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Title

Addressing the elephant in the room – managing low-level disruption in the primary classroom.

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Dedication

To Nicola and Harriet thank you for enduring my stealth work on this study and for your support.

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Abstract

In primary education the high numbers of pupils being permanently excluded due to low-level disruptive behaviour that is displayed in the classroom are a significant problem for educators, parents and politicians. Research has shown that teachers feel they lack the skills to address low-level disruptive classroom behaviour, including newly qualified teachers, entering the profession and those that have been teaching for longer periods of time. The research undertaken for this thesis seeks to answer the question of whether employing three specific processes of traffic lights, a token economy and scripted behaviour language could reduce low-level disruption in the primary classroom. In addition, it seeks to recognise if pupils could begin to develop self-regulatory behaviour habits within the framework of the processes, and whether Foucault's (1980) theory of disciplinary power may be applied as a background theory to support the creation of learning behaviour discourse as pupils begin to self-regulate. In this context, low-level disruption is any behaviour that stops pupils from completing work or disrupting other pupils from their work.

Based on a review of the literature on antisocial behaviour, low-level disruption, behaviour management and theories of critical theory and disciplinary power, a study was conducted in four primary schools with teachers who were both experienced and newly qualified. The research period involved observing teachers in their classroom with subsequent interviews and interviewing two headteachers to understand if deploying the three processes could support a reduction of low-level disruptive behaviour and support pupils to self-regulate their own behaviour in the classroom. Analysis of the observations and interviews suggests that the three processes have had an impact on the reduction of low-level disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms. Additionally, over time it was observed that pupils began to develop self-regulatory behaviour habits. On this basis, it is recommended that primary school educators and leaders might consider deploying the three processes in their classrooms to support a reduction in low-level disruptive behaviour and through developing a consistent approach could begin to promote habits that improve behaviour and potentially support pupils to learn to develop aspects of self-regulation in the classroom.

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Abbreviations	**Explanation**
A-B-C	Antecedent-Behaviour-Consequence
CASE	Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion
DfE	Department for Education
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
EPPE	Effective Provision of Pre-School Education
EPPSE	Effective Pre-School, Primary and Secondary Education
ET	Experienced Teacher
FTE	Fixed Term Exclusion
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
HT	Headteacher
LLD	Low-level disruption
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PE	Permanent Exclusion
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
SATs	Standard Attainment Tests

SBL	Scripted Behaviour Language
SEMH	Social Emotional Mental Health
SL	Scripted language
TA	Teaching Assistant
TE	Token Economy
TL	Traffic Lights

Chapter 1 - Introducing the context of the study

1.1 Introducing the subject matter

The aim of this research is to explore if a blended intervention of three distinct processes could address negative classroom behaviour of primary aged pupils to create a learning environment, which can support them to develop self-regulatory habits thereby reducing low-level disruptive classroom behaviours. This chapter will briefly outline the context of the issue for practitioners establishing the problem faced in schools and provide a brief definition of low-level disruptive behaviour. It will conclude by establishing the research questions and a summary of the researcher's positionality.

Behaviour in English school classrooms is of concern due to low-level disruption (LLD) impacting negatively on pupils ability to learn (Ward, 2019). For example, national exclusion statistics produced by the Department for Education (Pearson, 2018) demonstrate, for the academic year 2017-18, that the highest reason for exclusion, out of a range of other factors, is persistent low-level disruptive behaviour (LLD). The data demonstrates a steady decline in fixed and permanent exclusion rates from 2008 to 2013, yet from 2013 onwards these rates have risen considerably. For example, since 2013 to today, the permanent exclusion rate has increased by 47% for disruptive behaviour or LLD in school classrooms. Given these figures, employing suitable mechanisms to support a reduction of LLD behaviour takes on particular importance, because if it is not addressed pupil learning outcomes will suffer. Evidence suggests addressing poor classroom behaviour in England is a significant issue and any research that could suggest its reduction would prove useful (Taylor, 2011; Bennett, 2017; Moore et al., 2019). The key study aims of this research will be to investigate if employing three specific processes: traffic lights as a behaviour system; scripted behaviour language in speaking with pupils; and the deployment of a token economy to support pupils to remain on task, could reduce LLD and support pupils to develop self-regulatory behaviour habits. An area of interest that may be explored is the power relationships that could exist between adults and pupils in the classroom environment. As such, the research will consider whether the use of these processes could demonstrate a possible link with Foucault's (1980) theory of disciplinary power to support pupils ability to self-regulate their behaviour. It is the

researcher's belief that further formal research is required to understand if the blended use of the three processes could support existing anecdotal evidence from the researcher that indicates they collectively hold success in reducing low-level disruptive behaviours in the classroom. In addition, the intention is to understand if pupils are able to self-regulate their behaviour.

1.2 Managing behaviour in UK primary schools

Addressing classroom behaviour is not a new challenge; government reviews have identified poor, disruptive behaviour in English classrooms as an issue for concern (Plowden, 1967; Moss, 2010). The Plowden Report (1967) reviewed the entire primary education system to understand how pupils learn, and to understand if they had the skill to be 'agents of their own learning' (1967: 9). The report leaned heavily on Piagetian theory which subsequently came under scrutiny for the way pupils were encouraged to learn through discovery (Piaget, 1936). Roger Scruton argued the Plowden Report was to blame for a decline in standards of behaviour, noting that the curriculum should be based on pupils' specific individual needs and play should form aspects of their learning and interests become an integral characteristic for learning (Gillard, 2002). Four decades later, Robin Alexander, through the Cambridge Primary Review (Alexander, 2010), argued for an improvement in pupils' behaviour there should be an extension in understanding of the development of their imagination to understand requirements of cause and consequence. The intention being that this process would develop (within them) the empathy to support self-regulatory behaviour management. In 2014 Ofsted published a report 'Below the radar – the impact of low level disruption in school classrooms highlighting concerns regarding the behaviour observed in school classrooms (Ofsted, 2014). A key discussion area was the impact low-level disruptive classroom behaviour held for students and teachers alike. Since the Cambridge Primary Review, the government has commissioned both Charlie Taylor (2011) and Tom Bennett (2017) to undertake independent reviews of school and classroom behaviour. In addition to government and inspectorate-based reviews, a wide plethora of books exist to support professionals in the deployment of strategies to become successful managers of pupils' classroom behaviour. However, through the literature it appears there is little research evidence on combining scripted

language (SL) and a token economy (RE) with traffic lights (TL) to reduce LLD behaviour. This suggests to the researcher, a gap in the literature, and something worthy of researching.

Newly published data notes that pupils with social, emotional, mental, health (SEMH) difficulties were 3.8 times more likely to be excluded than other pupils (Weale, 2019) and a recent study conducted by the NASUWT teaching union stated 82% of teachers believe behaviour is a major concern in their schools (Ward, 2019). However, the then education secretary, Damian Hinds, called on headteachers to expel fewer pupils. One of the reasons lay in the fact that eight out of ten permanently excluded pupils came from vulnerable backgrounds and they were being sent home and subsequently out of sight. Therefore, a paradox is created between government strategy to reduce the exclusion of pupils who are not coping in mainstream schools because they are unable to regulate their behaviour, and educators who feel completely powerless and inexperienced to tackle behaviour observed in their classrooms.

Latterly, Tom Bennett, the former behaviour tsar, was asked by the Conservative Government to lead a £10 million project to support 500 schools across England to develop better polices and systems to tackle low level disruption that only continues to grow (Allen-Kinross, 2019; Department for Education, 2019). A key aim of the project is to support schools to develop both their capacity and resources to understand the root cause of pupils' poor behaviour and develop a 'behaviour network' that will provide support to a system that demands corrective action. Perhaps the development of a national perspective on reducing poor behaviour in schools will begin to support teachers and leaders to create more supportive learning cultures that highlight the lack of culture capital. This in turn could promote learning and reduce blame culture. Since the research presented in this dissertation, a significant report has been published by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to support school leaders to address pupil behaviour: 'Guidance on improving behaviour in schools (Rhodes & Long, 2019).

1.3 Defining low-level disruption

Low-level disruption is not a new term and its origins can be traced back to the Church Report (2003) where it derived from the term anti-social behaviour (Little 2003; Cowling, 2005; Wagner et al., 2005; Narhi et al., 2015). On occasion low-level disruptive of behaviour has the potential to escalate to high-level disruptive behaviour that could lead to classrooms becoming unsafe with pupils at the risk of either fixed term or permanent exclusion. An article in the Times Educational Supplement by Tom Rogers (2018) described low-level disruption as 'a rot' that is the 'curse of many teachers'. He explained teachers are teaching classes where behaviour exists on a continuum of 'heaven, hell and in-between' with pupils being the masters of creating low-level disruption. The literature review will define in greater detail exactly what low-level disruption is and how it manifests. In simple terms, low-level disruption is behaviour in the classroom whereby pupils are off-task from learning or disrupting other pupils from learning. It can relate to pupils chatting to each other, calling out or being distracted from working. Low-level disruptive behaviour can be applied to 'naughty' pupils (Narhi et al., 2015) who continually distract themselves or their peers from remaining on task of completing their work.

1.4 Addressing low-level disruption

Prior to undertaking this research study, the three processes had been applied in a mainstream primary school and appeared to have had success in reducing LLD. The study intends to gain evidence as to whether this was the case and if they support pupils to self-regulate and reduce low-level disruptive behaviour. The three processes are: the use of traffic lights as an antecedent-behaviour-consequence mechanism; the use of any token economy to reward pupils for behaving; the use of scripted behaviour language to support the way in which adults speak to pupils in the classroom.

Traffic lights as a behaviour system has its origins in operant conditioning (Skinner, 1966) where the antecedent condition leads to pupils being acknowledged through a behaviour response from the adult. This leads to a

consequence. One of the research aims is to understand if habitual deployment of traffic lights is able to support pupils' self-awareness of their personal behaviour and it is intended to elicit if their use fosters self-regulatory practices. From the literature it would appear there is very little evidence in the research on traffic lights use in mainstream school classrooms to support a reduction of low-level disruption.

The use of scripted behaviour language has been evidenced to support pupils to develop an internal moral framework that promotes self-regulation (Guerra & Slaby, 1988; Bandura, 1995; Mayer and Patriarca, 2007; Curtis, 2014). Scripted language means speaking the same way continually to reinforce desired behaviour and eliminate emotion from pupils' observed behaviour. The researcher can evidence anecdotally that there is success in reducing low-level disruption in classrooms when scripted language is deployed with traffic lights. It was unclear from the literature if research has ever been undertaken in deploying scripted language and traffic lights for research or for that matter with a token economy.

A token economy also has its roots embedded in operant conditioning and is generally considered to be used as an incentive-based reward (Kazdin & Bootzin, 1972; McLaughlin & Williams, 1988). Pupils earn tokens as a stimulus, as points, or tangible items to elicit a desired behaviour. Doll et al. (2013) states that through repeating the process of using a token before a reinforced stimulus, the pupil learns that the token becomes a reinforcing entity. Resultantly, the token economy becomes a conditioned reinforcer through its pairing with a positive event. A key aspect of introducing a token economy is to understand if it will provide reinforcement to pupils with the other two processes to create the desire within them to self-regulate their behaviour. The teacher will hand out tokens to encourage pupils to remain on task and it is hoped that they will learn to anticipate this and modify their behaviour accordingly; as a result, creating positive learning behaviour.

The researcher intends to explore whether Foucault's theory of disciplinary power (1980) might be considered as developing a learning behaviour discourse helping pupils develop self-regulatory practices. In the literature review the traffic light system will be presented as a panoptican style surveillance framework to support pupils to self-regulate. The deployment of scripted behaviour language would regulate the framework with a token economy used as a fundamental supported reinforcer of the desired behaviour (Hungerford, 2010). The literature will highlight there is very little evidence to suggest Foucault's theory of disciplinary power has been used to research classroom behaviour. Yet Foucault was interested in how 'human beings are made subjects' and the manner in which the self was inhibited. Therefore, this study intends to understand if pupils might create learning behaviour discourse addressing power relationships positively in the classroom environment, and in so doing, become autonomous self-regulators (Foucault, 1982: 208).

1.5 Main and Sub Research Questions

The questions that have been identified to support this study are:

1) Main Research Question: Can employing the three processes of traffic lights, a token economy and scripted behaviour language reduce low-level disruption in the primary classroom?

2) Sub Research Questions:

a) Are there any specific classroom implementations necessary when applying the three processes for them to be successful in reducing LLD?
b) Is there any evidence that pupils' self-regulatory powers improve using the processes?

In the researcher's school anecdotal experience suggests the intervention was successful in reducing LLD behaviour and a case study approach will be used to understand the views of other staff. In the other schools an action research approach will be employed consisting of initial staff training, an observation and interview with subsequent observations and interviews if required, to be discussed in greater detail in the methodology chapter.

1.6 Personal statement and professional contexts

The professional, theoretical and personal contexts for the research presented in this thesis are born of a somewhat developmental career pathway. This began as an early-experienced headteacher in 2009, where I found myself having to either permanently or on a fixed term basis exclude a high proportion of pupils for extremely disruptive behaviour. Over the next two years' exclusion rates increased, and behaviour worsened. The reason for this was high-level behaviour escalating that culminated with pupils and staff becoming injured. A behaviour audit with the local pupil referral unit identified LLD as the root cause. Subsequently, the school reviewed its behaviour policy and introduced three specific processes: traffic lights, scripted language and token economy. In three months, the school had turned behaviour around to the extent that the following year there were zero exclusions. As pupils became used to the processes it was noted that they began to self-regulate their behaviour and, how quickly they became used to their repetitive structure. The processes began to embed and for the next 3 years I began to support other schools in the city and beyond. My work on reducing low-level disruptive behaviour was acknowledged by another setting who asked me to establish the intervention in their school. This resulted in the school achieving outstanding for behaviour (Ofsted 140235, 2015). An interesting outcome was how I believed pupils began to self-regulate their behaviour through continual repetition of the three processes. As a researcher this has led me to consider how the disciplinary power theory supports the creation of learning behaviour discourse as pupils self-regulate (Foucault, 1980). If this is the case, it is hoped to produce new learning on a behaviour system that links traffic lights with scripted behaviour language and a token economy as the potential could exist for further study to appreciate if any positive impact on reducing LLD could be achieved on a larger scale.

Researcher positionality will be discussed in greater detail in the methodology chapter but it is important to explain that the researcher is the chief executive officer of a medium to large academic trust and three of the research schools are part of the trust. Acknowledging this information is an important factor because considering the position and responsibility attributed to the role has been an important aspect when considering my positionality. As a national leader of education (NLE) my position has meant undertaking lesson observations or

supporting schools to improve. Often my school improvement work involves working with leaders to review performance and develop whole-school improvements. Therefore, consideration should be given to understanding and recognising the dilemma that my role and status could create for teachers, support staff or pupils in the classroom; as generally all of the participants are known to me though my daily role (Daley, 2001). Creating a neutral research position by removing bias will be extremely problematic as a new researcher. In particular, research participants will understand that my research role will not comment on any negative aspects that relate to teaching. In fact there will be a shift away from a senior leadership role which could ultimately influence data outcomes (Outhwaite et al., 2007). By considering staff perceptions and attempting to become neutral to issues that surround criticality of practice it should be easier to establish the role of researcher instead of an observer of appraisal or school improvement process. Likewise, the views of other teachers from school 1 have been collected to validate the hypothesis that I have made. The focus for observations will be the manner in which teachers deploy the three processes to reduce low-level disruptive behaviour and whether pupils will be able to self-regulate their behaviour. During the interview process I intend to adopt the role of a professional stranger to reduce perceptions in which school-based professionals may perceive researchers (Daley, 2001). The aim will be to maintain a ‘disinterested’ standpoint to the interpretation of analysis and data (BERA, 2018: 9).

Chapter 2 - Review of the literature

2.1 Why is there a problem?

This chapter will explain in detail the problem of low-level disruptive behaviour in primary education concluding by reviewing the concept of power and the work of Foucault's theory of disciplinary power (Foucault, 1971, 1977, 1980). Meeting standards such as the early-years good level of development, the year one phonics test, the key stage one and the key stage two standard assessment tests is a customary yardstick by which primary schools are increasingly measured. Therefore, anything which impacts negatively on this needs to be addressed and it has been argued good classroom behaviour management is crucial to achievement (Sparkes, 1999; Narhi et al., 2015). It is accepted that many theories exist to support the use of classroom behaviour management (Dewey, 1960; Piaget, 1936; Skinner, 1966; Gordon, 1974; Kounin, 1970; Kounin,1983; Bandura, 1997; Glasser, 1998; Kohn, 1999). The review will not address each one in detail but will focus on the work of Skinner (1966) and the development of proactive behaviour strategies. From a reading of the literature, a gap in knowledge is presented that suggests the three processes have not been directly combined as one intervention in primary classrooms and it would appear there is very little evidence to support that they are successful in reducing low-level disruptive behaviour (LLD). This information was surprising considering the researcher's anecdotal evidence that the three processes appeared to successfully reduce LLD behaviour.

2.2 Defining low-level disruption (LLD)

During this research study there will be reference to certain terminology that relates to specific behaviours. The term low-level disruption (LLD) will be applied throughout to explain the behaviours of pupils who rule break or who exhibit unacceptable behaviour in the classroom (Macleod et al., 2015: 98). LLD behaviour can be categorised as pupils making derogatory remarks or persistent talking, silliness, or rudeness to other pupils/adults in the classroom and work refusal (Turner, 2003). The definition can include pupils who are 'off task' from working by disrupting both their own and others' learning (Little, 2003; Cowling, 2005; Wagner et al., 2005; Narhi et al., 2015). Nash et al. (2016: 2) categorise

the term as ‘that which is designated by pupils not learning in the classroom or distracting their peers from on task objectives’. Turner (2003) classifies LLD as behaviour that involves talking, movement, time wasting, disruption to themselves or others’ learning, making derogatory remarks and persistent low-level disruption. The Education Support Partnership (2010) classed LLD as silliness, rudeness to other pupils or adults in the classroom; work refusal. Macleod states LLD terminology can be simply applied in schools to ‘naughty’ pupils (2015: 98). Therefore, the issues and terminology relating to LLD are not a recent phenomenon as the Church Report (2003) defined LLD as antisocial behaviour in pupils who demonstrate social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. McGoey et al. (2010) maintain LLD/disruptive behaviour impacts on learning in and around the classroom. Recent terminology has emerged in reference to poor behaviour in schools (Ofsted, 2014) leading to classroom behaviour being regarded as inappropriate or classed as challenging. Ofsted (2014) categorises LLD to situations where pupils disengage from working or distract their peers. More recent research has indicated pupils’ predisposition to exhibit disruptive behaviour emerges during primary school (Dursley and Betts, 2015). As recently as June 2019, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) published a guidance report Improving Behaviour in Schools (Moore et al., 2019). This document has been developed for primary and secondary school settings and is a synthesised publication of the specific strand of research by the foundation. The report suggests two key outcomes for school leaders which are the benefits of staff training and embedding a whole-school consistent approach to behaviour. Recently, LLD behaviour has been defined as ‘misbehaviour’ (Moore et al., 2019: 2).

For the purpose of this study LLD behaviour is defined as pupils who appear to be off task e.g. talking to each other when they are supposed to be working or shouting out across the classroom and leaving the classroom. The term will include pupils who turn around or get up out of their seats when they are supposed to be completing tasks set by the teacher. LLD behaviour is an increasing problem and it could be assumed that if it is not tackled then the potential exists that it will impact negatively on pupils’ achievement, holding longer lasting implications as they grow older.

2.3 Policy and educational standards

Over time, education has continued to influence and be a subject for political discussion, the state of pupils' education being ever present in political party manifestos. Yet considering the frequency of discussion there has been little research into whole-scale education policy. The most recent undertaking was the Cambridge Primary Review in 2010 led by Robin Alexander; he argued a key error made by the British Government in the mid-1990s was to ditch the focus on core basic skills and by adopting an interactive whole-class teaching approach favoured by German, Swiss, Hungarian, Japanese and Taiwanese schools caused the creation of a two-tier curriculum (Alexander, 2010). Prior to this research Alexander undertook a comparison of primary education through international perspectives of five countries. In the comparison, Alexander (2000) argued international similarity was a result of globalization as governments considered their place economically and educationally with its competitors. This is not entirely a positive step as through this desire to advance up the league table, lower placed countries too often looked for quick fix approaches based on educational policies of more successful competitors; promoting less developed countries to applying a one size fits all strategy to specific issues (educationally); this could lead to a narrowing of curricula and over emphasis on outcomes. Goldstein (2019) argues PISA is moving the world towards a uniform system bringing together curricular into a world curriculum and refuting diversity in favour of conformity to support upward movement in ranking tables. An example of this currently is the manner in which England is embedding maths mastery and the Shanghai maths model (Boylan, 2019).

Alexander's review was preceded by other significant education reviews, such as the Hadow Committee (1931) and the Plowden Report (1967). A key outcome of Plowden was the recommendation of smaller class sizes and a shift towards positive discrimination of underprivileged schools in deprived neighbourhoods that place the child at the heart of the educational process. Today, schools receive pupil premium funding to support closing the gap for those pupils who are socially disadvantaged to raise their achievement (Copeland, 2019). Pupil premium funding was introduced in 2011 to support narrowing the gap between

the most disadvantaged learners and their peers (Copeland, 2019). Evidence has shown that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds do not perform as well as their peers and often face greater challenges in reaching their full potential with deprivation being linked to underachievement (Luiselli et al., 2005; Foster & Long, 2020). A relevant aspect of the Plowden report is the notion of smaller class sizes which the Education Endowment Foundation in their Teaching and Learning Toolkit actively advocate and support (Higgins et al., 2018). Later in the Cambridge Primary Review, Alexander defined eleven key policy priorities for consideration (Alexander, 2010). A central issue was the opinion that there should be a reduction in England's gross and overlapping gaps in wealth, wellbeing and educational attainment, which are all far wider in England than most other developed countries. He argued there should be: a relentless focus on developing pupils' agency and their rights; a reality applied to policy, schools and classrooms instead of reactive curriculum tinkering; and there should be a real focus on genuine curriculum reform leading to balancing the relationship between government, national agencies, local authorities and schools (Alexander, 2010). However, the government at the time largely ignored the recommendations set out by the review believing the review was overly critical of its policies and the schools minister Vernon Coaker suggested it was out of date, with recommendations not aligned to government policy or school reforms. In response to this many Headteachers' leaders explained that any attempt to ignore the report would be perceived as an act of weakness with the head of education policy research from the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, Nansi Ellis stating, 'the education profession argued that primary education should not become a battlefield (Ellis, 2012). Yet education continues to remain an area of political interest, particularly the issue relating to testing, as the latest Ofsted boss has admitted that school inspectors have placed far too much emphasis on tests and exam results and there should now be breadth and balance to school curriculums (Roberts, 2019). Political debate in education is certainly not new as far back as 1997 it was stated that education should not be viewed as a political football - politics should be kept out of schools (Watras, 2013). Instead of enforcing compliance the government should broker independent advisers who argue for schools and educationalists. In reference to classroom behaviour, the government has begun to address this issue with the appointment of Tom Bennett to lead a behaviour taskforce on an issue that he has stated has been, 'swept under the carpet for decades' (Turner, 2019). He added persistent disruptive

behaviour or LLD is the most common reason for permanent exclusion in schools (Turner, 2019). In 2017 Justine Greening, Education Secretary, wrote an open letter to Tom Bennett to thank him for his review of behaviour in schools: 'Creating a culture: how school leaders can optimise behaviour' setting out seven key principles to support school leaders, teachers and pupils to address challenging behaviour (Greening, 2017). Education requires time to develop and embed changes and reform as Alexander noted in his review that primary education was under intense pressure but in 'good heart' with pupils becoming victims of a standards agenda where the focus on results was damaging their educational statutory rights (Alexander, 2010). In other words, decisions were often adversely affecting the one group, pupils, supposed to be being helped as politicisation of education weakened the core offer to them (Moss, 2010: 510). However, education, policy and research should strive to work together to 'co-produce' a genuine relationship that supports effective research that leads to improved pupil outcomes (Byrne & Ozga, 2008: 399). Ball (2013) claimed the biggest losers were pupils because the logic of performance and productivity develops a culture where only the strongest can survive. In his paper on teacher professional development Kirsten argues in education that there should be a developmental shift away from top-down control to create strengthened self-governance because 'policies do not make change – people do' (2020: 395). Teachers who are unable to work with pupils that are unable to fit into the assumed academic mould could support their exclusion from mainstream education into Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). Data from the Department for Education on attendance and exclusion statistics evidence an increase in both permanent and fixed term exclusions particularly for low-level disruptive behaviour (Pearson, 2016). Consequently, the impact of this will be seen in schools who strive for pupils to meet required standards and grade level expectations and where subsequently pupils with special educational needs and/or behavioural difficulties could potentially begin to lose out.

Globally, the organisation that supports the collection of education data is the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) who promote policies to improve the economic and social wellbeing of people around the world (OECD, 2014, 2016). The OECD offers a forum whereby governments work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. Tests run by the OECD are taken every three years offering influential political debate

as politicians see their countries and their policies being measured against global school league tables. They carry political weight often used in the media by politicians to support a political message. In mathematics, the UK is ranked 27th, slipping down a place from three years ago, the lowest since it began participating in the PISA tests in 2000. In reading, the UK is ranked 22nd, up from 23rd, having fallen out of the top 20 in 2006. The UK's most successful subject is science, up from 21st to 15th place - the highest placing since 2006, although the test score has declined (OECD, 2014, 2016). The UK is behind top performers such as Singapore and Finland, but also trails Vietnam, Poland and Estonia. Whilst the United Kingdom has become all too aware of its rating in the global society and much is talked about in relation to the global economy, consideration should be given that these indicators are not a true measure of quality. The outcome of these reports suggests countries placed higher are a symbol of educational excellence (Klemenčič & Mirazchiyski, 2018), yet the case could be put forward these results only contain significance for politicians who are able to exert influence and invite action (Bulle, 2011). Where concern is placed by the government on outcomes it is filtered down to educational settings further politicalising the education agenda, as a result there could be a greater demand on schools to obtain improved results and outcomes; narrowing the education system could jeopardise the futures of pupils who are unable to fit into a mainstream paradigm.

Establishing clear protocols is a key enforcer of developing positive classroom behaviour; an influential document was the behaviour checklist produced by Taylor: ‘Getting the simple things right’ (2011). Taylor recognised the importance of developing a consistent approach whilst dealing with pupil behaviour and this was reinforced in the literature published during the final year of this study (Rhodes et al., 2019). Ofsted critically reviewed the nature of low-level disruption in school classrooms through their report ‘Below the radar’ (2014). The report indicated pupils were losing up to an hour a day of quality learning due to disruption in the classroom equating to 38 days of teaching lost per year (Ofsted, 2014). The report explained school leaders were not addressing it quickly enough, however the point could be made leaders, teachers and staff lacked the skills to adequately deal with LLD and its manifestation, which is why the problem existed in the first place. Tom Bennett’s (2017) report: ‘Creating a culture: how

school leaders can optimise behaviour' reviewed the subject matter. He found that there were no new 'silver bullets' or even 'gold nuggets' to address classroom behaviour, in fact, his findings suggest there are a number of commonalities and strategies for dealing with school behaviour. Bennett emphasises the importance of a strong culture of behaviour, initiated and led by the head teacher operating through the school and the need to develop in pupils the skill of self-regulation (ibid). The report highlighted strategies school leaders could practise to prevent classroom disruption, maintain good discipline and promote pupils' education (Bennett, 2017; Moore et al., 2019).

2.4 Antisocial behaviour linked to LLD

Antisocial behaviour is said to emerge from five key areas: the individual; the family; peer pressure; school and the community and can pervade all areas of society. It covers a wide range of behaviours that can range from dropping litter, hate crime, shouting and swearing, inappropriate cycling/ball games, drug-taking, prostitution, kerb crawling, fighting and many others (Harradine et al., 2004: 4; Leonard, 2013). However, in this section the intention is to draw a comparison and highlight a link between antisocial behaviour and LLD in school and family. The literature suggests that antisocial behaviour can be highly localised in communities this can include areas that schools are situated in. An extreme example would be the murder of headteacher Philip Lawrence in 1995 as he intervened in a fight between two students and was fatally stabbed (Hayden, 2011). Additionally, antisocial behaviour has pervaded school life and 'blurred professional boundaries' with the establishment of Safer School Partnerships, behaviour support teams and the linking of social care teams and inter-professional and multi-professional working (Hayden, 2011). In her inaugural lecture at the University of Portsmouth Professor Carol Hayden identified antisocial behaviour in school could be defined as:

- Naughtiness and disruption – talking out of turn, not responding to teacher's instructions;
- Testing the boundaries/ adolescent behaviour - challenging adult authority;

- Special educational needs – such as impulsivity and attention problems;
- Distressed behaviour – indicative of abuse or neglect, mental health and family problems;
- Disaffected behaviour – poor attendance, more serious disruptive behaviour;
- Bullying and other forms of aggression and violence – very varied eg cyber-bullying, physical and psychological bullying; playground fights, assaults and 'gang' or group related aggression and violence. Much of this can also be seen as 'anti-social behaviour';
- Criminal behaviour – behaviour that breaks the criminal law.

(Hayden, 2011)

The Millie report (2006) born out of the government's 'Together' campaign (Home Office, 2003) and 'Respect Agenda' (Force, 2006) was established in response to public opinion of antisocial behaviours regarding the nature of dealing with high-level antisocial behaviour in London. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003), established that behaviour programmes should focus beyond making pupils 'biddable' which means to meekly accept and act out instructions. The high profile given then to antisocial behaviour supports the fact that it was an issue, and it may be assumed antisocial behaviour observed on the streets could be linked to classroom behaviour standards. In fact, the Steer Report (2009) raised concerns about the standards of behaviour in schools and later the Cambridge Primary Review (2010) revealed teachers and parents continued to remain concerned about the extent of antisocial behaviour in school classrooms and the impact this had on learning. By today's standards, antisocial behaviour would be defined as low-level disruption or, misbehaviour.

Both antisocial and LLD behaviours have been linked to issues surrounding parenting, poor family management practices, low socio-economic status, poor academic performance, poor school attendance and low school bonding (Leonard, 2013). LLD behaviour has been said to emerge from a range of factors:

harsh/authoritative parenting; parental psychopathology and criminality; inter-parental and family violence; large family size; poverty; and poor educational achievement of parents (Bowen et al., 2008: 1; Farrington & Welsh, 2014; Dansie, 2016). However, other factors may be attributed to LLD behaviour such as pupils with special educational needs and teaching issues such as work that is not differentiated appropriately (Bru, 2006). Research has indicated pupils' predisposition to exhibit LLD behaviour emerges during primary school and problems associated with behaviour in schools often manifest themselves in later life (Hobcraft, 1998; Sparkes 1999; Luisilli et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2007; Dursely & Betts, 2015). Davey (2016: 170) states that there is a link between behaviour and learning and schools are the training ground for work and for pupils to play a full life in wider society.

Back in 1989 the Elton Report (1989) significantly influenced beliefs and developed practice to support proactive positive approaches for classroom behaviour management. Later, the QCA (2000) established core principles supporting positive behaviour development in younger pupils. The Elton Report identified pupils who exhibit antisocial and disruptive behaviour at a younger age were more likely to respond similarly when older, or as adults. Taking this into account, a need arises to potentially support and address this type of behaviour in school or the classroom otherwise it could impact on the individual and affect them later in life. Outcomes from the Elton Report (1989) supported the development of positive behaviour principles that can be found in later studies. Two examples are the Effective Pre-School, Primary and Secondary Education project (Sylva et al., 2004; Luiselli et al., 2005) and the EEF guidance on improving behaviour in schools (Moore et al., 2019). The EPPE project undertook a review of early years education and its impact beyond the classroom (Sylva et al., 2004). They monitored the development of more than 3000 pupils at the beginning of pre-school until they made their post-16 education, employment or training choices. The outcomes of the study found that pupils who had early years education gained higher English and mathematics GCSE results and were more likely to achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A*C. Additionally, pupils who had experienced high quality pre-school education were better at self-regulation and social behaviour and less inclined to hyperactivity. Moreover, pupils who had experienced high quality pre-school settings were more likely to follow a post-16

academic path (Sylva et al., 2004). Since 2008, the results from EPPE have directly influenced government policy on pre-school education, poverty, early years and primary education (Melhuish, 2014). As a consequence of the study many of the recommendations and findings have been taken forward to support early years teaching recommendations and the project is cited as having influenced thinking and practice in pre-school entitlement, early years pedagogy and curriculum design. It has led to free provision of high-quality pre-schooling for all three and four-year olds and was subsequently extended to free entitlement in nursery places for the poorest 40% (approximately 260,000) of two-year olds (Melhuish, 2014).

