School Exclusions and Pupil Identities

Jean Ewart Kane

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Applied Social Sciences

University of Glasgow

May, 2007

Abstract

National statistics on school exclusions published annually by the Scottish Executive indicate the over-representation of particular groups within the whole group of those excluded. Boys, for example, in 1999/2000 accounted for 92% of exclusions from primary school, 79% from secondary schools and 87% from special schools. Children living in poverty (as indicated by receipt of free school meals), children who are Looked After and children with Records of Needs also experience a disproportionate rate of exclusion from school. The practice of exclusion, and particularly the exclusion of very disadvantaged groups, was seen to be at odds with the broad policy pursuit of social justice in Scotland.

Official and policy accounts of school exclusion were explored and tensions found between social policy constructions of exclusion and school policy. The latter was rooted in understandings of challenging behaviour as an additional support need or as a problem of school functioning. Not only were these discourses in tension with each other, resulting in inconsistencies in practice, but both also ignored the social and cultural factors structuring school exclusion statistics. In the first empirical phase of the research, key informant interviews were used to probe professional and personal experience of exclusion, to contrast these with official views, and to inform the main phase of the investigation. The second, main phase of the research used a case-study sample of twenty excluded pupils in four secondary schools to investigate inequitable patterns of exclusion. Data was gathered from classroom observation, from school documentation and from interviews with pupils, parents and school staff. The main focus of the enquiry was the social identities of excluded pupils. The thesis shows how the negotiation of those identities was tied up with their exclusion from school.

Gender was a main category of analysis in this research, and especially masculine identities since boys were so predominant in exclusion statistics. Masculinities and femininities were shown to be intersected by other forms of identity and most forms of identity to be underpinned by social class. The thesis argues that school exclusions are not just an indicator of wider social exclusion but an effect of policy which pursues social justice without fair distribution of social and economic benefits. Structural inequality has ensured that children and families are differentially positioned to schooling and has limited the scope of schools in fostering engagement with schooling. Increased participation, particularly in curriculum planning, is nevertheless a worthwhile and realistic aim for schools seeking to minimize school exclusion.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Preliminary Note

Stages of schooling in Scotland

The span of primary schooling in Scotland is from 5 years to 12 years and compulsory secondary schooling is from 12 years to 16 years. The stages of schooling correspond to age and are termed P1 – P7 and S1 – S4.

Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks

The 5-14 Curriculum covers that age range and is assessed at 6 levels of attainment from Level A which would be attained by most pupils in P2 to Level F which is attained by some in S2.

Pupils in S3 and S4 generally follow Standard Grade courses leading at the end of S4 to awards at three levels: Credit, General and Foundation. Many schools organise S3 and S4 classes using these three bands of 'ability'.

Acknowledgement

First, I would like to thank the pupils, parents and staff who were involved in this research. Their time, interest and insights were invaluable. A great many people helped with the arrangements for access and data gathering and their support for the research enabled it to go ahead in the first place.

I owe a great deal to my two supervisors, Sheila Riddell and Nick Watson. Both gave freely of their expertise, their time and their support. I am very grateful to them.

The research was sponsored by the Faculty of Education, University of Glasgow. The financial assistance I received for the transcription of interviews is gratefully acknowledged. Two colleagues, Lucinda Dempsie and Pam Luthwood, carried out the transcription and I would like to thank them for all their work. Thanks also go to my colleagues in the Faculty for their preparedness to read and comment on drafts of this thesis.

When help was particularly needed with the presentation of this thesis, Gillian MacIntyre and Liz Turner came to the rescue. Thank you.

Finally, I would like to thank Danny, Eilidh and James who have brightened some difficult times with their interest, encouragement and very practical support.

Chapter 1

Origins and aims of the research

1.1 Pupil indiscipline

Why are some pupils excluded from school? Pupil behaviour has been the focus of much debate in public policy and by teachers' trade unions. The popular press, for example, contributed many column inches to the issue. These debates revealed polarised views of pupil behaviour. On the one hand were those who argued that some pupils did not deserve to be in school; their behaviour was considered to be so bad that they had forfeited the right to be educated with their peers, whose attainment they were seen to be jeopardising by their disruptive behaviour. This position was supported by fears that 'bad' pupils would impact on the academic standards of the school. On the other hand were those who adopted a more compassionate view that challenging pupil behaviour was linked to social disadvantage and that participation in education was an important means of improving the life chances of very disadvantaged groups. Policy has been trying to straddle these views and has conveyed mixed messages. Exclusions were endorsed and the attempt to reduce them through a target-setting exercise was abandoned, with a resulting rise in exclusions in 2003/04 (Scottish Executive, 2005). At odds with this endorsement of exclusions, the government's social inclusion policy characterised education as a means of re-connecting disadvantaged young people and their families to the mainstream through, for example, the New Community Schools initiative (Scottish Office, 1998). A further policy trend towards school inclusion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) was also at odds with the practice of excluding some pupils, so why does this practice continue?

Whilst debates about pupil behaviour have been going on for decades, the 1990s saw increasing political concern about rising levels of exclusion from school. There were reported public and professional fears about rising indiscipline. The Herald (20/6/2001) commented:

> Pupil indiscipline is a growing problem in Scottish schools, particularly in secondaries. The Scottish education minister confirmed as much yesterday when he painted a bleak picture of how the behaviour of pupils had deteriorated during his time as a teacher and since he left the profession. He had also witnessed a decline in respect for teachers among pupils and in the wider community. Teachers would concur. (The Herald, 20/6/01)

This quotation is drawn from an editorial welcoming the publication of the report of the Scottish Executive Education Department's Discipline Task Group, set up in 2000 and chaired by the then minister for education, Jack McConnell. The Task Group was intended to address the *'growing problem'* of pupil indiscipline. Its report *Better Behaviour Better Learning*, produced in June 2001 (Scottish Executive, 2001), offered 36 recommendations. The Scottish Executive committed itself to additional funding for classroom assistants and auxiliaries; funding was found for new posts of home/school link workers; and schools were provided with scope for increased curricular flexibility. Action required of schools included the promotion of positive behaviour and the improvement of school ethos; the implementation of a dress code for pupils, the increased involvement of parents; and the placing of pupils at the centre of structures in school by offering improved scope for their support. The associated Action Plan established a timescale for implementation which would see all recommendations addressed by 2003. The report was welcomed by the main teachers' union in Scotland, the Educational Institute of Scotland, whose General Secretary endorsed the recommendations and urged that they be pursued in full through proper funding arrangements (SEJ, February, 2002).

Despite this, two years later and in a special feature reporting on particular success stories in improving discipline, The Herald (4/6/2003) commented:

> *Achievements like that stand out spectacularly at a time when indiscipline in schools is a cause for widespread concern. A poll by The Herald yesterday suggested that nearly 80% of people believe it is a serious problem. Answering back, swearing and surly behaviour is commonplace in many schools – primary and secondary – and Scottish Executive figures suggest that violence against teachers is on the rise. (The Herald, 4/6/2003)*

Public and professional misgivings continued. The response from the Scottish Executive was to commission a survey of teachers' perceptions of indiscipline (Munn, 2004). The report of that survey found that teachers saw pupil misbehaviour as having deteriorated in the fourteen years since a similar study was undertaken by the same researchers. Reporting on the second survey, The Herald (5/10/04) notes:

> *The findings are not so promising. The researchers here found an increasing number of secondary teachers reporting a range of potentially disruptive behaviour in school. More than 70% of headteachers said they had to deal with physical and verbal aggression between pupils each week. More than two-thirds of heads said they had to deal with verbal abuse by pupils against them or their staff weekly. (The Herald, 5/10/04)*

In his reply to the survey, Peter Peacock, education minister in the Scottish Executive, was reported as acknowledging that 'societal change is presenting additional challenges to our school system'. Alongside the school development approaches of *Better Behaviour Better Learning*, then, there was government acknowledgement that at least some of the factors causing indiscipline lay outwith the school system.

Better Behaviour Better Learning makes no mention of gender, social class, ethnicity or any other form of pupil identity. The report is firmly contextualised in the school improvement orthodoxy which has dominated policy and practice in Scottish education and elsewhere in the UK for two decades. The School Improvement Movement (SIM) derives from a seminal study published in 1979, where Rutter et al identified that schools serving similar catchment areas can have very different outcomes and that an effective school is *'one which is susceptible to change'* (Rutter et al, 1979:203). In other words, schools should pursue programmes of continuous improvement. Since then, many policy initiatives in education have utilised the concept of school improvement in pursuit of objectives such as raising attainment, increasing educational inclusion and reducing exclusion (Ainscow, 1993). Rutter's work challenged earlier social determinism in relation to the impact of education on the lives of children and young people. It showed that schools matter and, perhaps more influentially, that schools can change for the better. The messages from the SIM are highly attractive to policymakers and professionals seeking to make an impact. The SIM has had such a grip on education policy because it offered the possibility of better educational outcomes for pupils without the need to tackle deeply intractable problems of social class and educational inequality, what Reay (2006) has termed *'the zombie stalking English schools'*. For a wider public, school improvement messages allowed economic, social, and cultural factors to be marginalized in educational debates, sometimes even to be characterized as mere excuses for educational failure. SIM may have increased the effectiveness of schools by improving the outcomes of schooling, but it has not delivered greater equity for pupils. As schools have raised standards overall, the gap between the highest and the lowest attainers has increased. Social inequality has been untouched by the SIM, and its influence on school policy such as *Better Behaviour, Better Learning* places that policy at odds with broader social policy which at least affords recognition to the claims of particular social and cultural groups in the pursuit of social justice.

1.2 Policy context

Peter Peacock's allusion to wider social factors as the possible cause of rising indiscipline was not reflected in the Scottish Executive's policy on school discipline but it did relate to the wider social policy of New Labour. Both the Scottish Executive and the UK parliaments had set up Social Exclusion Policy Units and, in November 1999, the Scottish Executive issued a new Report *'Social justice....a Scotland where everyone matters'* (Scottish Executive, 1999). The report was intended to provide a framework of targets (long-term aims) and milestones (short-term objectives) to enable judgements about progress towards social inclusion. Targets were aimed at, for example, ending child poverty, increasing the educational attainments of school leavers and increasing the financial security of older people. Amongst the shorter-term milestones were reductions in the number of exclusions from school. The link had thus been established between school exclusions and national policy priorities in relation to social inclusion. For New Labour school exclusion both manifested and exacerbated social exclusion and a reduction in school exclusions was a means of pursuing social inclusion (Scottish Executive, 1999). Initially, reductions in school exclusions were to be achieved through a target-setting exercise whereby a year on year decrease would be required of schools and local authorities. There had been fears that the exercise would lead to schools adopting a number of tactics to manipulate the returns, for example, through greater use of 'internal exclusions' (Munn, Lloyd and Cullen, 2000), but exclusions actually rose during the target-setting phase. Target-setting for schools was ceased in November 2003. During the following session exclusions increased again with 2003/04 showing a 7% increase on the previous session (SEED, 2005). Political response to concerns about indiscipline had over-ridden social inclusion strategy and had revealed tensions between educational and broader social policy.

This contradiction between school discipline policy, which included the use of exclusion and social inclusion policy was particularly pointed because the young people most vulnerable to social exclusion were also most likely to be excluded from school. Exclusion statistics in Scotland for 2003/04 (SEED, 2005) show that a number of social groups were over-represented in the whole group of pupils who were formally excluded. For example, comparison with the overall school population shows that pupils living in poverty, as indicated by their entitlement to free school meals, were more than twice as likely as other pupils to be excluded. . Pupils 'looked after' by the local authority were five times more likely to be excluded. Boys, in particular, were over-represented. In the 2003/04 session, they accounted for 79% of all exclusions, a proportion of the total which has remained

remarkably consistent since exclusion statistics were first published in Scotland in 2000 for session 1998/99. Over the six years of their publication, those exclusion statistics show the gender balance in exclusions to be stable overall with excluded boys outnumbering excluded girls by a 4:1 ratio. (SEED; 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005).

Interestingly, the exclusion rates for one other group point up a further policy tension between the practice of exclusion and other aspects of policy, namely the policy impetus towards the educational inclusion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Secondary pupils with a Record of Need or an Individualised Education Plan were shown by the same statistics to be three times more likely to be excluded than other pupils, this in spite of the fact that 'mainstreaming' was high on the policy agendas of Scottish and UK governments. There is also a considerable legal imperative towards the rights of the child. The Children (Scotland) Act (1996), whilst not specifically an education act, emphasised children's right to have a say in matters affecting them. This could have implications for school placements, for example, although there is little evidence of this occurring. Recent education legislation, the Standards in Scotland's Schools, etc (Scotland) Act 2000, codified the rights of all pupils to be included in mainstream schools. Section 15 of that Act required that local authorities (LAs) provide schooling in mainstream settings unless an exception could be made under any one of three stipulated categories. The categories of exception were:

- that the mainstream school would not be suited to the ability or aptitude of the child;

- would be incompatible with the efficient education of the children with whom the child would be educated; or

- would result in unreasonable public expenditure being incurred which would not normally be incurred.

The Standards in Scotland's Schools, etc (Scotland) Act was intended to establish a *'presumption of mainstream'* but the three categories of exception allowed plenty of scope for schools and LAs to argue against the mainstreaming of particular pupils. Any one of the categories could be used to initiate or perpetuate exclusion but the second category in particular provided a strong rationale for the exclusion of pupils on grounds of unacceptable behaviour.

A further Act commenced in November 2005, the Education (Additional Support for Learning)(Scotland) Act 2004, encompassed a much broader range of pupils as meriting additional educational support and, crucially, viewed pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) as part of the additional support needs (ASN) clientele along with other groups new to this form of statutory provision, such as children from the Gypsy/traveller community and children assessed as having high levels of ability. After full implementation, the population viewed as having ASN will be larger than the population noted as having special educational needs. However, most pupils with ASN will be provided for from within the schools' resources and through the mechanism of an IEP. A much smaller section of the whole ASN population will be accorded a coordinated support plan (CSP) whereby additional support will be provided by agencies external to the school.

Recent legislation stipulated that pupils with SEBD were legally entitled to planned and structured support from the school, supplemented in some cases by wider resources. This seemed to signal a move away from an ambivalent situation where many pupils identified as having SEBD did not have Records of Need (RoN). Indeed, even where such pupils were educated in special schools and units, LAs were reluctant to open RoNs. Will recent legislation broaden the group of pupils deemed to have additional support needs because of their behaviour? There are resource implications here but, in addition, the new legal framework does not sit easily with the practice of exclusion, nor with professional and public perceptions of 'indiscipline'. How will schools distinguish between, on the one hand, behaviour difficulties which merit additional support and, on the other hand, 'indiscipline' which deserves punishment and exclusion? What constructs of behaviour will be influential here? Very attractive to schools and LAs will be constructs which allow a narrowing of the group identified as having SEBD and which create a distinction between behaviour deserving support and behaviour deserving punishment. One such useful construct has emerged through the medicalisation of SEBD. Diagnoses of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) have increased, allowing the application of a medical label to some whilst enabling the challenging behaviour of others to be construed as 'indiscipline'. In either event, exclusion is a possibility; indiscipline may lead to formal exclusion from school whilst an SEBD/ADHD label may result in placement in a special school or unit. Scottish Executive statistics show that even though the number of pupils in special schools had declined

between 1999 and 2004 from 7920 to 7010 (Scottish Executive, 2005: 65), the number of special schools had increased from 151 to 183 (Scottish Executive, 2005: 64).

The over-representation of some groups in exclusion statistics is not addressed by the pathologising of behaviour difficulties. What is clearly lacking in prevailing policy constructs of challenging behaviour is an analysis which allows the demography of school exclusions to be considered. This is what this work aimed to provide. The endeavour was rooted in concerns about schools' capacity for social justice when some of the most vulnerable of Scotland's children appear to be more likely than most to be excluded. The concept of social justice recognises that inequality arises from not only economic status but also from cultural identities which are misrecognised or disparaged. This study considers two forms of identity in particular, social class and gender identities, and is concerned to analyse the intersections of these two aspects of identity.

1.3 Aims, research questions and methods of enquiry

The research aimed:

- to investigate gender, social class and other forms of identity as factors in formal exclusions from school

- to explore differences in the ways in which schools impacted upon the identities of different gender and social class groups and to relate those differences to school exclusions

- to explore how schools might further develop the means of reducing exclusions.

In pursuing these aims the following questions were addressed:

- How are the behaviours leading to exclusion understood in policy and in school systems?

- How do the negotiation of gender and class identities in school settings relate to exclusion from school?

- What other social and cultural aspects of pupils' lives contribute to exclusion from school? How?

- How far are excluded pupils exercising agency in the processes leading to their exclusion?

- What are the relative influences of school and wider social factors in shaping the gender and class identities of young people? How do these influences impact on one another?

- How can school provision be developed in ways that reduce exclusion?

Official views of exclusions were sought from policy documentation but these were extended and 'thickened' through a series of key informant interviews. Conflicting views emerged, which deepened the analysis of the practice of exclusions. Emerging themes from this first phase of the research were pursued through the main fieldwork phase. Pupils' identities were central to this enquiry and in this second phase case studies were used as the method most likely to allow study of pupils' experiences 'in the round', capturing pupils' perspectives of the social and cultural factors shaping their lives and impacting on their engagement with schooling. Case studies were built up using data from interviews with pupils, parents and staff in schools, classroom observation and pupils' behaviour referral records. The two fieldwork phases of the research, key informant interviews and case studies, were conducted consecutively and together form the central part of the thesis.

As previously noted, scrutiny of policy identified contrasting perspectives on pupil indiscipline. The background to the study is now widened revealing further discords and tensions in public and professional discourses about indiscipline and exclusion.

1.4 Public and professional perspectives

The discordancy in the policy discourses related to school exclusion are explained by a clash between government need to pursue its flagship social policy of social inclusion whilst, at the same time, appeasing public and professional panic about incesasing indiscipline. Government had identified education as a main vehicle for social inclusion. In contrast, teachers identified social exclusion as the cause of indiscipline. The solution for government – participation in schooling as a means towards social inclusion – constituted the problem for some sections of the teaching profession. Newspaper coverage sought to convey this. For example, n an article entitled *Inclusion has become a dogma.......It's a mistake, The Sunday Herald* (16/1/05) explained that a selection of Scottish primary teachers had kept discipline diaries for four weeks at the end of 2004. The diaries, the

article claimed, were filled with hundreds of incidents of bad behaviour ranging from the minor – like a child repeatedly talking when s/he has been told to keep quiet – to chilling experiences such as threatened assault. One teacher was quoted as saying:

> *I'm teaching a P7 class....there are three boys who have been nightmarish since P4. They are violent and abusive to me and their classmates, come from damaged homes and are frankly uncontrollable. I know that the school is just hanging on to them until the end of P7. That means it is the secondary school which is left to pick up the pieces. We don't have to expel them so we don't look bad. (Sunday Herald, 16/1/05)*

The image of teachers struggling to maintain control of pupils in ordinary mainstream schools rather than exclude them was common in media accounts.

There was tension then between government and professional perceptions of how far schools could and should be used as vehicles for social inclusion. Two agendas were confused in media accounts; social inclusion initiatives were identified with more longstanding commitments to the educational inclusion of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Drawing on an apocalyptic vision, an extract from an article in *The Sunday Herald* (16/1/05) about discipline in secondary schools demonstrated how indiscipline had been constructed as a function of the government's social inclusion policy and how that policy was distinguished from policy on educational inclusion:

> *The problem, according to most of the teachers I talked to, is the government's dedication to the policy of inclusion, a policy that many teachers privately loathe. They aren't upset by the inclusion of children with learning difficulties or physical disabilities. Quite the reverse. They believe that these children deserve and need the same education as 'ordinary' children and that 'ordinary' kids will benefit from being alongside these pupils.*
>
> *What infuriates teachers is the inclusion of youngsters with 'social and behavioural problems'. Years ago, these pupils would simply have been expelled and stuck in List D schools. No teacher I spoke to wanted a return to those days but nor do they want to see their classes and schools reduced to educational rubble.*
>
> *They realise that many of the youngsters who give them problems have been abused, come from intensely dysfunctional homes, have drug-addicted parents, spent time in care and generally lived a life that no child should have to bear. But, they argue, that just because the child is a victim, there is no reason for the school to have to pick up all the pieces. They are teachers, not psychiatrists or social workers. (Sunday Herald, 16/1/05)*

Confusion about 'mainstreaming' and social inclusion policy is evident whereby it was assumed by some that pupils were being moved into mainstream schools from the special and residential school sectors as a direct result of Scottish Executive policy, a view at odds

with the growth in the number of special schools and units since 1999 (Scottish Executive, 2005: 64). Also revealed in this extract was a belief that some pupils were deserving of inclusion whilst others were not. This implicit distinction was at odds with the revised framework for ASN which constructed young people with SEBD as among the population of pupils with additional support needs, similar to other groups of pupils with learning difficulties of various kinds.

The direction taken by educational inclusion is debated in the academic literature. Dyson (2001) queries whether government's social inclusion agenda with its emphasis on producing a highly-skilled and flexible workforce, may not, in fact, run counter to the broad principles of educational inclusion embodied in, for example, the *Index for inclusion* (Booth et al, 2000):

> *We can already see examples of schools which are socially inclusive in the Government's sense, but whose commitment to inclusion per se is ambiguous to say the least....schools serving areas of social disadvantage which have sought to drive up standards amongst their lowest attainers and to engage their most disaffected students in education not through a process of participation in shared learning experiences with their peers but through alternative curriculum and provision – perhaps outside school – an unrelenting focus on 'basic skills', a policy of 'zero tolerance' towards disruptive behaviour and so on. (Dyson, 2001: 27)*

Tension exists between government strategy of using schools as a main means of re-connecting socially excluded communities whilst providing education for some through different and sometimes separate processes. This study seeks to probe this tension by considering the experiences of twenty pupils who have been excluded from school. The extent to which their schooling can assist or otherwise with social inclusion will be addressed, as will longstanding questions related to the nature of schooling and the experience of working-class boys in particular.

1.5 Social class as a dimension of the study

Social class is a main focus for this study but class is not used as a simple category of analysis. The General Register Office for Scotland, in its online publication of Scotland's 2001 census results (http://www.scrol.gov.uk/scrol/metadata/topics/socio_economic_classification, accessed 28 November, 2005) does not use the term social class when categorizing people according to their occupation. Instead the term social grade is used and is ranked as follows:

- A Higher managerial, administrative, professional

- B Intermediate managerial, administrative, professional

- C1 Supervisory, clerical, junior management/administrative/professional

- C2 Skilled manual workers

- D Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers

- E On state benefit, unemployed, lowest grade workers

The families of most of the pupils in this study were in social grades D and E but a more complex understanding of social class is used here to encompass the cultural identities of excluded pupils, and not just their economic circumstances.

Social class was key term used in social science literature of the 1970s and 1980s with the implicit assumption that a more just society would be achieved through the redistribution of economic and social resources. Over the past two decades, conceptualisations of social class have gone beyond distributional justice (Young, 1990; Fraser, 1997; Cribb & Gerwirtz, 2003) to encompass the notion of cultural justice and associational justice. The broader concept of social justice entails recognition and affirmation of the identities of oppressed groups, the participation of those groups in the pursuit of social justice, as well as redistributive responses to economic oppression (Fraser, 1997). The pursuit of a socially-just society has been viewed as a pluralist enterprise. The argument is that the processes of distribution, and not just the outcomes, are subject to inequalities, for example, of access to political decision-making. Material inequality is viewed as having a social and a cultural, as well as an economic dimension. By this account, cultural groups such as women, particular ethnic groups and disabled people are at a disadvantage because they are likely to experience cultural domination, non-recognition or disrespect (Goodlad & Riddell, 2003).

These new understandings of social class as having a cultural dimension have enabled a re-working of class analysis among sociologists (Reay, 1998; Ball, 2003; Skeggs, 2004). Using Bourdieu's conceptual tools of habitus, capital and field, class cultural theorists focus on class processes and practices, the everyday workings of social class, developing conceptualizations that move beyond the economic and exchange (Reay, 2006: 289).

Research studies, for example, Wilkinson, 2003; Skeggs, 2004, have demonstrated how class is made and given value through culture. Although some of this empirical work has related to school and classroom processes (Plummer, 2000; Reay and Wiliam, 1999), Reay (2006) argues that education policy and initial teacher education routinely present classrooms as classless. As previously noted, this view is borne out by Scottish Executive policy on behaviour, *Better Behaviour Better Learning*. This study will seek the reasons for the disproportionate exclusion from school of certain groups in class cultural understandings. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship between inclusion/ exclusion and the processes by which class and gendered identities are negotiated in school settings – processes bound up with working-class experience of compulsory education. Reay (2006:295) comments:

> *Despite the advent of schooling for the masses over 100 years ago, until recently schooling for the majority of the working classes remained something to be got through rather than got into. Now, ironically, the working classes have moved from a position of educational outsiders to a marginalised position of outsiders within.*

Excluded pupils could be seen as exemplifying the marginalised position of the working-class in the education system. The investigation of their exclusion will relate to wider questions of social class and educational inequality.

1.6 Conclusion

To answer the question which opened this section – Why are pupils excluded? - it would seem from newspaper coverage that pupils are excluded because this is seen by teachers and by a wider public as a necessary response to indiscipline, necessary to the continuing education of other pupils, perhaps even to the welfare of pupils and teachers. The practice of exclusion, though, is at odds with the thrust of social policy. Social factors such as gender and social class, which structure the Scottish Executive's statistical data, are invisible in policy and in related strategies. It is a contention of this study that exclusions are to be understood as bound up with the processes by which particular class and gender identities are negotiated in school settings. The study has its antecedents in an older sociology of education which sought to understand class-related inequalities in the education systems of the UK. It is argued that the same inequalities are manifested currently in exclusion and other school statistics. This investigation is informed by a view of social justice as embracing social and cultural, as well as economic factors. Attention to those social and cultural factors would lead to a more radical view of schools and schooling in the endeavour to provide more socially just outcomes.

The thesis will review literature on challenging behaviour and exclusions in school settings, relating the topic first to policy constructions and then moving on to sociological theories of class, culture and identities. These theories will also inform the methods chapter when the epistemology of the study will be associated with critical and feminist theory. The account of policy and procedures relating to exclusions will be deepened in Chapter 5 by the analysis of key informant interviews from the first phase of fieldwork. Chapter 6 provides a social context for the main fieldwork phase in schools and Chapters 7, 8, and 9 constitute the analysis of data coming from twenty case studies of excluded pupils. Findings emerging from this analysis are discussed in Chapter 10.

Chapter 2

Exclusions and challenging behaviour in schools: policy perspectives

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter located this study in a context of mounting public and professional concern about challenging behaviour in schools. Influenced by those concerns, policy endorsed exclusions, although the practice of exclusion was at odds with broader social justice policy which linked school exclusion to social exclusion. These discourses have both failed to explain the disproportionate exclusion of some cultural and social groups. Social class and gender, conspicuous in official exclusion statistics, by contrast are invisible in policy and wider accounts of challenging behaviour and exclusions. So how does policy deal with exclusions and the challenging behaviour which leads to them? Chapter 2 will address this question, first by outlining official guidelines on exclusion in Scotland and by considering policy constructions of challenging behaviour. Not all difficult pupil behaviour results in exclusion. Why is this? Some pupil behaviours, although extremely challenging for schools, are deemed to be the result of pathological factors and deserving not of a punitive approach, but of a care and welfare approach framed by additional support needs legislation (Education [Additional Support for Learning] [Scotland] Act 2004). Alongside these constructions of challenging behaviour sits broad policy on behaviour and learning in schools, *Better Behaviour, Better Learning* (SEED, 2000). This policy has been shaped by the school improvement movement (SIM) and has located problem pupil behaviour in the pathology of the school rather than the individual pupil. By this account, exclusions and other outcomes are an indicator of school effectiveness. The influence and impact of SIM-based policy will be related to exclusions. The twin tracks of policy - the individual pupil approach and the school improvement approach – sit uncomfortably with each other and equally fail to acknowledge social and cultural factors in problem behaviour. The search for these in policy will be pursued in the final section of this chapter when the discussion will be broadened to consider social policy, its treatment of social class and its representations of exclusion. The aims for this chapter, then, are threefold: to establish how school exclusions operate; to analyse how education policy constructs challenging behaviour and exclusions; and, finally, to consider the relationship between school exclusion and wider social exclusion and the representation of that in policy.

2.2 School exclusions in Scotland

2.2.1 Procedures

In Scotland, exclusions are governed by Scottish Executive Circular No 8/03 (SEED, 2003) which sets out procedures and requirements for administering and reporting exclusions. Exclusions are the most serious of the sanctions used by schools to punish those pupils who break the behaviour code of the school. Three further forms of pupil exclusion are to be found in Scottish schools. Truancy, for example, may be seen as a form of self-exclusion from the school system for girls and boys (Osler et al, 2002; Collins and Johnston-Wilder, 2005; McLaughlin, 2005) because pupils are choosing to withdraw from participation in schooling. Commentators note that pupils making this choice exercise limited agency; structural factors such as poverty shape pupils' engagement with schooling and increase the barriers to participation (Ridge, 2005). The second form of unofficial exclusion is informal exclusion, that is, unrecorded exclusion. Informal exclusions occur when pupils are sent home from school, ostensibly to provide a 'cooling off' period for the pupil and others involved in conflict, and pending discussions with the pupil's parents. Such exclusions are not recorded and it has been suggested that they are prompted less by concern for pupils' composure than by schools' desire to demonstrate low rates of exclusion in official returns (Lawrence and Hayden, 1997; Parsons, 1999; Munn et al, 1997). The third type of unofficial exclusion is 'internal' exclusion where in-school units or bases are used as an alternative to formal exclusion (Bourne et al, 1994; Cohen and Hughes, 1994). Pupils presenting challenging behaviour are sent to the unit or base for all or some of their schooling over a varying period of time. Provision in behaviour support bases differs, sometimes offering pupils constructive educational opportunities whilst at other times serving a holding or even a punitive, 'sin bin' function for pupils judged to be disruptive of ordinary lessons (Munn et al, 2000; Head et al, 2002). These three forms of unofficial exclusion are linked to each other and to official exclusions. For example, the practice of sending pupils home on an informal basis, or to a behaviour support base is used as a low-tariff response leading to higher-tariff, formal exclusion. Pupils who are formally excluded will often have previous experience of 'internal' or informal exclusion and, especially after S3, will be more likely to withdraw from schooling for all or part of the time. School exclusions peak in S3, one year before the end of compulsory schooling, and this pattern has been linked to the self-exclusion of pupils who have previously been formally excluded (Munn et al, 1997). Links between different forms of exclusion are recognised and discussed here, but this research focuses specifically on exclusions as a disciplinary response to unacceptable behaviour on the part of the pupil.

Two categories of exclusion, temporary exclusion and 'removed from the register' (of the current school), are recognized in the regulations governing school exclusions (Schools General (Scotland) Regulations, 1975). The period of exclusion for particular kinds of misbehaviour is not prescribed but Local Authorities usually place a ceiling of twenty school days on the term of the exclusion, with pupils being asked to leave the school for a period of between two days and four weeks depending upon the nature of the incident. Schools would usually develop their own 'tariff' system where offences judged to be less serious, or first misdemeanours, would be punished with periods of up to three days. The tariff would usually rise on each subsequent occasion if the pupil were judged to have again breached the disciplinary code. The lack of regulation of the period of exclusions leads to inequities with the same or similar 'offence' attracting widely differing punishments depending upon the school, the pupil, the teachers involved and other factors. While this situation leads to unfairness, it is also seen (by professionals) as having a positive side, as it allows schools to respond flexibly and in ways which take account of factors such as the personal circumstances of the pupil, as well as the seriousness of the disciplinary incident. SEED guidelines endorse the use of professional judgement:

> *Education authorities and schools, when deciding whether exclusion is necessary, must have regard to the particular facts and circumstances surrounding individual incidents and/or pupils. (SEED, 2003, 2:10)*

The second type of exclusion practised in Scotland – 'removed from the register' of the school – is utilized where the offence is regarded as serious, or where a particular pupil has had a number of previous temporary exclusions for earlier breaches of the code. In such cases and within the four-week period of the exclusion, the headteacher of the school would be invited to attend a meeting with representatives of the education authority, the pupil, his/her parents and their representatives so that the school placement offered to the pupil might be considered in a welfare as well as a disciplinary light. In spite of the intention to make the interests of the pupil central to the decision about placement, the process sometimes breaks down at this point, for example, when the alternative placement offered to the pupil and his family is unacceptable to them for reasons of distance from the family home. Pupils can therefore be out of the school system for much longer than the period of the original exclusion. The regulations in Scotland differ from those in England where three types of exclusion are practiced – 'fixed-term' (similar to 'temporary' discussed above), 'indefinite' and 'permanent'.

2.2.2 Recording and reporting of exclusions

An earlier version of exclusion guidelines, Guidance on Issues Concerning Exclusion from School: Circular 2/98 (SOEID, 1998a), placed an obligation on LAs to collect and report exclusions data on an annual basis. In July, 2000, the result of the first annual survey of school exclusions was published (SEED, 2000) and the results of subsequent surveys have been published annually since then (SEED, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007). The statistics are structured by a range of social factors: gender, stage of schooling, poverty indicators (free school meals), looked after by local authority and special educational needs (existence of a Record of Needs). It is significant that the data are organized in ways which make specific links between exclusion and factors in broader social exclusion. From 2003, statistics also included the ethnic origin of the pupils as a factor in the analysis of data. As published, SEED statistics seem to offer assistance to schools and Local Authorities in their efforts to contextualise responses to exclusions in broader social policy initiatives. The links between exclusions and social exclusion will be explored further on in this chapter.

Whilst the availability of national data has been welcomed, fears have been expressed about under-reporting of exclusions by schools (Munn et al, 2000; Stirling 1996; Blyth and Milner, 1996). As previously discussed, there are a number of ways in which the level of exclusions may be misrepresented by the school using informal or 'internal' exclusion. In addition, where there have been a number of previous incidents, parents may be persuaded to move the pupil to another school in the interests of the pupil himself (Blyth and Milner, 1996) but also preventing the need for the school to record the event as a formal exclusion. The incentive for schools to under-report exclusions has been attributed to government target-setting in the area of exclusions (Munn et al, 2000; Parsons, 1999). The exclusion guidelines were updated in 2003 (SEED Standard Circular 8/03) to drop the target-setting requirement (SEED, 2005), a move not necessarily prompted by official concern with hidden exclusions. Target-setting may have led to under-reporting of exclusions but it had also failed to stem the rising tide of reported exclusions. In 2003/04, the year during which target-setting was abandoned, exclusions rose by 7% (SEED, 2005), raising the possibility that the dropping of target-setting was a political response to a failed policy initiative and not an attempt to encourage openness in the reporting of exclusions. In England, target setting did reduce exclusions but commentators (Hayden, 1997; Ball et al, 1998) saw the reductions achieved by the target-setting exercise in one area as outweighed by the overall

pressure to meet attainment targets and by the exclusionary culture thus created in classrooms and schools:

> *The introduction of published league tables of examination results and other indicators of performance in schools has created a climate less likely to be sympathetic to children not only producing no positive contribution to these indicators, but who may also prevent others from doing so. (Hayden, 1997: 8)*

The impact of quasi-market systems was viewed as exacerbating exclusion from school, even where such approaches were used specifically to reduce the number of exclusions.

2.2.3 Extent of exclusions and reasons for exclusion

Around 3% of Scottish pupils are excluded annually. The demography of exclusion statistics has varied little year on year and so it is possible to take one session as illustrative of overall patterns (SEED, 2005). For example, in the 2003/04 school session, 21,000 different pupils were excluded with the total number of exclusions amounting to 38,919 of which 176 were exclusions leading to removal from the register of the school concerned. Of the 21,000 pupils who were excluded, 61% were excluded on only one occasion, 19% were excluded on two occasions and 20%, that is about 4,000 pupils, experienced multiple exclusions in the course of one school session. Exclusion rates very greatly between sectors with 86% of exclusions arising in secondary schools, 11% in primary schools and 3% in special schools. Exclusion rates rise throughout Primary 1 to Secondary 2, peaking in S3. Pupils entitled to free school meals, those with additional support needs and those looked after by the local authority all had higher exclusion rates than other pupils. Boys accounted for 79% of exclusions in the 2003/04 session and the overall gender ratio of 4 male exclusions to1 female exclusion has been a consistent feature of published statistics.

In addition, statistical data has shown the link between school exclusions and poverty - children registered for free school meals (FSMs) in Scotland are two and a half times more likely to be excluded (SEED, 2005). FSMs are used as a key indicator of poverty, for example, in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, and are commonly correlated with attainment and attendance, as well as with exclusions. Scottish Executive statistics on FSMs have been further refined recently (Scottish Executive, 2005) in recognition of the disparities between entitlement, registration and uptake. Entitlement is accorded to children/young people themselves or in families in receipt of Income Support or Income-based Jobseekers Allowance or receiving Child Tax Credit and who have an annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) of below £13,480. The statistics themselves reveal a little of young people's attitudes to poverty in the variation between entitlement

for FSMs, registration for FSMs and actual take-up. The Scottish Executive's Statistical Publications Notice - Education Series (2005) showed that whilst 19% of the pupil population were eligible for FSMs, 17% of the population were registered and, on the survey day, 12% actually took a FSM, that is, 67% of those eligible. Some of the gap between eligibility and actual uptake will be accounted for by non-attendance, perhaps even by exclusion, but it will also be explained by pupils' unwillingness to identify themselves as eligible. Thus, policies to support participation in schooling can themselves be stigmatising (Ridge, 2005).

A number of commentators have discussed the impact of poverty on the lives of children and particularly on their experience of school (Reay, 1998, Ridge, 2005). Its exclusionary effect on young people has been identified; the economic restrictions of some pupils' lives preventing full participation. For example, a number of school social activities such as excursions demand expenditure. In addition, Ridge points to institutional practices such as the requirement for uniform and particular kinds of equipment as causing pressure for some school pupils. Sometimes, these requirements are concealed from families through children's desire to protect parents from knowledge of their children's experience of poverty. Thus, poverty prevents full participation in schooling and has been noted by a number of commentators as a factor in withdrawal or self exclusion from school, forms of exclusion particularly affecting girls. Young people's own views of the impact of poverty are still relatively under-researched:

> *Although we have an abundance of statistical data that can tell us how many children are poor and for how long .....we still have little understanding of what poverty means for children, or how they interpret its presence in their lives. (Ridge, 2005: 23)*

Young people and children are excluded for widely different reasons – sometimes even for non-attendance (Cooper et al, 2000). SEED statistics on school exclusions (SEED, 2001) offer information on the circumstances prompting exclusion. Of the total number of exclusions, 25% (n=8,402) were recorded as being the result of 'general or persistent disobedience', 22% (n= 6,794) were for verbal abuse of members of staff and 14% (n= 5,521) were for the physical abuse of fellow pupils. These three categories are the most frequent reasons for exclusion but the statistics show a range of other categories of behaviour leading to exclusion such as 'aggressive or threatening behaviour' (12% or n= 4,497); 'insolent or offensive behaviour' (11% or n= 4,289) and physical abuse of members of staff (4% or n= 1,660).

Comparisons with England are difficult for only permanent exclusion statistics are gathered and collated there. This is surprising because, if the Scottish experience is anything to go by, temporary or 'fixed-term' exclusions account for far more lost school time. Some figures are available, though. For example, the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) of the UK government, reporting on a survey in one large local authority, uses different categories for recording the reasons for exclusion but records that the single most common reason in England is cited as 'bullying, fighting and assaults on peers' (SEU, 2002) and that reason accounts for 30.1% of exclusions in the LEA in question.

There is no right of appeal at the point of exclusion but the excluded pupil and his family can institute an appeal to the education authority during the period of the exclusion. Few families take up that option. In the session 1999/2000, only 0.3% of exclusions were appealed against (SEED, 2001).

2.2.4 Violence in schools

During the 1990s, the Scottish Executive and teachers' trade unions and professional associations had become increasingly concerned by the perception that staff members in schools, as in other areas of public service, were experiencing increased violence and anti-social behaviour. Circular 5/97 (SOEID, 1997) updated in 2003, established guidance on the monitoring of violence against staff and defined anti-social behaviour and violence as:

> *Any incident in which an employee of a school is seriously verbally or physically abused, threatened, attacked or harassed by a pupil, parent, member of the public or any other person in circumstances arising out of the course of his/her employment. This includes any statement or action that causes the member of staff to fear for their safety, the safety of another, the school or for personal property. (SEED, 1997)*

The gathering of such data allowed the publication of statistics relating to violence against members of staff (SOEID, 2003).

Brown (2005:64) discusses understandings of violence and noted that, over the previous ten years, the boundaries of what was considered as harmful behaviour have expanded considerably to include new categories such as being ostracised by the social group, name-calling and 'dirty looks'. The expansion of the term 'aggression' has been fostered by a swelling of research interest in topics such as bullying which has application beyond the educational sphere. The expansion of the definition of aggression has necessarily entailed

gender as a category for consideration (Batchelor et al, 2001; Burman et al, 2003) since some forms of aggression such as 'relational aggression' and 'social aggression' have traditionally been associated with feminine behaviour. Smith and Thomas (2000), in considering girls' violence, distinguished between 'violent' and 'non-violent' girls, categorising participants in their study according to criteria such as exclusion for bringing a weapon into school or having been referred within the youth justice system for a violent act.

2.2.5 Effects of school exclusion

The cumulative effect on individuals of exclusions is difficult to gauge from official statistics. For example, although statistics (SEED, 2005) show that 20% of those excluded in 2003/2004 were excluded three times or more during that session, the duration of their exclusions is not shown. It is not possible, therefore, to quantify the total number of school days lost to individual pupils in that session. This is unfortunate when the repeated and lengthening exclusion of some individuals is likely to indicate a higher level of social exclusion than that prevailing amongst the 61% of excluded pupils in Scotland who were excluded just once during that same session (SEED, 2005). This point will be pursued in the analysis of the case studies when the total amount of schooling lost by those excluded pupils will be considered in terms of the individual's experience. In England, concern about the repeated exclusion of a number of pupils led to the amendment of the exclusion regulations (Education (No. 2) Act, 1993) by the Standards and Framework Act (DFEE, 1998) which limited the aggregate number of fixed-term exclusions possible for an individual pupil to 45 days per school session. Whilst the specification of a ceiling to temporary exclusions might be desirable, Macrae at al (2003) point out that 9 weeks is a significant proportion of time in a school year of 40 weeks.

