what the results were and what came out of my research, it'll  
654 probably be available next July or August, by then you'll be done with school. But I will sort  
655 of send your mum details if you wanted to get in contact, to find out what the results were, if  
656 you're still curious about it. But I'll also send you like a debrief sheet, which says thank you  
657 for taking part and then there are some links, if you were interested in racial inequality, if you  
658 wanted to think more about those topics. There are some links there and there's also a number  
659 if you felt affected by anything that we talked about today.

660 **Saif:** Okay.

661 **Interview:** But other than that, do you have anything else more that you'd like to share or add  
662 about your experiences? Any opinions?

663

664 **Saif:** I think I'm fine. Yeah.

665

666 **Interview:** Yeah. All right, well thank you and have a good evening. It was lovely to speak  
667 with you. And I'll email with any further information.

668

669 **Saif:** Okay

670 **Interview:** Do you have any questions just before I go?

671 **Saif:** Um, no. I think I'm good, cheers.

672 **Interview:** Alright. Have a good day

673

674 **Saif:** See you, you too. Bye

675 **Interview:** Bye

**Appendix 13: Transcript: Jacob**

1 **Interviewer:** Okay. Okay so, so my name is Iesha, and I'm a trainee educational  
2 psychologist, so I'm doing my degree at the moment, to become qualified as a psychologist,  
3 and basically what we do is we work with schools. So, young people ages zero to 25, and to  
4 support them and ensure that they have equal opportunities and have a good schooling  
5 experience and usually children who have learning difficulties as well, but I was interested in  
6 um.. belonging experiences of young people and especially young people from an ethnic  
7 minority background. Because I feel like it's really important that their voices are raised and  
8 elevated.

9 **Jacob:** Right.. yeah..

10 **Interviewer:** And so, erm.. and it came from personal interest of mine from my own  
11 experiences of being in school Um. And what that was like for me and on my friends who are  
12 of different ethnicities and their experiences and I think it's important to have belonging in  
13 school. And I think it can help with feeling. Errr... mentally well, and subsequent student  
14 achievement, academic achievement so yeah so I wanted to speak to young people  
15 themselves and find out from you what your experiences are so before I start, do you have  
16 any questions for me.

17 **Jacob:** Not that I can think of right now no.

18 **Interviewer:** It's not a test to there are no right or wrong answers, and you're the expert in  
19 your life. And, yeah, that's it I think if you want to withdraw at any point if you don't want to  
20 answer any questions you don't have to do. So, ummm... if I look off the screen it's because  
21 I'm looking at the questions. Okay. All right. Okay, so let's start then. Should take an hour but  
22 depends how much you want to share. So the first question. If you were speaking to a friend  
23 who doesn't attend your school. How would you describe it to them?  
24

25 **Jacob:** Um, probably in a high achieving school, like academically, you know, everyone. In  
26 my opinion, everyone has you know a good opportunity to go on and do well after school. So  
27 it's not like a school where there's like a big difference in like, between students and how  
28 smart they are, in a sense, everyone is like doing well. Stuff like that.  
29

30 **Interviewer:** Thank you. If a friend said that when they were at school, they felt like they  
31 belonged. What would they mean.  
32

33 **Jacob:** I would think that they mean like they fit in, in a sense, so but they don't feel like they  
34 are left out of any, you know, they don't feel left out of the school environment. Something  
35 like that.  
36

37 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. Okay, can you tell me more about fitting in.

38 **Jacob:** Sorry? What was that?

39 **Interviewer:** Can you tell me little bit more about fitting in. What do you mean by that.  
40

41 **Jacob:** Oh, maybe like the ability to like make friends. So, and then you don't feel like you're,  
42 you know, alienated from other friend groups or like you can't. You... er... or you don't find  
43 common interests with other people. That sort of thing.  
44

45 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah okay, yeah, so you feel that you can make friends, you find things,  
46 similarities between. Okay, and what does it mean to you, to be in a minority group?  
47

48 **Jacob:** Err, To me it's um, well sort of, to be in a, like, ethnic minority, your sort of your  
49 culture or your beliefs in a sense are often different to the majority of the people around you.  
50 So like, it's not just, like back to that fitting in you don't, you can't really find common

51 interests of other people due to the fact that, you know, you might have a complete different  
52 view of the world or stuff like that.

53

54 **Interviewer:** Okay. And, and, what was your ethnic label, how do you like to identify?

55

56 **Jacob:** Well sort of, well culturally, I, you know tell people, you know, that I'm Asian like  
57 Southeast Asian, and then you know when it gets to like religious standpoints I'm Muslim so  
58 then, people, so yeah, that's what it is.

59

60 **Interviewer:** So you're highlighting here that it's quite complex?

61

62 **Jacob:** Yeah, because, I mean, especially for me because, you know, especially growing up  
63 and then in secondary school as well people would often you know just see me as like a lot of  
64 East Asian like, you know, part of, like you know Chinese background or like a Japanese  
65 background. So then, and then when they start. And then when they realise that actually I'm  
66 not and then, I'm actually a, like I'm a Muslim, they often, you know, people get confused  
67 and then it, yeah..

68

69 **Interviewer:** Okay. And What, What do you think that relates to? Why do you think that is?  
70 That there's that confusion from people?

71

72 **Jacob:** Well, it's that people, people often like have this image of what like a certain religion  
73 is, in a sense. So, if you'd like, sorts of people, that if they relate, so Hinduism they'll think,  
74 you know people, like are Indian background and stuff like that. When people think of a  
75 Muslim background they think of, you know, like a Middle Eastern, bearded man. Or a  
76 Christian as like, you know, this normal white person in a sense. So people always have this  
77 image at the back of the mind of what they expect someone to look at.

78

79 **Interviewer:** So there's a preconceived idea that people have.

80

81 **Jacob:** Yeah. I feel like anyway

82 **Interviewer:** With yours, you feel yours is different to their preconceived ideas.

83 **Jacob:** Yeah, I think so

84 **Interviewer:** Thank you. It's really helpful. Um, so I'm going to move on to just talk about,  
85 I've put up, put the, the err interview into different themes. So, the first theme is about  
86 relationships in school. The second one is about identification. The third one's about  
87 inclusion/exclusion. And then the last one is about, your school environment. Okay, so we go  
88 to relationships first. So, do you feel you get on with teachers and staff in school.

89

90 **Jacob:** Yeah. Yeah, I would say so. Like a few, like maybe bad relationships with teachers,  
91 like when I was like, younger in the school when you know, you didn't really pay attention as  
92 much, but apart from that, yeah it's a pretty good relationship I have with teachers.

93

94 **Interviewer:** Why do you think that is?

95 **Jacob:** Um.. well I'd say that, like none of the teachers are sort of like, they don't, none of  
96 them like create like a hostile environment to learn in, in a sense. So it's always like a good  
97 environment to learn in. You know, so yeah, you never feel scared to like actually participate  
98 in activities and stuff

99 **Interviewer:** Okay, and you said, before you had a few bad experiences.

100 **Jacob:** Yeah

101 **Interviewer:** What do you think that was about?  
102

103 **Jacob:** I think, it's just because of my bad behaviour honestly. It was because, like you know,  
104 year seven, year eight, like I wasn't really paying attention to how stuff would work and then  
105 you know you misbehave, you think you can get away with stuff. I think that creates that  
106 relationships with some teachers.  
107

108 **Interviewer:** Okay, what are the teachers like? What's the staff like at your school?  
109

110 **Jacob:** It's quite, it's quite like a... because like other schools, like quite like a close knit, like  
111 community in a sense. As in, like all the teachers will like know you, whether they teach you  
112 or not and then you know if you come across them in like play. It's like, you can always say  
113 hi to them or ask them a question it's not. Yeah, there's no, I wouldn't say there's like staff  
114 which like come across as, like, rude, in a sense.  
115

116 **Interviewer:** Okay, so it's important that they sort of, well it's been helpful that they've been  
117 would say welcoming and there's that community. That sense of everyone being together,  
118 almost.  
119

120 **Jacob:** Yeah.  
121

122 **Interviewer:** Is it important to you to be part of a group.  
123

124 **Jacob:** To be... like, what kind of group?  
125

126 **Interviewer:** Umm, any group. I guess if you're thinking as a particular group you could talk  
127 about that as well.  
128

129 **Jacob:** I mean... I mean, I like to be part of groups. In a sense. As in like, um, in terms of  
130 socially, I'm like to part of, I like to be with other people. I don't like thinking that people  
131 don't like, sort of, want to be with me, in a sense.  
132

133 **Interviewer:** So, being part of a group is important, so that you feel you're not... Sorry, is  
134 my internet okay? I just got a message come up saying it's...

135 **Jacob:** Oh yeah, it just, it froze just for a little bit, but it's fine.  
136

137 **Interviewer:** Okay, so you're saying that it's important to be part of the group, so that you're  
138 not on your own, that you're with other people.  
139

140 **Jacob:** Yeah. Sort of, yeah.  
141  
142

143 **Interviewer:** When I said that question Did you Did anything else pop into your mind?  
144

145 **Jacob:** Um, well I, I only really thought about like social groups, I didn't know what other  
146 kind of groups to think about.  
147

148 **Interviewer:** Okay, yeah, yeah, no that's fine. Yeah, okay. So tell me about your friends at  
149 school, what are your friends like?  
150

151 **Jacob:** Um... I'd say they are pretty similar to me in the sense, like they probably like to be  
152 around other people. Quite a lot of my friends are through like, as in I'm friends with them  
153 through like sports and stuff like that. Like school sports. And then, and then a lot... lots of  
154 them are very funny. Like I don't often make friends with people if I don't, if I can't really  
155 laugh with them. You know, stuff like that.

156

157 **Interviewer:** So, relating to them in a way that they share similar qualities to you.

158

159 **Jacob:** Yeah, yeah. I would say.

160

161 **Interviewer:** Are they from a similar community or different community to you?

162

163 **Jacob:** I mean, ethnically like lots of them are very different to me as I'm like I'm, in terms of  
164 like from a like ethnic standpoint, I'm like one of. I'm like the only person, like, from like  
165 where I am. So I had to like communicate with like others, like communities, like already  
166 from the start. Because I couldn't find someone straight away. So yeah, like all of my friends  
167 are from different, um, backgrounds.

168

169 **Interviewer:** Do you think if there were people who were from your background, you'd be  
170 drawn to them?

171 **Jacob:** I think so, because like outside of school, I know people who are and then I'm  
172 obviously drawn to them. But it's just in a school, in a school, I don't think so because there  
173 aren't any.

174

175 **Interviewer:** Yeah, you didn't really have the option so you sort of had to find connections in  
176 a different way.

177 **Jacob:** Yeah.

178

179 **Interviewer:** And what, and what are they? Are they in any way similar or are they, is it just  
180 completely different? In terms of their ethnicities.

181

182

183 **Jacob:** Some of them are similar in the fact that some of them are like Muslim as well but  
184 then, some of them aswell, because they're also some, like, Asian. Um, so then like, be like,  
185 you know because from where they're from and then neighbouring countries have similar  
186 cultures and stuff like that so you can obviously talk to them about that. So, but. So I've got  
187 like lots of friends who are still like similar in a sense. But it's not like the same where I can  
188 just completely mix in with them.

189

190

191 **Interviewer:** Yeah. So, there are some similarities in cultures. There's some overlap in  
192 cultures, but it's not exactly the same. May not completely understand your traditions or  
193 things that...

194

195 **Jacob:** Yeah, stuff like that.

196

197 **Interviewer:** Okay. Thank you. Okay well let's, let's move on to... Actually before we move  
198 on to the next one, Do you feel like there's anyone that you don't mix with? Or that you  
199 wouldn't necessarily connect with?

200

201 **Jacob:** Um, not really I mean there's some like friendship groups at my school where they do  
202 stuff which I like, I wouldn't partake in. Because then like, I don't really fit with them on that  
203 level but as an in terms of like, anyone in my, in like my year group, in a sense, I can, I can  
204 still make friends with them. So it's not like I feel like from one group, I feel like completely  
205 alienated from like I can't, I don't talk to them at all. In the sense, I think I can still be friends  
206 or talk with like anyone.

207 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. Okay. Thank you. So just moving on to identification next. Um we  
208 kind of, kind of answered this already but, um, are there people at school who are similar to  
209 you?  
210

211 **Jacob:** Well, yeah. So, in terms of ethnically like culturally, there's some people who might  
212 share similar views on certain things. But there's also people who share different views to me  
213 aswell, but there's who will have, who can connect with me on a cultural or ethnic stuff.  
214

215 **Interviewer:** Yeah. And so that's in terms peers right you're talking about there. What about  
216 um, staff members?  
217

218 **Jacob:** Um, not really, but like, because I don't with staff. It's not like I'm... well like a nice  
219 way i'm not i'm not like like trying to, you know, communicate with them like all the time  
220 and you know, trying to be friends with them. Like in a nice way, it's just because I've never,  
221 I've never like thought about that.  
222

223 **Interviewer:** Yeah, well I hear what you're saying you're not trying to be friends with your  
224 teachers, um...  
225

226 **Jacob:** Yeah. But, Yeah.  
227

228 **Interviewer:** I guess, I guess the reason I asked is because it is it is dynamic and it is a  
229 relationship, it's different. They're helping you to learn. They're, teaching you so, um... it's,  
230 it's an important aspect in belonging in school. And, you mentioned that you have positive  
231 relationships with them so that's, that's good.

232 **Jacob:** Yeah  
233

234 **Interviewer:** Okay, um, is it important for you, do you think to be similar to other people at  
235 school?  
236

237 **Jacob:** Ah, sorry you cut out a little bit there.  
238

239 **Interviewer:** Okay, is it important for you to be similar to other people at school.  
240

241 **Jacob:** Um, well, I hadn't thought about it but like, I think so, because that's I made majority  
242 of like my friends at school through, you know, being similar to them, sort of, you know,  
243 when you find similarities between yourselves like you end up, you know, fitting like fitting  
244 in like a little bit more. But, like I've still, I still got I've still got friends who have like  
245 complete different like viewpoints. They've got different views of life and stuff like that. But  
246 like I can still, like it's not like, it wasn't, it's not like a deciding factor in, you know, wanting  
247 to be friends with someone.

248 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.. and if, I'm imagining... or maybe Imagine if you didn't have  
249 similarities with someone in school. And what, how do you think that would impact you? Do  
250 you think it's something that's helped you through your education?

251 **Jacob:** Um, I think, I think it would helpful me to like actually get to know other, like other  
252 things. For example, like when you're in primary school, you don't really think about that  
253 stuff and then you know when you're home, you're always taught you know certain stuff. Get  
254 into secondary school you're exposed to people like really really different viewpoints and  
255 who are vocal about it because obviously in secondary school. People are a lot more  
256 competent in themselves. So then, so that was good for me to like actually then, like,  
257 understand other people's use rather than literally just thinking about my own views and stuff  
258 like that.

259  
260 **Interviewer:** Yeah, so, would you say your school is quite diverse then lots of different,  
261 um...

262  
263 **Jacob:** I'd say my school is quite diverse yeah.

264  
265 **Interviewer:** And that's giving you the opportunity to learn different viewpoints. Understand,  
266 different peoples cultures, and...

267 **Jacob:** Yeah I would say so

268 **Interviewer:** Okay, so in some ways it is important to be similar, to have similarities. But  
269 actually, in other ways, it's helped you because you've learned a lot through meeting with  
270 people who are different to you. And then what you said before was there isn't it really  
271 anyone who is like you. Exactly like your ethnicity, but that hasn't been a complete  
272 hindrance.

273  
274 **Jacob:** Yeah, I don't think, yeah.

275  
276 **Interviewer:** Okay, Do you feel people at school understand you.

277  
278 **Jacob:** Um, for the most part yeah. I think so, like. What would you mean by like  
279 understanding me? As in... Yeah, I think so.

280  
281 **Interviewer:** Well, I guess what does it mean for you to be understood.

282  
283 **Jacob:** Like, what if I say something and then they'd, not necessarily agreed with me but  
284 they'd you know, take that in. And sort of, yeah, just understand what like what I'd be saying  
285 also or understand myself as a whole.

286  
287 **Interviewer:** Sort of like an acceptance?

288  
289 **Jacob:** Um... yeah, but obviously it's not. As in sometimes, someone can understand you but  
290 won't accept you.

291  
292 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. So you feel. So, so using that definition that you just came up  
293 with... Do you feel? You feel that school? That you can say something and then people show  
294 an understanding?

295  
296 **Jacob:** Yeah, I'd say so. But like, I think there's still like some people who just like won't  
297 accept it though. They'll understanding but they just won't accept it. I think, at my school.

298  
299 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. Do you have any examples of where that's happened to you?

300

301 **Jacob:** I mean, there's some there's like they'll be like... So for example if I say like,  
302 something related to, like my religion then some people would like, people are very quick to  
303 just dismiss it. So they weren't they weren't really like, maybe they'd understand it, but they  
304 won't really, they just dismiss it and just carry on and then. There's like small things like that,  
305 which have happened like throughout the years.

306 **Interviewer:** Okay. Yeah. So some, some sort of not complete understanding, because  
307 dismissed something you've said.

308 **Jacob:** Yeah

309 **Interviewer:** Um without properly. Knowing what they're talking about. Perhaps.

310

311 **Jacob:** Yeah.

312

313 **Interviewer:** What do you think has contributed to your, people under-, you feeling  
314 understood in school?

315

316 **Jacob:** Well, probably like the similarities we have. Like people would understand it,  
317 because it may not be like so much different to them. Obviously, like, for the people who like  
318 would dismiss it as like a they have the complete, complete difference. But for some people  
319 who'd have like when it's only like a slight difference to them they probably like understand it  
320 a little bit more than some other people would.

321

322 **Interviewer:** Yeah, So it's just a little bit of similarity. Sort of like the overlap we mentioned.

323 **Jacob:** Yeah.

324

325 **Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. So move on to, um, the inclusion questions. Do you, do you  
326 ever feel left out at school? Or have you been out of school?

327

328 **Jacob:** Um, personally, er, not, not really. I would say, since like, from year seven. I mean,  
329 because I try to get myself involved in like certain things. And so then I don't think there's  
330 been, you know, some something where I felt like, oh this isn't for me. I shouldn't really be  
331 here. Yeah, I personally for me.

332

333 **Interviewer:** Okay, so you felt, you haven't felt left out in school. But that's, that's something  
334 that you've done to prevent that from happening, where you've involved yourself in things.

335

336 **Jacob:** Yeah, because I've got like some friends who, who felt like they've been left out like  
337 on sports and stuff like that. And then you but then, it's mainly because they, they haven't  
338 really tired to do anything. Me, I haven't felt like left out because I've actively tried to, you  
339 know, include myself in these things.

340

341 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah. What do you think contributed to that? Why do you think you  
342 actively try and get involved?

343

344 **Jacob:** I think it's because like, I want, like, with like some sports. Because I like the sport  
345 right, so then, I'd try my hardest to be part of that don't feel like I'm left out. So, for example,  
346 with like football, like I loved football growing up. So then when I heard that the school had a  
347 football team. I didn't want to I didn't want to like let myself down by, you know, seeing  
348 other people on the football team when I know that I might like it more than them, or I might  
349 be better at it than them. I didn't like that feeling, in the sense that someone is in a position  
350 where I could be an If, like maybe tried.

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**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. So you're putting yourself in a position to be included and be involved because it's an interest of yours. And you don't want to be other people doing it when you could have had the opportunity to do it yourself.

**Jacob:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** Okay. What does, what does, What does your school do to help you feel connected or included. What kinds of things do they do?

**Jacob:** Um, well this has been happening, a little bit more recently but like this wasn't really run, like in year seven, year eight, maybe a little bit of year nine. But like, in terms of, to like, sort of, bring different ethnicities, to err, closer. They've been introducing like more like specific, special days, sort of like the international food festival day that they started at my school where, you know, you get to try other people's food, assuming you never like tried in your whole lifetime and you get to show maybe your food and stuff like that and then you're exposed to these different cultures, so it's not like it's not like you're just exposed to the same like canteen food every day for example right so you get to you get to try new things and then. Yeah, stuff like that. And then obviously, like some societies. So, like there's this African Caribbean society, so people have that of African Caribbean descent, or people or anyone who wants to go can go and like feel like they are included somewhere. But I think that's more recent. Than, than, back when when I was in year 7, that wasn't really around.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so would you like that's like a year or two ago, or?

**Jacob:** Yeah I think like, maybe two years ago, like the school started being more... I want to say, aware of, like, you know, other people's like cultures and wanting to include people. I think anyway.

**Interviewer:** That's really great to hear actually. Um, I've not heard of anything like that, in a secondary school. I usually hear about, um, like the Afro Caribbean society in universities. Um so it's interesting that that your school does that haven't heard of that before. Do you think that's something that helps people feel included in school? Do you think it's something that others schools should do?

**Jacob:** Yeah, I do. Because I remember when it first, that specific society first opened. There were like lots of people who are like, oh wow like we get to, we get to do something now we get to, you know, they're surrounded by people who have similar thoughts to them and they get to learn more about their culture which they may have not learned in school before so it was quite like, it's quite like exciting for them to be able to be amongst like other people that are similar to them.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, definitely. And food as well, food being quite an important part of people's cultures and having different... What did you call it? Erm something day, I can't remember what you called it.

**Jacob:** International food day. I think, yeah.

**Interviewer:** Yeah that's that's really cool. Is there anything else that you think schools could do to help children and young people from different ethnicities feel included?

401  
402 **Jacob:** Well similar to that food festival, I think on the same day. Um, well this was only  
403 done this year, but the the African Caribbean society, did a mufti day like you got to wear  
404 your own clothes, but they made it so that you can wear your own cultural clothes. So like  
405 you know not what you wear on the weekend but actual clothes that have like a meaning to  
406 your. They made that thing like this year. And like lots of people did it like everyone around  
407 the school was wearing like their own cultural things. So it wasn't like, so it was like a nice  
408 little break from, you know, just when you're in uniform, every single day, like you go you  
409 got to show other people, your culture, stuff like that. It was quite good.

410  
411 **Interviewer:** That sounds really good. And how, how was it taken up, what was the feeling  
412 from staff and pupils? How did they experience it?

413  
414 **Jacob:** I would say from students it was like a good response. Like everyone was like quite  
415 happy with it, thought it should happen more. And then, but I don't, I don't really remember  
416 like staffs opinions on that, I think, because with staff, there's quite a lot of them which are  
417 like, ethnic minorities. So even those, they go to wear their own stuff and was quite good for  
418 them as well. So I think for the most part, it was very like very positive thing. And there  
419 wasn't really much. There wasn't a bad thing about it.

420  
421 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah, okay. That's cool. Um, yeah, would you, what do you do anything  
422 else? If there was a school that wasn't doing anything like this, is there anything or... I mean  
423 your school are doing lots of things, but is there anything else, you could think of that would  
424 be great?

425  
426 **Jacob:** No that I can think of right now. Erm... I feel like that, that these two things should  
427 be done more often because, like, my thing, there's a big thing about like cultures and  
428 different ethnic groups is. It was literally like the food and the clothing right like it's very...  
429 it's something that is very like tangible like you can show people that... So like, I think is  
430 pretty good those two things.