The possibility exists that LLD behaviour becomes viewed as normal and pupils' personal development and growth is significantly underdeveloped often leading to poorer social skills, underachievement and subsequently increasing antisocial behaviour. Correspondingly, Sir Michael Wilshaw insisted, 'many teachers have come to accept some low-level disruption as a part of everyday life in the classroom' (Ofsted, 2014). Addressing this issue constructively means teachers should teach positive learning behaviour by utilising a range of strategies to support a reduction in LLD behaviour, however this is easier said than done as many teachers lack the experience to address this behaviour (Moore et al., 2019). Consequently, it could be stated that pupils who continue to misbehave in the classroom are in danger of falling further behind their peers, potentially achieving lower grades and less likely to achieve, often becoming labelled. The impact of one pupil's behaviour widens often impacting on their peers, teachers and families. This cyclical LLD behaviour could result in a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby pupils develop lower opinions and self-esteem that in turn leads to increased disruptive behaviour. Therefore, teaching pupils to develop positive attitudes towards achievement and subsequently working positively in the classroom becomes extremely important.

2.5 The impact of LLD in the classroom

Pupils who are unable to behave appropriately are at risk of not learning or making insufficient progress that affects their achievement (Ofsted, 2014; Moore,

2019). The Department for Education document - Behaviour and discipline in schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, 2015) expects all schools to have a clear school behaviour policy that should be consistently and fairly applied to promote and reinforce effective education. The document is a guide for all stakeholders including parents and carers and it identifies three key functions:

1. Teachers have power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour, which occurs, in school and, in some circumstances, outside of school.
2. The power to discipline also applies to all paid staff (unless the headteacher says otherwise) with responsibility for pupils, such as teaching assistants.
3. Headteachers, proprietors and governing bodies must ensure they have a strong behaviour policy to support staff in managing behaviour, including the use of rewards and sanctions.

(Department for Education, 2015, 2016; Rhodes et al., 2019)

Schools are encouraged to use the document as an outline to support the writing of, and implementation of school behaviour policy. It promotes nine core principles:

- Consistent approach to behaviour management;
- Strong school leadership;
- Classroom management;
- Rewards and sanctions;
- Behaviour strategies and the teaching of good behaviour;
- Staff development and support;
- Pupil support systems;
- Liaison with parents and other agencies;
- Managing pupil transition; organisation and facilities.

(DfE, 2016; Moore et al., 2019)

The school behaviour policy is an integral aspect of classroom management, it should be understood by teachers and support staff in order that pupils' rights and responsibilities are adhered to (Taylor, 2011). The development of a coherent behaviour policy is critical because it is key in establishing the rules for self-governance of an organisation and for teachers and pupils to follow. As a result, the knowledge of the policy could operate as learning behaviour discourse to be applied to the specific setting. Foucault argued policy should be concerned with giving knowledge, particularly in relation to education practices (1980: 132). Behaviour policy is concerned with giving knowledge to stakeholders about the behaviour of pupils in the school and his work on disciplinary power and discourse links to the formation of school behaviour policy because teachers are required to adhere to the policy in order to maintain the schools' behaviour standards consistently (Department for Education, 2015, 2016). If the policy is followed correctly to support positive behaviour and teachers reinforce it appropriately then it may be assumed there should be a reduction in LLD behaviour as pupils develop self-regulatory habits.

2.6 Developing the methods to reduce LLD

A review of the literature has shown that there is little evidence to support the use of the three processes blended into a singular behaviour management intervention. However, anecdotal evidence and school-based experience suggests deploying traffic lights, scripted behaviour language and a token economy support a reduction of LLD behaviour in primary classrooms. The reasons appear to be centred on the traffic lights providing a consistent visual reminder of where pupils' behaviour sits at that time; the scripts support un-emotive communication with reward/praise reinforcing the desired positive behaviour. Anecdotal evidence along with limited literature support suggests the potential for a formal research study into whether LLD behaviour could be reduced in primary classrooms using the stated methods. A key reason for this is due to the evidence from exclusion statistics that state in the local authority of Hull the issue of LLD continues to grow instead of reducing (Sylva, 2004, 2012, 2016, 2017; Pearson, 2018); this data supports the earlier claims by Wilshaw and HMI in their reports (Ofsted, 2014). With this in mind, the next section begins to

develop how the three separate processes are blended to become one overall method and transformed into one overarching intervention.

2.7 Traffic lights

This section will explore how traffic lights become a constant visual signifier of pupils' behaviour management. During the study three classroom rules will be introduced to support both staff and pupils. Initially, the school's behaviour policy will be reviewed to work in tandem with the three processes. The reason for this is to align the reward system with whichever policy currently exists in the school to be supported by the classroom rules. The use of rules is normalised practice in schools. Teachers are allowed to discipline pupils whose conduct falls below the expected standard to reinforce school rules (DfE, 2016: 7). In the teachers' standards the expectations is that there should be clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy (Department for Education, 2011). The DfE state rules should be 'proportionate, fair, varied according to pupils' age and circumstances' (2016). Systems are required to support the management of the behaviour policy in the classroom and emerging literature supports the belief all behaviour occurs for a reason and pupils do not exhibit inappropriate behaviour without any foundation (Dunbar, 2015; Nash et al., 2016). This research study intends to utilise three school rules:

- Be in the right place at the right time;
- Say the right thing in the right way;
- Do the right thing in the right way.

This study intends to use a visual traffic light system referenced to three steps using three colours: red, amber, green. The traffic lights model can be linked to an ABC approach to examining behaviour. The Antecedent-Behaviour-Consequence (A-B-C) approach is acknowledged as supporting the impact of pupils' behaviour during tasks (Killu, 2008). A-B-C has its origins rooted in the paradigm of operant conditioning of Skinner (1966). The use of this system will refer to manifestation of LLD in the classroom supporting pupils with a visual reference point to promote self-regulatory practices; pupils will be asked to

address off task behaviour with clear imperative instructions and the desired behaviour will be referred to through exercising the three rules and applied to traffic light colours, red, amber and green. Red is any negative behaviour that continues to be considered putting the pupil, their peers, or adults in danger. An example of this may be pupils being violent to either another pupil or an adult, leaving the classroom, damaging resources or the provision.

In relation to this study the antecedent is any behaviour that is related to being off task or not working and may be considered amber or red. The normative state is green which during the lesson all pupils are expected to be in. This means that pupils are expected to begin the day/session/learning sequence in green. The names of pupils are written/printed on tabs and stuck in the green traffic light. Green refers to positive learning behaviours pupils display relating to the class rules. The green circle is the largest traffic light and sits at the top with amber in the middle and red at the bottom. In this way green is manufactured as a constant state of expected acceptable behaviour relating to the class rules. Therefore, any act by the pupil to move off task becomes a trigger to that behaviour and the antecedent. For example, pupils sitting working at their desk and one turns to another to talk about an unrelated issue would be considered the antecedent to off task behaviour. At this point the pupil is considered to be in amber and would be given an imperative instruction to follow to move their behaviour to green. In addition, when a pupil is refusing to work the teacher would use scripted behaviour to highlight that the behaviour is not green and give clear instructions about the steps to return to green. Once the pupil has decided to continue with their work their name is moved back to green. The amber traffic light is smaller than the green traffic light with red below it which is the smallest traffic light out of the three. The behaviour exhibited by the pupil can refer to both the red and amber traffic lights and pupils' names are moved through the traffic lights by the teacher in relation to the observed behaviour. Additionally, amber behaviour refers to apparent LLD behaviours. Red refers to any behaviour that places the pupil, their peers or an adult at risk. It may refer to behaviour that is continual like work refusal for example, during a lesson a pupil refuses to complete their work despite support from an adult, their name is placed in red. In an ABC system the consequence arises out of the behaviour that has been displayed by the pupil; the consequence might just be to continue with their work or to refrain from

speaking whilst working. In severe cases the consequence could be to stay in at break to complete work or to sit and speak with an adult about their classroom behaviour. In this intervention the consequence is the desired outcome that is expressed through scripted behaviour language. A typical conversation could be:

Teacher: Ryan you need to stop talking and finish your work.

(Ryan continues to talk)

Teacher: Ryan to be in green you need to stop talking and finish your work.

(Ryan continues to talk)

Teacher: Ryan you are in amber. To move back to green you need to stop talking and finish your work.

(The teacher moves to the traffic light and place Ryan's name in amber)

(Ryan turns and begins to work)

Teacher: Thank you Ryan I can see that you are working.

(The teacher places Ryan's name in green)

Nash et al. (2016) found pupils might require frequent reminders (for this study scripted behaviour language and traffic lights) to develop an understanding of the consequences that their behaviour had to support relevant changes in LLD. In this way, pupils will be reminded that their behaviour is not appropriate (referenced to the rules), and it is anticipated to support pupils to appreciate personal triggers to challenge low-level disruptive behaviour. The use of scripted behaviour language will support pupils to become proactive instead of reactive about their classroom behaviour; the teacher will give clear statements defining the appropriate behaviour expected, followed by praise or reward. The operant conditioning will develop as both pupils and adults begin to understand the spontaneity of the behaviour and work through any unintentional or intentional actions that influence the surrounding environment (classroom learning). The

intention is for adults to deploy positive scripted language to promote to pupils the language of green positive behaviour. The intention will be to repeatedly establish and reinforce positive actions without the need to punish or provide negative consequence, this is based on Skinners (1938) three-phase model of operant conditioning; the context of which falls under the umbrella applied behaviour analysis set out below (Webster, 2020):

A: Antecedent - the antecedent condition leads to a…

B: Behaviour - behaviour/ response which results in a…

C: Consequence - consequence that follows the behaviour (not necessarily a negative response).

If green is the desired behaviour reinforced through spoken language, it is anticipated that positive reinforcement supports the desired aim and future behaviour becomes affected in a positive manner (O'Leary, 2007). Pupils who display negative (amber) behaviour will be reminded of this, through clear scripted instructions, followed by praise and a thank you once the desired behaviour allows the pupil to move back into green. Over time, the continual praise reinforces the positive behaviour and this act strengthens future self-regulation practices. It is hoped that pupils will begin to acquire an internal behaviour barometer because the repetition constructs a 'perceived cognitive competence' – which becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy of 'on-task behaviour'. Furthermore, the advancement of success supports motivation to task completion allowing the pupils to positively expend effort, thereby increasing self-resilience to tasks that are challenging. Research has shown pupils often display negative behaviour towards work if there is an opportunity that they are unable to complete it (Bru, 2006: 24); incorrect differentiation of learning tasks has the ability to cause negative feelings within pupils if they consider it to be either too easy or too hard; the EEF call this the 'Goldilocks effect' (2019). The next section will define the use of scripted language or help scripts to support reinforcement of the agreed behaviour system.

2.8 Scripted behaviour language

As far back as 1988, Guerra and Slaby explained how aggressive behaviour impacted on others in the classroom; their work on moral cognition concluded the use of scripts was a pivotal factor to support pupils to develop an internal moral framework to enable self-control and self-regulation. Anecdotal evidence supports the notion scripted language has the ability to promote positive learning behaviour as the script is used as the basis of whole-school behaviour language. A key reason for its success is that the script removes any ambiguity of spoken language and enables adults to remain in control, when faced with LLD, by removing the emotive and subjective nature of personal feelings. The application of the script allows pupils to learn that adults will speak in the same manner every time, in this way pupils are encouraged to practise controlling their behaviour. Resultantly adults will utilise scripted language for any observed off-task pupil behaviour and consideration should be given that negative behaviour could arise for many different reasons. Speaking to pupils with scripted language removes the element of control that could be exhibited by the pupils to the teacher. In addition, the script addresses the emergence of LLD behaviour without creating a direct affront to teachers' personal authority which could result in a potential power struggle between pupils and teachers (Bandura, 1995). The use of scripts is not a new phenomenon as they have been successfully developed in special educational settings to support pupils with emotional or behavioural disorders, allowing them to develop a mental representation for the progression of a situation where interaction by an adult is required (Schank & Abelson, 1989: 248). In the literature there is very little evidence of scripted behaviour language to support positive classroom learning. Paul Dix (2017) advocates the use of thirty-second scripted interventions or micro scripts where the focus is on delivering the language and consequence in that time. He explains that there are three parts to his script: the opening line; the message delivered; the consequence. However, in a classroom environment one may not be able to successfully bring a pupil back on task within thirty seconds and the three stages may need to be repeated. He does advocate leaving the pupil to reflect on this stating that the teacher has their dignity intact and there is little effect on learning. There were two other organisations that evidenced a form of scripted language. The first organisation Supportive Behaviour Management (Temple, 2013) provided examples of phrases that could be used with pupils which appeared wordy and lacked succinctness. In addition, the use of their scripted language was not used in

conjunction with both traffic or token economy. The second organisation is Pivotal Education who employ scripted behaviour interventions used on pupils who have 'dug their heels in' or after 'trying a few small nudges, you aren't getting anywhere' (Dix, 2013). The use of their scripted behaviour intervention is not supported by traffic lights or token economy which continues to suggest that the intervention that is being promoted in this research study supports a gap in the literature.

Scripts enable both the teacher and the pupil to understand what is required and begin to develop behaviour that can lead to the pupil self-regulating. Scripts are advantageous because they support pupils and adults to select the appropriate response once a situation occurs. In the behaviourism approach to psychology scripts can be used as a sequence to promote expected behaviour for a given situation (ibid). Consequently, behavioural scripts become 'entrenched patterns of thought and behaviour' learned by pupils over a period of time, supporting pupils to develop knowledge structures to improve social interaction and to support goal acquisition (Mayer & Patriarca, 2007: 3). For the purpose of this study-scripted language will be deployed by adults to express what is expected to happen followed by an acknowledgment when the pupil has listened:

> *'You need to sit up in your chair…thank you for sitting up in your chair' or 'you need to put your pencil down…thank you for putting your pencil down…to be in green you need to…in this school we expect…I can see you are upset…you talk I will listen'.*

The scripts will be agreed with the teachers prior to the study taking place and given out in the staff training session.

As previously mentioned, the script becomes a verbal representation of the perceived positive learning behaviour to allow the pupil to progress within a situation without the requirement of any emotive language by the adult. Behaviour issues can be dealt with calmly. However, there are shortcomings that exist as a result of deploying scripted behaviour language. In the first instance introducing scripted behaviour language is time consuming as all staff in the school need to

understand the specific scripts that exist for different situations. Inconsistency in its deployment can often cause issues with both staff and pupils; this is because the scripts have to be followed consistently in order that pupils understand what is required and can develop entrenched patterns of thought to respond to them (Mayer and Patriarca, 2007: 4). Of additional concern is what Mayer and Patriarca refer to as negative intent towards others (2007: 4). In this situation pupils with challenging social interaction will continue to project their negativity towards others due to their lack of skill in solving the problem because they are unable to process the next step appropriately. However, in this study the benefit of using shortened imperative instructions supports pupils as the adult can be succinct and clear about the next step they need to take to return to green. Another shortcoming of using this process is that the continual repetition of the script could cause pupils to develop a negative view of themselves, thus causing a self-fulfilling prophecy of negative actions; this may be caused by teachers using the scripted behaviour language in a negative manner and the pupil picks up on the negative cue leading to the formulation of the assumption that they always react in this manner (Dodge and Pettit, 2003; Mayer and Patriarca, 2007).

2.9 Token economy – paid to behave

The use of token economy or incentive-based structures is not wholly centred on education as they have been developed through common bartering systems to governments in a wide range of industries and civilisations (Doolittle, 1866; Duran, 1964; Grant, 1967: Schmandt-Besserat, 1992; Doll et al., 2013). Token economies to encourage positive reinforcement have been in existence for many years developing as cultures and civilisations have evolved (Doll et al., 2013). Research in the seventies centred on developing token economy through psychiatry, clinical psychology, education, mental health fields to modify animal behaviour and have been deployed to improve living conditions for prisoners (Kazdin & Bootzin, 1972; Sousa & Matsuzawa, 2001; Addessi et al., 2011). In education systems the use of token economies has supported larger-scale management of pupils for a number of years and is founded in the concepts of operant conditioning (Kazdin & Bootzin, 1972; Kazdin, 2012; McLaughlin & Williams, 1988). A token economy can be introduced in the classroom to improve behaviour of pupils in the classroom, to increase academic work production and

to minimise disruptive behaviour (Doll et al., 2013). There are a wide range of token economies that may be utilised to support behaviour in the classroom:

- Response cost is a system where tokens are removed from pupils as a cost of the observed behaviour. One of the drawbacks is that this method is negatively based and conducive to developing or promoting positive behaviour.
- Lottery system is used to reward target behaviours at the end of a reward period with a lottery type event for pupils to earn backup rewards. A drawback is that it cannot guarantee buy in from differing ages and populations of pupils.
- Individual versus whole class is a token system that pits an individual against groups within the classroom. This system has been proven to reduce unwanted behaviour.
- Level systems are a variation of a token economy system. The differing levels hold a range of tariffs and rewards that can be earned depending on the agreed behaviour it relates to. It is accepted that this system is effective for whole class reward and are extremely adaptable.

(Doll et al., 2013: 137)

The action of giving a token reinforces behaviour management systems in schools and ClassDojo is an example. Its development is rooted in the research of operant conditioning and should be perceived as a tool to reinforce desired behaviour positively rather than focusing on negative low level disruptive behaviour. ‘ClassDojo is a key technology of ‘fast policy’ that functions as a ‘persuasive technology’ of ‘psycho-compulsion’ to reinforce and reward student behaviours that are aligned with governmental strategies around social-emotional learning’ (Williamson, 2017: 4). The application is web-based and enables teachers to award ‘dojos’ to pupils as they are working or undertaking an activity. ClassDojo can signify classroom behaviour into a measurable value of working towards a common and individual goal. However, there is not extensive support for this system and some educationalists question the appropriateness of

awarding badges for obedience (Singer, 2014); there are other systems that can be purchased and provide the same service.

Whilst there are many advocates of a token economy to promote positive classroom behaviour there are also detractors. The practice of token economy is not entirely sympathetic due to ethical disagreement from educationalists, bureaucrats and members of the community who have proposed its use as being attributable to bribery or blackmail of pupils (Kazdin & Bootzin, 1972; Kohn, 1999); concerns exist that the use of this type of system creates dependency with pupils working to receive praise or rewards. Additionally, both Shakespeare et al. (2013) and Kohn (2006) state that the token economy can decrease a pupil's self-esteem as they behave for a reward rather than by choice leading to concerns that this type of system promotes dependency in pupils who will only work to receive a reward. Furthermore, study has shown that this form of reward system may encourage pupils to steal or resort to sabotage tactics to reduce their peers from receiving them; there are additional concerns that the token economy can cause pupils' self-esteem to suffer (Kohn, 2006; Doll et al., 2013; Shakespeare et al., 2013). In the researcher's view there does not appear to be any fundamental flaws in praising and encouraging pupils to display the correct behaviour or reward them for work completion or for behaving appropriately. For research purposes, the token economy will be deployed verbally in the classroom and added to the ClassDojo system either during or after a learning sequence. The aim will be to overuse praise and reward to support pupils to establish a connection between green behaviour, a reward, praise and task completion.

The token economy is given to promote on task behaviour which allows pupils to develop an ethic towards working to a goal to remain in the green traffic light. Pupils will learn that they can earn credits/tokens for following the rules which supports the development of a work ethic. Pupils earn tokens as stimulus/points/tangible items to produce a desired behaviour. Repeating the process of using a token before a reinforced stimulus enables the pupil to understand that the token is a reinforcing entity and a conditioned reinforcer that is paired with a positive event (Doll et al., 2013). In this token-reinforcement

system the token will be continually given as an incentive prior to the required behaviour or immediately before the ‘reinforcing stimulus’; this will lead to the token becoming a reinforcing entity (Doll et al., 2013). In other systems the incentive may take the form of a range of rewards such as a sticker, a stamp, praising language, an edible treat, golden time or any other reward/incentive. During the lesson the teacher will use token economy to reinforce positive working habits for example:

Teacher*: I can see you have completed your work; well done you have earned a Thorptons.*

In addition, the token economy will be given to pupils displaying green behaviour to encourage a target pupil to begin to change their behaviour. Once this has taken place the target pupil receives a token. In this study the continual repetition supports the identification of the reward as a ‘reinforcing stimulus and the token economy increases its function and power to pupils’ learning behaviour when the neutral tokens become secondary reinforcers (Miller & Drennen, 1970). In this manner, the frequency of handing out the reward supports, encourages the desired target positive behaviours considered to be normative and appropriate by the teacher. Paired with the traffic lights and scripted behaviour language the tokens support the class teacher to reinforce the desired target behaviour; the intention is to create a permanent state of green behaviour. Through continual repetition it is hoped pupils will develop a positive attitude in class to green behaviour; the teacher will use scripted language to identify LLD behaviour and move the name of any pupil who is off task in the amber or red traffic light. Once the pupil has changed their behaviour their name is moved back in to green. Anecdotal evidence suggests this process could have the potential to develop/support pupils’ self-regulatory habits that support future learning behaviour (Burger, 2015). The traffic lights will act as a panoptican constantly supporting pupils to understand where their behaviour is on the traffic light. In this way, traffic lights become a surveillance technique to illustrate to pupils that they are constantly being monitored. The use of the token economy is the reinforced reward for pupils to remain in green or to support them to move back to green.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the continual and consistent use of the intervention becomes internalised by the pupils through the passing of time and it is this that begins to develop self-regulation and a reduction of low-level disruptive behaviour.

2.10 The impact of LLD on teachers

Over the past few decades the focus of pupils' behaviour has been a concern in schools and educators have cited classroom management as one of a number of key reasons for teachers to leave the profession; this reason includes students who are in initial teacher training, post graduate certificate teachers, school direct trainees and any other entry pathway into the profession of teaching (Whitehead et al., 1999; Hutchings et al., 2000; Carrington & Tomlin, 2000; Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000). Therefore, the subject of disruptive pupils is not new and its impact in the classroom continues to be overwhelming and a disheartening factor for individuals considering a career in teaching; it is acknowledged that poor pupil behaviour has contributed to teachers feeling stressed and having low morale. (Rawlinson et al., 2003; Teacher Support Network Group, 2014; Camden, 2014; Carter Review, 2015). Evidently, the initial phase for all support and development should be at the primary stage of a teacher's career, regardless of the pathway they choose to complete their qualified teacher status. Views have been expressed that government policy should focus on training all student teachers correctly in order that they can thrive in classrooms by way of comparison to surviving (Barmby, 2006; Ofsted, 2012; Bennett, 2017; Moore et al., 2019). Fundamentally, teachers and leaders should develop protocols to support strong classroom management, thereby reducing the impact of LLD behaviour in the classroom. As an illustration, one cannot assume that there are swathes and generations of young people who are un-teachable. Possibly both early experience and experienced teachers expect a level of self-control (from pupils) that simply does not exist in their psyche; in fact, perhaps the teachers simply lack the skills to be able to manage the behaviour in the classroom due to a lack of training (Tennant, 2004: 55). If the profession is to recruit and retain quality teachers, the issue of pupil behaviour and discipline in schools must be addressed. For this reason, the UK Parliament Pupils, Schools and Families Committee found Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) felt inadequately prepared to

teach pupils with behaviour management and social in/exclusion issues and reported that to address this:

- ITT providers should cultivate opportunities for trainees to learn from outstanding practitioners;
- ITT students need to receive practical advice and strategies grounded in evidence;
- ITT programmes should support teachers to develop classroom presence;
- ITT students should receive mentoring from experienced teachers.

(House of Commons Children Schools and Families Committee, 2010: 7)

More recently, the Teacher Support Network Group (2014) identified 24% of teachers felt unprepared for real life teaching due to behaviour experienced in classrooms, and 25% expressed the view that Initial Teacher Training (ITT) did not support the management of disruptive pupils (Camden, 2014). Perhaps a reason for this is that at the start of their career, newly qualified teachers often adopt strategies observed by their mentors, peers or more experienced colleagues, but become surprised when they are ineffective (Sida-Nicholls, 2012). For this reason, early experience teachers may require greater support to develop their classroom management skills as they are unable to draw on sound pedagogical theory or practised behaviour management techniques; a key outcome of the 2010 Pupils, Schools and Families Committee was the need to provide early career teachers and ITT/PGCE students with experienced mentors who could support their induction in to the profession. McNally et al. (2005: 169) contended that despite a 'wide body of literature devoted to behaviour management' pupils in the United Kingdom 'were probably the worst behaved in the world' and many teachers were 'unable to exert their authority in the classroom'. Ofsted (2014: 5) explained teachers reported to them 'they ignored low-level disruptive behaviour and tried to just carry on' because they often felt there was a lack of skills to address LLD behaviour. With that in mind, focused professional development is required to support those entering the teaching profession to support troubled pupils and address LLD behaviour. The Carter Review (2015) on Initial Teacher Training (ITT) stated the development of teacher's behaviour management techniques, with appropriate resources to

improve behaviour management system, was a fundamental concern for early entry practitioners. Resultantly, the issue in ITT is accentuating the problem that teachers are ill equipped to address LLD behaviour. In his book 'The Behaviour Guru' Tom Bennett notes teachers lack the ability at the start of their profession to 'control' pupils (2010: xvii), stating 'controlling other people isn't a fact…not a theory…set of rules…it is a skill, an active verb'. The book comprises a collection of letters from his agony uncle page for the TES. Michael Gove, former Secretary of State for Education, claimed Bennett was shaping the education debate in a far more powerful way than many politicians (Gove, 2013). Bennett's evidence is rooted in practical observations and concerns from other teachers that have advanced into recurring themes. In the future, teachers exposed to high levels of LLD behaviour are increasing the possibility of it detrimentally impacting on their work life balance and potentially developing high levels of burnout as they become discouraged due to continual levels of (pupil) disengagement (Dursley & Betts, 2015). Ofsted indicated low-level disruption is becoming a socially accepted norm in school classrooms and furthermore school leaders were not addressing this quickly enough (Ofsted, 2014).

In this manner low-level disruption has created a dichotomy whereby teachers require support to manage pupil behaviour because it is deteriorating; conversely they are unable to address it, therefore it increases and a self-fulfilling prophecy of poor practice becomes evident. Teachers request support and pupils require intervention – the lack of teacher experience creates greater levels of LLD, and the profession is struggling to address the issue as there very little or no intervention or support. A more systematic and theoretical analysis is probably required to ensure LLD behaviour does not negatively impact significantly on both pupils and teachers (Nash et al., 2016). Resultantly, the research reviewed thus far suggests a requirement exists to address LLD in order to support teachers remaining in the profession.

2.11 Addressing low expectations

A key research study intention will be to understand if the intervention will reduce the manifestation of observed LLD behaviour in the classroom and if the anecdotal evidence holds weight. Whilst the literature acknowledges teachers, educators, policy writers and the government should address the learning

environment for the most troubled pupils, research still needs to take place to address the ‘mass’ or the whole class. As an illustration, where pupils react negatively to learning the danger exists that they will not make progress. In 1988 Hobcraft found results in test scores were the single biggest determiner of adult outcomes; individuals leaving school lacking formal qualifications were at greater risk of social exclusion in adulthood. Dursley and Betts (2015) explored the long-term implications that existed if LLD behaviour developed in the classroom. Often pupils become entrenched in LLD behaviour without understanding the impact it could have on the rest of the class, their teacher or on their future aspirations. Pupils could develop negative attitudes to school and learning as the result of LLD behaviour because it slowly becomes normalised; other pupils may identify, acknowledge and agree with LLD behaviour thereby internalising their peers’ attitudes projecting them back in the classroom (Bru, 2009). Pupils who suffer (for whatever reason) from low self-esteem or have fragile self-worth may become reluctant to expend any effort on academic tasks for the fear of failure, thus developing a range of strategies to ensure tasks are incomplete creating feelings of self-worth and perhaps perceived apathy towards school. As teachers question the observed behaviour and subsequently intervene this could create a superficial opposition towards teachers/school leading to future off task behaviour; therefore, the teacher views the behaviour rather than the needs of the pupil.

Conversely, pupils may comprehend LLD behaviour in the classroom but then may not consider it is detrimental or destructive, deciding to not draw attention to it (Dursley and Betts, 2015). Some pupils may perceive their behaviour is completely acceptable/reasonable and that the teacher’s expectations are wholly unreasonable; other pupils may observe LLD behaviour as funny or non-intrusive (Tennant 2004: 53, Bru 2007). There may be pupils who exhibit LLD exercising their assorted levels of perceptive filtering because what may appear extremely incongruous to one person might essentially remain seemingly typical to someone else (Tennant, 2004; McNally, 2005; 2006). In pedagogical terms what one teacher may class as normalised behaviour in their classroom could quite conceivably be considered to require professional intervention in another (Macleod et al., 2015). Culturally, a school with pupils from an extremely disadvantaged background may view behaviours differently than a school with pupils who are not disadvantaged. Bru (2006) considers whether going against

the accepted norm is actually valuable for escalating peer status in young people and Dursley and Betts (2015) suggest unchecked disruptive behaviour perpetuate a lack of engagement with school creating uncooperative pupils lacking the ability or desire to learn. In the future teachers may wish to begin a dialogue with pupils to evaluate the impact disruptive behaviour could hold on developing behaviour discourse and knowledge transmission (Swinson, 2010).

A study undertaken by Narhi et al. (2015) to understand the impact of developing strategies to improve on task class behaviour investigated reducing disruptive behaviour using an intervention based on clear behavioural expectations. The intervention was reinforced with positive behaviour support and swift provision for the most disruptive behaviour examples included: class-wide interventions, reviewing pupil seating arrangement changes, reminders about class rules, and evaluations by the teacher to pupils about their behaviour followed by student assessment regarding classroom behaviour. Whilst school staff remained positive about the outcomes pupils felt the intervention was being 'done to' them and that the researchers appeared more concerned with teachers' stress levels than whether they (pupils) bought in to the intervention. The conclusion noted the lack of control group hindered study outcomes as there was significant change between the interventions being put in place and whether teachers adhered to the principles of the study. Moreover, concerns arose regarding the fidelity of the teaching staff undertaking the process and an area of concern was the relationship and positivity of discussions held between school staff, and parents. A key outcome was that the validity of the overall evaluation might have been compromised as a result of it being staff led (Narhi et al., 2015).

Ultimately, if it is accepted pupil behaviour is an issue perhaps educators and researchers should develop and build a shared knowledge base to establish the root cause of LLD behaviour for example, how to support pupils who exhibit it and what should be done to address this issue (Nash et al., 2016). Otherwise teachers may be creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of poor behaviour because they lack the skills to address it; taking punitive action may be detrimental to pupils understanding of positive learning behaviour (Tennant, 2004). This could lead to pupils becoming unable to understand why their behaviour is or was inappropriate

in the first place and the lack of discussion means they are not given the opportunity to modify it.

2.12 Exclusion and inclusion

The government, Ofsted, educators, parents and pupils are concerned about the increase of low-level disruption in classrooms; often a consequence of this is the exclusion of pupils for a fixed period or permanently. Therefore, the result is that pupils' behaviour is never fully addressed with the cycle continuing (Taylor 2011; Department for Education, 2015; Cotzias et al., 2014; Ofsted, 2014; Bennett, 2017; Moore et al., 2019). The data presented in Table 1 demonstrates the continual growth of both permanent exclusions (PE) and fixed term exclusions (FTE) from 2009/10 to the latest published data in 2017/18. The statistics produced by the Department for Education suggest low-level disruptive behaviour is increasing in schools in England; the tolerance towards evident LLD behaviour is diminishing. Whatever the viewpoint the increase in both permanent and fixed term exclusions indicate there is an issue with LLD behaviour and any study that could reduce its presence may hold merit.

Table 1 National fixed term and permanent exclusion figures for low-level disruptive behaviour

Fixed term exclusion statistics for low-level disruption set against national total						
Reason	**2009/10**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**	**2017/18**
LLD FTE	**78 760**	**68 220**	**79 590**	**94 025**	**108 640**	**123 055**
Total FTE	**331 380**	**269 475**	**302 375**	**339 366**	**381 864**	**410 753**
%	**24**	**25**	**26**	**28**	**28**	**30**
Permanent term exclusion statistics for low-level disruption set against national total						
LLD PE	**1 660**	**1 620**	**1 900**	**2 310**	**2 755**	**2 866**
Total PE	**5 740**	**4 949**	**5 795**	**6 684**	**7 719**	**7 905**
%	**29**	**32**	**33**	**34**	**35**	**34**

(Cotzias et al., 2012-2018, Department for Education, 2012)

Table 2 presents the fixed and permanent exclusion rate in Hull and the East Riding. Local data evidence the rise of LLD exclusions. There are significantly fewer schools in Hull (approx. 85) than in the East Riding (approx. 150). It could be argued that the impact in Hull is greater because it is a far more deprived city than the region of East Riding. Table 2 illustrates in both local authorities low-level disruptive behaviour continues to be the single greatest reason for pupil exclusion. Another concerning factor is that in Hull the number of LLD fixed term exclusions has doubled from 180 in 2014 to 378 in 2017. Similarly, in the East Riding the FTE rate has risen from 320 in 2014 to 802 in 2017. The data supports the information presented in this literature review that LLD behaviour is a concerning issue that needs to be addressed.

Table 2 2014-2018 Local authority fixed term and permanent exclusion figures

		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
		FTE	PE	FTE	PE	FTE	PE	FTE	PE
Hull	P to P *	160	0	195	5	202	3	177	7
	P to A *	120	5	113	6	150	9	128	6
	LLD beh	180	0	220	10	454	20	378	13
East Riding	P to P	200	0	220	4	255	4	289	7
	P to A	80	0	83	0	67	5	95	5
	LLD beh	320	0	449	5	564	10	802	13

(Cotzias et al., 2012-2018, Department for Education, 2012)

(* P to P refers to pupil to pupil incidences that led to exclusions and P to A refers to pupil to adult incidences that led to exclusions.)