Commentators (Munn at al, 1997; Munn et al, 2000; McDonald & Thomas, 2003) have written of the personal impact of school exclusion not just on pupils but on their families. In these studies, parents are reported as experiencing a strong sense of powerlessness and hurt as a result of their child's exclusion from school. McDonald and Thomas (2003) found that negative experiences of school were intensified when the parents concerned were those of pupils who were excluded. The parents in MacDonald and Thomas's study felt that they had no voice in the processes leading to exclusion and neither did their children. They were unable to influence the dominant discourse of the school and therefore could not effect any change to the power relations within the schooling system. Munn et al (1997) revealed that exclusion generated mutual distrust between home and school. All pupils in that study indicated that their exclusion had made their parents angry and there

were examples of parents or staff feeling that they had been let down or betrayed by some statement or apparent non-cooperation on the part of the other (Munn et al, 1997:6). A key issue for excluded pupils and their families in these studies was the fairness or otherwise of the exclusion:

> *Pupils were conscious that they got labeled as troublemakers and as a consequence got picked on. Pupils who came from the 'wrong part of town' perceived teachers as more likely to pick on them for that reason (Munn et al, 1997: 5)*

Also contributing to pupils' perceptions of unfairness was the belief that they were judged according to the behaviour of older siblings (Munn et al, 2000). Are pupils' and parents' concerns about fairness justified? Is there consistency in understandings of challenging behaviour and in official responses to it? Having discussed exclusions in Scotland the next section will consider how challenging behaviour is framed in policy and how those constructions relate to exclusion from school.

2.3 Policy constructions of challenging behaviour

Policy and school responses to challenging behaviour have been framed by understandings of special educational needs (more recently in Scotland, additional support needs) and of school effectiveness and improvement. The nomenclature used to identify the group of pupils with behavioural difficulties reveals an ideology about this group. On the one hand the term social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) is used, denoting a sub-category of special educational needs. The term SEBD is a development of EBD from the Warnock Report (DES, 1978) and replaced 'maladjustment', one of the categories of handicap established as a result of the 1944 Education Act. On the other hand, the term deviant has also been applied to the group of pupils whose behaviour challenges the purposes, procedures and values of school. The different terms represent very different ways of conceptualising these difficulties – a contrast which is apparent in policy and in forms of provision and which has led to some anomalies in practice. Neither discourse acknowledges gender or social class as factors in pupil behaviour. Some commentators have attempted to trace these alternative – and sometimes competing - discourses in the language and professional practices operating around behaviour support and exclusions (MacLeod and Munn, 2004; Watson, 2005). For example, it is argued that there are tensions between viewing some young people as having 'needs' and others as requiring correction, between policy and school responses framed by welfare and others by 'the will

to punish' (Parsons, 2005). Challenging behaviour will be considered here within these two policy discourses, beginning with individualized and pathologised constructions.

2.3.1 Challenging behaviour as individual deficit

Policy and legal framework

Attempts to establish a suitable curriculum for the whole group of pupils with ASN/SEN have been marked by, on the one hand, a desire to ensure the entitlement of those pupils within a common curriculum framework whilst, on the other hand, ensuring appropriate and targeted support for individual pupils. Issues of commonality in the curriculum framework, and of breadth and balance in the curricular experience of pupils with SEN, were addressed by the introduction in the early 1990s of the 5 – 14 Curriculum with its accompanying *5 – 14 Support for Learning* pack. Teachers were offered a range of strategies to enable the planning of a suitable curriculum for individual pupils whilst ensuring that pupils' learning was framed by the national curriculum guidelines. The curriculum planning mechanism was an individualized education programme (IEP). The Warnock Report (DES,1978) had referred to *'educational programmes for individual children'* (11.15: 209) and emphasised the importance of planning long- and short-term learning objectives for all children with special educational needs (SEN) in a range of curricular domains. More recently in Scotland, IEPs had become a mechanism for raising and monitoring standards, as well as a tool for ensuring the curriculum entitlement and progression of pupils with SEN. Following the framework set out in the paper *Setting Standards – Raising Standards in Schools* (SOEID, 1998b), it was decided to set targets for schools in relation to the 5 – 14 programme and SQA awards and in 1998 support packs were produced and circulated to all schools. It was intended to include children with SEN in the target-setting initiative and the paper *Raising Standards: Setting Targets for Pupils with Special Educational Needs* (SOEID, 1999) described how this was to be done. In November 1999, a support pack in relation to special educational needs was produced and circulated to all schools (*Raising Standards – Setting Targets Support Pack: Special Educational Needs*, SEED, 1999).

The support pack provided to schools clarified the purpose of target-setting as a means of improving planning, assisting with self-evaluation and focusing schools on key aspects of their provision (learning and teaching, programmes of study, organization and management, use of certification). Advice was given about which pupils should have IEPs with targets. It was expected that IEPs should be opened for all children in special schools and units and all children with Records of Needs in mainstream schools. In addition,

children in mainstream schools who did not have a Record of Needs but who required *'significant, planned intervention'*, as set out in the *Manual of Good Practice* (SOEID, 1998c) should have IEPs wth targets. It was recommended that targets should be set in one or more of the following curricular areas: communication and language, numeracy, personal and social development and that all targets should be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. The use of IEP targets as a teaching tool and particularly as a mechanism to ensure school accountability was problematic (Millward et al, 2002, Riddell et al, 2002). The Scottish Executive is currently introducing a new curriculum framework, *A Curriculum for Excellence* (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/cerv-00.asp), a framework which seeks to provide for the first time for all children and young people from 3 to 18. Educational provision for pupils with SEBD has been provided within this framework very inconsistently in comparison with other groups. For example, pupils recognized as having SEBD were not allocated a Record of Needs (RoN) although many of these pupils were in special schools.

The construction of SEBD as a sub-set of SEN has presented difficulties for policymakers, local authority administrators and legislators. The Standards in Scotland's Schools, etc. Act (Scotland) (Scottish Executive, 2000) was landmark legislation which established the 'presumption of mainstream' for all of Scotland's children. Section 15 of that Act requires that provision for pupils be made in mainstream schools unless an exception could be made under any one of three stipulated categories. The 2000 Act shifted the balance towards placement in mainstream schools; alternative arrangements were to be made only in exceptional circumstances. The exceptions applied where placement in mainstream school:

- would not be suited to the ability or aptitude of the child

- would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for the children with whom the child would be educated

- would result in unreasonable public expenditure being incurred which would not normally be incurred.

These categories of exception offer very wide gateways into special settings for parents and local authorities seeking such an option. The second category of exception, in particular, exempts schools and education authorities from the obligation to educate pupils

with SEBD in mainstream schools. Even in statute there is a two-edged approach to pupils with SEN and pupils with SEBD.

The practice of placing pupils with SEBD in special settings but without RoNs was one of a number of anomalies addressed by the commencement of new legislation enacted by the Scottish Parliament, the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, which placed SEBD within a new framework of provision for pupils with special educational needs. Central to the changes were more planned and coordinated support for a wider range of pupils both in school and, for some, extending to other services beyond schools. Pupils with SEBD, formerly excluded from the RoN process, were among a number of new groups recognized as having ASN, for example, gifted and very able pupils, asylum-seekers and children belonging to particular cultural groups such as the Gypsy/Traveller community. New ways of organizing provision are claimed to be more encompassing and more equitable. The whole group recognized as having additional support needs is larger. All pupils within this group will have an IEP and their needs will be met from the school's own resources. A much smaller group of pupils will be entitled to a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP) which will draw upon services and resources beyond the school, for example, of speech and occupational therapists.

Criticisms of the new ASN framework have centred on the contraction of the pupil population previously allocated RoNs and now eligible for CSPs. It is argued that a much smaller group than previously will have access to resources additional to the school's. Resource availability, and not pupil needs, will determine the support allocated. Nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than for pupils with SEBD. Experience throughout Europe is similar. In outlining a cross-national classification system of special educational needs, CERI/OECD (2005) broadly grouped SEN as arising from:

- A: disabilities

- B: learning difficulties

- C: disadvantages

The Director of the OECD Education Directorate commented:

> *It is in category C that resource-based definition is most problematic because the number of students in this category reflects both demand, based on student need, and supply, based on national capacity, as well as willingness to provide*

support. The extent of supply can, therefore, depend upon national wealth as well as national policy. (CERI/OECD, 2005)

In Scotland, the medicalisation of SEBD has resulted from the need to tie definition to the availability of resources at a time when behaviour difficulties as indicated by school exclusions are rising significantly. Rather than the broader ASN category encompassing pupils with SEBD, as seemed to be the intention, limits on resource allocation are likely to contribute towards a much narrower re-definition of SEBD. In effect, the amorphous SEBD label will become used only when applied to AD/HD. SEBDs will themselves attract no resourcing unless they are deemed to be of an AD/HD nature. The medicalisation of behaviour difficulties is apparent in the increasing numbers of pupils who are diagnosed with ADHD. The 2003 Schools Census (Scottish Executive Education Department, 2004) shows that in Glasgow 5.9 pupils per 1000 (139 pupils) were diagnosed as having ADHD and in Dundee 22 pupils per 1000 had ADHD. That incidence was highest in the cities casts doubts on the argument that the causes of ADHD are genetic, and points instead to the impact of social factors, particularly poverty (Lloyd et al, 2006). Conrad (1992) discusses medicalisation as social control and argues that, for example, the huge increase in the diagnosis and treatment of hyperactivity and attention deficit disorders over the last part of the twentieth century in China is linked to the increasing openness of that country to the cultural and economic influences of the West.

Resource availability has been very influential in identifying which challenging behaviours may be classified as SEBD and thereby merit additional support, resulting in the medicalisation of challenging behaviour. Also contributing to the construction of SEBD within a medical model have been difficulties of defining SEBD within an alternative social interactionist model.

Challenging behaviour as ASN/SEN: problems of definition

A multiplicity of theories has been used by those seeking to understand why some young people behave in ways which are very challenging for their schools. These theories can be related to two alternative models of disability – the individual, medical model and the social, interactionist model. The former perceives difficulties as residing in the pathology of the individual as discussed above in the medicalisation of SEBD. The latter model is derived from social interactionist theory of the 1960s (Becker, 1963; Kitsuse, 1962; Erikson, 1962) and locates disability or ASN not in the person experiencing the difficulty but in their interactions with the social world. Remediation of the problem is pursued by

adjusting the relationship between the individual and the context. Interactionist theory will be discussed in Chapter 3; the focus here is on its influence on policy constructions of challenging behaviour.

Policy definitions of SEBD according to a social interactionist model have long been problematic. Furlong (1985) illustrates this by referring to the report of the Underwood Committee (Underwood, 1955) set up to inquire into the medical, social and educational difficulties of children who were maladjusted (the previous term for this 'category of handicap'). The report offered only the following relative definition:

> *In our view a child may be regarded as maladjusted who is developing in ways which have bad effect on himself or his fellows and cannot, without help, be remedied by his parents, his teachers and other adults in ordinary contact with him (page xii)*

Although this definition does not allow for the development of objective criteria in identifying SEBD, neither have subsequent attempts at definitions arising from the social model. Galloway and Goodwin (1987), taking up the idea that the difficulties are in the relationships or the interactions of the young person, argued for a distinction between 'disturbed' and 'disturbing' behaviour:

> *By definition, children who are called maladjusted or disturbed attract these labels because they have disturbed adults. The adults' disturbance may be at the level of frustration or anxiety or 'not getting through' to the child, or it may be sheer physical fear of violence. The term 'disturbing' implies a recognition of the children's effects on adults while the terms 'maladjusted' and 'disturbed' are too often taken to imply psychological or social characteristics in the child.'(Galloway and Goodwin, 1987: 15)*

This recognition that some of the difficulties experienced by children were to be located in their social interactions led to a change in the official label from emotional and behavioural difficulties to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. (The former is still the current label in England.) Definitions of SEBD arising from the social model have been unhelpful in developing criteria for the identification of SEBD.

Where forms of behaviour are extreme there would most likely be agreement about acceptable/unacceptable behaviour but for most forms of behaviour there is wide scope for varying interpretations of the same behaviour. This accounts for inconsistency in the responses of teachers and schools which, in turn, causes pupils to view their treatment as unfair, sometimes even whimsical:

...the pupils felt that the system was unfair because teachers in the school did not behave consistently. The pupils were aware that what happened as a result of an infringement of rules could be a bit of a lottery, depending on which teacher was involved and even on the mood a teacher happened to be in on the day.(Munn et al, 2000: 5)

A number of commentators (Laslett, 1977; Wilson and Evans, 1980), acknowledging the difficulties of definition, have settled instead for a description of the manifestations of the difficulties. Lists of symptoms, though, are unhelpful when considered outwith a social context. Unreasonable behaviour in one set of circumstances may be entirely reasonable in another situation. The subjective judgement involved in classifying behaviour contributes to the problem of definition. Views of appropriateness or otherwise will vary according to a range of social and cultural factors both in the child and in those judging the behaviour. For example, a number of writers have commented upon the over-representation of certain ethnic and cultural groups in the population of those pupils deemed to need special education as a result of their SEBD (Gillborn, 1999; Parsons,1999; Munn et al, 2000). Attempts at definition of SEBD arising from the social model have been normative and subjective. Judgements about the appropriateness or otherwise of behaviour are filtered through the social and cultural expectations of those perceiving that behaviour. Therefore, there will be cultural variations depending on, for example, social class values.

More recently, it has been argued that there are biological causes of behaviour difficulties (Cooper, 1998). Some of these are 'within-child' and relate to genetic or neurological factors. Biological theories of challenging behaviour are not entirely related to the medical model since causes are also noted as physical/ environmental, relating to factors such as diet which are socially determined. These theories are used to explain the increase in syndromes such as attention deficit disorder (ADD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), both of which have been linked to autism by some commentators. The biological approach to explaining behavioural difficulties is controversial because it has not been demonstrated that 'biological' causes are distinct from the broader social and cultural context within which the difficulties are experienced (Lloyd et al, 2006). Bioliogical analyses are identified with the medicalisation trend previously discussed. In school settings, the approach has lead to the prescription of drugs such as Ritalin and to their administration within educational settings. This practice has been held up as a prime example of medicalisation as a form of social control.

Attempts to define SEBD according to a social model have resulted in definitions that are loose, anomalous, inconsistent and culturally biased. Partly as a result of this, SEBD has

been increasingly medicalised, perhaps to the point where SEBD and ADHD are treated as synonymous. This trend is also exacerbated by a need to adjust 'demand' to the availability of resources. Given the array of difficulties in definition, the next section will consider whether the SEBD label is useful anyway.

Value of the label

Macleod and Munn (2004) discuss the value of the individual, medical and deficit model of disabilities as applied to the group of pupils with behaviour difficulties as opposed to the social model derived from interactionist theories. Their view is that the label has its uses:

> *The label is not without utility, it tells that the child has given adults cause for concern, probably more than one adult and probably over a sustained period of time. (MacLeod and Munn: 174)*

The problematic nature of labeling is illustrated when they go on to quote John Visser (2004):

> *Other characteristics can be inferred: for example, it is likely that the child has difficulty in forming and sustaining relationships, and that they have a limited repertoire of responses to the range of social situations. (Macleod and Munn, 2004:174)*

To infer SEBD from Visser's characteristics would be very misguided since the same characteristics could be noted in other sections of the population, for example, in professional activity. The categorization of challenging behaviour as a kind of SEN, worthy of sympathetic support is noted by some commentators as a desirable form of response, contrasting with an alternative alienating and punitive approach. Parsons (2005) notes that attitudes to behaviour and exclusion are shaped by the dominant welfare ideologies. In the terminology of guidelines on exclusion pertaining in England and Wales, Parsons finds that The tone and orientation are controlling and oppositional (Parsons, 2005: 188). In general, he notes that policies resonate with deepseated cultural positions linked to a willingness to pay and a propensity to allocate blame to individuals and families.

Definition of SEBD, then, has proved unhelpful in conceptualizing at least some of these difficulties as a form of SEN. Dyson (2001) argues that it is not that the values, procedures and aims pertaining to SEN should be extended to pupils with SEBD but, rather, that social inclusion initiatives to address marginalisation will define inclusion for all:

In crude terms, whilst the inclusion agenda focuses on presence and participation, social inclusion focuses much more on educational outcomes and, particularly, on the re-engagement of marginalized groups with learning, whether or not that engagement takes place in the 'common classroom, school and curriculum. (Dyson, 2001: 27)

The pressures created by these kinds of difficulties go beyond what may be provided for through traditional SEN approaches (individualization of the curriculum, flexibility of organization classroom, differentiation, etc). It is not, then, that SEN has to be extended to encompass SEBD but, rather, that responses to SEBD will redefine and shape what inclusion means for pupils with SEN. For some of the commentators discussed here (Parsons, 2005; MacLeod and Munn, 2004) the use of an SEN label is desirable as an alternative to seeing those young people as undeserving. A contention of this thesis is that the SEBD label, whilst useful in relation to some pupils, as MacLeod and Munn claim, is not only entirely inappropriate for other pupils but obscures a focus on what education should be for some groups of young people.

2.3.2 Schools as the cause and cure of SEBD

The social interactionist model of disability has been discussed as unhelpful in generating a definition of SEBD. A second discourse highly influential on policy locates the root of problem behaviour in the school – in its organisation, culture, systems. In this view, the problem is in the pathology of the institution and, once isolated, can be treated in ways which will ensure improvement in behaviour and/or academic attainment. Such constructions of challenging behaviour exist in policy alongside ASN/SEBD definitions, giving rise to competing discourses and sometimes anomalous practices in behaviour support and exclusions (MacLeod and Munn, 2004; Watson, 2005; Parsons, 2005) where some young people as having 'needs' and others as requiring correction. Policy and school responses have been driven in two different directions: by welfare on the one hand and by the will to punish on the other (Parsons, 2005). Policy guidelines locating the causes and cure of challenging behaviour in school settings are set very firmly in the school effectiveness/school improvement discourse which is reviewed here.

School effectiveness

Rutter et al (1979) established that schools serving similar pupil populations have different impacts on their pupils, depending upon a range of processes. Positive outcomes for pupils differed in academic attainment but also in pupils' personal and social attainment. These differences were related to a range of variable factors in the schools such as the setting and

marking of homework, teachers' use of praise during lessons, style of discipline, etc. Together, it was argued, these processes had a cumulative effect which Rutter et al termed school 'ethos.' Rutter et al (1979) found that schools serving the same kinds of communities could have very different effects. There was also an acknowledgement that schools formed just one part of a whole set of influences which determined how well children did in the education system:

> *It is not argued that schools are the most important influence on children's progress, and we agree....that education cannot compensate for the inequities of society. Nevertheless, we do suggest that schools constitute one major area of influence, and one which is susceptible to change. (Rutter et al, 1979:203)*

The possibility that schools as organizations may both 'cause' and 'cure' difficulties through the 'ethos' of the school has gained great influence in education policy for twenty five years. The nature of the relationship between school ethos and the personal, social and intellectual development of pupils has been subject to extensive investigation. Gray (1991), for example, argued that the opportunity for young people to develop positive relationships with significant adults was an important performance indicator of the school's effectiveness. It is worth noting that, even from the outset of school effectiveness research, it was recognised that the impact of schools was balanced by the influence on children's lives of wider social and economic factors (Rutter et al, 1979). The relative effects of school and wider social circumstances has been a longstanding concern of researchers in this area. Mortimore (1999) notes that schools do not receive the same kinds of intake – some schools receive pupils who have already attained and have considerable social advantages. Those pupils bring with them ' a dowry' which has a positive and continuing effect on their school and on their schooling. In judging schools, and especially in comparing schools, it is necessary to recognise differences in 'the dowry' that pupils bring and benefit from throughout their schooling. This argument has provided the main critique of the 'league table' approach to judging schools adopted by some newspapers. It has been argued that such rank ordering on the basis of examination results says more about the wealth and poverty of postal districts than about school effectiveness.

Definitions of school effectiveness take account of this argument. An effective school is *'a school where students progress further than might be expected from a consideration of its intake'* (Mortimore, 1991). The effectiveness of a school is to be judged, not on outcomes alone, but by considering the relationship between its intake (i.e. its pupils on entry to the school) and its outcomes (i.e. its results in a number of ways). To help to refine judgements of school effectiveness, then, it is necessary to separate out the impact of the school from

all those other factors influencing pupils' achievements. The impact of the school has been termed its 'value-added' effect and a number of studies of school effectiveness have attempted to gauge this, usually by establishing a 'baseline' of pupil performance on entry to the school (the input) and comparing this to the school's 'output'.

School improvement

It is helpful to pupils, parents, professionals and policymakers that certain characteristics can be identified as contributing to school effectiveness. However, what is arguably of even greater use is the notion that schools are not fixed as good or bad – they can become better. As referenced above, even the original study indicated that schools' influence was one which is susceptible to change (Rutter et al, 1979:203). Since then, many policy initiatives in education have utilised the concept of school improvement in pursuit of objectives such as raising attainment, increasing educational inclusion and reducimg exclusion (Ainscow, 1993). Gray et al (1999), in speaking about the education system in England and Wales, point out that the school improvement discourse has had a striking impact on policy approaches to schools:

> *In less than a decade the educational system has moved from a position where changes in performance from one year to the next were so small as barely to excite comment to one where 'improvement' has not merely been expected but demanded. (Gray et al, 1999:1)*

In Scotland, as well as in education systems across the world, the school improvement movement (SIM) has had an impact on policy and on legislation (e.g. Scottish Executive, 1999; SEED, 2000). It has provided a framework for judging schools and a means of seeking change. The terminology of school improvement pervades official publications and popular discourse - 'target-setting', 'excellence', 'performance', 'improving' (and its converse 'failing') are everywhere. The SIM is not without its critics. It has been argued that it manifests:

- *an over-concern with outcomes and a neglect of processes such as learning and teaching (Mortimore, 1999:32),*

- *a focus on too narrow a range of outcomes (Mortimore, 1999),*

- *a disregard for issues of equity through its treatment of schools as 'hermetically-sealed units' (Morley & Rassool, 1999: 83; Slee et al, 1998), and*

- *a tortuous research route to findings which are just common sense (Sammons, 1994:46)*

In spite of these criticisms, it is easy to see why the SIM has had such an impact on education policy and on practice in schools. Whilst it has long been recognised that social class is the main determinant of educational outcomes, inequality has not been susceptible to change, and certainly not as a result of schooling. The appeal of the SIM is its promise that action, albeit in the limited sphere of the school, can result in change for the better. It provides a way of challenging poor educational attainment without the need for wealth redistribution. The SIM body of research has had great appeal for governments seeking to improve educational outcomes, even though SIM researchers themselves have cautioned against a narrowing of the range of processes and outcomes to be considered and thereby judging schools only on what can be easily measured. Mortimore (1999), in replying to criticism that school effectiveness research has wrongly assumed that all pupils want what the school has to offer, agrees that:

> .....*working-class students have often made a rational decision to reject 'compliance' for 'credentials' .....most school effectiveness studies do start with the assumption that students want to succeed. If this, for any reason, is not the case, then many of the strategies of school improvement are likely to fail. The key point is.....that the system needs to permit as many as possible to succeed – albeit at different speeds, with different amounts of support and to different levels. (Mortimore, 1999: 327)*

Impact of SIM

Along with social inclusion, the New Labour administrations at Westminster and in Edinburgh have established the raising of standards in schools as a policy priority in education. The Scottish Executive conveyed its intention to pursue this policy through a target-setting approach by its endorsement of the framework set out in the document *Setting Targets – Raising Standards in Schools* (SOED, 1998). This framework set out how the Levels of Attainment of the 5 –14 programme and Scottish Qualifications Authority awards were to be used to quantify outcomes at different stages of schooling and thus enable judgements and comparisons about the effectiveness of schools. Whilst the adoption of a target-setting approach has been linked to a social democratic concern with 'best value' in public expenditure (Millward et al, 2002), commentators (Ball, 1999; Whitty, 2001) have also criticized its impact as minimal on the continuing educational failure of the working class. The influence of SIM, the 'new educational sociology', and its emphasis on the measurement of outcomes of schooling is perceived to have narrowed and rigidified learning and teaching and made schools less able to provide inclusively:

> *In the simplest sense this is a problem of 'teaching to the test'. Drilling students, individually and competitively in and for specific, context-bound, abstract tasks. An emphasis that is on repetitive short-term memory tactics and narrowly-focused, classroom-based knowledge and skills aimed at maximizing test or examination performance....The pressure of performance acts back upon the curriculum, both narrowing the classroom experience of all students and encouraging teachers to attend to those students likely to 'make a difference' to the aggregate performance figures of the class and the school. (Ball, 1999: 202)*

Commentators in England (Parsons, 1999; Cooper et al, 2000) have explained the 400% rise in permanent exclusions between 1991 and 1996 by pointing to this 'pressure of performance' and the exclusionary impact it has on sections of the school population. In Scotland, in one of the LAs in which key informant interviews were conducted, evidence emerged (McLean, 2003) from within the LA of schools shedding responsibility for the education of large numbers of fourteen- and fifteen-year olds. Some 10% of secondary-aged pupils in this LA were said to be in a variety of provision separate from schools and at the instigation of the school. Procedures for recording attendance in this LA allow a 'P' for permission to be entered in the register where pupils' non-attendance is by prior arrangement. Some of these placements were full-time but when they were part-time, these practices result in disrupted patterns of school attendance and so were likely to contribute further to truancy/non-attendance and to informal exclusion.

A second issue with out-of-school provision for some young people was its quality. Sometimes it was funded and managed within the public education sector, for example Further Education Colleges but, more often, it was private and outwith the framework of support and accountability within which pre-sixteen education functions. Examples of this kind of provision are Rightrack and Fairbridge which offer skills-based education to a largely male clientele. Staff working with young people in these organisations are low-paid and unsupported by the guidance and staff development available to staff within the public education sector. Within the FE sector, such support is available to staff but it is not designed for those working with children. For example, staff in FE have had no training in Child Protection procedures because their traditional clientele is adult.

There are also concerns for schools and the way in which their function is changing. A third and final concern is that by delegating responsibility for some children to private providers, schools are losing a slice of very scarce funding whilst simultaneously avoiding the pressure to develop their own inclusive capacity.

Schools are offered guidance on capacity-building in relation to pupils with challenging behaviour and vulnerable to exclusion (SEED, 2000). It is recommended, for example, that all schools appoint a designated member of staff who is responsible for the 'care, welfare and tracking of progress' of looked after children (SEED, 2001a). In fact, the education of this group was the subject of the first joint inspection undertaken by HM Inspectors of Schools and the Social Work Services Inspectorate (SEED, 2001b), signifying a political will to establish better inter-service articulation at all levels of the public services in furtherance of the social inclusion agenda. It is questionable whether the practice of educating some children separately with a focus on 'vocational' or 'basic skills' training will further that political ambition.

The roots of current school policy would seem to be very much still in the school improvement movement. *Better Behaviour – Better Learning* (SEED, 2000) endorses approaches such as a dress code for pupils (page 2) and 'flexible support provision, including in-class support and facilities to educate children and young people outwith the normal classroom environment' (SEED, 2000, page 4). These approaches to school improvement on their own may have had an impact on rising exclusions but any such impact has been negated by the drive to raise attainment, by the pressure of performance (Ball, 1999: 202) and its exclusionary impact on pupils who are unlikely to contribute to overall school performance and, worse, whose behaviour is seen to undermine others' endeavours. Whitty (2001) comments that the 'new' scoiology of education with its emphasis on changing core school processes such as the construction of knowledge within the curriculum and the bias of assessment has been largely ignored by New Labour in that:

> *While it has stressed that schools matter in terms of access and achievement, it has almost entirely accepted what counts as education within them. (Edwards et al, 1998 in Whitty, 2001)*

SIM-orientated school policy has not increased schools' capacity for inclusion, and especially not of pupils with challenging behaviour. Their exclusion has forestalled the need for schools' to develop approaches to curriculum, learning and teaching which would more fully engage pupils, families and communities.

The two tracks of school policy on challenging behaviour, ASN/SEBD and approaches rooted in the SIM, are both flawed in their failure to recognize the impact of social, economic and cultural factors on the exclusion of young people. The next section considers the representation of these factors in broader social policy and the influence of that policy on school exclusions.

2.4 Exclusion: broader policy perspectives

Origins of social inclusion policy

The New Labour administration which came to office in 1997 signalled clearly its endorsement of a 'Third Way' (Giddens, 1998) of tackling old problems of poverty, discrimination and social alienation, a way distinct from the market-led, libertarian policies of the previous New Right administration but also representing a break from Old Labour socialist policies. The term 'social exclusion' features prominently in policy discussion in the UK and in Europe. It is used to describe the industrial, social and economic changes experienced through the 1980s and 1990s and which resulted in marked deterioration in the quality of life available to large numbers of people. The factors which characterize social exclusion are noted by Silver (1994) as long-term or repeated unemployment, family instability, social isolation and the decline of neighbourhood and social networks. 'Social exclusion' has replaced 'poverty' in the discourse on inequality. Alvey and Brown (2001) distinguish between the notion of social exclusion and poverty, arguing that social exclusion covers both the causes and effects of poverty, discrimination and disadvantage:

> *Definitions of social exclusion often resemble those of relative poverty, and the term is sometimes used interchangeable with poverty, but the concepts are not identical. A key difference between them is that ideas about exclusion are primarily concerned with processes (the way things happen) whereas poverty has tended to be thought of as a condition or set of circumstances (the way things are).* (Alvey and Brown, 2001:1)

Although influential on the social policy of a number of European governments, understandings of the term 'social inclusion' are by no means in harmony. Macrae et al (2003) comment:

> *...we share some concern that there is a limited concensus, beyond the common sense version, of what is meant by social exclusion as well as by the scope of the issues which are to be included and where 'boundaries' might be drawn. Very few people would actually claim to be against social inclusion* (Macrae et al, 2003: 90)

The limited concensus is highlighted by contrasting very different conceptualizations of the term. It is argued (Viet-Wilson, 1998; Millbourne, 1999; Macrae et al, 2003) that some 'weak' versions of the concept are merely attempts to attach the excluded more firmly to established social structures whereas 'strong' versions critique the power relations which result in exclusion. The former version offers a 'safer, top-down version of inclusion which, at its worst, may well be based on a pathology of the poor or disenfranchised'

(Macrae et al, 2003). The latter, 'strong' conceptualisation challenges the existing and exclusionary social order and views the inclusion of the poor and disenfranchised as necessarily entailing change in that order. By this account, social inclusion policies encompass a means of addressing inequality as well as poverty and disengagement.

Social inclusion policy and educational exclusion

How does social exclusion impact on experience of school? The link between educational exclusion and social exclusion goes beyond the impact of formal exclusion from school. The multiple effects of poverty, for example, physical and mental health problems, are acknowledged as having an exclusionary effect on young people's engagement with schooling and on their life chances. For example, Cogan (2004: 191) in a study of the impact of parents' mental health problems on their children identified four ways in which children's schooling was affected:

- through fights and upsets at home distracting them from homework or exam preparation

- missing school or being late for school because a parent needed them

- lack of routine and structure at home

- inability to concentrate when at school through worry

Through its flagship social policy, *Social Justice.........a Scotland where everyone matters* (SEED, 1999), Scottish Executive policy treats educational exclusion, and formal exclusion from school is just one part of this, as part of wider patterns of social exclusion. Discussion in Chapter 1 noted that school exclusions in this policy were one strand in a series of targets and milestones by which progress towards social inclusion was to be charted. The target-setting exercise for school exclusions was halted in November 2003 when exclusions started to rise but the policy link between social exclusion and educational exclusion remained in the government's intention to address social disadvantage by re-connecting communities to mainstream services and opportunities, principally through one of the hallmark strategies of social inclusion – the delivery of integrated services to young people and families. In Scotland this was to be achieved primarily through the New Community Schools initiative (Scottish Office, 1998d). The new Community Schools Prospectus set out five key goals:

- modernization of schools and the promotion of social inclusion

- increasing the attainment of young people facing 'the destructive cycle of underachievement'

- early intervention to address barriers to learning and maximize potential

- meeting the needs of every child, ensuring that services are focused through New Community Schools

- raising parental and family expectations and participation in their children's education. (Scottish Office, 1998)

Key themes pervading these aims were the engagement of pupils, families and communities, in addition to management and service provision. Integrated service provision was very challenging for schools. Sammons et al (2003), in an interim evaluation of the pilot New Community Schools initiative, found that pilot schools were slow to start to develop joint-service structures, with one fifth of schools reporting joint training in Year 1 to be none or minimal. More generally, commentators (O'Connor & Lewis, 1999; Whitty et al, 1999) have criticized the capacity of local authority services, as they are currently structured and operated, to provide the integrated support viewed as necessary to promote the social inclusion of marginalised children and families.

A more fundamental criticism is whether such support is counterproductive to inclusion, labeling families and individuals in ways which are stigmatizing (Riddell & Tett, 2000). The re-engagement of socially excluded pupils, families and communities may not be achieved through policy which epitomizes 'weak' conceptualizations of social inclusion, that is, policy which precludes the redistribution of wealth and change in the social order (Macrae et al, 2003). Families are differentially positioned in relation to schooling, depending on economic and social factors. Educational reforms of the 1980s which claimed to empower parents have failed to acknowledge this in the discourse on social inclusion (MacDonald and Thomas, 2003; Vincent, 1996; Mac An Ghaill 1994). Hegemonic discourses about parenting dominate teacher attitudes and these emphasise the rights and the duties of parents. Vincent (2000) comments:

The exercise of the right to involvement and the fulfilment of that duty to be involved is clearly easier for some parents than others. (Vincent, 2000: 131)

Vincent argues that even parent-centred organisations serve as channels for the dissemination of hegemonic discourses about parenting so parents of excluded pupils can feel particularly unable to influence dominant discourse of the school and themselves experience exclusion from school processes of decision-making (MacDonald and Thomas, 2003). The misrecognition of some parents is underpinned by economic factors, by all of the ways in which low income restricts family life – poor housing, inadequate diet, health problems, limited access to the means of communication, inability to participate in local and community life.

Millbourne (2002: 328) points to a danger in defining social exclusion in order to assist in the classification of people as socially excluded. Such a process, she argues, steers the agenda away from addressing inequalities in a broader sense and helps to create a policy setting for simply treating symptoms rather than underlying causes. The social inclusion strategy, and the New Community Schools strategy, in particular, could be a trap whereby excluded pupils and their families are labeled and treated by an array of professionals but with no impact at all on the wider context causing their alienation in the first place. Anti-exclusion strategies, such as interagency systems of support, far from challenging existing inequalities may endorse them. In rejecting such supports as are offered by the school, then, young people and their families may be asserting a view of themselves – an identity - different from that proffered by the school and its associated agencies.

The link between exclusion from school and broader factors in social exclusion is established by the Executive's statistics. There remains the question of whether these two factors exist in a causal relationship or whether both are alike in being just symptoms of deeper, structural inequalities in society. The discussion here links to a longstanding educational debate about the relative influence of school processes and social class factors on the attainment and longer-term wellbeing of young people. Whitty (2001:287) characterizes the UK government's social inclusion policy as ignoring the strong messages from sociological research about the importance of social class in educational achievement, and favouring instead the 'new sociology of education' with its emphasis on school effectiveness and school improvement. Whitty (2001) argues that this approach continues to fail the working class and, further, that a genuinely socially inclusive strategy would tackle the self-exclusion of the middle-class from state education as well as the social exclusion of the working class. The government's emphasis on social and cultural factors could be said to distract attention from the economic policies which have created increasing inequality in contemporary society. The new rhetoric, it might be said, simply masks very old problems of poverty and inequality.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has established how school exclusions operate and has analysed how education policy constructed challenging behaviour and exclusions. Twin tracks were located in policy – challenging behaviour as SEBD and as a problem arising from school functioning. Each conceptualization was flawed within itself and posed difficulties for the education system in defining challenging behaviour, leading in the case of SEBD to the increased medicalisation of challenging behaviour. Together, the two conceptualizations have led to tensions and inequities in resource allocation and in responses generally, with some pupils recognized as having 'needs' deserving of support whilst others were perceived to be deserving of punishment. In addition, neither explanation offered any account of patterns of exclusion which were strongly structured by social class, by gender and by ethnicity. The SIM, in spite of its influence on policy, had little to contribute to understanding the inequitable outcomes of schooling.

Formal exclusion from school was connected to wider forms of educational and social exclusion. Social inclusion policy recognized the link between educational exclusion and the marginalization of some social groups and had established strategies in education and in other service areas to bring those groups back into the social mainstream. Participation was key to re-engagement but this was problematic since strategies intended to enable participation, such as integrated service delivery, could themselves stigmatise and further alienate particular groups. Social and economic inequality caused the differential positioning of families to education. 'Weak' social inclusion policy did not encompass an attempt to tackle inequality and would therefore leave unaltered patterns of wealth distribution and assist in the economic marginalisation and social exclusion of some working-class families.

The disproportionate exclusion from school of mainly working-class boys is not acknowledged in education policy. Whilst wider social policy has recognized different social and economic groups, it has pursued strategies unlikely to address the unequal outcomes of schooling. The next chapter will consider theories of class, culture and identities in relation to education.

Chapter 3

Exclusions and challenging behaviour in schools: theoretical perspectives

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter argued that current policy discourses of exclusion and challenging behaviour in schools have failed to acknowledge social class and have failed to take account of gender. This is in spite of the fact that the Scottish Executive's statistical data on behaviour and exclusions is clearly structured by both social class and gender. This chapter will consider an alternative analysis of educational exclusion and will foreground class and gender. How has sociology addressed the problem of the challenging and anti-school behaviour of some young people? And how does this analysis relate to social class and gender? These questions will be addressed in a chronological account, starting in the 1960s with studies of deviance. Labelling theory will be considered before the discussion moves on to the work of ethnographers such as Paul Willis and Stephen Ball who, in the 1970s and 1980s, offered a Marxist analysis of schools and schooling. Willis's work is particularly important for this study since he related the alienated and antagonistic behaviour of boys in school to the wider social class structure and to their future roles as workers in a capitalist economy. Emerging feminist critiques challenged Willis's work for its neglect of the experience of girls and women and its failure to identify the boys in his study as oppressors as well as oppressed. The view of gender as the main social category will be traced from its origins in the work of Carol Gilligan and critiqued using the theory of RW Connell. Connell's work is given some emphasis here, too, because he provides us with the clearest understandings of the complex intersections of gender and class. The chapter will finish by considering recent work in the field of social class, gender and identities and will relate that to pupils' experience of schooling.

3.2 1960s: Social interactionism

Deviance
In the 1960s, social interactionism became a dominant influence on sociological theory and provided a major paradigm in the sociology of education. To the fore in this paradigm were studies in deviance (Becker, 1963; Erikson, 1962) and. Becker (1963:4) summed up the key insight on deviance provided by the social interactionists

> *Deviance is not a quality that lies in the behaviour itself, but in the interaction*
> *between the person who commits an act and those who respond to it. (Becker,*
> *1963: 4)*

As noted in the previous chapter, this idea influenced the social model of SEN/disability
and enabled the causes of challenging behaviour to be located, not in the individual pupil,
but in the relationship between the pupil and the social/institutional context. In the
introduction to a collection on the theme of deviance, Rubington and Weinberg (1973),
exemplify social interactionist approaches by explaining how deviants are created through
processes of social definition:

> *Deviance, as an interactive process, requires that a defining agent perform the*
> *work of redefinition upon another person. If successful, the redefinition alters*
> *future relations with that person. For this reconstitution to be successful,*
> *however, certain requirements must be met. Conditions that initiate typing [of*
> *deviants] are first, an uncommon event, and second, a web of social relations.*
> *(Rubington and Weinberg, 1973: 4)*

This theory of deviance was influential in understanding the relationships between some
young people and schooling. It was used, for example, by Hargreaves et al (1975) to
explain how the behaviour of some groups, such as working class boys, was more likely to
be constructed as deviant. The labeling of deviance entails a process of selection, for the
defining agent of deviance need not see all uncommon events as deviant: In many
situations people treat unusual behaviour as if it were the statistical norm. (Rubington and
Weinberg, 1973: 5). Hargreaves et al (1975: 3) explained that deviance was a relative
phenomenon since rules varied between different cultures, subcultures and groups, acts
which were deviant (i.e. which break rules) in one group were not necessarily deviant in
another group.

In addition, labeling or social typing was more likely to be successful when a high ranking
person had done the typing. Rubington and Weiner (1973:6) commented that effective
social typing flowed down rather than up the social structure. In the heirarchical settings of
schools, effective 'typers' would thus be teachers. After the initiating conditions had been
met, an individual was successfully typed as deviant when the person typed as deviant and
the typer both took the definition into account in all future interactions:

> *Social deviants, then, are persons who have been stamped effectively with a*
> *deviant label.......A new set of interpretations is made available for*
> *understanding the person adjudged a deviant. And when these interpretations*

take effect, a person has been socially reconstituted... ... With these changes go a new set of expectations about future conduct. (Rubington and Weiner, 1973: 7)

Study of the processes by which some individuals were labelled as deviant allowed a focus not mainly upon the individual but upon the web of social relations which constructed some as deviant. Erikson (1962), quoted in Grove (1975) commented:

> *Deviance is not a property inherent in certain forms of behaviour; it is a property conferred upon these forms by the audience which directly or indirectly witness them. The critical variable in the study of deviance, then, is the social audience rather than the individual actor since it is the audience which eventually determines whether or not any episode of behaviour or any class of episodes is labelled deviant. (Erikson, 1962:11 in Grove, 1975: 4)*

Amongst the first attempts to relate wider understandings of deviance to behaviour in school was that of Hargreaves et al (1975) which showed how processes of 'typing' resulted in negative labels being attached to some pupils. This direct application of deviance and labelling theories to schools had little lasting impact. Pupils continued to be viewed as deviant by schools with little recognition of the role played by schools in actively selecting certain episodes and pupils as deviant. Ten years after Hargreaves work, Furlong in 1985 noted that it was the medical model, and not the interactionist model, that operated on constructions of challenging behaviour:

> *The notion of the 'maladjusted child', which is at least in part based upon the findings of positivist research, is today granted a central place in educational policy and provision. Teachers as well as other professionals in the educational welfare network .....overwhelmingly subscribe to a pathological view of school deviance. Children reject their education because of some deficiency in themselves, in their families or in their social milieux. That rejection is illogical for it denies the validity and importance of what schools have to offer (Furlong, 1985: 69)*

In this paradigm pupils labeled as deviant take that label to themselves and become increasingly disengaged and possibly antagonistic. Social interactionist theory has thrown light on the processes which result in the exclusion of some pupils but the theory has had little impact on constructions of challenging behaviour in schools. This may be attributed to the ways in which power is distributed and withheld in school communities, and the extent to which pupils are allowed to participate in *'naming the world'* (Freire, 1970). Pupils are not engaged in the web of social relations through which common understandings are constructed and shared values are formed, although pupil participation of this kind has been identified as a main means of pursuing inclusive schools (Booth et al, 2000; Thomas and Loxley, 2001). Pupils tend to be on the receiving end, rather than the

formative end, of the judgements which matter. Labels are allocated to pupils, affording them little opportunity to have their perspectives taken into account.