431  
432 **Interviewer:** Yeah, and it's sounds like it's something that perhaps there isn't a lot of  
433 opportunity for in other ways, because you happen to wear uniform or if it's a standard Mufti  
434 day you might come in. Um, I don't know what you would call it British clothes or clothes  
435 that are not from your original background. On a, on a scale of one to 10. How important do  
436 you think those things are for schools to be doing in the UK. So 10 being extremely important  
437 and one being not important at all.

438  
439 **Jacob:** I'd say, I'd say eight or nine from the area. Cause um, like another thing that bought  
440 like conflict. As in like, I don't know about you but like when I was growing up sometimes  
441 I'd feel like a little bit like shameful about my... not shameful but like not confident about  
442 my own culture sort of like the idea again of like fitting in you didn't really want to, you  
443 know, wear stuff that, you know, everyone around you didn't wear. So then like for stuff like  
444 that "wear your own like cultural clothes day" is quite important for like some other people to  
445 feel confident in it like not feel like they're getting judged all the time by their by their  
446 clothing and, like, same principle for like the food you know some people will look at other  
447 cultures foods and think, oh you know that smells weird or that looks.. that doesn't look nice.  
448 You know, so then, when you're finally are able to show that to everyone else and it feels  
449 more inclusive, then people suddenly have a lot more confidence in wanting to be part of  
450 their own culture. I think it's really important for that stuff like that.

451

452 **Interviewer:** Yeah, that's really well said, sounds like to me about raising awareness is  
 453 important. And then by raising awareness to everyone else and then then seeing their  
 454 response to you. You can then feel less shameful. A bit more confident about your culture  
 455 because it's more seen it's out there. When it's not out there, it's hard to for it to be accepted  
 456 maybe or to be appreciated. Sounds like it was a celebration, of this is my identity.

457

458 **Jacob:** Yeah. I think so

459 **Interviewer:** Okay, cool. All right so move on to the last bit which is school environment.  
 460 So, this is similar question to the first one, but thinking about your school, the environment of  
 461 your school. Could you tell me a little bit about it.

462

463 **Jacob:** The general environment?

464

465 **Interviewer:** Yeah, so maybe not physically but just so you know if I, if you were describing  
 466 it to me I don't know the school that walked in there. We've been there. What, what's the vibe  
 467 the ethos the environment?

468

469 **Jacob:** Um, well, as I said. It's very, very community like it's very like everyone knows each  
 470 other, like there's... everyone's, everyone knows each other everyone's like. Sort of even  
 471 from students to teachers to like their Headmaster. It's not like it's a very, it's not like it's a  
 472 school where people like some people just don't know each other it's sort of in that sense and  
 473 then obviously you have the fact that it's like a grammar school so then, everyone's like in  
 474 terms of like academics everyone's really smart everyone. Everyone wants, well not wants the  
 475 same thing but everyone like wants to be successful in their own sense, right, whether in that  
 476 interest or whatnot. So it's like so. It's like the community feel where you're surrounded by  
 477 like people who think like you, who not like people who are just wanting to go to school and  
 478 then that's it. Like they don't feel like they need to do anything else. So like, Yeah, I think  
 479 that's how to describe like the general environment of the school

480

481 **Interviewer:** Okay. So there's a sense of community, there's a sense that people share  
 482 similar values in terms of academics, want to achieve?

483 **Jacob:** Yeah

484 **Interviewer:** Okay, and how much do you feel that that school ethos and the values that you  
 485 just shared. How much do you feel they fit with your own?

486

487 **Jacob:** Um, quite well, especially in terms of the academics. Like the general feel of the  
 488 school towards doing well in academics, like I fit in well with that because I hear from like,  
 489 you know, other schools is that some are more some aren't really academic space, like they  
 490 just it's just somewhere for students to go like just because of their kind of they have to. And  
 491 then they just move on. Whilst this school is like you choose to go to the school because you  
 492 want to do well, like later on in life. And you want to have like good opportunities that you  
 493 know maybe people from other schools don't really get.

494

495 **Interviewer:** Okay, so something about the achievement and future opportunities being  
 496 really important to you. That that, fits fits in quite nicely with it. On a scale of one to 10.  
 497 Doing that again... one to 10. 10 being if you fit in very well. One don't fit in at all. Where  
 498 would you say you are.

499

500 **Jacob:** I'd say like a nine, or eight.

501

502 **Interviewer:** Okay, cool. Why was it not a 10 then? What, what's the thing that makes it a  
503 nine and not a ten.

504

505 **Jacob:** Um, I don't know, maybe it's a... Um... I think.. No, no, I think, I think. I think that's  
506 just because when I joined the school I didn't really feel like included, in a sense, because  
507 back then it was there wasn't really much like awareness of seeing a different, ethnicities.  
508 Back when I joined, it was literarily academics and that's it. Academics and maybe some  
509 extracurricular you can do on the side like sports. Whilst, if I were to join the school now in  
510 the current state that it's in, I would feel very much included in, I wouldn't feel left out.

511

512 **Interviewer:** Yeah, it sounds like part of your feeling on fitting in with the school's values  
513 and ethos is linked to little bit to your ethnicity or other ethnicities and feeling that they're  
514 appreciating difference.

515

516 **Jacob:** Yeah.

517

518 **Interviewer:** Whereas when you started, it wasn't really, it was just... Even though  
519 academics is value of yours and you feel that's important. It was that at the beginning but  
520 there was the, the appreciating difference in different ethnicities wasn't there?

521

522 **Jacob:** Yeah, it wasn't like a, like a focus point, because it was mainly just like back to  
523 school wasn't really like building, your character in a sense. It was just doing well and  
524 moving on. Whereas probably now it's more like people, so it's more like. Even though it's  
525 still got like a really big focus on it, But I think maybe, I don't know, actually, but I feel like  
526 when you feel like your culture or anything like that is included you have like maybe like a  
527 more positive attitude to learning and actually being at the school. Because like, like, Back  
528 when I was, like, younger, I didn't, I didn't really. Because I didn't really identify to most of  
529 the people at that school. I wasn't really feeling anything. So that I didn't really like learning  
530 was learning at that point for when you actually have like a genuine attachment to the school.  
531 When because, you know, they do, they do, like, they do included or make you feel better  
532 than you end up having a better attitude towards actually being at the school and learning at  
533 the school. I think,

534

535 **Interviewer:** Thank you, it's really helpful. So when you're saying is, that when you're  
536 connected to the learning, then you're feeling like you can achieve. You will sort of feel more  
537 able to achieve and feel that you'd learn and you want to, the motivation is a bit different.  
538 With before it was just sort of, I'm here to learn, but I'm not connected to it. I'm not  
539 connected to anyone here at the moment. What was the change. Was it the different students  
540 coming in, was it staff. What changed do you think?

541

542 **Jacob:** I'd say. I would say like just the general shift. Like for instance like my school is, like,  
543 more and more, it's becoming more of that like diverse through the years. Whilst, you know,  
544 like for example when I first joined the school majority of like people in the older years were  
545 like, mainly from a white background. So then, like, I think maybe I just started to notice it  
546 more than notice the fact that maybe some students left out or felt left out of the school, and  
547 stuff like that. I think it was just a general, a general shift in you know how society was. And  
548 you know like different, like, especially like recent events. There's been like a big like shift,  
549 like in terms of, like, attitudes towards racism attitudes towards different cultures about the

550 school. Like, they just started this like only now. They've had like they had like different  
 551 groups for everything but only now they started at anti racism, like task force. Which like  
 552 you'd probably expect should have been done, like a while ago but only because of recent  
 553 events that this is only been able to happen. Which I personally I feel like I should have  
 554 started back a while ago if you have like anti bullying ambassadors if you have, like, the e-  
 555 safety ambassadors and obviously I feel like the anti-racism ambassadors should have been  
 556 like a really long time ago, even though it's only introduced last week or a couple of weeks  
 557 ago.

558

559 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah, I agree that's really great that they're doing something about it and  
 560 it's really helpful to hear from you because you've, you've been in the school from year seven  
 561 to year 11. So, Yeah, you've had sort of a whole transition, and you could, you've had a  
 562 journey, which is helpful to hear about. Thank you. Okay. So, this is a last question, and then  
 563 see if there's anything else more you'd like to add. So do you feel connected to what you learn  
 564 about.

565 **Jacob:** Sorry you just cut out a little bit.

566 **Interviewer:** Oh, do you feel connected to what you learn about?

567

568 **Jacob:** Do I feel connected to what I learn about, um, was this talking about curriculum, as in  
 569 like sort of feeling that I want to learn about it then... For the most part, yes, like for the  
 570 subjects, such as, you know, the sciences, and that, like, obviously, I can't really do much  
 571 about that because that's just standard things by like maybe subjects like history where  
 572 obviously you'd like there's been like a whole thing about like decolonize the curriculum for  
 573 school. And, and English actually, we'll be learning about like that and that's true to me so  
 574 because back when I was, well, not before GCSE level, everything that I learned about in  
 575 history was mainly to do with like the British Empire. And like, you know, how successful  
 576 they were and how great the world was when you know the British Empire was about and  
 577 how beneficial it was to every country even though like we what we know now that it really  
 578 wasn't, like, the British Empire was like the best thing that ever happened to the world right?  
 579 So then, like so. So yeah, I would feel like from that sense. I was really like being forced on  
 580 me that I should feel like the British Empire was like the best thing ever. Right. But then you  
 581 know see if you go to GCSE you learn about different stuff. But then, the best like that's like  
 582 the own. And I've also had like some things for English like we shouldn't just be studying  
 583 straight, English, writers, and we should like be studying writers from everywhere else, and  
 584 stuff like that, but I'd say more so like the history part is like, more needs to be done about  
 585 that so it's not just like really biased towards, specifically the British Empire. But apart from  
 586 that...

587

588 **Interviewer:** What do you think? Why do you think that's an issue? What would be... what  
 589 would it mean if that was a sort of a more truthful history or more of a mix of different  
 590 history?

591

592 **Jacob:** well I think History about like um, about British Empire, and just colonisation in  
 593 general, like being taught in history, is the fact that it's made it sound like it's good. Like for  
 594 example, like myself and like most of my other friends have such... their, their past family  
 595 have had like so many bad like things to do with colonisation and then. Then when all of a  
 596 sudden in school you're being taught that it was really good for you know the different  
 597 economies and stuff that was really good for the whole world. Then you suddenly feel like  
 598 this, conflicting ideas between, you know, what's actually happened. And then what school is  
 599 teaching you. And I think that's why that issue is like quite like important.

600

601 **Interviewer:** Part of it being almost, being able to connect with it for yourself in your own  
602 histories. Um, but also that being a bit deceitful that you'd been taught this for how many  
603 years, and now it's coming about but it wasn't as great as you thought, and it doesn't match  
604 with the history. Your own history, your friends experiences and their histories, so. Yeah.

605 **Jacob:** Yeah

606 **Interviewer:** Thank you. And, well that's it for the questions. Was there anything else that he  
607 felt would be important for me to know. Important to raise.

608

609 **Jacob:** Um, I think I've covered everything that needs to be said really.

610

611

612 **Interviewer:** what you said has been really, really helpful. We are grateful for your, your  
613 eloquent thoughts, and there's been a lot of a lot of food for thoughts when I say food for  
614 thought. And, and I'm really looking forward to speaking to other young people as well to see  
615 if they share similar views to you. What I'm going to do now is I'm going to send you. Well  
616 send, got your mom's email so I'll send her a little debrief sheet, which is just to say a big  
617 thank you for me to you for your participation. If we were in person, I would have given you  
618 like some sweets, chocolate or something. Say thank you.

619 **Jacob:** Haha, that's fine

620 **Interviewer:** But with with this weird COVID stuff so it's gonna be a Word document, which  
621 is not as exciting and, but on that document, there is there are some links, about inequality,  
622 and if you were interested in looking into it further or if you wanted to join up any what's it  
623 called organisations, there are a couple links there. And there's also Samaritans if you felt  
624 impacted by anything that we spoke about today you can give them a call. It's free service,  
625 counselling service. I will check in with your mum. Because I have had contact details about  
626 months afterwards to see how you're getting on. Are you impacted, are you okay? And then  
627 after that one more time just to check in. And then I will be sharing the results, it with your  
628 school. You won't be in it, it's all. It's all anonymous, as no names connected to it and also  
629 your data is going to be mixed up with other students from different schools, so you couldn't  
630 really tell which schools said what and which students said what. It will be anonymous.

631 **Jacob:** Ahhh, okay.

632 **Interviewer:** Um, what we say in here is confidential I'm not gonna be sharing it with  
633 anybody else. It's for me to analyse myself. And, yeah, so the results will if you wanted to  
634 know about what the results were then you can contact me and I can share a summary of what  
635 I found. It is a long process, so that will be in July, 2021, so it'll be next year when it'll be all  
636 done.

637 **Jacob:** Oh okay

638 **Interviewer:** Yes, it's quite a while away, so you might forget about it by then. It's about a  
639 year. But yeah, if you were still interested, you can get in contact with me to find out what  
640 was found, but I'm hoping that will make a difference. So, you've been part of that. Thank  
641 you.

642 **Jacob:** Thank you.

643

644 **Interviewer:** and I hope you enjoyed the experience, because I've really enjoyed it. Nice.  
645 Yeah. All right. Have a good summer.

646 **Jacob:** You too.

647 And you're going into Year 12, So good luck with that as well.

648

649 **Jacob:** Thank you very much.

650

651 **Interviewer:** All right, all the best. Bye

652 **Jacob:** Bye.

**Appendix 14: Transcript: Malachi**

1 **Interviewer:** recording. Does it say recording on yours?

2

3 **Malachi:** Um yeah.

4

5 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Cool. All right. So thank you for taking part in this research.

6

7 **Malachi:** No problem.

8

9 **Interviewer:** I've got some starter questions and then there'll be four themes that we'll talk  
10 about. Okay. So, to start with, if you were speaking to the friend, who doesn't attend your  
11 school. How would you describe your school to them?

12

13 **Malachi:** Um, well I describe my school, I'd say that it's really good because, like, they're  
14 always pushing us to get really good grades, and they always make sure that we have some  
15 kind of insight that we're going to be later on in life. So that's like, kind of motivational  
16 because they put a lot of motivations, in place that we might not have had before. But I also  
17 say that like, sometimes it's not the same cause there's a lot of people from different  
18 backgrounds, when in my old school there were more just people from a vast majority of  
19 backgrounds. Like, maybe in my new school. It's a bit narrowed but I feel like they're very  
20 accepting. But if I was just to speak to a friend I just say, you know, they always push hard to  
21 give us like good grades, but it's very different and hard. The work is quite hard.

22

23 **Interviewer:** What, what year are you in Malachi?

24

25 **Malachi:** I'm in year 8.

26

27 **Interviewer:** So were you in a different school in year seven or did you go? Were you  
28 talking about your primary school? When you said your other school?

29

30 **Malachi:** Um, so, yeah if I speak to people out of my school now, I'd be speaking about my  
31 primary school.

32

33 **Interviewer:** Okay, primary school. And you said it was, there was more mixture of, diverse,  
34 it was more diverse?

35

36 **Malachi:** Yeah, like, we had loads of different people from different countries. We had, um  
37 yeah, loads of loads of different, a different variety. While as, I feel like, in our new school  
38 there's less of, um maybe black people or people from Hispanic background and stuff like  
39 that. That's, that's the only difference but yeah. Even though there's less of a like diversity in  
40 terms of the students that go there now. It's got much better, because my dad went there and  
41 he had a very different experience. And then, also, but there's definitely, like better, they're  
42 always accepting so.

43

44 **Interviewer:** and you feel they're accepting that that's important. And when you say it was  
45 more that it's different is that with the school staff or with the students or is it both?

46

47 **Malachi:** Um, to be honest, I only thought really about the school students. But, like, I mean  
48 I feel like the teachers, they have a very, like, vast majority of teachers in our new school but  
49 they only. I mean they don't have. I mean, they don't have, actually, to be honest, they don't  
50 have as diverse staff in the school now, but like I feel like they have a lot of different

51 backgrounds, like, different staff but they don't really have black teachers, and I feel like, one  
 52 thing that I've picked up one, is that a lot of the black staff are all cleaners, while as I feel like  
 53 a lot of in a lot of other schools in my, in the secondary school that my friends go to. They  
 54 have a lot of black teachers so I feel like maybe it's just the fact that, like, as I said, in, it's a  
 55 different background from a lot of people so that's why I think there's such a difference and  
 56 change.

57

58 **Interviewer:** Do you think, that you've noticed that, do you think that makes a difference?

59

60 **Malachi:** Yeah, I've noticed that and, like, it's been, I never really thought of the teachers but  
 61 then, when, when I did realise that like we don't have any black teachers, other than like we  
 62 have cleaners and stuff. And I feel like and and we had um also. It was quite um, confusing  
 63 because in the induction days in year six one before school. There was one biology teacher he  
 64 came from Ghana, which is where I come from, I come from Ghana and Jamaica. So she. I  
 65 like talked to her and then as soon as I came to school, she wasn't there, and we found out  
 66 that she like had been sacked or something, and there were no one other black teachers. So, I  
 67 mean, I feel like it's just something that hasn't been there but, like, I don't know whether it's  
 68 just a point of view from the teachers that they don't want a black children. I mean black  
 69 teachers, but I don't feel like that is the case. I feel like, teaching, being a teacher isn't really  
 70 like a pushed, kind of, I don't think it's a pushed job or occupation to have by a lot people. I  
 71 think that if you're speaking to your parents. A lot of people from my background, their  
 72 parents will say like Doctor, stuff like that. But me, I have more, or I can do what my parents  
 73 say just do well and you can choose what you want to do. But a lot of people have to work for  
 74 doctors or accountants and I feel like teachers kind of left, left out of the bracket.

75

76 **Interviewer:** Yeah, okay, thank you. So there was a teacher, there was there was a teacher,  
 77 and that you identified as being similar to you. Then you, when you started they weren't there  
 78 anymore and you found out it wasn't a really good reason behind why they weren't there  
 79 anymore.

80

81 **Malachi:** Yeah

82

83 **Interviewer:** So what does it mean to be in a minority group? what does that mean?

84

85 **Malachi:** Well, to be honest, it means that you have to mix with a lot of different  
 86 backgrounds. So, even though. In my old school for example, there were more. I'd say a  
 87 quarter of the year or a third of the year were black, but now it's like, I'd say a 10<sup>th</sup> if you're  
 88 lucky, and so I feel like it's, it's something that, it shows that if one 10<sup>th</sup> of the year is black,  
 89 then you have to mix with other different backgrounds because you can't just force yourself  
 90 to mix with the students. And I also feel like it means that we can come from some a different  
 91 background, that is nice that when we are together, we can like, identify with some of the  
 92 experiences that we've had. But it also means that a lot of people around us, especially in our  
 93 classes and stuff have very different backgrounds. So, in my, for example in my form, it's,  
 94 we've got two black people including me, and then they're like, half the class of the form is  
 95 Asian of the form is white I'd say. And then, so, when we like, share experiences, I feel like a  
 96 lot of the students, because we come from a smart school, a lot of them are able to take in, but  
 97 there are some students that just, they have their own kind of like mindsets and they don't  
 98 really take it in. I don't think that's many people, but there are some people definitely, they  
 99 hear stuff, and they don't think of it in the right way, but like. So, that just means that we have  
 100 to understand where they come from, understand how to act differently around different

101 people. But then, at the same time, like, also embrace our culture and talk to it, talk about  
102 with our friends as well.

103

104 **Interviewer:** So the things that some students aren't understanding or taking on board, what  
105 things were you thinking about then?

106

107 **Malachi:** So, like, um, like I feel like, for example, me and my friend so I've just moved to  
108 XXXX, but I used to live in XXX. And my friend lives in XXXX. And every time, when in  
109 class, we always say like that for example in year 7, there was one thing that the teachers  
110 always said, like stay away from XXXX, and stuff, and stay away from like XXXX as well.  
111 But the thing is, so one time we were like, my friend was like XXXX isn't that bad, it's just  
112 like, you know, it's a different area, you have to have your wits about you but like, it's not like  
113 that. It's not that bad. And these people like some people would be like taking it in and just be  
114 like, well. Either, they think maybe he's right or my mom's advised me not to go there so I  
115 won't go there but still think of what he's saying. But there were some people who are just  
116 like, no, it's really bad and it sometimes comes across as offensive to the student he actually  
117 lives there. So, and like, if you say something that, you know that's happened to you or  
118 something that if someone said something previously to you before. I feel like if even if you  
119 say something that someone's told you in primary. Some people are like, oh that that couldn't  
120 have happened, because, you know, we live in a different society and stuff like that. So I feel  
121 like some, some people, it's just that kind of, just their mindset that they don't really want to  
122 adapt to other people's opinions but that's not many people. And to be honest, in our school  
123 like a lot of the people actually put an effort into listening and understanding of other's  
124 opinions. So that's good.

125

126 **Interviewer:** That's good, so there are some people who perhaps are a bit insensitive don't  
127 really listen properly. Then, they're in the minority of people at your school majority try to  
128 listen and try to understand.

129

130 **Malachi:** Yeah

131

132 **Interviewer:** So, you mentioned this a bit earlier but how would you describe your ethnicity?  
133 How do you identify?

134

135 **Malachi:** So I identify as Ghanaian and Jamaican. My mom's mum is Jamaican, and  
136 everyone else is Ghanaian. So, I like know a wide range, you know, I have an I have quite a  
137 broad knowledge of different cultures. I know that in England, you know, that I know about  
138 the food here, the stuff that we wear here. And I also know about that stuff in Ghana. I also  
139 know, and same in Jamaica, and we have loads of parties and stuff before, lockdown, of  
140 course. So, like, I'm able to like, understand, different backgrounds, and it is nice, like, not  
141 just being on one being from lots of different places.

142

143 **Interviewer:** Yeah and how do you feel about being a mix of Ghanaian and Jamaican?

144

145 **Malachi:** I think that is actually quite nice because a lot of people. I know a lot of people  
146 who are Jamaican. I know a lot of people who are Ghanaian not just my family but like  
147 people when I meet them. Like people my age, so I meet them around my neighbourhood and  
148 stuff. It's really nice because like, it's not like I, I can relate to more than one of people. So  
149 that's why I feel like it's a nice thing. And, yeah, it's just nice.

150

151 **Interviewer:** Thank you. Yeah, it sounds nice. I can relate, in some ways. So we'll move on  
 152 to the themes, we're gonna talk about relationships so with, you know, teachers and friends  
 153 that kind of thing, we'll talk about identification. And then inclusion, and then we'll finish  
 154 with school environment. Okay so thinking about relationships, first, do you get on with your  
 155 teachers and staff at school?