Therefore, the increases in both fixed term and permanent exclusions establishes the growing inevitability for practitioners to identify reasons behind pupils' decisions to display this type of behaviour. The data and guidance from Taylor (2011), Bennett (2017), and the EEF (Rhodes et al., 2019) suggest far too much time is expended dealing with and managing disruptive behaviour in the classroom. For example, earlier research found a key indicator of exclusion was the fact that teachers felt 'powerless' and unable to control pupils, this led to

pupils becoming excluded (Ollin, 2005; Infantino & Little, 2005; Ofsted, 2014). The danger exists that a national epidemic is being created as the exclusion data demonstrates pupil referral units could be receiving more pupils in opposition to the ethos of schools being 'inclusive' (Cotzias et al., 2014). For example, pupils with special or emotional behavioural needs placed in mainstream education when a place in a special school would be more appropriate. Students could become excluded because their needs are not being met in the school through lack of expertise. This may lead to pupils becoming disengaged in class thereby exhibiting LLD as a result of the impression that they do not fit in. With that in mind, Rose argued through 'policing the obligatory access points to the practices of inclusion' novel forms of exclusion are generated (1999: 327). Adults therefore should consider their role in the process of behaviour management; understanding perceptive acceptability is crucial as what is considered LLD in one school may be perfectly reasonable in another. Goss and Sonnemann (2017) state teachers who display negative perspectives towards pupils who require intervention often reinforce the air of negativity. Pupils may require positive reinforcement from adults to self-actualise and demonstrate positive learning behaviour. The possibility exists that the pupil creates a negative perception towards adults who believe there is no other alternative than to exclude. In particular, adults are required to address behaviour in a consistent manner to provide a positive environment for behaviour and for learning. Time should be invested to support pupils to develop self-regulatory behaviours to reduce the increase of LLD behaviour.

2.13 Behaviour management, class rules and the work of Skinner

Whilst extensive literature has investigated the subject of behaviour management, Maag (2012) proposes very little empirical research exists to support evidence of the effectiveness of behaviour management within the classroom thereby suggesting a gap. O'Neill and Stephenson (2014, 17) assert teachers entering the profession relying on models of practice not complemented by empirical research should be cautious about their effectiveness within the classroom. A key reason for selecting the topic was to investigate in what way behaviour management was applied within schools to address LLD and enable pupils to become self-regulatory. As a result, an uncertainty exists between the information

produced in texts and the lack of empirical research to support stated claims. Of the texts reviewed, the vast majority offered solutions to ‘manage’ the ‘behaviour’ of young people in classrooms (Hook, 2014; Kay, 2005; Rayment, 2006; Shelton et al., 2008; Bennett, 2010; Triegaadt, 2010; Wearmouth et al., 2013; Beadle & Murphy, 2014; Rogers 2015; Cowley, 2014; Ellis & Tod, 2015; Kyriacou, 2015).

There are two approaches that can be applied to regulate behaviour in a school. They are classroom and behaviour management. Classroom management can be thought of as the process of arranging the classroom environment and its physical structure to prevent undesired behaviour. This system considers the physical and human resources that are required from those who contribute to the learning process (Kayikci, 2009: 1215). The teacher leads the classroom environment with an emphasis on rules and order dominating. The formulation and development of behavioural standards are key to creating a safe learning environment (2009: 1216). In addition, the term can be considered as one of the skills that teachers need to have for effective teaching as an ongoing process to support teachers to make decisions relating to where pupils sit, the teaching methods applied, pupils’ participation and motivation, learning resources and addressing misbehaviour (Sadik & Akbulut, 2015). In the literature, behaviour management is defined as strategies and systems that manage and eliminate difficult behaviours that prevent pupils from succeeding in any academic environment, whereas classroom management involves creating systems to support positive behaviour across a classroom (Webster, 2020).

The term behaviour management relates to the manner in which teachers control pupils’ learning behaviour as they should sit and be quiet, talk when spoken to, work when they are required to (Emmer & Stough, 2001). For effective behaviour management there should be clear rules set and a wide range of evidence suggests there should no more than five rules which are simply and positively written (Gottfredson et al., 1993; Little, 2003; Rosenberg and Jackman 2003; Akin-Little et al., 2007; Algozzine & Anderson, 2007; Akin-Little et al., 2009; Bromfield, 2006; van Tartwijk et al., 2009). The work of Skinner advocated positive reinforcement to support managing pupils’ behaviour in the classroom and it is universally accepted that classroom behaviour can have positive and

negative aspects inherent (1966). Skinner argued pupils were required to be active participants in the behaviour process through the act of engaging with it. In this way, he suggested teachers could affect the behaviour of pupils through very small acts as they acted as a result of the manner in which their teachers engaged with them. In the classroom this translates to employing positive reinforcement to change behaviour rather than acknowledged methods of punishment.

One of the key reasons for selecting behaviour management rather than classroom management is due to the impact that may be achieved supporting behaviour from inside of the classroom to the wider school community. In this study, the term 'behaviour management' will relate to behaviour of pupils within the classroom working with an adult to complete learning-based objectives but anecdotal evidence has shown that the impact of the three processes impacts positively across the entire school. Whilst there are 'many understandings' of what constitutes behaviour management. In the broadest sense they are taken to mean 'actions taken by the teacher to establish order, engage students or elicit their cooperation' (Emmer & Stough, 2001: 104). Therefore, behaviour management is the manner in which pupils and young people behave at school. Yet, the early work of Skinner (1966) argued teachers did not possess a deep enough understanding of behaviour management techniques to manage pupil classroom behaviour, often reverting to inconsistent techniques. Typically, teachers should refer to the behaviour policy with support and advice from experienced colleagues otherwise misconceptions may arise. For example, a teacher employing incorrect methods without the requisite knowledge or experience could end up presenting information to pupils which is misinterpreted:

- Implementing avoidance strategies to fabricate escape and undesirable emotional effects;
- Telling and explaining;
- Failure to modify learning tasks to individual pupils' levels of attainment;
- Refusing to use positive reinforcement.

(Skinner, 1966)

Consideration should be given to early career teachers, newly qualified teachers or initial teacher training students to consider if they have the skills to manage LLD behaviour as there is a great deal of skill required to manage the behaviour within a classroom (Bennett, 2010; Bromfield, 2006). Indeed, LLD behaviour can impact negatively on pupils, parents, staff and the entire school community. Indeed, the craft of teaching contains many elements and it may be assumed is a demanding profession. Therefore, any behaviour from pupils that is not positive could erode the confidence of early career teachers. This could lead to some teachers suffering emotional exhaustion from dealing with LLD behaviour and projecting this onto their pupils who in turn become disruptive (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). Through his research Skinner associated punishment with work avoidance, finding pupils began to feel negativity about work due to the manner in which teachers presented it to them. Later, work by Kounin (1970) influenced behaviour management research as it investigated the nature of environmental conditions influencing behaviour; primarily the events that occurred after inappropriate behaviour had taken place. He identified a set of teacher behaviours that could be deployed to show pupils that they knew what was taking place for example, planning proactive behaviour strategies to pre-empt negative behaviour. As a result, pupils were noted to become far more involved in their work, self-regulating their behaviour instead of utilising established avoidance strategies (Kounin, 1970). Kounin demonstrated a perceptual shift from reactive adult led classroom strategies to proactive preventative strategies. Kounin's findings confirmed a shift from the traditional approaches whereby behaviour became dominated by the teacher's individual personality to a set of protocols that could be trained and learned prior to teaching in the classroom. Later research by Good and Grouws (1977) supported Kounin's (1970) claims that teachers with finely honed behaviour management skills attained greater pupil achievement gains. Wilks (1996) argued behaviour management techniques fell into two broad strategies, proactive or reactive. The teacher to lessen the likelihood of pupils engaging in disruptive behaviour deploys proactive strategies whereas reactive strategies are deployed after the event of an action of disruptive behaviour. The NFER (Cunningham & Lewis, 2012) reported primary teachers tended to use proactive strategies more than reactive ones. The most commonly deployed are praising desired behaviour and a reward system or token economy. There are five areas

considered to be effective in achieving good behaviour management:

- Maximised structure and predictability;
- Post, teach, review, monitor and reinforce expectations;
- Actively engage students in observable ways;
- Use a continuum of strategies respond to inappropriate behaviours;
- Use a continuum of strategies to acknowledge appropriate behaviours.

(Simonsen et al., 2008)

To support effective behaviour management recent evidence has suggested pupils who are able to self-regulate become more adept at developing coping skills, thus are more likely to behave in school (Rhodes et al., 2019). Consequently, a key teaching outcome is developing resilient pupils who are able to utilise coping strategies becoming successful learners leading to developing self-regulation (Powell & Tod, 2004: 18; Rhodes et al., 2019). Yet, acquiring these skills is extremely difficult if a pupil has struggled to have a positive start in life due to extenuating social pressures or a lack of parental support. Self-regulation requires practice and repetition and pupils will need to be taught how to behave in the first instance. It is the intention of this research study to consistently support pupils to learn the three processes through continual repetition by the class teacher.

The information presented proposes establishing a different viewpoint in relation to behaviour management and producing a methodology that reduces LLD behaviour through evidence-based research to develop pupils' self-regulatory practices. Viewing behaviour management through a different lens may offer an alternative perspective of the same problem to produce a developmental shift that is transactional, dynamic and changing. For this reason, the teachers involved in the study will be required to consider behaviour as an aspect to be planned for to support pupils' understanding. The development of pupil self-regulation is problematical as once LLD behaviour becomes evident teachers may try to exert their will to control pupils into behaving. A false effect may be produced whereby pupils follow rules because they are told to and not through their choice. The

intention of this study is not to control pupils through rules and sanctions but to develop positive learning behaviour in order pupils view their behaviour positively and begin to self-regulate as anecdotal evidence has suggested. It is hoped that instead of breaking pupils down or controlling them to model desired behaviour they will learn to self-regulate instead of employing strategies to create a state of control in direct opposition to the intended effect (Ball, 1990: 21; Ball, 2013; 46). The intention to create a new perspective on classroom behaviour to understand if change could be enacted through the repetition of the processes (Gunilla et al., 2007). Earlier the work of Michel Foucault was mentioned to establish if his disciplinary power theory could be considered as a background theory to support pupils as they self-regulate their behaviour. The intention will be to review Foucault's concept of power expanding on his views of discourse to understand if a new understanding of learning behaviour discourse could be created.

2.14 The development of Foucault and power as a background theory

The notion of power and its relationship in the classroom has been a key interest from the outset of considering this research study. Similarly, understanding the manner in which power creates a relationship between pupils and teachers is a key area of interest. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, my positionality as a researcher in settings where my status is known requires thought to issues surrounding power (Rose, 1997). Secondly, as an experienced leader but a new researcher I have noted that often there are constant power struggles in play between pupils and adults. An example would be the manner in which adults have been observed speaking with pupils. During previous classroom observations I have noted teachers often stand over pupils who are known to display LLD behaviour, yet crouch down to speak with pupils considered to be well behaved. Moreover, I have observed negative power dynamics through teachers talking down to pupils exhibiting LLD behaviour as they adopt a clipped tone or do not use praising language like 'please' or 'thank you'. During these early observations and having read the work of Michel Foucault, his theory of disciplinary power through a panoptican effect and the creation of discourse I began to consider how they could be applied within the research. There is only one reference made by Foucault to schools and classroom behaviour this is in Discipline and Punish – the birth of a prison (1977). Therefore, new knowledge could be provided.

One of the intentions was to understand the characteristics of power relationships between adults and pupils (Foucault, 1977; Dobbert, 1982; Grills, 1998; Biesta, 2013; Wiederhold, 2015). Foucault explains that power is 'not a matter of consent' or the 'renunciation of freedom' but it exists through being 'exercised on others' (1994: 340). In school how can this concept be applied to pupils, teachers? The relationships that exist in school should be considered as power relationships that systemically and continuously exist in a wide variety of forms: adults and pupils, school leaders and teachers, governors and staff, parents and their children, parents and teachers, lunchtime staff and pupils, lunchtime staff and teaching staff. Power relations can be thought of as multidirectional with schools considered as institutions that are often comprehensively involved in classifying and specifying. Implicit in these relationships are varying degrees of power and for schools to function there should be a system to maintain order. This is the behaviour policy and behaviour management is not a matter of consent, it is an expectation that there will be a system that supports teachers and pupils to work together. Pupils do not give their consent to teachers to follow the system but the policy exists and is exercised on pupils by adults. In this way power could be considered negatively 'done to' pupils by teachers. Yet, Foucault reasoned 'power' was a positive force with associated negativity removed from 'its' definition: 'it excludes; it represses; it censors; it abstracts; it masks; it conceals' (1977: 194). Instead one should acknowledge power produces a reality; 'it' produces domains of objects and rituals of truth (Foucault, 1982: 208). Foucault objectifies power, acknowledging 'it' is more than a negative entity. Instead of an oppressive wielding force 'it' becomes a thing, a tool to be used and harnessed, wielded to produce positive outcomes decided by the user. Pupils wield power through their behaviour and work completion and teachers wield power through their role and the work that is set. It is only when LLD behaviour emerges in the classroom that the power dynamic is challenged; power's significance grows as a consequence of the existing relationships between adults and pupils. 'Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but it comes from everywhere' (Foucault 1980: 93-4). Through a behaviour management technique, the power exerted by teachers to readdress LLD behaviour creates a negative force towards pupils. Yet anecdotal evidence suggests continual repetition of the three processes support a positive aspect of power. In this way, it is intended that the

nature of power becomes a reflexive, measured and autonomous device to generate change to support pupil self-regulation. Instead of pupils being perceived as 'the other – the one over whom power is exercised' this study would like to establish them as agents who take control of their behaviour exercising 'a management of possibilities' to develop self-regulatory practices as they undergo the process of repetitively following the intervention (Foucault, 1994: 341). The intention is to understand if a 'freedom' can be created whereby pupils begin to develop an awareness of their behaviour within the classroom and as I undertake the research study observe whether pupils can begin to modify their behaviour through the deployment of the three processes, which leads to the development of self-regulation.

2.15 Disciplinary power

Foucault explained the real task in society was reviewing critically the neutral manner in which institutions were presented and he categorised power referring to its existence as a management of truth that acts as a positive mechanism instead of a negative influence to support transformation, defining it as 'disciplinary power' (1980). For Foucault, disciplinary power is an exploration of power relationships divided into three distinct phases. In the first, power is centred on the discipline of knowledge created through autonomous action of the traffic lights supporting regularity of behaviour (Foucault, 1971). Pupils' names constantly sit in the green traffic light unless their behaviour is defined as being amber or red. At this point the teacher would move their name into the amber or red traffic light until the pupil's behaviour changes and then their name is moved back to the green traffic light. The traffic lights are used in the same manner constantly and act as a surveillance technique. The exemplar of this technique is the Panoptican designed by Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th Century (Hungerford, 2010: 2117-2118). Its foundation was built on the stimulation of a state of consciousness and permanent visibility - an automatic functioning of power. The design supported 'inmates' feeling constantly under surveillance (Foucault, 1977: 201). Resultantly, inmates conformed through sustaining power relations independently without requiring intervention. Anecdotal evidence suggest pupils might self-discipline through self-monitoring processing, reflecting and modifying their classroom behaviour accordingly (Murphy, 2013: 42). Foucault explains that

the use of panopticism through ‘uninterrupted supervision’ creates a state of knowledge that moves away from whether something has occurred or not to a new knowledge that is concerned with the behaviour of the individual in the sense that a new norm is created (1994: 59). The new norm becomes the constant state of existence of the new knowledge. For this reason, both teachers and pupils create learning behaviour discourse and a new understanding of behaviour through the repetition of the traffic lights. In this study the traffic lights are deployed in a consistent manner by the teachers continually referring to them during the lesson. Anecdotal evidence advises that time is required to embed the traffic lights. Teachers will need to receive training on them prior to beginning the research study.

The second phase of disciplinary power is Foucault’s political questions of power. Foucault argued within any institution power, both positive and negative power relations exist; an aspect of this is political power (Foucault, 1994: 82). Foucault questioned the manner in which power in institutions was presented. This could be explained as questioning the manner in which individuals not only held the right to give orders, but equally held the power to make decisions regarding the futures of the ones who were given the orders (Foucault, 1994). Foucault believed that each social system held a regime of truth existing as a discourse of knowledge to support its existence. Inherent within each social system would be mechanisms and procedures to support its validity and value with established rules of rewarding and punishing (Foucault in Rabinow, 1991: 75). Similarly, he argued the school system was based on judicial power relations with classification and the desire to reward and punish. Foucault asks us whether one should be punished and rewarded in order to learn something (Foucault, 1994). In this study the three processes act as a positive process to support both pupils and adults to work together in a manner in which reward is prevalent but without the need to punish. The mechanisms that support this are scripted behaviour language and token economy. The continual repetition of these processes support pupils to develop self-regulatory practices through the disciplinary practices of behaviour (Foucault, 1977). To generate self-regulation through the regularity of the traffic light there needs to be language applied to support knowledge creation. This is constant reminders of pupils’ own behaviour through the deployment of scripted behaviour language. Repetition produces pupils who

adopt responsibility and self-regulate their behaviour without requiring proactive or reactive strategies. Teachers support learning through language instead of controlling behaviour. Rose identifies a Foucauldian view of education as a range of technologies of freedom invented to govern from a distance (1999: 324). Learning becomes knowledge as pupils acquire self-control developed through independent learning habits and consequently adults are removed as behaviour controllers through pupils' self-discipline. Ball examines the development of the self by explaining we are 'produced rather than oppressed' (2012: 20). As a result, power promotes individual self-governance. Therefore, pupils develop positive behaviour attitudes in the classroom, achieving positive learning outcomes, resulting in developed learning habits and thereby making better progress. Pupils become less compliant and controlled because they understand the behaviour expectations in the classroom and anticipate what is required (Mendieta, 2014: 122). In this manner the pupils have undergone a transformation from initial LLD behaviour to a new learning behaviour 'because we have become, we can also become different' (Ball, 2013: 126). Pupils create their own historical discourse through the experience of learning in the classroom discussed later. In this study teachers will be given scripts to use with their class. The scripts will identify the behaviour and reinforce the step that the pupil needs to take to move their behaviour from amber to green. For example, 'J you need to complete your work' or 'J you need to turn around' or 'J you need to pick your pencil up' once the pupil has responded the teacher would simply say 'J thank you for completing your work' or 'J thank you for picking your pencil up' or 'J thank you for turning around'. The script needs to be simple and to the point to avoid confusion for the pupil. Scripts do not need to be adapted dependent on the age of the pupil as in this study they use simple imperative language. The anecdotal evidence suggests that all adults involved in the classroom should be consistent in their use of it and the token economy or praise to reinforce positive displayed behaviour. The longer pupils are exposed to these processes it is hoped they will act freely within the safety of the framework to create disciplinary power.

The final aspect of disciplinary power is the discovery of theory of the self whereby pupils become free thinking and are routinely self-regulating with little prompting as the constant repetition of scripted behaviour language (SBL), traffic lights (TL) and token economy (TE) become the panoptican effect. Pupils feel constantly

under surveillance and therefore know/learn that their negative behaviour will always be addressed. As a result, they learn to modify and self-regulate their behaviour within these processes; in this way self-regulation begins to mature. In the school where the processes have been embedded for eight years anecdotal evidence suggest this occurs. Instead of using behaviour management to control pupils through a false effect (following rules because they are told to), it is hoped self-regulatory processes encourage power to become a positive instrument for transformation with pupils learning to regulate their behaviour. Foucault described the exercising of power as the management of possibilities. Instead of being wielded as an adversarial mechanism of coercion it should be viewed as a field of possibilities with multifaceted modes of conduct and behaviour (1994: 342). Disciplinary power will support pupils to develop their self-regulating behaviour and this will lead to a new understanding of how power can support positive action. As the pupils work within the three processes they begin to create knowledge of their behaviour and it is hoped begin to understand what it should be like. The constant repetition supports pupils to become comfortable and familiar with them. It is hoped that pupils transform their behaviour as a result of the consistent approach. For success to be achieved the teacher is required to be persistent in continuing to follow the three processes exactly as set out in the study by committing to follow the scripts, handing out tokens and using the traffic lights. Gradually pupils' knowledge creation leads to automatic self-regulation and the creation of learning behaviour discourse.

2.16 Learning behaviour discourse

Schools are authoritative in respect of their discourse systems for controlling behaviour. Depending on the context or social demographics, it could determine the policy applied for behaviour management. Choosing to control behaviour demonstrates exercising control over the reaction to the learning environment, the shift from reward and sanctions and a perceptible shift towards limiting individualised decision. Foucault asserted 'power produces knowledge' and the research intends to develop work related to questions of knowledge and units of knowledge (called discourses) into learning behaviour through the process of traffic lights, scripted behaviour language and a token. The adults communicate their intentions describing the rules and their representation through the traffic

lights. Additionally, the teachers support pupils to understand the manner in which the three processes blend together to support them to be successful. The continual and consistent use of the three processes by the adults to the pupils support a new knowledge of learning behaviour to be created. Pupils develop a positive power knowledge as they are rewarded for remaining in green. The continual reinforcement of the three processes leads to the creation of learning behaviour discourse. As pupils engage with them they learn to modify their own behaviour becoming become 'observers' self-modifying behaviour to support outcomes of learning (Foucault, 1977: 27, Foucault, 1994; Habermas, 1973). In this way, discourse creates a new view on learning behaviour with both pupils and teachers complicit in its creation (Ball, 2013: 19). With regards to behaviour management the existing power relationship is transformed into a positive force to support pupils to transform from pacified objects that are made to learn and are told to be good to positive pupils who may be engaged in the learning process making progress.

Ball states discourses are about what is said and thought and who can speak and with what authority (2013). The intention of this research study is to support pupils to consider their thoughts in relation to LLD behaviour. This means learning behaviour discourse arises from the power relations created through regular and consistent application of the three processes (Ball, 1990: 2). Foucault argues that discourse should be both an instrument and an effect of power; a hindrance, a stumbling block and a starting point for a new strategy (Foucault, 1982: 101; Ball, 1990: 2). In this study, the stumbling block is LLD behaviour that has been identified earlier as becoming a hindrance to both teachers and pupils. Perhaps this study could be a starting point for a new way of viewing behaviour management becoming a strategy for supporting behaviour policy in primary education. The three processes are the instrument to be wielded initially to support pupils to develop positive learning behaviour. The effect of the power relations that exist between adults and pupils continues as they embed. The continual communication of the three processes by the adults to the pupils support the creation of learning behaviour discourse; the regularity and consistency develops positive outcomes with the pupils. As an example, when one learns to play a sport in the initial stages time is expended learning and understanding the mechanics required to hit a ball with a racket or golf club.

Initially the player concentrates on the correct swing plane to hit the ball successfully. After a period, once the mechanics of the swing are achieved, they may add topspin or backspin or hit the ball softer or harder. Through the process of being in the state of the swing a person creates a knowledge or discourse about hitting the ball; often able to improve their knowledge and experience. Learning behaviour discourse is exactly the same process. Pupils are required to undergo the initial mechanics of the three processes led by the teacher and the constant state of surveillance supports pupils to begin to develop familiarity about them. The reinforcement using the token economy enables the process to be viewed positively. Pupils become familiar with the regularity of receiving tokens and the scripted behaviour language removes emotion from the adult to the pupil in regards to their behaviour. This allows the pupil to consider which behaviour they desire to exhibit in the classroom. Instead of a negative process of behaviour management whereby individuals could be rendered 'docile and pliable' pupils undergo the 'process of becoming' through the work of the 'care of the self' because school staff exercise power as a positive mechanism for pupils to behave (Ball, 1990: 7). Moreover, pupils are supported through the classroom rules and the three processes initiate the growth of learning behaviour discourse (Ball, 1990:21, 2013: 125). Discourse exists as conditions in which certain statements may be considered truth; for learning behaviour it is the manner in which pupils remain in the green traffic light through the use of scripted language and token economy (Ball, 2013: 19). Discourse provides an order and truth to be followed with grids of specification to support their replication. The mundane repetitive actions of responding to rules with the traffic lights as the Panoptican create a nexus through scripted language and token economy, thereby identifying with what Foucault views as a characteristic of discipline in that the 'discipline classifies the component thus identified according to definite objectives' (Bernstein, 1990: 57; Ball, 2013: 51). If pupils' behaviour improves, the language and system will be applied to everyone Ball defines it an 'erasure of difference' (1990,13: 51). As hopefully the group begin to undergo a process of normalisation, a standard might be created that unifies the practice of behaviour in the classroom and much later across the school. As a result, a typology of behaviour is created that defines what LLD is and what adults could achieve employing one blended intervention in order to address it. It is the belief of the researcher that learning behaviour discourse is created through deploying the three processes and that this supports the reduction of low-level disruption and promotes self-

regulation. Through the creation of positive learning behaviour teachers become a resource to support positive classroom learning behaviour (Shore & Wright, 2006: 559).

The researcher's interest in the work of Michel Foucault and his theory of disciplinary power has been discussed to understand if it could be applied as a background theory for consideration. It is accepted that there are limitations of what can be researched in this study and certainly further work is required to understand if there is merit in applying the theory of disciplinary power as a research paradigm.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

3.1 Research methodology

This chapter will discuss the methodological aspects of my research study providing a brief overview of the issue and researchable aims, before describing the beliefs that underpin the methodology. The ontological perspective will describe the conceptual aspects of the research study before explaining measurement through the epistemological stance. A discussion of worldviews will provide the reasoning why critical theory was chosen as the research paradigm, explaining the research hypothesis and questions. The schools chosen for this study will be defined before addressing the research methods and positionality of the researcher. Finally, ethical considerations and the research approach will be discussed.

Evidence from a range of published material over the last decade suggests that the topic of behaviour management is an important factor for teachers both entering and working in the profession (Kay, 2005; Shelton et al., 2008; Triegaadt, 2010; Beadle & Murphy, 2013; Cowley, 2014; Hook, 2014; Ellis & Tod, 2015 Rogers, 2018). Recently, the issue of low-level disruption in classrooms has received critical attention from Ofsted (2014) and Bennett (2017). In understanding the worldview consideration was given to the following: positivism, constructivism and criticalism and the manner in which one of these will support pupils to begin to work within the three processes to develop greater freewill to self-regulate their behaviour impacting on reducing low-level disruption (Ratcliffe, 1983). In order to explain the paradigm selected to undertake the research study consideration will be given to the ontological perspective.

3.2 Ontological perspective

The critical paradigm can be considered ‘normative’; it studies how things ‘ought to be’ judging the perceived truth. The starting point for a critical researcher is preconceived and is not value free as I have a viewpoint meaning my bias is in existence before beginning to research. Reality may contain predominant socially constructed entities with constant internal influence. The critical researcher

understands the pre-existing reality is open/perceptible to alteration by any human action. For example, in this paradigm it is acknowledged language contains ‘power relations’ that may be applied to either empower or weaken subjects. In this manner a critical theory has the potential to embrace emancipation for the disempowered (Scotland, 2012: 13). My personal experiences indicate that the management of low-level disruption normally operates within a social reality whereby power of control lies in the hands of the teachers. The reason for this is pupils are expected to comply following the rules and may become disempowered because there is not the possibility of learning to self-regulate their behaviour. My research aims to challenge this by employing traffic lights (TL), scripted behaviour language (SBL) and token economy (TE) with the ultimate aim of reducing low-level disruption (LLD). Anecdotal evidence from my own school indicates this can be achieved. Perhaps it would be naïve to expect that the full reduction of low-level disruption could occur, it may never become a reality, but I believe there is the potential to develop an enhanced democratic view of pre-existing behaviour management in the researched primary schools (Scotland, 2012: 13). Furthermore, through repetition and continual use of these three processes my sense is that pupils will have adopted fluency to self-regulate behaviour, modifying it accordingly. My past observations and discussions with staff suggest pupils may develop positive cognitive competence, with the result that attitudes improve (Bandura, 1997; Bru, 2006). It is hoped that the high degree of repetition of the processes supports pupils to modify their behaviour in a Foucauldian manner; this is because there is a panoptican surveillance technique deployed through the traffic lights reinforced with scripted language (Foucault, 1982: 202-3). Teachers’ continual repetition and consistent use of the three methods will support pupils to feel under constant influence beginning to modify their behaviour becoming resilient learners with an observed reduction in LLD behaviour. My contention is that the power relationship between adults and pupils will alter as a result of embedding the processes, further developing a positive learning environment.

The methods are open to interpretation and the impact of using them in one of the primary schools, which has established them over a period of 8 years, appears to have success in that context. My belief is the processes are well embedded and perceived to hold success addressing low-level disruption and

promoting pupil self-regulation of LLD behaviour. The development of my ontological perspective has been founded on generally constructing the social world (behaviour) in schools through subjective experience and is open to modification through human thought and actions. From this perspective, the initial point of this study is predetermined. Adopting a case study approach will obtain evidence to verify this perceived position in the hope that staff hold similar views and understanding (Flyvbjerg, 2006). In the three other schools an action research approach will be adopted. In each setting staff training will take place to establish each specific aspect of the three processes. This will be followed by a cycle of observation and interview and a period of reflection will be given to allow for future interpretation of their success (Freire, 1996). It is acknowledged research participants will bring different thoughts and actions to the process to develop an evolving, recursive connection concerning theory, data, research questions and interpretation (Talmy, 2012: 130; Scotland, 2012: 13). The methods employed will focus on supporting teachers to acknowledge LLD behaviour in the classroom to become critically aware of the impact that the processes hold to support positive learning behaviour.

3.3 Epistemological stance

Critical theory has a political character in this study the social and political implication is the increase of low-level disruptive behaviour in school classrooms (Guess, 1981; Taylor, 2011; Ofsted, 2014; Bennett, 2017; Marinopoulou, 2018). The praxis of behaviour management in schools requires a deeper investigation to understand if a different lens could be applied to improve outcomes in the classroom (Foucault, 1977: 201; Angrosino, 2007: 38: 9; Luff, 2012; BERA, 2018). Teachers arguably create and communicate authority whilst pupils must receive and accept it. In this manner, critical theory seeks to understand scientifically philosophical arguments because the moment a question or negation is formulated or asserted it creates a scientific moment (Guess, 1981, Marinopoulou, 2018: 9). The accountability has now distilled down regionally as local exclusion data demonstrates an increase of fixed term exclusions (for low-level disruptive behaviour) in the city of Hull year on year since 2014 (Ashbridge, 2018). Furthermore, in Hull, all of the primary schools use a system that is based on an antecedent, behaviour consequence with a wide majority adopting the traffic light

system to address classroom behaviour management. I feel there is a lack of clarity (in schools) about the manner in which they are used particularly in conjunction with scripted behaviour language and a token economy to reduce the impact of low-level disruptive behaviour. Critical theory offers scaffolding to link principles to develop and theorise new phenomena (Rexhepi & Torres, 2011: 680). For example, the national data suggest LLD behaviour is increasing and one may consider we are living in 'troubled times'. Perhaps more than ever it is time to act and ask educational practitioners and the government to decide if 'a better way does exist' (Rexhepi & Torres, 2011: 684; Taylor, 2011; Ofsted, 2012; 2014; Bennett, 2017). It is this position that has prompted me to undertake my research in order to seek to provide empirical evidence to support my view and hopefully offer empirical evidence to be used by schools to modify their approach to the management of low-level disruption that will benefit teachers and pupils.

For this study the epistemological dialectic is based on potential power dynamics in relation to school classroom behaviour. It is my intention to research whether a joint process of creating knowledge, shared understandings, joint participation and consciously agreed decision making can address this issue. I feel there is a contradiction forming between teachers and pupils; namely teachers may feel a lack of control due to their perception that there is an increase in acceptable classroom behaviour, yet pupils may lack control as a result of having behaviour management techniques forced upon them (Foucault, 2002: 474). Consequently, the principles of developing learning behaviour using the three methods are born out of the knowledge constructed socially in schools and influenced by competing power relations (Maynard, 1994). Knowledge will be created through observing possible triggers of LLD and pupil/teacher responses. The employment of the three methods will determine whether it creates a reduction of LLD behaviours. It is anticipated undertaking this research will create a deeper understanding of how the three processes can be embedded to provide 'rich data' that supports the view of the researcher becoming part of the process thereby developing 'lived experience' (Hamilton, 2011). Adopting a critical stance will promote objectivity to evaluate both sides of the research argument. The next section will examine the considered paradigms of positivism, constructivism and criticalism.

3.4 Positivism

Positivist theory is based on a single reality independent of human beings with binding meaning towards scientific methods (Mackenzie, 2011: 534). The theory's roots sit firmly in standardisation, measurement, reason and logic (Henwood 2015). The term was created by Comte in 1830 and is the notion that there is no knowledge but that of phenomena and this knowledge is relative and not concrete (Comte, 1896; Bourdeau, 2009). One cannot know the real manner of its production or its principle – only its relationship to other factors that may be created similarly. Positivist relations are constant and link the phenomena together yet their fundamental nature is unknown (Mills, 1866: 6; Mackenzie, 2011). For instance, the researcher would generally be an external participant to the research process using methods of tests to objectively determine outcomes and measure scores; there is focus on reliability of results with observable, manipulative and replicable concepts (Taylor & Medina, 2013). Positivism seeks to collate and analyse large amounts of quantitative data to achieve reproducible concepts argued as achieving objectivity. It follows that the scientific rationale of making the world around readable, measurable and accountable allows for a firm basis of prediction and control and the search for certainty (Burns, 2000: 4). The traditional methodologies of quantitative research create a tension between the exclusivist rights of positivism as the 'gold standard' of educational research and the nature of defining new answers to new research questions (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 1, 2008; Wright, 2006: 799).