Labelling

Closely linked to theories of deviance were theories of labeling. In education contexts there has been considerable debate about the impact of labeling, giving rise to investigations by a number of researchers and not always in terms of the effects of negative labels. Hargreaves et al (1975) refer to a study by Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) in which teachers were given false information about the high intelligence of certain pupils. After a period of time, those pupils' intelligence had improved dramatically. The conclusion drawn was that labels determine expectations which in turn determine outcomes. In a later article, Hargreaves (1976) set out four conditions which determine the impact of labeling on a child:

- the frequency of the label being applied and the range of situations in which it is applied,

- the extent to which the pupil sees the teacher as a 'significant other' whose opinion counts,

- the extent to which others support the label, and

- the public nature of labeling.

Where these four conditions were met, the pupil was likely to take the label to her/himself, incorporating it into her/his identity – a deviant identity. It was likely, too, that a pupil who had acquired such an identity would seek out others in a similar position to form a deviant subculture in the school.

Labelling theory has informed intense debates in the SEN field, where commentators have argued the value or otherwise of SEN labels. Wearmouth (1999) argued that labels were limiting, encouraged stereotyping and were self-fulfilling. Given the lack of clear definition of SEBD, it was argued that the allocation of that label was particularly arbitrary and, with its connotations of deviance, particularly unhelpful to those thus labeled. One such pupil was 'maladjusted Jack' whose SEN label Wearmouth (1999: 21) describes as having had devastating effect:

For Jack, the social consequences of assessment as 'maladjusted' have been very harmful........It has affected {his} life chances, his view of himself and his general outlook. He wanted to experience a sense of purpose and structure in what he was doing; he wanted to feel progress and achievement and to know that others had respect for his views even if they did not agree with him. He gained nothing positive from school and experienced only constant frustration and rage, and now as an adult he has experienced imprisonment and unemployment. (Wearmouth, 1999: 21)

As discussed previously, debates about labeling have continued within a policy context, with some (MacLeod and Munn, 2005) arguing that categories help to relate provision to previous professional experience and assist better diagnosis and decision-making. By the late 1970s, new insights into school settings were offered by educational sociologists using ethnographic methods. These involved extensive observation of the activity of members of a social group to describe and evaluate that activity (Abercrombie et al, 2000: 123). The next section will consider how two such studies, by Paul Willis (1978) and Stephen Ball (1981), contributed to understandings of challenging behaviour in school settings.

3.3 1970s: ethnographies

Ethnography originated in the early 20th century as a main method of social anthropology and was directed towards the study of 'primitive' societies. With its concern with the 'Other' in these contexts (Vlidich and Lyman, 2003), ethnography in its classic form became associated with imperialism, that is, with the study of *'a primitive, non-white person from a foreign culture judged to be less civilised than that of the researcher'* Denzin and Lincoln, 2003:2). In spite of these criticisms, ethnologies continued to be used in the social sciences and by the 1970s were valued because they allowed a pluralistic, interpretive and open-ended perspective, enabling better understandings of social processes and the perspectives of actors. Ethnographies of two schools are considered here and both are important for this study. Their standpoint is critical theory and the Marxist analysis they offer is particularly valuable in understanding why working-class boys dominate exclusion statistics.

Beachside Comprehensive

In Beachside Comprehensive: A Case-Study of Secondary Schooling, Ball (1981) addresses a well-established problem for educational sociologists – why do working-class children generally fare badly in school systems? Ball investigates how social class emerges as a major discriminating factor in the distribution of success and failure (xv) in Beachside

and charts the processes through which this occurs. His fieldwork, conducted in 1976, came early in the introduction of comprehensive schools in England and addressed the relationship between school stratification of pupils and the reproduction of wider social class structures. At the time of Ball's study, aspirations were that the new comprehensive system per se would bring about changes in the social class inequalities in education that had been caused by middle-class domination of the grammar schools (Ball, 1981: 31). Where in-school stratification continued through classes banded on ability, Ball's conclusion was:

> ...it is apparent that, while going some way towards solving the gross social problems and social inequalities which were a characteristic of the bipartite system, the streamed comprehensive school does produce an unstable, polarized social structure amongst its pupils, which in turn gives rise to considerable teaching and social control problems for teachers. (Ball, 1981: 283)

Problems of discipline and the behaviour of pupils were major concerns for the teachers of Beachside and Ball records that many teachers' advocacy of mixed-ability organization arose from the hope that it would improve discipline (Ball, 1981: 285). Even where there was mixed ability organization, however, teachers conveyed different and formative messages to different pupils:

> In the mixed-ability context, it is apparent that it is the teacher who is the prime agent of selection. His relationship with the pupils in the classroom is fundamentally concerned with the separation and ranking of them according to perceived academic ability, and the allocation of status. His contributes to their development of self-image and sense of worth – which may be inevitable in a competitive system. (Ball, 1981: 284)

Ball (1981) was concerned to understand how the ways in which classes were organized in school reproduced and reinforced social class structures. Willis's study in 1978 went beyond that to demonstrate the agency practiced by the 'lads' of Hammertown Boys Secondary Modern in using school to prepare themselves for lives lived as workers in industrial capitalist society.

Learning to Labour

In a seminal study in 1978, *Learning to Labour: how working-class kids get working-class jobs*, Paul Willis analysed the processes through which masculine, working-class identities were negotiated in a school setting. Willis described how a group of secondary-school 'lads' become increasingly resistant to school and explained this resistance in terms of their need to move into the culture which will shape their adult lives. Willis claimed that

his study offered some explanation of the failure of state education to radically improve the chances in life of working-class boys and girls. It also explained the coordinated and consciously challenging behaviour of some groups of boys within school settings and the fact that many who were excluded from school went on to lead responsible and settled adult lives.

Willis tracked a group of 'lads' during their last two years at school and into the first six months of work. He studied their increasing alienation from school - their 'oppositional' behaviour - and explained it in terms of their need to achieve cultural penetration of their social context. This is related to their future working lives and to the behaviour of working-class men in staving off the worst encroachments of capitalism through a culture which encompassed both resistance and accommodation:

> *Working class counter-school culture is the specific milieu in which a sense of manual labour power and an awareness of how to apply it to manual work is produced (Willis, 1978: 2)*

From third year onwards, Willis charted the emergence of an oppositional counter-school culture, with the 'lads' differentiating themselves from the compliance of the 'ear'oles'. Willis notes that factors within school organization have little bearing upon the emergence of this culture. For example, although streaming enabled the formation and consolidation of oppositional groups, mixed-ability organisation in fourth year did not counter the strength or influence of these groups. Willis's analysis could be used to explain boys' underachievement as well as their levels of disaffection. In particular the power of the group, of solidarity, of the need to be differentiated from controlling forces leads to little value being placed upon the individual and therefore on mental activity:

> *Individualism is defeated not for itself but for its part in the school masque where mental work is associated with unjustified authority, with qualifications whose promise is illusory (Willis, 1978:146)*

The development of the social and cultural identity needed for adult life makes it crucial for the 'lads' to oppose the basic purposes of the school and its modes of operation. They have to develop the protective layers of a culture which will allow them to withstand the impact of life in the labour market:

> *A commitment to work and conformism in school is not the giving of something finite: a measured block of time and attention. It is the giving up of the use of a potential set of activities in a way which cannot be measured or controlled and which prevents their alternative use. Getting through a term without putting pen to paper, the continuous evasion of the teacher's authority, the*

guerilla warfare of the classroom and corridor is partly about limiting such demands upon the self. (Willis, 1978:130)

The counter-school culture developed by 'the lads', therefore, was a product of capitalism and the demands it placed on working-class men:

The products of this independent ability of the working-class - profane testing of the formal, sharp, unre-ified language, oppositional solidarity and a humourous presence, style and value not based on formal job status - are no less the product of the capitalist era for their subversive or potentially subversive, forms. (Willis, 1978:132)

Willis spoke of 'the teaching paradigm' as the means by which teachers seek to maintain control through a moral authority. This rests upon the claim to greater knowledge and ablity to impart it in return for conformity:

Discipline becomes a matter not of punishment for wrongs committed in the old testament sense but of maintaining the institutional axis of reproducing the social relationships of the school in general: of inducing respect for elemental frameworks in which other transactions can take place.(Willis, 1978: 66)

This would mean that discipline in schools is self-sustaining and not necessarily referenced to more general social and legal codes. Willis argued that this need for schools to enforce respect for the prevailing order within the school conveyed to young people a sense of arbitrary authority and an apparent preoccupation with trivial concerns.

Learning to Labour has attracted considerable attention since it was first published, although interest has come mainly from sociologists rather than from professional or policy audiences. The work of Willis (1978) and Ball (1981) offer analyses which are conspicuous in their absence from current policy discourses based on special educational needs and school improvement. Reay (2006: 303) argues that Willis's work could assist in the creation of a teaching profession to tackle the greatest problem the education system faces: that of working-class educational underachievement, alienation and disaffection and advocates that it should be included in all initial teacher education curricula. In analyzing the workings of social class within schooling, Willis brought to the fore cultural, and not just economic, differentiations (Arnot, 2003; Connell, 2005). Its demonstrations of class and cultural reproductions within schools are highly significant for the attempt in this study to understand the over-representation of working-class boys in school exclusion statistics.

Feminist criticisms of Learning to Labour

Some responses to Learning to Labour have been very critical: its representation of class and cultural reproductions was seen to be at the expense of a gender analysis. Early feminist writers critiqued Willis's research for its neglect of the experience of girls and women and its failure to analyse forms of oppression perpetrated by the 'lads' upon girls and women (McRobbie, 1980; Skeggs, 1992).These early accounts of gender dichotomized women and men and set gender above social class as the main category of analysis in social research. By that account of gender, Willis's work conveyed the 'lads' as 'Subject' and girls as 'Other' (Paechter, 1998) and thus perpetuated the masculine paradigms of social research. This analysis of gender originated in the work of Carol Gilligan. The critique of Willis to emerge from early feminist theory, however, has not held sway because that theory itself was highly-flawed in its simplifications and in its false polarizations. R.W. Connell has provided the basis for the development of gender theory which will be considered further on. However, it is worth noting that Learning to Labour has survived its critics and is now regarded as highly insightful in its demonstration of how particular gender identities are constructed and intersect:

> *Because industrial labour has traditionally been associated with 'manly' endeavour and intellectual labour has a distinctly feminine connotation, the 'lads' rebellion against school authority, in the first place against the classroom teacher, is an assertion of masculinity'. (Aronowitz, 2004: ix)*

Similarly, Arnot (2003: 104) discusses how the lasting, and still uncontested, insight of Willis's work is his analysis of how the 'lads'' culture demonstrated that forms of social class (anti-school) resistance are based on the celebration of traditional sexual identities:

> *His work showed that boys were adapting, adopting and reworking gender dualism rather than be socialized into one or other category.*

Arnot's recent comments on Learning to Labour are particularly interesting in that they accord a measure of agency to the 'lads' in their resistance to school norms. Commentators had previously criticized Willis's work because structure was seen to prevail entirely over agency.

Connell (2005), along with Arnot (2003), noted the importance of Learning to Labour in its demonstrations of how gendered identities were mediated by social class and included the negotiation of particular and powerful masculinities in school settings, hegemonic masculinities. The concept of hegemonic masculinities has been widely used in the

literature to analyse the nature of, and relationships between, different kinds of masculinity, such as the 'lads' and the 'ear'oles' in Learning to Labour. The term derives from Gramsci's analysis of class relations and its use in gender research refers to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life. At any given time, one form of masculinity, rather than others, is culturally exalted (Connell, 1995: 77). The concept of hegemonic masculinities was taken further by a range of theorists during the 1990s and has been used particularly to understand boys' 'underachievement' in schools. Willis's work has not always been so influential on the development of gender theory. Before probing the concept of hegemonic masculinities further, the development of gender theory will be tracked.

3.4 1980s: The rise of gender

For Willis and other critical theorists, class was the 'master' category of analysis and provided a framework within which gender could be considered. From the 1970s onwards, this analysis was significantly challenged by feminists and by those theorizing the condition of oppressed minorities in, for example, the US. By these accounts, social inequality was not necessarily economic in nature. The oppression and exploitation experienced by women and by 'racial', sexual and other minorities took the form of cultural domination, non-recognition and disrespect (Young, 1990, Phillips, 1997; Fraser, 1997). These forms of oppression were not susceptible to remedy by re-distributive means. In the 1970s and the 1980s, identity politics came to the political fore: recognition rather than re-distribution was a focus for political campaigning, notably by the Women's Rights movement. Gender replaced class as the main social category but, in fact, political activism and gender theorizing were concerned exclusively with femininities. Gender Studies were, in effect, Women's Studies as is illustrated by an Open University course book published in 1984 (Deem, 1984).

Invisible women

The academic focus on women was in reaction to the omission of feminine perspectives, values and experience from academic disciplines (Gilligan, 1982a, 1982b). Carol Gilligan was influential in theorizing gender. Working in Harvard, she noticed that, in empirical studies, women were being disadvantaged in that their moral development was being judged according to a framework based on masculine values. Gilligan postulated that the perceptions, values and conceptualisations of women were categorically different from those of men. From this work came important insights into the value-laden nature of the epistemologies and methodologies of social science. This is discussed further in the next

chapter. However, Gilligan's work also influenced educational practice in areas such as assessment (Gipps and Murphy, 1994); classroom organization (Francis, 2000); and understandings of boys and girls in school settings (Skelton, 1996; 1997; Francis and Skelton, 2001). In particular, the notion of 'Subject' and 'Other' has helped analysis of the experience of boys and girls. Boys and girls relate differently to the world around them:

> *While she places herself in relation to the world.....he places the world in relationship to himself, as it defines his position, his character and the quality of his life. The contrast (is) between the self defined through separation and a self delineated through connection, between a self measured against an abstract ideal of perfection and a self assessed through particular activities of care. (Gilligan, 1982a, page 350)*

It was possible to delineate gender characteristics distinguishing women from men. For example, femininity valued subjectivity over objectivity; feeling over thinking; and mercy over justice. Head (1997) illustrates the last of these distinctions by contrasting the reactions of boys and girls to a film showing a fight breaking out in a bar. For boys, the decision about blame is straightforward; it is attributable to the person who first initiated violence through physical contact. But girls withhold judgement, seeking instead to know more about the context, the relationships and the motivations. In self-other relationships, girls tended to emphasise connectedness, whereas boys emphasized separation.

The main criticism of gender theory arising from Gilligan's work is that it dichotomises women and men and assumes gender identities are based upon female/male biological differences. Further, its simplistic account fails to offer an analysis of how gender relates to other forms of social identity. This point was famously made by bell hooks(1981) who confronted contemporary black women's aspirations to be more like men by asking, 'Which men?'. Similarly, Young (1990) argued against the trend of identity politics whereby people were allocated to a single category of identity. Nevertheless, gender continues to be used as a simple category of analysis unmediated by social class, and not just in popular culture either. As will be seen further on, official responses to boys' under-attainment in the UK and elsewhere have most often been rooted in a highly simplified and dichotomized view of gender. It is a contention of this study that policy and professional accounts of gendered experience of education have been inadequate because they have failed to relate gender to social class cultures. Early feminist theory, however, was applied to girls' experience of schooling and to some effect as will be discussed next.

'Sexism' in schools

In the 1970s and 80s, policymakers, researchers and professionals directed their concerns about gender inequalities in the processes and outcomes of schooling towards female pupils, who were viewed in the light of the gains made by the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. In the field of Women's Rights those advances were embodied in the Sex Discrimination Act (1976) and the Equal Opportunities Act (1976). The experience of girls in schools was seen as shaped by longstanding stereotyped views of women as having primary roles as wives and mothers. Riddell (2000), in tracing the history of gender in education policy in Scotland, notes that both national advice and local authority policy although identifying gender factors in, for example, patterns of subject uptake, did not problematise these findings in relation to school practices. That was instead left to teachers' organisations, notably the Educational Institute of Scotland and the General Teaching Council. In a pamphlet to its members intended as 'a positive assertion against sexism' the EIS criticised the situation in classrooms of the time where:

• boys demand and receive a generous share of teacher time

• boys receive a disproportionate share of hands-on experience (e.g. in science or computing)

• boys receive apologies from teachers when asked to undertake non-traditional tasks

• boys are rewarded for being assertive

• boys are advised not to act like girls and

• boys receive a disproportionate share of coveted class materials.

(EIS, 1989: para 3.2.5, page 5: cited in Riddell, 2000)

Since the 1980s, concerns about boys' performance in national examinations has led to a switch in the focus of concern from girls to boys. However, some commentators have pointed out that assumptions about girls' experience of schooling based solely on examination results could lead to an unduly optimistic view. In recent research reminiscent of the message conveyed by the EIS in 1989, Francis (2005) records girls' experience in classrooms:

The tendencies for girls to seat themselves on the peripheries of the classroom compounds the impression of girls as pushed to the margins of mixed-sex school life. Boys' physical domination of the classroom and playground space has been well documented. In the classroom, boys simply tend to take up more space than do girls. Even when sitting at desks boys tend to sprawl more and take up more room, and when moving around the classroom their activities are more invasive of space. (Francis, 2005:12/13)

From the 1980s onwards, sociologists' interest in gender broadened to include masculinities but they also began to interrogate the intersections of different forms of identity. Social class was not re-instated to its 1960s status as the master category of analysis. Rather, commentators argued, class was intersected by other forms of identity such as gender, ethnicity, 'race' and sexuality and these aspects of identity were as powerful as social class in determining how social rights and benefits were distributed. Phillips (1997) argued that the predominance of the Marxist or 'the materialist analysis' – with its emphasis on economic identity above all other forms of identity – had to be dislodged to enable proper consideration of the damaging impact of cultural and social constructions on particular groups – women, blacks, homosexuals. Analyses which rested on social class alone would fail to account for, or even acknowledge, devastating forms of oppression and exploitation, for example, domestic violence and the sexual abuse of children. Central in probing the complex intersections of different forms of identity has been the work of Connell (1995; 2002).

3.5 1990s: Masculinities

Connell's theory

In spite of the gains made by the Women's Rights movement, men continued to occupy a privileged position, for example, on the most recent count, 93% of all cabinet ministers in the world's governments were men (Connell, 2002: 1). The social, economic and political benefits accruing to men are related in the literature (Mac An Ghaill, 1994; Connell, 1995 & 2002; Mills, 2001) to the structure of gender power relations in Western societies, whereby women experience commensurate disadvantages. The privileging of masculinities within systems of power relations has disadvantages for men also, for example, men's higher rates of economic participation, and higher earnings, mean that men pay a higher average rate of taxation with income disproportionately redistributed to women through the welfare state (Connell, 1995: 247). Amongst some groups, perceptions of gender advantage/disadvantage have given rise to 'backlash politics' which portrays the drawbacks experienced by men, not as pertaining to a privileged position within gender power relations, but as indicative of men's status as the victims of advances made by the

feminist movement. Connell explains this backlash partly in relation to the diversity of masculinities and to their intersection by other forms of identity, causing unequal distribution of power, privileges and benefits among men:

> *The men who benefit from recognition and hold social authority are not, by and large, those who do toxic and dangerous work or who have high rates of imprisonment (Connell, 1995: 249).*

The study of gender, and masculinities, within a complex system of power relations has been helpful in analysing 'problem' masculinities such as violent behaviour. Commentators have pointed to the over-representation of men in statistics for crime, particularly for violent crime (Connell, 2000; 2002; Mills, 2001). These concerns with masculinities and violence extended into education and became particularly pointed after the murders at Columbine High School in the US in 1999 when two boys shot dead twelve students and one teacher in their own school. Connell argues that 'problem' masculinities such as violent behaviour can be understood as part of diversity in gender practices and consciousness, for example:

> *... ... those who enforce by extreme violence the marginality of gay men – that is to say, homophobic killers – are mostly young and economically disadvantaged men. Yet to themselves they are proving their manhood and defending the honour of men (Connell, 1995: 249)*

By this account, some 'problem' masculinities at least, arise from a false consciousness of masculinities and the structures of power relations, with the remedy lying in the re-education of men (Mills, 2001; Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2003).

In the education sphere masculinities were seen as a 'problem' with concerns throughout western education systems about the 'underachievement' of boys and about their disproportionate representation in exclusion statistics and other indicators of challenging behaviour. In seeking to analyse these patterns, Connell cautions against using the 'common-sense' dichotomy of masculine/feminine (Connell, 2002). This view of gender suggests a cultural distinction between women and men, based on the biological difference between male and female. Connell argues that this highly dichotomized view, emerging from early feminist theory (Gilligan,1982a; 1982b) is unhelpful in understanding the range of masculinities and femininities and the shared experiences and capacities of men and women (Connell, 2002: 8). The definition of gender used in this study will be that of Connell (2002):

> *..........gender must be understood as a social structure. It is not an expression of biology, nor a fixed dichotomy in human life or character. It is a pattern in our social arrangements, and in everyday activities or practices which those arrangements govern. (Connell, 2002: 9)*

This definition is contentious. There is debate as to whether social constructs of gender can be fully separated out from biological functions. It is argued, for example, that women's experience of pregnancy and childbirth is formative of feminine identities. Gender identities may be fluid as Connell suggests but there are 'fixing' mechanisms which tie gender to biological functions.

Connell's work offers considerable insight into the relationship between class and gender identities. Perceptions of the primacy of one category over the other category have been debated for over four decades, with commentators still divided over whether social class underpins, or exists alongside, other forms of identity (Young, 1990, Phillips, 1997; Fraser, 1997). This discussion will be pursued further in the final section of this chapter. It is the intention that this study will contribute to these debates in exploring commonalities and differences in the experience of twenty boys and girls who have been excluded from school.

Connell's theory has been influential as educational sociologists studied masculinities in school settings, particularly since the formal outcomes of schooling, exam results, exclusions and attendance showed boys to be faring less well than girls.

Masculinities in school settings

During the 1990s the theory of masculinities was developed by a range of theorists, for example, Mac an Ghaill (1994), Epstein (1997 & 1998), Skelton (1997). Jackson (2002: 39) identified four main strands in the development of this theory:

- masculine identities are historically and culturally situated

- multiple masculinities exist

- there are dominant and subordinate forms of masculinity

- masculinities are actively constructed in school settings.

The concept of hegemonic masculinities has been particularly useful in understanding how a range of masculinities are negotiated and re-negotiated in school settings (Skelton, 2001;

Francis, 2000). Hegemonic masculinities are based on the structure of gender/sexual power relations (Epstein, 1997), a central part of Connell's theory. Within that power structure, boys define themselves as Subject against the 'Other'. Any association with femininity is located within the 'Other', as are masculinities which do not conform to the hegemonic standard of what it is the be a 'real' man (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997: 119 -120). Some non-hegemonic masculinities are noted as particularly painful for boys to occupy (Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Connell, 1995). Writers also record, however, the difficulties for those boys seeking to achieve and maintain hegemonic identities. Renold (2004: 249) reported that over two thirds of boys in her study openly expressed their feelings of powerlessness and anxiety as they *struggled to negotiate the impossible fiction of hegemonic masculinity*. Boys who invested in Other (i.e. non-hegemonic forms of masculinity) were not always subordinately positioned and boys who invested in hegemonic forms of masculinity did not always feel its culturally exalted status (Renold, 2004: 250).

Further, the concept of hegemonic masculinities has been used to analyse the apparent underachievement of boys in national examinations (Jackson, 2002), a trend noted in all UK education systems as well as in those of the USA, Canada , Australia and New Zealand (Francis, 2000; Jackson, 2002). Academic work, it is argued, is perceived by boys to be 'feminine' and is therefore unattractive to those with hegemonic masculine identities. Academic achievement is not in itself seen to be demeaning but being seen to work in school is a problem for some boys. Jackson (2002) discusses how boys protect their self-worth in school settings where academic achievement is the single most important criterion in judging the worth of pupils. Caught between two competing influences on their sense of themselves – the need to conform to hegemonic masculinities and the desire to value one's own worth – Jackson outlines four strategies commonly employed by boys to protect their masculine identities in the face of pressure to work in school: procrastination, withdrawal of effort and rejection of academic work, avoidance of the appearance of work, and disruptive behaviour. The last of these has four benefits in Jackson's view. Disruptive behaviour can increase a boy's status with the peer group who may see him as demonstrating 'appropriate' forms of masculinity. Second, it can deflect attention away from academic performance and on to the behaviour. Third, failure to achieve can be attributed to poor behaviour rather than to lack of ability and, fourth, it may sabotage the academic efforts of classmates outwith the masculine hegemony. Does this analysis of boys' 'underachievement' relate to all boys? Willis (1978) detected the same antipathy towards academic pursuits amongst the 'lads' in his study. They viewed 'mental work' as irrelevant to their future lives as industrial workers. Thus, the 'Otherness' of school work lay in its positioning as middle-class, rather than feminine. Feminist criticisms of Willis's

work were founded on its perceived lack of a gender analysis, but some feminist accounts of gender in school settings could equally be accused of lacking a class analysis.

Theories of masculine hegemonies have allowed a more refined analysis of boys' experience than New Right prescriptions for change to address the 'problems' of masculinity, particularly in schools (Martino and Berrill, 2003: 103). Connell (2000) acknowledges attacks on the concept but argues that ways of theorizing gendered power relations among men are needed and so the concept remains valuable:

> *To recognize diversity in masculinities is not enough. We must also recognize the relationships between the different kinds of masculinity: relations of alliance, dominance and subordination. These relationships are constructed through practices that exclude and include, that intimidate, exploit and so on. There is a gender politics within masculinity (Connell, 1995: 37)*

Connell argues that the concept of masculine hegemonies has been particularly successful in school-based research, allowing as it has the vivid demonstration of patterns of hegemony. Willis's work was one such early example of this. A further point which links Connell's work to Willis's is their emphasis on the agency exerted by boys as they negotiate their masculine identities. Earlier sociological theory had sometimes conveyed schools as fulfilling a simple socialization role. Connell commented that the relationships constructing masculinity are dialectical; *they do not correspond to the one-way causation of the socialization model* (Connell, 1995: 37). Agency as part of the process of identity construction is a key notion for this research and it will be further discussed.

Connell also argued that there was a class politics within masculinity, noting that the privileged position enjoyed by men in the structure of gender power relations was compounded and enhanced for some men by class privilege:

> *Class, race and generational differences........ cross-cut the category 'men', spreading the gains and costs of gender relations very unevenly among men. The different situations defined by these structures are among the important bases of diversity in gender practices and consciousness, that is to say, among patterns of masculinity (Connell, 95: 249)*

Connell's theory of masculinities related to the wider social world where economic privilege as well as gender privilege structured power relations. This is acknowledged but the relationship between masculine hegemonies and economic status is unclear. For example, how do the hegemonies of working-class men in traditional sites such as factories relate to the powerful hegemonies Connell detects in the US Pentagon? It seems unlikely that the differences and similarities between these two groups can be understood in terms

of gender politics alone. Belonging to the former rather than the latter hegemony is determined not only by cultural factors but by economic situation. The concept of masculine hegemonies has had limited value in understanding masculinities and schooling because its social class dimension is undeveloped in the literature using the concept. Key issues relating to inequalities in educational outcomes, questions about which boys and which girls are faring badly in schooling, and why, have not been susceptible to analysis using this concept.

3.6 2000s: Complex identities: gender, social class and schooling

The focus of educational sociology broadened towards the end of the 1990s and provided more refined analyses of young people's engagement with schooling, achieved by considering the complex relationships within gender and between gender, social class and other identities, such as those derived from affiliations with local communities.

Femininities in school settings

So what happened to girls in the 1990s as masculinities became the focus for so much theorizing? Concerns were expressed that they had again become invisible as a focus on outcomes for one group (boys) distorted perceptions of the performance of other groups (Blyth and Milner, 1996; Plummer,2000). As a result of the focus on boys, particularly of perceptions that their behaviour was so much worse than girls, there had been less investigation of girls' experience. Research has been less concerned to analyse the processes, in-school and out-of-school, by which girls negotiate their multiple identities. Occasionally, in the literature to date on 'problem' girls, a stereotype emerged of girls as passive and introverted, as victims even. This view of girls was in marked contrast to Connell's portrayal of boys as exercising agency in the negotiation of their masculinities. Whilst acknowledging that girls' challenging behaviour took different forms, there were indications that feminine 'problem' behaviour was less likely to lead to exclusion, for example, by adopting stereotypical female responses, thereby avoiding exclusion. Osler et al (2002: 48) describe the reaction of some girls in school settings when confronted with a charge of wrongdoing:

> .....*the adoption of a remorseful stance, crying and the use of verbal skills including denial, excuses and apologies were strategies used by many girls to manoeuvre around school disciplinary procedures. (Osler et al, 2002: 48)*

Similarly, there were concerns that the behaviour of girls, whilst less likely to be of the very challenging kind that leads to exclusion, could be highly problematic and just as indicative of disaffection with schooling as the 'acting out' behaviour of boys. Osler et al

(2002) note that girls' exclusion from school was much more likely to be self-exclusion in the form of truancy or other disengagement from school and classroom processes. It is significant that recent research on girls' experience in schools has been in an older pre-Connell tradition of gender research where strong gender dichotomies apply. McLaughlin (2005:54), exploring the psychosocial experience of 'problem' girls and alluding to the work of Brown and Gilligan (1992), reports that adolescent girls seem to experience a 'loss of voice' at that stage, losing the 'ordinary courage' to speak their minds. This 'loss of voice' is linked to the social construction of gender (Brown and Gilligan, 1992; McLaughlin, 2005). Other writers (Osler & Vincent, 2003), too, have commented upon the link between girls' relationships, agency and experience of school. Their focus has been on girls who are not faring well in school settings and whose behaviour is characterised by passivity and withdrawal. Girls constitute just 20% of school exclusions. This is nevertheless a significant minority. The gendered behaviour of these girls will be the focus here. There are indications that the behaviour of these girls is becoming more prevalent amongst girls generally. For example, The Herald (18/9/06) reports a significant increase in the number of girls referred to the Children's Hearing System and attributes this to the rise of the 'ladette' culture amongst girls.

The focus on boys' attainment in the 1990s has resulted in misinterpretation of girls' performance within overall patterns of school attainment. In her study of the achievement of working-class girls in the education system, Plummer (2000) criticized the simplistic interpretation of statistics on the relative performances of boys and girls in national examinations in England. Within those overall statistics, there was evidence that groups other than boys were faring badly. Figures indicating the significant achievement of middle-class girls, Plummer argued, had been widely misinterpreted as indicative of a rise in the achievement of all girls. The work discussed in this section has tried to retain a continuing focus on girls throughout the 1970s, 80s and 90s and is now being complemented by the gender researchers who are widening their focus from masculinities to gender.

Complexities of gender

Recent studies have tried to analyse masculinities and femininities in relation to each other. Skelton (2003) discusses the assumed link between the underachievement of boys and the 'feminisation' of primary schools, whereby the gender balance of the teaching workforce in primary schools, in particular, has been viewed as deleterious to boys' achievement. Skelton argues that those assumptions have been based on sex-role socialization theory and have been superseded by more sophisticated and complex understandings of gender

identities. More important than an increase in male teachers to act as role models, she argues, is an increase in awareness of *intra gender differences* (Skelton's italics), exemplified by differences between male teachers of younger and older children. Male teachers of young children demonstrated different professional behaviours, that is, did masculinities differently, from male teachers of eleven year-olds. Gendered behaviours, by this account, are played out across a range of masculinities and femininities. Endorsement of this is more likely to challenge simplified gender dichotomies which are unhelpful to boys and girls.

Francis (2005: 14), writing of how gender identities are negotiated in classrooms, uses an informal classroom discussion of sexuality to illustrate how both girls and boys cooperate to construct genders as opposite. This negotiation process encompasses the negotiation of a number of femininities but Francis (2005) and Reay (2001) note that, although there are multiple femininities, what they all have in common is their deferment of power to the boys:

> *Within both localised and dominant discourses that these children draw on being a boy is still seen as best by all the boys and a significant number of girls. (Reay, 2001:164)*

Studies conducted in English schools recently have tried to research gender in terms of the contradictions beneath the surface of stable, settled and coherent masculinities. Renold (2004) sets out to explore how boys live out various contradictory and hierarchical layers of masculinity and to understand:

> *the processes by which some boys manage, negotiate (and seek to resolve) the tensions between the perceived feminisation of academic success/studiousness and the pressures of hegemonic masculinity. (Renold: 2004: page373)*

Femininities as well as masculinities are complex, shifting, layered and negotiated in school settings but there are limits to the permutations possible. Commentators (Connell, 2001; Reay , 2002) suggest that that there are 'fixing' mechanisms which limit the fluidity of identity construction and that social class is one such mechanism. The next section of this literature review will pick up on an earlier discussion of the intersections of gender and social class identities.

Intersecting identities: social class and gender

Over three decades from the 1970s, social theorists debated the prioritizing of one form of identity over others. The Marxist or 'the materialist analysis' which privileged economic or

social class identity was seen to marginalize other forms of identity (Phillips, 1997), namely, cultural identities arising from, for example, gender, sexuality, ethnicity. Bourdieu (1978) had proposed that capital had forms other than the material, but, like wealth, these were susceptible to the politics of redistribution. From this broad conception came theories of social justice (Young, 1990; Fraser, 1997) which articulated the pursuit of a just society as encompassing the proper recognition of social groups previously experiencing discrimination, oppression or exploitation; as well as the redistribution of wealth. Whilst the conceptualization of social justice as plural has been influential in policy, significant disagreements have remained about the nature of the relationship between economic and cultural forms of injustice.

As the theoretical debates continued, social class slipped away from the educational policy arena. Sociologists had been concerned for decades with questions of social class and educational achievement but that focus was lost in the 1980s and 90s. The new century saw its return. Lucey (2001) comments:

> *While some attempted to celebrate the 'death of class' in the 1980s and 90s ....., we find that in the new century the power of class never went away after all and that, alongside gender, race and ethnicity, class continues to be a vital factor in determining the educational experiences, achievements and trajectories of girls and boys. (Lucey, 2001: 177)*

David Milliband, Minister for School Standards, in an article entitled *Class haunts the classroom*, notes that improvements overall in standards of achievement have failed to address the experience of working-class pupils:

> *The socio-economic gap in education has been shown to start as early as 22 months. Traditionally, it has widened throughout the education system, culminating in skewed access to higher education. (The Guardian, 18/09/03)*

Class was back but in ways which recognized its intersections with cultural identities, consistent with the view of Connell (1995):

> *To understand gender... ..., we must constantly go beyond gender. The same applies in reverse. We cannot understand class, race or global inequality without constantly moving towards gender. Gender relations are a major component of social structures as a whole, and gender politics are among the main determinants of our collective fate (Connell, 1995: 76)*

From empirical studies, the relationship between economic and other forms of identity is conveyed. For example, Frank et al (2003: 123) argued for the need to see boys and their achievements in schools as multiply constructed within the intersections of a variety of

social positions, including issues of race, class, sexuality and ethnicity. Archer and Yamashita (2003) discuss 'culturally entangled masculinites' and argue that approaches to theorizing masculinities need to recognize complex identities, particularly since education policy in relation to boys and their perceived underachievement offers a narrow account of masculinities based upon 'laddish' behaviour. They argue that there is evidence of the 'normalisation' of particular, white, middle-class values within education which encompass 'laddishness' but fail to grasp the extent to which some boys experience strong emotional attachment to identities grounded outside of the education context (Archer & Yamashita, 2003:129)

Some studies go further than acknowledging the intersections of different identities to assert social class as an underpinning, and not just a mediating, aspect of identity (Reay, 1998; Plummer, 2000; Reay and Wiliam, 1999; Reay, 2002). In a case study of Shaun and his experience in a London 'sink' secondary school, Reay (2002) shows how a poor working-class boy struggles, at some personal cost, to maintain his 'tough' status with his peer group whilst simultaneously aspiring to achieve at school. Reay sees in Shaun's struggle an illustration of how gender and class identities interact: Shaun loves his entirely female family and shares their values but he recognizes that life on the estate where he lives demands his conformity to aggressive forms of masculinity. Reay's point is that his class identity shapes his gender identity, forcing him to construct his toughness as philanthropic, to be used in support of weaker peers and needy teachers.

Empirical studies of the negotiation of pupil identities within school settings encompasses the – for schools - central construct of ability (Reay and Wiliam, 1999; Hamilton, 2002). The concept itself has been subject to highly polarised political influences. For example, when egalitarian 'old left' policies of comprehensive schools were most influential, the emphasis was on individual potential and the need for precise measurement of 'ability' was underplayed (Benn and Chitty, 1996). Those in power therefore impact upon pupil identities through the internalisation of school and teacher criteria (Broadfoot, 1996) – pupils take to themselves the school's evaluation of them. This theory is consistent with theories of labeling and social typing discussed earlier whereby the person who is typed cooperates in the typing. Further, the institutional modelling of ability, for example, through the means by which learning and learners are organised (e.g. setting and streaming) places constraints on potential social identities (Ball, 1981; Reay and Wiliam, 1999). Pupil ability identity is considered to be a dynamic and negotiated construct and, potentially, open to parental influence. Hamilton (2002) researched the extent to which parents' views of their children's abilities affected the negotiation of ability identity in the

maintained and the independent school sectors in Scotland. She found that parents of pupils in maintained schools were more likely to look to the school for ability constructs and to have internalised those constructs as they were communicated in grades awarded to their children:

> *Parental role in the articulation of ability and interactions with school as well as their perceptions of their own position/role within their education communities seems to have been an integral element in shaping the independence of ability identity. (Hamilton, 2002: 601)*

Empirical work on the negotiation of identities in school settings has been successful in showing how schools are actively involved in the processes whereby pupils' identities are negotiated. Parents, too, are party to these negotiations of pupil identity but in this three-way process there are considerable variations in the influence parents are able to exert. Parental engagement with schooling shapes outcomes for pupils but that engagement is mediated by social class. Hanafin and Lynch (2002), writing about the involvement in education of working-class parents in Ireland, found that, although there was a continuum of parental involvement in schooling, parents at both ends of that continuum were unhappy with the quality of their involvement in spite of their clear desire to participate:

> *Belying theories of cultural deficit, parents throughout this study have shown themselves interested, informed and concerned regarding their children's education. Failure to participate in the schooling process cannot be attributed to lack of interest among these parents. Responsibility lies with the structures and practices of the school system as it operates, at least in the working-class areas of our community. (Hanafin and Lynch, 2002: 46)*

Vincent (2000) argued that the reforms of the 1980s and 90s which claimed to increase parents' role in education have failed to recognize the differential positioning of parents to schooling, positions largely determined by social class. Some parents have little effect in the school processes which help to shape their children's identity; other parents have a formative effect on schools' views of their children.

The relationship between different identities, particularly between economic and cultural identities, is contentious in theory. Empirical studies do not offer as yet a clear and consistent view of these relationships. It is intended that this study will contribute to better understandings of how economic and cultural identities interact with each other in the processes leading to pupils' exclusion from school.

3.7 Identities and social change

Policy relating to pupils' behaviour and exclusion from school was criticized in Chapter 2 for being overly influenced by the SIM movement and for failing to take sufficient account of pupil identities drawn from wider contexts. The theorists given greatest prominence in this chapter, Willis and Connell, both argue the need for research on identities and identity construction to see the school as located in a larger process. Masculinities and femininities are negotiated across various sociocultural and historically specific sites, impelling the researcher to consider school processes and experiences as influenced by global changes such as de-industrialisation. Such change means that the two main sites for the construction of working-class, masculine identities, in particular, have shifted dramatically. Much of Scotland's traditional heavy industry – steel, shipbuilding and mining – has gone, resulting in significant changes in access to employment and to patterns of work. Neither will working-class men's role in the home be the traditional one of patriarchal breadwinner. Alluding to the work of Nayak (2001), Reay says:

> ... ... against the backdrop of contemporary economic change and the hegemony of global capitalism, it is white, working-class young men who have the strongest sense that their masculinities are under siege, and this has consequences for their defensive practices (Reay, 2002: 232)

Not necessarily a defensive practice, but perhaps a way of counteracting the impact of economic change and globalization, is the strong affinity of working-class men to local identities.

Archer and Yamashita (2003) discuss how working-class boys in interview articulated a sense of belonging to a place as constituting an important part of their identities. This linked to their need to feel safe, to be known and accepted. Nayak (2003), writing about how boys in the North-east of England construct their identities in an industrial context much-changed since their fathers' and grandfathers' days, underlines the importance of football support as part of a 'curriculum of the body' used by 'the Real Geordies' to construct their white, working-class, masculine identities in the absence of a future of manual labour in heavy industry. Nayak's empirical work further evidences what Willis demonstrated twenty five years previously; although the boys in her study are still at school, she argues that their gender identities of young people 'cannot be adequately comprehended within the microcosm of the school institution alone' (Nayak, 2003: 148). Through support of the local football team the boys are able to construct their own identities and to differentiate finely those identities from other masculinities. For example, the differentiation is not just between those men who support the team and those men who

do not. Nayak (2003: 155) found that the Real Geordies located their identity in physically attending matches, shouting and singing during matches and drinking in pubs before and after. Anoraks, on the other hand, whilst still supporting the club, would watch matches on Sky television or in the pub. Nayak illustrates how a school sub-culture could continue to forge industrial masculinities in a post-industrial context:

> *For these 'local lads', football fandom provided them with the routines, rituals and forms of embodied regulation familiar to an older world of manual labour. Significantly, the cultural re-imagining of Geordie masculinities reconfigures the relationship to production within the fields of leisure and consumption. (Nayak, 2003:156)*

Nayak concludes by arguing that the Real Geordies strong association to place and culture indicate that traditions of masculinity are not easily dislodged from the lives of young men whatever global changes might imply. Neither, however, do these boys inhabit 'dominant, hegemonic masculinities' for their claims to power were more precarious and contingent upon time, space and social context. Within schools, it may be possible to see boys as constructing identities tenuously and cautiously in relation to an outside world changing but not yet changed in ways that are complete and entirely comprehensible. The dissonance between formal schooling and local masculinities may be seen as arising from the signaling, embodying and performing of masculinities in multiple sites and spaces, given the absence of the traditional sites for such processes.