156

157 **Malachi:** Yeah, most of them. I don't think, I don't think that they're, like, I don't think some  
 158 of the teachers that I don't like, I don't think they're all. I just don't think they're. I just don't  
 159 like sometimes they, they're just harsh and stuff so I just don't like them as a teachers. But  
 160 there are some teachers that are just, I just don't like for certain reasons that they just, they  
 161 kind of block out certain people. Which I feel like we'll go into more detail about. But like,  
 162 there's a lot of teachers who just. Well not a lot sorry, there's probably just two teachers that I  
 163 feel like they're not very nice towards certain group of people. But the rest, I don't think it's  
 164 like that. There are like 20 teachers and only two of them are like that.

165

166 **Interviewer:** When you say a certain group of people can you tell me a bit more about that.

167

168 **Malachi:** So like, if for example, I have, we've had like evidence that there was one teacher,  
 169 my design and technology teacher. Who, he, he just, there's not been one white or Caucasian  
 170 person that's been given a behaviour point. But all of the black people and some of the Asian  
 171 people have. Some of them haven't. So to be honest. That in itself was a factor. And I don't  
 172 think that, I mean me, I know that I am a very chatty person. I talk to people and I like.  
 173 Sometimes, I know that about myself that I can get behaviour points sometimes for talking in  
 174 class. But then I know that to a certain extent, it can't be like, that I'm getting loads of them,  
 175 because, I know that I won't be, you know, it won't be something that's that bad, that I'll be  
 176 getting one every class. So my advice from my dad, my mom was to just make sure that I  
 177 don't chat in his class. That's kind of work, but he always tries to find a way. And there's  
 178 plenty of other people in my class who just you know they um, they just, who are from, who  
 179 are black and stuff, they normally just, they don't care, they're just like, I'm gonna be myself,  
 180 and I don't, I'm not intending to get behaviour points, but if this person is giving me some for  
 181 no reason... For example, there's one boy, who is half Asian and half Nigerian, and he is one  
 182 of my best friends. And I know that he is not the sort of person to get in trouble, all the time,  
 183 but he does. He has like an attitude, which is what they will call it, and he doesn't try to get in  
 184 trouble but whenever he does for an unfair reason, he will then topical it with rather that you  
 185 know it's not fair and he'll get upset to the teacher and speak his mind. So, like, for example,  
 186 if this boy gets up in the middle of the class to help a friend. And this teacher says like you're  
 187 running or something random, like that's a lie. He'll then say "No, I wasn't". And then the  
 188 person, the teacher will be like where's your behaviour, your like card for me to write your  
 189 behaviour and he'll me like "I'm not giving it to you, cause I didn't do anything wrong". And  
 190 then he'll get himself in trouble, cause that's, that's just giving the teacher more reason to get  
 191 him in trouble. So I feel like that's kind of set up in a way like that. So, like I feel like the  
 192 teachers got better. My parents had a word with him because he said some sensitive  
 193 comments. But to be honest, I don't think that he's a bad person I just don't think his mindset  
 194 is right. It might be because of where he's grown up, who has influenced him. But, I mean, to  
 195 be honest it's not my, my, it's not my problem like I should just do my part in trying to be  
 196 good in his class. And to be honest DT isn't like a subject, I'll do so. I'll just try my best but  
 197 you know.

198

199 **Malachi:** it sounds like you have to be careful. And it sounds very unfair. Um, you  
 200 mentioned some sensitive comments that when that was said, Is this the same teacher?

201  
 202 **Malachi:** Yeah. So, when I had parents evening. There was a teacher who the same teacher.  
 203 He did my parents evening and I noticed before I was like one of the last people done my  
 204 parents evening. But, in, for his class. And I noticed that a lot of my friends who are black  
 205 came from the thing crying, and then I'd ask what he said. They said that he had told lies  
 206 about them. So, when I came in I was like, he's probably going to do the same to me. So I  
 207 was like, I'm just gonna go into the class, I mean the parents evening and just listen see what  
 208 I've done wrong, if there's anything to improve, I will. If there's nothing then I won't. So I  
 209 come in. He says that I got, decent grades, like, I'm better with group projects than singular  
 210 projects, and then after that, he starts saying like my behaviour is a problem. And then my  
 211 parents were like okay and like go on. And he said that, basically, I do little gestures and  
 212 gang signs. But that was a lie. So, for example, if I'm to wave at my friend, or, like, do  
 213 something like that, or like this. No, then he would take it the wrong way, but I've never  
 214 known this and so that's why it was quite shocking. That, like an automatic, automatically,  
 215 like it raised a question because at first I was thinking this teacher's just not nice. And then I  
 216 thought, maybe he's got some kind of prejudice, but I'm not sure. So I'm just going to, you  
 217 know, see where this goes. And then he said, something like that and to be honest, I felt kind  
 218 of upset because if, if someone is to like try and tell my parents that that's a very sensitive  
 219 thing. So, if my parents to question, like, are you in a gang or something like that. So that's  
 220 why I'd It's very sensitive, so I don't think that it was nice at all for him to bring something  
 221 like that. So that's why I'd say, like, sensitive comments. And, yeah, that's why.

222  
 223 **Interviewer:** Thank you for sharing that with me. It sounds very painful, very painful. And  
 224 you mentioned, despite these small amount of teachers, there are some teachers that you get  
 225 on with really well.

226  
 227 **Malachi:** Yeah definitely.

228  
 229 **Interviewer:** Do you feel there is any that you feel connected to or?

230  
 231 **Malachi:** Um, there's one teacher because like we've got no black teachers. But we've got,  
 232 one of our teachers is Jamaica. I get along. She's always telling me I need to work hard  
 233 because I don't want like anyone to get in the way of me trying to do well. And she's my food  
 234 tech teacher so, like, I thought like, it's nice that some of the foods that I know, she likes as  
 235 well, so that's nice. And also, yeah, it's nice to get on with her, as like in a cultural point of  
 236 view, and then also there's just teachers that I get along with because just they're good  
 237 teachers and they helped me, they actually put a lot of effort into, help me and the students  
 238 and they try to get to know everyone in depth. So, like, that's what I'd say.

239  
 240 **Interviewer:** Sounds like those teachers really care. And that's important. And it's also nice  
 241 that you can have that relationship with a teacher where you can share similar things and you  
 242 can talk about the, the food that you share, and that's, that's a nice experience, I imagine. So,  
 243 is it important to be part of the group, do you think?

244  
 245 **Malachi:** yeah like a cultural group?

246  
 247 **Interviewer:** any group, can be a cultural group. Yeah.

248  
 249 **Malachi:** Yeah, yeah I feel like, I just think that group of friends, to be honest, is all you  
 250 need. Like in my, I am the sort of person who gets along with nearly everyone. So that's why

251 I think there's like groups of people that I adapt to so there's people who like a specific game  
 252 that I like, I talk to them in a group and if there's people who are like, same sport as me, or  
 253 people from the same background as me, or something like that it's nice to be in groups like  
 254 that. But I also feel like a group is also good cause then you know, you got to trust in a funny  
 255 way so I know that I get along with, probably a lot of the year. So if my friend, one of my  
 256 good friends knows that that person is good first, then I can. It's good that I can stay in that  
 257 group away from the person. So, I feel like groups are really just, they're good for socialising  
 258 and actually like being together, and you can relate to a lot of people.

259

260 **Interviewer:** So tell me a bit about the people you relate to in school, so like your friends.

261

262 **Malachi:** So like, I relate to um, lot of my friends who play basketball and football. Because,  
 263 like, I mean, they are my favourite sport. So when I go outside to and play in the park, I can  
 264 play with them and I can talk to them about what happened in the latest game and stuff like  
 265 that. And then I relate to people who like, I'd say, who like the same foods or the same type  
 266 of stuff. I also relate to people who are on the contrary to me. So, when I was in primary and I  
 267 had a really good friend called David and he is like my best friend and he was from, like he's  
 268 just was a very. He's very opposite to me like, in a way, but then there's also definitely stuff  
 269 that we relate, we love science, we always did like experiments with each other. But the thing  
 270 was like, he likes to read a lot and I like to play games like he reads and he likes to play  
 271 games like I read. So, like, I'd say I play games like four, three times as much as I read. So, is  
 272 the same with him so it's like kind of the opposite and, like, it's nice also getting to know  
 273 other people's backgrounds like he likes. He likes um. What's it called. I think it's Johnny  
 274 Cage and I like Michael Jackson. So we listen to each other's music. And like we actually like  
 275 each other's music. So it's nice like we're introducing people, we're introducing each other to  
 276 like different kind of things. And also I feel like I can also kind of save him in a way because  
 277 in our primary school. My primary school and into our secondary school, the last year or last  
 278 two years, I was there. And now, there's a lot more like half a year or two, like, yeah, like  
 279 what two thirds of the year is black in that school now. And a lot of them come from very  
 280 different backgrounds and they tease him. Because he comes from, he's white and he comes  
 281 from a different sort of background to them. And so like I always try and help him. And he's  
 282 like, his parents say for example, his parents don't advocate, advocate fighting, which is not,  
 283 like, I wouldn't say fighting is a good way. But, like, if someone is physically hurting you  
 284 like, for few days you've got to like, stop it. So, when there was one boy who in year six, who  
 285 didn't even go to our school but he was friends with someone in our school, and they lived in  
 286 in estate together. And he kept always provoking David and always like, like when David  
 287 was skateboarding, he would kick his skateboard. Whenever I wasn't there. So I said that we  
 288 should be walk partners, cause we didn't like it was, he was walking home by himself with  
 289 me because my mom is very overprotected. So I was like we should be walk buddies and  
 290 when we walk. Every time a person did it, I'd tell him to stop. He was cool with me because  
 291 we came from the same background. So, and then every time he tried to I'd always tell him to  
 292 stop. It got to, he'd always still try and find a way to do it. So, we like kind of had a small  
 293 fight. And he never bothered him again. And then now, but now I've moved away from there.  
 294 And I don't know what's going on. So, I don't know what's happening, whether he's still  
 295 hurting him because now he goes to that secondary school. So, I don't know, but I feel like  
 296 groups are very important. But, yeah, sometimes you can help somebody else who's not in the  
 297 same group as you which is really nice.

298

299 **Interviewer:** yeah. It's nice to hear you can share something with someone else who's  
 300 different from you and they can share things with you as well and you can learn from each

301 other, what sounds like what you were doing there. Um, okay, we're going to move on to  
 302 identification, okay. And we kind of talked about this already, you mentioned it already, but  
 303 I'll ask you again. Then you can add, add anything extra that you wanted to share with me, so  
 304 are there people at school who are similar to you?

305  
 306 **Malachi:** Yeah, but not many. It's not majority, it's like minority but it's nice that I have a  
 307 little bit, people who can relate to me like, my food tech teacher and also, I have, I'd say. So,  
 308 one of my friends who goes to my school, he got in, and I've known in my whole life. So, in  
 309 my parents, my dad and his dad used to DJ together. And they met each other in university,  
 310 and they're like best friends. So, now we go to the same school, and we are, we didn't go to  
 311 the same primary but we like kind of know each other a bit better and we come from the  
 312 same. We both come from Ghana. And then I have two other friends who come from Ghana  
 313 as well. So that's nice. And I have one friend that comes from Jamaica, I have plenty of, like  
 314 most of, I'd say six friends that come from Nigeria. And so it's nice like that we can all relate.  
 315 Sometimes you have friendly beefs like, for example, Nigeria and Ghana both make Jollof  
 316 and we always are saying like all ours is better, no ours is better and stuff. So it's very funny  
 317 and it's very nice.

318  
 319 **Interviewer:** Did you come to any conclusion?

320  
 321 **Malachi:** Nope, but there was one, there's one boy in our year who is Nigerian and he said  
 322 that Ghanaian Jollof is better so currently we're at the lead.

323  
 324 **Interviewer:** So you guys are winning. That is funny. But it's nice that you can have these  
 325 jokes with people who understand where you're coming from as well, because they share  
 326 similar foods to you. Okay, so you can't you've answered this a little bit already but is it  
 327 important for you to be similar to other people at school?

328  
 329 **Malachi:** I also, I think it is. I think that I feel like it's important that you also have people  
 330 who are from, who are different to you, because then, like, you can learn more. In a more  
 331 like, you can learn about different people. So, if, let's say, I go to a school, and everyone in  
 332 the school is black then, that's a really nice thing, that I have so many people that I can relate  
 333 to. But then if, when I go to the workplace. And there's like, there's white people, there's  
 334 Asian people, Spanish people, there's loads of different people, then, when I come to that  
 335 workplace it's going to be very different. And I won't be adapted to that type of environment.  
 336 However, I feel like when you have those different kind of frame groups already. It's hard to  
 337 make them but then as soon as you make them, it gets, it helps you a lot. And also, but like  
 338 I've also felt like it's very important that you have groups of people that are similar to you  
 339 because if they aren't similar to you, I mean, like, it's, if you have no people that are similar to  
 340 you as a very upsetting kind of thing because you don't feel like you belong there. So, like, I'd  
 341 say, my dad, he had, he had about, he said that he had five people in his whole year that were  
 342 black. And so, that meant like, like he said that it was a really good school. But he didn't feel  
 343 as if he did, he like belonged there as much. So when, he came back to his, when he came on  
 344 the buss to XXX, he felt like his XXX friends were more like his friends and he didn't get to  
 345 make the connections in school. And then, also, on top of that, like, he didn't do rugby and  
 346 stuff like that. Which, because he's more into football and basketball like me but he always  
 347 tells me, no matter what you're used to like you've got to get out of zones that, like, you can't  
 348 just be stay in that zone, you've got to also adapt, so I do rugby as well and I have to like, you  
 349 know, have people different friend groups as well. But definitely if you don't, I think it's  
 350 really good because then it gives you a sense of belonging. If you don't have anyone in the

351 school that's like you, regardless, you won't, you won't feel like you belong there.

352

353 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. Um, and, does that involve, include staff as well?

354

355 **Malachi:** Yeah. I feel like, I feel like, it includes staff to a certain point because I see a lot of  
356 my like Caucasian friends, that they can talk to some of the teachers that even that they don't  
357 agree with me. And so, like, for example, my DT teacher can talk to others like, like they're,  
358 like, the less it would be very upsetting if I had no one that I could be like that to. So I feel  
359 like that. And also, like, even if your peers in your school right. If your peers in your school  
360 are from your background, they can help you to a certain extent. Also, your teachers are  
361 much wiser so if you have a teacher that's kind of like he or she, they like relate to you, they  
362 can help you a lot, just like your parents can. So, like that's, that's what I'd say. It's important  
363 to a certain extent.

364

365 **Interviewer:** Yeah. That's important. I can see that. Um, do you feel people at school  
366 understand you, do you feel understood at school?

367

368 **Malachi:** Yeah. By a lot of people, but not everyone. I feel like a lot of the teachers  
369 understand me. A lot of my peers understand me as well but not everybody. Definitely not  
370 everyone but a lot of people do. And I don't feel like, I think that it's nice that people can  
371 understand you, but then you don't can't expect everyone to understand you because they  
372 don't come from the same place as you. But it's nice when you have people who just  
373 understand you to a certain extent.

374

375 **Interviewer:** What do you think helps that, helps you feel understood by them? What do they  
376 do that makes you feel understood?

377

378 **Malachi:** Um, like they actually tried to talk to me and like they try and you know, they try  
379 and get to know me. So for example, in the first few days, I got to know some people and  
380 other people tried to know me. And so that's why it was nice for like, I have a friend that he's  
381 Indian, and he said that he, in primary school, he had a friend that was Ghanaian that loved  
382 Jellof rice and likes Jellof rice as well. And funnily enough, I have a friend from Sri Lankan  
383 from primary school who showed me Peshwari naan. And I really liked it. So, when we like  
384 connected we kind of, yeah we, it was nice because then we got to know each other. And we  
385 had also something that we could know like already about each other so like things like that  
386 it's really nice when someone actually comes to you and asks you, like. There's people who  
387 come to you and speak to you. But it's even nicer when you come to someone or they come  
388 to you and they say, like "Where are you from?" "What's your favourite food?" and stuff like  
389 that. And you can just be honest and express yourself with them. But there are certain people  
390 that if you express yourself with them, they might not be like, be like "oh I don't really like  
391 that" or like they always have some kind of negative opinion. But, like, it's much better when  
392 you like have people who have a good opinion.i

393

394 **Interviewer:** And people that can connect with you on things that you know about and that  
395 they know about as well. They have awareness about.

396

397 **Malachi:** Yeah

398

399 **Interviewer:** So, we're gonna move on to inclusion. Do you, do you ever feel left out at  
400 school?

401  
 402 **Malachi:** Not really. I do feel kind of left out when some people like they are into certain  
 403 stuff and, I mean, like there's a lot of people who are into the same sort of stuff for them. I'm  
 404 not because of where I come from and stuff, and sometimes, I guess that makes me feel a  
 405 little bit left out. But it's not really a big thing because I have things that I feel included about,  
 406 so like, I don't feel like it's anything that makes me feel bad or anything.

407  
 408 **Interviewer:** what kinds of things do you feel included in?

409  
 410 **Malachi:** So like, I feel included when it comes to certain sports like football and basketball.  
 411 I feel included, when it comes to like sports games as well like, FIFA and basketball and  
 412 NBA 2K20. And I also feel included when it comes to food, clothes. Um, I like when it  
 413 comes to also, how I dunno, like I feel like also like, sometimes there are comedy sketches  
 414 about like African households that are funny. And when, and we, but then some people watch  
 415 it, and they kind of like, say some stuff that just it doesn't come out right like the way they  
 416 say it it's not, it's not like that their pronunciation is bad it's just like they're mocking you, to  
 417 be honest. And it just doesn't seem right like it's not it's not funny when. Like, there's a  
 418 famous youtuber he does it as well. And he is very famous, so everyone knows him. But  
 419 when he does it, it's funny to certain people and then other people go ahead, take it and they  
 420 say it in ways that it doesn't, it just doesn't make it seem nice or anything. It feels like they're  
 421 actually mocking it. Whereas before, in my dad's time it was much worse where people  
 422 actually try, but now it's just like a missed concept.

423  
 424 **Interviewer:** And when people are mocking it, that is it the people who aren't, who don't  
 425 understand the culture where you're coming from?

426  
 427 **Malachi:** Yeah, and, like, I mean, I feel like also, it's kind of it comes across a little bit rude  
 428 as is if we don't understand that then we just don't say anything about it. But, when they say  
 429 it's just like and. It's just like, it's not really a joke anymore. And, um, also I don't like when I  
 430 don't know, I mean, I don't know. So, there's two people, there's a twin, there's two twins in  
 431 our class and they just say some very insensitive comments, and they like saying, for  
 432 example, like we, what was the one? So there was one about, that's saying, it's always the  
 433 white person that's racist, when no one's ever said that it's just that it's a bigger issue. And  
 434 they always every time we try to tackle, things like slavery segregation, Black Lives Matter,  
 435 they always say, "it's always the white person" who is racist and stuff. Or "It only happens in  
 436 America". And when we say oh this happened in England a week ago, they just say "Well,  
 437 that's just like an oddity, like it's not, doesn't happen in our country". And then, like, also,  
 438 they say stuff like in history, we were learning about how the English, and the European, they  
 439 built like colonizations, and it's not really justified, to a moral extent but we added like an  
 440 extra DTC thing where you do it and you'll see what it's like. It's yeah you say, whether it's  
 441 moral, and they say it's definitely, it's moral and it's fine because there were bigger  
 442 countries, like in France, and also in Spain, that like bigger countries such as France and  
 443 Spain, that they just had already built the Empire so if they had, it's definitely moral. And to,  
 444 they had a good reason, which was to be as big as the other countries, which I mean, I don't  
 445 think he's. I agree with that but like it's everyone's opinion and stuff. Everyone's open to their  
 446 own opinions but sometimes it just comes across a little bit wrong, the way they say it. And  
 447 like I get that they say, for me, I'd say they had a good reason, but they don't. It's not moral at  
 448 all. Like taking and taking like smaller countries, to an extent, and then making them feel  
 449 worse. It's like bullying. It's like, if you you at home. You've got your mom and your dad,  
 450 and they're always abusive to you, they always beat you up and stuff like that. Then when

451 you go to school. You go, and then you beat up people and you torture people, it's the same  
 452 thing. And it's even bigger extent. In like, the French and the Spain, and the Spanish. They  
 453 never even like hurt, or like took over England. They just. They just like, they just seem  
 454 bigger, and yet people, like, just because your parents are more, um, more like powerful than  
 455 you, doesn't mean you have to beat everyone up and kill other people, just because you don't  
 456 feel like happy with your amount of power. It's just very self and greed to be honest.

457

458 **Interviewer:** So is there, is there anything you think school could do to help children like  
 459 you feel more included in school?

460

461 **Malachi:** I feel like they're already doing a good job. I feel like they've spread the message  
 462 and stuff like that but they just need to educate those that are just not really caught the best  
 463 mindset already. But to be honest, a lot of those people might not change to. I mean they can  
 464 only do what they can but I'm not sure just like try, just even put in more effort to raise the  
 465 issue.

466

467 **Interviewer:** What does your school do already?

468

469 Um, so like they always, right now because of this whole black history month and stuff, they  
 470 are trying every class to like relate it to black people. Which is a good thing, but like is not  
 471 doing, it's good, to a certain extent, like, it's good that they're raising awareness. Say for  
 472 example, in maths they'll teach us about much more like mathematicians or people who  
 473 cracked codes that are black. But then, and say in history, they'll. I mean, they're talking  
 474 about slavery and colonisation and what we can do better. And then, in Art, we will later on  
 475 study black artists in loads of different and in English we'll read from black authors. Which is  
 476 good, but I don't feel like that's what they need to do because it's nice. It's raising awareness  
 477 and we don't also is a big issue because there's no one that, when we go to school, there's no  
 478 black authors that we can read. But there's always for the Caucasian white people there's,  
 479 there's white authors that they're reading all the time, but we don't have that yet so it's nice  
 480 that they do that. So I actually, that's one thing that they're doing really well. And two, they're  
 481 like, always trying to like we have form time and mostly it was about mental health. But the  
 482 main thing was that everyone was getting sick of that to be honest. It's not like that mental  
 483 health is a bad issue. It's like that people thought there were much bigger issues that should  
 484 be discussed. So now they discuss like racism and stuff like that. So, they're like educating us  
 485 and things like that. So those are the two main things that they're doing well. So like, to make  
 486 sure we feel better.

487

488 **Interviewer:** When you said they discuss racism is that with the whole school or is that with?

489

490 **Malachi:** Yeah, so we have forms, we have like houses. So, we have six houses were in each  
 491 year. We're in year eight and so far in year eight we have form time on the days that we don't  
 492 have any clubs or anything inside schools. When we don't have P.E., games, or clubs or  
 493 societies which is another event. Then we are able to have form time, two or three days a  
 494 week. And that means that that we are like lucky enough. Cause every time we have that two  
 495 times, or three times a week, we have the, we like educated about racism and how we can  
 496 tackle that individually and be aware of what we're saying and stuff like that. And they also  
 497 talk about LGBTQ which is also a big issue, because like there are people who joke around  
 498 about stuff like that. So that's a big issue that needs to be solved.

499

500 **Interviewer:** Sorry you broke up a bit, could you repeat that?