In the literature, the positivist paradigm is widely recognised for its traditional homogeny with scientific research (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Carson et al., 2000). The positivist ontology is acknowledged for believing the world is external with a single objective reality to any research irrespective of the belief of the researcher (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Carson et al., 2001)). This would entail employing a measured controlled methodology through identification of a clear research topic construction of fitting hypotheses and remaining detached from the research process; maintaining a neutral positionality. Personality and judgement are not evident because the emphasis is centred on supporting fact and reason with logic and mathematical techniques (Carson et al., 2001). Therefore, the positivist epistemology is rooted in controllable variables particularly where large sample

sizes are involved and is founded on the connectivity of natural phenomena and their relations and properties embedded around the development of valid knowledge being scientific. Information is derived from sensory experience interpreted through reason and logic and the search for certainty and the measurement of these (Dewey, 1960; St. Pierre, 2012). The benefits of using a positivist approach lie in its goal of grounding knowledge and its relationship between reality and research. There is a distinct focus on generalisation and abstraction to secure hard objective knowledge. Traditionalists criticise qualitative research methods as an assault on positivist research methods referring to them as 'soft science' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 2). Whilst such a paradigm has its place in scientific research it arguably fails to address influences that require 'fuzziness' (Bassey, 2001). Its insistence on methodological absoluteness to explicate every credible social occurrence is its Achilles heel. Scientific methods cannot be applied to every researchable or social situation. In fact, social scientists would argue a limitation of the positivist approach is its insistence upon perfect experimentation conditions for the accuracy of hypotheses and predictions (Dowding, 2012). Therefore, a criticism of positivism becomes the lack of consideration towards the influence of personality and abstract outcomes that cannot be measured. The initial anecdotally obtained evidence has not been rigorously researched and is subject to bias. In research, there could be an incorrect depiction created because of observer influence on human/pupil social action thereby constructing an artificial reality. This may support a status quo rather than challenge it (Bourdeau, 2009). Previous experience suggests the use of the three methods held success in reducing low-level disruption yet absolute replicable data may not be available for others to collect. This is because classrooms and pupils/adult personalities vary. The key intention is to understand if one or more factors are required to reduce low-level disruption. Through the passing of time research factors cannot guarantee replication; the best to be achieved would be similarity because full reproduction is clearly impossible (Rist, 1977). Objectivity is not fully present due to the production of an artificial situation such as observing behaviour in the classroom, whilst the results relate to human life, it is easy to affect or lead pupils to a determined outcome. A key failing is to bring the essences of humanity into its social order such as the ability to interpret experiences. The three processes are consistent but there is no single guarantee the conditions could be replicated every time with similar data available for others to collect repeatedly. This study is based on working with a small number of

schools (four) and isn't seeking to achieve certainty but to provide insight into whether the processes outlined do appear to achieve some sort of reliability which others might consider. If one is to take the view of Kuhn (2012) whereby scientists move away from normal science to developmental discoveries, undertaking a positivist view would not support discovering how learning behaviour could be advanced. I am considering an alternative paradigm.

3.5 Constructivism

Constructivist theory is based on the view knowledge is constructed rather than received, therefore learning becomes process driven and prior knowledge impacts on future understanding. Knowledge is constructed through interaction with the phenomena. Fox (2001) defines constructivism as a metaphor for learning as knowledge is constructed or built up. Constructivist concepts have influenced a wide number of disciplines including psychology, sociology, education and the history of science (Yilmaz, 2008). There are two strands of constructivism, namely social constructivism and radical constructivism. Social constructivism focuses on the collective generation of meaning-making (Lee, 2012: 405). The term was defined by Piaget (1936) as the manner in which humans make meaning in relation to their interaction between their experiences and their ideas. Its roots can be traced back to Greek philosophers Heraclitus, Protagoras and Aristotle (2009). Constructivists are observers of reality that is formed in daily life or science with the understanding that learners engage in meaning-making with knowledge built up instead of being passively received (Ultanir, 2012: 195). A constructivist approach to education would argue pupils are not 'empty heads' that can be filled with knowledge dispensed by well-meaning teachers and carefully crafted curriculum packages (Marcum-Dietrich, 2007: 83). Constructivism seeks to explore the world independent of human minds, but the knowledge that is presented is always a human and social construction. As a result, there is no single methodology instead a variety of useful methods that may be applied to create a structure for researchable aims (Galbin, 2014). Constructivism is recognised as an epistemology of learning or meaning-making theory that explains the nature of knowledge. How human beings learn with understanding constructed from learners' previous experience and background knowledge. The benefits of operating a constructivist approach

are the multifarious understandings that can be achieved through this wide approach and the way researchers are able to construct understanding throughout the process; they are not passive.

There are factors to be considered that suggest constructivism would not be an appropriate approach for my research study. The approach focuses on building knowledge with pupils or students 'as we see them', and resultantly develops 'our' construction of the subject (Von Glaserfield, 2005: 6). This construction remains the basis of 'known' experience and as such will affect the 'goals and expectations' of developing the research knowledge. Therefore, it could be assumed learning relates to remembering and knowledge cannot be constructed. The self-production of learning and knowledge enables the researcher to connect personally with the problem/research creating a new way of looking at it (von Glaserfeld, 2005; Ultanir, 2012). The philosopher Vico made the point 'the only way of knowing a thing is to have made it' (ibid). Where a constructivist would explore people's realities developing a worldview supported by individual unique histories, it was felt that constructing a reality about learning behaviour of pupils to address low-level disruption would take on too many other variables – such as different points of view from adults and pupils, and their own knowledge and experiences. A consideration of the study may be that if we say something exists how do we explain we come to know it (Schutz, 1967). One could assume low-level disruption is evident but how do we know that it actually exists and isn't our own interpretation of behaviour? The intention is to explore power relationships within the social world of the classroom. I am not just interested in constructing reality as viewed by those being researched but more concerned with bringing about potential transformation of practice. Additionally, I knew too much already as my bias existed therefore could not construct my understanding. For those reasons it was felt that it was not the appropriate paradigm to use for this study and that is why I am considering an alternative paradigm.

3.6 Criticalism

The final paradigm considered was criticalism. Critical theory is accepted as an influential paradigm within social philosophy and was born out of a need to

critique the dominant nature of quantitative social science research (Miles & Huberman, 1984). A key component is its development of 'discourse ethics' (Varga, 2010). Critical theory attempts to gain knowledge from social sciences and humanity to explore and critique society and culture. Habermas describes three universal properties exist within a social system. The first is the seizure of statements that exist outside of and within the research to develop a discourse of truth that can be tested and validated. The second creates a rational and reconstructable pattern to support the research process. Finally, changes in the standards of social systems are a result of the chaos of the pressures that are made and of the amount of structured self-independence. Through this process the social order that is being researched begin to change its values. The researched begin to form an inner environment that is opposite from the initial starting point. The learning gain made by this society creates discourse decided by the processes and differentiated questions that take place to support its creation. In this manner Habermas argues the process of social research can begin (Habermas, 1976: 8; Ball, 1990).

Transformations in the standards of social systems are a result of the chaos of the pressures that are deliberately created by the amount of structured self-independence whereby the social orders being researched undergo developmental changes to their values. Power relations are addressed, developing emancipatory aspects to support social science research to question who we are now through the concepts of discourse, power and the subject (Foucault, 1971). The theory supports the nature of enlightenment for critical theorists to create a new and radical understanding by looking at the same matter through a different lens (Fay, 1993: 34). Discourse is created as a result of the supported and decided processes and differentiated questions and Habermas argued that through this process social research begins (Habermas, 1976). This creates a rational and reconstructable pattern to support the research process. Critical theorists exemplify the world subjectively through subjective reasoning which is a significant feature because 'what is, what may be'…become 'what could be' (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2000: 3; Schofield, 1993: 209). Horkheimer (1972) was one of the founders and the theory originated from the Frankfurt School in 1923, emerging as liberation for humans from circumstances that enslaved them (Shwandt, 2007). The second generation of critical theorists who

emerged included Habermas, who was perhaps the most widely known. The paradigm is currently in its third genesis with Honneth acknowledged as the main successor to Habermas at Frankfurt University (Anderson, 2011; Corrodent, 2018).

The advantages of employing critical theory to this particular research topic can be illustrated through its need to empower and improve the knowledge system; Marx stated, 'philosophers have only interpreted the world…the point is to change it' (1976). Horkheimer (1982: 244) describes a critical theory as a process that liberates human beings from the circumstances that 'enslave them'. Foucault (2002) demonstrates power can liberate human beings from enslavement through discourse and the production of new knowledge. The key aim of critical theory is to establish a concrete interconnection between critical understanding and transformative action, in order that theory and practice can be interconnected (Corradatti, 2018). In other words, critical theory has the ability to empower research respondents to understand the world around them by viewing the familiar through an entirely different lens, aspect or position. Foucault argues power is reflexive, impersonal and autonomous; power should not be read as one's domination over another or others (2000). In respect of behaviour management this could be conceived as the manner in which schools use power as a controlling force to govern pupils' behaviour.

Through the methodology the critical theory will be applied to promote change in pupil behaviour to support the creation of learning behaviour discourse. It is hoped that the study will enable pupils to modify their behaviour through teachers' application of the three processes to develop cognitive insight into their behaviour. Recognition of their behaviour and internalising accordingly becomes a 'basis for action' supporting them to become autonomous rational subjects and addressing the dichotomy presented by Friendlieb that there should be a theory of formed moral autonomy to 'bridge the gap' between the 'normative and factual' (2000: 85-86). A connection is formed whereby moral autonomy is not a self-directed process because pupils learn to regulate their behaviour through repetition to produce knowledge and creating learning behaviour discourse. A key research aim was supporting teachers to recognise that there may be a different social

reality whereby they can address low-level disruption and how pupils could be instrumental in self-regulating their own behaviour. Enlightenment could be perceived to occur from pupil ignorance of pre-existing power dynamics from teachers and the employment of behaviour management. Therefore, the theory begins the process to liberate human beings from the circumstances that 'enslave them' through employing behaviour modification techniques (Horkheimer, 1982: 244). Pupils create self-discourse analysis about behaviour that creates the emancipatory characteristic and notion of changing the world (Jupp & Norris 1993:39). I would argue that pupils and teachers are complicit in the creation of their historical behaviour knowledge and therefore their own discourse.

Adopting a critical theory approach supports researchers to identify research aims by describing, collecting knowledge and adopting social constructions in order discourse creates a new view on learning behaviour to support self-regulation because 'real subjection is born mechanically from a fictitious relation' without the need to exert control over them (Foucault, 1977; 202). As the social order of behaviour changes contextually pupils create discourse learning behaviour and new knowledge (Foucault, 1971, 1977; Habermas, 1973). Understanding current power relations between pupils and teachers acknowledges the power relationships that exist in the classroom and the need to critique leads to an interwoven view above and below; critical theory recognises this. For this study, it was imperative an interwoven view was created with a vertical relationship between the researcher and the researched where the 'the view from above' aligned with 'the view from below' to create positive conditions to observe and discuss LLD behaviour (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 69). Therefore, the success of outcomes is not determined wholly by what is seen. Creating a vertical relationship between the researcher and the researched where the top down relationship is replaced by 'the view from below' supports a move away from a top down approach and hierarchical structures that exist *a priori (*Pidgeon & Henwood 2004). Instead of being reliant on *a priori* theory that directs data collection, analysis and interpretation processes it was felt there needed to be a shift from data to theory. Critical researchers should consider social constitution within the context of their work acknowledging issues surrounding social inequality and problems of race and oppression do not begin to adversely impact or disadvantage groups or individuals who are undertaking the research

process (Outhwaite et al., 2007: 54). For future consideration it was anticipated teachers would not require behaviour management techniques to maintain order within classrooms. An area of research interest relate to the belief that a power imbalance could exist between adults and. As a result, the nature of researching LLD behaviour in the classroom will be to understand classification through agreed processes ensuring the link between knowledge and power is central to the ethnographical relationships between researcher and the researched (Fay, 1993). The research approach will be discussed next.

3.7 Research approach

The research revolves around four schools, one of which the researcher was based in and where the three processes had been implemented and consistently used over a period of eight years. It is my belief that anecdotal evidence strongly indicates that the school, through the use of the processes, had reduced LLD. This resulted in producing self-regulative practices in the pupils. The reason a case study approach was adopted was due to the anecdotal evidence creating an interpretation requiring validation. It was important that other views of the research intention were gathered to understand if they aligned with my belief. The eight years of embedding the process had yielded anecdotal evidence that was only concrete in my understanding (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 238). Case studies can be defined as a detailed examination of a single example of a class of phenomena that is useful in preliminary stages of study to provide a hypothesis that may be tested (Abercombie et al., 1984: 34; Flyvbjerg, 2006: 220; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). This approach was suitable because it allowed me to test the principles that would form the study, transferring my belief from bias to evidence from other professionals. Additionally, I believed it was important to test the processes in other schools rather than one I was known extremely well in as I wanted to ensure the reliability of the data. As such, it was important to ascertain a base position to negotiate changes to support the other schools in exploring whether implementing the three processes could assist in the reduction of LLD. It has been argued that a case study approach addresses the negativity associated with the scientific quantitative approach of research as they provide a deeper understanding of real contexts to support researchable aims (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2012 :5). This view aligns with my understanding of the three processes holding success and will enable me to ascertain if my interpretation

could be validated as opposed to creating researcher subjectivity and a biased outcome. Indeed, one of the challenges that was faced when considering this approach would be being mindful of the requirement to listen to the research participants for their voice and supports the idea of new knowledge creation (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2012: 79). My belief that this study could be successful in reducing LLD behaviour should be set aside as I gather the views of others and it is important to elicit if they could support my assertion of success in this manner creating the three individual processes as an 'object' that can be reproduced with a boundary and working parts (Yazan, 2015 :139). However, full consideration has been given that there are many that believe a case study approach lacks scientific rigour and is essentially time consuming due to the fact that there is often too much data to be considered (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001 :8). To address the concerns the intention is to undertake the interviews with the headteachers and teachers using a consistent format. Interviews will employ open ended questions to support a deeper understanding of the practice of the participants as they engage in the three processes to understand what occurs as they become embedded (Burns et al., 2012).

In schools 2, 3 and 4 the intention was to use an action research approach to better understand if working with the teachers could improve behaviour outcomes; in this way the teachers would become researchers working on their own practice creating evidence to 'constitute a tradition of understanding about how to effect educational change' (Elliot, 2009: 28). Action research can be defined as a methodical approach to investigation to find explanations 'in everyday lives through using a continuing cycle of investigation to reveal effective solutions to issues and problems that are experienced in specific situations' (Stringer, 2013: 1). Too often research can become 'a description rather than an insight into something' and for this study it is important that the distinction is made between observed classroom behaviour and the reduction of low-level disruptive behaviour through deploying three specific processes (Newby, 2014: 96). The cycles of research will be enacted to promote improvements in observed classroom behaviour through the process of observation and interview drawing on concrete situations to support teachers to resolve the issues presented and reflect on the next steps. In this manner, the teacher and the researcher relationships intertwine with the subject of research and staff development

becoming a ‘partnership model’ (Baskerville & Wood-Harper, 1996: 100). Supporting the class teachers to develop their own practice and implement change is a significant outcome that could be achieved from this study. Additionally, Newby argues action research does not generate knowledge for its own sake, therefore it is closer to a case study approach (2014: 96). The anecdotal evidence suggests the study could hold merit for new learning and a key aspect to research will be to prove the three processes could be replicated over a shorter period of time, instead of eight years. It is hoped using the three methods, as repetitive actions, will develop self-regulatory practices within pupils.

The nature of a qualitative approach is born out of the prerequisite to promote human understanding and can be traced back to Wilhelm Dilthey (1977) and the established arguments between the disciplines of natural sciences and human sciences. It was felt the humanistic nature of the research topic meant understanding the unpredictable nature of both pupils and teachers had to be taken into context. Acknowledging the benefits of utilising qualitative methods to participate in social justice-based research has long been stated (Torrance, 2008; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, 2008). Researchable aims will involve observing evident learning behaviour of pupils in the classroom and how they could self-regulate to promote liberation from classroom management techniques. The study of pupils’ classroom behaviour supported the search for understanding and meaning defined by utilising qualitative research methods. Indeed, qualitative methodologies are born out of the social science view of understanding how research participants perceive their world and the way researchers draw conclusions from the research observed. This suggests the holistic analysis of data sits in complete contrast to the methodologies of quantitative research as there is not one single definable approach. Instead multiple views of the world are produced with interpretative knowledge to be negotiated. It was felt the use of a qualitative approach necessitated research questions requiring investigation into pupils’ classroom behaviour. It is imperative questions are constructed to ensure ‘shape and direction’ of the selected topic (Agee, 2009: 431). Developing a ‘worldview’ means understanding more succinctly the factors driving pupils to exhibit LLD behaviours, or, supporting teachers in reducing its existence in order that the research questions reflect the ‘unfolding lives and perspectives of others’ (Guba, 1990: 18). A background theory that will be considered is whether

Foucault's theory of disciplinary power can be applied to support the reduction of low-level disruptive behaviour in the primary classroom.

Action research supports utilising interviews and observations in the classroom and the research will be viewed as evolutional and developmental. Employing qualitative methodology recognised the subjective experiential 'lifeworld' of human beings. Instead of a single understanding there are multiple understandings or beliefs inherent and applied (Burns, 2000: 11). The setting of the study is the classroom where pupils are considered as individuals with freewill and wholly independent; their learning behaviour therefore perceived as an uncontrollable factor. Consequently, each learning activity could produce a different outcome, particularly as the differing contextual natures of schools varied. Overall qualitative research is not a panacea, but this methodological approach is more meaningful for naturalistic enquiry with multiple views of the world produced with interpretative knowledge to be negotiated (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972).

An important consideration for this study is the credibility and legacy. Will the outcomes support developing the processes on a larger scale in other settings? This suggests the holistic analysis of data sits in complete contrast to the methodologies of quantitative research, as there is not one single definable approach. In this manner the validity of reliable outcomes becomes an issue. If a quantitative approach had been adopted it would have been difficult to recreate a test environment and alter one or more determinable factors due to the passing of time impacting on research factors because there is no single guarantee of replication (Rist, 1977). The best that could be achieved is similarity or a general understanding because full reproduction is clearly impossible. Securing credibility and transference become important factors to consider when utilising a qualitative approach because the positivist ideology is supportive of reliability, time/information overload, generalisation, subjective bias, validity (Burns, 2000). Indeed 'external validity' occurs as a result of the replicable processes (Schofield, 1993: 201). Using the quantitative approach would focus on developing numerous descriptive and conceptual components involved to create a replicative process (Schofield, 1993). A key intention is that using a set of processes

collectively and consistently will support a reduction in LLD. Adopting a scientific approach would produce reliable outcomes. However, the fact remains in each setting there will be different pupils, teachers and contexts, therefore scientific re-production becomes impossible (Gerston et al. 2005: 36). Implementing replicative investigation processes could secure similar findings and conclusions but the positivist would be required to develop the researchable aims in the same manner every time – this is not possible in the context of pupils (Yin, 2009: 45). Typical data collection processes will involve observations in the classroom to review the impact teaching and learning has on low-level disruption in four very different mainstream contexts, observing pupils (aged between 5 to 11 years old) and adults interacting in the classroom with interviews with teachers.

The use of action research as an approach is not without its critics; a key concern is the fact results can often be laden with subjectivity as the theoretical model emerges from the research data instead of being 'defined in the positivist research tradition' (Kock et al. 2004: 268; Koch et al. 2005). In this study the evidence gathered from the observations will support what is discussed with the research participants. The definition of LLD behaviour will be fixed and discussed with the participants prior to research being undertaken. The evidence gathered will be 'triangulated' from the observation and discussed in the interview (Aspland et al., 1996: 99). A secondary criticism of action research is that researchers often lack control of the environment they conduct research in, being required to adapt their research methods as a result; described as the challenge of balancing the research goals with problem-solving goals (Kock et al., 2004: 268). This area has been given great consideration from the outset of the study; mainly due to the fact that the classrooms will be different, the teachers and the pupils will be individuals who bring their own experiences to the research arena. However, the three processes are defined with the teachers aware of what is being observed and recorded against. Continuously reference will be made to the manner in which teachers apply traffic lights to support pupils to remaining in green, supported through scripted behaviour language and token economy. The third area of criticism that has been considered with regard to action research limitations is that there may be too much evidence gathered that is 'broad and shallow rather than narrow and deep' leading to the research variables becoming difficult to manage (Kock et al., 2004: 268). Gathering the correct data will be

imperative to understand whether LLD behaviour exists and the manner in which teachers address this. In the classroom environment there will be many different types of behaviour evident such as pupils: on task working, speaking to the teacher, speaking to their peers and perhaps exhibiting LLD behaviour. It is this area that requires the skill of the researcher to filter out what is observed and heard to record for discussion in the interview. Recording the lesson with a video camera may ensure data is not missed or lost but there are so many ethical considerations that would be required prior to undertaking data collection and the time limits will prevent this.

For this study the approach will involve a staff meeting with all staff to present the three processes. The teachers will be provided with traffic lights and sheets containing the suggested scripted behaviour language. During the training the use of the traffic light system will be presented with an explanation of who and how pupil names are moved through the colours. Prior to the training each schools' behaviour policy will be read and shared again with the staff to establish the token economy as they vary from school to school. Staff concerns and questions will be addressed with a discussion on the constitution of amber and red behaviour and resulting consequences. Once the classes have been selected, letters will be sent out in each school to all pupils to inform them of the study and a predetermined date will be set for the initial observation and interview. Depending on what results from these will determine when the next observation and interview will take place. Any LLD behaviour will be identified with ideas and suggestions to practice for the next observation. All teachers involved with the study will be given support on how to link the scripted behaviour language with the traffic lights. The cycle will involve understanding if LLD behaviour is a problem in the classrooms and through the interviews understand if the processes actually address a reduction in LLD behaviour. At the start of the study, the processes will be introduced in a staff meeting with follow-up observations to measure the effect of implanting the processes. Finally, the three processes will be evaluated with an interview.

3.8 Research hypothesis/questions

Anecdotal evidence gained by the researcher shows an observed reduction in the amount of low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom because of the methods discussed being employed. It was noted pupils became more resilient in their work and appeared to cope more effectively with their behaviour. They were able to self-regulate when faced with harder work and others who displayed LLD. It therefore appeared pupils, working within the three methods, were able to self-regulate their own learning behaviour. At first, it seemed that the act of repetitively performing the three processes developed positive learning behaviour and reduced LLD behaviour. Through reading the literature and thinking about issues surrounding power the notion of the Panoptican approach was considered. In particular if Foucault's disciplinary power theory could support a reduction of LLD in mainstream classrooms; this could be the development of disciplinary power as a process created through the regularity of the methods. The rationale for developing a hypothesis centred on how these processes might reduce low-level disruption behaviour in primary schools for mainstream pupils.

Main Research Question

Can employing the three processes of traffic lights, a token economy and scripted behaviour reduce low-level disruption in the classroom?

Sub Research Questions

a) Are there any specific classroom implementations necessary when applying the three processes for them to be successful in reducing LLD?
b) Is there any evidence that pupils' self-regulatory powers improve using the processes?

3.9 Schools included for research

Having considered the research hypothesis and defined questions, it is now necessary to provide information relating to the schools that will be included in the study. The four schools selected to conduct the research study are based in

both Hull and the East Riding with differing experiences of employing the methods from having them fully embedded (the researcher's school) to having no experience of using them. Each school was selected for different reasons. School 1 was selected as this was the school that had anecdotal evidence which required documenting. School 2 approached me to undertake behaviour work and I asked if they would be interested in being part of the study. School 3 was known to me and the processes had recently been implemented; it was felt that this would be a good opportunity to work with the staff and pupils as their knowledge and experience was emerging. School 4 was selected because they had employed a significant number of newly qualified teachers and I approached the headteacher to ask if it would be reasonable to review LLD behaviour in their school.

The staff selection approach varied in the four schools for different reasons. In school 1 the headteacher was selected as they had worked with me previously to embed the three processes and I wanted to obtain their views. The other teachers were selected by placing a notice in the staff room and asking for volunteers. In school 2 the headteacher was approached because they had asked for support to address LLD behaviour in the school. The headteacher spoke to the staff and asked for volunteers and the two experienced teachers from the same year group offered to be part of the study. In school 3 I was now working as an executive leader and had knowledge of the classes and teachers. Two teachers who were receiving behaviour support were asked if they would be part of the study and they accepted as they felt the support could improve their classroom behaviour management. At this point an external observer was approached to become a research assistant undertaking the action research cycle of research with a follow up interview from me. The reason for this was so that I could validate the views of the external observer and speak with the participants to understand their views on the research study. In school 4 the teachers were asked to volunteer and two approached me to be involved. The participants involved in the research will be coded in the following manner (Appendix 6):

- School 1, headteacher 1 (HT1), experienced teacher (ET1), newly qualified teacher (NQT1);

- School 2, headteacher 2 (HT2), experienced teacher (ET 2, 3);
- School 3, experienced teacher 4 (ET4), newly qualified teacher 2 (NQT2);
- School 4, newly qualified teacher 3 (NQT3), newly qualified teacher 4 (NQT4).

In school 3 and 4 the headteachers were not involved because the researcher was working there as an executive headteacher.

The contextual nature of the schools is as follows:

School 1 has fully embedded the systems the research study is based on. It is a primary academy with 542 pupils on roll, considerably higher than the England average. 96.7% of households are categorised within 10% of the most deprived households nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is 58.5%, which is well-above the England average.

School 2 employs a traffic light system and the headteacher has expressed the view behaviour is an issue. 37.3% of households are categorised within 10% of the most deprived households nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school is 7.7%, which is well-below the England average.

School 3 has recently put in place the systems described for this research but they are not fully embedded. It is a primary academy with 466 pupils on roll, considerably higher than the England average. 93.8% of households are categorised within 10% of the most deprived households nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is 45.2%, well-above the England average.

School 4 has developed some of the methods but they are not fully embedded. It is a primary academy with 311 pupils on roll, considerably higher than the England average. 98.4% of households are categorised within 10% of the most deprived households nationally. The percentage

of pupils eligible for a free school meal is 52.9%, well-above the England average. The next section will explain the nature of researcher positionality to support the research methods.

(Ashbridge, 2018)

3.10 Researcher positionality

As a serving headteacher I have had to acknowledge observing both pupils and teachers in the classroom may cause tensions as my position carries status and all the participants are known to me though my daily role (Daley, 2001). My understanding of positionality is that there is 'contextual subjectivity based on social dimensions such as race, class, gender, status' (Knight. 2011: 49). A dilemma is presented to the neutral interviewer with school leadership experience because remaining impartial when one observes negative behaviour will be particularly crucial in order that I do not influence data outcomes. This means ensuring during the observation my reaction to LLD behaviour is as neutral as possible. Thus, my focus in observations will be to sit out of the eyeline of teachers towards the rear of the classroom in a corner; consciously ensuring there is no coaching or mentoring of participants thereby influencing data outcomes (Outhwaite et al., 2007). Considering staff perceptions of my role as a researcher will require me to inform them that other issues surrounding criticality of practice will be ignored as the role of the researcher is different to observing the appraisal or school improvement process. Issues that arise will be accepted as a fundamental irony to researching human life as I intend to adopt the role of a professional stranger (Daley, 2001; Iphoren, 2009: 184). Removing the accoutrements that the status my role contains is not without complexity. The notion of becoming a neutral observer means contemplating how one records during the observations. One may decide to work in a surveillance manner outside of the classroom, or through developed reciprocal relationships when participants are active and involved in the process (Mortari, 2012). It will be crucial to adopt a 'disinterested' standpoint to interpret and analyse data to promote a culture whereby power relationships are allowed to be unpredictable and multidirectional in the hope that they produce higher quality data for analysis (Mellor et al., 2013; Brooks et al., 2014; BERA, 2018: 9). Previous studies have considered similar issues (Campbell, 2007). One such study carried out on

teachers' professional ethics in the 1990s presented teachers as moral agents noting 'any action a teacher undertakes in the classroom is capable of expressing moral meaning that, in turn can influence students' (Hansen, 2001: 286). Campbell argued teachers too often are unable to acknowledge how their ethical values could transfer into their professional practice (2007). Hansen contends teachers hold an essential moral duty to shape the classroom environment for their pupils (2001). In another study subjectivity was required by the researcher due to difficulties faced in a secondary school (Smith, 2007). This is because the researcher was a headteacher and they had created a natural tension due to their position; they had to go to great lengths to remain neutral to both adults and pupils. Smith stated that during the research process there was a manipulative element whereby his view of the researcher and researched created a 'two-way street of mutual deceit'. The researcher was required to gain the trust of the research participants and manage the relationships to ensure success was achieved. Smith felt the process of 'being here provided a far more intuitive picture' to develop a fuller interpretation of 'being there' (Smith, 2007: 172). In this manner, tension may come to exist between the researcher and those being researched, particularly if there is the feeling the researcher is passing information back to the headteacher. Similarly, teaching staff could perceive the researcher is observing teaching performance. Consequently, Smith established that he could never be fully impartial to the research process as his positionality and lived experience would always be an aspect of the research process; in this way neutrality cannot never be fully removed from the process.

There are aspects of my being that will remain constant. I am a white middle-aged man and pupils will view me as such. In addition, the teachers that I will be working with know of my role as a leader and know me as an early researcher. Therefore, as a teacher/headteacher/trust leader once I enter the room my position and hierarchy enter with me and it is important to consider how to negotiate the dynamic presented (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998; Brooks et al., 2014). This means that I will not wear a suit, instead dressing in a shirt and chinos. In as much as is possible I will endeavour to act as neutrally as possible by looking away from pupils and refusing to make eye contact during the observations. In addition, I will be sitting in the classroom prior to the start of the lesson to ensure I am not observed walking in or out. I acknowledge it will be

problematic to obscure my professional identity in the micro community. However, considering my positionality will ensure minimal disruption to pupils and teachers. The adults that I work with will be aware of my roles possibly acting out subconsciously which could influence the teaching and learning process. Nevertheless aiming for a neutral presence ought to support that characteristic (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998: 207). In the interviews with the teachers after each observation I will contemplate my positionality.

Throughout the interview process I will endeavour to maintain a 'disinterested' standpoint to the interpretation of analysis and data (BERA, 2018: 9). As an insider to three of the schools and an outsider to one of the schools my positionality through my role establishes me as an insider and this does not necessarily mean that I will produce 'better knowledge' (Herod, 1999: 313). In fact, one of the key reasons for choosing action research is to identify LLD behaviour in the classroom and use the interview as an opportunity to discuss positively what is observed. Whilst my positionality as an 'insider' could produce both a 'truer and more accurate' evidence base there is the potential for subjective bias that could influence the interviews whereby I obtain evidence to support my hypothesis (Herod, 1999: 314). However, the reflection and consideration prior to undertaking this study will mean that whilst one may never truly devoid oneself of personal or professional values I will always be aware of them. The belief from the anecdotal research is there is merit in researching further and during both observations and interviews focus will be placed on what is seen and heard to establish questions to support gathering further evidence from the interviews. Indeed, the outcomes of the study may hold benefits to practice supporting teachers and pupils in primary education to benefit in reducing LLD behaviour. Maintaining integrity is an important aspect of consideration to this research study and whilst I acknowledge there is value in achieving success my expectations will be based on validating views from others (Kirk & MacDonald, 2001). Moreover, the approaches that have been selected should support the study to ensure factors have been considered and researched appropriately in order that consideration is given to that which is seen and heard. In addition, considering positionality has meant reflecting about prospective interviewees nervousness to speak with me about what was observed in their classroom or their feelings or if they are 'threatened' about having to respond to

questions about their practice (Sands et al., 2007: 353). Consequently, every opportunity will be given to establish a supportive environment to reiterate my role as a researcher to avoid top-down control when seeking answers from interviewees. Moreover, contemplating 'teachers' positioning' acknowledging their potential concerns or worries should support them to be more open and factual about what has emerged in their classrooms (Kirk & MacDonald, 2001: 566).

3.11 Observations

During the design of this study consideration was given to the different methods data collection data there are five suggested: interviews; questionnaires; document analysis; direct observations; own experience (Martin et al., 2000). The next section will discuss the use of observations and semi-structured interviews and the positionality consideration for observations.

It has long been acknowledged observations are a fundamental characteristic when working psychotherapeutically with pupils (Rustin, 1989; Reid 2013; Paiva, 2014). Similarly, when undertaking research in schools where pupils are one of the main components of researchable outcomes it makes sense to observe both pupils and adults in the classroom. In fact, undertaking observations with pupils in the learning environment supports the collection of data as it could provide effective developmental staff training to support the schools to improve their behaviour management strategies (Paiva, 2014). Employing observation as a research method supports viewing the familiar through a different lens. Instead of focusing on how participants are taught the observer can focus on why they are taught in a particular manner (Hollenbeck, 2015). A key outcome will centre on observing learning behaviour both adults and pupils functioning together to obtain an appreciation why the perceived behaviour took place in the hope of creating a balanced view of the research (Dalli & One, 2012). In the interview, any observed LLD behaviour will be discussed with subsequent actions to address in the next observation. I will watch adult interaction with pupils, looking for LLD behaviour to begin to review to support the teacher to establish the next steps (Gunter, 2001, 2003).