Archer & Yamashita (2003) detect agency in boys constructing their identities and evidence this in the forms of speech, style and clothing adopted by the boys:-

> *Accent and language appeared as important defining features of Harkton masculinities..., and a number of boys constructed a key difference between both researchers and themselves; namely, that we would not be able to understand the made-up slang that characterized Harkton boys' speech. (Archer & Yamashita, 2003:119)*

This deliberate cultivation of particular kinds of embodied masculinities would be likely to hinder the social mobility of the boys and they recognized that this would, indeed, be the case, citing their experience in job interviews, for example. Their strong attachment, therefore, to a particular locality and their choice to embody and articulate that attachment contributes to the reproduction of inequality and continued oppression. However, in contrast, a final point offered by Archer and Yamashita (2003) is that 'bad boy' masculinities are fun for those who espouse them, offering status, close friendships and enjoyment of life.

These two studies (Archer & Yamashita, 2003; Nayak, 2003) are important for the insights they offer into the construction of the identities of working-class boys in a post-industrial context, as well as illustrating the continuing relevance of Willis's work in a de-industrialised context.

Poverty

An additional aspect to be mentioned in relation to social class and education is poverty and its impact on young people's engagement with schooling. Social change has brought increasing inequality in the UK. Reay (2006) notes that by the late 1990s relative poverty was twice the level of the 1960s and three times the level of the late 1970s. Material resources, and the lack of them, shape forms of engagement with schooling. For example, Ridge (2005) suggests that self-exclusion relates to poverty:

> *Although we have an abundance of statistical data that can tell us how many children are poor and for how long .....we still have little understanding of what poverty means for children, or how they interpret its presence in their lives. (Ridge, 2005: 23)*

Ridge (2005) goes on to discuss her own research on the impact of poverty on the lives of children and particularly on their experience of school. She identifies its exclusionary effect on young people through the economic restrictions of their lives. For example, a number of school social activities demand expenditure such as the requirement for a uniform and particular kinds of equipment as causing pressure for some school pupils. Sometimes, those pressures are concealed from families through children's own desire to protect parents from knowledge of their experience of poverty.

Boys have been shown to dominate public spaces such as streets, playing fields, shopping centres so for girls in particular, schools can offer public space and social networks not otherwise available to them. Ridge (2005: 30) points to the critical importance of schools in providing social opportunities. For young people living in poverty, their homes do not afford the social space that would enable them to, for example, have friends to stay or even to visit. The physical restrictions of home may not be the only disincentive in its use for social purposes - embarrassment about furnishings may also be a factor. Neither are other sites for socialising open to young people living in poverty, for many of such places levy charges. This cost may be exacerbated for young people in rural settings where there are additional transport costs. (Ridge, 2005: 30).

As previously noted, exclusion statistics (SEED, 2005) indicate a connection between poverty and exclusion from school. Pupils in receipt of free school meals are over-represented in exclusion statistics. The literature available demonstrates how experience of schooling is undermined by poverty but this area is under-researched, especially in the light of increased in equality. This study will probe further the impact of relative poverty on pupils' engagement with schooling.

3.8 Conclusion

Chapter 2 had considered policy constructions of challenging behaviour and exclusions to inform the first research question:

- How are the behaviours leading to exclusion understood in policy and in school systems?

Gender and social class had been found to be invisible in the literature review of policy in spite of their conspicuousness in exclusion statistics. This second chapter in the literature review set out to examine how sociology had theorized the challenging behaviour of some young people in school settings. Social interactionist theory allowed insights into how individual pupils were 'typed' by the school as deviant but this process was not an interactive one; lack of pupil participation ensured that pupils were merely recipients of judgements handed out by professionals. The medical model, rather than the social interactionist one, dominated. Behaviour difficulties were attributed to factors in the pathology of the pupil, leading to labels of one kind or another. Labeling theory had allowed better understanding of the possible effects of labels on those labeled and had allowed a powerful critique of labeling within an SEN context. For pupils labeled as maladjusted, or as having SEBD, it was argued that labels were particularly unhelpful; at best, they were limiting and stereotyping and at worst, they stigmatized and undermined into adult life. Others argued that labels generally, and the SEBD label in particular, helped professionals to make connections between behaviours observed and assisted in better diagnosis and decision-making. This literature provided the theoretical basis for the SEN policy approaches discussed in the previous chapter but it did not throw light on why exclusion statistics were so strongly structured by gender and social class.

Ethnographies, particularly Paul Willis's Learning to Labour, addressed a central problem for educational sociologists: why did working-class children fare relatively badly within the education system? Willis showed that the oppositional, anti-school behaviour of the

'lads' in his study related to their development of the protective layers of a culture which would allow them to withstand the impact of life as workers under industrial capitalism. Willis's work was before its time in its demonstration of the development of particular cultural identities, masculine and working-class, within economic differentiations. The culture of the 'lads' valorized solidarity with the peer group, humour, and an ability to resist or withstand the controlling demands of arbitrary authority. This behaviour was shown to be deliberately cultivated in relation to the wider social context and to their future lives. For this study, Willis's work generates two questions:

- How far are excluded pupils exercising agency in the processes leading to their exclusion?

- What are the relative influences of school and wider social factors in shaping the gender and class identities of young people? How do these influences impact on one another?

For decades after Willis, gender replaced social class as the main category of analysis, although there were continuing debates about the prioritizing of one category over the other. Within gender analyses, there was a tendency to polarize femininities and masculinities until the work of R.W. Connell. Although initially focusing on masculinities, Connell argued that gender identities were all part of a structure of power relations. Masculinities were varied, fluid and continuously negotiated but, more than that, some masculinities were dominant and others subordinate. Heirarchies, or hegemonies, within masculinities were achieved and sustained by processes of 'othering', resulting in alliances and hostilities, inclusion and exclusion. Connell's account of how masculinities are negotiated reflected Willis's account of the 'lads' and the 'ear'oles'. Also like Willis, Connell argued the influence of social class, amongst other factors, in determining different forms of masculinity. The social class dimension of Connell's theory was found to be missing from some subsequent analyses which drew upon Connell's theory of masculine hegemonies to explain boys' underachievement and challenging behaviour in school settings.

More recent empirical studies acknowledged the intersections of class and gender in the processes through which boys negotiated identities in school settings, although there was debate as to whether or not social class was the main formative influence shaping other forms of identity. This study aims to provide evidence for that debate. The literature offers accounts of how class and gender intersected, creating for some boys identities which were

uncomfortable to inhabit. These accounts are not directed towards understanding how the class cultural affiliations of some boys result in their exclusion. It is possible that a line of enquiry informed by understandings of the class cultural identities of boys will yield insights into why working-class boys are disproportionately excluded. The question to be addressed by this study is:

- How do the negotiation of gender and class identities in school settings relate to exclusion from school?

Recent literature revealed that identities were often very localized, with boys in particular demonstrating very strong attachments to their own communities and, in the absence of traditional industry, using leisure pursuits such as support for the local football team to signal and sustain working-class masculinities. The investigation here will foreground class and gender identities but will also ask:

- What other social and cultural aspects of pupils' lives contribute to exclusion from school? How?

Coming strongly from some commentators was the message that the main challenge for educational sociology was to explain the relationship between social class and educational disadvantage, to consider the zombie stalking the education system. Exclusions are part of the problem in creating schools which serve better the interests of all children. The final question to be addressed by this study then is:

- How can school provision be developed in ways that reduce exclusion?

The next chapter will outline the methodology for addressing these six questions.

Chapter 4

Methodological issues

4.1 Introduction

The Scottish Executive Education Department produces annually school statistics; those include exclusion from school. The demography of those statistics year on year is remarkably similar, with particular social groups forming a consistent proportion of the overall population of those excluded. Those statistics provided the starting point for this study which used qualitative methods to probe the reasons behind the statistical patterns, particularly, why boys were over-represented in exclusions. Policy and professional discourses offered no insights into this gender imbalance. Not only that, but gender was invisible in policy on pupil behaviour and exclusions. More helpful to the aims of this study were sociological theories of gender and social class and their impact on schooling. The clearest view of working-class boys' negative engagement with schooling came from Paul Willis. He showed that in the final years of schooling, working-class boys were using an anti-school culture to negotiate individual and collective identities, identities which would sustain them in their future working-lives under industrial capitalism. Connell's work on masculinities offered similar insights; class culture and gender identities were shown to intersect. The relationship between class culture and gender identities was not always represented in the literature of the 1980s and 1990s, with some commentators using theories of masculinity to explain boys' underachievement without reference to social class. More recently, the complexities of schooling, social class and gender identities have been probed. This study aimed to build on that body of work by applying theories of class culture identities to school exclusions. The methods used are discussed in this chapter, starting with a statement of the aims and research questions. The intention here is to show how particular epistemologies shaped the study, linking the focus of the research to the modes of enquiry. A rationale for the methods used will be provided and the process of the research will be critically reviewed.

4.2 Aims of the research and research questions

The proposal is to investigate the over-representation of some groups, especially working-class boys, in formal exclusions from secondary schools in Scotland. Statistics from the Scottish Executive (Scottish Executive, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007) indicate that boys and girls are excluded in a ratio of 4:1, with other groups such as

children in receipt of free school meals and children looked after by the local authority also significantly over-represented. As discussed previously in relation to policy and wider literature the research will aim to:

- investigate gender and other forms of identity as factors in formal exclusions from school

- explore differences in the ways in which schools impact upon the identities of different gender and social class groups and to relate those differences to school exclusions

- explore how schools might develop anti-exclusion strategies.

In establishing these aims for the research, the intention has been to build upon a large body of work on challenging behaviour and exclusions. A critical evaluation of that work showed that there was a need for a perspective that considered pupil behaviour and exclusions in relation to the negotiation of identities and, in particular, to the negotiation of masculine, working-class identities. The broad aims of the research, therefore, have been translated into specific research questions:

- How are the behaviours leading to exclusion understood in policy and in school systems?

- How do the negotiation of gender and class identities in school settings relate to exclusion from school?

- What other social and cultural aspects of pupils' lives contribute to exclusion from school? How?

- How far are excluded pupils exercising agency in the processes leading to their exclusion?

- What are the relative influences of school and wider social factors in shaping the gender and class identities of young people? How do these influences impact on one another?

- How can school provision be developed in ways that reduce exclusion?

These questions were addressed through two phases of fieldwork: a series of key informant interviews which helped to establish and probe a range of understandings of school exclusions in practice and in policy; and twenty case studies of pupils excluded from four secondary schools, enabling a multi-faceted representation of pupils' experience.

4.3 Research design

4.3.1 Theoretical influences

Critical theory

The research questions described above have arisen from apparent discords in policy and practice in schooling. Implicit in the questions is a view that exclusion from school is a problem in and for schooling and that the disproportionate exclusion from school of some groups is unjust. The project adopts a political and moral standpoint, its purpose is to offer insights as to how policy and provision might develop in line with that perspective. Mason (1987, 1996) points out that:-

> *Your epistemology is, literally, your theory of knowledge, and should therefore concern the principles and rules by which you decide whether and how social phenomena can be known, and how knowledge can be demonstrated. (Mason, 1987: 13)*

The epistemology of this study is derived from Marxist Critical Theory with its emphasis on social change as the purpose of research. Seidman (2004: 33) recounts how, for Marx, social theory and social change went hand in hand. Seidman himself endorses the view that social knowledge is about promoting the good of humanity but finds that this *'moral hope.... ... is often not acknowledged by many social scientists as an important criterion in judging the worth of social research and theory.'* (Seidman, 2004: 4)

However, the notion of change, rather than knowledge, as the purpose of social research is criticized by Hammersley (1995). He argues that Enlightenment thinking has given rise to three models of the relationship between research, policy and practice – the disciplinary, the engineering and the Critical research models. With regard to the last of these, Hammersley comments:

> *Here research is conceived as properly directed towards the achievement of progressive social change, this often being conceptualized in emancipatory terms. (Hammersley, 1995: 127/8)*

Hammersley comments that Marxism and, indeed, all Critical Theory adopts the view that knowledge functions to preserve or change society. Its failing, however, according to

Hammersley, is that 'all forms of inquiry are constituted by interests other than the pursuit of knowledge itself.' (page 140). Hammersley is concerned that, in an approach which sees values as core to the research process, too little value is placed upon knowledge for its own sake and, consequently, the practice of research is devalued in relation to other forms of practice. The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake was not a prime aim of this research which was infused with social and political purpose. Inequities in the processes and outcomes of schooling were treated as a problem and the research aimed to explore this problem to inform policy and professional practice in the future. Change, rather than knowledge, was therefore the prime aim of the study. Research for social purpose serves broader constituencies than those concerned with the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake, and its worth is judged by that broader group, for example, by professionals and policymakers, as well as by the academic community.

Feminist theory

The study here constructed gender as an important category of social analysis. But gender theory and, in particular, feminist theory, has also influenced the research design in its critique of positivist methods:

> *...feminist methodologies have questioned whether the traditional scientific method is the best tool for capturing human experience in general, and women's experience in particular (Campbell, 1995: 215)*

Feminist theories do not offer a distinctive method or methods but, instead, develop established methods of social research in ways which allow the perspective of less powerful members of society to be captured. Positivist approaches have, it is argued, been dominated by the perspective of white, middle-class men and, in upholding the notion of the scientific method as objective and value free, they have masked the fact that the method embodies their values and just their values. The value-set of a particular and powerful group within society had therefore been generally held to be transcendent of all subjective experience. Dorothy Smith (1987, 1990) saw objectified knowledges and discourses as a central force in the social domination of women (Seidman, 2003: 214). However, in arguing that all knowledge is socially situated and interested, Smith tried to steer a middle course between objectivity and relativism. By her account, individuals and groups respond to the same world in different ways – there is a common reality but it is interpreted differently, its meanings constructed in multiple ways. Similarly, one of the main gender theorists influencing this project has commented that as modern epistemology recognizes, there is no description without a standpoint. (Connell, 1995: 69). It followed that the task of the social researcher was to allow these different constructions to emerge

through interviews with a wide range of key stakeholders, for example, excluded pupils; their families; teachers and other staff; and school managers who took the decision to exclude.

The attempt to capture the 'multiple realities' of a range of participants did not preclude the researcher's own perspective. Archer and Yamashita (2003), in speaking of their own work with inner city, working-class boys, noted:

> *As researchers, we are, of course, neither objective nor 'outside' of the research process. Our gendered, racialised and classed identities/positions interact with the identities of the respondents, providing a specific context within which the boys produced, constructed and negotiated masculine identities... (Archer & Yamashita, 2003: 118)*

Archer and Yamashita eschewed an objective or 'outsider' stance. A similar 'insider' stance is taken in this study in acknowledgement of the influence of the researcher's experience, values and purposes in conducting the research. Semi-structured interviews enabled a range of perspectives on exclusions to emerge and allowed meanings to be constructed through the interactions of the researcher and the participants. If different subjects knew the world differently, the task of the researcher was to take account of these different constructions of knowledge and allow them to shape her own understanding of the problem.

4.3.2 Participative research

The methods of the study were influenced by feminist principles of representing 'multiple realities', attempting to understand different constructions of knowledge and giving particular voice to those whose voices were not usually heard. Those contributing to the research process have been termed 'participants' in the discussion to follow, in recognition of their formative role. The discourse about participation in social research has particular point for research related to professional contexts such as teaching. There, the aims of the research link closely to the development of provision and practice in the field, to what Orme (2000) calls 'the production of knowledge for practice' as well as to the distillation of 'knowledge from practice.' The view articulated by Orme is in marked contrast to that of Hammersley cited previously; by her account, knowledge is collectively constructed and is then used to effect change. In furthering these aims for research, the participation of 'stakeholders' is of central importance in ensuring, not just the rigour of the work, but also its impact, its capacity to support change. Participants in the research here had particular interests in exclusions, as well as opinions to offer. There were limits to the participative nature of the project, however, in that participants could not be said to have the same sense

of ownership of the project as the researcher. And even where commitment to and interest in the project was very strong , the practical constraints of, for example, school organisation, prevented professional participants from engaging fully with the research processes at all stages. Nevertheless, participative research offered a way of integrating research, policy and practice in ways which were capable of developing all three.

4.3.3 Emancipatory research

Oliver (1992, 1996, 1997) has done much to advocate and develop through practice emancipatory research. In researching disability, he has argued that:

> *Disability research should not be seen as a set of technical, objective procedures carried out by experts but part of the struggle by disabled people to challenge the oppression they currently experience in their daily lives. (Oliver, 1992:102)*

Emancipatory research is located by Oliver as a development of the interpretive paradigm which, in social research, had gained ground from positivism. However, the interpretive paradigm had changed the rules but not the game – interpretive research is just as alienating as positivist research because what might be called 'the social relations of production' have not changed one iota (Oliver, 1992: 106). The task for emancipatory research is to develop its own understandings of the lived experiences of its subjects through a dialectical process whereby those subjects have control over the research process.

Powell (2002) also describes the full engagement of participants with social research as not just participatory but emancipatory. The knowledge claims of participants are shaped by their social and cultural experiences but through their participation in the research process, participants are enabled to influence the context in which they function. Participation in research can therefore be liberating for those involved. By this account, participation offers the potential for change in the participants as well as change in the site being researched. The research process would provide the means for all involved to develop and learn through the collective construction of knowledge. The research process, therefore, is mutually formative for the researcher and for all other participants.

What did these understandings mean for the project here? In participative or emancipatory research, the dichotomy between the researcher and the researched begins to break down. The researcher is no longer the expert whose interpretations are the only ones which matter, but, instead, is a facilitator. The construction of knowledge becomes a collective

process for all of the participants, including the researcher. These emancipatory principles were embraced in this project only in limited ways. For example, data analysis was conducted by the researcher alone, ensuring that her interpretations were privileged within the research process. In contrast, ontological understandings based on emancipatory priniciples had some influence on the choice of methods. There was an effort throughout to allow the knowledge of all of the participants to be shared. For some participants such as government policy advisers, conventional data-gathering techniques such as one-to-one interviewing were a familiar and appropriate means of allowing them to share their views of the topic under consideration. Some were confident enough that they took a measure of control over the process, for example by stipulating the conditions and circumstances under which they were prepared to be interviewed. For other participants, though, such as the children and young people who had been excluded from school, the methods used to enable expression of their knowledge were more problematic:

> *Those who are at times deemed subjects or objects of the research have to be involved as full participants. This requires more than giving informed consent: participants are active agents within the research process. This in turn necessitates that they are receptive to research, both its findings and its nuances, and that they are themselves research literate. A consequence of this for social sciences is an educational role, making research accessible both as an outcome and as an activity. (Orme, 2000: 212)*

One of the consequences of fostering broad participation in school-based educational research is a fuller integration of teaching and research activity in those sites. This would better equip professionals to participate more effectively as researchers but, until schools themselves are constructed as sites for the learning of everyone involved, it is unlikely that the broader range of participants in research would be fully empowered to take control of research processes and outcomes. For example, the young people in this study and, to a lesser extent, their parents cooperated with the study but it is not possible to claim that they were sufficiently engaged with the school, nor experienced enough in participation in the organization, to become co-owners of the project. The principle of emancipatory research might be hard to follow through where the research is into organizations which have low levels of participation amongst their constituency. Thus, although this project aspires to emancipatory principles, there were constraints in the contexts researched which restricted its emancipatory aims.

4.3.4 Implications for the researcher and the research

The approaches outlined above require certain attitudes from the researcher. A researcher adopting participator/emancipatory approaches had an obligation to underpin knowledge

claims with constant critical reflection. There were ways in which the effective researcher in the participator/emanciatory model was not that different from a model of the effective professional practitioner – the work of both is shaped by combining action with reflection in an ongoing process. This required reflexivity, that is, a responsiveness to emerging issues and a preparedness to shape and re-shape the process as it proceeded, rather than simply a launching of the designed project onto an unsuspecting community. A further demand made upon the researcher was the need for critical self-scrutiny at all stages of the process, using evidence as feedback about the research process and the researcher, and not just as comment about the area under investigation. Such critical awareness was painful at times, pointing as it did to flaws, for example, in interviewing technique. The hope is that it might also be constructive of stronger and better methods, and, perhaps, of a more skilled and insightful researcher.

To conclude this section, this study aimed to understand a particular inequity in the outcomes of schooling – the disproportionate exclusion of working-class boys - so that inequity might be addressed in policy and in professional practices. The aim was to effect change and the project employed methods influenced by critical theory, and in particular by critical feminist theory. The researcher was part of the research, allowing her values and experience to shape data-gathering through the use of semi-structured interviews; and to permeate data analysis. Those involved in the research were regarded as participants, contributing feedback about the research as well as data in relation to the research questions. The research makes only limited claims to an emancipatory paradigm, since the researcher occupied a privileged position with regard to the analysis and interpretation of data. In summary, the selection of methods was based upon the intention that the research:

- was inclusive of a wide diversity of perspectives,

- used those perspectives formatively to shape its processes and its outcomes,

- was particularly careful to capture the voices of less powerful participants and

- aimed to be transformational of the sites it researched, and wherever possible, of those who engaged with the process.

Subsequent sections will discuss the nature of the methods used in furtherance of these intentions.

4.4 Selection of methods

This work does not offer a secondary analysis of Scottish Executive data but, rather, it sought to explain by qualitative means some of the patterns and trends evident in these data. Data was gathered in two phases. The first phase was a series of key informant interviews with a range of stakeholders including Scottish Executive and local authority staff involved in developing and overseeing guidance on exclusions; school managers implementing exclusions; and pupils with experience of exclusion. The key informant phase was designed to complement and deepen understandings of exclusions gained from the literature. The second and main phase comprised twenty case studies of excluded pupils in four secondary schools in one local authority. Each of these phases is discussed in detail below. Additional statistical data was gathered from the four case study schools but this was intended to enhance the description of each school in relation to, for example, uptake of free school meals. School information provided a background for the discussion of the twenty case study pupils. Thus, although additional quantitative data were gathered and analysed, that information formed a small part of the whole data.

An exploratory paradigm was used in dealing with a range of verbal data, much of it generated from interviews with those most closely involved in and/or affected by exclusion from school. To the fore in that group were excluded pupils themselves. Their perspectives were particularly important because of the focus of the research and also because there is increasing emphasis in legislation on the rights of young people to be heard and to be involved in decision-making processes affecting their lives. Their rights in school settings are held to be problematic, however, conflicting with the rights of other pupils and staff to study and work in a calm and safe environment. The key informant interviews and the case study approach allowed 'rights' to be considered from a range of perspectives and for tensions and dissonances to be identified.

The twenty pupil case studies encompassed interviews with a range of actors around the excluded pupil, as well as observation in classrooms and information from pupils' behaviour files. An advantage of the research design was that it allowed multiple and often diverging accounts to emerge of individual case study pupils. Experience of schooling was viewed through very different lenses by, for example, pupils who had been excluded on the one hand and by staff in schools on the other. In allowing these differences to emerge, the methodology contributed to the theoretical progression afforded by the study which relates exclusions to the wider social identities of pupils and to the relationship between social class and gender and pupils' engagement with schooling.

But even within the qualitative aspect of the study, different kinds of data were needed. For example, research question 1 enquired about policy on exclusions at local, national and school levels and the methods used – semi-structured interviews - were directed towards establishing what policy was, how it was understood by those administering it and how it was perceived by those affected by it. These perspectives encompassed the political, the professional and the personal but the same method was used to capture very different perspectives. Research questions 2, 3, 4 and 5 however, with their concern to understand the relationship between school, wider cultures and identities present a different methodological challenge in that these questions relate partly to an analysis of classroom interactions between case study pupils, teachers and amongst other pupils. It would seem that different kinds of data would require different kinds of tools but Barbour (1998) has indicated that mixing qualitative methods might be problematic:

> *Data produced from different sources may produce apparently contradictory findings. This constitutes a potential pitfall and can lead, if we are not careful, to us appealing to hierarchies of evidence.* (Barbour, 1998: 359)

However, Barbour concludes that contradictions thrown up by different methods are to be valued, offering as they do a focus for further investigation and explanation. Whilst the study here employed a range of methods to elicit different kinds of information, it was recognized that there would be conflicting evidence emerging. Methods were selected for their appropriateness to the question asked and their consistency with a critical feminist research paradigm. What follows is a mapping of the methods used to answer the six research questions.

Research question 1

- How are the behaviours leading to exclusion, and the practice of exclusion itself, understood in policy and in schools?

This question was addressed first through a policy analysis directed to the sub-questions: –

- With regard to exclusions, what policies have been established

  - o by SEED

  - o by the case study LA and other LAs?

  - o by the case study schools and other schools?

- How do these policies reflect each other?

- Does the policy discourse match school practices?

During the first, exploratory phase of the research, the intention was to establish the philosophy, aims, functioning, effectiveness and consistency of exclusions policy at national, local and school levels. Relevant policy documentation from all agencies was scrutinized, compared and contrasted. It was recognized that operational policy could differ considerably from written statements. Policy was recognized as dynamic and, no matter how conscientious an organisation might be in committing its agreed policies to paper, these were likely to change almost as soon as they were embodied in text. There was, too, the possibility that written policies were interpreted and implemented differently by different readers. For both of these reasons, the writer anticipated that the policy perspectives offered by key people in schools, LAs and SEED would yield richer (and probably more conflicting) data than would be gleaned from an analysis of the documentation alone. Key informants were a main source of data about policy and practice in exclusions, but these interviews served an additional purpose beyond the policy perspective required by research question 1. The range of interviews conducted represented (not in the statistical sense of a sample) the perspectives of all of the main parties involved exclusions – pupils, teachers, administrators and policy makers – and it was anticipated that this first part of the research would identify issues and questions not considered in the original research proposal. The views of key informants, therefore, were used to refine the focus of subsequent fieldwork. This responsiveness to key informants' views was

consistent with the intention stated earlier of involving participants in shaping the research process.

The method used in working with key informants was interviews and, because it was intended to compare and contrast the perspectives offered from different areas of the school education system, interviews were conducted according to a common framework. The research also aimed to be participative, to allow different understandings of exclusions to be articulated. For that reason, interviews were semi-structured, allowing flexibility to the interviewer to capture particular subjective insights and experiences. Barbour (2001) discusses how it can be helpful to think about approaches to interviewing as existing on a continuum from interviewer administered at one end to unstructured at the other end of the continuum. This was helpful in conceptualizing what might be gained and lost in adopting different degrees of structure in the interview schedule. In the interviews in this first phase of the research, the intention to compare and contrast perspectives would have been assisted by a highly structured format, but this advantage was outweighed by a desire to allow participants full scope to contribute their 'situated knowledge' to the project. If the template imposed by the interview schedule were too rigid, then the researcher's own preconceptions would shape the responses received. The balance desired would be most likely to be achieved using semi-structured interviews where the same themes could be broached with all interviewees, allowing cross-referencing, whilst the sequencing and emphasis of questions could be varied to reflect different insights, different 'ways of knowing' to be offered by the interviewees. Mason (1998) discusses how the level of structure of the interview reflects the ethical and political position of the research:

> *You may have a particular view of research ethics and politics which means that you believe interviewees should be given more freedom in and control of the interview situation than is permitted with 'structured approaches. You may want to suggest that qualitative interviewing is more likely to generate a fairer and fuller representation of the interviewee's perspectives. You may believe that, you, as an interviewer, should be more responsive to the interview interaction than a structured format allows. For example, answering questions the interviewee may ask, giving information, opinions, support. Or you may feel it is important to try to make sure your interviewees enjoy being interviewed, and your view may be that qualitative interviewing is the best way to achieve that. (Mason, 1998: 42)*

In addressing research question 1, then, the methods employed were semi-structured key informant interviews supplemented by an analysis of national, local and school policy documentation about pupil behaviour and exclusions. Appendix 1 shows the schedule used for key informant interviews.

Research questions 2 - 5

- How do the negotiation of gender and class identities in school settings relate to exclusion from school?

- What other social and cultural aspects of pupils' lives contribute to exclusion from school? How?

- How far are excluded pupils exercising agency in the processes leading to their exclusion?

- What are the relative influences of school and wider social factors in shaping the gender and class identities of young people? How do these influences impact on one another?

Research questions 2, 3, 4 and 5 were addressed by the same body of data, namely a sample of twenty pupil case studies (n = 20). Those pupils were drawn from four schools (n=4) in one local authority in the west of Scotland and had in common recent experience of exclusion. The main principle governing the selection of the sample was that it should encompass a range of pupil characteristics with the common factor that all had been excluded. The sample was 'purposive' (Mason, 1998:92), that is, it was intended to cover the categories which would allow comparison between the identities and experiences of excluded pupils. Those categories included:

- gender

- poverty (as indicated by eligibility for free school meals)

- age

- ability in school

- number of previous exclusions

- reasons for exclusion

The intention had been to consider also how different school settings impacted on pupil behaviour. It was intended that the school sample would encompass schools with different

outcomes in relation to exclusions and different communities in relation to social exclusion. However, in the event this was not possible. Schools serving areas of low social exclusion were generally unwilling to participate, even when the local authority had suggested those schools to the researcher. In some ways this was surprising since schools serving more affluent or socially-mixed communities tend to have better measured outcomes with regard to attainment, attendance and exclusions. It was possible that schools serving communities with high indications of social exclusion held the school as less directly accountable for pupil outcomes. Questions of the relative impact of school/family/community/peer group on pupil identities will be a theme in the analysis of data further on.

It was not intended that the case study education authority, schools and pupils be representative of the whole population of education authorities, schools and pupils in Scotland. The schools and pupils were selected to enable consideration of only those factors discussed above. For example, although the education authority covers a wide and varied geographical area in the west of Scotland differences related to the urban and rural locations of schools were not a focus for analysis. The sample was constructed within the constraints of permitted access, in negotiation with schools and was representative of those factors already identified. Appendix 2 shows the demography of the case study sample.

Research question 6

• How far are schools sites for the pursuit of social justice?

Attempts to answer this final research question drew upon all of the data emerging from the project but were also supported directly by a combination of interviews and focus groups with the intention of gaining the advantages of both techniques. For interviews, these advantages related to capturing in some depth the perspectives of key individuals, and, in particular of the case study pupils themselves. As discussed earlier, the interview schedules were semi- structured to enable comparisons between the experience of individuals (for example, between boys and girls) whilst allowing the interview to be shaped by the interviewee and not just by the interviewer. Interview questions relating to this final research question formed the final part of interview schedules used to construct the pupil case studies.

Having described the methods to be used in generating data, the next section will consider the nature and processing of data gathered.

4.5 Pilot study: key informant interviews

4.5.1 Purpose

These interviews were with a series of 'experts', each of whom, by virtue of her/his personal or professional experience, would be able to

- illuminate issues of policy and practice for the researcher

- allow the identification of strengths and difficulties in current policy

- assist in directing the fieldwork in schools towards problematic issues.

The interviews were not intended to be a representative sample. Rather, they were organised to allow the research to be informed by a broad range of personal and professional perspectives on exclusions.

4.5.2 Range of interviews

Interviews were conducted with seventeen key informants drawn from three areas of the education system: SEED, education authorities and schools. In schools, interviews were conducted with those with key responsibilities for exclusions and also with young people who had themselves been excluded. Unless otherwise stated below, interviews were conducted with individual participants. Interviewees were as follows:-

- SEED

- The SEED interviewees included two officers from the schools branch and one with policy responsibility for special educational needs. The posts held by those interviewed were:

- Head of Policy, SEN

- Head of Schools Division

- Officer from Schools Division with responsibility for school exclusions

The Head of Schools Division, recently moved from a post with the Home Office in London, was new to her responsibilities for establishing and maintaining standards, regulations and guidelines for Scottish schools. The Schools Officer with responsibility for

exclusions was also new to her area of responsibility. The Head of Policy desired that a single, coherent view emerge from the Scottish Executive and so requested one interview with the group, rather than three individual interviews. A request to audio-tape this group interview was declined.

Local Authorities

The local authority representatives interviewed were selected because they represented a range in the 'league table' of exclusions published by SEED (Scottish Executive, 2001). The intention here was to obtain interviews with different kinds of local authorities in central Scotland. The exclusion 'league tables', as with school league tables of attainment, reflected the affluence of the areas served by the LA. Social and cultural contexts were of interest to this study, but it was not primarily concerned with evaluating the effectiveness of LA and school policies with regard to exclusions. The selection of key informants from a high- and a low-excluding authority, and from high-and low-excluding schools, therefore, was intended to provide diversity of experience amongst the interviewees. Two representatives of the case study LA were also interviewed in order to establish the policy context within which the case study schools were working. A single interview was conducted with the two representatives of this case study LA. The LA interviewees were:-

- **LA 1 (Case study LA: 50 exclusions per1000 pupils)**

    o   Quality Development Manager

    o   Research and Development Manager

- **LA 2 (108 exclusions per 1000 pupils)**

    o   Senior Education Officer

- **LA 3 (46 exclusions per 1000 pupils)**

    o   School Inclusion Officer

    o   Assistant Headteacher

Schools

The school interviewees were not from the case study schools, since views from within those schools were to be gathered in the second-phase fieldwork in schools. The four schools represented in this group of interviews were within LA 2. One of these schools is centrally-funded and not in the LA-managed sector, although it is located in LA2. The schools were chosen because they represented a range, from a very low-excluding school serving an affluent middle-class community to high-excluding schools serving areas of high social exclusion within the same city. Exclusion rates for LA2 schools are given below for the 2001/02 school session which was the session before the interviews were conducted. In all exclusion statistics in Scotland, exclusions are counted in 'openings', that is, half-days when attendance would have been possible. Thus, the exclusion of one pupil for two days would account for four openings or half days lost. LA2 tracks and compares rates of exclusion by calculating the number of openings, or half-days, lost per 1000 pupils. Within the secondary schools, the professionals interviewed were in management positions and had direct experience of managing exclusions procedures. Individuals interviewed held different positions within the school organization (for example, headteacher, depute headteacher, principal teacher) and it was likely, therefore, that their perspectives on exclusions varied according to their formal role as well as in relation to their own beliefs and the type of school they worked in. The schools and interviewees in LA2 were:

- **School 1:** outwith LA managed sector but located in LA 2, very affluent urban community, pupil places highly sought after, caters for 5 – 18 year olds in primary and secondary departments, secondary school role of 580, exclusion rate 28 openings lost per 1000 pupils.

    o Headteacher

- **School 2:** LA 2, area of highest social exclusion in Scotland as indicated by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, school roll 708, exclusion rate 1599 openings lost per 1000 pupils

    o Headteacher

    o Assistant Headteacher

- **School 3**: LA 2, inner city area, formerly dominated by shipbuilding industry, high social exclusion, school roll 512, exclusion rate 1453 openings lost per 1000 pupils

  - Principal Teacher Learning Support/ national officer of the Educational Institute of Scotland

- **School 4**: LA 2, peripheral housing scheme, high social exclusion, school roll 830, exclusion rate 723 openings lost per 1000 pupils

  - Behaviour Support Teacher

In addition to professional perspectives on exclusions, the views of young people themselves were gathered. This perspective was an important one for the study during the case study phase but it was hoped that by including interviews with young people as key informants, broad issues of policy and practice would emerge which were different from those highlighted by professionals. Access to the young people was arranged through the agency of School 4 and the interview in this case was conducted with four young people as a group. All were boys although the request to the school had not stipulated this gender representation.

Primary schooling in Scotland covers seven years, from 5 – 12 years and secondary schooling six years, from 12 – 18 years. In indicating the stage of schooling, the practice in Scotland is to refer to the primary stages as P1 – 7 and the secondary stages as S1 – 6. The young people and their stage of schooling were:

- John (S1)

- Martin (S1)

- Robert (S3)

- Billy (S3)

4.5.3 Conduct of interviews

All of the interviews were audio-recorded, with the exception of the interview with SEED officers where permission to audio-record the proceedings was not granted. The principle of informed consent was observed by providing key informants with a briefing paper about the research (Appendix 3) and forwarding the appropriate interview schedule in advance of

final permission for the interview being given. The interview schedules were developed from schedules used in a previous project carried out by the author and colleagues in the education authority where the current study was carried out (Head et al, 2002). This project was an evaluation of alternatives to exclusion and had been commissioned by the education authority. Part of that evaluation had been a series of interviews with representatives of six secondary schools. The interview schedules used here were piloted with behaviour support teachers attending postgraduate courses in Special Educational Needs at the University of Glasgow. Their subsequent use in interviews with a range of stakeholders in schools offered a relevant and tried basis for the schedules used in this project. An example of an interview schedules used in this phase of the research is provided in Appendix 1 but, in summary, the broad themes covered were:

• Purposes of exclusions

• Policy on exclusions

• Operation of exclusions procedures

• Effectiveness of exclusions

• Future developments in policy and practice

The schedules were semi-structured to allow subsequent analysis to compare the perspectives offered, whilst also leaving scope for interviewees to contribute to the process the full breadth of their understandings and expertise. The interview schedule was structured around themes which were broached with all interviewees but the sequence and emphasis of questions were varied in response to different insights and experiences offered by interviewees. Questions at the beginning of the schedule were open and sought to establish free and relaxed communication: questions towards the end were again very open to allow interviewees to supplement their earlier responses.

4.6 Case study phase: the research sample

4.6.1 Purpose

A case study approach was the chosen method for the second phase of the study. This method is noted as allowing a fine-tuned exploration of complex sets of interrelationships (Edwards and Talbot, 1994). In this study there were three reasons for using a case study approach. First, it allowed a progressive focus, enabling the researcher to respond to

emerging issues by extending and adapting data gathering as she proceeded. The capacity to respond to emerging data, for example, by seeking additional interviews, was an important feature of methods derived from a research paradigm which values different constructions of knowledge. Second, it offered a multi-faceted approach to the lives of the young people who were participating, helping to provide a sense of how their attitudes and experiences were changing as they moved through school. Third, a case study approach enabled a consideration of individuals in the context of the school, recognizing how the difficulties they experienced were perhaps caused by the setting in which they were being educated. Edwards and Talbot (1994) described this advantage of case studies thus:

> *The case is a unit of analysis ......each case has within it a set of interrelationships which both bind it together and shape it, but also interact with the external world. In an examination of the interrelationships within a case it is therefore possible to reveal not only internal elements of the case, but also aspects of the context within which the case is situated. (Edwards and Talbot, 1994: 45)*

Three kinds of data were used to construct the case studies: interviews, documentary analysis of pupils' behaviour files and classroom observation. These different kinds of data allowed methodological triangulation but there was also triangulation in the capturing of multiple perspectives on each case study pupil. For each of the case study pupils, the intention was to conduct a series of interviews with the pupil him/herself, with key teachers and other professionals (such as social workers) supporting the young person, parents and peers. In the event, it proved particularly difficult to gain the participation of parents. The reasons for this have been discussed in general terms in the literature review. An example of the schedules used in the semi-structured interviews has been included as Appendix 4.

4.6.2 Demography of case study sample

The data was organized around case studies of twenty pupils, all of whom had been excluded during their time in secondary school. The sample was not constructed to represent a particular gender balance but, as it happened, there were seventeen boys and three girls, roughly the same gender balance indicated by national exclusion statistics (SEED, 2006). The pupils were drawn from S1 to S4, that is, from twelve to 16, the age range of compulsory secondary schooling in Scotland. Nineteen of the pupils were white and Scottish, one boy was black and Scottish. Ethnicity was not an aspect of identity considered in this study in any depth; neither was religion, although one of the schools in the study was a Catholic denominational secondary school. Case study pupils' experience

of exclusion ranged from a single exclusion (all three girls were in this category) to multiple and extended periods of exclusion.

4.6.3 Range of data

Data were gathered from semi-structured interviews with pupils, parents, teachers and other staff; from focus groups with pupils; from classroom observations; and from documentary material. In all, 105 interviews were conducted in this phase of the research, ranging in length from 1.5 hours to just 10 minutes when some teachers gave a little time at the ends of lessons to comment on what had just passed, before the next class arrived. Pupils were observed in class on 26 occasions, though this was not possible for one of the S4 case study pupils whose attendance had been very poor. All interviews, apart from those with parents, were conducted in the schools. The type and range of data across the case study sample is shown in Appendix 5.

4.6.4 Selection of case study local authority and schools

The second-phase, case study research was conducted in a local authority in the west of Scotland. The choice of LA was influenced by two pragmatic factors. First, previous work had been done there in evaluating systems of behaviour support in secondary schools (Head et al, 2002, Head et al 2003, Kane et al, 2004). This previous association was helpful in gaining access to LA personnel and to schools. The second reason was that the area was in close proximity to the researcher's place of work. It was intended to spend between 5 – 7 days in each of the four schools and so convenience for travel was also a factor in the choice. A further advantage of this LA was that it was composed of very diverse communities and the intention was to consider exclusions in relation to schools serving different pupil populations.

The LA was divided into four areas, each of them historically, demographically and economically distinct. The plan was to conduct the research in one secondary school in each area but, in the event, the schools were distributed as follows:

Area 1

This area is largely agricultural. It is the local authority's main tourist destination, with important market towns and historic villages. The area also includes some former mining settlements. None of the case study schools were located here though it had been planned to include a secondary school from this area (see below).

100 align right

Area 2

The first of these contains a number of the well-established towns of the area, including the historic county town which in the 2001 census had a population of 48,546 and remained the administrative centre of the authority. One of the case study schools, Easton High School, was located in a peripheral housing scheme of that town.

Area 3

The second area bordered a major city. It was composed of two towns with a joint population of 55,182. These towns had much in common with each other and with the neighbouring city - a past in heavy industry and a present battling against economic decline. For example, what was formerly one of the major employers in the area, a large manufacturing company, had reduced its workforce from 5000 to 100 during the period of this study. Since the demise of the steel and heavy engineering industries, attempts had been made by the local authority to encourage new businesses to base themselves in one of a number of business parks surrounding the towns. Two of the case study schools, Carrick High School and St Thomas's High School were located here.

Area 4

The third area is the largest town in the LA. It was established as a new town in the late 1950s from the original village and provided homes to young families from the nearby city. Its population of 73,796 is socially mixed and has a high level of economic activity. This area provided 30% of the jobs available within the local authority. Its industry in the main is light, electronics industry but central and local government offices were also based here. One of the case study schools, Hammond High School, was located here.

The original intention had been to construct a sample of four schools as follows:

Figure 1 - Intended School Sample

School 1	School 3
High social exclusion	Low social exclusion
High school exclusion	High school exclusion
School 2	School 4
High social exclusion	Low social exclusion
Low school exclusion	Low school exclusion

The LA had 21 secondary schools and collected from them annually statistics for temporary and permanent (removed from the register) exclusions. That data is stored in the LA's information management database and was used to identify four schools as indicated in Table 1 to be approached for permission to conduct the research. The key statistic used to identify schools was the number of exclusion incidents reported. Schools also provided information about the number of openings lost through exclusions. A ratio of that figure with the number of exclusion incidents would reveal the average length of exclusions in each school. This was thought not to be particularly useful since schools have generally cut back on the length of the period of exclusion. Indeed, during the time when this research was conducted, government guidelines on exclusions (SEED, 2003) were revised to lower the maximum period allowable for temporary exclusion from six weeks to four weeks or twenty schooldays.