501  
502 **Malachi:** Oh sorry, the other. The other thing that they cover is LGBTQ is also a big issue  
503 because a lot of people joke around about that. So it definitely needs to be. It will actually  
504 stop some people from like, even if you have a certain view on that stuff. I always feel like  
505 there's a, there's something that I go by. If you have, I have nothing against people from that  
506 type of background and I have nothing against people who are Caucasian, white, Asian, or  
507 black. So, but if I was to. I wouldn't go around or say anything to anyone. Like, if I didn't like  
508 gay people, for example, I would never go to their face and say that I would never make jokes  
509 about that. But there's people who, I don't know what they do, but they just, they make very  
510 irrational comments, and certain people. And that's like not nice at all. So that's one thing that  
511 they're trying to wipe away their mindset, and also stopping and saying, stuff like that, so  
512 yeah.

513  
514 **Interviewer:** Well, it sounds like your school was doing, doing a lot of things that are really  
515 helpful. And they could probably help other schools to do similar things, I think. Um, so  
516 moving on to the last few questions, last few bits. It's about your school in general. So, how  
517 much do you feel the school ethos, so their values, um you know the way that they are, fits  
518 with your own? So on a scale of one to 10, and 10 is really fits with my values, I really feel  
519 aligned with the values of the school. And then one is not at all. Where would you say you  
520 are?

521  
522 **Malachi:** Nine.

523  
524 **Interviewer:** Five?

525  
526 **Malachi:** I'd say nine.

527  
528 **Interviewer:** Oh nine!

529  
530 **Malachi:** Yeah, I'd say nine because their school ethos is all about. One, I think their main  
531 thing is just making sure that everyone does well, they achieve their goals, and they all, like,  
532 they all get the best grades that they can. So that's why I feel like their school ethos is so  
533 amazing because it's only like striving to help everybody. So, even if there are teachers with a  
534 bad kind of mindset, to certain people I feel like they definitely still want us to get good  
535 grades in their class. Every teacher, if you don't get good grades in their class, they're trying  
536 to say that, basically, you don't want to make yourself look bad. You don't want to make  
537 yourself, the cl-cr-, I mean the class look bad. So that's why I feel like the the school ethos is  
538 really good because they're just striving for us to be the best.

539 **Interviewer:** It sounds quite academically driven as a school. Okay, last question. Do you  
540 feel connected to what you learn about?

541  
542 **Malachi:** is it like to rate it? Or to give an answer?

543  
544 **Interviewer:** an answer, do you feel?

545  
546 **Malachi:** I'd say...

547  
548 **Interviewer:** You can rate it if you want, if that's helpful.

549  
550 **Malachi:** I don't really think that I connect to it. But, like, also, when I was studying for the

551 11+, I had to adapt to a lot of the different things that we learn about, like, the different just,  
 552 you know, different. A lot of the texts that they had in the exam, they were all written to a  
 553 certain extent to the fact that they were stressed on one certain background. So, like, when I  
 554 heard certain words I'd have to learn them cause, I didn't understand it but a lot of people in  
 555 the actual background, who are reading these text, it'd be like reading themselves, like it's not  
 556 anything to worry about. So I feel like, I don't feel like I'm connected, at all to like what we  
 557 learned, but I don't think that's a problem. I feel like it would help, that would make sure that  
 558 I get like better marks, much easier, but I don't think it's a problem like. I can adapt to it. I  
 559 don't think it's a problem yeah. But I don't feel connected to what I learn about.

560

561 **Interviewer:** What do you think you would need to feel connected to it?

562

563 **Malachi:** I think I need some kind of, wouldn't even have to be up the race of the person who  
 564 wrote the book, but a certain background of the person who doesn't live in like a posh or rich  
 565 place. Like you rather live while you're, middle, and you're not, like, you're not poor or  
 566 anything but you just have you have issues while as a lot of the books that we have, even  
 567 though there's no fairy tale stories, they kind of are fairy tales. Like they have no problems in  
 568 terms of prejudice. They have no economic problems or anything. I'm not saying that I have  
 569 economic problems but I'm saying that, like there's no problems and the person has in those  
 570 certain books, they're more problem is that their parent won't let them go out, or something  
 571 like that, and that's not really a problem. One is there's problems in society that I feel like  
 572 they would have so much more of an impact if they weren't included in like the books or stuff  
 573 that we learned about in school. So, to be honest, I think that I believe that a lot of the  
 574 learning and education all relates to books. So, if the first thing they'd have to change would  
 575 be a different sort of backgrounds of books like that they're set in, so I think that that would  
 576 have a huge impact for me and any others to feel connected to what we're learning.

577

578 **Interviewer:** So perhaps what you read being more relatable to real life, prejudice,  
 579 discrimination, not just based on someone's race but based on many things in their life that  
 580 they experience. Okay. Thank you. That comes, that's the end of all the questions. Is there  
 581 anything else that you would like to add or anything you want to share, before we finish?

582

583 **Malachi:** No, I'm fine. I feel like we touched on a lot of different things so I'm, I'm fine. I'm  
 584 fine.

585

586 **Interviewer:** Thank you for sharing your views and things that are very personal to you, very  
 587 sensitive as well. Things that have made you feel frustrated and then things that have brought  
 588 you joy, it's been helpful to hear and I'm really looking forward to bringing all of your, your  
 589 views and the other students who you I've interviewed, bringing it all together and creating  
 590 some data that will be helpful for schools to make a difference because I think, as I said at the  
 591 start your voices are really important to me, really important to raise, because you are living  
 592 in it. You are doing it every day. So, just ends, and I will, what I'll do is I'll send your dad's  
 593 leaflet, which is just to say thank you for taking part and also, there'll be some links in there  
 594 for things, if you felt, you know, affected by what we spoke about and you can talk to  
 595 somebody. And also, you were interested in more, more interested in, you know, fighting  
 596 against racial prejudice that's links in there for young people what they can do.

597

598 **Malachi:** Okay

599

600 **Interviewer:** And lastly, and if we were in person I guess I would sort of like give you a  
601 chocolate or something to say thank you but we're not in person. So, treat yourself to  
602 something, I don't know.

603  
604 **Malachi:** Thank you.

605  
606 **Interviewer:** If you have any sweets in your house. And then I was also interested in,  
607 whether you have any friends who you think would also want to take part. Do you think other  
608 people would be interested?

609  
610 **Malachi:** Yeah. I think that there would be other people who would be interested.

611  
612 **Interviewer:** Okay, you could mention it to them, and they could mention it to their parents  
613 and then, If you wanted to.

614  
615 **Malachi:** Okay, yeah definitely! Yeah, I have some people in mind so.

616  
617 **Interviewer:** Oh great! Okay, you can tell them about this experience and if they would like  
618 to take part to that let their parents know and they can email me. Okay. Thank you. Malachi.

619  
620 **Malachi:** Thank you.

621  
622 **Interviewer:** Have a great evening

623  
624 **Malachi:** You to

625  
626 **Interviewer:** And good luck to the rest of your educational career hopefully we can all make  
627 a change together.

628  
629 **Malachi:** Thank you.

630  
631 **Interviewer:** Okay. Thank you.

632  
633 **Malachi:** Thank you. Bye.

634  
635 **Interviewer:** Bye

**Appendix 15: Transcript: Vanessa**

1 **Interviewer:** started recording, okay and let me press it on my multiple devices. Okay, yep  
2 that's going and on my phone... Alright, okay, so the first question, um, is... So, if, if you  
3 were speaking to a friend who doesn't attend your school. How would you describe it to  
4 them.

5 **Vanessa:** Sorry, it um.. kind of um, it froze.

6  
7 **Interviewer:** That's okay. If you were speaking to a friend who doesn't attend your school.  
8 How would you describe it to them?

9  
10 **Vanessa:** I think that it's a very good school. Um, it's quite diverse, um... there's a lot of um..  
11 inclusivity. Um.. the.. um.. Being a Catholic is a big part of the school. Yeah, that's it.0

12  
13 **Interviewer:** And when you say inclusivity, there's a lot of inclusivity, what do you mean by  
14 that?

15  
16 **Vanessa:** In terms of races, and ethnic backgrounds.

17  
18 **Interviewer:** Okay, so the next question. if a friend... (another friend).. if a friend said that  
19 when they were at school, they felt like they belonged. What would they mean?

20  
21 **Vanessa:** Um, could you repeat that please.

22  
23 **Interviewer:** Yeah. If a friend said that when they were at school, they felt like they  
24 belonged? What would they mean?

25  
26 **Vanessa:** I think it would mean that they could feel comfortable being themselves, and they  
27 could find the people like them, they can relate to and feel like they can belong to a group of  
28 people.

29  
30 **Interviewer:** So they feel that they can belong to a group of people, people who are maybe  
31 like them or they feel they fit in with.

32  
33 **Vanessa:** Yes.

34  
35 **Interviewer:** Okay, what does it mean to be in a minority group? So how would you  
36 describe. First of all, how would you describe your identity, ethnicity, and then what does  
37 that mean to you?

38  
39 **Vanessa:** I think, I would described my ethnicity, as mixed. I think it means that I come from  
40 lots of different cultures and backgrounds and I can belong to different ones if I want to.

41  
42 **Interviewer:** Sounds flexible.

43  
44 **Vanessa:** Yes.

45  
46 **Interviewer:** Okay, and how do you.. it's a similar question, how do you feel about being  
47 mixed?

48  
49 **Vanessa:** Um... I feel like it can be a bit complicated in terms of finding which groups you  
50 belong to. Um but I also think that some people are very inclusive, in terms of, they let you

51 be who you are, rather than wanting to... Yeah, you need certain characteristics to belong to  
52 that certain group. So, yeah, but it's not always the case.

53

54 **Interviewer:** Do you want to give me an example? An example of when it is the case and  
55 perhaps an example of when it isn't the case.

56

57 **Vanessa:** So if you don't speak like a certain language... or Yeah, if you can't really relate at  
58 different levels as many levels as others, if they belong to the group more.

59 **Interviewer:** Mmm.

60

61 **Vanessa:** And, um.. yeah.

62

63 **Interviewer:** Okay, so sometimes it can feel a bit complicated?

64 **Vanessa:** Yes

65 **Interviewer:** A bit complex because you have two different cultures, I guess. And you could  
66 say you can belong to either one?

67 **Vanessa:** Yes.

68 **Interviewer:** Yeah, sounds, flexible, as well. Okay, so we'll move on then to the main  
69 questions. And so a bit about relationships. Do you get on with the teachers and staff at your  
70 school?

71

72 **Vanessa:** Yes.

73

74 **Interviewer:** Yeah? And why is that.

75

76 **Vanessa:** I think erm, understanding, and they teach well. And um they, most of them know  
77 what you don't understand so it makes them a better teacher. Because they don't just try to  
78 teach it to you again and again they try like different ways around the problem until you  
79 understand it, so. Yeah.

80

81 Yeah. So part of being able to get along with teachers view is with them to help you  
82 understand different things.

83 **Vanessa:** Yes

84 **Interviewer:** And to be able to explain it in a way that can help you to understand, and you  
85 feel that you're able to get that where you are at, at the moment?

86 **Vanessa:** Yes

87 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay. Um, is it important to be part of a group think?

88

89 **Vanessa:** Umm.. I think, Yeah, I agree because, um, I think that, um, it helps you to identify  
90 more um and feel that you belong. Which is I think it's quite important because when you are  
91 in a minority either already. You can't really relate because maybe you don't have certain  
92 characteristics and things so it can feel a bit hard to, to be who you are because you need to  
93 change in order to fit different characteristics of groups you don't belong to.

94

95 **Interviewer:** Yeah, which groups do you feel like you wouldn't belong to? Do you think.

96

97 **Vanessa:** Um, obviously like Asian. Um, but er, I think, also er, I think, yeah, I think that's it.

98 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Um, I'm trying to recall what you said now, it was really, it was really  
99 interesting. Being part of a group is being really important. Also, it's finding people that fit in  
100 that you feel you can fit in with and certain characteristics. So, what characteristics do you

101 feel would be helpful to feel that you're part of the group?  
102

103 **Vanessa:** maybe knowing the language. Uh.. being able to, um, learn about, know about the  
104 culture a bit more.

105 **Interviewer:** Yeah.

106 **Vanessa:** So, yeah, that you know some things that other people wouldn't know. I didn't  
107 know know maybe about food or something.

108 **Interviewer:** Yeah

109 **Vanessa:** Maybe...

110 **Interviewer:** Go on

111 **Vanessa:** Maybe like outsiders wouldn't know. Um, yeah.  
112

113 **Interviewer:** So finding something which other people wouldn't know but you can find out  
114 about, and then you have some knowledge that you're able to kind of fit in or understand a bit  
115 more about a group that maybe you don't feel you belong to, because of certain  
116 characteristics. And you mentioned language, um, is there a particular language that you have  
117 in mind when always or you just want language in general.  
118

119 **Vanessa:** We are just language in general, maybe as a country, or maybe like a smaller tribe.  
120 That is really exclusive, that is only in certain parts, so you know that if you belong there.  
121 You speak it. Yeah.  
122

123 **Interviewer:** Yeah. And I guess where we are here. We will well majority of us speak  
124 English right and that's it. If you're part of a community where you speak another language  
125 and English, and you're able to sort of that can be helpful to fit in with different groups that  
126 like what you were describing earlier with. It's not just one group that you fit in with it can be  
127 multiple. Okay. So tell me about your friends at school. What are they like?  
128

129 **Vanessa:** Um, I think that they're quite understanding, and I can relate with them a lot. And  
130 they come from lots of different backgrounds. Even though we're totally different in some  
131 ways. There are some ways that we can just relate a lot, and um, it's quite funny because we  
132 wouldn't be able to connect on some levels but on others we can. And, um yeah.  
133

134 **Interviewer:** Would you be able to give me an example of ways that you connect and other  
135 ways that possibly not.  
136

137 **Vanessa:** maybe to do with, not connecting as like you don't. So, in some ways you don't  
138 really understand the different cultures. But in other ways you connect, in the, in the way that  
139 we're like the same age group so understand for example that different pop culture references  
140 and answers.  
141

142 **Interviewer:** Okay, yeah, so although you're not from the same cultural background, you  
143 sort of share the culture of the pop culture of here being here, in England. Rather than maybe  
144 heritage and background of a different sense.

145 **Vanessa:** Yeah

146 **Interviewer:** What different cultures are your friends from?  
147

148 **Vanessa:** So, one is from St Lucia. One is from sri lanka. One is white. One is mixed.  
149

150 **Interviewer:** All very different.

151 **Vanessa:** Yes

152 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Do you feel that, that's representative of your school is that quite difficult  
153 to get a lot of mixtures of groups or do you find that it can be quite cliquey? Are there certain  
154 groups that will stick together? What's it like in school?

155  
156 **Vanessa:** I think that the school is very open. In terms of of there aren't that many cliques but  
157 there are some. But um, I think there are lots of different groups, and some may have cliques  
158 if they feel like they're a minority and need to stick together. But there are, I think it's not  
159 hard to find people that you connect to in terms of race. Because there are lots of different  
160 races and cultures in my school.

161  
162 **Interviewer:** So what you say there's something about there being a mould, a mixture of  
163 people from different backgrounds that helps to make you feel like you belong a bit more.

164  
165 **Vanessa:** Yes

166  
167 **Interviewer:** Rather than I guess if it was just you and your own nobody else, similar to you.  
168 There seems to be a sense of similarities between you and people in your school, which helps,  
169 perhaps. not necessarily exactly the same and it doesn't need to be exactly the same.

170 **Vanessa:** Yes

171 **Interviewer:** Okay, we're gonna move on to identification. It's kind of what I just said, just  
172 now, I'm jumping ahead of myself. But are there people at your school who are similar to  
173 you?

174  
175 **Vanessa:** Yes, yes. Like um, different French speaking people. Um, mixed race people. Um..  
176 Yeah, that's it.

177  
178 **Interviewer:** And do, and with the French speaking people, do you speak with them in  
179 French Is that something that is important to you, that you have that?

180  
181 **Vanessa:** Sometimes, but because other people can't really understand we try not to.

182  
183 **Interviewer:** Okay, are these...

184 **Vanessa:** But.

185 **Interviewer:** Go on.

186  
187 **Vanessa:** Yeah it's important for us because it makes us different. But it can also help us like  
188 know each other.

189  
190 **Interviewer:** Yeah. How did you find these people.

191  
192 **Vanessa:** I don't know we just picked up when each other, maybe talking to our families or  
193 friends. And, yeah.

194 **Interviewer:** Okay, is it important for you, do you think to be similar to people in school.

195  
196 **Vanessa:** Yes. Yes, it is.

197 **Interviewer:** Could you tell me why?

198  
199 **Vanessa:** Because it helps you to belong more. Um, Because, um. Because then you have to  
200 like you need to change to, to, for other people. Because if you're not similar to people you

201 don't want to be the outsider. Because um, you can't really, you um, you can't, you can't er,  
202 you can't fit with other people yeah.

203

204 **Interviewer:** Yeah. What, why do you think that's important to not be an outsider and to fit  
205 in with people?

206

207 **Vanessa:** Because no one wants to be alone, because, because it's just not nice. But um, I  
208 think it's important to fit in with people because to fit in with people it's easily to find friends.  
209 Because you have to go like the long way to find people that, that, that are, that are like, that  
210 that are like you. Um, because if you, um. It's just easier, because um, there are people that  
211 are, that aren't like you. That you can change to be like. And in that way you can be friends  
212 with them.

213 **Interviewer:** Yeah, do you think, do you think it's something that you would want to do to  
214 sort of change to fit in with people would you just like to just be. And then, do you think it's  
215 something you've had to do?

216

217 **Vanessa:** Um, I think, yes. Um, because, um, because it's just easier to find friends.

218

219 **Interviewer:** In what ways do you feel like you've had to change?

220

221 **Vanessa:** Maybe learning different slangs and maybe creating different accounts like for  
222 Tiktok so that I could understand people's references. And, yeah.

223 **Interviewer:** Yeah. That makes sense. That sounds like what a lot of people do to try and fit  
224 in fitting in is something that we will want to do, I think. Thank you for that. Okay, so the  
225 next question so just the last one on identification and then we'll move on to the next theme.  
226 Do you feel people at school understand you?

227 **Vanessa:** Yeah

228 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Could you tell me why or what contributes to that?

229

230 **Vanessa:** Because um, I think that if people understand you. They can, um... that if they  
231 relate to you they can feel like they belong more. And, if they find people that are like them,  
232 it makes them feel. Yeah, like they belong. And that they... they don't really feel as isolated.

233 **Interviewer:** Yeah and what, what do you think helps you to feel understood in school? Why  
234 do you feel understood?

235

236 **Vanessa:** Because um, I'm not sure.

237

238 **Interviewer:** It's a tricky question.

239 **Vanessa:** Yeah.

240

241 **Interviewer:** Is it something, perhaps, um, to do with the way that staff are towards you, their  
242 approach, is it something what the school environment, or perhaps your friends, the way they  
243 sort of speak, Is there is there like a mannerism, or?

244

245 **Vanessa:** I think that, yeah it's mainly my friends, understand me. Because we're the same  
246 age group we can. Yeah, we can understand each other. Yeah, like different references. When  
247 I'm just talking about feelings towards different things and issues. Yeah.

248

249 **Interviewer:** And teachers, not so much.

250

251 **Vanessa:** Not Not really. I don't really speak to teachers. They help me in terms of like work  
252 and things.

253 **Interviewer:** Yeah. But understanding is something you feel is more related to friendship and  
254 having that kind of similar age group and similar life experiences and and references to your,  
255 um experiences at this time in your life. But teachers wouldn't really get that deep, I guess. If  
256 they're just teaching you.

257 **Vanessa:** Yeah

258 **Interviewer:** Okay, we'll move on to the next theme which is inclusion/exclusion. Have you  
259 ever felt, or do you ever feel left out at school?

260  
261 **Vanessa:** Um, not, not not really, because I always have people that I can, I can, I can find.  
262 I'm never really alone. Because um, my friends, my friends, we, we, we always know where  
263 to find each other. And yeah, we, we are, we always. We always find each other so we never  
264 really alone.

265  
266 **Interviewer:** It sounds like you've got like a nice solid group with you. That helps you feel  
267 like you don't feel left out. Did you have a sort of, in your school thinking back, did you ever  
268 feel in your later years or year seven, eight? Did you ever feel left out then?

269  
270 **Vanessa:** Yes because I didn't really know anyone. So, I didn't really know who was my  
271 friend and who was not. Because some people were a bit exclusive, that you... they just don't  
272 want to be your friend. But I think...

273  
274 **Interviewer:** In what way were they exclusive?

275  
276 **Vanessa:** They just didn't didn't include you, they didn't really, yeah, they didn't want to be  
277 your friend so they, they let you know. So you didn't try anymore. So, um, yeah. So you just  
278 need to find like different new friends because there was no point and be their friend  
279 anymore.

280  
281 **Interviewer:** So people who are a bit more welcoming? It sounds like.

282 **Vanessa:** Yes

283 **Interviewer:** Sounds like those people who are exclusive are quite rejecting.

284 **Vanessa:** Yes.

285 **Interviewer:** Okay. Um, does school in any way, help you feel connected or included?

286  
287 **Vanessa:** I think that there are clubs and things so it helps you to find friends. And they have  
288 this thing. This day so you start earlier. Before... year 7 start one day before the rest of the  
289 school so they can find their friends and they can make friends with others. So I think that's  
290 one thing they do.

291  
292 **Interviewer:** What kind of clubs do they have?

293  
294 **Vanessa:** they have mainly sports clubs, but they also have robotics. I think different cultural  
295 clubs, they have photography, different games.

296  
297 **Interviewer:** Is there anything that, that helps you feel connected? So that's kind of like what  
298 school would do for everyone? Is there anything that you feel for yourself, makes you feel  
299 included?

300

301 **Vanessa:** I think the school. I think the school tries to make you feel included but sometimes  
302 just doesn't work. So you just need to do it yourself.

303 **Interviewer:** Yeah, well, what doesn't work like what would, what would you say it's tricky  
304 about it? That makes it difficult?

305  
306 **Vanessa:** I'm not sure

307 **Interviewer:** that's fine, that's fine. Is there anything that you would suggest to the school.  
308 Like, if you could speak to them and say, this would really help me and other people like me  
309 feel more connected, could you do this. Is there anything you would tell them?

310  
311 **Vanessa:** Um, no, I don't think there's anything that they could do. Yeah, I don't think so.

312 **Interviewer:** Okay. All right, so, is... Oh wait, I asked you that question already. Um, so, the  
313 last bit this is the last bit about the school environment, just in general, the ethos or the  
314 atmosphere the general feel at school. Could you tell me about that?

315  
316 **Vanessa:** I think the school is. The school is very. I think the atmosphere is quite good like  
317 people are not necessarily like violent, or angry all the time. People are quite nice. They hold  
318 the door open she they like, I don't know they do things that I do know make you feel good. I  
319 think everyone just says just nice to each other because there's no point in being not nice, so  
320 yeah I think everyone is kind of friends with each other. And we, we just try not to be mean  
321 to each other because there's no point.

322  
323 **Interviewer:** Sounds like a nice place to be.