Adopting observations as a research method will present issues to be considered during the research period; the main reason other than data collection should be to support professional development to progress teaching development and improve the level of future delivery (Dodiya, 2014). Improving the behaviour of pupils through the actions of the teacher will be a key aim; central will be ensuring researcher objectivity about what is seen and recorded is not hindered via researcher bias. To mitigate this concern LLD behaviour will be logged as the 'observation measure' with teachers clear about what will be documented during the lesson (Aguiar & Aguiar, 2020: 4). In the interview the participants will be asked about evident LLD behaviour observed during the lesson. Once the interviews have been transcribed themes will be coded that support evident LLD behaviour. Issues surrounding recall will be addressed as soon as is reasonably possible after the observation. Teachers will be invited to meet with the researcher once the observation has been concluded at a mutually beneficial time (Dodiya, 2014: 396). Triangulating the data collected in the lesson should remove any bias from the researcher by way of allowing the participant to reflect on the LLD behaviour that occurred. During the interview/observation process consideration will be given to whether the participants present themselves more favourably thereby distorting the data collected (Dodiya, 2014). The use of classroom observations presents a problem for research validity due to the subjective nature of both the researcher and the participant, with some arguing classroom observations become unreliable as a method of data collection (Ho & Kane, 2013; Hora, 2013). Observation protocols are designed to measure the quality of teaching with a range of different scales accepted; an example would be the Ofsted framework for inspection. The nature of this study differs from the framework in that it is researching the impact of the three processes to specifically reduce LLD behaviour; there will be no judgment of the quality of teaching or the quality of learning. Hora states that the dilemma often presented is who the observation will focus on, the behaviours of the teachers, pupils or both, as a focus on one party can essentially preclude the other (2013: 3). However, the nature of this study will focus on observing both pupils and teachers.

For the purpose of data collection, the observations will involve sitting at the rear

of classroom taking notes about what is seen during planned lessons. The teachers will be aware of my presence. In addition, due to the fact that I have been supporting one of the schools (School 3) as an executive leader I decided to draft an external observer to work with one of the experienced teachers (ET4) and one of the newly qualified teachers (NQT2). Their observations and feedback will be included as notes and analysed in the same way as the interview transcriptions. It is anticipated observations will allow invisible data to become visible (Farber, 2006: 371). During the method I will ensure that I am present prior to the lesson beginning and will spend the first five minutes sitting looking at either the wall or notes in my notebook. This technique has been deployed before and developed in my role as a National Leader of Education when I am asked to observe teaching and learning. Throughout the time I am in class I will explicitly refuse to acknowledge or make eye contact with any of the pupils when they look at me or smile to obtain a reaction. Instead I will look away or down. After a time, the pupils began to ignore my presence, enabling me to observe without interfering with their behaviour. In fact, they soon began to forget that I am in the room. In the schools that I am known this method will be of importance as often pupils about to exhibit negative behaviours will generally look in my direction. Data collection will involve noting and recording how the teacher speaks with pupils and interactions that relate to behaviour (Graue & Walsh, 1998: 129). Similarly, focus will be placed on how pupils interact with each other and the teacher. Research evidence will consider how teachers deploy traffic lights, scripted behaviour language and token economy and pupils' responses looking for the 'aha moments of noticing' (Farber, 2006: 370). My notes will be kept in a notebook that I will refer to during the interviews.

3.12 The interview process

There are three types of interviews: unstructured, semi-structured and structured, available to use as a research tool. Each will be considered before the rationale given for selecting the desired approach for the research study. The role of the unstructured interview is to support asking open-ended questions of the research participants on the chosen subject matter. They are intended to develop constructed meaning from the interviewee to understand entrenched ideas and the basis for their decisions. This method could be deployed as a research tool

for studying new domains when pre-established questions may not be utilised. Researchers develop research waves using unstructured interviews as a starting point before moving to a structured process later. This method supports understanding in greater detail related phenomenon when time is a limitation, or for ethnographic research purposes, supporting researchers living with a group of participants. This process supports researchers to gain a deeper insight to participants when the study is constructing meaning (Given, 2008). A structured interview (often referred to as a standardised interview, researcher administered survey) is a qualitative method holding its roots in surveys where the benefit of each interview provides the format of the same questions. In education parlay this would refer to a closed questionnaire that could be sent to parents, teacher or pupils by Her Majesties Inspectors during an inspection (Ofsted, 2017).

Primarily, whilst using the same questions in survey form would be an advantage it left no scope for further discussion. This would have meant that greater time would have been required planning the questions which could have become over onerous. Perhaps for future studies this may be an advantage, but a degree of flexibility was required due to the researcher not being able to predict what would be seen during the observations. There could be occasions where further clarification could be required (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008: 24). Therefore, this method was not considered as a research tool in case the questions limited the data that could collected during the interviews. In addition, the process is generally weighted towards fixed questioning which would not support developing a conversation about behaviour (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001; Given, 2008). Resultantly, a semi-structured approach appeared to support this research study. One of the key benefits is that they achieve a commonality of questioning leading to some resonance of consistency; providing the interviewee with the opportunity to expand and develop other ideas. Researching the behaviour of pupils and adults' responses requires semi-structured questioning to ascertain support for the views of the teacher. Semi-structured interviews will allow participants to reflect on their teaching to focus on evident LLD behaviour thereby developing a 'conversation with a purpose' (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001: 2). Interviews will support the researcher to discuss observed behaviour and promote a degree of flexibility to gather additional evidence (Martin et al., 2000; Camparo & Saywitz, 2014: 373). This will hopefully lead to an understanding to acknowledge issues

inherent during the study. The key in the interview will be for the researcher to ask questions to gain insights into the interviewee's key common thoughts, their values, their views and allow the researcher to explore what was evident in the observation. This method will provide a tool for data collection supporting observation analysis and a clear structure to promote effective data collection. As a result, timings and occurrences may be recorded to remind participants about significant events with the observation (Clifford, 1988: 50).

Throughout the interview process it will be necessary to support participants as they discuss their thoughts and feelings about behaviour. Whilst personal identities will be masked, all participants will have a 'voice' and their influence on the final outcomes will not be negated (Tangen, 2008). During the interview process it will be imperative to reduce any discomfort or stress to the interviewees. It will be important to remain neutral and impartial recording what is said by stating fact. The interviewee will wield power in relation to what is shared, discussed or responded to. The task of the researcher will be decoding all of the evidence counting as data to create themes that could be developed as data. Obviously, the main purpose will be interviewing participants about evident LLD behaviour but being aware of other themes will be equally important. As mentioned earlier, understanding if disciplinary power could be applied as a background theory will be considered (Foucault, 2012). During this study a letter will be given to the headteacher and chair of the governing body and the same sent out to parents and staff to ensure they were fully aware of the research study.

From the outset of this study, it was proposed to interview pupils but after consideration of comments from the ethics committee about the challenges of doing this and discussion with my tutor it was felt that given the observations and interviews with staff planned omitting this element would not be deleterious to my research and I therefore took the decision not to interview pupils. As a result of my considerations on pupil interviewing it was felt that an important characteristic was obtaining consent for each pupil in all the schools prior to undertaking the study, approximately 330 consent forms. This was problematic because of the perceived impact that the right to withdraw could have held on the observation process. I felt that some of the parents might believe their child or the entire class

had behavioural issues and subsequently withdraw them and the right to withdraw is a fundamental aspect of the ethical research process. Through discussion with my supervisor it was decided that removing the issue of interviewing of pupils would be in the best interests of them; on the other hand, it meant researching the way I addressed power dynamics would be affected. Once the decision was made, I decided to focus my research on observing in the classroom and interviewing the teachers. A letter was sent home to the pupils in the classes that I was intending to observe in explaining the nature of my study with the caveat that no single pupil or class was considered to have behavioural issues. Furthermore, there was focus on the deployment of the three processes.

3.13 Ethical considerations

The key consideration for developing ethical consideration is understanding that ethics relates to what is considered right and good (Mortari et al., 2012). Therefore, the question of ethics in this study is what is good and right to deliver a successful outcome for the research process. An avenue of consideration has involved thinking whether pupils understand the methods of recording, including how their data will be used for research purposes and the reasons why they are undertaking the study (Graue & Walsh, 1998). For these reasons it is anticipated consent will be obtained from parents, staff, including the chair of governors, and the headteacher, as mentioned in the previous section. Brindley & Bowker (2013) identify obtaining consent promotes ethical considerations as there could be issues surrounding the *in loco parentis* relationship of teachers' perceptions of their moral position deciding consent on behalf of students (Dunphy (2005). The agreement in principle of acting in this manner presents ethical consideration in particular the rights and agency of pupils participating in research (Freedman et al., 1993). With that in mind the ethical question relates to what level of risk will pupils be open to? During the design stage of this study interviewing pupils was considered to be an integral aspect of data collection. In fact, considering inherent power relations requires both pupils and teachers to be interviewed. Sadly this was not possible and, although a limitation to the prior aims of the study, my supervisor and I concluded that the pupils would be excluded from the interview process as discussed in the methodology chapter. Therefore, discussion took place with all of the schools to re-establish the research intention of the three

processes reducing LLD behaviour. It was agreed that pupils would be observed in the classroom without their views sought.

The promotion of objectivity becomes important particularly when working in one's own or known settings because ethical intentions should centre on reducing negative factors to colleagues. Participants will have rights to have their involvement documented and made public if they wish. Their rights extend to data protection meaning they have full access to the information provided and all participants have the right of disclosure. This may include contextualising an ethical framework to ensure pupils understand their ethical involvement, however the intention is not to interview them merely observe them in the classroom (Brindley & Bowker, 2013). If required in this study teachers and pupils will be able to withdraw at any point with complete anonymity. In the same way, the interview will be considered to promote a positive process with an explanation in order the teachers understand their views and what they have to say is valuable and important. Prior to the data collection process informed consent will be sought to promote the privacy of all participants and schools will numbered, teachers coded by experience and pupils assigned a letter that does not relate to their name in order participants may not distinguish themselves from the study (Bourke & Loveridge, 2014). BERA guidelines (2018) acknowledge participant's rights to privacy. Brooks et al., (2014) identify research participants' rights to withdraw without any harm or repercussions is a fundamental aspect of researchable aims. In addition, participants should be given full rights of confidentiality and the right to withdraw. Another issue for consideration when working with pupils is the ethical sensitive consideration due to their 'vulnerable status' and their positioning in society (Brooks et al., 2014). In terms of positionality, one will adopt multiple responsibilities and sensitivities to occupying the two roles of both leader and researcher; ensuring the role of researcher is dominant (Outhwaite et al., 2007). The issue is whether consent is required to observe them in class and draw conclusions of their behaviour as a result of what is seen. Ofsted inspectors do not seek ethical consent to observe pupils in schools during an inspection, instead a letter is written to parents to explain inspection intentions. For the purpose of the study a letter will be sent out to all pupils to take home explaining a researcher would be researching learning behaviour in the classroom. In fact, undertaking the observations will require

great thought to remove work-based status, as will interviewing adults from the classrooms. It will be a significant undertaking to become a neutral observer whilst collecting data within the classroom and during observations and the issue of ethics will be prevalent throughout the study.

Chapter 4 - Analysis of findings

This chapter will analyse the findings of the study by examining the data collected from the headteachers (HT1, 2), qualified teachers (NQT1, 2, 3, 4) and experienced teachers (ET1, 2, 3, 4). To support the research process, an external observer undertook the observations because the researcher was working there in a leadership capacity. The external observer (EA) and I had worked together in varying schools and contexts reviewing school behaviour policy and developing positive learning behaviour. The EA had worked in pupil referral units for over thirty years and had a wealth of experience of LLD behaviour. In school 3 we discussed the teachers who would be observed and how the action research cycle would take place. At the beginning of the study we discussed how the use of the traffic lights and scripted behaviour language could support positive learning behaviour when reinforced with token economy. At the start of the study I explained to the EA the research approach being undertaken to maximise consistency. The EA recorded the observations in the same manner as myself, noting LLD behaviour and the teachers and pupil responses. At the end of the observation they interviewed the teacher to discuss what had been observed highlighting LLD behaviour and providing next steps. After each observation and interview the EA and I would review the notes and next steps to ensure consistency of approach and at the end of the study I conducted a final observation interview with both teachers to validate the EA's view. My observation data was collected in a journal where I made notes about observed behaviour and teacher utterances. The notes formed the basis of exploration in the interviews which were transcribed. During each observation I would listen for the language used by the teacher and observe pupils' behaviour and recorded both in my notebook. These would be referred to during the interviews as concrete examples. Quotations from interview transcripts are included in what follows. In these quotations, spoken wording has been edited slightly to ensure clarity in the written versions of the statements.

4.1 Headteachers (HT)

HT1 (school 1) and HT2 (school 2) were interviewed in their respective schools through the case study approach. HT1 was familiar with the three processes having worked with the researcher to embed them for eight years; in a previous

setting HT2 had worked with the researcher embedding them too. HT1 explained their school was situated in an area of high deprivation with 97% of families categorised in the top 10% for poverty. Despite this the staff in the school:

> *'Hold high expectations for the pupils who enter very well below national expectations and leave at or above, which is considered to be an outstanding journey.'*

HT1 was asked to define LLD behaviour:

> *'It can be a child just not focussed, tapping the table anything which is low level that stops learning from happening. It could be something very slight if it's not addressed, it could actually escalate into high level behaviour.'*

The behaviour system was explained:

> *'We use traffic lights with scripted language and Thorptons so now the staff are more aware that if they see something which is very low level, they're quick to actually address in a kind of positive manner, because they'll tell the child what they need to do. So, if a child is tapping, they'll say, 'You need to put your pencil down.' So, they'll tell a child what they need to do, rather than saying, 'Stop tapping.' They'll address what they should be doing instead.'*

HT1 explained staff believed developing a consistent approach supported by continual training supported success in reducing low-level disruptive behaviour leading to pupils developing self-regulatory habits:

> *'We talk about everybody using the three systems. We talk about behaviour being everybody's responsibility, you know, if you see something that isn't right, you need to address it. So, if a child's running, you ask them to stop and go back. It's that consistent kind of approach. I think support staff understand as well that if they make a decision and they*

say something to the child about, 'This is going to happen,' it's about making sure it does happen.'

As a result, HT1 felt that the pupils understood the behaviour system well and evidence indicated that they were able to self-regulate:

'The children we've got now in Year 6 have had traffic lights from Year 1. They understand what green is and understand that if you go into amber, you've got the choice to self-regulate to get yourself back into green if you listen to advice.'

HT1 noted unaddressed LLD behaviour held potential for escalation into high-level behaviour that could require greater support but such escalation was increasingly rare as a result of embedding the three processes. They believed the emphasis on continual training allowed other staff to feel confident to use TL/SB/TE to create a culture and work ethic with pupils promoting a consistent approach. To support the team the school underwent a yearly behaviour policy audit, assessment and review to encourage staff ownership and subsequent confident deployment to pupils. Resultantly, the school felt parent engagement was high which promoted better relationships between home and school. The reason for this was staff were expected to communicate with parents about their child's behaviour. For example, when a member of staff used a script of, *'I will speak to your mum about what happened at play-time.'* pupils recognised that adults' expectations were always followed through. HT1 explained:

'We follow everything up. The parents and pupils know what is expected and what we will do when there is an issue. We have a culture of transparency and an open door to support and help our families.'

HT1 believed over time both pupils and staff understood why TL/SB/TE were used to support behaviour and everyone was comfortable with their use. Furthermore, the school reinforced TL/SB/TE with three simple rules: be in the right place at the right time, say the right thing in the right way and do the right thing in the right way. Previously, HT1 explained behaviour rules were referred to less frequently as pupils began to-self regulate their behaviour in line with the consistent approach from staff:

> *'Pupils know what the rules mean and how they relate to the traffic light system. We all use the system the same in the same way after a period of time the rules are less important and the language of green takes over.'*

In particular the rationale of green behaviour overtook the need for rules particularly with older pupils:

> *'The older pupils have this general understanding because we use language about being in green, and we tell the pupils what green is by the scripted language, like, 'You need to be in green. You need to be quiet. You need to sit still. You need to do your work.'*

Embedding scripted behaviour language supported rule reinforcement because using imperative phrases removed ambiguous language misunderstandings and emotion by the adult. Pupils who made inappropriate choices were given explicit instructions about the next step to make, thereby removing the focus on the negative behaviour. Instead of being reactive the adult becomes proactive. Consequently, the three processes create a culture of green learning behaviour as pupils understand if their name moves into amber or red they will be directed to and supported by staff about the exact choice required to move their behaviour back into green. HT1 held the belief the continued philosophy of pupils and staff working in this manner built a culture of high expectations with pupils understanding the expectations for appropriate behaviour. Resultantly, adults

created scripted behaviour language that explained how pupils could make the right choice leading to them to begin to self-regulate. HT1 claimed that now:

> *'The focus is on the need to do right, not what they're doing wrong. It's more about the philosophy now of green. The three rules, it's about the culture now of green. We've built a culture where we have high expectations.'*

Over a period of time HT1 believed a philosophy of green behaviour was created as pupils consistently understood they were being monitored (by staff) and regulated accordingly. HT1 carried out frequent traffic light audits to monitor the pupils' position on the traffic lights. The headteacher noted that it was very rare for the pupils to be in amber or red as green had become the social norm:

> *'Usually, when I go into the classrooms, every class, every child is in green because that is the norm. That's what we expect. I think the pupils know that if their name moves into amber or if it goes into red, they'll be told or they'll be directed or they'll be supported by the staff about what they need to do to get back in green.'*

HT1 felt pupils began to learn green was a minimum requirement and therefore a continuous expectation across the school; believing continual staff training supported high expectations of green behaviour and kept staff updated. HT1 explained recently they had undertaken training with support staff to revisit key behaviour strategies promoting a consistent approach; to reinforce corporate responsibility. To develop a positive culture continual reference was made to promoting green as perceived learning behaviour:

> *'We have the traffic lights in the classroom but they've (some staff) got to a point where sometimes they don't use them because they don't need to use them because there's no child out of green as such.'*

Through the consistent deployment of the three processes staff awareness and confidence grew with dealing with situations particularly their confidence in using scripted behaviour language as they were:

> *'More aware that if they see something which is very low level, they're quick to actually address in a kind of positive manner, because they'll tell the child what they need to do.'*

For example, directing pupils in the following way, ‘*'You need to put your pencil down*.’ instead of saying to a child, *'Stop tapping.'* HT1 explained for 95% of the pupils the traffic lights system isn't a consequence just a reminder and a signal explaining their behaviour is inappropriate. The consistent approach using scripted language removed focus on pupil wrongdoing (*Don't hit*) and instead being explicit and clear about the action the pupil needs to make it be in green, for example, expecting staff would say, *'You need to...*' As an example, HT1 explained how scripted behaviour language with the imperative script directed the expectation:

> ‘*Instead of saying, ‘Sit down!’ staff would say, 'You need to sit on your chair.' As this action occurs the adult thanks them. Teachers do not ask pupils if they could pick a pencil up, instead they will say, ‘you need to pick the pencil up’*

Moreover, pupils become positively acquainted with green learning behaviour through the continual repetition of scripted language leading to a positive culture resulting in pupils self-regulating their behaviour. HT1 believed self-regulation becomes a reinforced entity because staff support pupils to make a positive choice:

'So…after a while they know what will happen and learn to stay in green. They begin to self-regulate their behaviour because they know we will never give up.'

HT1 believed that the time spent working with pupils was integral to developing behaviour and an intrinsic aspect was the use of token economy:

'Thorptons is used consistently across the school as a reward, and we catch them doing something really good to improve behaviour. It is used right across the school giving a very clear indication, via the traffic lights, their behaviour's not right. You move them in amber. Then they'll correct the behaviour, so you move them in green, give them a token and we're very precise about what we need them to do. That makes a big improvement because it's about developing peer pressure.'

Furthermore, HT1 explained reinforcing pupils' behaviour meant reinforcing the home and school partnership. Parents were contacted for every incident to create a meaningful dialogue with positive steps forward. Token economy was used to support the home relationship. Pupils earned them for good attendance, wearing school uniform and for positive behaviour and remaining in green all day. In addition, the school promoted positive attitudes to work and achievement to build staff relationships with pupils. Parents were invited into 'good work' or 'celebration' assembly every two weeks. This led to pupils' voice growing as they expressed the view that they wanted to celebrate achievements more frequently:

'We've said to the pupils, it is really important that if they do something which is outstanding or a big achievement for themselves, that they can come and show myself or the deputy or one of the assistant heads.'

A token economy was implemented across the school to inspire pupils to work whereby they understood if they worked hard, they could earn rewards. It was reported that some pupils would save up to 1,000 or 2,000 credits to purchase larger items, often taking two years to save. The token system extended to lunchtimes in order staff could support pupils to play positively with friends as this could be a period of LLD behaviour and fighting. Yet, HT1 explained:

> *'I have seen the school make real progress over the eight years since we introduced the behaviour policy. Pupils challenge each other to exhibit positive behaviour across the school with peer pressure to behave. We know that pupils understand that all behaviour will be dealt with and they self-regulate to not get into trouble.'*

HT1 was asked if the pupils self-regulated their behaviour:

> *'I think the traffic lights and scripted language have helped and now it's very rare at the moment that children are not in green. When I go into the classrooms, every class, every child is in green because that is the norm. That's what we expect. I think the children know that if their name moves into amber or if it goes into red they'll be supported by the staff about what they need to do to get back in green. I think the children, over time, have understood that's just the expectation.*

HT1 expanded this point further:

> *'Some pupils with complex behaviour self-regulate, when there is an issue they don't stay in the classrooms anymore. They'll take themselves out. So, as soon as they go out, they'll go into red, so the other children see that they're in red, and then when they return, they go back into green. The rest of the children are generally in green all the time, and if they do move*

into amber, it's very quickly addressed by the staff, what they need to do to get back in green, and they usually do get back in green.'

The school had developed the three processes to the point that HT1 believed that for the majority of the pupils they were an accepted norm:

'For the 95% of the children, the traffic lights system isn't a consequence. It's just a reminder. It's just a signal, to say, 'At the moment, your behaviour is not what we expect to be appropriate.'

School 1 demonstrated that over a sustained period the three processes held success in supporting positive behaviour, with the headteacher holding the belief that consistency was key when reinforced with staff training. Acknowledgment was made to the fact that pupils began to self-regulate. In school 1 HT1 explained implementing a token-based system supported pupils to view the school in a positive light which led to pupils developing ownership and responsibility through roles that supported school leaders. This has led to the development of job roles with Head/ Deputy boys and girls. They led assemblies in order that sometimes it was not the adults talking to the pupils about issues. For example, the headteacher explained how during a specific lunchtime, the pupils were leaving their plates in the dining hall. As a result, the Head/Deputy boys and girls led an assembly about dining hall expectations and the need to put plates away. HT1 felt pupils held greater ownership towards the school:

We talk to the pupils about running the school. We talk to the pupils about making the right choices…Adults are here to facilitate the pupils to become good learners and actually be able to achieve.'

HT1 felt pupils had begun to self-regulate their behaviour more frequently in school 1 and were now thinking more broadly in terms of the community. They felt that the behaviour system had held success beyond the classroom.

Whereas, in school 2 the headteacher wanted to introduce them because of prior experience working with the researcher. HT2 believed the three processes could support their new setting to address current concerns of LLD behaviour because there was:

> ‘*You came and worked with us on developing out behaviour policy and procedures across the school because we'd identified that although behaviour wasn't poor a lot of low-level behaviour was just impacting on learning…it wasn't as tight as it needed to be.’*

HT2 acknowledged the impact that the previous work held to improve behaviour:

> *‘We worked with staff making sure expectations were clear you spoke to them about this green standard of behaviour and how we need to be using a common language and reinforcing that at all time. It was so simple and so clear, it meant that the staff were able to get on board with that and develop that common language across the whole school. That, in turn, meant the children had a very consistent approach to understanding what was expected of them at different times, it was going to be reinforced by all adults within the school and it meant that we saw significant reduction in the low-level behaviours.’*

Resultantly, the school improved learning behaviour across the school and appreciated developing consistency was integral to promote positive learning behaviour, recognising:

> *‘It’s worked before and I know it will work here. The staff want to get it right and I think we need to be consistent.’*

HT2 supposed pupils in this school required a consistent approach to behaviour management. There was a belief that behaviour in the school had become complicated and unwieldy to manage:

> *'We had over complicated behaviour. Every time you go to something else, you add something in and you don't drop anything off the end, I think it was reducing it right back down to, what does a green standard of behaviour look like across the school? How do we make sure that just becomes a uniform approach and a common approach*?'

HT2 recognised their staff held different personal behaviour journey experiences. For example, lunchtime supervisors were slightly more of a challenge to bring on board because they did not perceive it as their job to manage pupils' behaviour consequently implementing scripted behaviour language within their system could secure consistency:

> *'We need to reinforce language to develop a consistent approach to achieving good behaviour, across the school. It is simple when used by everyone.'*

In addition, there was the belief that staff should view the pupils differently:

> *'Separating the child out from the behaviour is really key and something we're trying to work on here, actually, it's the difference between the child and the behaviour.'*

HT2 wanted to endorse a consistent approach across their school because the recent Ofsted inspection (June 2015) had graded the school requires improvement overall. Though, the school received a good for behaviour, safety and welfare the senior leadership team believed low-level disruption and

inconsistent learning behaviour had affected pupils' learning engagement. HT2 was pleased with the outcomes for behaviour noting:

> *'Leaders and I were happy with the report but know we can do more together. To get good overall we need to promote positive on task behaviour in the classroom as well.'*

HT2 explained across the school believed successful outcomes centred on developing a whole-school staff training approach to current low-level disruptive and review how the policy was applied across the school in order everyone bought in to the system and was consistent:

> *'It's how we move around school as there are low general expectations for behaviour, with little reinforcement by staff. The general feeling around the school is the feeling we haven't been able to have the impact that we would have liked to have done and this could be better.'*

At the beginning of the study the initial staff training from the researcher supported the school to instigate a coordinated approach to behaviour management. A key factor was due to the overall sense that teachers in two specific year groups held reactive instead of proactive views to evident low-level disruption. Moreover, HT2 explained the pupils lacked resilience to criticism from adults when asked to modify their behaviour.

> *'We've managed their behaviour rather than addressing it. You could speak to any member of staff in the school who would agree there is a lack of respect and children with very little resilience who couldn't deal with any kind of criticism or comment around their behaviour.'*

Additionally, other staff in the school believed some pupils lacked respect towards their peers and staff. The impact across the school was other pupils viewed the

negative behaviour assuming this would be acceptable. HT2 believed outbreaks of LLD behaviour escalated rapidly with staff feeling unequipped to address it properly:

> *'Some staff need additional support to work with difficult pupils as they need help to de-escalate behaviour and then there are* enormous flare-ups and we'd go from zero to ten very, very quickly. '

To counter this, the entire school had been developing an approach based on green behaviour using the three processes:

> 'We've been working on establishing the green behaviour and the green language, and we talk about green walking and green sitting, and green whatever else.'

The intention was to use three key school rules by way of a baseline and starting point to promote and reinforce the behaviour policy consistently:

> *'We would be working with the three school rules so we could keep coming back to them. Staff would be talking to pupils about the three school rules explaining to them where there behaviour is now and which of those rules is it not working against?'*

The rules centred on respect for others and themselves, and following instructions through listening and doing the right thing, at the right time, in the right place. The intention was to develop a consistent culture in order that all of the staff took responsibility for any negative behaviour collectively. It was hoped that the outcome would be improved staff confidence as they could hold pupils to account for the three rules:

> 'They (staff) often d*on't always have the confidence to challenge behaviour because they don't always know how to challenge it…they're not quite sure*

how to do that and because of that this means that they continue to lack the confidence. I hope that the training will help my staff to work together and be consistent across the school.'

HT2 believed the simplicity of the rules supported the staff to create positive learning behaviour that could be maintained:

'The reason for that is, if we've then got that really tight, all staff, irrespective of their role in school, can remember three rules. Then, it's making sure children understand those and we can reinforce that through other behaviour work that we do.'

An outcome that HT2 had observed at their previous setting was the consistency in pupils' understanding of behaviour and the development of self-regulation. Through this study they hoped the pupils would respond to the consistent attitudes by staff and develop positive attitudes to whole-school behaviour:

'For the pupils I would like them to understand the consequences of their behaviour and that they have to take responsibility for this. It is important that they understand we are not forcing them to do things, or to behave in a certain way. We are placing the onus back on them to behave because that's the right thing to do.'

HT2 recognised a consistent approach was significant appreciating the emphasis professional development training held to improve whole-school pupil behaviour and staff responsibility. The reason for this was too often some staff held negative personal views, and this transferred to pupils:

'I know that pupils realise, 'Well, I can get away with it with that person but I can't get away with it with that person,' which then leads to inconsistency *behavioural issues being left.'*

In a similar manner to school 1, HT2 hoped to develop parental relations that supported staff/parents to understand behaviour was a whole school approach rather than something that is being done to a group of pupils. A reason for this was the perceived legacy that parents believed existed with regard to dealing with behaviour incidences.

> *'With regard to parents and pupils whatever behaviour system you put in place doesn't really matter as long as it is fair and consistently applied… and there has been a perception by parents that it's not fair. That is why we have had the problems that we have had over the years. '*

HT2 believed parents' ambivalent attitudes to their child's in-school behaviour was not a supportive factor as they tried to improve an improved behaviour culture. Too often parents refused to accept their child had displayed LLD behaviour:

> *'Most parents would be supportive… but we have a core group of parents who are very much, 'My child wouldn't do that, my child doesn't behave in that way, it's the school's fault, you're not managing the behaviour properly. My child is storming out of classrooms because he's not having his needs met and you're not doing that,' … 'regardless of the fact that these are the parents who storm out of meetings.'*

4.2 Newly Qualified Teachers

The newly qualified teachers joined their respective settings in the autumn term prior to the beginning of the research study. Each had undergone the same staff training from the researcher to deploy the three processes. NQT1 had worked with the processes for eight years as a teaching assistant. NQTs 2, 3, 4 were new to their respective setting and had little previous experience of using the three processes. In school 1 a case study approach was adopted to validate the researcher's anecdotal evidence. In schools 3 and 4 an action research approach

was adopted. The scripted behaviour language was identified along with the token economy; the traffic lights and school rules remained identical. Table 6 illustrates the number of interviews and observations each NQT undertook.

Table 3 Newly qualified teachers data collection schedule

NQT	School	Interview	Observed
1	1	1	0
2	3	7	6
3	4	3	3
4	4	3	3

NQT1

This teacher had worked at the school for a long period of time as a teaching assistant before training to become a teacher. They were familiar with the three processes. NQT1 defined low-level disruption:

> *'LLD is anything that is stopping learning within the classroom. It could be shouting out, not putting your hand up, talking to the person next to you, swinging on your chair, just something that's distracting to the teacher and the other pupils within the classroom.'*

NQT1 explained traffic lights were used in conjunction with the token economy. Pupils earned Thorptons for a variety of reasons that included: arriving on time, reading a book at home, staying in green and completing their work. Pupils accrued the Thorptons in the school shop run and stocked by the pupils. NQT1 explained how the school employed each process consistently and that this supported pupils to behave, work in class and maintain their behaviour:

> *'It's a whole-school approach. Everybody is using the same language, doing the same thing, and the pupils know what it looks like. It's not*

complicated they get on with their work. It's not confusing in any way. It's just you need to be in green, and everybody knows what green looks like.'

Pupils understood the use of traffic lights as a system that was used to monitor their behaviour with green behaviour as the expected requirement. Amber was used to indicate observed LLD behaviour identifying to pupils whether it was acceptable or not. Scripted behaviour language was used to remind them of the next step and next expected behaviour through the language of green. This explanation suggests the pupil concerned chose to decide about their behaviour for the rest of the lesson:

'I remind them that this isn't the appropriate behaviour, and that in order to be in green, they need to stop making the silly noises… First time, they ignored me and carried on. So, there was a warning. It was, 'This isn't green behaviour, if you carry on making those silly noises, you're going to be in amber,' and then straight away they stopped, and it was fine for the rest of the lesson.'

The scripted behaviour language identifies pupils' behaviour in relation to the colour whilst the continual repetition reinforces if the behaviour is appropriate. Pupils may decide to modify their behaviour and the adult responds by placing the pupil's name in the relevant traffic light colour. The movement between the colours is a visual reference and over time the repetition and consistent approach appears to support pupils to develop self-regulatory habits:

'Amber, it means that you're not in green, so you're not doing the right thing. Everyone knows you're not doing the right thing and you know yourself you're not. The teacher explains that you are not doing the right thing and what you need to do to get back into green. It's accepted as not a place (amber) that pupils want to be. They change their behaviour

because they don't want to be there. They need to be in green in order to be in this classroom. They want to earn Thorptons.'