Two of the schools selected declined to be involved. In one case, no reply was received from the headteacher after a number of contacts. In the other case, the headteacher explained that his staff were over-burdened generally and specifically as a result of a national job-sizing exercise affecting all teaching promoted posts. He felt that the request had come at a very inopportune time and he declined to be involved. Both of these schools were in Area 4, which contained some of the more affluent communities of the local authority. Four schools agreed to be involved, Carrick High School, Easton High School,

Hammond High School and St Thomas's High School but they did not represent the social and geographical spread intended in the original design of the research. Two of the four schools, Carrick HS and St Thomas's HS, were in an area of high social exclusion, near to the boundary with a large city, the third school, Easton HS, served a housing scheme in the main town and administrative centre of the local authority and the fourth school, Hammond HS, was in a 'new town', an area with a much more socially mixed population.

Figure 2 - Actual School Sample

Carrick High School High social exclusion High school exclusion	
St Thomas's High School & Easton High School High social exclusion Low school exclusion	Hammond High School Low social exclusion Low school exclusion

As with levels of social exclusion in the communities served by the schools, the range of exclusion rates for the four schools was not as great as had been intended, although there were significant variations apparent. This variation is discussed further in Chapter 7 when the case study schools are considered in detail. The sample of schools was not intended to be representative of all schools in the LA or in Scotland but it contained sufficient variations to allow fulfilment of the purpose of the research - to explore pupils' gender and class identities in relation to exclusions. .

4.6.5 Recruitment of case study pupils

Access to pupils was arranged through the schools. At an initial meeting with the link person in each school, usually a Depute Headteacher or a Principal Teacher, a range of pupils who had been excluded was discussed. Factors influencing the selection of possible case studies were: the age of pupils, the reasons for their exclusion, the frequency of their exclusion and their likely availability (i.e. fairly regular attendance). Following this meeting, the link person approached pupils, outlined the research, and asked if they would be prepared to participate and to have others (parents and teachers) offer comment about them. Briefing papers about the research and formal letters/forms of consent were passed to pupils who had voiced interest and to their parents/carers (Appendix 6). Approximately thirty pupils were approached. Ten declined to proceed before the twenty case studies were identified and formal consent established.

The role of the link persons in each school was crucial in the case study phase. In particular, they helped to identify and to gain the consent of pupil participants. From the

literature, it was to be expected that the topic of school exclusion would have very negative associations for pupils:

> *The more sensitive or threatening the topic under examination, the more difficult sampling is likely to be because potential participants have more need to hide involvement. (Renzetti and Lee, 1993)*

However, the link persons had behaviour support responsibilities. In all cases, they knew and were trusted by participating pupils. The research therefore benefited from the rapport the link persons had with some previously-excluded pupils. The link persons facilitated all practical arrangements for interviews, classroom observation, focus groups and access to documentation.

Were there disadvantages in using school staff as gatekeepers? It was possible that pupils who had been excluded would feel compelled to participate by the authority of the DHT/PT in the school setting. No sense of pupils' unwillingness came through in the interviews or subsequently, although in one or two cases the topic of exclusion was an embarassing one. There were challenges in pursuing research in the critical feminist paradigm. Participants were not equally powerful and some less powerful participants – excluded pupils - needed reassurance so that their voices could be heard. Judgement was exercised in offering encouragement to children interviewed whilst recognising that such support could be construed as exerting pressure. In retrospect, even though no pupils withdrew from interview, or seemed to be upset by the experience, arrangements for pupil support should have been made in case the interviews proved to be difficult for pupils. Care was taken at the start of each interview to explain that participation was voluntary and that the interview was confidential and could be terminated by the pupil at any time. When pupils seemed hesitant or unforthcoming in answering particular questions, they were again given the opportunity to withdraw. In all cases, pupils signalled their willingness to proceed.

4.6.6 Data used to construct case studies

Interviews

Much of what has been said previously about key informant interviews also applies to interviews in the case study phase. The epistemology of the study embraced the thinking of Dorothy Smith (1987, 1990), particularly her contention that there is a common reality but one which is interpreted differently by different actors. Semi-structured interviews in this research were used to allow different, and less heard, perspectives to emerge so that the case studies might be rounded and layered in the interpretations they offered. All

interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Field notes were also taken and these were very useful when participants offered further information after the interview had been formally concluded. Each interview ended by asking participants if they had anything further to add, but it was surprising how often the switching off of the tape recorder prompted additional responses. Field notes were written up immediately after the interview.

Classroom observation

The second data set used to construct case studies was classroom observation. The pitfalls of classroom observation as a research method have been well-documented (Edwards and Talbot, 1994; Mason, 1998; Wragg, 2003) and relate to the roles of observer and participant. Mason (1994) questions whether it is possible simply to observe without being drawn into engagement with the situation and thereby, changing it. Thus, the very reason for selecting observation as a method – that it grounds the research in the 'real-life' situation - may be undermined by the very presence of the researcher. Not only is there a risk that the researcher's presence will distort the situation, but also there is a danger that the richness and density of activity in the 'real-life' situation might subvert the project and the aims of observation. For example, a classroom offers a mass of undifferentiated data and even one strand within that data, such as the interactions between the teacher and a particular pupil, would require layers of interpretation. Wragg (2003: 16) advises the classroom observer to minimise the intrusion and to make contact with the teacher beforehand to clarify the purpose and likely outcome of the observation.

Various approaches to observation are possible. These are discussed by Edwards and Talbot (1994) as ranging from prepared and structured checklists, through strictly timed and tightly-focused target methods to loose narrative vignettes or critical incidents. Selection of the appropriate technique would vary according to:

> ...its use within the cycle of research activity: whether identifying the research question or checking the outcomes of an intervention. Equally, it may depend whether you want illustrative narrative data or countable evidence of, for example, frequency of behaviours. (Edwards and Talbot, 1994, page 77)

For this research, the purpose was to study particular behaviours of teachers and pupils in some depth, with a view to discovering which behaviours are problematic (for both parties) and whether perceptions of the behaviour varied according to the perceiver and according to the characteristics of the person exhibiting the behaviour. In considering pupil identities and classroom behaviour the intention was to consider if and how pupils used classroom

interactions as a means of negotiating particular kinds of identity and to observe if and how teachers and other pupils contributed to the negotiation of identity. This entailed the development of a structured observation format which enabled comparisons between situations, teachers and pupils but also allowed an open and descriptive format (Appendix 7). It was hoped that opportunities to observe critical incidents would arise (Wragg, 2003: 67) and this was, in fact, the case. The open format allowed the researcher to make use of such opportunities.

Documentation

The second set of data was documentation relating to each pupil. The pupil behaviour file maintained for each school pupil contained details of referrals both within and beyond the school, exclusions and correspondence relating to the pupil's behaviour record. Permission to access these pupil files was sought from the pupil, from parents and from the school.

In addition documentation was gathered about the school. Some of this was background information which helped to set the school context. However, other statistical data from schools such as that on attendance and exclusions helped to gauge case study pupils' records in these respects against school norms.

4.6.7 Construction of case studies

Case study data was gathered in June and September 2003, that is, over two school sessions. Data from three schools were collected at the end of the 2002/2003 session and from the fourth school at the start of the 2003/2004 session. The case studies were written up using all sources of information. The profile of data varied for each case study, depending upon factors such as parental willingness to be interviewed and the depth of information provided by the pupil and other participants. Appendix 5 shows the spread of data sources for each case study. The case studies average 2000 words in length and vary between 820 words and 2,800 words.

4.7 Focus groups

A focus group was organised in each of the four schools with pupils who had not been excluded. The purpose here was to capture the perspectives of pupils generally about exclusion, the behaviours leading to it and the impact on the pupil community. Focus groups served a different but complementary purpose for this research. Barbour and Kitzinger (1999) describe focus groups as any group discussion where the researcher is actively encouraging and is attentive to, the group interactions. It is a flexible and adaptive

method which, like interviews, lends itself to use within the rigid organisational structures of secondary schools. Unlike interviews, focus groups enabled the study of group interactions and the processes of opinion-forming within the group. Focus groups were also useful in encouraging children and young people to talk without the pressure of direct and possibly intrusive questions. The intention was to use focus groups as a way of encouraging a range of school pupils to build collective social knowledge and to share this with the interviewer. The schedule used for focus groups is included as Appendix 8. Particular difficulties in taping focus groups were borne in mind. For example, the practical difficulties in picking up a range of voices and in subsequently identifying those voices influenced mundane matters such as seating arrangements.

4.8 Transcribing the interviews

All audio-recorded key informant interviews were transcribed, as were all case study interviews.

> *Transcription is a transformational process, taking live conversation and changing it into a textual representation of talk. Hence, transcripts are silent in several ways. They are, for instance, silent about body language, such as gestures, facial expressions... and positioning. (Poland and Pederson, 1998: 302)*

Verbatim rather than selective transcriptions were made of all audio-recorded interviews (n = 122) across both key informant and case study phases. This substantial task was carried out by colleagues in the University of Glasgow who are very experienced in transcribing interviews. The analysis here did not rely on the kind of detail needed for discursive analysis where non-verbal communication such as pauses, intonation and pace of speech would matter. The analysis related to the content of responses, although sometimes field notes included comments about participants' demeanour, attitudes and behaviour. It would be dishonest to say that the transcription of interviews by a colleague was not very welcome but it had one disadvantage in that the transcribed data was not as familiar as it would otherwise have been. Efforts were made to redress this matter in the analysis itself by listening again to the tapes and reading through the transcripts before embarking on coding.

The content of interviews was the main focus for the analysis, but the transcriptions presented a dilemma about the importance of the dialects of those interviewed. The

transcriber had been given no guidance as to how these should or should not be represented but, interestingly, had spelled pupils' speech phonetically to indicate their dialect, whilst conveying all other participants' speech as standard English. And yet, all participants spoke in dialect of one kind or another, for example, the participant from the Scottish Executive Schools' Division had a very pronounced East London dialect. In drawing upon transcriptions for quotations, the dilemma was whether the transcriptions should continue to differentiate the young people in this way. It seemed patronising to do so. However, when their responses were translated into standard English, a good deal of the vigour and colour of their speech was lost. Even their meanings seemed to be diminished. Young people's speech is therefore represented further on as the very strong and confident dialect that it is. The rationale for distinguishing pupils from other participants in this way is that this study is concerned with issues of culture and pupil identities and dialect is an important part – arguably the main semiotic – of local and class identities. Nor is the use of dialect by the pupil participants unconscious. In their study, Archer & Yamashita (2003) detected agency in boys constructing their identities, evidenced in the forms of speech adopted:-

> *Accent and language appeared as important defining features of Harkton masculinities..., and a number of boys constructed a key difference between both researchers and themselves; namely, that we would not be able to understand the made-up slang that characterized Harkton boys' speech. (Archer & Yamashita, 2003:119)*

The pupils in this study performed their identities in a number of ways, for example through their physical bearing; their clothes; and, most strikingly, their speech. It was judged to be important for the study, therefore, that an important and consciously adopted aspect of their identity should be conveyed in the analysis.

4.9 Coding and analysing the data

Transcripts were read initially to sense the extent to which the anticipated main themes of the research were present in the data and to gauge which new themes were emerging. This initial analysis extent was directed towards identifying a suitable structure for the presentation of the twenty pupil case studies. Three sample case studies are included as Appendix 9. The initial analysis also allowed categories for the overall analysis of data to emerge. For subsequent analysis after categorizing and coding, Barbour (2002) offered a useful checklist to support the analysis of transcripts:

- What are the common themes?

- Are there any notable exceptions?

- What are the range and distribution of views expressed with regard to a topic?

- Can any sub-categories be identified (ie variations or distinctions on the themes)?

- What concepts are appealed to?

- What language is used?

- What respondent characteristics are associated with which views?

- What views go together?

- What patterns emerge?

There is a shifting line between data collection and analysis in the model of research used here. Sometimes, analysis may be done through interview or focus group sessions. Wherever possible, as has been suggested by Barbour (1994), care was taken to enable participants to engage in analysis, by putting back to them in, for example, the interview situation, issues for explanation. Questions were included in the interview schedules to allow participants to engage in analysis of data such as statistical data showing a gender imbalance in exclusions. This practice of drawing participants into the analysis was consistent with the participative research paradigm discussed earlier in this chapter.

4.10 Ethical issues

4.10.1 Ethical codes

The proposal for the research gained ethical approval from the University of Glasgow's Ethics Committee and access was granted by the local authority on the understanding that such ethical approval had been received. The research was conducted according to the guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004) which are binding upon members. Those guidelines require researchers to comply with Articles 3 and 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 3 stipulates that in all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration. Article 12 requires that all children who are capable of forming their own views should be granted the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them commensurate with their age and maturity.

4.10.2 Issues of consent

The principle of gaining the written, voluntary and informed consent of all participants was maintained throughout the study. An example of the consent form used is provided in Appendix 7. The practice of providing full information about the project through a briefing paper (Appendix 8) was observed for all potential participants. However, work with children, and especially with those who were disaffected from the context of the study, raised particular issues of informed consent. There was a danger that the processes through which participation was negotiated were affected by the power relationships in the school and by children's experiences of school practices. David, Edwards and Aldred (2000) note:

> *A straightforward notion of children's and young people's right or freedom to choose to participate in social research on the basis of provision of adequate and appropriate information in the school setting especially seems naïve (David et al, 2000:364)*

The ethical issues posed by working with young people and by working with them in a school setting were compounded in this case by the desire to work with young people who have been in conflict with the school. Parental consent was obtained for all children and young people participating. In addition, care was taken to explain the affiliation, role and purpose of the researcher and to give pupils opportunities to withdraw consent before the interview commenced and while the interview was in progress. After the interviews and in the two years since the empirical work was completed, there has been no evidence that problems had been caused in any way for the schools or the participants.

4.10.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

The LA did not seek anonymity on its own account but required assurances that the anonymity of schools and all participants would be maintained throughout the project. The names of schools and all participants have been changed, therefore. The local authority sought and was given assurances that confidentiality would be maintained in all outputs from the research.

4.10.4 Access and storage of data

All data gathered has been stored in ways which are consistent with the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998). Electronic data, including all transcripts, have been stored in password- controlled computers. Papers related to the project have been filed in locked filing cabinets.

4.10.5 Debriefing

A commitment has been given to return to SEED, to the local authorities and to schools once the project was completed. As discussed earlier, the project was motivated by critical theory which constructs the prime purpose of research as social change. Dissemination of findings is therefore part of the research process. Feedback will be offered to SEED, the LAs and the schools as a summary report for discussion with the researcher or as a presentation/seminar. However, it is acknowledged that these formats are unlikely to be useful for pupil participants and, anyway, many of those involved will have left school. It is hoped that feedback given to schools will be helpful in understanding more about the processes leading to the exclusion of some pupils and therefore beneficial to future pupils.

4.11 Conclusion

The methods used to investigate the relationship between pupil identities and school exclusions were influenced by critical theory and feminist epistemologies. The origins of the investigation relate to the over-representation of some groups in school exclusion statistics; a situation regarded here as incompatible with policy aspirations towards social justice. The aims of the research were not just to understand better the situation but to provide insights to remedy it; to support change in policy and practice by disseminating findings, particularly to those who influence policy and professional practice. A further influence on the methods was feminist theory or 'standpoint theory' (Smith, 1990; Connell, 1995) which recognised that knowledge is socially situated and not disinterested. The methods here attempted to enable a range of perspectives to emerge through the extensive use of semi-structured interviews. Interviews with pupils feature prominently in this data. Participants were used to guide as well as contribute to the research. For example, key informant interviews in the first phase helped to map out more clearly the area of enquiry and identified particular issues for investigation in the second phase of the research. Case studies were used in the second phase to gain insight into the complex, shifting and sometimes conflicting influences affecting pupils' engagement with schooling. The case studies allowed the emergence not only of contrasting perspectives on the same event/s – pupils' exclusion – but also of the interrelationships between perspectives, allowing pupils' experience to be considered 'in the round.'

The discussion now moves towards that empirical data. Chapter 5 presents the first phase of the research, an analysis of seventeen key informant interviews.

Chapter 5

Perspectives on school exclusions

5.1 Introduction

Having discussed the methodology for the study, this fifth chapter will consider the first phase of empirical data, the key informant interviews. Earlier discussion of exclusions noted that exclusion statistics were strongly structured by factors such as gender. On the other hand, policy discourses on behaviour and exclusions were found to neglect social identities. Disparities and tensions between policy and experience will be probed in this chapter through interviews with a range of key informants from schools, local authorities and the Scottish Executive. In this way, it is hoped to consider and evaluate policy as a set of collective working practices, as well as a statement of political intent. Seventeen interviews were conducted with a series of 'experts', each of whom, by virtue of her/his personal or professional experience, was able to:-

- illuminate issues of policy and practice for the researcher

- allow the identification of strengths and difficulties in current policy

- assist in directing the fieldwork in schools towards problematic issues.

These aims were fulfilled in the data generated by the interviews. Policy and practices in exclusions are again discussed here but, this time, the empirical data is used to deepen the analysis. The chapter is organized around the main themes found in the data.

5.2 Themes emerging

Interview schedules were organized around broad themes related to the literature on exclusions. These were: the purposes of exclusions, operational issues, the effectiveness of exclusions, gender, and developments in exclusions policy and practice. These themes provided part of the framework for collating and analyzing the transcripts and notes. However, other themes started to emerge from the data itself. In particular, exclusion emerged not just in the technical sense of formal exclusion from school but as located in broader experiences of inclusion and exclusion in schooling, and of affiliation and identity beyond schooling. Of the seventeen key informants, only four were pupils. Their views are given some prominence in the analysis here because they offered a perspective distinct

from other participants, all of whom were professionals. There were differences in the accounts of professionals but these were not as great as the differences between pupil and professional accounts. The key informant interviews were intended to guide the second, main phase of the research - the pupil case studies - towards issues worth probing further. The pupil key informant interviews were particularly helpful in that respect, linking as they did pupil experience to a much broader social world. The themes listed above were expanded after an initial analysis of the data, first, to allow gender and social class to be considered together; and, second, to enable the data to relate to broader social policy and not just to exclusions policy. The themes shaping the analysis and providing the organisers for this chapter were:

- operation of exclusions

- consistency and fairness

- exclusion as punishment/exclusion as welfare

- exclusion from school/exclusion from education

- purposes of exclusions

- effectiveness of exclusions

- gender and social class

- exclusions and social policy

These themes are discussed here in that order, beginning with key informants' views of the purposes of exclusions.

5.3 Operation of exclusions

5.3.1 Overview
In the operation of exclusions, three main themes were identified across the range of respondents with significant differences emerging between different groups. Those different perspectives are discussed under each of the themes which were:-

- consistency and fairness

- exclusion as punishment and exclusion as welfare

- exclusion from school and exclusion from education.

5.3.2 Consistency and fairness

Exclusions were not generally used in ways which were consistent with the related incidents. All of the school-based staff interviewed argued strongly against a strict tariff system where particular types of incident attracted a set period of exclusion. SEED guidelines (SEED, 2003b) were not prescriptive in that sense. They left considerable scope for LAs and schools to take into account factors other than the incident itself. Some LAs, however, had stipulated a fixed penalty for certain offences such as association with drugs, use of alcohol and for violence. In the view of several key informants, the stipulation was upheld rigidly for drugs but much less so for alcohol and for violence, where other information was regularly used to qualify decisions about exclusions. The PTLS pointed out that the automatic application of an exclusion tariff for violence was very difficult where 'violence' was so open to interpretation:

> *That's an area in which, although that is the headteacher's stated policy, it is frequently breached, and if we were to operate it in a literal sense, where every punch thrown or every kick led to an exclusion, it would in actual fact be unworkable. I would have to say that the interpretation of that, the whole violence rule, does cause me some concerns. We have put out pupils who have not come back.....other pupils have carried out similar activities and they have been excluded for either very short periods or indeed dealt with through the Assistant Heads. (PTLS)*

Thus, flexibility to apply exclusions in the light of wider knowledge of the pupil and the circumstances can lead to inconsistency and unfairness. For the young people interviewed, fairness was a central concern. Often, they could see some basis to decisions about the length of an exclusion:

> *I: What are different spells of exclusion? What's the reason for that?*

> *S2 pupil: Cause it 's what you do. There's stuff you do. But if you get an exclusion for whatever...having hundreds of punnies....that's not very bad, is it? But you get three days. But that time I got accused of hitting a teacher with a stone, know what I mean, that's how I got twenty days. That was, like, dodgy, know what I mean?*

> *Sometimes, though, it was felt not only that different schools applied different criteria in exclusions (see below) but also that, even within the same school, pupils were treated differently. This might be related to gender but, more importantly, it was perceived to be a function of teachers' expectations of*

different pupils. The boys interviewed felt that they had been negatively labelled and had suffered discriminatory treatment as a consequence:

See the day in Craft and Design, a stink bomb got set off, right, and I don't know but I think the teacher thinks it's me because I'm the worst, one of the bad people in the class, but it wasn't me....see like somebody that's good behaved? He would never blame them even if it was. (S2 pupil)

The young people interviewed endorsed the view of the PTLS that schools were very sensitive to their image and that incidents which were in themselves minor might attract exclusion because the incident was seen to be damaging to the school's reputation:

Those youngsters who bring the school into disrepute, for example, by misbehaving during an outside speaker's presentation, will almost automatically be excluded, even if the actual incident was a relatively minor one. (PTLS)

The sensitivity of schools in this respect is a result of their need to exist in a market context where placing requests in and out of schools were influential in assuring the future of the school.

The SEO interviewed was aware of inconsistencies in the use of exclusions but thought the flexibility allowed to schools in determining the appropriateness of an exclusion should be maintained. In balancing consistency against flexibility, the weighting should go to giving schools flexibility because what worked very well for some young people did nothing for others.

5.3.3 Exclusion as punishment/exclusion as welfare

In the application of exclusion guidelines there was a lack of clarity about whether exclusion was a form of punishment or a way of supporting children, for example, by prompting a collaborative review of their difficulties. This tension was apparent in the extent to which the LA considered social and personal circumstances as opposed to just the incident when decisions about exclusion were made. Too often, in the view of the Principal Teacher of Learning Suppor (PTLS), social care/ pastoral support systems were separate from discipline systems – Guidance staff (or social work staff where these were based in the school) were not involved in the run-up to an exclusion; the decision was taken by the SMT person without reference to Guidance teachers or other support workers.

The existence of an Appeals system in relation to exclusion is one of the clearest indications that exclusions are officially regarded as a form of punishment. The Senior Education Officer (SEO) identified the existence of Govan Law Centre, which was partly funded by the Local Authority, as explaining why the south-west had a much higher number of challenges to exclusions than other areas of the city. In the view of headteachers from that quadrant, the intervention of legal advocacy did not always serve the interests of the child. They had indicated their concerns formally to the SEO, saying that the kind of challenge posed by the Law Centre pushed the school towards a tightly administered and procedurally-correct approach to exclusions which left little scope for consideration of the pupil's welfare. For example, challenges to exclusions had been lodged on the grounds that if a pupil's behaviour had indeed been disruptive to the functioning of the school then the exclusion should have taken effect immediately. The fact that the exclusion had not taken effect on the day of the incident, it was argued, conveyed that the behaviour was not problematic to the school. This kind of challenge created an impetus against careful investigation and broader involvement in the decision to exclude:

> *That is a matter of serious concern to a number of colleagues in other agencies, Psychological Services, Social Work. It is a matter of concern to the Guidance staff and we are trying to find ways......of trying to ensure that children on the verge of exclusion are dealt with through a multi-agency approach from the school. (PTLS)*

Although in some other areas of the city there were a number of challenges to exclusion, the SEO confirmed that it was rare for these challenges to develop into formal appeals. This is consistent with the national pattern. In the 2003/04 session, there were just 26 appeals in 38,919 exclusions (SEED, 2005). In her own LA, the SEO attributed the low level of appeals to two reasons. First, the LA made the exclusion process as fair and as transparent as possible and, second, the appeals procedure was so slow that, by the time the appeal was heard, the exclusion period was over and the best that could happen was that the note of the exclusion would be expunged from the pupil's record. The SEED policy officer concurred with this view. Appeals would always be after the event and he believed that parents generally saw no point in appealing in retrospect. The exclusion would have served the school's purpose(s) by the time any appeal was heard. SEED indicated that the low number of appeals was a concern. The systems supporting appeals were not responsive enough to prevent the exclusion taking place. On an alternative system of appeals, the SEO said:

> *That's a difficult one. I do not quite know how to resolve it because...we would almost have to have a system that enabled a parent to register an appeal on the*

day of the exclusion and where the appeal was heard within two or three days.
(SEO)

Lack of responsiveness in the system may not be the only reason why there were so few appeals. One of the AHTs interviewed attributed the low level of appeals (he had none in his experience) to a certain feeling of powerlessness on the part of parents:

> *A lot of our parents will rant and rave and say they are going to (Council HQ) to complain about the system and so on...they get a note with the exclusion telling them how to appeal but very few actually do....In some respects, some of our parents do not stand up for themselves. (AHT, secondary school)*

With regard to appeals, there was evidence that parents' engagement with the school system did not empower them to challenge exclusions, even when they were informed about the formal mechanism. In the light of this, educationalists' challenges to the role of the Govan Law Centre could be construed as professional protectionism. Whilst the 'rights' approach upheld by the Law Centre forced a legalistic and procedurally-orientated approach to exclusions, limiting the scope for professional 'welfare' interventions, it also enabled some parents to 'stand up for themselves'. The Law Centre challenged schools' supremacy in making decisions about children but the empowerment it offered parents may still leave them ill-equipped for constructive participation in their children's education.

More broadly, social class influenced experience of exclusions. Parents' engagement with schooling was crucial in determining if the processes leading to exclusion were supportive of the interests of the pupil or were merely punitive. Schools in the LA with high rates of social exclusion reported great difficulty in involving parents in preventative measures and in securing their support once the decision to exclude had been taken. Sometimes the reasons were material:

> *A lot of parents either do not have a phone or the number keeps on changing or they have not bought their card for the mobile phone...... because our parents are so poor, I am talking about a lot just now, have a mobile phone in the house – there is no land line. It seems to them to be cheaper because you have not got a big bill coming in at the end...(AHT)*

In contrast, schools in areas with much lower incidence of social exclusion seemed able to count on the support of parents to forestall difficulties developing:

And really, when I have any kind of concern, I am very quick to write to parents....in this Authority there are three letters: one, I have got concerns, please get in touch; two, the real concern is.....you have to see me at (specify appointment); three, to avoid an exclusion, please get in touch (specify appointment). And you are giving parents every chance. (AHT)

This school had a number of placing requests and served a socially mixed community. Similarly, the headteacher of the school serving the most uniformly middle-class area explained that the school could rely on the prompt and explicit support of parents should any difficulty arise.

5.3.4 Exclusion from school or exclusion from education?

Education professionals interviewed in schools and LAs conveyed that exclusions were not, or not just, punitive. A 'welfare' construction of exclusions requires that they do not undermine the education of pupils and in 2002 the guidelines on school exclusions (SEED, 2003b) were amended to establish that exclusion from school should not be exclusion from education. The LA representatives strongly endorsed this position and one LA respondent indicated that schools were expected to provide homework packages for the period of the exclusion. However, it was acknowledged that there was as yet no established system to implement and monitor that aspect of exclusion guidelines within the LA. Within schools, there was much less support for the idea of homework packages, with some respondents indicating their view that it was unworkable:

I think it is a piece of nonsense this – work will be provided. What do you do about their science? ...I am sure there is some human rights legislation behind it but if teachers have limited preparation time, how do they go about doing it? (AHT)

Even when systems are established, they will be difficult to implement where exclusion is seen by the person excluded as a kind of official leave of absence. Where exclusion has been brought about through the pupil's disengagement with school, it is unlikely that private study will be undertaken at home. The view that exclusion was a break from the pressure and routine of school was endorsed when the pupils interviewed were asked if they undertook schoolwork during the period of their exclusion:

If you're excluded, you're excluded. There's no point getting excluded if you are going to be doing the work, know what I mean? An exclusion is to get out of school. (S3 pupil)

My ma always asks for work but I never do it. I tell her I am going out to play or I will see her after. (S2 pupil)

If these attitudes are prevalent amongst excluded pupils, those in schools setting the 'work' may come to see this as a token exercise designed to ensure compliance with legislation, rather than as an attempt to ensure continuity in the young person's education.

There was concern, too, from SEED that access to services (e.g. of therapists) normally gained through the school, would be closed off during the period of the exclusion. Pupils with Records of Needs are disproportionately represented in exclusion statistics, and concern for their welfare has been taken up in LA guidelines to schools:

> *In the case where the Authority considers that exclusion from the particular school is necessary, it is essential that the Authority take all reasonable steps to ensure that alternative provision for the pupil's special educational needs is made available. (L.A.3)*

Again, right of access to services during the exclusion may not be taken up if and when pupils and their parents experience exclusion from school as a break from a demanding routine.

Also of concern is the number of children for whom exclusion from school results in exclusion from education in the long-term. Sometimes, a twenty-day exclusion would be accompanied by the recommendation (supported by the Director of Education) that a new placement in mainstream be found for the pupil. A new school would be asked to accept the pupil but parents then had to cooperate in enrolling their child in the new school:

> *If the parents simply do not cooperate with that then you then have the youngsters in a limbo as we have – at least one – I think we have only one just now who, technically, should have been going to another school round about August (i.e. six months previously). His mother has not done so and he has been roaming the streets since then. (PTLS)*

Pupils remain on the role of the original school until they have re-enrolled elsewhere and the school would then record their non-attendance as unauthorised absence. For some pupils, though, the option of a 'fresh start' in a new school did provide an answer to the difficulties they were experiencing. However, the SEO indicated that shortage of alternatives made this option less available:

> *But we are having to watch the S3 cohort carefully just now because there are additional demands with asylum seekers coming into the city. Where we used to have a bit of flexibility and space, the schools are actually filling up. (SEO)*

120

The practice of re-enrolling young people in a school in their own quadrant of the city was thus increasingly difficult to maintain. For families, the difficulty and the expense of maintaining a child at a school in another part of the city might be strong disincentives to keeping that child in school.

Summing up, the operation of exclusions revealed inconsistency in two ways. First, school staff valued flexibility over consistency in their approaches to individual pupils. In their view, the processes leading to exclusion from school had a welfare dimension and were not just punitive. Flexibility, as opposed to a strict tariff system, allowed pupil support to be a central consideration. How far this intention was realised depended very strongly on parents. The second and more strategic indication of inconsistency arose from this circumstance. Parental engagement with schooling was a crucial factor in determining whether the processes leading to exclusion were punitive or supportive of the pupil. Parents who were economically and culturally advantaged were able to respond to the school in ways which could forestall the exclusion. Where the exclusion was not prevented, parents had access to an appeals system but, generally speaking, this option was very rarely taken up. The functioning of exclusions will be probed more fully in the next section where key informants' views of the purposes of exclusions will be identified and analysed.

5.4 Purposes of exclusions

5.4.1 Range of purposes
Across the group of key informants seven purposes of exclusion were identified. Some of these purposes were endorsed by all respondents, others were more contentious. Interesting divergences emerged between the official view of exclusions and the opinions expressed across the group of key informants. In the view of the SEED policy officer exclusions served just two purposes: as a deterrent to bad behaviour for the pupil excluded and as a means of protecting learning and teaching in classrooms by removing disruptive pupils. The ordering of these purposes below is a rough rank order, intended to reflect the weight of endorsement across the range of key informants. The purposes identified were

- as a signal to the excluded pupil and his/her parents that his/her behaviour was unacceptable

- as a deterrent to bad behaviour

- as a means of protecting the continuity of learning and teaching in the classroom/school

- as respite for other pupils and teachers

- as choice by the excluded pupil

- as a punishment for wrongdoing

- as providing a gateway to special provision

These purposes are discussed in turn with an indication of differences in key informants' views.

5.4.2 Exclusion as a signal to the pupil and his/her parents

This purpose was cited frequently by professionals in some schools and all education authorities but not by SEED. Those citing this purpose argued that exclusion could be constructive in that it prompted all those concerned to take time to review what had happened and to try to change the young person's behaviour. Senior managers in some schools said that an exclusion might be used to attract parental attention where previous attempts at contact had failed:

> They are all going to be grown-ups and they have got to be effective grown-ups. None of this should be about hurting or damaging. It should be about changing. (AHT)

Sometimes exclusion was needed to find out if there were other, deeper reasons for the pupils' behaviour. Then more appropriate support systems could be put in place. This purpose was named as a prime purpose by the headteacher of a school outwith the LA sector. He indicated that exclusions were not the end point in a hierarchy of sanctions but the means of providing a broad forum for planning the future support of the pupil. This school served a middle-class locality and enjoyed the support of an affluent and educationally active parent community. This school was hugely over-subscribed, rejecting each year between 150 and 200 applications. Of all the schools in this study, this school had the fewest exclusions, so few that the statistical patterns and trends could not be gauged. Parents, although most of them were working, were easily contactable and highly responsive to school requests. For schools serving poorer areas of the same city, this purpose of exclusion was less important. Exclusions there may send a signal but, for

parents with fewer economic and cultural resources, not necessarily one to which they could respond as the school would like.

5.4.3 Exclusion as a deterrent to bad behaviour

SEED representatives indicated that this was one of two broad purposes to exclusion but emphasized that exclusion for this purpose was always a last resort. Professionals in schools and school pupils interviewed questioned whether or not exclusions served this purpose. Professional respondents indicated that exclusions could operate as a deterrent along with a range of other, lesser, sanctions but only for those pupils who had never been excluded or who were rarely excluded. For young people who were excluded regularly, the deterrent effect clearly was minimal. The divergence of the view of school professionals from the official view is explained by their understanding of the differential impact of exclusions. As noted in Chapter 2, 61% of the 21,000 pupils who were excluded in 2003/04 were excluded on just one occasion, 19% were excluded twice and 20% were excluded on multiple occasions in the same school session. For this last group of about 4,000 pupils, exclusion was not a deterrent. The pupils interviewed were among those who had been excluded on numerous occasions and they confirmed that they were undeterred by the possibility of exclusion. On the contrary, they conveyed that time off school was an incentive to behave badly. The view of pupils here is probed further on in relation to the effectiveness of exclusions. If exclusion is not a deterrent for approximately 20% of excluded pupils, what purpose was served by the exclusion of this group? The second and last purpose cited by SEED – the protection of learning and teaching for the majority – seems to be the only purpose served by the exclusion of approximately 4000 pupils who are regularly excluded.

5.4.4 Exclusion as a means of protecting learning and teaching in the classroom/ school

The second broad purpose cited by SEED representatives was supported strongly by school-based key informants. It is separated out here as a purpose distinct from respite, for it was cited in the context of policy on raising attainment where schools saw disruption to learning and teaching as a hindrance to meeting attainment targets. Commentators on rising school exclusions had frequently attributed one reason for this to the drive to improve attainment outcomes and the resulting exclusionary effect on the pupil population (Parsons, 1999, Cooper et al, 2000). This effect was perceived not just in the rise in formal exclusions but in the marginalisation of some pupils within school organization, for example, through streaming by ability and the operation of bottom sets, brought about by the pressure of performance (Ball, 1999:202). Key informants confirmed that the formal

exclusion of some could safeguard the progress of other pupils through the curriculum. Pupil key informants who had themselves been excluded recognized and sympathized with the view that their exclusion could provide this safeguard:

> *But see all of us man, people must get fed up of us because we are bamming up the teacher and they can't get on with their work, know what I mean like? John Boyle, he is dead smart, know what I mean? He likes getting into his work because he likes to get it done, know what I mean? We are all bamming up the teacher, so the teacher's not got time to say like this is what we are doing, because we are all giving it to him stinking and that is how we get excluded. (S3 pupil).*

With regard to this purpose, exclusions were seen as fair, a way of reconciling conflicting interests in the classroom. SEED key informants acknowledged a tension between two of the national priorities for education, raising attainment and the promotion of inclusion, The Standards in Scotland's Schools, etc. Act (Scotland)(2000) and its presumption of mainstreaming had brought into sharp contrast the promotion of inclusive practices in schools whilst the rate of exclusions increased. Of particular concern were high rates of exclusion for some very vulnerable groups, for example, pupils with Records of Needs. The second purpose of exclusions identified by SEED, then, was also highly problematic; exclusion as a means of protecting learning and teaching directly undermined the mainstreaming initiative. There is evidence that conflict between raising attainment and inclusion is not inevitable, with some commentators pointing to more radical forms of school development as enabling inclusion and high levels of attainment (Florian, 1998; Florian and Rouse, 2001).

5.4.5 Exclusion as respite for teachers and other pupils

This purpose links to the last one but, from some respondents, the respite provided was not just about protecting learning and teaching but was also a means of removing from the classroom community significant personal and social pressure on others. At the extreme, exclusions could ensure that adults and young people in the classroom no longer had to tolerate on a daily basis the threat and the experience of abusive and aggressive behaviour. Exclusions as serving this purpose were supported strongly by professionals in schools and by education authority staff:

> *It is shocking that I have to do it. But if he tells a member of staff to fuck off in front of other children.....staff are human beings with rights as well. I mean it is totally detrimental to the good order of the school. (AHT)*

SEED representatives did not cite this purpose. This does not necessarily signal official indifference to the verbal abuse of teachers. If the abusive behaviour of pupils is in itself a reason for exclusion, then many more pupils with ASN will be excluded, for example, pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. In addition, it could be argued that teachers' professionalism in mainstream classrooms and in special settings should encompass skills in managing anger in pupils. Exclusion as means of providing respite might be widely recognized and practiced but its official endorsement as a valid reason could lead to the more widespread and earlier exclusion.

5.4.6 Exclusions as choice by the excluded pupil

The LA respondents recognized that exclusions could also provide respite from a difficult situation for the excluded young person himself/herself. Neither they, nor the school-based professionals, acknowledged that the excluded pupil might be exercising agency when s/he is excluded. They differed in this from the young people interviewed who strongly endorsed the notion that they engineered situations in order to gain official leave from school:

> *Pupil: At times, I've just been cheeky to teachers. One time I battered a wee guy that was taking a liberty.....it was wee Leslie, man, because he was annoying me. Just to get myself put out of school really.*

> *I: Were you trying to get put out of school?*

> *Pupil: Aye, because I just don't like it. I had just....I was off school for about six months or something and I had just come back like that. It was getting up in the morning, you know, you are like that, "Aw, naw, man, do ah need to go to school?" And it just puts you in a bad mood and when you come you are just in a bad mood already so you just start annoying teachers and that and you start giving them lip.*

It is possible that there was some bravado in these claims. The boys did not portray themselves as ever having lost control and reacted in anger to teachers or other pupils. Rather, they represented themselves as always in control and always able to manoeuvre situations to their own advantage. The PT Learning Support interviewed disputed the idea that some children go out to engineer their own exclusion:

> *There is a myth that some children, just to get a break from school will try to get excluded. It is not my impression here that pupils go out to set up a situation that may lead to their exclusion. They may lack self-control or a situation may escalate but it is very rare that a child will provoke exclusion. (PTLS)*

This view was endorsed by an AHT from another LA:

> *Like people saying that some children laugh at exclusion, I have yet to hear, to see, a child that is happy to be excluded. I genuinely mean that. (AHT)*

On the other hand, the boys interviewed had also truanted or excluded themselves from school and so there was evidence of their desire for time out of schooling and of their preparedness to achieve this by whatever means they could.

5.4.7 Exclusion as a punishment for wrongdoing

The responses of the key informants were contradictory in that officials and professionals did not include punishment in the range of purposes cited and yet young people saw the intention behind exclusion as punishment. Exclusion blocked off access to an important social forum – school:

> *My highest suspension has been ten days and I didn't like it because I was sitting in and I was bored and everybody else was at school.*

This view was endorsed by a second young pupil:

> *I have been suspended twice for five days each time. I got snibbed because I got suspended and it was pure boring because nobody was about.*

The punitive effect seemed to rely on parental cooperation in that young people who were confined to their homes during exclusion were more likely to experience the exclusion as a punishment. There seemed to be differences in the level of parental support schools could expect in the event of exclusion. One AHT (in LA3) could usually rely on parents reinforcing that the behaviour was unacceptable:

> *It means you have to see their parents and, touch wood, you very seldom find parents complaining about an exclusion (AHT)*

Not all schools represented in the key informant interviews experienced the same level of parental support, with a consequent diminution in the impact of the exclusion. This is discussed further on.

5.4.8 Exclusions as a gateway to special provision

A final purpose was emphasized strongly by school-based professionals. They indicated that exclusions served as a gateway to special provision. In this view, they differed pointedly from the official view. LA representatives and SEED maintained that there were two quite separate processes governing exclusions and decisions about placement outwith

mainstream. The Principal Teacher of Learning Support (PTLS) interviewed claimed that exclusions were used as a fast track to secure LA consideration of alternative placement in the special sector or alternative support arrangements. He illustrated this point with reference to an S4 pupil:

> *We have considerable doubts as to whether he will get to the end of fourth year in a mainstream school, but the only we can trigger any consideration, any other facility was because of twenty-day exclusion ......the only way you can actually say we are really concerned is to use this sledge-hammer approach.*

In contrast, the Senior Education Officer (SEO) from this same LA emphasised that the exclusion referral system was not to be used as a gateway to special provision:

> *If a young person's social and emotional and behavioural difficulties are such that specialist provision is required, then those children should not be coming through an exclusion route (SEO)*

Chapter 3 discussed the difficulties in conceptualizing some challenging behaviour as SEBD. These conceptual problems are here seen to lead to confused and unfair practice. If the processes leading to exclusion and special placement are quite separate, who decides which route is appropriate for which pupil? From a school perspective, the twin track endorsed by officials seems to be inoperable in ways which are fair and consistent. It would not be surprising if exclusions are used as a staging post on the road to special provision.

Having identified seven purposes across the range of key informant responses, the next section will consider what those responses revealed about the effectiveness of exclusions.

5.5 Effectiveness

Which of these purposes, if any, were served by exclusions? Key informants gave no clear indication that exclusions were effective across the range of purposes identified above. Their views of the effectiveness or otherwise of exclusions are linked here to the range of purposes identified.