324 **Vanessa:** Yes

325 **Interviewer:** Sounds like a polite, warm place to be. When I've walked, walked in myself it's  
326 been a positive experience as well so I can, I can imagine why you feel like that. Um, it's  
327 such a nice building as well. Okay, so how much do you feel the school ethos and values fit  
328 with your own. So, on a scale of one to 10. So 10 is like fit with my values and ethos, 10, and  
329 then a 1 is doesn't fit in with my ethos at all.

330  
331 **Vanessa:** I think the school ethos fits, so like around a nine.

332  
333 **Interviewer:** So quite high yeah? So why is it a nine and not an eight what makes it a nine?

334  
335 **Vanessa:** I think, though, they are. They seem quite good, and the ethos, yeah the ethos is  
336 quite good like, um. It's quite reasonable, I think that the rules. Yeah, they're, they're quite,  
337 reasonable. Yeah.

338  
339 **Interviewer:** Okay, and then why is it not quite a 10?

340  
341 **Vanessa:** Because, um, there are certain things I don't really agree. They are a bit extreme.  
342 Just yeah.

343 **Interviewer:** Okay. Could you give me an example? If you're worried about any of this  
344 going back to school. It's not going to be attached to you at all. It's as I say, it's going to be  
345 part of other schools as well, so don't, if you were concerned about that... I was wondering  
346 about that, when I was mentioning, although I mentioned at the beginning that you won't be  
347 connected and they won't know what you've said, and won't be connected to you. So yeah, so  
348 why is it not a ten.

349  
350 **Vanessa:** I think that's not because there are certain small things are a bit annoying like you

351 can't roll up your skirt, you can't um, yeah. It's a bit mad.

352

353 **Interviewer:** appearance related things?

354

355 **Vanessa:** Yeah. Yeah.

356

357 **Interviewer:** Is there anything else.

358 **Vanessa:** No.

359 **Interviewer:** Okay, the last question is do you feel connected to what you learn about. So for  
360 example, to feel connected to history, religion, and religious studies I mean, do you feel  
361 connected to art? Do you feel connected to what you learn about?

362

363 **Vanessa:** Yes, I do, because um, the School of, school teachers on certain levels are quite  
364 diverse. Because of history learn about different, different cultures are different sides of the  
365 story. So, they're not just teaching you just one side they have to believe in. They let you  
366 decide it for yourself, which I think is quite good. I think the school could have been a bit  
367 more inclusive, because they didn't touch on Black Lives Matter. They didn't actually  
368 mention it. But they are quite diverse, but they didn't really mention. Yeah, they should have  
369 done something about it.

370

371 **Interviewer:** Yeah... Yeah. Yeah. What do you think, um, when you say they didn't mention  
372 it Do you mean on a broad scale or do you mean, in classes as well? Did any tutors, that you  
373 have mentioned it Did you have any discussions or anything?

374 **Vanessa:** No.

375

376 **Interviewer:** So, as a recommendation to schools. Would you recommend that this is  
377 something that should be talked about?

378 **Vanessa:** Yeah, so I think that, yeah, they should definitely talk more about it and draw more  
379 attention to it. Yeah, I think they should also, um, at least maybe have like a moment of  
380 remembrance. Maybe, um. Maybe just, yeah do more work, and pay more attention to source  
381 things are happening. And maybe bigger ones well, and maybe working on race, even in like  
382 the small like, small community.

383

384 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Within your school?

385 **Vanessa:** Yeah

386 **Interviewer:** yeah, so start if everyone sort of did some work on racism within schools  
387 perhaps there would be more of a shift and change in the wider society. Um, Okay, that's  
388 really, really helpful information. Thank you. I lost my train of thought I was going to say  
389 something when the Black Lives Matter movement, and I was curious about how you feel it's  
390 impacted on you. In, in terms of your experiences. There's the lack of the school  
391 acknowledging is quite painful for some people.

392 **Vanessa:** Yes. I think that it was quite shocking. Because I've got family in America. So it  
393 was a bit, a bit alarming. I was actually really concerned because. Yeah, it's just the level of  
394 brutality is a bit scary because you just don't know who will be next and yeah, it's really  
395 scary.

396

397 **Interviewer:** So perhaps safety being really important, and perhaps school can help, help  
398 people feel more safe by acknowledging it and talking about it?

399 **Vanessa:** Yes

400 **Interviewer:** Okay, thank you, Vanessa. That's it, all the questions, did you have anything  
401 else you'd like to add in terms of your views on feeling of belonging and inclusivity?

402 **Vanessa:** No

403 **Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. So, just as a, what I'm gonna do is I'm going to email on your  
404 mom's email, and it will just say a bit about what we did today. And then there's some links,  
405 um there as well if you wanted to join any kind of community that's for racial equality and  
406 fighting against racial injustice, there are some links that you can have a read or have a look  
407 if you are curious about it. And then the results of this research. Is going to be hopefully  
408 completed next July, it's quite a long time, takes take some time. And if you are interested to  
409 know about what came from this, I will happily email anything that comes from it. And I'll  
410 just check in with you in about a month's time and see how you're getting on, you know, that  
411 you're feeling okay after this interview and that nothing sort of upsetting has come up. If it  
412 has, that's also okay and we can have a think about what to do from there. Okay? Does that  
413 sound alright?

414 **Vanessa:** Yeah.

415 **Interviewer:** Yeah? Okay, thank you so much for your time.

416

417 **Vanessa:** Thank you,

418

419 **Interviewer:** All the best to you. Bye

420 **Vanessa:** Bye

**Appendix 16: Transcript: Michael**

1 **Interviewer:** Okay. Just to say thank you again, for giving me your time. This Friday  
2 evening. Um, so, first question. If you were speaking to a friend who doesn't attend your  
3 school. How would you describe it to them?  
4

5 **Michael:** A very well relaxed place where a lot of ethnic minorities and like white kids get  
6 together and just do whatever they want to do really. Can study a bit, play a lot. And in the  
7 end, turn out however you turn out really. You just get popped out, back into the real world  
8 and that's where you are.  
9

10 **Interviewer:** What year are you in?

11  
12 **Michael:** Year 11  
13

14 **Interviewer:** Year 11, so have you been at this school since year seven?

15 **Michael:** Yeah.

16 **Interviewer:** So you probably know quite well?

17  
18 **Michael:** Yeah, yeah, quite well, yeah.  
19

20 **Interviewer:** Um, and what does it mean to you to be in a minority group? What does that  
21 mean?  
22

23 **Michael:** Um, it's kind of like the sense of pride that you're a bit different than a lot of other  
24 people. Like you have people like that understand you like a bit more because they'll be in  
25 situations that would be in. Determining race and stuff like that. And so it kind of makes you  
26 feel like unique a bit more unique than someone who is not an ethnic minority.  
27

28 **Interviewer:** Mmm, it's quite positive.

29 **Michael:** Yes

30 **Interviewer:** The way you described it and then, and you said there's other people as well  
31 who you share that with?

32 **Michael:** Yeah  
33

34 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay. And how would you describe your ethnicity?  
35

36 **Michael:** Probably Afro Caribbean. My mum's from Jamaica, my dad's from Nigeria. Yeah,  
37 that's, that's how I describe it.  
38

39 **Interviewer:** So a mixture of both.  
40

41 **Michael:** Yeah, a mixture of both, Yeah.  
42

43 **Interviewer:** And how do you feel about being Afro-Caribbean?  
44

45 **Michael:** Um. Just like, I guess there's a lot of culture you have to intake from the both of the  
46 two nations like, one of them is like, they're completely different. It's really confusing when  
47 you have two of the same family and they're just different people. Um, but other than that, I  
48 just, it's just me, isn't it? I just get used to it.  
49

50 **Interviewer:** what's confusing about it? With the different, the two different, um cultures?

51  
52 **Michael:** Er, Well, my nan is from Jamaica. She's a lot more laid back she doesn't really care  
53 what I do, but my granddad always wants to know he's always asking questions. Yes, I, have  
54 you got a girlfriend yet? I say... maybe. And then er, he was just like, you should show her to  
55 me. And I was just like no. Yeah, it's just like, very different like, how they look about like,  
56 young people in that kinda sense.

57  
58 **Interviewer:** And that's, is that your granddad's on your mom's side or?

59  
60 **Michael:** My granddad on my dad's side. I should have said that yeah.

61  
62 **Interviewer:** No no, that's okay. It's okay. Um, so it's quite different in terms of their  
63 upbringing and your upbringing.

64  
65 **Michael:** \*Nods\*

66 **Interviewer:** Okay. Just to say as well that there are no right or wrong answers to these  
67 questions. You're, you're the expert in your life and your experiences and I'm just curious and  
68 asking, being nosy. A little bit nosy asking questions. Okay, So we'll move on to relationships  
69 then. So do you get on with teachers and staff at your school?

70  
71 **Michael:** Errr, most of them. Yes. There's obviously like that select few that you just don't  
72 really like. But most of them you do get on with, but the ones that you, that I don't  
73 particularly like, the ones that like overly strict or just like dumb in the way they handle a  
74 class. Like if the class is talk, like one person is talking and makes a whole class laugh that  
75 doesn't mean the whole class has done something wrong. Like, I don't I don't need to be kept  
76 back for half an hour because I laughed at something, it's just not needed. Like I'd rather they  
77 just like talk to the guy and then, I don't want to stay after school, basically. Um, but other  
78 than that I kind of get on well with teachers. Yeah.

79  
80 **Interviewer:** Tell me about the ones you get on with, what are they like?

81  
82 **Michael:** um, it's like they enjoy the subject they're teaching and so they make you want to  
83 enjoy it as well it's not like they're doing something, because they have to, like, they enjoy the  
84 subjects and so they want you to enjoy the subject and so they understand like, if you don't  
85 enjoy the subject, you're not gonna be working at your 100%, or something like that. They  
86 understand everything but also like, they kind of they respect you, but they don't think like  
87 you're stupid or something like your, your child, like, they kind of expect you to like almost  
88 be an adult in school.

89  
90 **Interviewer:** How, how do they show you respect? Like how do you know that they respect  
91 you?

92  
93 **Michael:** They don't talk to you like a kid almost like if you're messing around they say stop  
94 it rather than you've got a detention kind of thing, like, if you, like and if you do something  
95 by accident instead of like saying, oh, you should do this, just say oh, well, you can learn  
96 better later. They try and, they instead of like pushing you, they kind of just like need you  
97 almost, kind of.

98  
99 **Interviewer:** Yeah, so it's, it's, sounds like it's almost quite like um, equal playing fields.

100 **Michael:** Yeah.

101 **Interviewer:** Some respect on both sides. Whereas, maybe with the teachers that you don't  
102 get on with so much It's not like that?

103 **Michael:** Yeah.

104 **Interviewer:** How is it with those teachers what makes it difficult to get on with them?

105

106 **Michael:** Um, well, they, they think like by punishing you they're gonna make it better. I like  
107 by saying "ahhm look how bad these punishments are" all they have to do, it's like they  
108 threaten you and it doesn't work because the more you threaten the worse a class is gonna get.  
109 Because, it's that's not how it works. Because once you threaten with something like you're  
110 gonna stay after school for half an hour, then there's no difference to staying back after school  
111 after 45 minutes. You might as well just continue, it's more or less the same. I'm still missing  
112 a train.

113

114 **Interviewer:** Is it all of it it? is it all? Is it like the whole class or is it individual?

115

116 **Michael:** Well, it's starts off with individuals and then by the whole class gets annoyed with  
117 the teacher. So the whole class doesn't care if they missbehave. It's like that.

118

119 **Interviewer:** so, so it says sounds quite frustrating.

120 **Michael:** Yeah

121 **Interviewer:** To all be punished for something that you feel you know, doesn't need to be,  
122 don't really need to be punished for.

123 **Michael:** Yeah

124 **Interviewer:** Okay, so you get on with some teachers, others not so much. Are there any  
125 particular teachers that you feel are similar to you or that you feel quite connected to?

126

127 **Michael:** um, probably not. Probably not no. And like, I like, the teachers I all respect. I all  
128 respect them as like human beings but they're not really much like me. Because, I don't think  
129 there's any black teachers in my school so.

130

131 **Interviewer:** Okay, okay, so there's no one who. Yeah, to share the same sort of culture or  
132 background as you?

133 **Michael:** Yeah

134 **Interviewer:** Okay. Do you feel it's important to be part of a group?

135

136 **Michael:** Yes, I do. Um like, it makes. Like, I've always been like enjoyed rugby because  
137 it's a team sport. You're with your team. You win, lose together. It's not like you're alone or  
138 anything. It just gives you like that confidence that you have that you don't have when you're  
139 alone. So, that's why it's really important to group.

140

141 **Interviewer:** What groups do you feel that you belong to?

142

143 **Michael:** Um, I guess, the more ethnic minority people with my school. Like, that's kind of a  
144 group in itself. The people I go home with on the train. The people who have known since  
145 like primary school. Like my rugby, any like sports I do, I'll belong to those types of groups.  
146 That's like, like, if I see them I know that I can go up to them and like have a genuine  
147 conversation rather than just like hi or bye.

148

149 **Interviewer:** So there's lots of different groups that you have for different reasons as well, I  
150 think. Okay, tell me about them, the different groups.

151  
152 **Michael:** Um, so I guess the ones like me and some black friends. Um, very, we mess around  
153 a lot I guess. They're not exactly like the most well-behaved bunch. But it's not like we're  
154 doing anything bad or anything. Um and then, er, that came around just because I went to a  
155 more or less all white primary school so I never really had any black friends. And so, I just  
156 got drawn into them when I like came into year 7. And so, it's like that. And so, the guys I go  
157 on the train home with. It started at two and ended at like 10 different people on one train, it  
158 was quite ridiculous. Um, but yeah, those are just like the people I just know because like I  
159 see them every day on the way to and from school. And yeah. It's we sometimes talk, but  
160 sometimes we don't. It just depends. And then, er what else do I talk about. Um.

161  
162 **Interviewer:** The primary school?  
163

164 **Michael:** Oh yeah, primary school. um, I've known them since like primary school. You  
165 don't really, it's like those friendships that you don't really break. Like, you just always have  
166 them but they live really close to me. I can go to their house or anything, if I want. But  
167 obviously not now cause COVID but. I used to be able to. Um, like those like childhood  
168 friendships like they're not gonna break, like we've fallen out so many times it doesn't really  
169 matter. Because like we're still there, like we're not going to disappear.

170  
171 **Interviewer:** Yeah, so some, some of them. Some of them you've connected proximity wise.  
172 You're in the same space, you get the same train others you've sort of, you've built a  
173 friendship over such a long time you connected in primary school and you're in the same  
174 class aren't you? So you kind of stay with them. And then your other friends who you didn't,  
175 you didn't really have any Black friends in primary school and then you went to secondary  
176 school and you felt affiliate, like you wanted to connect with them, you'll connect with them  
177 around things that related to you. So different reasons. And then your sports group.

178  
179 **Michael:** Oh yeah. Um, I've always just been into sports. Like, from like year 5, I started  
180 playing rugby and rugby cup and like some kids come and go, but then you've also got some  
181 there like every week and those friendships just grow and that's where they came from  
182 really, just playing rugby.

183  
184 **Interviewer:** Some things are based around hobbies as well.  
185 Yeah,

186 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay cool. You kind of answered this question already but I'll ask you  
187 again anyway if you have more to add but tell me about your friends at school. Who do you  
188 spend time with?

189  
190 **Michael:** Ah um, lot of different people, like from year seven to nine. I had this really strong  
191 friendship group with like some other kids who like always in my class. Like we had almost  
192 the same classes together. We also went home on the train together. In year nine they  
193 swapped the classes around so was, they were all in one other class and I was in a different  
194 class to them like. We never saw each other and that kind of broke it a bit. But we still made  
195 an effort to like see each other like at breaktime and lunchtime because we still wanted to just  
196 kind of. It was a lot weaker than when we were like seeing each other like 24/7. And so I like,  
197 we all had to start by trying to make different friendship groups and so, like, we were all  
198 putting effort into four other people, three other people. So that's why it started to break  
199 down but we still try, like we still to understand each other.

200

201 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, and the friends you have now, how did you form friends with those  
202 people.

203  
204 **Michael:** Uh, well, I already knew them, because like, we technically were in the same class.  
205 I just didn't talk to the a lot. And so because I need them like we just like, since we were all  
206 put in the same class together and like we didn't, all our other friends, like moved on to  
207 different classes because we were forced to. Um we just decided. We were already like kind  
208 of friends but not like always talking so we just decided to, like, come together. And that's it,  
209 we just made friends.

210 **Interviewer:** Okay. Okay, because you were in the same class and you were close together.

211  
212 **Michael:** Yeah.

213  
214 **Interviewer:** Okay, cool. So we'll move on then to identification. And it's a similar questions  
215 to what I asked you about teachers, but are there people at school who are similar to you?

216  
217 **Michael:** Yeah, probably just in my year.

218 **Interviewer:** Okay.

219 **Michael:** Um, like, there are a lot of people of ethnic minority in the whole school, in the  
220 students. And um, yeah, a lot of them go through the same things I have to, like racism or just  
221 like stuff to do their their race or what they're interested in. So, I guess they're similar to me.  
222 It just depends on whether like they're sharing it with me, like all the time. Cause sometimes  
223 you just don't ask sometimes you just don't.

224  
225 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. So some people you share some experiences with, but you might  
226 not talk about it but you know that there are similar experiences that you share. And it's not  
227 just you that experiences, racism, and those things that you've described to me. Do you have  
228 any any examples of your experiences being similar to other people? at school?

229  
230 **Michael:** Oh, um, I'd say. Wait, what does? In what context?

231  
232 **Interviewer:** Um, so I guess the, you know, just mentioned racism and I wonder if you've  
233 experienced anything like that at school?

234  
235 **Micahel:** Oh, Okay. As in have I experienced racism in school? Errr, I'm luckily, personally  
236 haven't. That's probably because I'm like the good guy in the classroom I don't really get into  
237 trouble inside the classroom, outside the classroom, maybe, but inside the classroom, kind of  
238 just the more the well behaved guys. But I have experienced other people experience racism.  
239 Um, one of the teachers who got fired like two years ago was like, not the best around racism.  
240 So that's probably why he got fired he was getting like three, he had an assembly saying I'm  
241 not a racist after like three kids have had their parents email into the school saying like these  
242 incidents and stuff and they got fired in the end. So yeah, I luckily haven't because I don't  
243 really get into as like, it's just like for talking and they got detention. Which is kind of  
244 ridiculous and then they got shouted up because they were saying I haven't done anything and  
245 that all just kicked off. So stuff like that.

246  
247 **Interviewer:** Okay. So there were some experiences that were not to you personally, and you  
248 said, luckily, and as well, which is interesting. It's being it being like, you know something  
249 that is fortunate that you haven't experienced in school. Yeah, and other people have, which,  
250 which is unfair and it's a shame. Um, is it important for you to be similar to other people in

251 school?

252

253 **Michael:** Yes. Because, like, obviously I wasn't with any black people in primary school. So  
 254 I'm, I, if I'm now imagining me like going through my whole, whole of my like school life  
 255 almost, like never like having good friends with two or more black people. It's like changed  
 256 how I think about the world entirely cause I wouldn't really understand. Like if it was  
 257 happening just to me then it'll be weird not to have anybody else at the same time. So that's  
 258 why, like I'm so proud. Erm, I'm so lucky to have those type of friends.

259

260 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah, it sounds like it's helped, helped you to understand yourself a bit  
 261 more.

262

263 **Michael:** Yeah.

264

265 **Interviewer:** And your experiences. Do you feel? I mean, you mentioned, friends, do you  
 266 feel there are other people that you're similar to in, in staff, or perhaps not the same as you,  
 267 but similar to you?

268

269 **Michael:** Um, probably not. I guess similar like, they, like, I like maths quite a lot and there  
 270 are a lot of math teachers that know I like math. I guess in that way, they're similar to me,  
 271 because they also enjoy like maths and working out problems. But that's like the only way I  
 272 could really think of that they're similar to me.

273

274 **Interviewer:** Yeah, okay, do you feel people at school understand you? Do you feel  
 275 understood?

276

277 **Michael:** Yeah. Like from year 7, like the tight group of friends I had. Like we all understood  
 278 each other, we, like, we'll open up to each other. It wasn't that hard for us to do that. So,  
 279 Yeah. I do feel that I'm understood yeah.

280

281 **Interviewer:** How to, how do they help you to feel understood? What do they do, do you  
 282 think?

283

284 **Michael:** Well, like, they don't care if you say anything personal to them, like is, even if they  
 285 just like make a little joke about it, it's not like it's supposed to make you feel bad, bad. Not  
 286 supposed to make fun of some things. Or you'll find the silver lining off it or something like  
 287 that. It's not nothing to like hurt you, it's just to make it better or try and make it better.

288

289 **Interviewer:** So you can so you can have jokes with each other and not take it too personally.

290 **Michael:** Yeah.

291 **Interviewer:** And Do you think? Um, just going back to staff being similar to you, do feel it's  
 292 important, you mentioned it's important that the other children in your class who are similar  
 293 to you. Do you think it's important to have people, staff who are similar to you as well?

294

295 **Michael:** Yeah, well I do think that's important because then you've got like someone, you  
 296 can see who's doing well in the world, and you can see that you could also do that same thing.  
 297 Like, I, obviously it's good to have like, influential who people they look up to or like role  
 298 models, but it could be good to have it like right in front of you. Like telling you like. This is  
 299 all the knowledge I know, I've got this many degrees and you can do that too. Whatever.

300

301 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, having it in physical form in your school.

302 **Michael:** Yeah.

303 **Interviewer:** Thank you. Okay, we'll move on to the next one which is about inclusion. So, do  
304 you ever feel left out at school?

305

306 **Michael:** Pardon?

307

308 **Interviewer:** Do you ever feel left out at school?

309

310 **Michael:** Ah, no.

311

312 **Interviewer:** What do you think helps to make you feel included in school?

313

314 **Michael:** uh, I guess like, it's more of a choice whether or not you want to be part of  
315 something. It, like no one forces you to not. And no one is gonna say, no you can't do this.  
316 Like obviously, there's some people, like you, it's not like you even even want to like  
317 included in that sort of thing, so you just don't. And if you are, if it's your choice it's not like  
318 they're forcing you or telling you, you can't do this.

319

320 **Interviewer:** So there are opportunities for you to be involved in things, they have things  
321 which you can be involved in. And it's not forced on you, it's sort of a choice that you have.  
322 Whether you want to be involved or not.

323 **Michael:** Yeah

324 **Interviewer:** What kinds of things can you be involved in?

325

326 **Michael:** Erm, so I guess, you can be part of a club. As in like planning it, not like attending.  
327 Um, you can, um. Um what can? You can do like, be like ambassadors of like, like school  
328 council ambassadors, where your, your classmates vote for the best person they think. And  
329 you do, have to do this little speech, no one really does it. You vote because you always pick  
330 the same person. Because you know they'll be the best at it. And then, you can put yourself  
331 up for things like school council, house captain.