The token economy was accepted by all by way of the reward system which filtered into all aspects of the school's culture. Even the lunchtime supervisors used them in the dining hall as a positive reinforcer. NQT1 explained the credits reinforced positive behaviour because pupils really valued them:

'The pupils earn Thorptons for many different things and some pupils have jobs within the school. There are jobs in the classroom and across the school. We also give them out for outstanding behaviour, outstanding work or something that really stands out, pupils value them.'

The teacher noted the token economy held intrinsic value, reinforcing the ethos of 'green' behaviour by way of becoming a conditioned reinforcer. The consistent application of the token economy, scripted behaviour language and traffic lights supported positive learning behaviour in the school. NQT1 believed this consistency was successful due to the fact that the processes were introduced to pupils as early as nursery and reception. In their view over a period of eight years, they had improved behaviour during lessons and reduced low-level behaviour:

'Pupils understand and behave. It's embedded within the school from early years, so that the pupils understand that language, the scripts and traffic lights and what it means.'

The NQT identified the consistent approach supported pupils that if they did leave a classroom and another member of staff saw them, they would repeat what the teacher had said in the classroom. They recognised that it was important that all staff bought in to the behaviour system:

‘The same language will be used by all the staff and the pupils respond to that. We will say, 'I can see you're upset. I can see you're not in green. When you're ready to talk, you can talk to me. Can I help you get back in green?''

NQT1 noted scripts created a common behaviour language in the school because all teachers and support staff used them in the same style. Even student teachers on placement had remarked on the simplicity of the behaviour policy as they had remarked to them on the first day:

'Oh, wow,' you know, 'I can see how that's worked with that child. I'm going to use that,' which I think is brilliant.’

NQT1 was asked whether the three processes appeared to reduce low-level disruptive behaviour in the school NQT1 responded:

‘It definitely does, because they are simple and easy for every member of staff to remember, and the pupils understand it’.

The views of this teacher suggest traffic lights, scripted behaviour language and the token economy were successful in this school because they were consistently applied by all staff. Pupils were familiar with each aspect of the processes and enjoyed earning tokens to support on task behaviour. It would appear the pupils viewed the three processes positively understanding what was expected throughout the school with consequences when behaviour was unacceptable.

NQT2

Despite the initial staff training at the start of the school year NQ2 was struggling with the levels of LLD behaviour in their classroom. Resultantly, the external research assistant was asked to observe and feedback to this teacher during the research study. At the end of the cycle of action research they were interviewed

by the researcher. During the research cycle NQT2 was asked to deploy the scripted behaviour language consistently by firstly targeting it to the whole class and then particular groups and individuals. They were asked to think about developing a proactive response to LLD behaviour in the classroom planning work for certain pupils to support them to remain on task. To address reactive responses, they were asked to consistently use scripted behaviour language reinforcing positive learning behaviour. resultantly, desired learning behaviour was targeted and encouraged: active listening, good sitting, participation and remaining on task. During the data collection stage NQT2 frequently encouraged their adult support to work alongside specific pupils handing out tokens reinforcing positive behaviour. NQT2 was encouraged to bring the class together to use positive praise for any pupils who were on target and reminders/prompts to those who were not.

As the period of research progressed NQT2 acknowledged that the three processes had had a positive impact on classroom behaviour. It was evident pupils were used to the well-established routines and expectations as they were responding promptly and positively to instructions and correction including pupils with identified needs. Levels of engagement were consistently high and sustained. Levels of low-level disruption were negligible and both NQT2 and the teaching assistant supported the class well by providing class and individual support. In the final interview NQT2 was extremely reflective about the impact that LLD behaviour had on the quality of teaching:

> *'It was difficult and I struggled as the behaviour in my classroom was something different than what I'd encountered before during teacher training. There was just a lot of low-level disruption, a lot of chatter in the classroom, and a lot of pupils just struggling to follow the school rules'.*

NQT2 defined LLD behaviour:

‘It is behaviour in the classroom affecting and disrupting learning and preventing other pupils in the classroom from accessing the maximum learning that they can’.

They felt they were struggling to control the class as the constant LLD was extremely ‘challenging’. When asked about how the three processes were deployed they recognised initially their approach to using them was inconsistent and if someone was looking in to the class from outside the door:

‘*It would look a bit chaotic in the classroom. From my point of view, I felt like I had a lack of control of what was happening.’*

NQT2 added the behaviour had not only begun to affect their self-esteem, which was noticed by pupils:

‘My eye contact and body language was defensive and not inclusive to the rest of the class. And this meant some of the pupils, the pupils who, perhaps, weren't disrupting the learning, were struggling to focus in the environment, which was having a knock-on effect for their learning’.

NQT2 explained that when they tell pupils what they are looking for or when describing what they need to do to be in green, they try to ensure pupils understand what the school rules are and what they should take occur:

‘To be in green ‘*you need to be doing this*, *because that would mean you're in the right place at the right time,'*

The emphasis is placed on describing the imperative instructions and explaining how to get back to green and what pupils can do to earn tokens. For example, a pupil would earn a token for being in the right place at the right time. As a result

of the three processes being deployed NQT2 acknowledged an improvement in their classroom and individual pupil learning behaviour:

> *'I've seen in an improvement with children willing to respond to scripts. Once I tell them what behaviour I'm looking for, they will show that behaviour. Using the traffic lights they know when they're given clear direction of what to do to get back to green, they show those behaviours and want to stay in green. The token economy promotes positive behaviour.'*

NQT2 felt that the outcome of the three processes meant that there was increased on task behaviour:

> *'There's definitely more of that in the classroom which shows there's more control now. The children know what is expected from minute one of entering the classroom.'*

Pupils were willing to respond to adults when spoken to through scripted language. For the majority of pupils once they understood the required behaviour from the teacher tended to display on task positive learning behaviour:

> *'Using the processes has reduced the low-level disruption from other children. A lot of the children in the class who were starting to mimic that behaviour, using the processes has prevented them from even joining in. The other children who were originally causing low-level disruption stand out more because the other ones are trying to stay on green and trying to earn Griffin tokens.'*

Furthermore, the traffic lights supported pupils to understand where their behaviour was in relation to the traffic light colour and through the scripted

behaviour language were able to modify this in order that the adult moved their name to the green traffic light:

> *'Traffic lights are used when children are doing the wrong thing. A child may be in green because for sitting in the right place at the right time. That shows the other children, 'Oh, this child is in green,' because he's doing the right thing. Then, if you look around the classroom, other children do what they need to do to be in green. They're following the school rules because they know positive praise supports the child to be in green. It's using traffic lights to praise behaviour that it addresses the children who aren't showing the green behaviour.'*

Over time, pupils frequently began to modify their behaviour to remain in green. Similarly, with the token economy, the use of praise and reinforcement promoted positive behaviour that led to greater self-control from pupils to be able to get on with their work, which had improved learning time:

> *'The pupils know what is expected from minute one of entering the classroom…I had been using a range of encouragements such as 'Show me how well you can …', 'Who can show me…?', 'I'm listening for …', 'Can you do … by the time I…?' and 'Wouldn't it be good if …?, and praise to inform pupils how well they were doing Thank you for …', I'm super impressed with your …', and 'See, I told you, you could…'*

The use of scripted behaviour language had supported the teacher to remain calm and focused on teaching instead of taking the behaviour personally:

> *'They were really useful because it meant that there were scripts that I could use, and the children know, when I say what I'm expecting of them. They do respond. The majority respond very well to scripts and using that language.'*

NQT2 believed the token economy supported pupils to remain on task:

> *'Originally, when I first started I wasn't using the Dojos as effectively as I could have. I now pick out individual children and reward positive behaviour and the rest of them want to show that behaviour as well. The pupils enjoy being given something material rather than just saying to them, 'That's good.' It's something, 'I've earned this. Because I've been good, I've now earned this reward.'*

NQT2 believed that an area of success was the number of pupils willing to correct their behaviour, developing positive behaviour habits in the classroom. This led to the teacher to grow in confidence thereby being able to develop stronger learning behaviour:

> *'There's a lot of higher expectations in the classroom now. Pupils are clearer now about what is expected of them, and from September, that's a massive difference to what you'd see now.'*

In addition, when asked if the three processes had reduced LLD behaviour in the classroom NQT2 responded:

> *'The majority want to be in green and they some children make the wrong choices, but the majority try not to show low-level disruption. They try to stay on green and do the right thing. When they make the wrong choice, they work back to green. To be in green they just need to make sure that they've done the right thing.'*

The teacher felt pupils had made progress from the point of previously displaying LLD behaviour to now thinking about the choices that they could make to remain in green. NQT2 believed the class had begun to self-regulate their behaviour:

'I would say the majority of children are able to self-regulate and manage their own behaviour and make sure that they're making the right choices without me intervening. I would say the majority have really improved those skills since the start of the year.

In the future NQT2 was asked what would ensure success of the three processes:

'There has to be consistency across the school making sure all teachers are using the same language, so they're not receiving mixed messages, with tokens across the school to praise the positives.'

NQT3

To begin with NQT3 felt there was very little low-level disruptive behaviour in their classroom. So, during the first observation there was continual LLD behaviour observed by the pupils. During the first observation the teacher and their member of support staff moved around the classroom marking work and speaking with pupils about their learning. It was noted that there was very little behaviour led talk from any adult to the pupils and the traffic lights were not used to support expected behaviour. In their interview NQT3 felt the traffic lights were viewed in a negative manner and highlighted interaction with one pupil that they, '*chose not to use it with them because it could make them sulk'*. It was clear that NQT3 was inconsistent about the use of and their personal expectations of deploying the intervention to the pupils. An example of this was when they asked the class to organise their books and tidy up for the next part of the lesson. Pupils ignored the instructions resulting in low-level disruption becoming evident because pupils spoke to each and began to display off task behaviours. This behaviour was not addressed because the teacher inconsistently directed their expectations to the pupils for example, when a pupil was asked what they were reading the pupil responded by shrugging their shoulders. NQT3 was asked to define LLD behaviour:

‘Anything that the pupils shouldn’t be doing when they're not on task…if I've given an instruction, the pupils are, maybe, not following it…doing something as simple as sat fidgeting with a pen…getting up, walking around, going and sharpening their pencils, asking to go to the toilet, anything that's just contributing to them not being on the task, for me, is low-level disruption. Obviously, it can escalate and go further than that.’

Similarly, NQT3 recognised pupils with special education needs often became demotivated or bored, requiring greater assistance. Therefore, they felt the need to employ, *'you need to sit down. You need to sit down.'* During the interview the discussion centred on using scripted behaviour language consistently, irrespective of whether a pupil has specific learning needs. This is because the teacher needed to challenge pupil behaviour, and wait for a response. In the first interview NQT3 acknowledged a lack of consistency in using the other two processes:

‘I haven’t used traffic lights or praise consistently either in the same way. With X I prompted him to get on with his work, gave him the opportunity to do it. The next time I saw him, he wasn't getting on with his work, so maybe I should have used praise with the script telling him he was in amber instead of just trying to say, 'K, get on with your work.'

This was not an isolated incident as one pupil refused to place his hand in the air to ask for support, continually refusing to respond to teacher-led requests to do so. The behaviour resulted in the teacher walking over to assist the pupil giving attention. Once NQT3 had walked away the pupil was off task again for this reason demonstrating the lack of consistency of the three processes held an impact on whether pupils chose to display LLD behaviour. The teacher was asked to focus on using the behaviour policy through the three processes, instead of selecting just one of them, when it suited, with specific pupils. They were asked so as to develop a consistent teacher-led approach for all of the class praising all of the pupils and challenging behaviour by always using scripted behaviour language against the traffic lights. The aim was to understand if consistent

application would support more on task behaviour in the classroom. During this stage of the research process the benefit of using scripted behaviour language was discussed so that if they employed language such as, *'X, I'm going to move you into amber for not following instruction'* and *'X, well done for getting on with your work. I'll move you back into green.'* this could support pupils to remain on task. Typically, in the first observation NQT tended to speak to pupils negatively, *'Don't shout out.', 'No need to interrupt…', 'Turn around you're not listening' and '… what's missing?', 'Why haven't you finished?', 'That is not enough work…'.* This style of language contrasts with that of scripted language that gives the *imperative 'you need to…' followed by 'I can see you have …thank you.'*

Accordingly, NQT3 agreed to work on developing their use of the scripts:

> '*That's one of the notes I put down – using the scripts more as I have been reflecting after you've been in there, that is something that I will try to work on and develop, I know I need to be more consistent*.'

Furthermore, NQT3 reflected about the use of traffic lights and praise prior to being involved in the research process; they were able to explain how a particular child did not have traffic lights used with them because they would sulk if he went into amber:

> *'If I am not consistent XX will see that as unfair and believe that I am picking on him. I will use them all together with my teaching assistant to support pupils to do the right thing.'*

Accordingly, NQT3 agreed to work with their teaching assistant to develop the use of traffic lights to signify pupils' behaviour during the lesson. Scripts would be used more specifically, *'X to be in green, you need to sit down', or, 'X to be in green, you need to put your hand up…thank you for putting your hand up'.*

Additionally, praise would reinforce the desired behaviour with tokens handed out to encourage positive learning behaviour:

> *'X I've given you an instruction you're not following, so I'm going to move you into amber now until you follow my instruction. Then, I'll move you back into green once you're showing that green behaviour and listening to the instruction I've given*.'

The teacher realised that they needed to invest time to develop the skill of being clear and explicit about the behaviour they wanted to see from the pupils, but following these expectations with a thank you, reward or a specific instruction using scripted behaviour language:

> '*It's not just, 'Thank you,' or, 'Well done.' It's, 'Well done for sitting down. Well, done for following instructions.' It's being specific so that they're aware of my expectations, and then they're following them*. *Using the scripted language to tag on before it. It seems like a really small thing, but it's something that you have to think about and work on.'*

NQT3 acknowledged they could use Dojos to support keeping pupils on task explaining, *'X that's a great metaphor. Well done. You've listened to what we've done. Two Dojos.*' In this manner NQT3 acknowledged the token as a conditioned reinforcer to praise pupils to encourage them to develop resilience and motivation to work explaining them, *'They never run out, do they?'* By the end of the first interview NQT3 had begun to understand how each aspect of the three processes supported each other to develop and reinforce positive attitudes to behaviour; that time was required to practise each individual aspect to become one singular behaviour intervention.

In the second observation it was noted incidences of LLD had reduced as NQT3 was consistently deploying the three processes with clearer instructions from the teacher to pupils in reference to their expectations about required classroom behaviour. It was noted how the teacher spoke to the pupils specifically about the behaviour they wanted to see and thanking pupils once it had been displayed:

> *'Because the pupils know what an expectation is of green behaviour. They know it's to do the right thing, say the right thing, be in the right place…Show me green just lets the pupils know what I'm expecting, to show me green, you need to put your pen down. Okay, well done for showing me green. Thank you. Thank you for putting your pen down.*'

NQT3 recognised consistent use of both token economy and scripted behaviour language reinforced the traffic lights supporting pupils to understand the steps they needed to take:

> *'I can see how my being consistent in the use of scripted behaviour language, using the Dojos reward system that we've got in place at the school, and making sure that all of the pupils are doing the right thing at the right time helps the class to want to work harder to stay in green. Now I say to them, 'To show green, put your hand up and be patient. Wait to be asked, rather than put your hand up and shout out.'*

They had begun to recognise the relationship between using praise to support pupils to remain in green through positive reinforcement and by using Dojos to encourage pupils to remain in green. NQT3 explained the increase of the number of Dojos deployed to reinforce the positive behaviour was a positive and unforeseen aspect:

‘It is funny how the use of the Dojos on the system, they've gone up massively, because we're using them more consistently now as well, so that's working well, and praising the pupils is working really well because they want to earn them and are showing pride in receiving them…’

In particularly with one pupil who had been struggling with their behaviour in the classroom they felt there had been considerable progress, they were making a more conscious effort and choosing to behave better:

‘*Using the behaviour language with this pupil and using the praise and Dojos was working very effectively, and that's showing in their points charts. Sometimes ‘I don’t see it really necessary to use amber because if X is slouching down. I just say, ‘You need to sit up.’*

NQT3 similarly recognised the relationship between the teaching assistant and themselves as a positive conduit to support on task learning behaviour. Their adult support had begun to deploy consistent scripted behaviour language with praise/Dojos and the traffic lights, which was helping to promote improvements in classroom behaviour:

‘I use my teaching assistant a lot more effectively than I was last time. Instead of just having more of a focus on certain tables, things like that, we've split the seating plan up and we both now circulate a lot more and use our resources and our time a lot better. We are both managing behaviour as well. We use the traffic lights and the language together, and we both, sort of, support each other in that sense, so it's working quite well.’

It was noted that in the second observation both the NQT3 and their teaching assistant spoke with pupils almost always crouched, sitting or presenting

themselves at the same level as all of the class. The pupils responded well to this and when asked about it NQT3 explained:

> *'That's something that we both have prided ourselves on throughout the year, because we don't ever want to stand over a child and talk to them when we're just giving them information about the work it wasn't appropriate, so we make sure that we are, sort of, on eye-contact level. They like it and it means we can talk to each other.'*

At the end of the second observation and interview NQT3 noted the three processes had begun to have a very positive impact on reducing LLD. They were using the scripted language a lot more than originally and using the Dojos and the token economy more consistently. The pupils were responding well and their behaviour had:

> *'Improved greatly…they were engaged. They were switched on. They were listening. They are working harder and want to learn. The Dojos are a great motivator for the class to behave better'*

The final observation and subsequent interview reviewed how the three processes had impacted on teaching and learning. The teacher felt there had been positive steps forward to create positive learning behaviour:

> *'I cannot believe the difference it has made, I has helped massively…you asked me to make sure that I was using the token economy, and rewarding pupils with Dojos for showing green behaviour, and also thanking pupils and using praise as well as the Dojos, and being more specific with my actions or ways forward for the pupils. At the start I was sceptical but can see how they fit together.'*

NQT3 recognised developing a consistent approach with their pupils through continual repetition of token economy as a conditioned reinforcer supported pupils to display positive learning behaviour explaining:

> ‘T*he pupils are all really, really excited to earn the Dojos and like to be rewarded. They aren’t behaving for the sake of it and now show green behaviour more consistently. They like to have, like, a little competition with each other. The atmosphere has changed in the classroom because my consistency has encouraged the pupils to want to stay in green and learn. They (pupils) want to be the best, and they also know that the behaviour is being rewarded and it is being recognised (consistent). They're not just behaving for the sake of it. The atmosphere has changed. Yes, it feels like they all want to learn now. They're not just in school. They want to be there. They want to learn, and it's nice. It's nice that they're like that. Yes, I thought it would work, but I did think it would only work for certain pupils. It's worked with most of them*.

At the end of the process NQT3 acknowledged they had observed a reduction in LLD from the pupils as they were, ‘*starting to show the green behaviour much more consistently.’* Additionally, they reported pupils did not view amber negatively, more as *‘a warning to move back into green behaviour.’* One of the key benefits for this teacher was using the three processes developed precision and specificity with instructions about behaviours they wanted or expected from their class.

NQT4

NQT4 had joined the school in the September, receiving staff training on the three processes and behaviour policy. During the first observation it was noted that LLD behaviour was prevalent in the form of pupils speaking when NQT4 was giving directions or asking for information in response to a question. Furthermore, there were frequent occasions when pupils turned around and spoke with each other instead of completing their work. These behaviours were unseen by the

teacher or teaching assistant. Pupils often disengaged from the task by sitting with their hands up to gain the teachers attention yet continued to speak to each other. The teacher posed questions to the class and pupils would respond with their hands up waiting to be picked and would speak over the teacher who was listening to the selected pupil. The class had well established routines for work avoidance that included frequent pencil sharpening, changing dictionaries, walking around the class looking for resources. On one occasion after waiting with their hand up a pupil began to stand up and dance around because the teacher hadn't seen them. There was other evidence whereby pupils endeavoured to distract others sitting behind or on a table next to them. Pupils would often gain their attention by shouting out even when they were requested to put their hands in the air, especially for a rubber or to sharpen their pencil. Initially the first observation demonstrated pupils received specific one-to-one attention. However, most of the class were often ignored, particularly where any LLD behaviour was evident. The teacher tended to be solely focused on the pupils they were working with or speaking to.

During the interview, NQT4 explained it was a struggle with their class because the pupils were very challenging, and they were struggling to manage the behaviour. However, during the lesson NQT4 admitted that they did not directly perceive any LLD behaviour but admitted the behaviours that had been generally observed:

> *'It's not the child kicking off in the middle of the classroom or starting something with another child. It's that behaviour where it almost falls under the radar. That's what I pick up in my classes anyway. It's always the ones where it might be, 'Can I sharpen a pencil?', or talking about what they did at the weekend. In an afternoon, they are chattier. They are a very chatty class anyway, but they are chattier in an afternoon.'*

When asked how they used scripted behaviour language NQT4 explained that they tended not to use it as they were unsure of how to speak it. Typical of this

was that they spoke very simply to their pupils, often with a lack of praise or thank you:

> *'J, turn round', 'R, what are we writing?', 'Sit properly.', 'K, pencil down.', 'A, this way.', 'Right, if you have finished...'*

When asked to explain the intention of the statement, *'Sit properly.'* they said it was because R was swinging on their chair. However, they reflected that perhaps they could finish any requests with more positive comments such as:

> *'R, you need to get on with your writing…Thank you for completing your work' to see if it might have a more positive impact upon reducing their behaviour and when it was for them to not swing on the chair I could have told them 'you need to put your chair down. Thank you.'*

The comment from NQT4 'sit properly' demonstrates that they had reflected about the lack of precision in their use of scripted language. Later they were asked about their use of the three processes to reduce LLD behaviour and they admitted (in their opinion) the traffic lights didn't work with their pupils because they responded better with praise. During the first observation there was a distinct lack of praising language or the use of Dojos to support on task behaviour. In addition, the traffic lights were used only when the teacher believed there was something to highlight:

> *'I know that my class work a lot better by giving them praise. As soon as I start using the traffic lights, some of them don't respond that well. I try and use my traffic lights if there's any behaviour where they need a warning.'*

The teacher explained how they felt classroom behaviour was something that was developed, and they didn't like to use the traffic lights because they felt the

pupils didn't like it. They also noted that they explained they hadn't used traffic lights before and wanted to use them slowly:

> *'I think it is just, with the traffic lights, this is what I was saying before, it is all-new. I've never been in a school with it all before, so I'm doing it slowly.'*

When asked to describe in more detail about the use of traffic lights NQT4 explained they felt uncomfortable explaining to the class what stage of the traffic light their behaviour referred to:

> '*X doesn't respond well, and XX, so I use more praise and then I focus on them. The other pupils I worry about using my traffic lights because I don't know whether I should be telling them.'*

It was clear NQT4 did not understand that the traffic lights sat continually in the background of the lesson as a surveillance or reinforcement technique. As a result, NQT4 evidentially was unable to recognise how the three processes could be used as one specific behaviour method. NQT4 was encouraged to reinforce the three strategies consistently by practising them regularly to improve confidence in using them. Likewise they were encouraged to develop scripted language in order that it became being clear about what they wanted pupils to do and then thank them the second they have done it:

> *'X you need to turn around and get on with your work' and then 'Thank you, you've turned around'. 'XX you need to put your pencil down because I'm talking. Thank you, X, for listening.', 'Year 3, you need to put your pencils down'*, *'TA has everybody got their pencils down, showing me green sitting?', 'Pupils, you need to put your pencils down and show me green sitting…right then pupils, you need to put your pencils down and show me green sitting.'*

NQT4 acknowledged they would be consistent with their use of each process in particular praise and tokens. Additionally, they agreed to further develop the use of praise to signify green behaviour. In this manner the traffic lights would become the signifier with amber indicating pupil behaviour at a specific moment. The use of scripted language would describe the steps to green behaviour. NQT4 explained that prior to the study the use of Dojos was sporadic to avoid wasting time when pupils were working:

> *'I will try to hand them out in the lesson to assist the class to remain in green. I am happy to give it a go. It will be difficult to keep remembering to link it to green but I am happy to try.'*

During the second observation there was a calmer feeling in the classroom and pupils were observed to be on task and completing their work. The teacher used scripted language to remind pupils what they were required to do. The use of praise and handing out of tokens was much improved and consistently applied. NQT4 explained that since the first observation pupils obtained their tokens at the end of the lesson using their individual reward charts:

> *'I've now got individual reward charts pupils, we do that at the end of each lesson, which was something we spoke about before because I was saying, for pupils that didn't respond that well to the whole amber thing it would be difficult, well now that's working so much better. They're excited to do it, and enjoy working to earn the points in a lesson, instead of me just telling them what to do.'*

Indeed, NQT4 explained their class had begun to develop a greater understanding of green behaviour related to the traffic lights using scripted behaviour language:

‘Before pupils were saying how the traffic lights were new to them and that they didn't really understand them and they didn't understand what red meant. Now, after the first interview I am using the traffic lights in everyday discussions with pupils. I make the point of consciously thinking and then saying, 'To be in green, you need to…,' or, 'Show me green.' Whereas before I was not using that language as much.’

NQT4 had adapted scripted language to fit in line with their teaching:

‘Even though it's scripted language, it doesn't have to be the whole script that I am using. I have adapted the scripts to make them quicker, 'To be in green you need to…'. I use that now all the time and pick out good pupils, 'You're showing me green,' and that works much better.’

NQT4 believed the study had supported them to develop a positive outlook to behaviour in their class and leading to developing a better relationship with them through thanking:

‘*That's something I have consciously tried and I am doing so much more because I didn't even know, just saying, 'Thank you' would make such a difference. I know it makes me sound really harsh, but I'm saying thank you a lot more.’*

Later NQT4 acknowledged there was a positive impact using the three processes and they identified the development of scripts avoided panicking about what to say and when to say it:

‘I think it's because I'd panic as well. Mainly in observations, I'm not going to lie, where something will happen and in my head, I’m just panicking and it's not going right. Whereas now that I've found that you can just stick to the script and reinforce green. This means I'm using it more because I'm not afraid to use it.’

When asked if the teacher had observed any improvements in classroom behaviour using the three processes they commented:

‘*Yes, in my pupils massively. I think just more because now it's clearer what I want from them, that I'm getting a lot more results from them. Looking back, it was silly to think that they'd now what to do if I'm not telling them. So, I have seen an improvement, especially with the Dojos, I'll pick out the good instead of the bad.’*

In their final interview NQT4 explained how they had begun to specifically consider:

‘*To praise, use scripted language, position myself self correctly in the classroom, and to stop and wait*.’

When asked if there had been any significant differences in the time since the first observation and interview NQT 4 explained there had been a reduction in the amount of noise and LLD behaviours during their input and pupils’ independent work. When asked about any other significant differences between the start and the end of the process NQT4 could identify how the use of a token economy and praise had made a significant impact:

‘*The praise is probably the biggest improvement with using the Dojos to help is massive. I start using that as soon as they come in. Like when you were saying before, you don't have a set amount of them, just give out many. I've just been trying to see how many I can give out’. With respect to the use of the scripted language, doing the whole, 'M, turn around, thank you.' Being precise with it. Also, rewarding pupils, when they do well, ‘I'm finding that works really well, and it's just made the whole class better.’*

NQT4 identified the correlation between the use of Dojos/praise and the way pupils responded positively to instructions as scripted language had enabled them to focus on teaching because they didn’t have to think about what to say. Praise statements were uttered more frequently, with pupils responding positively, creating a ‘snowball effect’ whereby other pupils wanted to show NQT4 they could behave:

‘Praise has really helped my pupils they want to do right by you. They want you to be impressed by them. It is a knock-on effect; it's like a snowball around your classroom. If one has done the right thing, then all the rest want to do the right thing and get a Dojo as well. So, it's like that wave effect. They all will latch on to it. I think that's why they all want a Dojo they all want you to think that they are good.’

NQT4 explained there was a link between the praise and using imperative instructions whereby pupils responded autonomously because it was implied:

‘Just, it's real, 'This is what I want you to,' and, 'Thank you for doing it.' It's not up for debate at all. It's, you're going to do it, and thank you for doing it. They don't have a chance to argue against it, because you're already saying thank you before they've got time. It's, 'Turn around, thank you,' and then they just do it anyway. I think it's that you don't give them an option. Then it's the praise that links with that, as well, that they're not in

trouble for doing it, you're just reminding them, and actually, well done now, you've done it, and it works really well.'

When asked at the end of the final interview about their opinion on the use of the three processes NQT4 articulated they felt they helped all pupils to remain on task and work within the system as they *now* applied to all pupils in the classroom. This section examined the role of the newly qualified teachers, the next section will analyse the interviews from the experienced teachers.

4.3 Analysis of findings – Experienced Teachers (ET)

The next data collection phase involved observing and interviewing the four experienced teachers across three schools (1, 2, 3). In school 1 there was an interview because the three processes were well developed, as described in the introduction to this chapter. At school 2 the two experienced teachers (ET2 and ET3) took part, with an initial observation and subsequent interview followed by a visit three months later. Both were in year 2 and their classes were purported to display a high proportion of low-level disruption that will be explained individually. In school 3 the experienced teacher (ET4) was observed four times with follow-up sessions and one final interview. All teachers involved, had been teaching for four or more years.

Table 4 Experienced teachers data collection schedule

ET	School	Interview	Observed
1	1	1	0
2	2	2	2
3	2	2	2
4	3	5	4

ET1 was an experienced teacher who had been teaching for eight years in: year 1, year 2, year 4, and year 5. They had a great deal of experience of working with pupils who exhibited LLD and were able to explain how staff worked together to pick up on it straight away so that it didn't escalate any further. Their background

experience had involved working with the researcher on developing and embedding the three processes. This had led to the teacher becoming extremely familiar with the deployment of them. Additionally, their early behaviour management experience had reflected high levels of low-level disruptive behaviour. This behaviour mainly manifested as pupils refusing to work, running around the classroom, fighting, and refusing to follow reasonable requests to keep them safe. There was the feeling that this was due to a lack of behavioural training prior to entering the profession and experience dealing with it explaining:

> '*Partly down to the inexperience of how to cope and deal with this type behaviour, and then pupils with low-level disruptive behaviour how to move them into positive behaviour to create a positive classroom.*'

ET1 felt that the initial training provided at the start of the study by the researcher ensured consistency as everybody in the school bought in to the same policy. This is because it provided clarity for pupils who learned to understand what was expected of them which later translated into the development of a whole school strategy. The teacher explained the whole-school consistent approach was extremely supportive:

> *'Reflected back by the pupils meaning all pupils and staff understood the expectations 'everybody was singing from the same hymn sheet, if you like. Everybody used the same system.'*

ET1 recognised how the school had worked as a team to address low-level disruptive behaviour using the three processes. These were reinforced with frequent training to support staff to feel confident to address negative learning behaviour:

> *'Because of the training and the experience that the staff have been given we're well aware to pick up on low-level disruptive behaviour straight away*

so that it doesn't escalate any further. We use scripted behaviour language to help the pupils stay on task, do the right thing.'

ET1 acknowledged the journey the school had been on with LLD as they were cognisant that their own lack of experience resulted in a lack of confidence in how to address it. As such ET1 explained LLD manifested and escalated into extremely bad behaviour. To address this the traffic lights supported pupils to consider the choices they had made with teacher led instructions to decide on the next choice. In this way pupils causing low-level disruptive behaviour learned to understand that an adult would place them in amber. The scripted behaviour language supported adults to explain how pupils could get back into green. This process led to quick transitions to bring the child's behaviour back around. The pupils learned that amber gave them an opportunity to consider their behaviour and make a conscious decision to move back into green. Over time the feeling developed that through the continual repetition pupils were learning to self-regulate :

''We will explain to the child that they need to stop calling out and need to put their hand up by stating, 'You need to do this, you need to sit down or you need to stay in your seat, you need to show me green behaviour. Pupils know what the next step and quickly get back on task.'

The teacher clarified the emphasis was on pupils to remain in green as the scripted language constantly talked about green behaviour. The teacher explained they would sometimes scaffold the desired behaviour using scripted language on other class members to demonstrate to the pupil what the observed behaviour should be:

'*Thank you for not calling out I can see you are listening. When the child that called out asks politely or puts their hand up staff reward the positive behaviour with a Thorptons credit.'*

As the processes became embedded ET1 explained pupils loved positive praise using the credits as a conditioned reinforcer because they understand that their behaviour has an outcome:

> *'The pupils then see it as a positive. They want to please the adults. They see that other pupils are being rewarded with the Thorptons credits and they want to achieve that as well.'*

Over time pupils responded well to a verbal *'well done'* or *'thank you'* by the teacher. Additionally, the teacher felt the Thorptons credit was valuable in reinforcing positive behaviour. Pupils had bought in to the system and viewed it extremely positively:

> *'The pupils love positive praise, whether it's just verbal or a 'well done', or a 'thank you' by the teacher. I see them making more positive choices and think that they self-regulate their behaviour now.'*

ET1 felt the culture of behaviour in the school had improved with overall classroom behaviour better now as everyone led the behaviour policy consistently. Resultantly, pupils began to require the use of rules less due to the growth of positive learning behaviour becoming embedded and pupils increased their understanding of the intervention:

> *'There just isn't the behaviour that there used to be. I have seen the behaviour across the school improve and we don't need to use rules we talk about the culture of green behaviour. Pupils settle down to work much quicker than they ever did before.'*

ET2

ET2 had worked in school 2 for six years and was now a teacher in year 2. When asked about low-level disruptive behaviour they explained it as:

‘*Low-level behaviour, disruption, a lot of chatting, not particularly what we're doing in between … a lot of what I call 'fussing', a lot of telling somebody else how to do something when they actually aren't doing it themselves, telling tales about that. Avoidance, getting up, trying to go to the toilet, trying to sharpen their pencil*.’