There was some agreement that exclusion sent out a signal that certain kinds of behaviour, for example, violent behaviour, were unacceptable to the school but the prime audience for that signal was not the excluded pupil or his family but other members of the school community:

> *...it is probably.... effective in cases where there has been a fight, violence of that sort, the parent of the aggrieved child will hear that his or her assailant was excluded and will get a sense of satisfaction that the school takes the concern seriously. (PTLS)*

LA representatives concurred with the view that exclusions drew a line in the sand with regard to certain kinds of behaviour, indicating that, although centrally-funded initiatives had made a significant impact in reducing the number of exclusions overall, there were still a number of drugs and violence-related incidents for which exclusion was an appropriate response.

Key informants did not see exclusions as providing an effective deterrent for pupils who had been excluded. Particularly questionable, in the view of most of the professional key informants was whether exclusions served the interests of the excluded pupil:

> *One piece of evidence that they are not is that there are a small number of youngsters who are repeatedly excluded. That would suggest exclusion is not effective. Other pupils who are excluded and never offend again? I am doubtful of that.' (PTLS)*

The point was also made that schools had only limited control over some of the factors which led to exclusion. Sometimes, in spite of the development of internal anti-exclusion strategies, exclusions might increase significantly because of events outwith the school. One Assistant Headteacher from a secondary school spoke of an increase in gang warfare as a result of a tragic accident when an eleven-year old boy had been killed on the M8 motorway whilst being chased during territorial fighting. Reprisals had been ongoing and had involved a number of boys at the school, resulting in their exclusion. Exclusion for violence or drugs-related behaviour might be seen to establish the school's position with regard to that behaviour but exclusions here was not viewed as effective in curtailing the behaviour which was dangerous to the young person and to others.

Exclusion as a means of protecting learning and teaching was one of two purposes cited by SEED and it was the only one where exclusions were seen to be effective. School-based professionals were clear that exclusion does prevent interruption of teaching and learning (PTLS) but they did not argue that there were commensurate benefits for the young people who were excluded. In fact, there was recognition from LAs that their exclusion could remove the need for schools to develop more inclusive practices:

> *I am not saying it is an easy exit for children because the other side of the coin is to ensure that schools are developing more in-house strategies, more effective learning and teaching, more appropriate curriculum models. (SEO)*

To encourage schools to develop better in-house provision this LA had mooted that mainstream schools should themselves pay for alternative educational provision. By this method, pupils remained on the roll of the school and the per capita payments made to the school by the LA could be retained by the school or used to buy external provision for the pupil.

Exclusion was also seen as providing respite. This purpose linked to the previous purpose and, similarly, there was agreement that exclusion served the interests of others in affording them some peace and possibly protection:

> ...it is effective in that it does make life easier for other children, it does make life easier for teachers (PTLS)

Again, the effectiveness of exclusions was seen to rest entirely upon the benefits they brought to the school community as a whole.

As previously discussed, there was contention in one LA as to the role exclusions played in accelerating placement in the special sector with the LA insisting that processes of exclusion and special school placement being entirely separate. What was much less contentious was the effectiveness of exclusions, or, rather, the need to reduce exclusions, in forcing the development of 'alternative' provision where the pupil remained on the roll of the mainstream school. In a second LA, the links between exclusion and special provision were emphasised by the AHT interviewed:

> There's one boy who has had four exclusions, one first-year boy, four exclusions this term and he is on a reduced timetable at the moment, which is ridiculous for a first year and we are looking to get help from our Cluaran Project and from our Day Unit. (AHT)

Of particular interest to LAs were educational resources which offered 'flexibility' in that young people could be placed there for blocks of time to follow alternative curricula with a heavy emphasis on, for example, Personal and Social Development and/or Information and Communications Technology. The mainstream placement would be maintained for the young person during these periods in the alternative provision. However, no information was available from LAs as to the effectiveness or otherwise of alternative provision. Such provision would be very difficult to evaluate because criteria for evaluating success were not specified. This raises the possibility that effectiveness here rested solely on a capacity for removing some pupils from mainstream schools. Thus, although schools and LAs

discoursed on alternative provision in terms of 'appropriateness' and 'individual needs', it is possible that its main purpose was to support exclusion from mainstream.

Consideration of the effectiveness of exclusions begs the question 'Effective for whom?' The answer is for staff and for the majority of pupils who are not excluded. Exclusions fulfilled a function in enabling schools to communicate a view within the school and beyond the school as to the behaviour that was acceptable. For some pupils, awareness of that standard may deter unacceptable behaviour, but for those 4000 or so pupils each year who are excluded again and again there is no deterrent effect. Their repeated exclusion results in disruption and discontinuity in their education. This problem has been tackled by developing 'alternative' provision but a lack of evaluative data makes it hard to judge the educational effects for excluded pupils. There was some suggestion from pupil key informants that exclusions served their own purposes; that they engineered conflict in school in order to have time off. Staff interviewed denied this was a factor but, as noted in Chapter 3, the literature documents the agency of working class boys, in particular, in negotiating negative relationships with schooling. In investigating the disproportionate exclusion of some groups of pupils, this possibility will be considered further, starting with key informants' views of social class and gender in exclusions.

5.6 Gender and social class

Concern about the negative impact of exclusions is increased because they impact particularly on some groups. Boys were shown in the exclusion statistics to be particularly affected and in discussing the processes leading to exclusion, key informants pointed to significant social class differences, with more affluent parents able to use exclusion processes to forestall exclusion and attract support for their child. Key informants were asked directly about gender and social class issues in exclusions. Those comments are discussed here.

5.6.1 Gender differences in exclusion

All of the school-based professionals interviewed agreed that there were fewer girls excluded because they generally behaved better than boys:

> *Why are there more boys killed in road accidents than girls? It is there – boys and girls are two different species in some ways. Part of it is societal – boys are brought up to stick up for themselves. But if you walk into a classroom just*

now, you will find that we have got wee girls and they have got nice bags and their jotters are all covered. If boys were allowed to, they would carry the stuff home in their pockets. (male AHT)

This view of girls was endorsed by the four male pupils interviewed:

Lassies are really well-behaved, like. See like boys, they don't really give a monkey's because they just want to carry on and all that. Lassies just sit there and do their work. (Male pupil)

Gender differences were noted not just in the numbers of girls and boys excluded but in the reasons for girls' and boys' exclusions. Official statistics showing the reasons for exclusions are not structured by gender and key informants differed in their views here. Professional key informants pointed to girls' exclusions arising from difficulties in relationships between girls. One AHT pointed to his experience of long-running bullying incidents as characteristic of the causes of girls' exclusion:

I would suggest you get a lot of girl bullying.....you know, long-term bullying, these ongoing girl-things that tend to go on for a long time. The gang thing apart, my perception is that, if two boys have a fight, it tends to finish there....that's the end of it. If two girls fall out, it may go on for a year.' (AHT, secondary school)

This was supported by an AHT in a second LA who attributed to girls a tendency to be more personally vindictive:

We are not going to do it, but if we went along to the girls' and boys' toilets and you saw the graffiti in the boys' toilets it would be about football clubs. In the girls' toilet, it would be about people – 'so and so is a slag'. (AHT)

Disagreement with the view that there are differences in the reasons why girls and boys were excluded came from the male pupils interviewed. They recognised that there were girls in the same position as themselves:

I: Do you think boys behave worse than girls and that's why they are more likely to be excluded?

Pupil 1: There's one worse lassie in our year

Pupil 2: She's mental, man

Pupil 3: She's lost the plot

There was much sympathy for this girl, who, in their view, was discriminated against:

Lorraine finishes her work as much as I do, man, know what I mean? He praises me up to the max and he praises John Jack up to the max, but he never praises Lorraine, know what I mean? He sat Lorraine way at the back, back of the class, man. And that's her permanent seat, just because she talks all the time. It's not her fault. It is her personality.

For the boys interviewed, the key differences were between those who were excluded and those who were not. Unlike most of the professionals interviewed, they saw commonalities rather than differences in the behaviour of girls and boys who were excluded. In one respect, though, the pupils interviewed identified a crucial difference between excluded boys and girls: the importance of the peer group for boys. The male pupils interviewed claimed that a main motive for them in misbehaving was to gain prestige amongst peers:

Every one of mine (exclusions) has been trying to show off to my pals to try to make myself look good. (S2 pupil)

A headteacher key informant endorsed this view, citing the peer group as the single most important factor in boys' experience of school. In his school, in years when boys' academic performance had been poorer overall, the peer group was the crucial factor. When attainment levels for boys were lower, there was a stronger and more anti-school peer culture than in other years. This culture was seen to impact on boys in ways other than academically. The PTLS thought that certain masculine peer cultures prevented boys being themselves:

There is an issue affecting boys which is the way in which – I know this is stereotyping – they are not supposed to demonstrate emotions but I do think there is some difficulty in that, generally, boys do not get to demonstrate their emotions in socially acceptable ways.....(PTLS)

With regard to exclusions, although boys were generally more vulnerable, some boys were much more likely than others to be excluded. Those boys lived in and attended schools in areas of social disadvantage.

5.6.2 Social class and exclusions

The schools represented in the key informant sample spanned a considerable social range, from a school serving a middle-class community to a school in an area of the same city noted in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation as having the highest indicators of social disadvantage in Scotland. There were widely-varying rates of exclusion in the schools represented. Across the range of schools, the professionals interviewed explained variations by pointing to very different social and economic circumstances beyond the school. On closer analysis, this explanation meant different things to different key

informants. For some, poverty and the difficulties it created for young people and their families made the demands of school overwhelming. By this account, exclusions were caused by the mismatch between the expectations of schools and the reality of the lives of some young people. Difficulties leading to exclusion were therefore systemic. For other professionals interviewed, social class was the reason for high exclusions in some areas but its impact was through the pathology of the child:

> *It is society. It is social class reasons....and that is not because of middle-class prejudice, it is because (in some areas) you are more likely to get children who commit the kinds of offences that lead to exclusion. It is just like in Glasgow, you have got more children excluded in Drumchapel, you have more children committing certain sorts of things than you will in Bearsden or in Giffnock....It is not snobbery. It is just a fact. (AHT)*

Not all key informants pathologised poverty in this way. In the very advantaged school represented in the key informant interviews, exclusions were very low indeed with no long-term exclusions in the five-year period covered by the headteacher's experience. He attributed these low rates of exclusion to out-of school factors: the social, economic and cultural resources of parents and the community. The school was fortunate to be able to offer pupils a wide range of social, sporting, cultural opportunities, many of them paid for by parents. A similar point about class cultural issues and exclusions was made by an AHT from a secondary school with high rates of exclusion, the AHT attributed the exclusion rate to:

> *...the multi deprivation we have here and, I suppose, the general sort of lawlessness of some of our children, not the majority, but a significant minority and their families. (AHT)*

This was the same AHT who had explained the difficulty the school had in combating exclusions when out-of-school factors were so significant. The example he gave, described earlier, was the importance of gang affiliations in the culture of teenage boys.

Although there were differences in how social class was seen to relate to exclusions, there was unanimity amongst professionals that the broader social context of the school constituted the significant factor in exclusion rates. An AHT from a school serving a very disadvantaged area commented:

> *You get a lot of poor souls down at Charing Cross (Council HQ)...For all sorts of reasons, school, education, social work, whoever, has not managed to give them and their families the necessary support. At the end of the day, we have got to run the school for the other seven hundred kids in here. (AHT, secondary school)*

This comment here provides further evidence for the point made earlier that exclusions serve to protect the interests of those not excluded.

Key informants offered some pointers as to how gender and social class impacted on exclusion rates. Differences in boys and girls' behaviour were noted, with the peer group seen to be the crucial influence on boys' behaviour. Within the group of excluded pupils, there was no clear view as to whether the behaviours leading to exclusions were different for boys and girls. There was a very consistent view that the wider context of pupils' lives determined the likelihood of their being excluded or not. Further, pupils' experience was seen to be shaped by cultural factors as well as social and economic circumstances. The final theme illuminated by key informants was the impact of policy.

5.7 Exclusions and social policy

SEED key informants indicated that the official aim was not just to reduce exclusions but to address the causes of exclusions. The vulnerability of some groups of pupils was recognized and policy aimed to assist those pupils by supporting their families and their communities, as well as by tackling school exclusions directly. This section will consider key informants' views of the impact of this two-layered approach to tackling school exclusions.

5.7.1 Social inclusion policy

SEED emphasized that the approach to school exclusions was part of a whole approach to social inclusion, coordinated by the Social Inclusion Unit. One LA representative indicated her view that such broad and coordinated approaches were necessary in tackling school exclusions. She attributed the increase in behaviour difficulties and especially an increased number of referrals in the early years to social exclusion:

> ...I am seeing, although the numbers are still quite small, ...a much bigger incidence of difficult behaviours at Primary 1 and Primary 2. I think they are linked to the parenting issue because it is young parents, the drug abusers, a lot of social deprivation issues and these children come into Primary 1, quite often they have not had access to a pre-5 place because, although the city has capacity,... we have maybe only about 80% take up....there is still a hard core that it is difficult to access. (SEO)

The strategy to address these issues was coordinated across Scottish Executive departments by the Social Inclusion Unit and was intended to mirror the multi-agency structures needed in LAs and schools to take forward the flagship social inclusion initiative: the New Community Schools development. One LA key informant explained that the Learning

Communities approach adopted by her LA enabled multi-agency and cross-sectoral support systems to be developed. A considerable part of schools' resources had gone into such initiatives with the aim being to use coordinated approaches to support children from a very early age. Even though funding was available, other obstacles had slowed down the implementation of this LA's social inclusion strategy:

> *So, much of the early intervention work which might mitigate against some of the difficulties experienced later, has been very difficult. That is not a budget restriction. The budget is there. It is difficulties in recruitment. (SEO)*

Staffing was one of the difficulties LAs experienced in pursuing the social inclusion strategy but other difficulties were also touched upon, for example, the challenge of developing integrated approaches across services. These barriers and resulting delays in implementation may account for the fact that school-based key informants offered scant comment on social inclusion initiatives and their impact on exclusions. In a school serving a very disadvantaged area in the LA mentioned, a 'new community school', poverty and not a lack of professional support, was identified as the important factor in explaining both exclusions from school and low levels of attainment. A very practical example of how poverty impacted was on the school's ability to contact families in the event of a crisis or in an effort to ensure attendance at SQA examinations:

> *Probably one in three phone numbers I phone are out of date by the time I phone them and that is a lot in your school, isn't it? In a few weeks' time, senior pupils are going to sit their SQA examinations and we have got to ask all Fourth and Fifth Year pupils to give us to give us the most up to date telephone number they have – their auntie's, granny's, next-door neighbour's phone – so that if they do not turn up for the exam we can actually phone them. (AHT, secondary school)*

More frequently mentioned by school-based key informants were initiatives specific to schools.

5.7.2 School exclusions and policy

Better Behaviour.....Better Learning (SEED, 2000) had been well received in schools in the view of school-based key informants. The PTLS believed that it offered a constructive way forward perhaps because it did not pretend to offer panacea. Along with BBBL, the Alternatives to Exclusions programme had provided additional funding to enable schools to develop in-school alternatives to exclusion with schools given considerable autonomy in deciding how to use the funding. Many schools had opted to create Behaviour Support posts and some of these staff were deployed in Bases or Units The pupils interviewed provided some evidence of the success of these initiatives:

Pupil: See the classes I was bad in, right, I used to get took out of them and put in the Pupil Support Centre and Mr C really helped my behaviour. Everybody who has got put in there has really got better behaviour and that because he helps you.

I: Why is that? What is it that's done in there?

Pupil: There's less people so... the teacher can help you, and you know, he just sits you down and has a wee talk with you and all that and says just get the head together.

On the other hand, the target-setting exercise to reduce exclusions was ill-regarded in schools represented in the interviews. A whole target-setting to reducing social exclusion had been set out in 'Social Justice.......a Scotland where everyone matters' (SEED, 1999). In 2003, schools were no longer required to progress towards reducing exclusions by one third. Somewhat confusingly, SEED key informants indicated that press reports that the target of a one-third reduction in exclusions had been abandoned were misleading. Targets had not been abandoned but there were other approaches sitting alongside that one. In any event, the one-third target was an 'aspirational' national target. It did not mean that each LA had to achieve such a reduction. Also, it was pointed out that there was no timescale attached to the achievement of the target, unlike in England and Wales. Exclusions had increased in 2003 and SEED's ambivalence here seemed designed to obscure a political failure.

There was strong opposition to a target-setting approach in schools. The view was that such an approach to school improvement did not work. This view came through strongly and particularly so from the headteacher of the 'high-performing' school outwith the LA sector. He exemplified his point by referring to the categories for collecting national statistics, indicating that, as the drive to improve attendance increased attendance rates, it would also increase exclusion rates as many of the pupils brought back into school would not wish to be there. Other respondents, too, cited examples of the means used by schools to achieve better looking statistical returns while the situation remained unaddressed. Worryingly, it was suggested that 'informal' (i.e. unrecorded) exclusion was still common practice.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has used interviews with key informants to identify and illuminate issues in school exclusions for the main empirical phase of the study. Exclusions were noted as serving a range of purposes. The official view was that some of these purposes served

excluded pupils, for example, in deterring them from future wrongdoing. Statistics revealed that some 20% of excluded pupils had been repeatedly excluded and there was some scepticism amongst school-based key informants as to the deterrent value of exclusions. The pointers were that the overriding purpose of exclusion was to benefit school staff and other pupils. This is understandable where some pupils are undermining learning and teaching but it creates a significant problem. Exclusion, especially repeated exclusion, increases existing social disadvantage by undermining the education of some pupils and their future lives.

Key informants other than pupils constructed exclusions as having a welfare- rather than punitive function. Exclusion was seen as helpful in establishing provision more appropriate to the pupil's needs, sometimes in places other than the mainstream school. It was not possible to draw conclusions as to the effectiveness of such provision but the inability of LAs and schools to identify success criteria, and the lack of evaluative data, suggested that the existence of alternatives, rather than the quality of provision, was the main requirement. Pupils suggested that exclusion suited them, indeed, was sought by them. The notion of pupil agency in exclusion is a key one for this study and it will be explored through the main dataset, the pupil case studies. Agency linked to class cultures and exclusions. Insights were offered as to how the agency of middle-class parents might forestall exclusion. Social class came through as a strong factor differentiating pupils and the likelihood of their exclusion but social inclusion policy was seen to have had less impact on school exclusions than specific and in-school initiatives. These issues will be pursued through the analysis of twenty case studies of pupils who had been excluded. Before that, the next chapter will set a social context for the case studies by describing the case study LA and the four case study schools.

Chapter 6

The Local Authority and the Case Study Schools

6.1 Introduction

Having identified themes and issues from the literature and from interviews with key informants, the discussion now turns to the main empirical phase of the project. The investigation was pursued through twenty case studies of excluded pupils in four secondary schools in the same local authority. The findings from this phase are considered in Chapters 7, 8 and 9. Before that, this chapter will provide a social and economic background to the second phase of the study, highlighting those factors which have particular bearing upon the lives of young people approaching the end of the compulsory schooling period. This wider social setting for the lives of the twenty case study pupils will assist in the analysis of data in subsequent chapters when the focus will be upon the negotiation of cultural and social identities. Also relevant to that analysis will be the school settings within which case study data was gathered. The second half of this chapter will be concerned with providing a description of each of the four case study schools and with discussing how those schools provided for their pupils. Quantitative data is used here not to evoke comparisons between schools but to convey a sense of the differing circumstances of the schools. Qualitative data was gathered from documentation provided by the schools, from interviews with staff and from focus groups with pupils.

6.2 Demography of the local authority

The website of the local authority and the Scottish Executive's social statistics offer the demographic information outlined here. With a population of 302,110 at the 2001 census, the local authority was the fifth largest in Scotland. It is located in the central belt of Scotland but reaches into the southern uplands. The authority area is large and its environments are diverse. 80% of its area is in agricultural use but, alongside that, some of its town were served by heavy industry and, at the time of the research, were experiencing the same economic decline as the rest of the urban conurbation. At 5% in 1999, claimant unemployment rate was exactly the same as the Scottish average (www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/sss). In May 2000, 14% of the population was claiming a key Social Security benefit, compared to 18% of the Scottish population as a whole (www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/sss). However, averages here for the LA may mask pockets of significant social exclusion in some of its communities. A comparison of census statistics

between 1991 and 2001 shows an aging population in that the number of children and young people is in decline whilst older age groups form a larger part of the whole population. This trend is consistent with the rest of Scotland. For the education service, implications of this trend include a re-zoning and a re-organisation of school provision into clusters of secondary, primary, special and pre-5 provision. This initiative would be financed through a public/private partnership arrangement. At the time of the school-based phase of this project, all of the schools knew they were to be affected to some extent by these plans.

6.3 The policy context and the case study LA

The previous chapter discussed exclusions in relation to the Scottish and UK policy context and indicated the policy link between school exclusion and wider social exclusion. That connection was made explicit in the Improvement Plan produced by the LA :

> _____ *Council has in the last year clearly indicated a commitment to an agenda for social inclusion as part of the Council's strategy to raise achievement. The Council's strategy for Access and Opportunity recognises the link between educational achievement and the economic and social development of the area.........A key feature of this strategy is to reduce the need for and the incidence of exclusions and to develop effective alternatives.*

To secure government funding under the Excellence Fund, the case study LA had devised a continuing strategy to tackle school exclusion. Funding made available under SOEID's Alternatives to Exclusion Programme had been used to establish a range of approaches to behaviour support. The initiative was aimed at the LA's twenty one secondary schools and the approaches included:

- establishing area management resource bases for primary and secondary pupils,

- allocating additional staffing to schools,

- appointing home link workers, and

- providing staff development in behaviour support

With regard to the second of these approaches – enhanced staffing for behaviour support – schools were given considerable autonomy in developing their own systems of support within parameters set by the LA (Head et al, 2002). This lead to some differences in behaviour support systems and personnel within the four case study schools. Types of

behaviour support emerging in this LA's secondary schools and impact on exclusions is discussed elsewhere (Kane et al, 2004). The nature of behaviour support in each of the case study schools is outlined below.

By January 1999, the LA's Improvement Plan indicated that the funding identified in the Excellence Fund would be used to further develop and extend provision for behaviour support. Within this phase, however, judgements about the effectiveness of provision would be based upon exclusion statistics. The aim of nationally set targets was to reduce exclusions by 30 per cent in the three years from 1999 to 2002. As previously indicated, the target-setting approach to reducing exclusions was abandoned after one year. However, during the period of the fieldwork for this research in 2002/03, it was apparent that schools were still very sensitive about their exclusion statistics and that they used a number of techniques to minimise exclusions as they were represented in formal returns to the LA, as well as trying to reduce actual exclusions. During that session, national statistics (www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/bulletins/00402-00.asp) show that the number of exclusion incidents dropped in the case study LA and across Scotland, only to rise again the following session. In 2003/04, when the last of the case studies were compiled, national statistics (www.scotland.gov.uk/stats/bulletins/00402-00.asp) show that the case study LA had an exclusion rate of 56 per 1000 pupils, a rate slightly higher than the Scottish average of 53 exclusions per 1000 pupils. The case study LA ranked as eleventh out of the thirty two Scottish LAs, with Dundee City Council heading the list with 97 exclusions per 1000 pupils and Glasgow City Council with 95 exclusions per 1000 pupils.

6.4 Case Study School Sample

This research has not focused upon school differences as a main strand in the analysis of data, though differences are outlined here. The intention was not to evaluate each school's provision in relation to exclusion rates but to consider the broader experience of individual pupils who had been excluded. There was some variation in school size. In 2002/03, the school session during which the research was conducted, two schools, Hammond and Carrick, had very similar sized rolls of 685 and 703 respectively. The rolls of the other two schools were larger. St Thomas's had a roll of 848 and Easton High School of 839. There was clear contrast in entitlement to free school meals (FSMs) across the school sample with almost 40% of pupils at Carrick High School registered but only 16.4% registered at Hammond High School, reflecting different employment levels in the communities served by the schools (Table 1).

Table 1 - Case Study Schools by Roll and Percentage Entitlement to Free School Meals

SEED No	School	Roll at Census	Entitled to Free Meals	Percentage Free Meals
8458332	Carrick High School	703	279	39.7
8524432	Easton High School	839	180	21.5
8533539	Hammond High School	685	112	16.4
8458030	St Thomas's High School	848	203	23.9

Table 2 below shows rates of exclusion in the four schools reflect the same differences, with Carrick High School showing the highest rates and Hammond High School the lowest rates (Table 2). As will be seen below from exclusion rates for the same session, the size of the school did not seem to be a factor in rates of exclusion. This is borne out by other research into exclusions carried out for the same local authority (Head et al, 2002).

Table 2 - Case Study Schools by Roll, Number of Exclusion Incidents and Ratio of Exclusions (number of exclusion incidents per 100 pupils) 2002/2003

	School roll	No of exclusions	Ratio
Carrick High School	703	160	23
Hammond High School	685	35	5
Easton High School	839	100	12
St Thomas's High School	848	98	13

The ratio of exclusions to school roll here raises questions about the relative effectiveness of the case study schools in managing behaviour and reducing exclusions. This is particularly true when comparing the two schools in Area 2, Carrick High School and St

Thomas's High School, both serving the same communities but with very different rates of exclusion. St Thomas's HS is a Catholic denominational school and its relatively low rates of exclusion contrast with exclusion rates at Carrick HS. Commentators have noted the relative success of these publicly-funded denominational schools as measured by hard indicators such as examination results, attendance and exclusion statistics. This has been attributed to Catholic schools having a better ethos arising from a clearly articulated value system to which the whole school community subscribes. School effectiveness and school improvement research has indeed underlined the importance of a unifying value system in contributing to successful schools. However, there may be other factors contributing to the success of denominational schools. Catholic schools are fewer than non-denominational schools and tend to serve a wider catchment area. For many pupils more effort is required to opt for Catholic education and some families, those with fewest resources, take the easiest course and send their children to the nearest school. The effect is that a self-selection process operates with some pupils from Catholic primary schools opting out of (or never opting into) the associated Catholic secondary. There is no evidence for this hypothesis in the five case study pupils from Carrick HS; all five had started school at associated non-denominational primary schools, although one pupil had completed his primary education at a local Catholic primary before transferring to Carrick HS. Within the group pupils who provided key informant interviews, however, there was some evidence that pupils who experienced difficulties of one kind or another opted for their nearest school. Of those five pupils, two had been pupils at a denominational primary school before opting to attend the more local non-denominational secondary.

This study is not centrally concerned with comparisons between schools, although it recognises that schools have different impacts on their pupils. The case study local authority had recognised this when it commissioned an evaluation of behaviour support in its twenty one secondary schools (Head et al, 2001) to ascertain what in-school factors explained very different rates of exclusion. Some commentators have cited schools as the main factor in school exclusions and school development as the main means of reducing exclusions. However, this study, whilst recognising the impact of schools, does not attempt to isolate those in-school factors. Rather, the discussion is concerned with differences and commonalities across the case study sample and schools attended constitute only one point of difference and/or commonality. A description of each of the four schools is offered here as background to the analysis which follows in the next three chapters. These descriptions are drawn from documentation provided by the schools, from, school websites, from interviews with staff and pupils and from focus groups with pupils who have not necessarily been excluded themselves.

6.5 Carrick High School

Carrick High School was a co-educational, non-denominational secondary school serving an area of significant social exclusion near the boundary with the neighbouring city. Its exclusion rates were highest of the four schools, although in the year after the research was carried out, the number of exclusion incidents had been halved. Consistent with national patterns of exclusion, and illustrating the link between school exclusion and wider social exclusion, the school also had the highest number of pupils entitled to free school meals.

The school was housed in 1960s buildings and had a range of facilities including, for example, a large assembly hall and stage, allowing a strong tradition in musical productions. At the time of the research in June 2003, numbers of pupils and staff were very busy with rehearsals of Bugsy Malone. The buildings were no longer in good repair, however, and it was anticipated that refurbishments would be carried out under the LA's public/private partnership financial arrangement. This investment would also herald organisational changes. The LA's schools would be clustered in much tighter units with an overall head of the cluster and exercising much greater local financial control. The school was already part of a looser cluster with six primary schools. Its roll had once been larger and its accommodation reflected this, but pupil numbers had stabilised giving the school continuity in its staffing complement.

Staffing had been enhanced under the LA's Alternatives to Exclusion funding and that additional staffing, together with the school's own commitment from core staffing, had been used to establish Behaviour Support in the School in the form of an extended support team and a Behaviour Support Base. The Depute Rector coordinated Behaviour Support and he explained that each member of the extended support team provided one-to-one support for approximately two or three pupils deemed to be at risk. Those staff would also be available to support teachers who were experiencing difficulty with those pupils. The Behaviour Support Base allowed the withdrawal of pupils from normal classes. The school's Alternative to Exclusion policy document (Carrick High School, 2003) explained that the Base was 'multi-functional':

It has a role in helping to prevent exclusion i.e. it is available for pupils who are 'heading for exclusion' but for whom, with a little extra support an exclusion may be avoided.....It is also a resource for the following category of pupil:

Pupils who are:

- undertaking an adapted curriculum

- school 'refusers' and those who are, after negotiation, returning to school with a part-time timetable

- requiring 'time-out' from a subject or subjects

- in a situation where ongoing progressive punishments have been ineffective

- experiencing difficulties in the home which are making them upset

- subject to a parental request for support   (Carrick High School, 2003)

However, the policy statement goes on to explain that the two broad categories of pupils in the Base – those who were there literally as an alternative to exclusion and those who were there for support/welfare reasons – were to be treated differently. Those who would otherwise have been excluded would 'forfeit their normal interval and lunch hour' and would instead be escorted to the toilet and dining hall at those times and kept under supervision by a member of the senior management team or the additional support team. The staff time needed to run the Base would be provided by an extended support team made up of support teachers and other teacher volunteers.

The impact of the Base may have contributed to a reduction in formal exclusions during that session through what has been termed 'internal exclusion' by some commentators (Munn et al, 2000). However, other aspects of Behaviour Support may also have helped. For example, the Home Link worker was closely involved in supporting young people's education by encouraging their families to engage with the school. To that end, a number of programmes and activities were offered to bring parents into the school building or even just into pleasant and positive contact with the school.

Pupils in Carrick High School were very supportive of school exclusion, seeing it as a just response to misbehaviour such as fighting or shouting at teachers. In fact, for the three boys in a focus group of six, exclusion was not enough of a deterrent. They argued for a return to the belt. This was the standard form of physical punishment used throughout Scottish schools until 1983 when a ruling by the European Commission on Human Rights prompted its abandonment. The pupils here were not born when the belt was used but, presumably, had heard it discussed by their parents.

6.6 Easton High School

Easton High School was located in a housing scheme in the town which is the administrative centre of the LA. Its roll at the time of the research was 839. The school was about to merge with the secondary school which served a nearby town. Although this was a merger, the combined school would be in a new building on the site of the other school and so staff in Easton were fearful of the impending upheaval and insecurity with regard to their own posts.

The school has a positive reputation, especially in the area of support for pupils. For a long time, and pre-dating recommendations in Better Behaviour Better Learning (SEED 2001), Easton has integrated pastoral and learning support to provide inclusively for all its pupils. The school had a department for profoundly deaf pupils who were integrated into mainstream subject classes. The headteacher voiced particular concern that, when these pupils were excluded from school, they were, in effect, excluded from education. He added that a further point for staff to bear in mind was that deaf pupils may react differently to situations, or that their behaviour may be interpreted in ways that discriminate against them.

The school handbook notes that the school had been cited frequently in national initiatives as an example of good practice and that the school received annually a number of visitors from other parts of Scotland and from abroad. The headteacher had served eighteen years as Head and the quality of his service had been recognised in 1999 by the award of a CBE. A considerable section of the school handbook is devoted to outlining Support for Learning and to underlining that its aim is to support all pupils in ways that permeate the curriculum, as well as in more targeted ways. These permeating approaches meant that staff did not see themselves as belonging to either support or subject staff. The school handbook reported:

- School policy on pupil behaviour, whilst setting out systems and procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour, emphasizes the importance of ethos:

- An ethos of caring , and of quiet and respectful interpersonal activity will have more of an impact than policies which deal with misbehaviour, important as they are. (Easton High School, 2003).

There were relatively high rates of social exclusion in the communities served by the school. In discussing poverty as a factor in school exclusions, the headteacher indicated his belief that there was not a straightforward causal relationship between poverty and school exclusion. The factors which increased the likelihood of exclusion were cultural and not just economic. Where the values of the family included trust in the school, it was very unlikely that the possibility of exclusion would ever arise. Some families generally seemed to deal with conflict by becoming very aggressive, shouting, and so on. The headteacher reported that he had often had parents shouting down the phone at him whilst the pupil stood beside the parent and heard the exchange. Lack of respect and a tendency to opt for confrontation limited the schools options and an exclusion would then be the only way of proceeding. The headteacher believed there was an inverse relationship between the number of exclusions experienced by a pupil and the level of support the family exhibited towards the school. Some parents saw good parenting as siding with the child against the school. Lone parenting was not necessarily an issue in school exclusions. An important aspect of the school's behaviour support strategy was the Home Link worker who tried to build parents' confidence in themselves and in the school.

Pupils participating in a focus group about behaviour and exclusions reported their satisfaction that some forms of behaviour both in and out of the class resulted in punishment. However, there was some scepticism that exclusion changed people's behaviour. It was felt that when pupils returned, they ' just did the same thing again.' Classes where boys predominated were noted by several girls as being particularly difficult for them, especially where the lessons were practical:

> ...like some o' the boys chuck paint at you and pen you, and their personal hygiene in Home Economics is disgusting: they spit on the food....and when the teacher is not in the room they will throw flour about the place and they will like, throw things about and other people will get into trouble. (Clare, S2)

6.7 Hammond High School

Hammond High school is a co-educational, non-denominational secondary school and it serves what was once called a 'new town' built to provide a community for families moving from the nearby city. In 2002/03 the school had a roll of 685 and was projected to stay at this level. The headteacher saw the medium size of the school as a positive feature and was anxious that South Lanarkshire's proposals to merge secondary schools might create large establishment less supportive of pupils with behaviour difficulties. Hammond High School itself would not be significantly affected by the LA's plans under the

public/private partnership arrangements. The school was housed in well-maintained 1960s style accommodation. Unusually, both the headteacher (HT) and the depute headteacher (DHT) in this school were women and they were interested in the idea that this might feminise the culture of the school.

The school had a specialist resource for children with speech and language difficulties. As far as possible, pupils were integrated into the mainstream curriculum. In total, there were twenty one pupils in the school with Records of Needs. Support was seen as integrated and permeating all aspects of the school. The HT saw the centrality of staff development undertaken as contributing to the supportive ethos of the school.

The school's intake was reasonably affluent with some middle class and professional people using the school, although, generally, the community was affluent working-class. In that respect, the school was the most advantaged of the four case study schools. The headteacher was aware of this advantage but pointed out that it also created difficulties when both parents worked and they were not available to come to the school during the day, even in the event of an accident to their child. For example, the parent of a pupil with a broken leg maintained it was the school's responsibility to take him to the A&E department. Parents sometimes conveyed their sense that they had no practical responsibilities for educating their child but expected the school to make sure that s/he got into university. Attainment was relatively high, as it is represented by performance in SQA examinations. A recent HM Inspectorate report (March 2002) on the school noted:

> *At Standard Grade the proportion of pupils achieving five or more awards at*
> *grades 1 – 4 was consistently above the national average. (HMI, 2002)*

The headteacher indicated that Hammond High School did not have many exclusions. This was borne out by LAs statistics which showed Hammond High, of all four case study schools, as having by far the lowest exclusion rates for the 2002/03 session (See Table 2 above). Support structures were strong and the emphasis was on proactive approaches focused on subject classrooms. Behaviour Support (BS) was led by a Principal TeacherT (Guidance), was provided in ordinary classrooms, and was intended to support teachers as well as pupils. BS was allocated to departments according to a bidding system. From the following session, this would change, with some pupils receiving support in a Base staffed by BS. It was felt that this would give the school some flexibility in retaining excluded pupils in school during their exclusion. The BS teacher commented on the reason for changing the BS system:

I think that the bidding, to date, has worked really, really well. I would say that the staff evaluations and the pupil evaluations and the Behaviour Support provision are fairly positive, but I do think we are at quite a crucial time now. I think we now need to move away from bidding, to some type of Behaviour Support Base provision within the school.....And I never thought I would say it, but I think we've got a group of kids just now that are causing quite a bit of bother we and need to maybe think about a place – isolating them.......from the other kids and staff. Because some of the kids, in particular, are pushing staff really quite hard.... In particular the boys in that year [S2] I would say are causing us problems.....I've just put out the new bid just now, for after the October week. And I think in that bid will be protected time for the flexibility rooms. [The Base] will be manned and kids will be involved in group work and specific behaviour-related activities. (BS teacher)

The Bs teacher explained that she was surprised that she had come to support the withdrawal of pupils to a Base. She had always believed that extracting pupils form ordinary classes did not necessarily equip them to go back into the mainstream of the school:

And I think, now, I have moved a bit from that because I think some of these boys in particular, in second year, are pushing staff to the limits. (BS teacher)

6.8 St Thomas's High School

St Thomas's was a co-educational, Catholic denominational school near to Carrick High School and covering some of the same local communities, but drawing upon a wider and more socially diverse area. The school was housed in modern buildings and had extensive playing fields. With a roll of 848, St Thomas's was the largest of the four case study schools. It was associated with seven primary schools. The headteacher was a woman and she had taken up her post just before this research commenced. For that reason, she declined to be interviewed about overall school policy, nominating instead an Assistant Headteacher.

The school operated discrete systems of behaviour support with a designated member of staff. These systems, however, linked to other pupil support systems in the school. An evaluation of behaviour support in the LA (Head et al, 2002) found that cooperative teaching, subject based group work and individual tuition were cited as effective supports for pupils with behaviour difficulties. Pupils, parents and staff viewed behaviour support positively. A range of staff development was undertaken. The policy document clearly stated the role of the behaviour support teacher and detailed the disciplinary procedures. The policy states that the main aim of Behaviour Support was to bring about changes in individual pupils in their:

- Behaviour – by encouraging the pupils to take more responsibility for this, primarily within the classroom

- Attitude to work – by encouraging pupils to recognise their own strengths and build on these, increasing self-awareness and an ability to control and cope with difficulties when they arise

- Relationships with others – by developing pupils' self respect and respect of others. (St Thomas's HS, 2001)

Behaviour Support had a staffing level of 1.4 FTE and the BS policy notes that this time was deployed to operate as effective members of the existing support framework in the school, involving liaison with the SMT, Guidance, Support for Learning, Joint Assessment Team, teaching staff and external agencies. BS would also provide appropriate feedback to all of these agencies, as well as to parents with whom BS would work to develop behaviour strategies appropriate to each pupil. As indicated in the aims of BS, work with pupils was on a one-to one basis or in small groups and was designed to enable pupils to develop strategies appropriate to their difficulties. BS would also maintain links with pupils on part-time placements in Behaviour Support Bases.

The Joint Assessment Team (JAT) is given some prominence in the school handbook and was mentioned several times by staff in interview. It offered a means of enabling a number of professionals (e.g. teachers, educational psychologist, social workers) to meet on a regular basis to consider support for pupils referred by school staff. Its strength lay in its capacity to draw upon services beyond the school and to integrate support offered to pupils and families. St Thomas's had a Family Group Worker based in the school and she received a number of referrals through the JAT. Her particular role was to liaise with pupils' families and other services supporting pupils' families.

6.9 Conclusion

This then was the context within which the case study research was conducted. The policies of the LA were shaped by national policy on social inclusion with its emphasis on the development of integrated services to support children and families. The influence of education policy was also seen in the prevalence of behaviour support posts and structures, many of them funded under national initiatives such as Alternatives to Exclusion and Better Behaviour Better Learning. The most recent innovation was the appointment of

family/school link workers, provided by BBBL funding. Many of the case study pupils in this study were receiving support from these staff, as well as from teachers in a number of support roles.

Behaviour Support took different forms in the four schools and spanned a range from very permeating and curriculum-based support, for example, in Easton High, to support targeted at individual pupils, for example, in St Thomas's High School. The models of behaviour support operating in this LA have been discussed elsewhere (Kane et al, 2004) and comparisons are not offered here. This is difficult, in any case, since quantitative outcomes such as exclusion rates could not be simply attributed to models of behaviour support. For example, Easton High and St Thomas's had very similar rolls and rates of exclusion in the 2002/03 session but, amongst other factors, the schools served different kinds of communities. Conclusions about their different approaches to behaviour support could not be drawn from exclusion rates alone.

No judgment is offered here as to the relative weighting of in-school and out-of-school factors in influencing exclusion rates (or other school outcomes). Both are acknowledged as having an impact, as is illustrated by Carrick High School. It stood out in that its rate of exclusions was far higher than in any of the other three schools. This could be explained by much higher levels of poverty in the community served by the school; almost 40% of its pupils had free school meal entitlement as opposed to just 16% in Hammond High School. In the year following this research, the exclusion rate in Carrick was halved, perhaps signifying an improving school or possibly indicating more effective massaging of statistical returns.

All four schools in this study were sensitive to their exclusion rates and to all of the 'hard' indicators of their effectiveness. In spite of a desire to minimise exclusions, they were regarded as necessary in some cases. All schools had extensive and effective systems of pupil support which went well beyond internalising exclusions by retaining pupils in a Base in the school instead of sending them home. Staff interviewed for this research for the most part worked in pupil support and their concern for, and interest in, the case study pupils were evident throughout the interviews.The next three chapters analyse the case studies and demonstrate how factors in the identities of pupils link to their exclusion from school.

Chapter 7

The Social Identities of the Case Study Pupils

7.1 Introduction

Having identified and discussed themes and issues in school exclusions in the previous chapters, the thesis now moves on to the first of three chapters examining data from the pupil case studies. These were constructed from classroom observation and interviews conducted in four secondary schools and in venues convenient to pupils' families. In addition, a range of documentation was made available by the schools. These data are used here and in subsequent chapters to address research questions 2 – 4, that is, how do the negotiation of gender and class identities in school and beyond school relate to exclusion from school? Also addressed here is how far pupils are exercising agency in the processes leading to their exclusion from school. In other words, to what extent were boys and girls choosing to oppose the processes of schooling? And, if they were, why would they make such a choice? Alternatively, it could be argued that most of the pupils in this study were victims of structural inequalities – that the circumstances in which they lived their lives impelled them towards conflict with the school system. The discussion will consider the negotiation of social identities in relation to schooling, pupil behaviour and exclusions and will be organised into three chapters and discussed under three main themes emerging from analysis of the data. The analysis of data under themes is arbitrary. The case study data were multifaceted, interconnected and layered. In separating out strands, there was a danger that some of that would be lost. To minimise this, and avoid the deconstruction of case studies, some analysis includes case studies 'in the round' in an effort to convey the wholeness of pupils' experience as it relates to particular themes. Similarly, the division of findings into three chapters is also artificial since some themes cut across the chapter organisers. Chapter 8 deals with exclusions, engagement and participation in schooling; Chapter 9 discusses exclusions and young people's lives. In examining the social identities of the case study pupils in this chapter, findings are discussed under four themes:

- Multiple and intersecting identities

- Femininities and schooling

- Masculinities and schooling

151

- Femininities and masculinities

The economic circumstances of pupils' lives are discussed further on and gender and other identities will be related to social class. The aim in these three findings chapters is to consider the development of class cultural identities and to consider exclusions as part of gendered and 'classed' experience of schooling.