332 **Interviewer:** Those things sound like quite powerful, influential positions, is that what? Is  
333 that right or?

334 **Michael:** Less influential like the higher up in the school you get. Like, in year seven. Yeah  
335 school council means a lot because they want to know what Year 7's are talking about. But,  
336 and also in Year 11, I guess because obviously they're going through their GCSE's which is  
337 more important. But between year eight and year nine, it's less important because you've got  
338 the more important years like, 6<sup>th</sup>, lower, upper 6<sup>th</sup> and year 7 and year 11.

339 **Interviewer:** Okay. are you part of any of those?

340

341 **Michael:** Um, I'm a prefect. So, that's why I have this tie.

342 **Interviewer:** Oh, so they have different ties based on...

343

344 **Michael:** Yeah, some have pins, some have ties. The more important ones have ties, um. The  
345 less ones have pins. Um

346 **Interviewer:** There's a hierarchy!

347 **Michael:** Yeah, more or less! Um, so being a prefect means that I like, I can go to student  
348 council but I don't have to. I, we have our own meetings and stuff like that. Talk about what  
349 school council talked about and actually make it happen. Rather than just like, it will go to us

350 and then we take it to senior leadership team or SLT or whatever. And they will like to crack  
 351 on until it becomes like real. Um, so yeah that's that's, like, I put myself forward. I had to do  
 352 like an application, took like three minutes or whatever. Then randomly, I don't even know  
 353 how I got, but I did. Um, and then, yeah, it's just, it's such a range of people but pick like even  
 354 the kids you haven't always got the best you know track record, in terms of like behaviour,  
 355 they got picked because obviously like their view still counts because, they're still part of that  
 356 section of people who should still have their voice heard.

357  
 358 **Interviewer:** Yeah, it sounds quite um, a nice position to have. Sounds like one where you  
 359 can say your views as well and feel listened to. Do you feel listened to by the school?

360  
 361 **Michael:** Sometimes, well not me, it's not me personally obviously. It's like, kind of the  
 362 whole year, the whole. Sometimes they listen to you but when it's like. Even like the small  
 363 things, we asked to be able to do revision in life form time and the headmaster was like no.  
 364 And even our was like 'I don't like why he said no' because you're not doing anything during  
 365 form time. You're just on your phone so why can't you revise. I don't know why. Sometimes  
 366 the obvious you don't really know why. But sometimes you do get heard.

367  
 368 **Interviewer:** So those are some practical things that school does to help you feel included. Is  
 369 there anything that they do? Is there anything else that they do that isn't like a position? Sort  
 370 of like the environment they create? Do they create like an inclusive environment?

371  
 372 **Michael:** Oh, If I think of exclusive. It's more of. Like the environment is whatever you want  
 373 to make almost. Like if you want to do something, you can do it. Look. Yeah, it's more of a  
 374 choice rather than. Like if you want to be excluded you can be. It's just your choice. No one's  
 375 gonna stop you. No one's gonna force you. It's just your choice, you can be included if you  
 376 want to.

377  
 378 **Interviewer:** Mmm okay. Have you ever felt left out at school? I know you said you feel,  
 379 you've not really felt it. Was there experience before in maybe, in primary school or when  
 380 you started or have you always felt included?

381  
 382 **Michael:** Um well, in primary school. I didn't, It was like, kind of feeling left out because  
 383 you had all the cool kids obviously. And I wasn't one of the cool kids, and I wanted to be one  
 384 of the cool kids. That was kind of the exclusion I felt in primary school. It, I had my own  
 385 group of friends really so.

386  
 387 **Interviewer:** Okay. Um, you kind of answered this question already but I'm going to ask it  
 388 anyway, if you have anything more to add. Is there anything you think school could do to  
 389 help children like you feel more included in school?

390  
 391 **Michael:** I don't think so actually, because like if they add more, it will be, it would appear  
 392 like they're trying to put you together and like nobody, like nobody wants that. It would just  
 393 end up with less people doing it. I think like the less, like, the way it is, is fine. Like people  
 394 have the opportunity to do things and if they want to do things they can, rather than, like, do  
 395 it, do it.

396  
 397 **Interviewer:** And you feel that there are enough opportunities for you to do things to feel  
 398 included at your school?

399 **Michael:** Yeah.

400 **Interviewer:** Okay. That's great. So the last section is about school environment. Um, I asked  
401 you at the beginning to tell me a bit about your school, but you tell me a little bit more about  
402 your school environment. The ethos the values, how would you describe it?

403  
404 **Michael:** Uh so, it's like our school is really weird in that, because it's a grammar school,  
405 you do have like some smart kids that go there, but if it's, like you do also have the people  
406 who don't really want to work. And so, and then you've got the people in the middle who are  
407 like going to get like all sevens or whatever. Not like all nines or something but they're going  
408 to do fine, they're going to be able to do whatever they want for their A-levels, or something  
409 like that. Uh, so it's a kind of a weird like place where, like you've got the smart kids who you  
410 inspire to be like. Then you've got the rest that you're okay with and don't really care about.  
411 So that kind of creates an environment where it doesn't, but it doesn't feel like a competition.  
412 It more feels like. It definitely, it doesn't even feel like a race even it's just a walk, more like,  
413 you're just going, you're walking with 100, or 200, people in a year. So I play, you end up  
414 wherever you end up really.

415  
416 **Interviewer:** And you said at the beginning so it's quite a relaxed environment.

417 **Michael:** Yeah.

418 **Interviewer:** Yeah. And that goes with what you said about being like it's a walk and not a  
419 sprint, or that it's like a massive competition with people. Okay. How do you, how much do  
420 you feel the school's ethos and values fit with your own? So, a scale of one to 10, 10 is, it  
421 really fits, it's perfect, fit my values. And then one is, don't, doesn't fit at all with my ethos  
422 and values.

423  
424 **Michael:** Okay. Um, probably a nine.

425 **Interviewer:** Why is it a nine?

426  
427 **Michael:** Um, probably a nine because it more or less does fit with my values. Like, it's very  
428 rarely that I'm against what the school does. When I'm against it, it's nothing like major, it's  
429 just like, it seems stupid or that type of thing it doesn't make sense why they would do it.

430  
431 **Interviewer:** What kinds of things that they do that you feel is similar to you, that you feel  
432 aligned with?

433  
434 **Michael:** Well, they have like these things like, um, racism task force and um, cyber bullying  
435 ambassadors and bullying ambassadors and those sorts of stuff. I guess with my ethos, I don't  
436 want anyone to go through those sorts of things so. Them trying to fix it. I guess is a good  
437 thing.

438  
439 **Interviewer:** And what kind of things do you not feel fit with your ethos?

440  
441 **Michael:** Uh, I think about it, it might as well just be a ten. It's not even like it's going  
442 against my ethos. It's not going against my ethos. It's just silly things like, making the day go  
443 on for thing five minutes longer so everyone misses the bus and you have to wait half an hour  
444 to get the next one. It doesn't matter.

445  
446 **Interviewer:** Things you disagree with rather than it not being their ethos.

447 **Michael:** Yeah

448 **Interviewer:** Yeah, okay. Last question. What do you feel? No, not what do you feel. Do you  
449 feel connected to what you learn about?

450  
451 **Michael:** Depends on the subject. So, some, sometimes like when I enjoy the subject, I kind  
452 of feel connected because you enjoy doing it so you want to do well in it, so you want to  
453 continue doing it. But some subjects, you just, you do it, because you have to, more or less.  
454 Like, it's, it's not like you feel disconnected. It just feels like you don't want to do it anymore.  
455 Like, you're ready to get it finished and get the exam out of the way.

456  
457 **Interviewer:** Because you're not passionate about it? or just doesn't because it doesn't  
458 interest you?

459  
460 **Michael:** It just doesn't interest me.

461  
462 **Interviewer:** What subjects are you, do you feel more connected to?

463  
464 **Michael:** Um, maths, physics, computer science, those type of right or wrong answers. Not  
465 English, no, not Spanish, no. I don't know how there cannot be a right answer and yet there  
466 can be a wrong answer. That type of thing.

467  
468 **Interviewer:** Confusing. Complicated isn't it? no clear answer. Okay. All right. Well, that is  
469 the end of the interview, was there anything else that you wanted to add or want to share that  
470 would be helpful to know about your experiences?

471  
472 **Michael:** I think I said it all yeah.

473 **Interviewer:** It sounds like you have a really positive experience

474 **Michael:** Yeah, I do, I feel lucky yeah.

**Appendix 17: Transcript: Joshua**

- 1 **Interviewer:** And I'm also recording on this. This is a dictaphone that I have. And also my  
2 phone, just in case. I don't catch your views. I've got three different ways now. All right. So  
3 the first question is, if, if you were speaking to a friend who doesn't attend your school, how  
4 would you describe it to them?  
5
- 6 **Joshua:** Um, I'd say my school is quite multicultural. Well, it's got, to be honest, in my year  
7 it's mostly black and Asian people, and then there's not that many white people but I think  
8 the school overall is pretty white. I think our year is kind of an anomaly. I don't know why.  
9
- 10 **Interviewer:** Okay. Is that is that just school stuff or is that just students?  
11
- 12 **Joshua:** Students, there's barely any black staff. It's mostly white staff, I think there's like,  
13 there's two mixed race teachers and that's it.  
14
- 15 **Interviewer:** Okay, and if a friend said that they were that when they were at school, they  
16 felt they belonged. What, what would they mean?  
17
- 18 **Joshua:** Um, I think that would be like they thought they were included in a lot of activities  
19 and they weren't held back because of like any reason to be honest, like, they could just go  
20 and join in anything and no one would judge them for it.  
21
- 22 **Interviewer:** Anything else?  
23
- 24 **Joshua:** Er nah.  
25
- 26 **Interviewer:** Okay, what does it mean to be in a minority group?  
27
- 28 **Joshua:** Um, it's when you're just like, you're not the. You're not like the, What's the word  
29 that I'm looking for? You're not the um. like mood I guess, like there's a lot more of a  
30 different group than you and you're probably only going to be with a couple other people,  
31 compared to like. So say there's about like, five black people compared to forty white people  
32 or something like that.  
33
- 34 **Interviewer:** Okay. Yeah, so you're not in the majority.  
35
- 36 **Joshua:** Yeah.  
37
- 38 **Interviewer:** Yeah, okay. And how do you, how do you identify?  
39
- 40 **Joshua:** Um, what do you mean like. Just like a black male, Caribbean male. 15 years old, I  
41 guess, I dunno.  
42
- 43 **Interviewer:** And how do you feel about being a black male?  
44
- 45 **Joshua:** It's like, it's pretty good. I dunno. I'm not ashamed that like. I don't really.. right now  
46 in.. it's not too bad being black, like, some people are just going to be racist all the time  
47 anyway. But I can't really change that, if they're racist, they're racist. But I feel like XXXX  
48 anyway is a lot less racist than other places, so it's not too bad.  
49
- 50 **Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. So we'll move on to the themes now. So relationships, it's the  
51 first one. Do you get on with teachers and other staff at school?  
52
- 53 **Joshua:** Yeah um most of them. Most of them.

51 **Interviewer:** Most of them. Can you tell me why that is?

52

53 **Joshua:** Well most teachers are pretty calm and they're just, they're helping. They're there to  
54 help with you but I feel like there's always some teachers that are kind of. They're, you just  
55 feel that, like even though they're there to help you, you just feel like they're being negative  
56 for a reason and annoying and just picking on everyone.

57

58 **Interviewer:** Do you have any examples?

59

60 **Joshua:** Um, yeah some teachers they just like. They don't let you talk. They're um, or  
61 they're like, if you... This hasn't happened to me but it's happened to my friends as well.  
62 Like, the whole class will be talking. And then, everyone's talking and they'll pick out one  
63 person. But keep on picking them out, getting them in trouble even though everyone else is  
64 talking.

65

66 **Interviewer:** Okay, so a bit of um, being pointed out.

67 **Joshua:** Yeah

68 **Interviewer:** Excluded from, like, the majority of people even everyone else's talking it's one  
69 person who's getting picked out from that.

70 **Joshua:** Yeah, exactly, yeah.

71

72 **Interviewer:** And the, the staff that you get on with, what, what is it about them do you think  
73 that helps you to get on with them?

74

75 **Joshua:** They're just like, really calm, they can take a joke, they're not too uptight with  
76 everything. Like if you're messing about they're not gonna get on your case, like detention  
77 straightaway they'll tell you to calm down, and like, a lot of staff that I get along with as well,  
78 they're actually quite good at teaching, and they helped me to understand stuff as well so it's  
79 quite helpful, but if you're like some staff, are just bad at teaching. Maybe you're bad at  
80 teaching I'm not gonna listen and then when I don't, listen, I get in trouble.

81

82 **Interviewer:** What, what makes someone good at teaching? What's an example, do you  
83 think?

84

85 **Joshua:** Well, just listening, because some teachers just, they just write it on the board how  
86 to do it, and then go they just go through the lesson really quickly and if you don't understand  
87 something, it just like "oh go home and look up" or "go home and revise", but that's not  
88 really helpful cause if you could just go home and revise it you wouldn't come into school.

89 **Interviewer:** Yeah, I understand. So actually being involved with it in the lesson, rather than,  
90 you know, encouraging you to do it at home. Okay Is it important for you to be part of a  
91 group?

92

93 **Joshua:** Um, I don't like, I don't really think so. Because I'm quite like, sociable.

94

95 **Interviewer:** Oh, I think you muted yourself. Hang on. I think you muted yourself.

96

97 **Joshua:** I'm in like most groups, but I feel like it's good to be in groups with people because.  
98 It's...

99 **Interviewer:** Oh, I think you've froze on me.

100 **Joshua:** Um, um.

101

102 **Interviewer:** Um, you froze on me. Okay.

103

104 **Joshua:** Yeah, my mum keeps calling me to ask if I'm here, so I had to answer.

105 **Interviewer:** Oh, oh, Okay. Yeah I just got her email. Did you manage to tell her that that  
106 you're, do you want me to tell her that you're.

107 **Joshua:** I told her.

108 **Interviewer:** Oh okay, okay. Yeah, so being part of a group.

109

110 **Joshua:** Um, yeah, it's important to be part of a group because if you're not in any groups, it's  
111 kind of just gonna feel a bit like gonna feel lonely. Like, you're gonna feel like, because a lot  
112 of time in school as well, people aren't really friends with people outside of their groups. And  
113 they don't really talk to people outside their groups, they kind of like stick together. So, if  
114 you're not in one you're gonna feel left out the whole time.

115

116 **Interviewer:** So do you feel. How do you feel in school? Do you feel you're part of a group  
117 in school?

118

119 **Joshua:** I mean, yeah, um, yeah, I've got couple friendship groups. And I guess rugby would  
120 be another group that you're in, even though I don't play it. But it's like when I've been there,  
121 the couple times everyone's quite close together and it's just fun playing rugby together.

122

123 **Interviewer:** Sounds like there's like a sense of community.

124 **Joshua:** Yeah,

125 **Interviewer:** A sports community as well.

126

127 **Joshua:** Exactly, yeah, like when I play football, outside the school that's where I get sort of.  
128 Everyone's really close friends. Having fun playing football together.

129 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah so things like link you in terms of your interests. So you've got  
130 your school friends that's one group, then you've got your football outside of school. That's  
131 another group, and you feel that's important that having, being part of a group. It's important.  
132 Okay.

133 **Joshua:** Yeah

134 **Interviewer:** So tell me about your friends at school.

135

136 **Joshua:** Well I think my school is pretty like, the friendship groups are pretty segregated.  
137 Like, so I have my black friends. I have my, sounds bad saying it but like, I have my black  
138 friends I have some white friends, and I'm friends with a couple Asian people but they're  
139 like. Not that, not that close to them. I'm more close to my black friends than anyone. But  
140 that's just like because we can relate to the same stuff I guess.

141 **Interviewer:** Yeah. When you say segregated, what do you mean by that?

142

143 **Joshua:** Like, well in class everyone talks to each other obviously. Like don't not talk to  
144 someone because of their race but like say when you're the playground. Black people  
145 hanging out with black people white people hanging out with white people, etc.

146

147 **Interviewer:** Okay, so you can see there's more of a divide.

148

149 **Joshua:** Yeah, I mean, people do mix but like, it's not that often is not just 50/50 white

150 people, black people. It's mostly black people, mostly white people, Asians in a group.

151

152 **Interviewer:** Okay. Okay. And why do you think that is?

153

154 **Joshua:** um, it's probably just because you can like, you can live in like similar lives I guess  
155 so you have more to talk about, each other and like you can relate to more of the same stuff  
156 when you're with the same people as your race I guess.

157

158 **Interviewer:** What kinds of things do you think?

159 **Joshua:** Um, I can talk about music with my black friends a lot but I find my white friends  
160 don't listen to the same music as me a lot of the time so like, can't really talk about it with  
161 them, I guess. But yeah.

162

163 **Interviewer:** So when, so for you at school, it um. Stuff that you talk about, like music, is  
164 something you talk about and you can find that you can talk about it with your black friends  
165 because you listen to the similar music.

166 **Joshua:** Yeah

167 **Interviewer:** But you found that some of your white friends don't really listen to the music so  
168 he can't relate to them in the same way.

169

170 **Joshua:** Yeah, basically.

171 **Interviewer:** Okay. Is there anything else you think that makes it easier to relate?

172

173 **Joshua:** Oh yeah, well, um. Cause a lot of them, people live in like the same area as well, so  
174 like, you kinda stick to where your, so like. So bus routes away from school is probably  
175 where most people, most people made their friends like I guess. Because you're, like the bus  
176 to XXXX, that's where I made a lot of my friends because we're all talking there and chatting  
177 about stuff together.

178 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay. Cool. Thank you. All right, we're gonna move on to identification.  
179 So, are there people at school who are similar to you?

180

181 **Joshua:** Yeah, 100%. Yeah.

182

183 **Interviewer:** How important do you feel that is? So on a scale of one to 10 so, 10 is like very  
184 important that they're similar to you, and one is not at all important? How important do you  
185 feel it is?

186

187 **Joshua:** Um, I think like a seven cause, obviously I'm friends with some people that are  
188 totally different to me, like 100% don't, are not interested in the same things as me but we're  
189 still friends, but it's nice to be with someone that you can talk to about the same stuff. Yeah.

190

191 **Interviewer:** Same stuff being? What do you mean by same stuff?

192

193 **Joshua:** Cause, see some of my friends hate football and they'll never talk about it, but at the  
194 same time it's nice to just like talk about football have banter about each other's favourite  
195 teams and stuff like that. So it's good to have people that are interested in the same things as  
196 you.

197

198 **Interviewer:** Yeah, so for you, someone being similar to you is having similar interests to  
199 you.

200 **Joshua:** Yeah.

201

202 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay. And why is it is seven and not an eight then or not a nine.

203 **Joshua:** Because, I have loads of friends that are similar to me, but I also have closer friends  
204 that are completely different to me and don't listen to the same music. Don't watch football.

205 Not interested in the same stuff I am, but we still get along, still have jokes and stuff, so it's

206 not that important. Like I'm not only friends with people that are similar to me.

207

208 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Why do you think that is? Why do you think you need people who are  
209 less similar to you?

210

211 **Joshua:** It can help you learn about new stuff as well. Like I've learnt a lot from like, friends  
212 that aren't similar to me to me. because if I was just friends with people that were similar to  
213 me and say my friend likes, I dunno, classical music. For example, I wouldn't know anything  
214 about classical music if I wasn't friends with him. But Now I know and maybe I listened to it  
215 once and I really like it and wow, I start listening to classical music more. So it helps you like  
216 expand your mind, I guess.

217

218 **Interviewer:** Okay. Yeah, thank you. Okay, so the last question in this little theme. Do you  
219 feel people at school understand you?

220

221 **Joshua:** Um, yeah, I feel so, most of the time.

222

223 **Interviewer:** What, what helps you feel understood?

224

225 **Joshua:** Well everyone's like, pretty much speaks the same way. Kinda, like it's not, there's  
226 not a lot of different, people use the same slang and stuff it's not too different, and everyone  
227 understands what I'm saying. And talk about stuff to everyone like goes through as well. So  
228 it's not too bad.

229

230 **Interviewer:** So that's kind of also links to being similar to you, like, similar slang, um and  
231 mentality, helps you feel like you're understand at school. What about, um, is that just  
232 friends? Or is that staff as well?

233

234 **Joshua:** I mean I don't really talk to that many staff about my like personal life much but I  
235 think, I've got, there's a couple of teachers that are like, you can talk to you about personal  
236 stuff really fine, cuz they're quite sociable people. But most of the time it's just like, if you're  
237 in lessons, you stick to lessons stuff, you don't really talk that much about outside life.

238 **Interviewer:** Mmm mmm, so maybe you feel less understood by staff? It's a different kind  
239 of understanding? What do you think?

240

241 **Joshua:** well staff it's just like, in maths lessons we talk about maths. They don't really care  
242 about much about from like getting use the grades, I guess. They don't really understand like,  
243 if I was talking about hip hop or something.

244

245 **Interviewer:** Mmm, mmm, Yeah. Do you feel like that staff, aren't there to sort of  
246 understand you then? They're there to teach you?

247

248 **Joshua:** Yeah I don't yeah, yeah, it's not really like their job. I guess, so it's like. They don't  
249 have to, they're just there to get us good grades.

250  
251 **Interviewer:** Okay. So we'll move on to the next one which is inclusion. Do you ever feel  
252 left out at school?

253  
254 **Joshua:** Um, not really no. But, um no. Our school loves talking about inclusion and stuff  
255 and making everyone feel included so they're quite good at that. So never feel left out or  
256 anything.

257  
258 **Interviewer:** Do you think if didn't talk about these things you might feel a bit left out? Do  
259 you think it helps?

260  
261 **Joshua:** Yeah. It helps because they have a big focus on it by like, some schools don't focus  
262 on it at all and they just feel left out.

263  
264 **Interviewer:** Okay, so what does your school do? To help you feel included?

265  
266 **Joshua:** Well, they have a bunch of assemblies and stuff. Like talking about how, like, they  
267 just try and include everyone in everything. Like, if you're having um, what's it called? Clubs  
268 and societies about stuff they invite everyone. So even if like, it's not for me, but they have  
269 Afro Caribbean society but it's not just only African Caribbean people can come anyone can  
270 come and learn and talk about what we're talking about so it's quite good for that.

271  
272 **Interviewer:** Do you go to that, um society?

273  
274 **Joshua:** Um, Sometimes it's very hard to get into because so many people want to go. So you  
275 have to get there like really early. Otherwise you wouldn't get a place.

276  
277 **Interviewer:** Oh okay, okay. What kinds of things do they do? I've not really heard of it  
278 being in school before we have one at university but it's kind of unique to me, that they have  
279 one in school.

280  
281 **Joshua:** Um, so they talk about food African food like. There's a lot of things about origins  
282 of stuff like things have come from slavery. Being hairstyles like braids and stuff, and they  
283 try and talk about like the lesson in, like, inventors and black people that have had an impact  
284 on society but there are no reports about that much.

285  
286 **Interviewer:** Yeah, that's great. Was it set up by staff or was it set up by students?