The teacher acknowledged they needed to address low–level disruption to support pupils to remain on task:

‘Often, they are not on task or they are daydreaming or just not getting on with it even though they've had the input a few times and had individual input, still the level of work is not there.’

In the first interview the teacher was asked if they had observed any LLD incidents and they said that they had not. However, during their first observation two pupils were seen to be displaying LLD behaviour (a pupil rocking on a chair and a pupil who had decided to visit the toilet without asking for permission). The teacher felt the class were extremely fussy and dependent on adults for support. ET2 explained pupils would often come to speak with the teacher instead of independently working. this would result in pupils being off task and talking. However, the teacher acknowledged:

‘Mostly the girls (causing disruption), there are more girls than boys anyway. The girls just fiddling about with things, talking, not getting on, not going, directly where they're supposed to go, I did notice that.’

The teacher recognised pupils needed to be aware of their learning behaviours to understand the levels of classroom noise because at times it was loud and unacceptable. Through discussion it was agreed to be consistent deploying the three processes to support the desired behaviours in the classroom. They were able to acknowledge the script would be used as a *thank you* after an instruction.

The teacher had reflected that they too often asked pupils to make the right choice instead of expecting them to make the right choice. By the next session the teacher had used the three processes as set out in the methodology. However, remaining consistent with the scripted behaviour language and reinforcing with the token economy had proved a little more problematic:

> ‘*We don't do it in lessons. I did have a go with giving out tokens, but they lost them, they fought over them. I decided to just use them at the end of the lesson, that's been working successfully. They don't nag, they just wait to the end of the lesson and they get their reward, depending on what I've told them, how many points they've got, and off they go*.’

The teacher described how the process had taken a period to become established but found pupils responded to the green language. ET2 found being tough with pupils putting them straight to amber surprised pupils initially. They did not like it, but most of them seemed to appreciate the benefit:

> *'Right, it's not liked it's been used before, if it's not green, it's amber. And we used that language for a while, and actually they seem to be better now that I'm not using the language so much.*’

The teacher explained that they were using ‘*amber less and less because they have been better behaved*.’ The impact was positive for both the teacher and support staff. ET2 believed consistency had improved outcomes for staff and pupils:

> ‘*We're all using the same script, Right, expect this. This is what's expected as well. I expect to see this. I want to see this*. *The pupils respond well to it.'*

The teacher described how there was less LLD behaviour with pupils focused on work and accepting their boundaries. As a result of the study, pupils were remaining in their seats working for longer. The instances of pencil sharpening and toileting had reduced. As a result, the teacher explained clarity existed about expectations to pupils with clear instructions:

> *'I need to make sure I'm prepared to make sure their resources are there so there's no excuse for them to get up and wander round. I'll say at the beginning of the lesson, which you didn't see, when somebody asks to go to the toilet, I'll say, 'Right, we're not toileting now, we're going at break time.' And that's the end of it.'*

This in turn, they felt had helped improve the class work-rate noting:

> *'I'm not waiting for pupils still moving around, I'm not waiting for them to come back.'*

In their later comments the teacher explained how the class had developed a more consistent focus:

> '*So, they're (the pupils) more focused. They're motivated because they really want a reward, because obviously other pupils are getting it as well*.'

The teacher felt pupils were independent in class and had begun to develop a greater work ethic as a result of the systems being deployed. They had seen a reduction in pupil excuses for going up and wandering around, which had led to them becoming more settled. The teacher explained that the traffic lights supported the pupils who nearly always behaved to begin to concentrate more frequently as other pupils were in amber less:

'So, I think for those who are working hard not being distracted, they're not being disturbed by the ones who initially were more behaviour problems.'

The principal outcome was for those pupils who were always on green to not continually be distracted as they could concentrate on their work:

'*It has made such a difference on how we work and how much work we get through. And it is just nice for those pupils who are always on green, for them not to have all that distraction and disservice as well, for them to really be able to work freely and without all that going on next to them.'*

The teacher acknowledged how the traffic lights supported green language. Initially placing pupils on amber had shocked them because they were used to getting away with negative behaviour. A positive result of pupils being placed in amber was they did not receive a green card at the end of the week therefore having to explain to their parents why not. This consistent approach supported the system and meant pupils understood all behaviour would be addressed. Other staff around the school had noticed an impact on pupil behaviour commenting:

'*We have found that, when people have covered us, they have mentioned that, there is a lot better behaviour for them as well. They are saying, 'Actually, behaviour has improved.'*

In conclusion ET2 explained:

'If you had told me that it would work I would have been very hesitant but using the three processes consistently has improved the class' behaviour and I have been amazed that it has been so successful.'

ET3

ET3 worked in School 2 and in the same year group as ET2. The teachers and headteacher expressed the view that there were similar behaviour issues with the class to their colleague. This teacher explained that the pupils exhibited low-level disruptive behaviour in the following ways:

> '*Talking whilst the teacher was talking; ignoring instructions; becoming louder through talking; sitting with a hood up; disengaging from a task; walking around the classroom; continually changing a reading book explaining … I don't know if they've even understood the book they're reading half the time*.'

Initially it was noted that this teacher had employed a different use of traffic lights that worked as a noise chart. It had three traffic lights and a pointer deployed to show the class noise levels. It was arbitrary relying wholly on the class teacher's depiction of noise levels. The teacher had explained that they did not want a noisy classroom but also acknowledged there were times when it needs to be quiet for the learning. During the first observation the teacher was aware pupil noise levels had arisen and appeared to use the sound meter to explain to pupils where their classroom noise levels were. However, it was unclear how this could be measured and how pupils related to it. The reason for this was due to being asked to be quiet one minute, then being allowed to speak the next. The sound meter was an idea the teacher had used the previous year:

> *'That's something I've just put in for key stage one. Year ones and year twos, it's just getting used to what we mean by 'green learning'. I thought it was a way to try. I think they need reminding that it's not a whisper, but it's quiet. If someone's sat on your table, you don't have to shout across them.'*

Through discussion in the interview it was agreed to leave the sound meter and concentrate on embedding the three processes consistently. This is because the observation highlighted the use of traffic lights and scripted language was

inconsistent with very little emphasis on rewards, *'Yes. I did it initially when we introduced it back in September, but it's not embedded obviously. We need to come back to it.*' ET3 admitted they were worried about giving the class autonomy, which led to a discussion about the way the traffic lights, scripted language and token economy could be deployed.

The second observation demonstrated a difference in exhibited LLD behaviour by the class. The teacher was able to explain how they had worked hard to use the green language, traffic lights where necessary, giving out more achievement points with absolute focus on positive praise.:

> '*The use of green language, the green scripted language that we're trying to use as a school, and really trying to make sure the atmosphere in the classroom is calmer for working, because when the pupils first came, beginning of the year, they were quite unsettled.*

During this final visit, the teacher acknowledged that the class were used to green language, they worked quietly:

> '*I think the pupils were more engaged. I felt it was a calmer atmosphere in the classroom. I think, in general, better progress is always being made now, because the pupils are in that right frame of mind for learning.'*

ET3 acknowledged a positive outcome appeared to be the use of the green language as it was supporting pupils to be more engaged. A contributing factor of this was the clarity and the consistency of using scripted language. They felt pupils knew what the language meant responding positively to it. The teacher believed scripted language and the use of rewards appeared to support pupils remaining on task having observed pupils keen to colour in their points on the chart to achieve their certificate on Friday. They further expanded:

‘*The pupils know that they need to be on green, and they get a little green card at the end of a week for parents. They really like it and it motivates them to work harder and behave in class.’*

ET 3 explained better progress was being made because pupils were in the right frame of mind for learning. This appeared to be a direct result of clearer expectations and that as a year 2 class learning was becoming more formal. A dialogue had opened about explaining that they were entering Key Stage 2, where work would increase and the class would need to be more consistent with their behaviour. The teacher explained:

‘I can see how the traffic lights and praising language has supported positive outcomes of behaviour from my pupils. We have seen a massive improvement now we are using a clear consistent behaviour policy as pupils understood what each part of the process is and respond well to it. They have worked with the behaviour of my class.’

Finally, ET3 acknowledged they had observed pupils engaged with their learning making the right behaviour choices wanting to learn because:

‘*it's a class environment where they can learn well now.*’

ET4

ET4 had been teaching for three years and recently moved from teaching in early years to year 1 which was proving problematical. They underwent four observations in the classroom, following each observation with an interview and ways forward that centred on utilising the processes in their classroom. It was evident at the beginning of the process that this teacher struggled with managing both the work content and managing the behaviour of the class. From the outset, the class found it difficult to sustain attention and engagement with high levels of low-level disruption evident as the teacher explained:

'*Things just like people shouting out, swinging on the chair, faffing with the pencil, yes, the little bits, the little things.*'

They described how LLD was impacting on their ability to teach effectively:

'It would have looked like me teaching at the front trying to get through everything at a fast pace…somebody would be on task one minute…then the next minute they'd be faffing with a pencil or swinging on a chair or what-have-you…I would be concentrating modelling on the board listening to somebody else… I wouldn't see that one behind me.'

The behaviour was escalating with ET4 concerned that they were unable to complete enough work in the lesson because pupils were disengaged and refusing to respond to requests to stay on task. ET4 felt the pupils had begun to stop listening to their requests which, in turn, resulted in them focusing only on the negative behaviour of their pupils that fluctuated in waves from reasonably high engagement to very low engagement:

'*I just feel like I wasn't aware of the whole class enough. I was so focussed on getting through everything. That was one of the biggest things for me.'*

The teacher believed that the class' behaviour was becoming worse and it was affecting their confidence to teach them. During the research process time was taken to work with them on securing confidence with each phase of the three processes as the teacher had forgotten to deploy traffic lights to support learning behaviour. It was evident in the early observations the lack of consistency had begun to impact negatively on pupils' learning behaviour. It appeared the class were unable to understand what positive learning behaviour looked like because it was not being modelled. Pupils were probably unaware of how to sit at the table,

or how to move around the classroom; it was also clear working noise levels were not established.

What was agreed during the interview was that ET4 needed to try and establish learning behaviours and develop consistent routines deploying traffic lights to signify pupils on task behaviour. Scripted behaviour language was required because their voice level and pitch rose with the noise of the class. ET4 began to understand how being consistent with the processes could support a reduction in low-level disruptive behaviour. ET4 appreciated the way the study focused solely on classroom behaviour and through the research process acknowledged that at the beginning of the school year they had probably not spent enough time on developing positive behaviour. ET4 admitted feeling conflicted as they accepted behaviour had to improve but could not dedicate the time to it because of the great pressure on ensuring the class worked in learning time to complete planned work.

To address this, throughout the study period ET4 worked on addressing the whole class using scanning eye contact and inclusive body language to catch the eyes of individuals in order to increase attentiveness and engagement. As this was a year 1 class (who had short attention spans) ET4 was encouraged to offer very frequent use of green to reinforce those who were performing well and to prompt those who are not through praise. In addition, they were encouraged to talk slowly lowering their voice pitch. Furthermore, positive learning behaviours and clear routines were established through praise, high expectations, active listening, good sitting, participation and reduced class noise levels. ET4 explained:

> ‘*If I was obviously given this opportunity again and a new class that's what I'd do and just get it right from the start and then it wouldn't carry on.’*

Later observations identified that E4 had begun to praise pupils more frequently planning short activities with the main purpose of establishing learning behaviours and routines:

> '*When they're getting on with their work' explaining to pupils, 'Thank you for getting on with your work,' if they've been moved to amber, 'You're now in green, you're getting on with your work, so thank you.'*

The emphasis from the teacher speaking with pupils about behaviour expectations supported them to understand the steps required to show green behaviour in the classroom:

> '*They want to be doing the right thing, they just need that guidance…You can tell that they want to be doing the right thing, they just need that little bit of support.'*

ET4 admitted they had not realised praise could be used to support positive learning behaviour explaining:

> *'I have just not been aware of the effect of that. I'd never seen it before; I'd never seen the effect that that could have. The class respond to that well.'*

This view was reinforced further once tokens were introduced the class became extremely positive about earning them:

> '*The tokens, they are showing green, they are doing whatever they're expected to do, then they see that they get tokens for it, and then they can*

point to those tokens because they get to spend in the shop, which to a five and six-year-old that's what it's all about, isn't it?'

In the case of ET4 it became apparent using the three processes enabled pupils to feel there was a point to now being in green and a point to earning the tokens. An example of this was a child who had previously shown extremely negative learning behaviour and had been excluded from school. However, through the research study and the development of a consistent approach this behaviour had improved:

'For him this has been a big success. Now most of the time he is getting on with his work, doing the right thing, with only a little bit of reminding, 'You need to,' and then generally speaking he gets on. If he is moved to amber he's devastated…like the rest of the class he wants be doing the right thing, wants to be in green, loves praise and loves it when he get tokens.'

The teacher understood that viewing green behaviour as a minimum standard was pivotal to supporting on task behaviour:

'I*f that is not what they are doing they are going to be challenged*'.

ET4 explained pupils were demonstrating consistent green behaviour as a result of employing the three processes:

'I think they see it as green behaviour is something that they need to be doing, and if that is not what they're doing they're going to be challenged and they're going to be told that, 'you need to,' whatever it may be.'

ET4 explained pupils had begun to take it upon themselves to show green behaviour and know that that is what is expected of them. Pupils were keen to work with the teacher demonstrating green behaviour and had already started to pre-empt what the teacher wanted by tidying up prior to the teacher mentioning it. As a result of the study they were able to explain that they felt the processes had supported a reduction of LLD in the classroom**.**

During the interviews I focused on remaining impartial and focused on the questions to ensure I did not lead or coerce the interviewees. At all times I was aware that I could provide the interviewees with the information to produce positive outcomes. To address this, my questions related to the three processes and blending them in to one single intervention. Each participant was asked to explain at the end of the process if they believed there had been a reduction of LLD behaviour in their classrooms or a positive outcome to pupils' classroom behaviour. When analysing the data, I looked for themes in the transcribed interview notes. For example, searching for terms like consistent, self-regulation, rewards and token economy. During the analysis each research participant's data was reviewed to understand the specific themes that were developing to support the research questions and evidence established the headteachers were very clear about the behaviour that was expected, referenced to the behaviour policies. Both were able to identify a culture of behaviour expectations that centred on the development of the three specific processes. Commonalities became evident, for example it was clear that low-level disruptive behaviour was evident in each of the schools researched and in each of the classes. Development of the research process showed that each of the teachers, irrespective of experience required training to support using the three processes. Additionally, all of the teachers believed that pupils in their class were beginning to self-regulate their behaviour through using the three processes; each teacher agreed that consistency is required to secure success in the approach. As a result of analysing the data there were five key themes that became apparent:

- the fact low-level disruptive behaviour was evident in each of the classrooms despite in some cases it not being recognised or addressed appropriately;

- continual training was essential in supporting the development of the three processes;
- a consistent approach needed to be taken to embedding the three processes;
- teachers found that the use of token economy paired with praise supported pupils to remain on task;
- the use of the three processes seemed to promote self-regulatory habits.

Chapter 5 - Discussion and Reflection

The previous chapter analysed the data collected from the research participants, highlighting the key areas for reflection and discussion in this chapter. This chapter will consider and reflect whether the three processes were successful by being combined into one blended method to reduce low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom. Therefore, the discussion will indicate that there were five key areas for discussion:

- Low-level disruption
- Development of continual training
- Consistency of use of the three processes
- The importance of a token economy
- Self-regulation

The five points will be explained and discussed in finer detail beginning with low-level disruption.

5.1 Low-level disruption

One of the key observed outcomes at the beginning of the study was the evidence of low-level disruption (LLD) behaviour; irrespective of experience for each teacher LLD was observed, both the newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and experienced teachers (ETs). During the observations it was evident that quite frequently LLD interrupted teaching and learning and the teachers often left it to continue because they did not observe it or struggled to address it successfully therefore ignoring its presence. In fact, pupils who were not considered to have behavioural issues were observed displaying LLD behaviour; it was unclear whether it was a direct choice and if they believed their behaviour was inappropriate (Tennant, 2004). It was noted that during the observation process adults tended to appear to be busy working with pupils on their tasks yet there appeared to be very little behaviour dialogue between them and pupils linked to traffic lights, scripted behaviour language or token economy. The teacher needed to utilise the script to create improved social interaction about the desired behaviour (Mayer & Patriarca, 2007). Pupils tended to ignore teachers' instructions leading to low-level disruptive behaviour increasing and pupils remaining off task. The language used by the teachers to pupils was over-

generalised: '*how many are paying attention to me? Don't shout out';* the lack of precision did not allow the pupils to create a mental representation for the progression of the situation. In all four schools LLD behaviour existed. As previously mentioned, the evident LLD behaviour continued with teachers and support staff unable to address it. A reason for this was a lack of experience or strategies to support pupils to remain on task. LLD behaviour left to grow, holds implications for both pupils and teachers. It was noted that the teachers became embroiled in a power struggle often referring to what was seen/heard without necessarily clearly explaining the desired behaviour (Bandura, 1995). This often resulted in pupils continuing to remain off task even when their poor behaviour was addressed because there appeared to be no consequence for it.

Considering why LLD behaviour was evident may have been due to the teachers' lack of consistency to the three processes. The teachers had planned the lessons but had failed to think about the learning behaviour that was required from the pupils. This was confusing to pupils because they often require constant reminders in order to learn the consequences to make the right choice (Nash, 2015). The teachers worked on a micro level instead of developing a wider view of classroom behaviour. In addition, the lack of understanding by teachers of the behaviour policy in schools 2, 3, 4 had an impact. The teachers believed they could pick and choose which aspects of the policy would support them in class. The teachers lacked understanding of their behaviour policy to support positive learning behaviour. Whilst the teachers had read the policy the processes were not applied consistently which resulted in a lack of clarity from pupils as they were not aware of teacher expectations and instead chose to misbehave (DfE, 2015). Indeed, the observations highlighted pupils found difficulty sustaining attention and engagement. The fact that the teachers were inconsistent meant that positive learning behaviours associated with sitting, movement around the room and noise levels were not securely established (DfE, 2015, 16; Moore et al., 2019). The teachers generalised attitudes to the three systems, in particular the traffic lights only accelerated pupil off task behaviour. Frequently pupils' names remained in amber or red that resulted in pupils believing there was little consequence for LLD behaviour, yet the behaviour was not without foundation (Dunbar, 2015). The research demonstrated in three of the schools that

irrespective of teaching experience LLD behaviour existed and the approach adopted by the staff increased its development.

The literature identified how pupils' predisposition to exhibit LLD behaviour emerges during the primary school, as the teachers did not address LLD behaviour then the pupils were at risk of repeating it as they moved through the school (Luisilli et al., 2005; Dursley and Betts, 2015). It was clear during the observations the pupils were used to witnessing this behaviour. Therefore, left unchecked, pupils could have the propensity to develop LLD behaviour into more negative behaviour as they grow older, indeed the literature highlighted how the report on the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (Sylva et al., 2004) proposed pupils who exhibited anti-social behaviour at a younger age were more likely to respond similarly when older. Perhaps a reason for LLD behaviour to develop is due to the manner in which staff interacted with the pupils. During the study it was evident that the teachers were sparse in their use of praise or token economy and perhaps this advanced the manner in which LLD behaviour grew because pupils did not receive positive reinforcement once they had complied (Doll et al., 2013). During the observation stage LLD behaviour was evident and the teachers allowed it to occur; unchallenged LLD behaviour has the potential to disempower staff (Allen-Kinross et al., 2019). This could lead to an inconsistent approach being applied by all school staff, as they are unable to recognise or address LLD. Leaders, teachers and support staff will create a self-fulfilling prophecy for pupils to increase the growth their LLD behaviour. They left it. It continued. They didn't know how to address it. It continued. The lack of consistency in applying the token economy/praise began to disempower the teachers when in actual fact the teachers should be in control (Tennant, 2004). If teaching staff are to thrive in primary classrooms there should be greater emphasis on understanding the triggers to address LLD behaviour with an agreed toolkit (Bennett, 2017; Moore et al., 2019). The growing national statistics for exclusion in the literature review appear to support this view. It is imperative that all staff and pupils are involved in establishing a culture of positive classroom behaviour.

Another issue that arose out of the observation process was that the teachers appeared to be used to having LLD behaviour develop in their classrooms. In fact, the evidence suggested the teachers viewed or experienced LLD daily. By the end of the interview process each teacher acknowledged there had been a reduction of LLD behaviour using the three process consistently. Perhaps teachers would benefit from being supported nationally with professional development that focuses on strategies to reduce LLD behaviour. There was a lack of clarity and understanding from the teachers to address LLD in the classroom, yet each could define it and had the tools to address through their individual school's behaviour policy. This opinion is supported by the literature as the EEF (Rhodes et al., 2019) identified reinforced positive relationships between both teachers and pupils are of paramount importance. In the interviews the teachers were able to recognise the emergence of low-level disruptive behaviour but felt the behaviour could be explained away. In school 2 ET1 explained that they needed to:

> *'Crack down a little bit more on LLD and sometimes pupils not being on task. They're either daydreaming or just not getting on with it even though they've had the input a few times, the level of work is not there'*.

At one point a specific pupil was discussed who was singing throughout the lesson; the teacher remarked:

> *'She sings all the time. She does know. She does know I've told her to stop but she's not aware she's singing. She'll sing in-between.'*

The issue is that the teacher understood that LLD was evident yet did not address it or reduce its manifestation. Their colleague ET2 explained one of the reasons LLD had developed was because it, *'wasn't the day for his support'* and the noise levels were high due to the fact that they needed *'to walk around more and just make sure that they're all on task'*. Instead of addressing the behaviour it was

accepted that it could continue, an example that was witnessed was when two male pupils who the teacher accepted *'did not normally sit together'* were displaying LLD and it was left unchallenged. The boys continued to remain off task and the teacher appeared to leave them to do this. This created the appearance and a feeling that the teachers were continuing to teach even when LLD behaviour was present inappropriately in the classroom.

Whilst LLD behaviour was evident an extremely positive outcome for the study was that from the initial observation/interview to the final observation/interview there appeared to be a reduction in observed LLD behaviour. In the literature, Tennant (2004) explains teachers expect from pupils a level of self-control that does not exist in their psyche. However, shining a light on LLD behaviour supported the teachers to raise their expectations and support their pupils to respond to the use of praise/tokens alongside the traffic lights system. The continual reference to the traffic light colours, by deploying scripted language to support on task behaviour supported all pupils to focus on their work with a reduction in observed LLD behaviour. Collectively in school 1, the staff held the knowledge and belief that self-regulatory practices were embedded over time with a reduction in LLD. It may be assumed, that exposure to a consistent process promotes self-regulation and continuous support by the teacher supports pupils to develop self-regulatory habits. This section explained the evidence of LLD behaviour.

5.2 Development of continual training

This section will explain how the outcomes of the study appear to suggest continual staff training will support a positive reduction in LLD behaviour. The Education Endowment Foundation (2019) emphasised the need for continual staff training to support teachers and teaching assistants to feel more confident in dealing with behaviour management. A key outcome from this study for the educational sector to consider is that there is scope for universities to support students to address LLD behaviour through more focused training on LLD behaviour using the three processes. In addition, school based initial teacher training programmes and schools could similarly support newly qualified teachers,

recently qualified and experienced teachers to study behaviour management in more depth. In fact, the development of training across a period of time appears to hold the key for success as the recurring conversations support the development of a consistent behaviour strategy.

The headteachers described the positive impact that a consistent approach to on-going training had on ensuring all their staff felt confident to address pupils LLD behaviour (Ofsted, 2012; Bennett, 2017; Moore et al., 2019). In fact, all of the teachers acknowledged being involved with observations in their classrooms with a focus on behaviour supported their professional development. The research process supported the teachers to reduce LLD behaviour because the observations and interviews were focused solely on that one area. Each teacher seemingly benefitted from utilising a consistent approach and from continual training as LLD behaviour was reduced. The headteachers held this view and were able to acknowledge the importance of continual training to support positive behaviour management. For example, in school 1 the processes were entrenched for eight years, all staff had been trained continually and as a result HT1 felt a culture was established that meant all staff agreed how to use the three processes consistently. In the other schools the teachers began to understand that continual training on blending the three specific processes into a single intervention resulted in an observed reduction in LLD behaviour. This was evident from the data collected from both observations and concluding interview comments from NQTs and ETs. In the concluding interviews both the ETs and the NQTs could identify the importance of training on the three processes to address LLD behaviour. It was interesting to note that the views of the ETs and NQTs were coherent with the literature whereby the pupils' behaviour had become a significant reason for teachers leaving the profession, and this issue led to individuals being discouraged from entering.

An outcome of this study has been supporting staff with continual training as it has enhanced their understanding of ensuring they were rigorous and consistent about following the instructions precisely (Teacher Support Network Group, 2014; Camden, 2014; Nash et al., 2016; Dursley and Betts, 2015, Rhodes et al., 2019). Furthermore, the teachers grew in confidence as the research study continued

as by the end both sets of teachers were able to address all LLD behaviour by deploying the traffic lights as an antecedent, behaviour and consequence method. The continual training on the scripted behaviour language supported staff to speak with pupils in a specific manner and the use of the token economy and praise supported pupils to remain on task. The development of training supported a growth in teacher confidence as they addressed LLD behaviour (Nash et al., 2016). The ETs felt that continual training in a consistent manner was a key factor to reducing LLD behaviour. Put simply, teachers clearly required training to support pupils to behave. Each teacher agreed the support provided by the researcher to develop the three processes reduced LLD behaviour. Throughout this study the teachers acknowledged their pupils responded positively to the repetitious use of the three processes, appreciating what was expected of them and what to expect from their teachers. Pupils recognised what LLD was and expected their teachers to address it consistently. The Education Endowment Foundation report (2019) supported the work of Bru (2006) that pupils have to believe an intrinsic value exists towards undertaking work in the classroom. The study identified how pupils moved off task extremely quickly, becoming distracted easily and avoiding engaging with the teacher. Therefore, establishing a positive working environment is a key aspect of the classroom. Furthermore, Taylor (2011) and Bennett (2017) highlighted establishing clear protocols was a key enforcer for positive behaviour as one requires a continual common approach to embed a culture; perhaps this could occur through continual training. Training staff to employ a consistent approach appears to support the view that over time pupils become self-assured in understanding expectations through scripted language and understand where their behaviour sits on the traffic lights.

A lack of training for both the ETs and NQTs demonstrated that irrespective of experience any professional could feel ill-equipped to deal with poor classroom behaviour (Teacher Support Network Group, 2014; Camden, 2014, Rhodes et al., 2019). In fact, all the teachers were able to describe how LLD behaviour held a negative impact for them, leading to the realisation that initially they all struggled to be consistent. Whilst the NQTs had read their school behaviour policy they had adapted it to support in the classroom without considering the implications of applying it inconsistently. Consequently, during the first observations it was clear that each teacher applied each of the three processes differently with little

success. During the interviews both sets of teachers identified inconsistency in their approaches as they had selected only one of the processes to use. Resultantly, ET4 felt from the outset that they should have focused on embedding the three process in entirety because they had created a contrast between getting the behaviour right and ensuring there was work in the books:

> *'At the beginning it does take time because you are learning about behaviour and learning to develop behaviour in the class and it is taking time away from actually teaching because you are spending time using the processes. I tried to spend time on the books and neglected the behaviour. Then the knock-on effect was we didn't get work in books. If I was given this opportunity again with a new class I'd just get it right from the start and then it wouldn't carry on.'*

The experience of the teacher was not a factor for whether LLD behaviour manifested itself or not. The NQTs benefitted from regular contact and support. The frequency of observations and interviews helped them to understand where they could make minor changes to develop their confidence to address LLD. With the experienced teachers they appreciated a third party viewing their practice through the behaviour lens and being given time to practise deploying them. This suggests that developing a philosophy of training and support whereby teachers can work with other staff on classroom behaviour can promote a culture of LLD reduction. Over time, frequent professional development has the potential to enable staff to become confident about deploying the three systems successfully.

5.3 Consistency of use

As mentioned in the previous section it would appear that the consistent use of the traffic lights, deployed as an antecedent, behaviour and consequence method, the scripted behaviour language used by staff to speak with pupils in a specific manner and the token economy operating as a reward system appeared to provide a reduction of low-level disruptive (LLD) behaviour. Both HT1 and HT2 identified that an overarching layer of consistency was required to embed them to reduce LLD behaviour. However, their individual experiences differed. For

example, HT1 had worked for eight years to reduce LLD behaviour with the processes and HT2 had experience of them from a previous setting and wanted to embed them in their new school. Both headteachers acknowledged the need to support positive learning behaviour through embedding a consistent behaviour policy with continual training.

The Department for Education (DfE, 2015) support this understanding and it is a position very much agreed upon by Tom Bennett (2017) and the EEF (2019). The need for consistency had an impact on the teachers as both NQTs and ETs explained they had experienced feelings of low morale; the NQTs specifically felt underprepared to deal with LLD. As the teachers began to develop a consistent approach they observed a reduction in off task behaviour with their pupils becoming more productive, whereas previously their pupils had disengaged from learning (Dursley & Betts, 2015). In the initial period the traffic lights were required continually to support pupils to understand where their behaviour was at any point in the lesson, with frequent reminders to support changes in pupil on task behaviour (Nash et al., 2016).

As NQT2 explained that if you looked in their classroom it would look chaotic because they:

> *'Had a lack of control of what was happening…I felt the pupils, who weren't disrupting the learning, were struggling to focus in the environment, having a knock-on effect for their learning.'*

Consistency in approach appeared to support pupils to remain on task and allow teachers to become aware of evident LLD behaviour. The constant use of the traffic lights began to establish a repetitive pattern of positive behaviour as each teacher consistently supported their class with scripted behaviour language (Skinner, 1966; Webster, a2020, b2020). As the study concluded for some pupils the teacher merely needed to remind the class of the requirement to show green behaviour as they began to develop 'cognitive competence' towards the behaviour system (Bru, 2006). As an example, both an NQT and ET could explain:

‘I think having that guidance, sort of, really helped me to be more specific, there's a lot higher expectations in the classroom now, they are clear now with what I expect of them, and I think from September, there is a massive difference to what you'd see then to now.’

(NQT2)

‘Obviously I'd had lesson observations, and that type of stuff was never picked up, so it just shows you that somebody actually looking at behaviour, looking at the script, looking at the use of traffic lights, it is picked up, it made me realise that, yes, I'm not being consistent enough as I should be.’

(ET4)

What became clear during the interviews was when staff deployed the three processes in a consistent manner, pupils quickly acknowledged and responded to them. Consistency became a recurrent theme throughout as all interviewees acknowledged consistency, strengthened by systematic staff training, was successful in reducing LLD as exemplified by both NQT1 and ET1:

‘If a child leaves the classroom and another member of staff sees them, they will say exactly the same language as the teacher said in the classroom because we all are consistent.’

(NQT1)

‘The initial training provided at the start, everybody in the school using the same policy,’ ‘the pupils understanding what is expected of them,’ ‘the whole team following the same language, the same script. Everybody knew, that meant that pupils understood it no matter where they were.’

(ET1)

This view was reinforced by HT1:

> *'We use the same scripted language,' 'we talk about the three systems,' we talk about everybody using it, 'it's that consistent kind of approach.'*

A consistent approach supports the EEF report (Rhodes et al., 2019) that creating a strong culture of behaviour should be initiated and led by the headteacher and run throughout the school. Similarly, Tom Bennett (2017) advocates continual staff training is a key factor in creating the correct conditions for a positive behaviour culture. In school 1, it would seem the consistency in approach, validated through regular deployment of the traffic lights, scripted behaviour language and a token economy (Thorptons) was positive in reducing low-level disruptive behaviour over a sustained period of time. Similarly, in their interview HT2 acknowledged the experience of embedding the three processes consistently in a previous setting supported both staff and pupils in their new school to buy in to the system:

> *'I'd like to see a consistent approach across the whole school rather than something that is being done to a group of pupils …because whatever behaviour system you put in place doesn't really matter as long as it is fair and consistently applied.'*

A lack of consistency hindered the NQTs who lacked the experience to address observed LLD behaviour. NQT2 admitted they felt that a lack of consistency resulted in a negative impact with their class, who were generally quiet and compliant but held very poor work habits, often becoming extremely distracted. In respect of the newly qualified teachers, it was clear that they had yet to develop the skills and protocols to support their classroom management and at times this

had led to low morale (Camden, 2014; Carter Review, 2015). However, the NQTs were open to recognising what the inherent issues were and the steps required in addressing them. Throughout the period of study, the NQTs were able to move away from adopted ineffective strategies to a consistent approach that appeared to support the reduction of low-level disruptive behaviour (Sida-Nicholls, 2012). In their first observation a large proportion of the class were seen to be disinterested; there was a lack of response to adult-led instructions. The behaviour was left unchecked and as a result, off task behaviour increased. The experience of NQT 3 was similar because whilst they used elements of the behaviour policy it was inconsistently applied. Scripted behaviour language lacked precision and praise with statements like 'show green don't shout out, X what's missing?' It appeared there was tendency to describe the behaviour they saw without being clear about the next step to put it right. Pupils shouted out to each other even when the teacher asked them repeatedly not to. Likewise, NQT4 lacked confidence at the beginning often asking pupils to show green behaviour without any clarity of what green behaviour was required. This led to pupils continuing to talk over the teacher resulting in low work production.