7.2 Multiple and intersecting identities

Seventeen of the case study pupils were boys and just three were girls. One pupil, a boy, was reported by his school as 'middle-class' on the basis of his father's occupation and only one pupil, also a boy, was from a black ethnic minority. The case study sample here is a result of school choice and the willingness of pupils to participate but, as it happens, it bears some resemblance to the overall profile of excluded pupils in Scotland. For example, the sample here includes three girls out of twenty pupils when the proportion nationally is one girl for every five pupils excluded. Whilst gender is a main theme of this project, the case study sample gave a clear indication that gender identities were not simple dichotomies. The case study pupils had multiple identities which cut across their gender identities. One such form of identity was drawn from youth culture. Case study pupils conveyed as strong sense of affiliation to particular 'style' groups or gangs, exemplified by Kat.

Neds

At the start of the school session, Kat had 'point-blank' refused to work with a group of girls who were Moshers (Goth-type style, black nail varnish, etc) because of their style. Kat claimed that she liked to beat them up at weekends and so could not work in a group with them. Like Kat, most of the case study pupils saw themselves as 'Neds'. This affiliation is strongly associated with working-class youth and with social exclusion. The police originally used the term to describe those who have criminal associations but it has come to refer to teenagers who gather and socialise in public spaces such as parks and who wear sports-type clothes – hooded sweatshirts, skip caps, track suit trousers tucked into white socks, and trainers. Neds have had a very bad press. Their behaviour is viewed as threatening to the wider community, deserving of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and justifying the use of curfews for young people under sixteen. In spite of this, case study pupils asserted their Ned identity as a matter of pride. One boy was offended when Neds were referred to disparagingly by the Drama teacher:

You shouldn't talk like that about Neds. Neds are alright.

There was very conscious agency in the negotiation of Ned identities which entailed the adoption of deliberately oppositional attitudes to teachers and to school. The dress or style of girls and boys allowed their Ned identities to be clearly manifested, although sometimes this was a source of conflict with teachers. For example, one case study pupil was repeatedly told to remove his skip cap in lessons until, eventually, the cap was confiscated. Usually, 'Ned' pupils managed to reach an accommodation whereby certain items of clothing would be accepted, even though all four schools required school uniform. Not only was dress used to convey class affiliations but dress enabled young people to convey gender oppositions within a common alignment and could be varied according to the social setting:

> ... *she wears make-up when she goes out and she doesn't wear make-up when she's playing football and stuff like that, when she's fighting. (Eddie)*

For boys as well, there were differences in presentation depending on the social occasion:

> *...like most boys only wear jeans when they are going out, like going into the dancing or something and if they are, they spike their hair up, or at least comb it or brush it, wear a hat or something like that, and put aftershave and that on... ... Well, you look at boys and see if they are wearing shirt and jeans with boots and all their jewellery, then that means they're going out and see how if you see them in trackies with their hats up to here, then they are not going anywhere, they are just sloping about their own scheme looking for trouble. (Eddie)*

Dress and physical presentation were used as markers of identity. In the case of Neds, this identity was rooted in social class culture, arguably distinguishing Ned identity from other kinds of youth 'style'. There was a sense in which the re-appropriation of the term 'Ned' was a conscious attempt to assert a class identity. The class culture dimension of pupils' identities was apparent also in strong attachments to their own neighbourhoods.

Local identities

Case study pupils articulated a sense of belonging to a particular locality as constituting an important part of their identities – references to 'my bit' were frequent. This linked to their need to feel safe, to be known and accepted but there was evidence that a sense of belonging to one place was accompanied by a strong sense of not belonging to other places. This 'othering' of localities led to territorial conflicts. These figured largely in the lives of girls and boys interviewed and were at times the cause of their exclusion.

Local or territorial affiliations cut across gender oppositions. Girls saw themselves as having a strong connection to place and this connection served to align them with boys from the same neighbourhood. In the case of local gang fights, the main divisions were portrayed as territorial and involved girls and boys. Mostly boys were involved in these gang fights but not exclusively. Eddie gave an example:

> ...sometimes there are lassies from other schemes and like, the lassies from my bit, sometimes they will go and fight with them but they are based on – like a team? (Eddie)

Eddie, one of the case study boys, indicated the complexities of oppositions and allegiances affecting girls and boys. He explained that some of his girl friends were 'real lassies, like pure, all glammed up and that' but most of them were tomboys. When asked which would get into bother, Eddie replied:

> Tomboys because they have got more brain like a boy than a lassie. And it's like...see boys and girls that come from a scheme that fight with another scheme, they always end up getting involved. (Eddie)

The term favoured by the press is 'ladette' but whatever the term, there was evidence that some of the femininities negotiated and admired by case study pupils were active, aggressive and highly visible in public spaces.

Sectarian identities

In the same way as Nayak (2003) described how football was a means through which identity was negotiated by young men in the north-east of England, so some girls and boys in this study conveyed their support for particular clubs, for example, by the wearing of football tops so that they were visible under school-approved sweatshirts. For historical reasons in the west of Scotland, support for the two largest football clubs, Celtic and Rangers, may be tied up with religious identities. This was the case for some case study pupils. Sometimes, violence was perpetrated because of sectarian affiliations. These affiliations also transcended gender dichotomies. Eddie, one of the case study boys, told of the Orange Walk coming through H_____ and he spoke admiringly of Kelly, a girl he knew from W_____ but who 'hung about down at H_____':

> It was when the Orange Walk was walking through H_____ and Kelly was wearing a Celtic top and other girls [following the Walk] were wearing Rangers' tops......She held up her badge [on the football top] and kissed it and all the lassies walked over to her ready to fight her. She – Kelly- she battered six of them herself........She is like a tomboy but sometimes she can be like a girl. (Eddie)

Territorial and sectarian motives were hard to separate out here. H_____ was traditionally a Catholic and a poorer area. The routing of the Orange Walk through such a community was intended as, and would be viewed as, provocative. Eddie attends a Catholic secondary school, and for some members of his local community, especially the younger ones, Kelly's actions would be seen as heroic.

For young people in the west of Scotland, football colours may be intended to convey a Protestant or Catholic identity and there were some signs that these aspects of identity were consolidated by the existence of denominational (Catholic) and non-denominational (Protestant) schools within the state system in Scotland. For example, exclusions had resulted from boys (including several case study pupils) from the Catholic secondary going at lunchtime to a nearby non-denominational school to seek a fight. This is not to argue here that the existence of that system causes sectarian conflict, but that young people seeking to define themselves used that affiliation amongst others.

Ethnic identities

Nationally, Scottish Executive statistics (SEED, 2001) show that 1% of pupils excluded are from a black minority ethnic background. Just one of the case study pupils was black. The scope of this study does not encompass ethnic identities and school exclusions. However, racism emerged as contentious issue in the experience of Raj, and so race and racism are briefly considered here. Raj was in S3. During interview, he was pleasant but very shy and unforthcoming. He was noted as keeping a low-profile in class and around the school and as being fairly passive during lessons. Raj came to Hammond High School on a placing request because his older brother, Hardminder, was already in the school, working hard and doing well. However, the DHT described Raj as 'a strange, strange boy' who has done some 'stupid' things that have got him into bother. Raj has some friends but they fall out on a regular basis. Raj has made allegations of racist abuse against these friends but the school feels that this is part of the teasing that goes on in this friendship group and that Raj has reciprocated with other insults. The DHT said that most of the dealings he had with Raj were through racist things:

> *Raj said somebody (Stuart) called him 'a black shit' and that James had punched him during maths.....Stuart did not deny it .....he said that Raj had been annoying him and had called him fat. Raj is very much into name-calling. He will claim someone has made a racist remark ...about him but when you investigate it, you find he has given as good as he gets (DHT)*

The DHT was quite clear that Raj was not a victim of intentional racism. However, Caulfield et al (2002) considered the experiences of black and minority ethnic pupils

following the transition to secondary school. In that study, also conducted in the West of Scotland, pupils reported that peer racism increased between primary and secondary school and that, although teachers were seen to have a key role in dealing with racist incidents, they were often ineffective in doing so. Nevertheless, Raj himself says that he is happy in secondary school, preferring it to primary because he likes to have different teachers and to be able to leave the school premises at lunchtime. He likes the extra freedom available at secondary school. In addition, he was at this school as a result of a placing request. His parents had chosen the school because Raj's older brother was happy there.

Judgements of racism here are problematic. Raj was clearly experiencing racist abuse but neither he nor his family seemed to object. Neither did the school feel that there was anything untoward happening. Scotland's school population is overwhelmingly white at 96.35% in 2004 according to official statistics (Scottish Executive, 2005). Black ethnic minority families are concentrated in particular inner city areas and so some schools would have a much higher proportion of black pupils. None of the four case study schools was in that position. Raj's family were very conspicuous in the area where they lived and in the schools they used. It is possible that they desired to be assimilated into the community and so tolerated unreasonable circumstances rather than make a fuss or draw attention to themselves. This interpretation is supported by Raj's mother's reaction to his exclusion. He had been excluded just once for a short period of time but it had caused Raj and his family great embarrassment. Raj's mother declined to particpate but she gave permission for Raj to be interviewed.

The complexity of the identities pursued by young people in this study points to how important out-of school influences were for adolescents. The simple gender dichotomies evident in strategies to tackle boys' relatively low attainment have attributed this to 'laddishness' and have neglected the alignments and 'otherings' pursued by girls and boys. Some of these, such as sectarian identities, are longstanding in Scotland but others are the result of the impact of social and cultural change. This point will be developed further on, after the feminine and masculine identities of the case study pupils have been more fully probed.

7.3 Femininities and schooling

Girls account for just 20% of school exclusions and just three of the twenty case studies were girls. The relatively low rate of girls' exclusion raises questions about exclusions and femininities:

- What are the reasons for girls' exclusions?

- How does the negotiation of femininities relate to exclusions?

- Are girls who are excluded acting out femininities differently from other girls?

Further on in this chapter girls' exclusions will be compared with boys' exclusions. These questions will be considered here through the case studies of three girls, Gill, Kat and Lorraine who came from three different secondary schools. In addition to having been excluded, the girls had a number of factors in common. They were the approximately the same age, they were working-class and they had abilities in a number of subjects.

The girls: Gill, Lorraine and Kat

Gill was 15 years old and very articulate during interview. She lived with her mother, an older sister, a younger sister in S1 and two younger brothers who were still in nursery. Gill's Business Studies teacher knew her very well and liked her very much indeed. She described herself as having a soft spot for Gill. When this teacher was asked why Gill had been in trouble for her behaviour, she was mystified. She did say, however, that Gill had a group of friends - girls – who, amongst staff, were seen as quite challenging to teachers. This teacher's view of Gill was one of several examples of some excluded pupils being seen quite differently, and much more positively, by certain teachers who clearly had a good relationship with pupils in difficulty elsewhere. This applied to pupils who were excluded on multiple occasions as well as to pupils who had been in less trouble. An important aspect of schooling is its capacity to provide pupils with opportunities for positive and constructive relationships with adults. For some pupils in particular, that opportunity may be the difference between their engagement with education and complete disaffection. This point will be developed further on in relation to a case study boy who had been excluded on numerous occasions and implications will be drawn then.

Lorraine was aged 14. Lorraine stayed with her mother and her stepfather. Relationships at home had been difficult for a year or so with Lorraine's mother at times threatening to put her out of the house. Lorraine's relationship with her stepfather had been particularly difficult causing Lorraine's mother to contact the Social Work Department to seek help in managing Lorraine and her very wilful behaviour. Lorraine had been excluded for the first time ever in April of S3. The exclusion had been for just two days and had resulted from Lorraine swearing at a teacher. Although she had only ever been excluded once, Lorraine

had been in trouble at other times for loud, boisterous and sometimes aggressive behaviour. Her teachers linked this behaviour to her appearance:

> *Well, she's a big bruiser, for want of a better word. I mean she comes up the stairs and you can hear her bouncing along corridors and such and she's banging off both the walls, you know, bang, bang, bang. (Business studies teacher)*

Her Guidance teacher offered a similar view of L's image:

> *She's a big girl. She's loud. She can be aggressive. That has surfaced probably more this year than it ever has done in the past. (Guidance teacher)*

This teacher went on to suggest that her physical appearance caused her to adopt a 'tough' identity:

> *My opinion is that she wants to be an individual, as a lot of pupils of that age do. Her size and her stature, I think, could make it quite difficult for her to fit in with the way that a lot of girls look. And she is making an attempt, I think, to make a statement about, 'I am an individual. I am a female and here is how I want to look' and she's not afraid of authority as such. She wants to fit in but she is obviously not afraid of getting into trouble. She has been able to stand up to her mother and say, 'I am wearing this.' (Guidance teacher)*

Lorraine differed from the other girls and from many of the other case study sample in that her attendance was very good. It stood at 95% for the session in which the research was conducted and Lorraine indicated that she was very happy in school.

Kat had had numerous exclusions. She had just started S3 at the time of the research. She lived with her mother and her older sister who was 17 and at College. The family received support from the Social Work Department, mostly in relation to welfare rights and benefits but also to make sure that *'mum was okay and that the family situation was settled'* (Family Support Worker). Kat's mother was on a methadone programme at the time of the research. Her partner had been very ill during the previous year and there were indications that a very stressful home life had impacted on Kat's experience of school. The Family Support Worker had worked with Kat in a group work situation after school for a ten-week period and knew her well. She indicated that Kat's well-being was very much tied up with her mother's well- being and vice-versa. Kat had never been excluded in primary school but had been excluded a number of times in S1 and S2. The DHT said that the school had taken Kat under its wing early in S1. She had been one of 6 pupils to be given support in a behaviour support group run in the school by specialist teachers from the local Behaviour Support Base. All of other members of the group were boys. In S3 Kat still attended the

Base for part of her timetable. Her behaviour was reported as having improved but there were still episodes where she gave backchat to teachers during lessons, leading to an escalating confrontation and her eventual exclusion.

7.4   Reasons for girls' exclusions

Two of the case study girls had poor attendance but this did not seem to reflect a broader 'withdrawal' from school processes for, when present, all three were highly visible in lessons. This is reflected in the reasons why they had got into difficulty – all three girls were noted as shouting, swearing and giving cheek to teachers. For example, loud and aggressive behaviour was reported by Gill's history teacher who recounted how Gill had been caught cheating in a test. Gill, when accused of this, had nearly thrown a fit, shouting that she was not cheating. She had been excluded just once in S3 for 2.5 days. With her friend, she had stolen some blackboard cleaning materials because it was Guy Fawkes' night and the material was easily flammable. Her friend had put the materials in Gill's bag. Gill was caught with them and excluded although her friend was not. In Gill's view, her exclusion had been fair but she felt that her friend should also have been excluded. Gill reported that she had almost been excluded again around that time when her teacher had not allowed her to go to the toilet, although she had a particular reason to go. Gill had responded by shouting at this teacher and had been reported for her behaviour. 'Getting on' or not with teachers emerged as a big part of the girls' experience of school. The accounts by teachers showed that all three girls were viewed very differently by different teachers.

Of the three girls Kat had been excluded most often by far. The DHT reported that her exclusions were caused by talking back to teachers – 'She just wouldn't take a telling.' Kat herself said these exclusions were for 'just being cheeky and all that and answering back'. All of her exclusions were for classroom misbehaviour. She was reported as being in less trouble but, the day before she was interviewed, she had told the History teacher to shut up. Kat did not seem to seek confrontation with teachers but she also seemed unable to allow them to tell her what to do.

> *She just really finds it difficult to step back – and then she is excluded. (Family Support Worker)*

The most frequent reason for exclusion in Scotland was general and persistent disobedience. Kat's exclusions all fell into that category.

The incident where Lorraine was excluded came about after a referral for not wearing school uniform. Lorraine was already angry about having been sent to the AHT here because she felt that there were others also not wearing uniform. However, the situation escalated when the AHT phoned Lorraine's mother to say she was being sent home to change.

> ...I was pulled up for something...I think it was my uniform. Mr M was phoning my mum at work and my mum doesn't like people phoning her at work, like, about me...I swore at him so he phoned my mum and said I was to go home. (Lorraine)

This behaviour was judged to merit an exclusion – the only one Lorraine had ever had. Her exclusion seemed to have arisen from her anguish that further pressure would be put upon her mother as a result of Lorraine's transgression.

The girls were very clear about which teachers they liked and did not like and this was related to how far they felt they were treated respectfully by their teachers. However, there was an issue here in that there were different understandings of what constituted respectful behaviour. Some of Gill's teachers, for example, indicated that respectful behaviour, according to Gill, was often too familiar for their liking:

> Gill does not like to be told anything at all. She very much speaks to you in the way she speaks to her friends, I think. That has become an issue and you just have to say to her 'That's not how you should speak to a teacher'........Her justification was that's how she speaks to her mum and her mum is more important than anyone.' (History teacher)

The same judgement applied to Kat. She, too, was judged to respond inappropriately to teachers and yet neither girl had been excluded in primary school. Their behaviour may have changed with adolescence or the tone of teacher/pupil interchanges in secondary may have been different. The girls' demands that they be treated respectfully by teachers had much in common with boys who were trying to negotiate masculinities which were powerful and high-status amongst their peer group, sometimes referred to as hegemonic masculinities. 'Respect' is considered further in relation to case study boys.

How does the negotiation of femininities relate to exclusions?

There were indications that girls exercised choice in how they represented their femininity. Sometimes, they dressed to distinguish themselves from boys whilst at other times they emphasised their alignment based on, for example, girls' and boys' sense of belonging to

same place. Eddie, one of the case study boys, explained the variations in how girls presented themselves:

> *See when she's fighting, she's a tomboy, or see when she wants to play football, she's a tomboy, but see when she's going to the dancing or going out with her pals, she's a lassie.*

The distinction drawn here by Eddie conveys a sense from the data that girls acted out multiple femininities and that some ways of doing femininity, ways that led to exclusion, encompassed assertiveness and aggression. None of the case study girls had been excluded for fighting or violence but there was indirect evidence of girls behaving in these ways. Some of the exclusions imposed on case study boys had been because of fighting others from a different area. Girls, too, saw themselves as having a strong connection to place and this connection served to align them with boys from the same neighbourhood.

The alignment of girls and boys with each other and in opposition to others could also be seen in classroom contexts where girls and boys would be part of the same social group and where that group was the challenging one for the teacher. One Home Economics lesson observed provided such an example. In that lesson, Kat seemed motivated and happy. There were only 10 pupils in this class, two of whom were boys, and there were two groups. Most girls stood quietly at the back of the class, watching the other group, which contained Kat and the boys, carrying on. Kat moved about a lot. She was very gregarious – That's the most revolting thing I have ever tasted in my life – but seemed to be purposeful in getting the task done. She asked me if I would like to taste her spaghetti carbonara but I declined. One of the boys, her friend, asked if this was a judgement of her cooking. They were very playful and not at all confrontational but they dominated the space. The lesson observed demonstrated some boys and all girls, except for Kat, occupying the peripheries of the classroom. Kat's behaviour with regard to classroom space was exactly like the behaviour of the boys.

Some femininities had much in common with boys but within these common allegiances, there was evidence of boys 'othering' of girls. Whilst Eddie described common aspects of identity between boys and girls, he differentiated between the female and the male members of his 'team' in their competence at fighting:

> *We throw bricks and bottles and sticks and all that but lassies, they just walk into it and pull hair and all that. (Eddie)*

Thus, even where particular feminine behaviours were admired by boys, they were simultaneously disparaged. This echoes the point made by commentators (Reay, 2001; Francis, 2005,) that, although there are multiple femininities, what they all have in common is their deferment of power to the boys. What is not addressed by the literature is the extent to which some girls use an alignment with boys to create the means to negotiate particular kinds of femininity. This is not to suggest that the girls are 'masculine' but there was some indication that friendships with boys provided scope for girls to be girls in unconventional ways. The evidence here is too limited to develop this interpretation

Are girls who are excluded acting out femininities differently from other girls?

As previously discussed, there has been a tendency in the literature to dichotomise girls' and boys' problem behaviour. Boys' behaviour is represented generally as 'acting out' – being loud and disruptive of other activity. Girls, on the other hand, have been generally represented as 'acting in', their difficulties manifesting themselves as eating disorders or depression, for example. The behaviour of the case study girls ran counter to this description. Their behaviour differed from general accounts of girls' 'problem' behaviour. The case study girls differed, too, from the behaviour of other girls whose behaviour was not regarded as problematic but who were noted (Osler et al, 2002) as using tearfulness and remorse as ways of deflecting possible sanctions. When challenged about some aspect of their behaviour or thwarted in some way in their wishes, the case study girls were far from remorseful, shouting and swearing in response to teacher decisions. In their avoidance of 'stereotypical' feminine behaviour, the case study girls increased the likelihood of their being excluded.

The case study girls differed, too, from some descriptions of 'problem' girl behaviour as characterised by withdrawal from school processes (Ridge, 2003; Osler et al, 2002).Whilst in school, the girls in this study were reported as having friends and being popular. Classroom observation similarly showed the girls to be socially well-integrated. Two of the case study girls had poor attendance but this did not intimate a broader pattern of withdrawal from school but linked to the demands placed upon them by family circumstances. Their participation in schooling, especially Kat's, in personal circumstances not supportive of education, could be seen as indicative of strong engagement and even as a triumph of individual agency over structure.

The experience of the case study girls showed that they experienced neither a loss of voice nor of agency in their engagement with schooling. Their exclusions in all cases came about

because of their preparedness to challenge verbally and publicly the authority of teachers. Adolescent girls generally may experience a lessening of their powers of agency but the data here points to differences between girls and, especially, to the reason why so few girls are excluded and why some are. A key difference between the case study girls and others would seem to be that excluded girls were prepared to challenge authority. Relationships with boys may facilitate the negotiation of particular kinds of femininities, that is, those leading to exclusion, but data here is too limited to develop this argument.

The discussion will now turn to boys and the relationship between exclusions and masculine identities.

7.5.1 Masculinities and schooling

The seventeen boys in this study were not a homogeneous group. They were distinguished one from another by a number of factors, but an important factor to be considered here is the extent to which their formal exclusion from school occurred as part of a process by which they were negotiating their gender and class identities. This section will first discuss hegemonic masculinities, the means by which they were negotiated and the relationship between those negotiations and exclusion form school. The second part of this section will consider 'other' masculinities and the links there to school exclusions.

7.5.2 Hegemonic masculinities

Gramsci's theory of political hegemonies has provided a means of understanding the dynamic by which some boys claim and sustain a leading position in social life (Connell, 1995:77). For decades, the concept of hegemonic masculinities has been particularly useful in analysing the negotiation of gendered identities in school settings. For example, Willis (1978) showed how the boys in his study were actively constructing social class relations during the last two years of schooling and doing so in relation to their gender and social class identities. Arnot (2003: 103), in reviewing the impact of Willis's study, notes that Willis had shown the ways in which different masculinities, and particular forms of hegemonic masculinity were created, regulated and reproduced within the same school. In this study, the concept is used to understand better the overrepresentation of boys in the exclusion statistics. Working-class boys disadvantaged socially and economically sought to negotiate for themselves identities that accorded power and status with the peer group and from their own communities. The discussion will be pursued here with reference to two

case study boys in particular, Andy and Ross, both of whom were engaged in negotiating dominant masculinities.

Andy

A number of the boys in this study exercised considerable control over their personal lives, sometimes well beyond what would be accorded to other adolescents, and in marked contrast to the scope for control offered by their schools. For example, twelve-year old Andy and his twin brother, Craig, were living with their mother who had mental health problems and who had great difficulty in helping her sons to organise their lives. The boys came to secondary school with what the DHT called an absolutely horrific report from their primary school indicating a range of concerns, including some raised by the local police:

> *Caught with drugs. Kept in cell overnight because no responsible adult could be found to take them. They have den where they sleep overnight. (extract from police report to primary school)*

The boys seemed to have exercised a great deal of control over their own lives. For example, Andy and his brother refused a referral to the Educational Psychologist, even though their mother and the school were advocating this course. The boys were hostile to professionals. They preferred not to have a social worker and were strongly opposed to other professionals entering their lives. There was, though, great concern, about the experience of the boys out of school. They were known to a range of community services, including police and social workers – 'They are so well-known to everyone these boys, to the police, to everyone.' (DHT). Worryingly, Andy's mother has reported to the school that, at home, he has been violent towards her, swearing at her and kicking her. The boys were reported to have put their mother out of the house on occasion. Andy himself has no real explanation to offer when asked why he gets into bother – 'I don't know. I haven't a clue.' He knows that he himself sometimes tries to annoy the teacher but he also feels that sometimes it is the teacher's fault. Andy was represented as bright and very engaged by some teachers but there was evidence that he used some lessons to further negotiate a very dominant and controlling masculinity. Andy's French teacher commented on his behaviour in S1:

> *Last year, it was horrendous. Andy led the class as it were. He would tell people, you know, it was him, he was the King. And you know, he strutted in my class.... That is how he would do it. He would strut into class and his behaviour was awful. (French teacher)*

This teacher also said that Andy was very bright, had a lovely French accent and with one-to-one coaching could be really good at French.

Andy was recorded as excluded just once in S1 but, during interview he said he had been excluded six times, all in S1. Later, the DHT explained that the single exclusion given to Andy was in line with the local authority policy of not excluding pupils wherever possible. However, he also explained that Andy had been 'sent home' a number of times pending his mother coming to the school to discuss his behaviour. She would usually come on the following day. 'Sending home' would not count as a formal exclusion and so this practice would account for the disparity between Andy's account and the school's account on the one hand and the written record on the other hand.

Ross

The second case study is Ross who was thirteen and who lived with his mother and his older brother. Ross's attendance in S1 had been poor. His record showed 129 absences from a possible 369 openings at time of interview, giving an attendance rate of 65.04%. Ross had been excluded just once, for one day, during S1. This was surprising given accounts of his behaviour in school but his poor attendance might explain this to some extent. His father had access to the family home and Ross had a good deal of contact with him. Ross's father had wider family in the area and they were reported as being well-known locally. Ross's relationship to his father and his father's family were reported to have made Ross himself very streetwise. Ross was tall and of good physical stature. His friends were older than him but it was reported by several staff that he did not seem out of place, physically or socially, in the company of sixteen- and seventeen-year old boys. This marked him out in a group of first-year boys:

> ...*he has got to be the big guy and you can see the fear factor with some of the other kids. (Home/School link worker)*

Ross did not appear to have friends in his class in school. His male classmates seemed to regard him with a mixture of admiration and deference. One teacher indicated that Ross was very protective of people in the class, offering to 'get' anyone who bullied his fellow classmates.

'Respect' and control

The behaviour which led to the exclusion of both boys could be interpreted as part of the negotiation of hegemonic masculinities. There was evidence from the case studies of how

such identities were negotiated through interactions with teachers and with peers in the school setting. Most of the pupils in this study had been excluded, and sometimes repeatedly so, for their very challenging attitudes towards teachers. Teachers cited the disrespect and abuse they experienced from pupils as a main justification for exclusions. In 2003/04, the verbal abuse of teachers was the second most common reason for exclusion from school. On the other hand, pupils in this study cited teachers' attitudes to them as the reason why they 'lost it', resulting in their exclusion. Again and again, boys and girls in this study accounted for some of their exclusions by saying that they were responding to being shouted at or being treated with disrespect by their teachers. For example:

> *The teachers do not treat you right. In Primary 7 the teachers treated you with respect. Here they don't; they treat you like you were dirt, nearly every single teacher (S1 pupil)*

An S3 pupil who had been frequently excluded explained why he sometimes lost all control:

> *I can't stand teachers in my face shouting at me....At C___ Primary. The teachers were always shouting at me so I always shouted back, swearing and all different things. So I always got suspended. (S3 pupil)*

In general, pupils' angry reactions to being shouted at were seen as indicative of a loss of control but there were also indications that some boys were able to use their angry reactions to reach an accommodation with teachers. One teacher, a young woman, commented on how she had learned to deal with Andy, the first case study pupil:-

> *My experience of Andy was very simple. If you were too antagonistic with him he would react in a similarly antagonistic way and that happened once – the first time I met him....He was showing off to other people and we hit a brick wall quite quickly. He reacted and he was quite aggressive. His body language was quite aggressive. I quickly learned from that if you are full on, he will just shout back at you. He will actually use expressions like 'Don't speak to me like that' or ' Don't shout at me' (Female English teacher).*

The teacher went on to say that she now treated Andy differently from other pupils in the class, in that she would not now speak sharply to him. She recognized that there were inequities here but she felt that other pupils in the class expected Andy to be treated differently and therefore did not object. This teacher's changed behaviour could be seen as an example of how teachers, as well as pupils, learn in classrooms. They develop their professional practice to accommodate the diverse range of pupils in each class. However, it is also possible to interpret this teacher's experience as learned deference to a boy who is consciously seeking to be dominant in the classroom, even when the teacher is present.

Similarly, a young woman teacher of another case study boy described a similar experience. The pupil, who had been excluded frequently, indicated that one of the few teachers he got on with was this Home Economics teacher. The pupil was a boxer and he had invited her to his next boxing match and she was uncertain about whether or not she should go. She had discussed the question with her boyfriend the previous evening and she felt that, if she did not go, Charlie would be offended. There was a risk here of the teacher endorsing Charlie's very particular kind of masculine identity. More than that, even, as an attractive young woman, the teacher could become a kind of 'scalp' for Charlie. It seemed that Charlie had not invited any other teachers in this way. There seemed to be an issue with authority and respect. Charlie's HE teacher reported that he wanted to speak to her on equal terms as a friend and he was very offended when she told him that she was not his friend. She could have a positive relationship with him but only if she abandoned the authority lent to her by her position as a teacher.

Power and status

Ross, the second case study pupil, used classroom events and interactions as a means of constructing in a continuing way his identity. This was observed during a history lesson when Ross demonstrated his ability to orchestrate the lesson. Ross sat at the front of the class, in clear view of everyone and close to the teacher. From my position at the back of the classroom it was clear that Ross used his position to establish himself as the leader of disruptive behaviour. It was clear that others in the class looked to Ross for their lead. He was literally laid back during the lesson, leaning back with his feet on a chair and his hands clasped behind his head. He asked a girl at the other side of the room for a drink from her bottle of Irn Bru. This was thrown from one pupil to another until it reached Ross. He drank and then threw it back across the room. The teacher did not challenge Ross in a direct way. Instead, he went twice to have a quiet word with him. This tactic had no effect. Ross continued to run the lesson for his own and others' enjoyment, making noises and asking superfluous questions. In fact, the teacher seemed to try to establish an accommodation with Ross. For example, he had refused permission for one of Ross's classmates to go to the toilet. However, when Ross asked he was granted permission immediately.

Ross did not appear to have friends in his class in school. One of his teachers commented:

> *Pupils want to be his friend because I think it is the power he has outwith the school, or the perceived power he has outwith school. (Teacher)*

The teacher indicated that Ross was very protective of people in the class, offering to 'get' anyone who bullied his fellow classmates. Ross is powerful enough to be able to offer patronage to other boys. This is not heroic altruism, although Ross constructs it as such, but is a means for Ross to demonstrate and to advance further his control and his status.

For a number of the boys, the negotiation of their masculinities involved the establishment of relationships with pupils and teachers where the boys were accepted as dominant. There was evidence that most boys within the case study sample coveted high-status masculinities and that some of their difficulties, and some of their exclusions, arose in the pursuit of those masculinities. For example, the mother of one of the case study pupils, Sam, attributed the change in his behaviour between primary and secondary school to his need to gain the respect of his peer group:

> *I think he was just trying to be one of the boys – 'I can do as well as you can do'. If they got into a fight, he would get into a fight, stupid things that really led to him clowning about. Most of it is just stupid with him. (Sam's mother)*

There was also some indication that Sam was trying to protect himself by gaining a reputation for being 'hard' and that bad behaviour in school enabled him to do that:

> *.....a lot of the kids around here are quite aggressive and all the rest of it. I do not think Sam copes with that very well, like confrontation.....He would rather talk his way out of a fight than actually get into one. (Sam's mother)*

The negotiation of these masculinities brought power and status within the peer group to the boys concerned. Archer and Yamashita (2003) note that, in addition, 'bad boy' masculinities offer fun for those who espouse them, close friendships and enjoyment of life.

7.5.3 'Other' masculinities

However, some boys amongst the case study sample did not enjoy the advantages of 'bad boy' masculinities, even though the rate of their exclusion was very high indeed. The experience of two boys, Ewen and Dougie, will be considered here. Both were very largely shunned by their peer group, although Ewen, in particular, seemed to be trying and failing to negotiate more powerful and high-status masculinity.

Ewen

Unusually for pupils in this sample, and for excluded pupils generally, Ewen came from a middle-class and affluent family. The Assistant Headteacher indicated that Ewen's mother and father were both in professional jobs. He had two older brothers aged twenty two and twenty four, one of whom had done well at Cambridge University and the other who had also graduated with a good degree and started a career. Ewen's exclusions were frequent and increasingly lengthy. During the 2002/2003 session, he had been excluded for 31 days in total and was reported by the DHT to be approaching permanent exclusion from St Thomas's HS. Exclusions were of no use in changing Ewen's behaviour. However, they had provided respite for the school.

Ewen was tall and well built. His physique would indicate that he would play sports but he seemed not to have that interest in common with many boys in the school. Ewen reported that he had never really been happy in school, not even in primary school:

> *I just felt as if I had never had any friends or anything like that. Like every single time we played football I got told to go away. The janny did not particularly like me and my mum went up to the school to complain because he always used to ....like, when I was younger he always used to slag me when I was at school and my mum went up to complain to the headteacher because he used to talk about me in front of everyone. (Ewen)*

Ewen'difficulties had continued in secondary school. The DHT reported that, in S1, he had been moved from one class to another because his family contended that it was other pupils in the classes who were leading Ewen into trouble. Ewen cited a number of occasions when he had been bullied or harassed and said this was especially likely to happen on the playing fields and when playing football. The educational psychologist had been involved in working with Ewen's family in the Family Support Group. The referral here had come about because of Ewen's inappropriate tactile behaviour, especially in PE. At the time of the research Ewen had been referred to the Department of Children's and Family Psychiatry at a nearby hospital.

Ewen's difficulties in his relationships with other boys started, according to Ewen, in Primary 5. This seems to have been the time when his sense of difference, of alienation from other boys was first felt. It did seem that many of the difficulties he had experienced since then were an attempt to gain acceptance from his peer group. For example, Ewen was described as craving attention and of doing quite outlandish things in lessons to get attention. Ewen's drama teacher in S1 and S2 reported that he had brought with him a long history of antagonism from other pupils:

They hated, they absolutely hated his attention-seeking. To them he would wreck all their work. He would step in and wreck it. He would constantly bicker and moan and in a crybaby fashion that his point of view was not being heard. (Drama teacher)

Ewen's teachers made the point that Ewen is very much in control of himself – the behaviour which gets him excluded is not the result of anger or 'losing it' at any time. He seems to be making a conscious decision to behave or to misbehave.

Dougie

Like Ewen, Dougie had one of the highest rates of exclusion amongst the case study sample. Unlike Ewen, he seemed not to be aiming for high-status masculinity within his peer group. The DHT indicated that Dougie was a talented dancer and was very interested in dancing. He was a dance teacher in his aunt's disco dancing class and was interested in a career in dance and/or drama. Dougie's father was reported as strongly disapproving of his son's dancing and there was considerable friction between father and son about this. Within school, too, there were indications that Dougie was put under pressure from other boys because of his interests and his style. During a residential stay, the Home/School link worker reported that Dougie was the butt of criticism:

He is effeminate and all that. Dougie can be quite feminine in his speech and in his actions. You can imagine the flack he was getting from G (a fellow male pupil, described as very vocal) and they were sharing a room. But they worked it out and everything was fine. (Home/School link worker)

In S3, Dougie had been excluded 9 times, one time for 15 days and other times for periods of 11 days. Altogether in S3, he had missed 57 days of school through exclusion, that is 114 openings or half-days out of a possible 390 openings . He is reported as very disruptive in classrooms, refusing to work and adopting a hectoring and aggressive attitude to some of his teachers. He can become very angry and interrupts teachers. Sometimes, he will not stay in his seat. His behaviour seems to be worse in some subjects – French seems to have referred Dougie a number of times. The H/S link worker feels that Dougie's acting out and aggressive behaviour is part of an attempt to bottle up his feelings:

...there is certainly an attention side to it...and act that out and I think that maybe has been his problem. I think he has got to show aggression to make up for the fact that he is different from everybody else. Whether that is the deep root of it, I do not know. (H/S link worker)

The DHT reported that a further exclusion could see Dougie being removed from the school altogether and asked to enrol elsewhere.

Both Ewen and Dougie were socially isolated in school. For them, challenging behaviour and exclusion did not assist in the creation of 'bad boy' status within their peer group. Their identities were troubling to them, to their peers and to their teachers and there were no means through which these issues could be discussed other directly through the formal pastoral and discipline systems of their school.

7.6 Gender differences in exclusions

The main difference between boys' and girls' exclusion is in the extent to which they are excluded. Case study girls' experience of exclusion differed from boys in the study in that they were excluded less often and for shorter periods of time. There were just three girls in this study and two of them had been excluded just once. In all cases, the reasons for their exclusion seemed very similar to the reasons why boys were excluded. In Scotland in 2003/4, the main reason for all exclusions was 'general or persistent disobedience' and 25% of all exclusions were for that reason. The second largest group of exclusions were for verbal abuse of staff and 22% of exclusions were in this category. The girls' exclusions came under these main categories. In that respect, the reason for their exclusions was the same as for a large number of boys' exclusions.

Two of the girls, Gill and Kat, had very poor attendance. According to her teachers, Gill's performance in Standard Grade courses had been jeopardised by absences in S3 of up to 4 weeks at a time. Her RE teacher commented:

> *I know her fairly well. I was going to say very well but the reason I do not know her very well is that I would – if she were much in school. (RE teacher)*

Kat, too, has had poor attendance though, when in school, her behaviour was confident and assertive. Her teachers described how she constantly claimed attention and became quite huffy when it was not immediately forthcoming. Commentators (Osler et al, 2002, McLaughlin, 2005) have noted that girls' responses to difficulties are 'hidden' and often result in withdrawal from participation in school, even when still maintaining a physical presence and, eventually, such non-participation could become self-exclusion or truancy. This analysis would go some way to explaining the low exclusion of girls as it is manifested in exclusion statistics – they exclude themselves rather than be formally excluded. The experience of the case study girls here is at odds with this analysis. In fact, in the view of some professionals interviewed, the girls, and others, would benefit from their strategic withdrawal from certain situations and the adoption of more low-profile personas. For example, a Family Support Worker commented about Kat:

Kat in a one-to-one situation is just ideal and she wants to please regardless of who you are and I think the teachers find that as well. Once you put her in a group setting with certain individuals, then Kat will just play up and, unfortunately, she does not know when to back down. (Family Support Worker)

There was a clear difference in the extent of girls' and boys' exclusions but no indication that girls' exclusions were for different kinds of behaviour.

7.7 Conclusion

Many of the pupils in this study had been excluded at some point for general or persistent disobedience, the largest single reason for exclusions in Scotland. Sometimes, in trying to reduce exclusions, this category of exclusion has been targeted by schools as representing the 'softer' end of a continuum of reasons why young people are excluded and therefore the area where the greatest improvement could be achieved. However, exclusions in this category can represent the outcome of a conscious and sustained challenge to the teacher's authority and evidence from some case studies demonstrated this. Andy and other boys in the whole case study sample were angry and sometimes, very aggressive, losing control of themselves when confronted with what they interpreted as aggressive or coercive behaviour from their teachers. Other boys in this study demonstrated no loss of control; on the contrary, they demonstrated very high levels of control over themselves, other pupils in the class, even over the teacher on occasion. The referrals they received were, according to their behaviour records, for reasons of general and persistent disobedience. This cause of exclusion, therefore, may be harder to tackle than is generally supposed, for it is sometimes a reflection of a deliberately oppositional attitude to school – of agency - adopted by some boys as part of a process of negotiating their gender and class identities.

This chapter identified how the negotiation of particular kinds of identity were influenced by social class and by other factors. The complexity of the identities pursued by young people were clear. These are not apparent in the simple gender dichotomies evident in strategies to tackle boys' relatively low attainment have attributed this to 'laddishness' and have neglected the alignments and 'otherings' pursued by girls and boys. Girls and boys in this study cooperated to construct gender oppositions, but they also showed how the processes of negotiating gender were cut across by other forms of identity. Some of these, such as sectarian identities, are longstanding in Scotland but others are the result of the impact of social and cultural change on the identities of young working-class people, for example, the adoption of Ned identities could be seen as a cultural dimension of social exclusion

Agency was evident in the ways in which boys and girls constructed their identities through speech, dress and other forms of behaviour. It is likely that these class cultural forms of identity would be unhelpful to young people in the wider world, as well as in school. There were no differences apparent in the reasons for girls' and boys' exclusion, the main reason for both being general disobedience and the verbal abuse of teachers. Girls' alignment of their interests with boys and in opposition to others in school could be viewed as a way of rejecting other, more passive, feminine identities. Girls and boys were not equal in these alignments. Although girls' aggressive behaviour was sometimes admired by boys, it was also spoken of in patronising ways. Through their friendships with boys, girls gained access to public spaces and to accepted norms of behaviour which would have been hard to reach in the company of other girls alone. The three girls in this study did not seem to have experienced a loss of voice nor a lack of agency in comparison with boys.

Having considered the social identities of young people, the next section will consider the relationship between exclusion and young people's engagement with and participation in schooling.

Chapter 8

Exclusions, participation and engagement with schooling

8.1 Introduction

The previous chapter considered the relationship between school exclusions and the social identities of young people. Schools are recognised as an important site for the negotiation of young people's identities. This second chapter on the findings of the study narrows the focus to consider some of the processes of schooling and their impact on the identities of the twenty pupil case studies. Engagement with schooling is shown to be shaped by economic as well as cultural factors, and that these two intertwine in pupils' interactions with schooling. There were signs that from S1 onwards, case study pupils were disengaging from schooling. The links between exclusion and self-exclusion or disengagement have been recognised in the literature - sometimes as a way of understanding gendered patterns of school exclusion, as noted in the previous chapter. This chapter aims to consider the negotiation of pupils' identities in school by analysing

- how the processes of schooling impact on the case study pupils' sense of who they are, and

- what effect those negotiations have on engagement with schooling, and on exclusion, in particular.