287  
288 **Joshua:** Nah, all societies are um, student led. So it's just sixth form that are doing it. Oh,  
289 okay. How long has it been for?

290  
291 **Joshua:** Um, well they only did it, they only started society since I started this year so from  
292 September. So now but it's gonna carry on this year as well.

293  
294 **Interviewer:** Okay. So that helps you feel sort of included in school. Did you ever feel left  
295 out at all, when you spent started Did you, did you attend the school since year seven or?

296  
297 **Joshua:** Yeah, since year seven.

298  
299 **Interviewer:** Yeah

300  
301 **Joshua:** I mean, not really because, obviously, when you first started, it's still awkward  
302 because you don't know anyone. But once you have your friendship groups you don't really  
303 feel that left out. And I guess some people feel left out of some friendship groups but that's  
304 not really the school's fault because you can't really like, people pick and choose their friends  
305 they don't.

306  
307 **Interviewer:** Yeah.

308  
309 **Joshua:** Some people are very uptight, there's only three people in the friendship group and  
310 they don't want to talk to anyone else. And some people just include everyone so.

311  
312 **Interviewer:** And you said well your year is quite diverse as well. Okay, is there anything  
313 more you think school could do to help young people like you feel more included? Is it  
314 anything extra?

315  
316 **Joshua:** Um, I mean, I think Black History Month is a bit trash to be honest. It's not very like  
317 hopeful at all. Like they did like one assembly on one thing and then that's it done. Like this  
318 year over. So I feel like, like especially through this black lives matters movement now.  
319 Black history month should be a lot better than it is, but apart from that not really.

320  
321 **Interviewer:** What would you suggest then to school? If you had the power?

322  
323 **Joshua:** Um, like get people in for workshops to educate everyone about certain stuff, that's  
324 to do like, like people have more assemblies because we have one assembly but that's like 20  
325 minutes, done. Doesn't really talk about anything else to do with it. And maybe like, because  
326 we have some, we have a, um, in the summer we have like a food festival thing. So you can  
327 do something like that for Black History Month where you get everyone to cook some food,  
328 and everyone can have some try stuff.

329  
330 **Interviewer:** Yeah. So, something that, it sounds like it'd be helpful if something was  
331 continuous, whereas it's just like it sounds like at the moment is that once and then. Well, we  
332 can't just invite once so be continual. Okay. So continuous thing, and what was the food  
333 festival you're talking about? What's, what is that?

334  
335 **Joshua:** Oh, so um, like every year our school does RAG week which is raising and giving...  
336 Oh my phone's going off. One second. They have a, um. They do a bunch of likes charity  
337 event, and raise money for this charity, I can't remember what charity it is now. But um, in  
338 that, they have the food festival. So they get everyone to cook food for, or to just bring in  
339 some food and then you pay £2.50, you get a plate and you can try and they can try whatever  
340 food you want. And then in that week as well they have like teachers versus students netball,  
341 they have like wax the senior of the team and a bunch of others like um, have some like, you  
342 know those like fair things, where you do like tricks, not tricks, you do like competitions for  
343 sweets and stuff, they have all of that.

344  
345 **Interviewer:** Okay, that sounds that sounds really good. Do you think that helps you feel a  
346 bit more like included in school? Do you think it contributes?

347  
348 **Joshua:** Yeah, it's great. It's good, because er, you get to interact with a lot more people in  
349 this like, older years and younger years. Get to like talk to them.

350

351 **Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah yeah. Okay, cool. Alright so the last theme is about school  
352 environment. I asked you about, earlier, about your school. But can you tell me anything  
353 more about the school environment? What's it like? What's the vibe or the values, the ethos?

354

355 **Joshua:** It's courage commitment. Conduct effort, something or something or organising. A  
356 bunch of stuff like, it's cause it's a Grammar School so it's important for education,  
357 obviously. Good grades. They try and focus on like being good people as well. Being  
358 respectable and teaching us to like, how to help people and stuff. A like, the school vibe is  
359 pretty relaxed because not many people are too naughty so, you know you can.. it's not like it  
360 was screaming and shouting and stuff it's not that bad like that. But it's pretty, it's quite  
361 small. So a lot of the time the corridors are pretty cramped.

362

363 **Interviewer:** And how do you feel when you walk into school?

364

365 **Joshua:** Tired. But it's, it's not like I'm annoying to be there. not that I'm a need to be that  
366 you like

367

368 **Interviewer:** You like being there?

369

370 **Joshua:** I mean as much as I would like ever like being at school, yeah.

371

372 **Interviewer:** Of course, of course. How, how much do you feel it, your school values, fit  
373 with your own values? On a scale of one to 10, so 10 it fits me perfectly. You said it's  
374 academic, it's about respect, being a good person. 1 about being a good person, academics, .  
375 That

376

377 **Joshua:** I'd say like, an eight, seven, eight. Around there. It's pretty, pretty. Fits with how I  
378 am as a person.

379

380 **Interviewer:** And what do you think contributed to that feeling, that you fit in with the  
381 school?

382

383 **Joshua:** I mean they kind of just like, not drill it into you, but they kinda like teach it to you  
384 from year 7, to be a good person, how to be respectable. Like, holding the door for people  
385 you see coming, lending your stuff to people, stuff like that. So I kinda just, I've kinda just,  
386 grown up in that line as well.

387

388 **Interviewer:** Mmm, yeah, okay, okay. Do you feel connected to what you learn about?

389

390 **Joshua:** Um, pshh, no not really, not particularly like, um history. Well, when I used to do  
391 history, it wasn't that, like, I wasn't connected to it at all, because it's just like Romans,  
392 Vikings, stuff like that. And, er, but in, and English as well, I don't like it. Because it's not,  
393 it's Shakespeare who cares. I don't even think it's that important to know stuff like that. But  
394 the rest of it. Yeah, it's pretty. I'm pretty connected to it because like, stuff like economics or  
395 things that like my life, that's how life is going to be. Geography, talking about how the  
396 world is gonna be in, and climate change and stuff that's how, that's the word I'm going to be  
397 living and I feel pretty connected to it.

398

399 **Interviewer:** For you, to feel connected to something, it has to be relatable to you?

400

401 **Joshua:** Yeah. Yeah. Exactly

402

403 **Interviewer:** What would you change then about the curriculum, so that you felt more  
404 connected to it.

405

406 **Joshua:** I'd change English so that, like, it was less like, olden time books because I know  
407 they're supposed to be like classics and so on. But they're not really enjoyable to learn, and I  
408 feel like, if something's more enjoyable to learn you're more likely to do well. And you're  
409 more likely, because it's gonna stick in your brain, you're gonna listen more to your teacher,  
410 when they're talking about it. Whereas, I just find like Shakespeare just boring. So I don't  
411 really listen. Like all my friends don't listen but, and we're just half asleep. Just writing down  
412 like robots, like we're not taking it in properly.

413

414 **Interviewer:** Mmm, mmm. So you're just doing it for doing it sake.415 **Joshua:** Yeah.416 **Interviewer:** Whereas, if you felt connected to it. If it was something that you felt, you could  
417 actually apply. Then, you may feel that you could be more successful with it.

418

419 **Joshua:** Yeah like economics, cause I want to do to economics later on in my life. I try like  
420 and the teacher is pretty relaxed and chill, I try properly in that subject. Like I actually listen  
421 and interact with the teacher like, raise questions and stuff. Whereas in English, talking about  
422 connotations of words. Like I don't, just feel in my life I'll never use that knowledge again. If  
423 I get pass the exam I'll just forget about it straight away, I won't carry on.

424

425 **Interviewer:** yeah, yeah, okay. It's really helpful. Do you, do you feel that um, that there's  
426 anything about the environment, school environment that helps you feel that you belong at  
427 school?428 **Joshua:** Um well, they've got a bunch, like the society, so and say like, I'm not gay, but like,  
429 they've got an LGBT society. So like, people that are LGBT can go there. They can feel  
430 included there. Well they feel included anyway. And they also have like a big thing of like  
431 coming down hard on bullying and discrimination so that you can't really have or be bullied  
432 at our school, because the teachers will just come down on you hard and.433 **Interviewer:** What do they do?434 **Joshua:** Well it's like, it's like, instant inclusion for anything racist or discriminatory and like  
435 bullies pretty much instant inclusion as well and anything..

436

437 **Interviewer:** Do you feel like you'd be listened to if you had something racist had happened.  
438 Do you feel like this would be a safe space to do that?

439

440 **Joshua:** Um, Yeah. Well, I think I would yeah. But sometimes also you'll people feel like,  
441 when you say something, it feels racist in the moment. And then when you like, listen to  
442 yourself saying is that? It's like could that be racist or are they just being rude? so.443 **Interviewer:** It's hard to trust yourself with it?444 **Joshua:** Yeah445 **Interviewer:** Mmm okay.

446

447 **Interviewer:** Well that's it for those questions, I wondered if there was anything else that you  
448 wanted me to know about? Because what I'm doing with my research is, I'm trying to elevate  
449 your voices and get your voice out there. And to help with the research if there's anything

450 else you thought would be helpful for me to know then, now is the time.

451

452 **Joshua:** Um, I think public transport is kind of racist, not gonna lie.

453

454 **Interviewer:** Okay.

455

456 **Joshua:** Like on my way to school people will just like, not sit next to me and stuff. Cause  
457 I'm... I'm not even doing any.. I'm not even wearing anything scary, like a mask or anything,  
458 I'm just sitting there, either on my phone or like, doing work, or reading a book or something.  
459 And people just like, some people would prefer to stand up or sit next to me. But you know,  
460 you can't really change them because they're stuck in their ways being ignorant about stuff  
461 like that.

462

463 **Interviewer:** And is that people in your school or is that just the public?

464

465 **Joshua:** No, not people at my school, that's just like, people on my way to school.

466

467 **Interviewer:** That feeling, um, isn't carried into school, it's just the stuff that's outside of  
468 school? Your school, I mean, correct me if I'm wrong but your school sounds like a safe  
469 place, sounds like a welcoming place.

470 **Joshua:** Yeah

471 **Interviewer:** They celebrate difference, they've got lots of different societies, helping you  
472 feel included, but it doesn't match the outside world.

473 **Joshua:** No, not really. Because yeah, our school is pretty safe, yeah.

474

475 **Interviewer:** Okay, thank you Joshua. Thank you so much. It's been wonderful chatting with  
476 you. That is it from me and what I'll do is, I'll send you a debrief sheet and on that sheet.  
477 There are some links to things if you wanted to get involved with fighting against inequality,  
478 um then there are just some links there if you were interested in looking it up. And if you  
479 were impacted by anything we spoke about today, there's Samaritans which is a free  
480 counselling service that you can call. But it was just really to say a massive thank you  
481 because your voice is really important to me, and I value it, and I hope to raise it um, and the  
482 results, if you were interested in what came up from this, they'll actually be read next year.  
483 It's quite a long process, so this time next year. Hopefully I'll have the results, and if you  
484 were interested in, you know what came from that, then you can contact me and I'll share  
485 with you what came from it. Okay?

486 **Joshua:** Okay yeah.

487 **Interviewer:** All right, anything else. Any other questions or anything.

488

489 **Joshua:** No, not really.

490

491 **Interviewer:** Have a wonderful summer, are you in summer now?

492 **Joshua:** Yeah.

493 **Interviewer:** All right. Enjoy your garden experiences.

494 **Joshua:** Haha, yeah

495 **Interviewer:** Okay, bye

496 **Joshua:** Bye

## Appendix 18 – Example of codes and extracts that were used to generate themes

It is necessary to note that the codes and themes represented here are not the full version of analysis but a working document of the analysis process. The final analysis was completed away from Nvivo. The codes were printed, cut and moved around to form the final overarching themes, themes and sub-themes. Here I have demonstrated two examples of how I generated the following themes, ‘Complex Relationship with Ethnic Identity’ and ‘Searching for Similarity through Ethnic Identity’. I have added the relevant extracts, their code and the codes that make up the sub theme/theme. In both examples, I used latent and semantic meaning of the extract to create the codes. The codes were also generated through a critical orientation as part of Reflexive Thematic Analysis where by a pattern or rule within the extract was noticed.

<b>Overarching theme – Being Different from Majority</b>		
<b>Theme: Complex Relationship with Ethnic Identity</b>		
<b>Sub theme</b>	<b>Codes</b>	<b>Extract</b>
<b>Ethnic Identity Label is reductionist</b>	Culture is unique and distinct from one another	<p><b>Appendix 16, Line 43</b>  <b>Interviewer:</b> And how do you feel about being Afro-Caribbean?</p> <p><b>Michael:</b> Um. Just like, I guess there’s a lot of culture you have to intake from the both of the two nations like, one of them is like, they’re completely different. It’s really confusing when you have two of the same family and they’re just different people. Um, but other than that, I just, it’s just me, isn’t it? I just get used to it.</p>
	Describes identity in relation to ethnicity, gender and age	<p><b>Appendix 17, Line 35</b>  <b>Interviewer:</b> Yeah, okay. And how do you, how do you identify?</p> <p><b>Joshua:</b> Um, what do you mean like. Just like a black male, Caribbean male. 15 years old, I guess, I dunno.</p>

	<p>Ethnic identity is complex and cannot be described with a label</p> <p>Having to correct and explain his ethnic identity</p>	<p><b>Appendix 13, line 60</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> So you're highlighting here that it's quite complex?</p> <p><b>Jacob:</b> Yeah, because, I mean, especially for me because, you know, especially growing up and then in secondary school as well people would often you know just see me as like a lot of East Asian like, you know, part of, like you know Chinese background or like a Japanese background. So then, and then when they start. And then when they realise that actually I'm not and then, I'm actually a, like I'm a Muslim, they often, you know, people get confused and then it, yeah..</p>
	<p>No neat box to fit ethnic identity into</p>	<p><b>Appendix 16, line 36</b></p> <p><b>Michael:</b> Probably Afro Caribbean. My mum's from Jamaica, my dad's from Nigeria. Yeah, that's, that's how I describe it.</p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> So a mixture of both.</p> <p><b>Michael:</b> Yeah, a mixture of both, Yeah.</p>
	<p>opposing to societal ideas or stereotype of ethnic minority experience</p>	<p><b>Appendix 12, line 42</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Could be in terms of your school could be in terms of self.</p> <p><b>Saif:</b> I don't really feel like too much of a minority I won't lie. Because I think, for example in my school, um, I think the majority of people are of Asian descent, and then next would be white and then black. And then,</p>

		<p>of um east. So like, people from China and Japan and Korea and stuff that would be the lowest. But um, I don't know I just don't really feel that marginalised if that makes sense. Yeah. So I just kind of feel fairly included. I mean, yeah.</p>
	<p>Others reduce one's ethnic identity (inaccurately) to a category based on how he looks</p>	<p><b>Appendix 13, line 60</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> So you're highlighting here that it's quite complex?</p> <p><b>Jacob:</b> Yeah, because, I mean, especially for me because, you know, especially growing up and then in secondary school as well people would often you know just see me as like a lot of East Asian like, you know, part of, like you know Chinese background or like a Japanese background. So then, and then when they start. And then when they realise that actually I'm not and then, I'm actually a, like I'm a Muslim, they often, you know, people get confused and then it, yeah.</p>
	<p>There's more to one's ethnicity that how they label themselves or how others label them</p>	<p><b>Appendix 13, line 54</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Okay. And, and, what was your ethnic label, how do you like to identify?</p> <p><b>Jacob:</b> Well sort of, well culturally, I you know tell people, you know, that I'm Asian like Southeast Asian, and then you know when it gets to like religious standpoints I'm Muslim so then, people, so yeah, that's what it is.</p>
	<p>Upsetting to be perceived in a way that relates to a stereotype and not their true selves</p>	<p><b>Appendix 14, line 217</b></p> <p><b>Malachi:</b> I felt kind of upset because if, if someone is to like try and tell my parents that that's</p>

		a very sensitive thing. So, if my parents to question, like, are you in a gang or something like that. So that's why I'd It's very sensitive, so I don't think that it was nice at all for him to bring something like that. So that's why I'd say, like, sensitive comments.
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### Overarching theme – Protective Factors for Ethnic Belonging

#### Theme: Searching for Similarity through Ethnic Identity

Codes	Extract
A small number of people who are similar to him	<p><b>Appendix 16, line 217</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Okay, cool. So we'll move on then to identification. And it's a similar questions to what I asked you about teachers, but are there people at school who are similar to you?</p> <p><b>Michael:</b> Yeah, probably just in my year.</p>
Actively searching for someone of same ethnicity as him	<p><b>Appendix 13, line 163</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Are they from a similar community or different community to you?</p>
An aspect of being similar to others includes his ethnicity and cultural background	<p><b>Jacob:</b> I mean, ethnically like lots of them are very different to me as I'm like I'm, in terms of like from a like ethnic standpoint, I'm like one of. I'm like the only person, like, from like where I am. So I had to like communicate with like others, like communities, like already from the start. Because I couldn't find someone straight away. So yeah, like all of my friends are from different, um, backgrounds.</p>
Being around people who have a similar ethnicity to you through societies such as the afro Caribbean society helps you feel included	<p><b>Appendix 13, 368</b></p> <p><b>Jacob:</b> So, like there's this African Caribbean society, so people have that of African Caribbean descent, or people or anyone who wants to go can go and like feel like they are included somewhere. But I think that's more</p>

	<p>recent. Than, than, back when when I was in year 7, that wasn't really around.</p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Okay, so would you like that's like a year or two ago, or?</p> <p><b>Jacob:</b> Yeah I think like, maybe two years ago, like the school started being more... I want to say, aware of, like, you know, other people's like cultures and wanting to include people. I think anyway.</p>
<p>Being similar to others is related to one's ethnic identity</p>	<p><b>Appendix 13, line 382</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Do you think that's something that helps people feel included in school? Do you think it's something that others schools should do?</p> <p><b>Jacob:</b> Yeah, I do. Because I remember when it first, that specific society first opened. There were like lots of people who are like, oh wow like we get to, we get to do something now we get to, you know, they're surrounded by people who have similar thoughts to them and they get to learn more about their culture which they may have not learned in school before so it was quite like, it's quite like exciting for them to be able to be amongst like other people that are similar to them.</p>
<p>Being similar to someone involves experiencing situations in relation to their race</p>	<p><b>Appendix 16, line 219</b></p> <p><b>Michael:</b> Um, like, there are a lot of people of ethnic minority in the whole school, in the students. And um, yeah, a lot of them go through the same things I have to, like racism or just like stuff to do their their race or what they're interested in. So, I guess they're similar to me. It just depends on whether like they're sharing it with me, like all the time. Cause sometimes you just don't ask sometimes you just don't.</p>
<p>Being similar to someone is to be the same race or ethnicity as them</p>	<p><b>Appendix 16, line 143</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> What groups do you feel that you belong to?</p> <p><b>Michael:</b> Um, I guess, the more ethnic</p>
<p>Belonging to a group can be based on ones ethnicity, specifically minority ethnic people</p>	<p><b>Appendix 16, line 143</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> What groups do you feel that you belong to?</p> <p><b>Michael:</b> Um, I guess, the more ethnic</p>

	<p>minority people with my school. Like, that's kind of a group in itself. The people I go home with on the train. The people who have known since like primary school. Like my rugby, any like sports I do, I'll belong to those types of groups. That's like, like, if I see them I know that I can go up to them and like have a genuine conversation rather than just like hi or bye.</p>
<p>Drawn to people of his own ethnicity</p>	<p><b>Appendix 13, line 170</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Do you think if there were people who were from your background, you'd be drawn to them?</p> <p><b>Jacob:</b> I think so, because like outside of school, I know people who are and then I'm obviously drawn to them. But it's just in a school, in a school, I don't think so because there aren't any.</p>
<p>Having a variety of ethnic groups in one school is beneficial to ones feeling of acceptance at the school</p>	<p><b>Appendix 14, line 36</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Okay, primary school. And you said it was, there was more mixture of, diverse, it was more diverse?</p> <p><b>Malachi:</b> Yeah, like, we had loads of different people from different countries. We had, um yeah, loads of loads of different, a different variety. While as, I feel like, in our new school there's less of, um maybe black people or people from Hispanic background and stuff like that. That's, that's the only difference but yeah. Even though there's less of a like diversity in terms of the students that go there now. It's got much better, because my dad went there and he had a very different experience. And then, also, but there's definitely, like better, they're always accepting so.</p>
<p>Having friends who are from the same background as you is a source of comfort</p>	<p><b>Appendix 14, line 310</b></p> <p><b>Malachi:</b> So, now we go to the same school, and we are, we didn't go to the same primary but we like kind of know each other a bit better and we come from the same. We both come from Ghana. And then I have two other friends</p>

	<p>who come from Ghana as well. So that's nice. And I have one friend that comes from Jamaica, I have plenty of, like most of, I'd say six friends that come from Nigeria. And so it's nice like that we can all relate. Sometimes you have friendly beefs like, for example, Nigeria and Ghana both make Jollof and we always are saying like all ours is better, no ours is better and stuff. So it's very funny and it's very nice.</p>
Having friends who are the same ethnicity or race as you helps you learn about your similar life experiences	<p><b>Appendix 16, line 253</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Um, is it important for you to be similar to other people in school?</p>
Having friends who are the same ethnicity or race as you is a form of support	<p><b>Michael:</b> Yes. Because, like, obviously I wasn't with any black people in primary school. So I'm, I, if I'm now imagining me like going through my whole, whole of my like school life almost, like never like having good friends with two or more black people. It's like changed how I think about the world entirely cause I wouldn't really understand. Like if it was happening just to me then it'll be weird not to have anybody else at the same time. So that's why, like I'm so proud. Erm, I'm so lucky to have those type of friends.</p>
Having friends who are the same ethnicity or race as you is life changing	
If you don't have people who are like you, you won't feel as though you belong there	<p><b>Appendix 14, line 337</b></p> <p><b>Malachi:</b> And also, but like I've also felt like it's very important that you have groups of people that are similar to you because if they aren't similar to you, I mean, like, it's, if you have no people that are similar to you as a very upsetting kind of thing because you don't feel like you belong there.</p>
It is upsetting to have no one similar to you in a school	
Relates being similar to someone to their ethnicity	<p><b>Appendix 16, line 127</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Okay, so you get on with some teachers, others not so much. Are there any particular teachers that you feel are similar to you or that you feel quite connected to?</p> <p><b>Michael:</b> um, probably not. Probably not no. And like, I like, the teachers I all respect. I all respect them as like human beings but they're</p>

	not really much like me. Because, I don't think there's any black teachers in my school so.
Relates people that are like him to his race	<p><b>Appendix 16, line 152</b></p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> So there's lots of different groups that you have for different reasons as well, I think. Okay, tell me about them, the different groups.</p>
You are naturally drawn to people who are of the same race or ethnicity as you	<p><b>Michael:</b> Um, so I guess the ones like me and some black friends. Um, very, we mess around a lot I guess. They're not exactly like the most well-behaved bunch. But it's not like we're doing anything bad or anything. Um and then, er, that came around just because I went to a more or less all white primary school so I never really had any black friends. And so, I just got drawn into them when I like came into year 7.</p>

## **Appendix 19 – Reflective notes and decisions made as part of Thematic Analysis**

### **Data analysis method**

WB: 18.02.21

1. Coded each interview individually – codes based on critical orientation, looking for rules or underlying messages that relate to belonging or their experiences. Codes were long and descriptive
2. Put all codes – 900 of them in one place
3. Refined codes by merging very similar codes – e.g. if both codes are speaking about academic similarity – put them together.
4. Initially tried to put similar codes for individuals first then – gave me a sense of potential themes. Then put all codes in once place
5. Broad categories came to mind when coding data and skimming data to see what arose across data sets – Judgement from others, exclusive groups vs inclusive groups, Conflict between being one mixing and being with people like you, ethnic identity, Having choice and having no choice, it's too late. Putting codes into these and seeing where they fit. Having an other section also
6. Why these categories – because they answer the research question and take a critical orientation – align to a factor or something that contributes to belonging. Part of something that can be used to support this students

### **WB: 25.02.21**

Sharing culture in tangible forms → Brining culture alive → being seen/making culture visible

Taking interest in someone, personal interest

Actively listening

Sub-themes merged with an overarching theme as they didn't work as separate themes. E.g. representation of school staff and leadership was one theme and representation in the curriculum was another – this became a part of cluster of over-arching theme: Ethnic minority representation in school

Protective factors vs risk factors

Some codes go across both things – “not being represented makes it harder to fit in” fits in with ‘Ethnic representation in school’ and “Needing to fit in’

### **WB: 04.03.2021**

Cannot separate experiences and factors so looked at them together as they often overlap. Made the distinction while I was organising the themes.