The experienced teachers acknowledged that initially the class's behaviour had been detrimental to their learning, however by the end of the study they had begun to appreciate the need to be consistent and undertake continual training to support their on-going classroom practice (Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000). The experienced teachers were inconsistent in their approach. ET2 was aware of scripted behaviour language having previously worked with their class on this. They had traffic lights up in the classroom and they were using a token economy (Dojos). Yet, in the first observation there was very little evidence of the three processes being used consistently to support on task behaviour. In fact, there was very little dialogue between the teacher and pupils about behaviour. The teacher tended to give simple instructions and acknowledged they did not use scripted language or Dojos. ET3 highlighted there were high levels of LLD behaviour. Statements tended to focus on what was seen and heard in the classroom without necessarily explaining clearly what the next step was. Pupils continued to remain off task even when their behaviour was addressed because there were no consequences in place. ET4 struggled because there was a great deal of LLD behaviour evident in the classroom as they did not appreciate how

consistent use of the processes supported good learning behaviour. Therefore, the pupils were not aware of the teacher expectations and so were choosing instead to misbehave. The entire class found it difficult to sustain attention and engagement. The class collectively fluctuated in waves from reasonably high engagement to very low engagement.

The initial observations identified the existence of LLD behaviour and the first interviews with the teachers presented the observed issues. The professional discussions established what steps were required to be consistent. Over time the teachers addressed the issues and subsequently consistent application of the supported a reduction in LLD behaviour. Each teacher could explain that a consistent approach to routines and expectations supported the pupils to respond promptly and positively to instructions and correction. There were increased levels of engagement and work completion as levels of LLD became negligible. Evidence by Narhi (2015) supports the view that class rule reminders and continual evaluations from teachers about behaviour lead to improvements in on-task behaviour. The repetition appears to support the development of a consistent approach, this in turn supports the development of a positive behaviour culture which when reinforced with continual training develops a proactive approach to behaviour management (Bennett, 2017). Whilst LLD was evident in all classrooms, teachers were unaware and inconsistent in using key strategies during teaching. The teachers tended to focus on pupils on a micro level instead of developing a wider view of classroom behaviour. Therefore, the study demonstrates the three processes with consistent and continual training support a reduction in LLD behaviour. The previous sections have described how the application of a consistent approach and continual training supported the teachers to improve their relationships with their pupils improving on task behaviour (Nash et al., 2016). The research supported the information from the EEF (Rhodes et al., 2019) that developing a consistent approach to any behaviour policy/system was a key factor to improve the culture of behaviour in a school; the teachers benefited from receiving continual training on the three processes.

5.4 The importance of a token economy

A significant outcome over the period of the research study was the fact that pupils responded extremely well to praise from the teacher, further supporting a reduction in LLD behaviour. Yet in the initial stages of the research study the teachers felt the token economy was not a significant factor to support pupils on task behaviour; their perception was it was an add-on instead of realising it acted as a positive reinforcement to support pupil management (Doll et al., 2013). Each of the teachers adopted a token economy to reward pupils, albeit in varying format; ClassDojo appeared to be the preferred mechanism used to reward pupils for on-task behaviour (Williamson, 2017). The teachers acknowledged how the pupils responded positively to praise and rewards and by the end of the study each teacher was using the token economy to reward pupils and each had seen a reduction in LLD behaviour. It appeared that the use of the token economy supported pupils to remain on task and remain in green. Each of the schools employed a token economy distributed as a token or credit that pupils earned for showing green behaviour (traffic lights). During the research stage a document produced by the EEF (Rhodes et al., 2019) highlighted a key aspect to support and develop positive classroom behaviour was the use of intrinsic motivation in the form of external influences like reward and praise: at the start of the study it was not known if this would be successful. In this study, the use of praise and rewards led to pupils developing self-motivation towards the achievable goal of green behaviour; a consequence of being rewarded was that pupils improved their behaviour, creating resilience to tasks, and were less likely to display LLD behaviour (Burger, 2015).

The use of tokens varied from school to school; in school 1 there was a shop that pupils could buy items from; in school 2 pupils' tokens led to receiving a certificate at the end of the week for being in green; in school 3 the tokens were collected to spend in a central store with a limited number of prizes; in school 4 the tokens were given to support pupils to spend in a small shop. The tokens were handed out in line with Charlie Taylor's checklist that stated 'there should be a system in place to follow through with rewards' alongside rules that 'should be displayed in the class and that pupils and staff know what they are' (2011: 5). The DfE state sanctions should be 'proportionate and fair… that may' vary according pupils' age

and circumstances (Department for Education, 2015, 2016: 8). It should be noted that the use of praise and reward was one third of the intervention; the traffic lights and scripted behaviour language were the two other aspects that supported them. The three processes are interconnected and an intrinsic part of each other. It was interesting to note that the teachers began to understand this relationship, with an understanding of how the traffic lights signified how specific pupils' behaviour as they developed a proactive approach to moving pupils' names to amber or red as required. Both sets of teachers were able to refer to the scripted language to ensure the pupils understood that they had a choice to make. By the end of the study the teachers created a fluid process whereby the scripted behaviour language supported pupils to make the choice to behave and move back into green.

At the beginning of the study there was inconsistent use of the token economy and possibly the reason for this was that the teachers were unaware that the token economy was a conditioned reinforcer to support on task behaviour. In fact, the teachers viewed the use of tokens as an additional aspect to classroom management rather than as a stimulus to elicit a desired behaviour for reward. The literature highlighted repeating the process of using a token before a reinforced stimulus promotes the pupil to learn it is a reinforcing entity (Doll et al., 2013). The token economy becomes a conditioned reinforcer because it is paired with a positive event. Each of the schools employed the ClassDojo system to deliver and record their token economy (Williamson, 2017). Moreover, the deployment of tokens in the schools supported the view of Burger (2015) who found pupils in receipt of points could positively influence their classmates with behaviour modification and self-regulation for future learning behaviour.

Each of the teachers could describe the way the token economy supported a reduction in LLD. NQT1 explained the simplicity of one overarching reward system was beneficial for pupils and staff to buy into and maintain with the onus placed on the pupil to behave and earn the credits. NQT2 admitted that prior to being involved in the research study they were not using the Dojos as effectively as they could have been. For example, they admitted they were not clear enough on what behaviour was expected or what the pupil had done well which would be

reinforced with a token. By the end of the study they felt much more confident in their use of tokens to support positive behaviour from their class. Similarly, NQT3 felt at the beginning of the study that tokens were an additional aspect of behaviour management. By the end of the process they understood using a token economy and rewarding pupils with specific praise supported the class to show green behaviour much more consistently. This resulted in reduced LLD behaviour. At the start of the study, NQT4 handed pupils tokens as a reward at the end of the lesson. This confused pupils about the reasons of their receipt and the precise moment the positive behaviour was expected of them. A positive outcome for the end of this study was how pupils responded positively when tokens were handed out during the lesson. The teacher gave tokens to pupils from the first moment that they entered the classroom as an engagement device:

> *'I think praise; they want to do right by you. They want you to be impressed by them. It is a knock-on effect; it is like a snowball around your classroom. If one has done the right thing, then all the rest want to do the right thing, and get a Dojo as well. So, it is like that wave effect. They all will latch on to it. I think that is why they all want a Dojo, they all want you to think that they are good.'*

This teacher was the most sceptical about deploying praise and tokens in the lesson yet by the end of the research acknowledged the impact that was gained from using them. Similarly, the ETs explained how the use of tokens impacted positively on their classroom management and aided in reducing LLD behaviour. ET2 found deploying the token economy with the other processes that it supported the class to work together and remain on task. They found it easier to hand tokens out at the end of the lesson but use praise to reinforce on task behaviour. ET3 discovered the scripted language with praise and handing points out created a calmer classroom. Pupils responded positively to receiving achievement points against the school rules. ET1 explained how the use of the token economy supported pupils to remain on task and display positive behaviour in the classroom and around the school:

‘The pupils love positive praise, whether it is just verbal or a 'well done', or a 'thank you' by the teacher, through the Thorptons credit. I think that is one of the best things that was ever brought in, that they see they are aiming towards something. The pupils can achieve the best that they can, and they want to. They want to go and get the Thorptons credits, and visit the shop.’

The final experienced teacher ET4 explained how the use of tokens supported pupils to show green behaviour. They were able to acknowledge that they had witnessed pupils behaving in a more positive manner because the expectations were far clearer and the pupils had begun to understand they receive tokens for behaving, ‘*which to a five and six-year-old that is what it is all about, isn't it?*’ The use of the token economy with the shop had supported the teacher in reducing LLD behaviour because the class had bought in to the system and understood what being in green meant responding appropriately.

In School 1 the systems are well embedded and HT1 explained that the use of a token economy developed beyond rewarding pupils in the classroom to becoming an achievement award system. In the initial stages the token economy (Thorptons) was mainly used to support attendance, wearing school uniform and promoting within the class positive green behaviour, being in green all day. They felt that over time because the pupils were largely always in green, the use of the token economy had changed from being a token system for correcting behaviour to a token system for achievement, for work, for attitude. HT1 described how the three processes were used to inspire pupils to take an active role in school life. The school deploys the reward system to mirror real life and support pupils in developing culture capital. Pupils save their tokens to purchase larger items in the school shop because they believe if they work hard and undertake additional jobs, that they may reap benefits from the token system. At the start of their time in the school there was a perception that pupils who did not behave were rewarded with reward charts or stickers and stamps. This led to other pupils believing if you misbehaved you would be rewarded for displaying negative behaviour. This began to create a cultural mind-set that ‘if you behave badly or if you have not behaved very well, you might actually get rewarded for it.' Pupils

began to display more negative behaviour to receive the rewards. To address this and alter the culture it was agreed to reward pupils who were only in green all the time. Across the school all pupils understand that if they stay in green they can earn credits. Further to that there is added responsibility as they can apply for a job where they can earn more credits. Thus, a culture is created that states:

> *'If you work hard in this school, you are rewarded, which is a bit like life. If you work a little bit harder and you get a good job, you earn a little bit more.'*

Similarly, in the classroom the token economy is used to reward positive behaviour and HT1 stated how staff across the school are encouraged to look for every opportunity to catch pupils working hard or being good. Lunchtime staff, the cooks, the caretaking staff and office staff use the three processes; if a child says thank you for their dinner, the staff use the Thorptons to support the child for demonstrating green behaviour. In this way, the use of Thorptons becomes a valid currency used between staff and pupils consistently across the school that enables pupils to acknowledge the benefits of displaying positive behaviour.

What this research indicates is that used appropriately token economy solicited a positive response from pupils. Pupils in each class found it easier to respond to the teacher when they used praise coupled with the token economy. It allowed the pupils to view the teacher in a positive manner because they understood what was expected of them and could respond positively in the moment. In this manner, a positive reinforcer supports the use of scripted language and traffic lights. Another positive outcome is the fact that the token economy reflects real life as pupils begin to develop the view that if they work hard remaining on task, self-regulating they will earn tokens and praise. The next section will reflect on whether pupils could self-regulate their behaviour as a result of the research study.

5.5 Self-regulation and Foucault

An area of significant interest for this study was whether the three blended processes could support pupils to self-regulate their classroom behaviour. Likewise, during the literature review period Foucault's theory of disciplinary power was explored to understand if it could be applied as a background theory to consider if disciplinary power was created with learning behaviour discourse. A reason for this is that over a period of time it was recognised that the continual support and training by the teachers developed a consistency of approach leading to consistent responses from the pupils to the teachers. As the research developed pupils became more aware of teacher expectations and began to modify their behaviour which resulted in an observed reduction of LLD behaviour; responding positively to the teacher. The three processes supported pupils to modify their behaviour to understand where their behaviour fitted on the traffic light continuum. In the theory of disciplinary power the traffic light could be viewed as the surveillance technique or Panoptican because it sits in 'permanent visibility' with the colours and meaning remaining in a constant state (Hungerford, 2010; Murphy, 2013). This could allow pupils to believe that their behaviour is in constant visibility or that they are under surveillance (Foucault, 1977). Scripted behaviour language may have supported pupils to acquire an internal framework to develop self-control and self-regulation (Guerra & Slaby, 1988; Schank & Abelson, 1989; Bandura, 1995; Mayer and Patriarca, 2007). This is because the scripts provided imperative actions for pupils to respond to without the need for emotional language or the raising of voices. Similarly, the regularity and repetition of scripted language supported pupils to make a choice about their behaviour. Consequently pupils were used to being given direction and responded positively which coupled with positive reinforcement as the tokens promoted a positive work attitude. It is believed that the continual repetition created a discourse of learning behaviour – the pupils understood what was expected and responded. In this process the pupils begin to develop 'care of the self' as learning behaviour grows as a result of the continual training and consistent approach (Ball, 2013). The consistency of repetition supports the teachers to become more confident, and resultantly pupils become autonomous through the regularity of repetition. In the initial stages the teachers had to practise the three processes and develop the skills to redress the negative power relationships whereby pupils exhibited LLD behaviour. The intention was to create an overarching repetitious work ethic whereby the use of scripts would support pupils to develop an internal framework

to begin to become controlled decision makers (Ball, 2013). During the initial observations it was evident many pupils across the settings were unable to display any self-regulatory aspects towards their own classroom management. Yet by the time observations concluded pupils were beginning to self-regulate and perhaps the consistent approach applied by the adults supported this. In the planning stage it was intended to understand how pupils could achieve self-regulation through the deployment of the three processes. An area of exploration was to understand if the act of reinforcing positive behaviour could support pupils to learn and self-regulate their behaviour. The benefit of using scripted language was the fact that it enabled adults to be extremely precise in their expectations. The use of praise and tokens encouraged pupils to make an internal choice of their behaviour as a positive reinforcer. In the literature the claim was made that the use of this system could support resilience due to repetition of the processes creating self-regulatory behaviour. Similarly, the literature questioned whether pupils could begin to develop self-regulation techniques that would move away from classroom management by the teacher.

In school 1 (HT1, ET 1, NQT1), where the processes have been embedded and developed over a period of eight years pupils were conversant with their use. ET1 felt that the consistent approach over a long period of time had developed a structure with the pupils to self-regulate their behaviour through the use of them.. NQT1 explained how relentless focus embedding the processes supported pupils to clearly understand the behaviour system to make the correct choice. They were able to explain how across the school pupils held each other to account for behaviour. This led to pupils frequently choosing a positive response. HT1 explained that throughout the school from year 1 to year 6 all pupils understood what green behaviour looked like. They understood if their behaviour was not appropriate, they would move in to amber and that they had the choice to self-regulate to move back into green. The behaviour culture was embedded as staff believed self-regulatory practices were evident. What has become evident is the long-term consistent use of the system appears to be a key to achieving consistent self-regulation. HT1 explained:

‘For the 95% of the rest of the pupils, the traffic lights system isn't a consequence. It's just a reminder. It's just a signal, to say to the child, 'At the moment, your behaviour is not what we expect to be appropriate.'

The result of this was that all staff believed that the pupils should be in green and the pupils similarly felt the same. Over a period of time self-regulation may develop and occur.

In school 2 (HT2, ET2 and ET3) had developed the process as a result of the headteacher’s experiences in another setting. ET2 felt that their class could begin to settle and work on their own without too much prompting. Their pupils had begun to work much more collaboratively and when prompted responded much quicker to teacher commands. ET3 had developed a stronger classroom presence and was able to stop LLD behaviour in order that pupils continued their work. ET3 explained that they had witnessed changes whereby the class would need less prompting to make the right choice. The teacher introduced individual rewards for one or two specific pupils that were more challenging. Overall, this teacher explained they spoke less and praised more which supported the class to remain on task and behave well. HT2 was cognisant of the system having success at a previous setting and wanted to develop it at their new school. The year group chosen for research was the one considered by the staff to need development and support; both teachers (ET2 and 3) were. Their experience of behaviour management was well established but they had not worked with the three processes prior to beginning the study.

In school 3 (ET4 and NQT 2), NQT2 discussed the way their class had moved from not being to stay on task to a point where they felt pupils could self-regulate their behaviour. They accepted pupils had begun to manage their own behaviour to develop making the right choices without teacher intervention:

‘I would say the majority of pupils are able to self-regulate, they know, they've made the wrong choice and the success of using these processes in my classroom is that it's a lot more settled in my classroom

now, it has progressed learning. It has been successful in ensuring that those pupils who can show low-level disruption know that they need to make the right choices.'

Initially both of these NQTs were uncertain about pupils' ability to self-regulate their behaviour in the classroom because they did not consistently apply the three processes. What was clear was that the experiences of all of NQTs were similar to that of ET4. In this school particularly NQT 3 and 4 held similar limited views, experiences and training of the processes. There had been initial training on the behaviour policy in September but this was a new method for them to adopt. By the time of the research study beginning in November 2019 both NQT 3 and 4 had developed their own system to use which had begun to move away from the school-based system. The lack of consistency allowed LLD behaviour to increase and support the findings that a consistent approach and continual training are required.

In school 4 (NQT 3 and 4) where the processes were in place but the NQTs were new to their implementation. NQT3 was able to describe how over the research period they witnessed specific self-regulatory behaviour with specific pupils. The focus on specific language, tokens and praise promoted pupils to remain on task completing their work. One pupil even had their own set of traffic lights on the table, which assisted in ensuring that they could remain on task and regulate their behaviour. During the observations and interviews with NQT4 it was discussed how two years previously the class had been unable to remain on task.

This research study has demonstrated that there is the potential for the three processes to support pupils' self-regulation but further work is required to ascertain if this is a potential positive development in reducing LLD generally. The literature suggests there is a gap on the effectiveness of behaviour management research in the classroom Maag (2012). The EEF (Rhodes et al., 2019) report highlights the need to embed processes completely to ensure sustained change. Schools should adopt a long-term strategy, rather than looking for quick fixes, perhaps the eight years spent by School 1 reinforces the EEF findings. What became clear throughout the study was the deployment of three

specific processes supported pupils to develop self-regulatory behaviours and this impacted positively on the reduction of low-level disruption.

Disciplinary power

At the beginning of the study an area of interest was how could pupils begin to self-regulate their behaviour through continual repetition and if Foucault's theory of disciplinary power could be applied to explain the success of the three processes. Whilst the study was unable to prove the evidence of disciplinary power consideration should be given that the three processes have the potential to become an overarching Panoptican surveillance technique to support pupils' learning behaviour. As the literature established, Foucault never directly applied his theory of disciplinary power to education or classroom behaviour (1977). However, his work on the theory of disciplinary power was considered to understand if behaviour discourse was created through pupils' autonomous regulation of the three processes. It is believed that the consistency of using the intervention supported both the teachers and the pupils to develop positive power relationships which were multidirectional (Foucault, 1977). At the beginning of the study the pupils were controlling the classroom behaviour due to the inconsistent approach applied by the adults. However, it could be supposed that the regularity of the intervention with continual repetition of each process supported self-regulatory practices to take place and perhaps created learning behaviour discourse (Ball, 2013). The changes in behaviour could be observed and measured 'because we have become, we can also be different' with positive outcomes (Ball, 2013). The rigour and consistency of implementing the three processes supported the improvement of pupils' self-regulatory powers. Foucault's disciplinary power theory centred on knowledge created through autonomous action. The traffic lights could be viewed as a Panoptican approach and a surveillance technique supporting teachers to consistently hold pupils to account for positive learning behaviour and with pupils learning to modify their behaviour accordingly which could be defined as new behaviour discourse. The teachers acknowledged pupils were beginning to routinely self-regulate with very little prompting. Ball identified that discourse was a central concept in Foucault's analytical framework explaining that they refer to what can be said and thought and who can speak, when and with what authority (2012: 2). Foucault identified

discourses as signs that can be used to ‘more than designate things’ (1974: 49). Explaining that discourse is not that which translates struggles or systems of domination it is the power which is to be seized (1970: 53). Furthermore, discourses exercise their own control as principles of classification or ordering (1970: 56). The discourse that is being considered as a background theory in this study is behaviour in the classroom against a set of three distinct processes to create ‘an effect or theorem’ with the result of producing a truth that can be formulated and shared to the teaching profession (Foucault, 1971: 56). Through the practice of embedding the process it is intended that a discipline is constructed of new learning behaviour and whilst each individual process is not considered to be new, the literature review demonstrated that there is little evidence to suggest that they could be harnessed into one singular system to be reproduced and replicated (Foucault, 1971: 59). Similarly, traffic lights were selected due to the understanding that in Hull nearly all primary schools use them in one context or another; the literature review highlighted no evidence existed of employing them with scripted language and token economy to reduce low-level disruptive classroom behaviour.

At the start of this study it was noted that Foucault was interested in how ‘human beings are made subjects’ and the manner in which the self was inhibited with an aim to understand whether pupils could create learning behaviour discourse to redress power relationships within the classroom environment (Foucault, 1982). Whilst the sample size did not allow for a more in-depth study into Foucault’s work, the data produced throughout the study tends to suggest that pupils and adults both responded positively to the three processes implementation with the result LLD behaviour reduced and there was clear evidence of positive learning behaviour. This can be classed as knowledge production because it did not exist before the study took place; the three processes appeared to support a reduction in LLD behaviour. If new knowledge is created on LLD behaviour perhaps that could be classed as behaviour discourse whereby teachers and pupils are defined as a resource creating positive classroom behaviour (Shore et al., 1999). Further research is required to understand if acting through the theory of Foucault’s disciplinary power with the three processes could have an effect of creating learning behaviour discourse. The exploration of power relationships was not conclusive as the observations tended to focus on the deployment of the

three processes and the opportunity to observe power dynamics did not arise. Consequently, the power relationships that exist in the classroom require further research to ascertain if pupils feel in control when displaying LLD behaviour. Similarly, exploring the relationship of power with teachers to understand whether they feel powerless or in control when LLD behaviour is displayed. The foundations for this are in place because it is the belief of the researcher that pupils developed self-regulatory habits and there was a positive transformation from observed LLD behaviour to on task learning behaviour (Foucault, 1980, 1982). In the literature Ball (1990; 2013) identifies pupils are 'in the process of becoming' through the work of the 'care of the self', which arguably could be applied specifically to the consistent use of the processes in assisting pupils to understand where their behaviour is during a lesson. The use of scripted language develops the 'care of the self' as a result of being paired with the token economy to create the environment whereby pupils begin to view themselves in a more positive manner as a result of remaining on task., They are rewarded or praised which results in their future learning behaviour becoming positive. Instead of teachers exercising power negatively as was observed in the initial observations the continual and consistent use of the three processes appear to develop a mechanism to support pupils to behave and develop positive attitudes to learning (Ball, 1990: 21). It could be argued that the reduction of LLD behaviours in the classroom supported what could be considered a positive shift of power differential from teachers to pupils.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

6.1 Problem statement and methodology

The previous chapter explored key areas for discussion that occurred from the study; this chapter will examine and summarise the research recognising the main methods used, bearing in mind the implications of the study. It will outline briefly the intention of the study which is the emergence of low-level disruptive behaviour in primary classrooms. It will present a problem statement and review the methodology explaining some of the study limitations and provide results of the summary. Finally, this chapter will conclude by providing a discussion of the results and further recommendations for future research.

The aim of this research study was to understand if the three specific processes described throughout could be blended into a single intervention and produce a reduction of low-level disruptive behaviour in primary classrooms. My experience in the field of behaviour management as a headteacher was a central factor for conducting the study. In the literature review data showed the levels of low-level disruptive behaviours in primary schools had increased the proportion of pupils who were being excluded (Cotzias et al., 2014). Another aim for beginning this piece of research was the prospect this work would contribute to the existing field of knowledge on classroom behaviour management supporting colleagues to reduce the impact of low-level disruptive behaviour in the classroom. The impact of exclusions in schools is a concerning issue for pupils, parents, teachers and school leaders (Bennett, 2017); any research that could support school leaders and their staff to support pupils to remain in school would be considered a positive influence for the education profession. During the study the low-level disruptive behaviours that were observed were consistent with the descriptions found in the literature (Church Report, 2003; Little, 2003; Cowling et al., 2005; Wagner et al., 2005; McGoey et al., 2010; The Education Support Partnership, 2010; Ofsted, 2014; Betts & Dursley, 2015; Narhi et al., 2015; Nash et al., 2016: 2). Another area that was considered was developing knowledge to support early career teachers and students entering the classroom (Camden, 2014). During the literature review there was very little evidence of research that had been conducted specifically on the blended use of traffic lights, scripted behaviour language and employment of a token economy to improve classroom behaviour. Furthermore, an aim was to understand if pupils could begin to self-regulate their behaviour through the use of this single intervention and if it could be applied through Foucault's theory of disciplinary power; thereby providing a new piece of knowledge in the subject area.

The first aspect of the methodology was developing an ontological perspective; the origin of this was based on the paradigm of critical theory. The critical paradigm has emancipatory aspects inherent within it, and I wanted to understand if pupils could be taught to self-regulate their behaviour by deploying the intervention in a specific manner. This would address what I considered to be pre-existing power relationships evident in current behaviour management techniques. As a headteacher there had been personal experience of embedding the three processes to support a reduction in low-level disruptive behaviour and to create pupil self-regulation. The intention of the study was to therefore recreate the conditions in school 1 to understand if other teaching staff could deploy the three processes consistently, thereby reducing low-level disruptive behaviour.

The epistemological stance was based on the fact that a review of each school behaviour policy in Hull found that the majority of Hull primary schools used either the traffic light system or similar type of system. A lack of clarity about their consistent use and deployment existed and my experience supporting schools specifically in this area had shown that there was often confusion surrounding their use. I believe there was a gap in the knowledge about traffic lights and believed that they could be used in conjunction with scripted behaviour language and a token economy.

The belief was a new way of looking at behaviour management could be created through this system. As a result, it was intended that pupils would develop greater self-regulatory habits and instead of being ‘controlled’ by the teachers would create learning behaviour discourse (Foucault, 1970; Habermas, 1976). In this way, the intention was to develop a positive relationship with power so that pupils felt more in control and teachers felt able to teach without feeling powerless to address poor behaviour. Key aspects of researchable aims were the belief a power imbalance between adults and pupils existed and whether pupils implicitly were controlled by teachers’ power dynamics (Ball, 2013). It was hoped that the repetition of the intervention would sustain pupils to create new knowledge of learning behaviour – behaviour discourse. The work of Foucault on disciplinary

power was a key factor for selecting this paradigm as he had never directly undertaken research in schools (Foucault, 1971). The study took place in four schools across Hull and the East Riding and each was known to the researcher but held different experiences about the use of the intervention. A qualitative approach was adopted with the research question focused on employing the three processes to reduce low-level disruptive behaviour. One of the key areas for concern was my positionality because as a headteacher my role carried status with pupils and teaching staff. Therefore, developing a neutral tone became an important factor to achieve neutrality as a researcher.

The research process highlighted five key areas: the evidence of low-level disruption; that continual training should support staff; a consistent approach should be adopted; the token use economy was essential; self-regulation will occur if the processes are followed consistently. From the outset of this study it was proposed to interview pupils but after reflection of comments from the ethics committee it was decided to focus on interviewing teachers and leaders. This consideration meant that the approach adopted was case study format in school 1 and in schools 2, 3, 4 an action research approach was adopted. The methods employed were semi-structured interviews with a classroom observation. The use of semi-structured interviews ensured consistency of questioning and supported the importance of maintaining reliability, furthermore this provided the prospect to develop and acquire other thoughts ensuring the interviews became a 'conversation with a purpose' (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001: 2). During the observations the focus centred on observing learning behaviour - the adults and pupils working together establishing the reasons for any low-level behaviour that occurred. The teachers were aware of the reasons for my presence, but the pupils saw me as a figure at the rear of the class. The basis of what was observed was used as a discussion with the questions in the interviews.

6.2 Summary of results

In total ten participants were interviewed over a three-month period in four schools. In school 1 the case study approach involved interviewing the staff because the intervention had been in place and developed over eight years. In

the other schools an action research approach supported the interviews with feedback and follow-up observations, leading to refining teacher practice of the intervention. The main reason for this was that schools 2, 3, 4 had little experience of working consistently with the intervention. The teachers selected were either newly qualified teachers or experienced teachers with four or more years teaching experience.

The research was able to demonstrate that if the intervention was followed in a consistent manner with continual support and training for the teachers, it would support a reduction in low-level disruptive behaviour in primary classrooms. In addition, towards the end of the study pupils were developing self-regulatory habits; this was because the teachers were maintaining a consistent approach. One of the sub-research questions related to whether the three processes could be successful if they were researched separately, however this was not undertaken, perhaps this could be explored in a future study? The role of Foucault's theory of disciplinary power was considered.

6.3 Discussion of results

This research demonstrates on the scale it was employed that the three processes could reduce the impact of low-level disruptive behaviour in primary classrooms. My belief is that blending the three processes into one system that can be replicated is new knowledge, in particular when employed to signpost LLD behaviour. For this intervention to be successful the teachers were required to follow it consistently in the manner set out with continual training on each separate process. Teachers needed to understand that the use of token economy and praise was a supportive measure working in conjunction with scripted behaviour language and traffic lights. Initially, the teachers needed to be trained more on how to approach the traffic light colours to ensure pupils' names were moved back to green as soon as the desired behaviour was shown. In addition, teachers needed to be reminded to use praise to support pupils once they had demonstrated the desired behaviour. In fact, praise statements coupled with a token economy were a key feature arising from the research; pupils responded positively if the teachers used frequent praise or tokens. However, the role of

Foucault's disciplinary power required greater research to understand the nature of power relationships inherent in the classroom.

The issues surrounding the decision not to interview pupils probably worked against this area of the study, but I believe that new learning behaviour discourse was created through the manner in which teachers applied a consistent approach to promote repetitive processes to support pupils to remain on task in the classroom. Linking Foucault's theory provided a new way of looking at the same problem and is to my knowledge unique. Over the life of the study it was clear that pupils began to develop self-regulatory practices and the evidence suggests they become familiar and accustomed to its regularity and use. As the study developed pupils demonstrated less LLD behaviour and the teachers noted how quickly their classes were able to get on task or continue to work with self-regulation observed. The teaching staff acknowledged pupils responded more positively when they were consistent which is an important aspect of the study. The three processes remain a fixed trait in any setting that they could be embedded in; it is my belief that the repetition develops self-regulation and the familiarity is a safe space for pupils. When used consistently all of the pupils began to respond positively to the three processes to the point where their classroom behaviour improved. It is my belief the processes became the surveillance technique or Panoptican. At the school that had spent a considerable time working with the three processes there was evidence that there was a significant reduction in LLD behaviour as a result. Any future research would benefit from a pupil centred approach where the subject of power and its relationship with adults is explored in greater depth. The study set out to reduce the impact of low-level disruptive behaviour in primary classrooms and it is my belief that the intervention is able to do this. Similarly, the fact that pupils worked with the three processes which resulted in a reduction of LLD behaviour suggests that learning behaviour discourse was created as they developed a positive relationship with the class teacher and became positive agents for change. The constant repetition supported the development of self-regulation.

6.4 Expanded recommendations

Having spent a considerable period of time researching this topic it is my belief that the intervention could produce successful outcomes to support a reduction in low-level disruptive behaviour in primary classrooms. If the study was taken forward I would recommend three areas to research.

Firstly, this study would benefit from being undertaken with other professionals to understand if it could produce similar results. For example, working with an ITT provider to establish with students if the processes support confidence in approaching teaching practice. The outcome could be developed in any NQT training programme to support teachers to address LLD behaviour. Students would need to be trained on the socio-demographic of the city that they are training in to ascertain the social deprivation or cultural differences. The potential exists to form a relationship with an institution working alongside programme directors to develop a behaviour training toolbox making contact via research schools and super teaching school hubs (Department for Education, 2020). An opportunity exists to approach the Education Endowment Foundation to trial the study on a larger scale with a wider range of settings and teachers to understand if the three processes could be replicated.

Secondly, it would be useful to undertake the study in Hull with all of the primary schools to understand if the approach could be replicated and it would be interesting to undertake this study in other settings in a range of different areas and contexts. Having taken the time to review each behaviour policy of Hull schools, the potential exists to create a standard protocol to support all stages of professionals, perhaps working with schools that have been identified for having problems with behaviour management; using exclusion data to identify them. Each school would undergo a behaviour audit and initial staff meeting on the three processes with follow-up observations and interviews. There is further opportunity to undertake this research in different regions or with other trusts or schools of varying contexts to understand if the three processes produce similar outcomes.

Finally, this research would have benefitted from being undertaken over a longer period of time with greater focus on interviewing pupils to understand their reasons and rationale behind exhibiting low-level disruptive behaviour, particularly to explore the subject and relationship of power. An area for deeper focus would have involved gathering individual pupil views of their LLD behaviour to understand the reasons that sit behind its production. This recommendation has the potential to include the work of Foucault and the theory of disciplinary power. As a new researcher this area is interesting to me as I believe that it could be developed in to a PhD with a focus on the inherent power relationships that exist in schools. As well as interviewing pupils it would be interesting to interview staff alongside them to understand the dynamics of low-level disruptive behaviour.

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