Something about rarity, uniqueness, fortune e.g. only a small amount of people who are like him, lucky to not experience racism etc.

More manageable to put in a broad category – e.g relationships with staff, then figure out subcategories. In other instances, more manageable to do a sub theme and then consider which sub themes could merge to become an over-arching theme.

Some mix and are blurred for example Open Vs. Narrow Minded could put in there mixing with others and needing difference.

Copy and pasted codes to one theme and then checked to see if those codes would fit under other themes. For example representation of one's ethnicity and the code ‘sharing ethnic experiences need to be heard more’ – comes under both sharing culture and representation in the environment

Representation is not just visible characteristics.

### 05.03.2021

Students create a space for themselves within the system or adapt to fit the system. What is the system doing?

A sense of experiences being minimised, diminished, having to justify oneself.

Generated new codes for each line – that's why I have 1 and 1 reference to the text. Had to make sub codes

Codes → sub codes → sub themes → themes → super-ordinate themes.

### 06/03/2021

**Shared experience** is part of being support and being understood

**Need to fit in** – acceptance

Ethnicity as reductionist and complex relationship – coming together to potentially form

**Relationship with Ethnic identity** – sub theme from this: Feelings of shame and pride, maybe non-judgement should join here?

**Sharing culture** sometimes overlaps with **ethnic representation in school** – consideration of merging these? So far kept separate.

**Similarity to belong** and **finding similarity in ethnic identity** – come together.

NEW THEMES: **Relationship with Peers**: Almost like criteria for friendship forming, sports, similar interests, being similar and different. **Experiences of racism. Action taken by school . Relationship to Learning** (under Education is more than what you learn about?).

Relationship to learning that is connected to ethnicity.... Consider this.

### 11.03.2021

Needing to fit in may be linked with adaptability – as some codes talk about adapting ones self to fit in. But adapting is still different as some codes talk about adapting ones behaviour or learning to be able to succeed.

Change and adaptability related to experiences of racism – having to adapt one's behaviour to prevent or avoid being misrepresented.

Action taken by school – in relation to anti-racism, but also belonging and making friends, outside coming in – external relations (are these discussed).

### **Misrepresentation**

**Experiences and feelings invalidated**

**Acceptance and rejection, non-judgemental**

Relationship with peers is more important than relationship with peers in terms of belonging.

Teachers and staff hold a different role in relation to belonging – role models, learning, academic belonging perhaps? Provide guidance, parental figures, role models, people you feel you can achieve from – If staff are off your ethnicity

**Relationship to learning** – being interested in subject, relating to it on a personal level, books, black authors etc. (look in ethnic representation in school pile and education is more than what you learn about pile).

Embracing culture is like having pride in culture.

Themes that can be broken down:

Understanding, Relationship to peers, Relationship to staff, Adapting, Challenging stereotypes, Choice/Autonomy, Open, close and established groups, action taken by school.

### 12.03.11

Started to put sub codes into themes and themes into subordinate themes and sub themes.

Put into protected factors – sharing values, having similar academic ability,

Relating to school through ethnic identity – protected space,

Distinction between ethnic identity and its relation to belonging and then belonging in general.

Distinct experience and belonging that's related to one's ethnic identity and being different from the majority.

Needing to fit in changed to Different from majority – therefore need to fit in to Eurocentric norm, adapting self and avoiding being an outsider.

Relationships clumped together as authentic and meaningful – this came up in peers, teachers and learning.

Challenges to belonging? Maybe, this is where being different from majority etc. can go, close and open groups etc.

Protected factors ----- Challenges

Separate and distinct relationship with ethnic identity underneath these two things.

Autonomy and responsibility

Locus of control – Internal (personal choice, have influence over environment) vs. external (no choice in things and have no influence over environment)

Action taken by school -> Meaningful actions taken by school – put in acknowledgement of outside world.

### 13.03.2021

Feeling understood may be part of general belonging but also about being different – check codes again to name this properly.

### 16.03. 2021 and 18.03.2021

Codes checked for each sub code that it was put into to ensure it made sense and any other sub codes that can be generated from these codes were created. E.g. Relationship teachers – warm and approachable,

For some did bigger picture to smaller picture – e.g. subordinate theme into themes and sub codes: relationship teachers, actions taken by school – broken down. Others were smaller picture then building up e.g. codes into sub codes – fortunate experiences.

When one can't experience ethnic belonging (belonging to their ethnic group) – other areas of belonging that protect them.

Checked that codes made sense with the code extracts and sub codes made sense with the codes.

### 19.03.2021 – Reviewing and refining themes

Moving themes about making them into sub-ordinate themes, sub themes and sub-sub themes.

### Stage 1

All Data Sets		Search Project					
Name	Files	Referenc	Created /	Created	Modified	Modified	
SHARING VALUES AND GOALS WITH SCHOOL COMMUNITY	0	0	25/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
NEEDING TO FIT IN	1	1	25/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG	
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCES	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
RELATIONSHIP WITH ONES ETHNIC IDENTITY IS COMPLEX	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
CHOICE, INTERNALISED, POWER, AUTONOMY	0	0	26/02/20	IG	05/03/202	IG	
ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN SCHOOL	0	0	26/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG	
SHARING ONES CULTURE OR BEING SEEN	0	0	26/02/20	IG	06/03/202	IG	
HAVING A SIMILAR ACADEMIC ABILITY AND DRIVE TO SUCCEED	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
PROTECTED SPACE FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
FINDING SIMILARITY AND BELONGING THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	26/02/20	IG	05/03/202	IG	
HAVING TO ADAPT AND CHANGE BEHAVIOUR	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
BEING PART OF A GROUP PREVENTS YOU FROM ISOLATION	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
KNOWING PEOPLE AND BEING KNOWN	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
NON-JUDGEMENTAL ENVIRONMENT	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES, OPEN VS NARROW MINDED	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG	
PROTECTED FACTORS	0	0	27/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG	
BEING SIMILAR TO OTHERS HELPS YOU BELONG	0	0	27/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG	
RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAFF	0	0	04/03/20	IG	05/03/202	IG	
EDUCATION IS MORE THAN WHAT YOU LEARN ABOUT	0	0	04/03/20	IG	04/03/202	IG	
DIVERSITY PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN	0	0	04/03/20	IG	04/03/202	IG	
OPEN, CLOSED AND ESTABLISHED GROUPS	0	0	04/03/20	IG	04/03/202	IG	
TIMING OF ANTI-RACISM WORK	0	0	04/03/20	IG	05/03/202	IG	

Name	Files	Referenc	Created /	Created	Modified	Modified
SHARING VALUES AND GOALS WITH SCHOOL COMMUNITY	0	0	25/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
NEEDING TO FIT IN	1	1	25/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG
It is difficult to be yourself when you are in the minority	1	1	25/02/20	IG	19/02/202	IG
NEEDING TO FIT IN TO EUROCENTRIC NORM OR ASSIMILATE	0	0	27/02/20	IG	04/03/202	IG
AVOID BEING DIFFERENT OR AN OUTSIDER	0	0	27/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCES	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCE SEPARATE TO ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCE AS PART OF ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
RELATIONSHIP WITH ONES ETHNIC IDENTITY IS COMPLEX	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
ETHNIC IDENTITY LABEL CAN BE REDUCTIONIST	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
SHAME AND PRIDE CONNECTED TO ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	06/03/20	IG	06/03/202	IG
FORMING IDENTITY	0	0	06/03/20	IG	06/03/202	IG
CHOICE, INTERNALISED, POWER, AUTONOMY	0	0	26/02/20	IG	05/03/202	IG
ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN SCHOOL	0	0	26/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG
REPRESENTATION IN THE CURRICULUM	0	0	26/02/20	IG	05/03/202	IG
REPRESENTATION IN SCHOOL STAFF AND LEADERSHIP	0	0	27/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG
REPRESENTATION IN STUDENTS	0	0	27/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG
REPRESENTATION IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT	0	0	27/02/20	IG	04/03/202	IG
SCHOOL EVENTS AND SOCIETIES	0	0	06/03/20	IG	06/03/202	IG
SHARING ONES CULTURE OR BEING SEEN	0	0	26/02/20	IG	06/03/202	IG
TANGIBLE OR VISIBLE	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
NON-TANGIBLE OR INVISIBLE	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
HAVING A SIMILAR ACADEMIC ABILITY AND DRIVE TO SUCCEED	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
PROTECTED SPACE FOR ETHNIC MINORTIES	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
FINDING SIMILARITY AND BELONGING THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	26/02/20	IG	05/03/202	IG
HAVING TO ADAPT AND CHANGE BEHAVIOUR	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
Adapting self in order to fit in with the social norm and pop references	1	1	25/02/20	IG	19/02/202	IG
It is important to adapt and move out of your comfort zone	1	1	25/02/20	IG	22/02/202	IG
with people he feels uncomfortable or lacks acceptance with he adapts his behaviour	1	2	25/02/20	IG	15/02/202	IG
ADAPTING TO FIT IN	0	0	04/03/20	IG	04/03/202	IG
ADAPTING TO AVOID GETTING IN TROUBLE	0	0	04/03/20	IG	04/03/202	IG
BEING PART OF A GROUP PREVENTS YOU FROM ISOLATION	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
Being part of a group is important because it helps you feel that you belong somewhere	1	1	25/02/20	IG	19/02/202	IG
To be without a group can bring emotional challenges and feelings of isolation	1	1	25/02/20	IG	28/01/202	IG
There are advantages and disadvantages of being part of a group	1	1	25/02/20	IG	28/01/202	IG
To be part of a group is to also be included	1	1	25/02/20	IG	28/01/202	IG
BEING PART OF A SPORTS TEAM	0	0	06/03/20	IG	06/03/202	IG
KNOWING PEOPLE AND BEING KNOWN	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
NON-JUDGEMENTAL ENVIRONMENT	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES, OPEN VS NARROW MINDED	0	0	26/02/20	IG	26/02/202	IG
PROTECTED FACTORS	0	0	27/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG
BEING SIMILAR TO OTHERS HELPS YOU BELONG	0	0	27/02/20	IG	27/02/202	IG
RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAFF	0	0	04/03/20	IG	05/03/202	IG
Relationships with teachers has improved with maturity and as he has progressed through the school years	1	1	25/02/20	IG	15/02/202	IG
Staff members are similar to him in terms of their interest in subjects such as like maths and the teacher likes maths also	1	1	25/02/20	IG	21/02/202	IG
Teachers need some degree of competency around working with people from different ethnicities and races	1	1	25/02/20	IG	21/02/202	IG
Gets on with the majority of his teachers	1	1	25/02/20	IG	20/02/202	IG
Relational distance from teachers and staff	1	1	25/02/20	IG	15/02/202	IG
BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT	0	0	05/03/20	IG	05/03/202	IG
GENUINE AND AUTHENTIC INTEREST	0	0	05/03/20	IG	05/03/202	IG
WARM AND APPROACHABLE	0	0	05/03/20	IG	05/03/202	IG
PROVIDE ACADEMIC HELP AND SUPPORT	0	0	05/03/20	IG	05/03/202	IG
STUDENTS CAN BE AUTONOMOUS	0	0	05/03/20	IG	05/03/202	IG
EDUCATION IS MORE THAN WHAT YOU LEARN ABOUT	0	0	04/03/20	IG	04/03/202	IG
DIVERSITY PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN	0	0	04/03/20	IG	04/03/202	IG
OPEN, CLOSED AND ESTABLISHED GROUPS	0	0	04/03/20	IG	04/03/202	IG
TIMING OF ANTI-RACISM WORK	0	0	04/03/20	IG	05/03/202	IG

**Stage 2**

Themes							
Name	Files	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By	
SHARING ONES CULTURE OR BEING SEEN	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	06/03/2021 17:56	IG	
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCE SEPARATE TO ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	26/02/2021 17:51	IG	
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCE AS PART OF ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	26/02/2021 17:52	IG	
RELATING TO SCHOOL THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	12/03/2021 12:39	IG	12/03/2021 12:48	IG	
PROTECTED FACTORS FOR GENERAL BELONGING	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 12:58	IG	
MEANINGFUL ACTIONS TAKEN AND COMMUNICATED BY SCHOOL	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 16:21	IG	
LOCUS OF CONTROL	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	19/03/2021 11:19	IG	
JOINING AND FORMING A GROUP IS CHALLENGING	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	18/03/2021 17:04	IG	
FINDING SIMILARITY AND BELONGING THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	05/03/2021 17:06	IG	
FEELING VALUED AS A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 16:14	IG	
BEING DIFFERENT FROM THE MAJORITY	1	1	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 13:25	IG	
AUTHENTIC AND MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS	0	0	19/03/2021 11:27	IG	13/03/2021 19:52	IG	

Themes							
Name	Files	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By	
BEING DIFFERENT FROM THE MAJORITY	1	1	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 13:25	IG	
AVOID BEING DIFFERENT OR AN OUTSIDER	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	27/02/2021 19:53	IG	
HAVING TO ADAPT AND CHANGE BEHAVIOUR	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	26/02/2021 11:18	IG	
EXPERIENCES OF RACISM	0	0	12/03/2021 17:28	IG	19/03/2021 11:11	IG	
DIFFERENCES MAY NOT BE ACCEPTED	0	0	13/03/2021 19:34	IG	13/03/2021 19:48	IG	
FEAR OF BEING JUDGED FOR DIFFERENCES	0	0	13/03/2021 19:35	IG	13/03/2021 19:49	IG	
DIFFICULTY EMBRACING CULTURE	0	0	18/03/2021 12:34	IG	18/03/2021 12:34	IG	
EXPOSURE TO FIXED MINDESTS	0	0	18/03/2021 14:56	IG	18/03/2021 15:07	IG	
UP AGAINST NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES AND ASSUMPTIONS	0	0	18/03/2021 14:56	IG	18/03/2021 15:01	IG	
LOCUS OF CONTROL	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	19/03/2021 11:19	IG	
HAVING AUTONOMY AND INFLUENCE	0	0	18/03/2021 15:52	IG	18/03/2021 15:52	IG	
HAVING NO CHOICE OR INFLUENCE	0	0	18/03/2021 15:53	IG	19/03/2021 11:20	IG	
PROTECTED FACTORS FOR GENERAL BELONGING	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 12:58	IG	
SHARING VALUES AND GOALS WITH SCHOOL COMMUNITY	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	26/02/2021 17:48	IG	
HAVING A SIMILAR ACADEMIC ABILITY AND DRIVE TO SUCCEED	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	26/02/2021 01:54	IG	
BEING PART OF A GROUP IS PROTECTIVE	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	16/03/2021 19:47	IG	
KNOWING PEOPLE AND BEING KNOWN	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	26/02/2021 15:39	IG	
HAVING SIMILAR INTERESTS AND THINGS IN COMMON	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 13:00	IG	
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCE	0	0	12/03/2021 13:13	IG	12/03/2021 13:27	IG	
JOINING AND FORMING A GROUP IS CHALLENGING	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	18/03/2021 17:04	IG	
OPEN GROUPS ARE INCLUSIVE	0	0	13/03/2021 19:30	IG	16/03/2021 20:54	IG	
CLOSED GROUPS ARE EXCLUSIVE	0	0	13/03/2021 19:30	IG	16/03/2021 20:54	IG	
RELATING TO SCHOOL THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	12/03/2021 12:39	IG	12/03/2021 12:48	IG	
COMPLEXITY OF RELATIONSHIP WITH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 12:36	IG	
ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN SCHOOL	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	27/02/2021 19:47	IG	
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCE SEPARATE TO ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	26/02/2021 17:51	IG	
SHARING ONES CULTURE OR BEING SEEN	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	06/03/2021 17:56	IG	
TANGIBLE OR VISIBLE	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	26/02/2021 16:33	IG	
NON-TANGIBLE OR INVISIBLE	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	26/02/2021 16:37	IG	
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCE AS PART OF ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	26/02/2021 17:52	IG	
MEANINGFUL ACTIONS TAKEN AND COMMUNICATED BY SCHOOL	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 16:21	IG	
TIMING OF ANTI-RACISM WORK	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	05/03/2021 13:50	IG	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RACIAL INEQUALITY AND CURRENT EVENTS	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 16:19	IG	
ONGOING ACTIONS REQUIRED	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	13/03/2021 19:53	IG	
DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 15:50	IG	
PROTECTED SPACE FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	26/02/2021 17:54	IG	
INCLUSION AND ANTI-RACISM EMBEDDED IN ETHOS	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 16:14	IG	
OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE CULTURE AND RAISE AWARENESS	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 16:21	IG	
FINDING SIMILARITY AND BELONGING THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	05/03/2021 17:06	IG	
FEELING VALUED AS A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 16:14	IG	
EXPERIENCES DISMISSED AND INVALIDATED	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	16/03/2021 19:33	IG	
NEEDING TO BE UNDERSTOOD	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	13/03/2021 19:49	IG	
EMOTIONAL VALIDATION	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	16/03/2021 19:35	IG	
NEEDING TO BE HEARD	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 16:13	IG	
AUTHENTIC AND MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS	0	0	19/03/2021 11:27	IG	13/03/2021 19:52	IG	
RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAFF	0	0	19/03/2021 11:27	IG	05/03/2021 09:22	IG	
RELATIONSHIP WITH PEERS	0	0	19/03/2021 11:27	IG	12/03/2021 13:01	IG	
RELATIONSHIP WITH LEARNING	0	0	19/03/2021 11:27	IG	12/03/2021 13:01	IG	

### Stage 3

Themes							
Name	Files	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By	
PROTECTED FACTORS FOR GENERAL BELONGING	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 12:58	IG	
RELATING TO SCHOOL THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	12/03/2021 12:39	IG	12/03/2021 12:48	IG	
PROTECTED FACTORS FOR ETHNIC BELONGING	0	0	19/03/2021 11:52	IG	19/03/2021 11:52	IG	

Themes							
Name	Files	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By	
PROTECTED FACTORS FOR GENERAL BELONGING	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 12:58	IG	
SHARING VALUES AND GOALS WITH SCHOOL COMMUNITY	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	26/02/2021 17:48	IG	
HAVING A SIMILAR ACADEMIC ABILITY AND DRIVE TO SUCCEED	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	26/02/2021 01:54	IG	
BEING PART OF A GROUP IS PROTECTIVE	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	16/03/2021 19:47	IG	
KNOWING PEOPLE AND BEING KNOWN	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	26/02/2021 15:39	IG	
HAVING SIMILAR INTERESTS AND THINGS IN COMMON	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 13:00	IG	
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCE	0	0	12/03/2021 13:13	IG	12/03/2021 13:27	IG	
AUTHENTIC AND MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS	0	0	19/03/2021 11:27	IG	13/03/2021 19:52	IG	
RELATING TO SCHOOL THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	12/03/2021 12:39	IG	12/03/2021 12:48	IG	
COMPLEXITY OF RELATIONSHIP WITH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 12:36	IG	
ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN SCHOOL	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	27/02/2021 19:47	IG	
BEING DIFFERENT FROM THE MAJORITY	1	1	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 13:25	IG	
JOINING AND FORMING A GROUP IS CHALLENGING	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	18/03/2021 17:04	IG	
LOCUS OF CONTROL	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	19/03/2021 11:19	IG	
PROTECTED FACTORS FOR ETHNIC BELONGING	0	0	19/03/2021 11:52	IG	19/03/2021 11:52	IG	
FEELING VALUED BY OTHERS	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	19/03/2021 12:03	IG	
FINDING SIMILARITY AND BELONGING THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	05/03/2021 17:06	IG	
SHARED LIVED EXPERIENCE AS PART OF ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	26/02/2021 17:52	IG	
SHARING ONES CULTURE OR BEING SEEN	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	06/03/2021 17:56	IG	
MEANINGFUL ACTIONS TAKEN AND COMMUNICATED BY SCHOOL	0	0	19/03/2021 11:26	IG	18/03/2021 16:21	IG	

#### Stage 4

Name	Files	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By	
CONTRIBUTIONS TO GENERAL BELONGING	0	0	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	19/03/2021 12:10	IG	
RELATING TO SCHOOL THROUGH ETHNIC IDENTITY	0	0	12/03/2021 12:39	IG	12/03/2021 12:48	IG	
CONTRIBUTIONS TO ETHNIC BELONGING	0	0	19/03/2021 11:52	IG	19/03/2021 12:09	IG	
MEANINGFUL ACTIONS TAKEN AND COMMUNICATED BY SCHOOL	0	0	19/03/2021 17:29	IG	18/03/2021 16:21	IG	
ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN SCHOOL	0	0	19/03/2021 17:29	IG	27/02/2021 19:47	IG	
BEING DIFFERENT FROM THE MAJORITY	1	1	12/03/2021 12:35	IG	12/03/2021 13:25	IG	

Being different from majority, ethnic representation and meaningful actions felt too big to be sub-themes.

Meaningful actions, ethnic representation became school ecosystem

Contributions to general and ethnic belonging become school belonging

Being different from majority –things that are experienced through being different by others.

Relating to school through ethnic identity – response to school through being connected to identity.

Complexity of ethnic identity – how one connects to their ethnicity.

Got rid of joining group is challenging as this wasn't related to ethnic identity and was just describing groups in general. Got rid of forming identity as it wasn't a big enough theme – not enough codes or patterns across data.

Being different from majority becomes superordinate theme – relating to school through ethnic identity changes to internalised response to being different. Complex relationship with ethnic identity stays as it is. Being different from majority changes to external response to being different.

Discarded timing of anti-racist work as it codes fits into ongoing work required and acknowledgement of racial inequality.