The discussion will begin by exploring school constructions of pupil abilities and this will be related to transitions from primary school and to the teaching and organisation of classes in secondary school. It will argued that schools and not just pupils are actively engaged in the negotiation of pupil identities. The focus will then turn to consider the effects of pupils' relationships in school, first with teachers and other staff and then with other pupils. The final section here will discuss if and how schools encourage pupils to subscribe to the social life of the school. As in the previous chapter, accounts of some of the case studies will be represented holistically to show how issues and themes in the analysis are played out in the experience of individual pupils.

8.2. Abilities

Hamilton (2002: 591) notes that the concept of ability has been open to political interpretation. The view of ability as potential to be unlocked, which influenced the comprehensive movement of the 1960s and 70s, was challenged by policy in the 1980s and 90s which tended to construct ability as a fixed and measurable entity. 'Ability' is a central construct for schools and its application illustrates the part played by schools in the negotiation of pupil identities, as previously noted in Chapter 3 (Ball, 1981; Broadfoot, 1996; Reay and Wiliam,1999). Within the whole case study sample, teachers' comments and school reports on pupils indicated a wide range of abilities. The negotiation of ability identity is a dynamic process and this was also apparent in the data. For example, some pupils were assessed in primary school as having very high abilities but secondary school experience showed a 'falling away' of their demonstrated abilities. Pupils with high abilities, and numerous exclusions, will be discussed further on in this section but there were also pupils whose behaviour difficulties were seen as bound up with general learning difficulties and the discussion will turn first to two boys in this category.

Behaviour difficulties and learning difficulties

Official statistics (SEED, 2003) show that pupils with Records of Needs are over-represented in exclusion statistics. One possible reason for this could be the tendency for boys, in particular, to use challenging behaviour as a diversion from their learning difficulties, thus protecting their self-worth and improving their status with the peer group (Jackson, 2002). There was some evidence of this in the case studies of Joe and Gary both of whom seemed to prefer a 'bad boy' label to a learning difficulties label.

Joe

Joe was an S2 pupil who had considerable difficulty with his behaviour in secondary school. In primary school, a Record-of- Needs was opened because of generalised learning difficulties. In reading, he was working at Level A, the 5 – 14 level normally attained by P2, and it was reported that he had great difficulty in accessing the curriculum in all subjects, even where differentiation strategies were used. In S2 Joe was excluded 6 times for a total period of 21 days. In addition, he had a further 70 days off school, giving him an attendance rate of 62.37%. His misbehaviour was almost always in class. He shouted out inappropriately and drew attention to himself. He was very disruptive of lessons. Joe reported that he *'just got badder'* as he went on into first year, getting ever more punnies, referrals and suspensions. The AHT believed Joe's behaviour difficulties were closely

related to his learning difficulties but, if the relationship were as simple as this suggests, Joe's behaviour would have been a problem across the curriculum. The pattern of referrals in his behaviour file showed this not to have been the case. Joe said that he liked PE and he played a number of sports. He also liked maths and English and computing. He strongly disliked French and he had been in a great deal of trouble there. When asked what makes the difference between a subject he likes and a subject he dislikes Joe immediately said it was the teachers:

> *A bad teacher rattles on at you all of the time, shouts at you, tells you to shut up and all that, and a good teacher.........I don't really know.*

In certain classes, it seems that Joe's self-worth was protected for him by the teaching strategies used. In spite of the effectiveness of some of its teaching, mainstream secondary was seen by the school as the wrong place for Joe. His parents had been asked to transfer him to school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties but they had refused. For Joe's parents, too, the learning difficulties label was unacceptable; they had stated that they did not want him stigmatised. However, in view of the difficulties he was experiencing, Joe's parents had again been asked to consider transferring him out of mainstream.

Gary

Gary did not have a Record of Needs but, like Joe, he was not doing well academically. His mother felt that Gary did 'act the clown' for others in his class:

> *He's just a bit immature. There are times his mouth just runs off, you know what I mean? He's all mouth. He's not a bad boy. I know every mother will say that, you know, but he just seems to get into trouble, he gets caught out at every turn and he's not fly, you know what I mean? (Gary's mother)*

In S2, Gary's attendance was recorded as 57.80%. This included 3 periods of exclusion of 3 days, 10 days and five days, amounting to 18 days missed through exclusion. In addition, Gary had been absent for a further 60.5 days during that session. The behaviour which led to Gary's exclusions was observed in an English lesson. He was uninterested, inattentive, kicking underneath the table at the boy opposite and then claiming he had been kicked. He seemed to be seeking and trying to create diversions. His English teacher, Mrs T, had found Gary very tiresome:

> *I would say with every kid there is a redeeming feature. With Gary it is very hard to find. It is almost as though he has switched off and he is quite pleased in a way to be going in to the bottom third year section......He's totally disaffected for some reason or another and I have no notion why. And, of*

course, it is sort of self-fulfilling because he misbehaves, gets put out and back in, he is further behind, he cannot allow himself to be seen to ask for help, therefore he misbehaves, I complain and the whole thing starts again (Mrs, T, Gary's English teacher).

Gary himself presents his relationships with others in the class as the main factor in his behaviour:

It all depends who the teacher is or who's in my class at the same time.....If it's the teacher, like, if they don't like me or I don't like them I kind of just annoy them. (Gary)

With both Gary and Joe, there was evidence that they were prepared to pay the price of multiple exclusions to avoid the demeaning learning difficulties label. There was also evidence that this choice was not forced upon them in all classes; both boys referred to teachers as a key factor in their behaviour. The experience of Joe and Gary raises questions about the quality and the consistency of provision in secondary schools. Further questions about secondary schools are raised by the boys' experience of primary school which contrasts sharply with secondary school experience.

Transition from primary school

For some pupils, notably less able pupils in this study, the move to secondary school signalled a significant change in their relationship to schooling. For example, Joe was not excluded at all in primary school but had been excluded 8 times since coming to secondary. The AHT commented that Joe seemed to cope for the first six months in secondary school but then started to misbehave. Joe himself remembers being happy in primary school and getting into very little bother there. Similarly, Gary had been happy throughout his 7 years in primary School. He had never been excluded although he did get into trouble a couple of times for what he called 'wee stupid things'. Gary had been happy in primary school but by the time he was in S2, his attendance was just 57.80%. Gary spoke wistfully of primary school:

It was excellent. I just loved primary school. I wish I was back there.....I just liked all the teachers. They were nice. It was a wee calm school and excellent. (Gary)

With combined experience of fourteen years in primary school, Joe and Gary had no exclusions; in secondary, they each had numerous exclusions and by S2 their attendance was little better than 50%. Adolescence may bring increased pressure on boys to negotiate hegemonic masculinities and this may account for the boys' contrasting experiences of

primary and secondary education. Alternatively, the reason for the difference may lie in the different ways in which primary and secondary schools are organised. Both boys cited the importance of teachers. It is possible that contact with a single teacher only in primary school, and the scope for an in-depth relationship with that person, suited both boys well.

Not all pupils who had been excluded in secondary school were nostalgic about primary school. Craig came from primary school with a record of difficult behaviour, exclusions and referrals to the local Behaviour Support Base. Craig and his brother were described by the DHT as coming from primary school with an *'absolutely horrific report'*. Craig had not been allowed to stay in school at lunchtime in primary school. Craig himself felt that he had suffered as result of the reputation he brought with him from primary school. However, on inspecting his record for S1, the DHT felt that he was doing better than anticipated. Craig, too, during interview seemed to feel that he was doing better than in primary school:

> *(Things have) got much, much better since I came to High School and I like High School better... ...because you get more freedom and you don't stay in one classroom the whole day and you get to know more teachers. My Guidance teacher's sound and all that... ...I like my Guidance teacher (Craig)*

The transition experiences of Joe and Gary and their contrast with Craig's point to two issues in primary/secondary transition. First, not all pupils experience the organisation of secondary schools as difficult. For some, secondary organisation presents a welcome breadth and diversity of experience. The second issue lies in the information passed by primary schools, or more precisely, in the reception of that information in secondary schools. Reports received from pupils' primary schools were reported as influential on secondary teachers' views of pupils but this seemed to be the case only when the report was negative, as in Craig's case where there did seem to have been some advance labelling. Where reports of pupils were positive but their behaviour went into sharp decline in secondary, as was the case for Joe and Gary, it was assumed by the secondary school that information about the pupil had been withheld by the primary school. An AHT commenting on Joe's record voiced the opinion that primary schools were very reluctant to contact the secondary with 'negative' information about children. This assumption may have been comforting for secondary schools as it forestalled the need for them to ask why some pupils fared so badly after their move to secondary.

Sociological theory discussed previously conveyed the processes of labelling as demanding the participation of the person being labelled. Similarly, theories of identity discuss the

involvement of individuals in negotiating their identities within cultural sites such as schools. Some of the case studies, such as Joe and his family, show how powerful schools were in limiting, rather than opening up, possibilities for pupils. The constraints placed by schools on pupils' possible social identities were illustrated in the allocation of pupils to ability groupings but there was also evidence of pupils' involvement in using or rejecting allocations to particular groupings.

Organisation of classes by ability

Pupil's ability in a subject shaped teachers' perceptions of that pupil, even when the teachers knew the extent of the pupil's bad behaviour elsewhere. For example, Sam had been placed in a top maths section at the end of S2, in spite of having missed almost 25% of lessons that year, mainly as a result of exclusion and he also had a poor record of completing homework. His S2 maths teacher confirmed this, explaining that Sam had challenged her expectations:

> *When he came to me in S2 I was quite surprised because I had one of the top S2 classes. They are split into ability groups and I had one of the top two sections. I was surprised when he came into a top section because I used to see him only outside of (S1 teacher's) class. (Maths teacher)*

His S3 maths teacher noted that Sam's placement in a top set was correct in spite of earlier impressions:

> *He picks up things very quickly, I would say. When you do something new, Sam picks it up. (Maths Teacher)*

It was interesting to note how teacher expectations operated for pupils who had a reputation for bad behaviour. Sam was considered very able in Maths and in English by those subject teachers and by the AHT with overall responsibility for S1 and S2. Sam's noted ability overcame perceptions of his challenging behaviour in some subject areas where positive views of his ability shaped teachers' perspectives. This was not the case for Charlie. He used to like maths but he indicated that he no longer did. This is reflected in what his maths teacher said about him being in a General and not a Credit class as the result of his behaviour rather than his ability:

> *He is more than capable of the work. He is actually bored with the work but because he is in that class, he has to do it. ...he is the best one in the class because he should not actually be there. (Maths Teacher)*

Charlie had been removed from his previous class because he had sworn at the teacher. The DHT commented that his relationship with the maths teacher had been damaged irreparably and that the decision had been taken to move him into another class. Unsurprisingly, some problems with his behaviour were again materialising. Some boys welcomed the status conferred by their placement in higher ability bands, even though this might cause problems by separating them from their friendship group. For others, such placement entailed negotiations they were unwilling or unable to be involved in, for example, in their relationships with particular teachers. Identities were negotiated in such very specific contexts but they were also seen to be emerging from pupils' overall engagement with schooling.

Pedagogies

Very uneven patterns of behaviour were also evident for pupils who had low levels of attainment. There was evidence that this was related to very uneven provision across the curriculum. For example, Jim was also noted as having behaviour difficulties related to his learning difficulties. His English was recorded as Level A and his maths as Level C. Jim was observed in two lessons, music and English and interestingly, his behaviour contrasted sharply in the two lessons. In music, there were just 12 pupils present and the class were set to work individually through exercises on the keyboards using headphones and a workbook suitable for their level of ability. The teacher spent a good deal of time with Jim at the beginning of the lesson, making sure he understood what he was to do, taking him through examples and helping him to get started. In spite of this, Jim sought the teacher's attention throughout the lesson, claiming to have technical problems with the keyboard/ headphones and also that he could not do the work. On each occasion, the teacher went to check out his problem, either the headphones/keyboard were found to be working or Jim demonstrated that he could, in fact, do the example. Once, another pupil, a girl, went over to help Jim to sort his headphones. By the end of the lesson Jim was at his third keyboard, although the ones he had left were both in working order. He had worked on his own for no more than two minutes at a stretch before putting his hand up to claim he needed help of one kind or another.

After the music lesson the teacher confirmed that this attention-seeking behaviour was typical of Jim. His concentration and ability to work on his own were always very limited. During interview the music teacher said that, up until several years previously, pupils like Jim would have been in a special school. In music, Jim was in a practical-size class of 15 maximum. Another case study pupil, Billy, was in the same group and the music teacher

said she found the group very demanding. Billy was suspended at the time of the lesson observed. From observing Jim in this lesson it was not clear if his difficulties were real, that is, related to his inability to undertake the work set, or a strategy for diverting attention away from his difficulties, or both of these.

Jim was also observed in English in a full-sized mixed-ability class of 25. As well as the teacher, the Principal Teacher (PT) of English was present for part of the time as a normal timetabled commitment. Jim's behaviour there was in direct contrast to the music lesson; he was quiet, attentive and fully engaged with the lesson. This was a whole class lesson with a collective discussion of a film clip to which Jim contributed very effectively and during which he seemed to be entirely focused. When a question was asked of the class as a whole, Jim raised his hand and gave the right answer for which he received considerable praise from the teacher.

What do these contrasting episodes mean for Jim, for other pupils whose measured attainment is low and for the organisation of learning and teaching? The English department in this school has a longstanding commitment to mixed-ability organisation of classes and has highly developed pedagogies and resources to facilitate this way of working. All English teachers cooperatively teach with each other at some point in the week. This seemed to foster a collective responsibility for pupils and ongoing discussions about teaching methods, for example, the decision to use media texts, as well as printed texts, to enable pupils with reading difficulties to participate in classroom processes. In this lesson, Jim seemed relaxed, he smiled, chatted quietly to other pupils, and engaged with the teacher by putting his hand up to volunteer answers. Jim's English teacher argued strongly that the inclusive setting of a mixed-ability class was the main factor in providing well for pupils with learning/behaviour difficulties such as Jim:

> *How are they going to learn how to behave in a class if they are not there? How are they going to learn what is acceptable behaviour if they are not there? How are they going to learn to take praise? And that is such a huge thing for these boys because they do not know how to take praise – they cannot accept compliments....I do not know how they can do that without being in class and seeing the other kids doing the good stuff....seeing the other kids putting up their hands and seeing the other kids getting enthusiastic about something. (Jim's English teacher)*

Jim's very contrasting experience points to the importance of classroom pedagogies in inclusion. From this little piece of evidence, class size in itself seemed not to be important – Jim fared better in a group of twenty five than in a group of twelve – and mixed-ability organisation may also have been ineffective had the English Department not had very well-

worked out classroom strategies to ensure the participation of all pupils. A further factor may also explain Jim's contrasting experiences. The English teacher, a young and inexperienced teacher, and the PT English both articulated a strong commitment to inclusive schools and inclusive classes, unlike the music teacher who felt that Jim should not have been in mainstream school. The value position of teachers came across as a crucial factor shaping attitudes to pupils and capacity to provide well for them.

'Bright' boys

Some pupils had high levels of general ability and, sometimes, particular ability in traditional 'male' subjects such as mathematics and physics. One BS Teacher saw this as a departure from her early teaching experience:

> *And I, I mean I'm not really too sure, and I would say, and it's not even just now that our boys are poor ability, because I would even have said, that in the past it used to be kids that struggled with the curriculum. The curriculum was a huge barrier.*

Ross, one of the case studies discussed in Chapter 7, was noted by all teachers as a very able boy. His abilities were demonstrated not just in traditional measures of attainment but in his social interactions. He did well in primary school and, on transfer to secondary, he was working within the 5 – 14 curriculum at Level E in maths, that is, well beyond the normal range of attainment for children of his age. In spite of very poor attendance and exclusion, he was still in the top maths section in secondary school. As previously discussed in Chapter 7, Ross aspired to a powerful and high-status masculinity and he seemed to be sustaining this identity in school. He was treated by other boys with a mixture of admiration and deference. There was a sense of his life taking on a very different orientation:

> *He is a very bright boy but he is out till 1.00 or 2.00am and he cannot get up in the morning for school. He has a difficult home life but there is a lot of pressure as well with peers. (Home/School link worker)*

School seemed to be diminishing in importance for Ross but his recognized ability was still a point of pride with him:

> *I was one of the brightest in my class at primary school. I still am really in most of my classes. I can do the work; but I just don't do it most of the time. (Ross)*

It is possible that, in turning away from school, Ross was making a choice, similar to that made by Willis's 'lads'. The identity he was seeking to negotiate – or needed to negotiate - could not be achieved in a school setting. The possibility of agency in pupils' exclusion will be pursued further on but before that, the experience of Davy will be introduced. Like Ross he was acknowledged as bright and he had been excluded but by S3 he seemed to be making choices quite different from Ross's.

Davy

Davy was keen to portray himself as a boy's boy, emphasising that he had a lot of friends and a girlfriend. Davy had had two exclusions, both of them during the previous year when he had been in S2. Davy's exclusions had been for bringing a knife into school and for aggressive and threatening behaviour towards a girl. Both exclusion incidents had involved other boys and there seemed to have been some bravado on Davy's part on both occasions. The knife incident had come to light when a local woman had phoned the school to report that she had seen several of its pupils with a knife at the bus stop that morning. Davy emerged as the one who had brought the knife into school. The second exclusion arose when a girl saw Davy with her friend's stolen mobile phone. Davy had bought the phone not realising that it had been stolen. He subsequently threatened the girl in the corridor and was excluded for this bullying behaviour towards her.

For a bright working-class boy like Davy, university was not on the horizon at all. He cited his intention of 'staying on' to the post-compulsory period but his view of schooling was highly instrumental. He presented the 'S' Grades and Highers he hoped to achieve as a passport to a better job, a means of achieving a higher standard of living in the future. It may have been that this was one way for Davy to square his academic aspirations with the values of his friendship group. Although university could also be said to provide a better standard of living in the future, the boys had no evidence of that within their own social sphere. Davy's emphasis on schooling as a means for him to earn more money may indicate that working-class boys grow up more quickly than their middle-class counterparts. At just fourteen, Davy saw himself in a settled relationship with a girl and as having to make plans about how he would earn a living. For him, the reasons for not going to university stacked up: university would be a socially unknown experience; its potential benefits were unproven; it required one to remain in education until the age of twenty two - a timescale quite out of keeping with how working-class boys saw their lives progressing; and, more recently, the financial resources required for participation in Higher Education would be unavailable to him. Also motivating against the boys' participation in Higher

Education was their sense of being 'anchored' to their own social, cultural and geographical base and of their need to construct a future for themselves within that sphere. Coming through strongly from the case study boys was their sense of belonging to a particular place but this could also be a metaphor for cultural affiliation and the threat of dislocation posed by academic success. Commentators (Epstein, 1997) have noted the experience of working-class students who articulated their sense of 'leaving' and 'holding on' to their culture as they entered middle-class HE institutions.

The notion of the education system as meritocratic is challenged by data in this study. A number of the case study pupils had been judged as very able in primary school and their abilities continued to be recognised by their teachers in secondary school, even though their attainment was falling in relation to their peers. Sometimes, this happened through the agency of pupils as they started to make decisions about their future lives in relation to their present circumstances. Family attitudes were the crucial factor in how boys' saw schooling with regard to their future lives, with some boys prepared to move away from their peer group to pursue academic success. Families were key in the class cultural reproductions of pupils in this study but schools, too, were actively engaged in those processes.

For some pupils, continued engagement with schooling was sustained by positive relationships in the school setting. The next section will examine how relationships with staff impacted on pupils.

8.3 Relationships with staff

One of the striking things about some of the case study data was the very different perspectives offered by different adults about the same pupil. Chapter 7 touched upon this when discussing Gill whose Business Studies teacher described herself as absolutely mystified by the school's decision to exclude Gill. This section explores these differences, tries to account for them and associates them with levels of pupil engagement.

It was noted previously that teachers' perceptions of pupil ability overcame reservations about their challenging behaviour and allowed a space to be created for the pupil, for example, in a top set, where they could perform well. Sometimes pupils formed key relationships with particular teachers on the basis of personal affinity or, more surprisingly, shared academic interests. Again, it was interesting how a pupil's ability in a subject shaped teachers' perceptions of that pupil, even when the teachers knew the extent of the

pupil's bad behaviour elsewhere. Jack provided an example of a pupil who was almost completely disengaged with mainstream schooling but who retained one positive point of contact.

Jack

Jack was described by the DHT as 'very bright and very angry'. He was wiry and quite small for his age, very self-assured and articulate during interview. He had already started to earn a living, working in a chip van two nights a week from 4.00 – 10.00pm. For these twelve hours he earned £30.00. He had been excluded many times, starting in primary school and always for angry outbursts. He was reported as being very confrontational with teachers, refusing to cooperate and then becoming abusive when he was pressured. One referral described how he was asked to stand outside the classroom because of an outburst he had had. When the teacher came to speak to him he called him a fucking bastard, fucking black jake, fucking poof. This resulted in one of his exclusions. He attended an off-site behaviour support base for 2 x 0.5 days per week. When in school, therefore, he was on a part-time timetable. The home/school link worker had had input and there was liaison with the SW Dept.

There was wide agreement that Jack was very able and that, had his life been different, he would be going to university. The Headteacher, who had not been nominated as one of the interviewees for this research, took time to come to offer comment about Jack:

> *Of all our pupils, Jack is the one I fear most for – so bright but how he copes with the circumstances in which he is living I do not know. (Headteacher)*

The influence of wider circumstances on pupils' participation in schooling, and their exclusion, will be discussed in the next chapter but schools sometimes offered pupils a positive connection even when the pupil was moving quickly away from schooling. Jack's abilities lay in the area of mathematics and physics and his physics teacher described him as gifted. Although Jack had been excluded on numerous occasions since primary school, this teacher had never had a problem with him. The physics teacher attributed this to a mutually respectful relationship. He had found that Jack responded well to positive feedback:

> *If you push Jack too hard you get a bad reaction. If you encourage him, he tends to go with you. He likes, not direct compliments, but reminders that he is good. He likes reminders that he is good, he is quality. (Physics teacher)*

Although Jack's frequent non-attendance had repercussions for the continuous assessment components of his Standard Grade courses, Jack was nevertheless expected to do very well. It was unlikely that the strong and mutually-respectful relationship with his physics teacher would be enough to keep Jack within the school system once he was sixteen. As reported previously, SEED guidelines on exclusions (SEED, 2002) were changed to ensure that exclusion from school was not exclusion from education. Pupils excluded for more than three days had to have schoolwork provided. Although this stipulation was welcomed by local authority staff, in schools it was viewed as tokenism in that teachers would be unable to supply a distance education pack customised for pupils and that, even where such material could be provided, excluded pupils would be unlikely to complete the work at home for a range of reasons. However, the intention to maintain continuity in pupils' education could be applauded when considering the experience of Jack. As previously noted, he had high abilities in maths and physics but was also very angry and capable of very aggressive behaviour. The school system does not cope well with this combination of intellectual giftedness and very challenging behaviour. Always, the behaviour becomes the main focus for attention. Jack had had six exclusions during S3, one of them for three weeks. In all, he had missed 37 school days in S3 because of exclusion. His overall attendance record was 67.75%, though some of that attendance has been at a behaviour support base where he would not follow a normal curriculum but would focus on Personal and Social Development in areas such as anger management. The amount of time he had out of the ordinary curriculum had an impact on his educational attainment. Jack's physics teacher had never had a problem with Jack in his class and was therefore aggrieved that Jack's exclusions had undermined his performance in physics:

> *His last non-attendance was due to the school deeming him not to be suitable in my class (Physics teacher)*

Jack's physics teacher argued that it would be important from a societal point of view to get Jack into an apprenticeship of some kind and away from possibly a very violent life on the streets. He felt that withdrawing him from academic subjects where he excelled was not the way to support his future. There is a common dilemma here for schools in the strategies they use to support pupils with challenging behaviour. Behaviour support bases whether in-school or off campus, have gone some way to providing the kind of flexibility schools needed in managing the very challenging behaviour of some pupils. Bases are very different in their aims and functioning (Head et al, 2002; Kane et al, 2005). All offer a form of 'internal exclusion' (Munn et al, 2000), serving a dual function, that is, keeping pupils off the streets and off the school's exclusion statistics. However, whilst some bases

are 'sin bins' aiming for containment only, other bases offer a more developed educational provision. Even where provision in bases is purposeful and helpful to pupils, though, it cannot replicate the depth and breadth of the ordinary curriculum. Thus, the flexibility bases offer schools in their organisation is something very different in terms of the curriculum experience of pupils. Jack's physics teacher says he would be delighted to teach physics to Jack six times a week and he feels that the system should be flexible enough to allow for this. He argued that education should take different forms so that exclusion from ordinary school should never be exclusion from education. He argued strongly for multiple solutions to the problem of bad behaviour and exclusions to accommodate the wide range of pupils affected. It was hoped, though, that the recognition Jack had received about his mathematical ability would encourage him one day to return to education.

Sometimes, a key positive relationship in the school was a pupil's relationship with a member of staff who was not a teacher. Relatively new posts, Home/School Link Workers, had been created in this authority and comments coming through in pupil interviews were testament to the effectiveness of those staff in forming relationships with pupils who were otherwise hard to reach. For example,

> ...like, there's Rab. See people like who have been referred to him, and you go to his club on a Monday after school. He's good but he tells you he's not your social worker, he's not your teacher, he's your pal. That's quite good cos you can listen to him. He's not trying to shout at you, he's not trying to get a pure bad point across to you, he's just talking away to you and he gets to know you and that. He's good.........He's only in his early thirties. If you got more of them in the school I think that would be better. (Ross, S1)

Sometimes, difficulties in relationships between pupils and teachers seemed to lie in pupils' limited social skills. For example, Baz's RE teacher had known him very well throughout S1 and S2. This teacher saw some of Baz's difficulties as lying in an inability to gauge the appropriateness of his behaviour towards teachers:

> Baz is a very sincere young man. He has a heart of gold. I think he has a strange relationship with some teachers. He is a friendly young man and he wants to be friendly. I think he has a great sense of humour as well but he does not know the barriers of the relationship between pupil and teacher.....and I think what he tends to do is to overstep the mark slightly. It is not always obvious how he oversteps the mark but he does. (RE teacher)

This is an interesting point in that Baz and some of his friends may have only one way of conducting positive relationships with other men and that way may be quite incompatible

with the deference expected in pupil relationships with teachers. It might be that Baz has not learned the subtleties involved in maintaining different kinds of social relationships.

Similarly, one of the case study girls, Gill, had sometimes fraught relationships with teachers. She was noted as claiming a parity of status that was unacceptable to staff:

> *Gill does not like to be told anything at all. She very much speaks to you in the way she speaks to her friends I think. That has become an issue and you have to say to her, 'That's not how you should speak to a teacher.' .....Her justification was that's how she speaks to her mum and her mum is more important than anyone. (History teacher)*

'Respect' came through strongly as an issue for both teachers and pupils but, clearly, there were differences in interpreting behaviour as disrespectful or not. Pupils may or may not have intended attitudes or behaviours to be disrespectful to teachers and, amongst staff groups within the same schools, there were different views of what constituted 'respectful' behaviour. Some of these differences related to teachers' notions of authority and it is possible that what they sought from pupils was deference and not respect. This would be culturally very challenging for some of the boys in this study. It was notable that the Home/School Link Workers interviewed had strong relationships with the pupils they dealt with and seemed to accept much more informality in their relationships with pupils, for example pupils called them by their first names. Some of these relationships with boys were characterised by mutual respect. The next section will consider pupil relationships within the peer group.

8.4 Peers, friends and social networks

This section aims to consider the place of relationships amongst pupils as a means of fostering case study pupils' connectedness to schooling. A main attraction of school for many of the case study pupils, and especially the boys, was the facility it offered to socialize with peers. There were indications that masculine identities were developed within the peer group individually and also collectively as a response to what Willis (1978) has called the 'unjustified authority' exerted over them by school. A number of pupils indicated that the really negative impact of exclusion was that it closed down for them an important social forum. Commentators have identified the influence of the peer group on adolescent boys as a significant factor in their conflict with the institutional authority of the school (Connell, 1989: 291; Mac an Ghaill, 1994). Boys in this study endorsed strongly the importance of friends to them: Friends are always there beside you right through life. It

was also clear that boys' friendship groups exerted very strong influence upon them and one which was demonstrated in lessons in which case study boys were participating.

Davy, one of the case study boys, Personal & Social Education, the impact of Davy's social group on his behaviour was very apparent. Davy sat with a group of 10 boys whose dress was a kind of uniform within the school uniform and distinguished them from others in the class. This group operated quite consciously as a group, teasing each other and encouraging each other to annoy others in the class, especially girls. Davy was in the thick of the group and was very involved in attempting to attract the attention of a girl sitting in front of him. The boys participated in the lesson but, to a much greater extent, they were engaging with their own friendship group. Once the teacher put on a video, the boys moved to sit on the desks, still keeping close to each other. They maintained their conversation, which was about drugs and the video itself, throughout the film. The rest of the class – all of the girls and a few boys – were quiet and attentive throughout. This episode was a very vivid illustration of how his friendship group impacted on Davy. He was very much part of a group of mates who were prepared to participate in the lesson but very largely on their own terms.

Mac an Ghaill (1994: 56) noted that for the boys in his study, the peer group provided the 'significant others' in the school setting providing continuing feedback and guidance as to proper attitudes to schooling and future lives. There was considerable evidence in this study coming form pupils and teachers of peer group influence as a factor in boys' challenging behaviour and exclusion from school:

> *I think some of it, with the difficult boys we have in here, there is a peer thing goes on there. I don't think there is any double that Andy likes to entertain the other boys in the class. I think he also likes to entertain the girls, but he doesn't do it an obvious way. It's always a boy he connects with....And I think a big part of it, for the majority of them is, they already have a reputation. And what they do is they continue to live that reputation. (Principal Teacher Behaviour Support)*

Boys themselves discussed how the bother they got into in school and out-of-school was related to their friendship group. Charlie recounted how in Primary 6 he had 'started getting bolder and started getting in with the wrong crowd'. He and his friends had got into bother out in the community. Baz, too, recounted how some of the trouble he had been in was caused by his efforts to perform for his friends. Baz has been excluded twice in S2. The first time was for 5 days for maliciously setting off the fire alarm. Baz indicated that he had been incited by his friends;

The fire strike was on and people were going to set off the fire bell. Somebody asked me to do it .....and I felt, 'Oh, I could do this and I could really be something big if I done this.' So I was the one that done it.

Sometimes pupils were excluded because of their intervention in incidents which did not concern them. For example, the DHT recounted how Andy had stormed off having been in trouble in detention. He walked across the playground at lunchtime calling back to the DHT and another teacher, 'You are a pair of dafties. Your school stinks. It is a dump.' The verbal abuse continued as he walked across the playground to the school gate. Other pupils, some of whom were his friends, observing this, called on him to come back and not to be so daft but Andy continued on his way. Then Craig realised what had happened and approached the DHT insisting that his brother could not be sent home in this way:

What have you done to my brother? You can't send him home. Get him a taxi.
(Craig)

The DHT explained that Andy was going home of his own free will and would not be getting a taxi. Craig then turned away saying to the DHT, 'Fuck off'. He was then excluded himself.

Boys' friendships could and did have negative effects for their schooling but they also brought a number of advantages. First, these friendships offered closeness and continuity. The friendships seemed to be very stable and enduring. Some of Charlie's friendships had lasted since Primary One and he envisaged that they would be lifelong. Eddie, too, commented:

...me and S_ have been friends since primary school and all that. Like, when my Ma and Da went on holiday and I was too young to go, his Ma watched me and that. (Eddie)

Second, friendships offered solidarity and therefore protection to boys. Aggression featured largely in some boys' accounts of enmity and friendship. Competence at fighting was highly regarded amongst friendship groups. One or two boys explained that friendships came about because friends were able to stand up for you when you were being bullied. There was then an obligation to do the same for them. There seemed to be a very strong code of honour operating where it was expected that you should accept blame, even when you were innocent, if it spared your pal. One or two boys reported that they had been excluded for things done by pals but that this was acceptable to them. The third advantage of boys' friendships was that they provided 'good fun'. Humour was very important to the

boys interviewed and considerable status was accorded to boys who could make others laugh.

How do schools deal with boys' friendships when they are frequently a basis for oppositional attitudes to schooling? Sometimes, the setting or streaming of classes is a means of splitting up friendship groups in S3. When pupils enter Standard Grade courses, and sometimes earlier than that, classes are organised on the basis of ability. Although there is evidence from this study and elsewhere that the disproportionate number of boys allocated to bottom sets is a reflection of motivation, rather than ability. For example, Charlie, whose placing in a low maths set was discussed previously, indicated that he used to like maths but that he no longer did. His maths teacher confirmed that he was in a General class rather than a Credit class as the result of his behaviour rather than his ability:

> *He is more than capable of the work. He is actually bored with the work but because he is in that class, he has to do it. ...he is the best one in the class because he should not actually be there. (Maths Teacher)*

Charlie had made a choice to continue to challenge teachers in order to maintain his status with his peer group.

However, for one or two of the case study boys, 'ability' sets allowed some space for them to move away from their friendship group. Davy was at a crossroads in his life. He had been and continued to be one of the lads, behaving in and out of the classroom in ways that got him into trouble along with his mates. However, his academic aspirations were taking him away from those mates. For a number of subjects, Davy was finding himself in different sections from his friends. One of his teachers reported that he:

> *...showed ability early on but he did not play to his strength. He tried not to show that he was clever because it was not cool within that class. (English teacher)*

Going into S3, Davy was placed in a top Credit class for English and his teacher thought that he might resent being separated from his friends. When she asked Davy about this privately, she discovered that he was pleased to be in this class. He had been doing very well, bringing homework to her on a one-to-one basis to check it with her.

The majority of the case study boys rated friendship very highly in their lives and many of them showed that friendship had played a direct or an indirect part in their exclusion. This was not the case for all of the boys here. Ewen was a notable exception. He was the only

case study pupil to come from a middle-class and affluent background. He had no friends in the school, although some of his exclusions seemed to be as a result of giving cheek to teachers in an effort to gain peer approval. The BS teacher reported that Ewen's parents tried to engineer friendships for him, sometimes picking out boys and suggesting that they would make suitable friends. Ewen's parents take him to a middle-class suburb some distance away so he can take part in a rugby club there. The young men he associated with there were in their twenties. Coming across strongly from Ewen during interview was his sense of isolation from other boys and his awareness of difference from them. He acknowledged his social advantage – he mentioned his dad's laptop – and he had identified that, unlike him, most boys who were excluded 'came from bad areas'.

Different from the majority of case study boys was Jack. He seemed to get on well enough with other pupils he had no real friendships in school and, unlike Ewen, he did not seek friendships. He was described as a loner, as assuming that when he left the class he had no contact with any of the other pupils. This is attributed to his maturity to his being very worldly-wise and therefore finding very little in the company of other young people his age. It is also possible that significant family responsibilities, such as shopping and caring for younger siblings, and his job, prevented Jack having the time or the resources to maintain friendships. When asked for his analysis of the gender imbalance in exclusions, Jack reported that he knew girls who were just like him – that is, with significant family cares and responsibilities - except they were never in school to get into trouble.

Does the peer group exert the same influence on girls in relation to exclusions? This study has not been informed by the experience of a broad and diverse group of girls since its scope was formal exclusion from school. However, the girls in this study were unlike those most often identified in the literature. Whilst in school, they were reported as having friends, being popular, even. Classroom observation similarly showed the girls to be socially well-integrated with their peer group. To that extent, the excluded girls had much in common with the majority of the excluded boys. Interviews with most of the case study pupils, girls and boys, indicated that they saw their friendship group as encompassing both genders. The existence of cross-gender friendships came across strongly in interviews and they were often cited with pride. It seemed to be important to these young adolescents that they had male and female friends, in addition to the romantic/sexual relationships which some of them also mentioned.

Case study pupils, girls and boys, found that school offered an important site for creating and maintaining friendship groups. Those friendships could operate in opposition to

schools. For many boys masculine identities were developed within the peer group and as part of a collective response to the school's differentiated forms of authority. The boys in this study had that in common with Willis's lads. Unlike Willis's lads, their post-school transitions would not be experienced collectively. The final section of this chapter will look at case study pupils' participation in the broad community of their schools beyond the curriculum.

Joining-in

All four secondary schools in this study operated a range of extra-curricular activities in, for example, sport, music and drama. Pupils in the case study sample had very low rates of participation here unsurprisingly, perhaps, when many of them had very poor attendance rates. There are issues here related to the economic and cultural resources of pupils' families. For example, Andy who was twelve years old, indicated that he had given up playing football on a Saturday morning because he could not get himself out of bed in time for the match. The themes of poverty and family and their effect on children's engagement with schooling will be picked up further in the next chapter. However, there were some attempts on the part of schools to encourage pupils' participation beyond the formal curriculum as a means of enhancing their overall engagement with schooling. Baz provides one such example.

Baz

Baz was popular and was at the centre of a group of boys who were good friends. Baz and many of his friends had been in trouble of various kinds in school. Because the trouble Baz had been involved in had not usually been in the classroom, he had not been on a behaviour monitoring sheet. This meant that he was seen in quite a positive light by many of his teachers who felt they had a good relationship with him. The DHT desbribes Baz as a Jack-the-lad, quite a happy-go-lucky boy and, actually, quite a likeable lad. Baz's file from primary school indicated a similar pattern of behaviour and relationships. It was noted in his primary school report that other pupils sought his approval. He had been made a House captain but had it removed from him. During interview, Baz spoke a good deal about his pride in this:

> *Well, I put my name down to be the Captain or the Vice-Captain but I did not think I would get it... ... other people in the House would pick who it was. And there's a boy, Martin Lee, got picked got picked for the House Captain and I thought, 'Oh, no. I have not got a chance any more. Then I was well happy when my name came out for Vice.'*

It was not clear if the process of selecting the Captain and Vice-captain were genuinely democratic. It is possible that the school wished to make Baz more of a stakeholder in the school by giving him a measure of responsibility. If so, this tactic seemed to work according to Baz's own account:

> *People were looking up to you and a lot of people would come to you if they needed help, like the wee ones, I mean. They would all ask you for some help and that so you felt a lot more authority. You felt as if maybe you had done well for yourself and that you were higher up, like close to your mum and that. (Baz)*

Many of the case study pupils showed a range of abilities and skills, including well-developed social skills and high levels of self awareness. Almost all of the case study pupils were on the margins of the school and sometimes that was because the margins were where they chose to be. Other influences in their lives mattered more than school. For other pupils, though, and especially those in S1, a more interventionist approach which promoted their involvement in social and recreational activity might have strengthened their connection to schooling

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter set out to consider the negotiation of pupils' identities in school by analysing how the processes of schooling impacted on the case study pupils' identities and by considering the effect of those negotiations on engagement with schooling, and on exclusion, in particular. Ability, and being seen to have it, mattered a great deal to the case study sample. Even boys who no longer cared about doing well in school valued the 'very bright' label. One of the main ways in which schooling influenced identity negotiation was through its power to attribute and withhold ability labels such as 'bright' and 'learning difficulties. Pupils' behaviour was central to schools' negotiations here with decisions about placement in particular classes, or even special schools, made on the basis of behaviour and not ability. Schools did not see their manipulation of ability identities as a means of controlling pupil behaviour but some pupils experienced it as such and reacted by becoming further distanced from schooling.

Particular problems for secondary schools emerged. Some case study pupils reacted badly to the more fragmented curriculum organisation of secondary school with its compartmentalised subjects and range of teachers. They seemed not to have found the means of connecting to secondary as they had with primary. This may have related to the lack of an ongoing positive relationship with a single, or main, teacher. Pupils certainly

articulated the view that it was teachers who made the difference for them but there was evidence that it was teaching, too, that made a difference. Some lessons observed were carefully planned to ensure the participation of all pupils and they succeeded in this aim. Other lessons had an alienating effect on pupils. If pupil identities are shaped by pupils' internalisation of school and teacher criteria, there was evidence of schools shaping pupil identities in ways that were ultimately very challenging for the school.

Teachers' values, as well as their professional skills and commitments, made a difference to pupil experience. Their attitudes to pupils were central in determining how pupils responded to them. Again and again, pupils spoke of 'respect' and of the lack of it as a reason for their insolence, disobedience and, sometimes, total loss of control. This was partly to do with teachers' views that they had to maintain authority, implying that pupils should not talk back or question them, but there may be other factors at work here for some teachers seemed able to maintain authority alongside respectful relationships with pupils. There was wide variation in the relationships case study pupils enjoyed with their teachers, with some very sharp contrasts. Sometimes ability in a particular subject allowed a bond between the teacher of that subject and the pupil; in other cases, teachers seemed to see something to be liked and/or respected in the pupil allowing a positive relationship to develop. Whatever the basis of these relationships, they gave pupils a valuable link to schooling when they were otherwise very alienated. More could perhaps be made of these links by allowing pupils more time in those areas of the curriculum, or with those teachers.

Schools were an important social site for pupils and their identities were shaped in and by the peer group which spanned school and pupils' broader experience. There were very strong collective identities, founded on common cultural norms such as their shared value system. The next chapter will discuss exclusions and the wider social context, beginning with family.

Chapter 9

Exclusions and young people's lives

9.1 Introduction

The previous chapter considered the part played by schools in the negotiation of case study pupils' identities, and the inclusionary and exclusionary effects of some school processes. This third chapter on the findings of the study looks at broader aspects of case study pupils' lives and considers the impact of those factors on their exclusion from school. Education policy was criticised in Chapter 2 for its over-emphasis of school improvement as a means of tackling challenging behaviour and exclusion. It is the intention in this chapter to probe case study data in relation to that policy critique. Discussion will address if and how wider social and cultural factors in pupils' lives contribute towards their exclusion from school. Some factors have already been highlighted, for example, case study pupils' sense of belonging to a particular locality was shown to be formative of their identities. Other themes coming through from data analysis were:

- Poverty

- Family

- Aggression and violence

- Future lives

In relating these themes to exclusion from school, the question of agency will again arise. Are excluded pupils turning away from school and, if so, to what extent are they exercising choice? The economic and social context of pupils' lives will be a main part of the discussion throughout this chapter beginning with poverty and then moving to family background and a comparison of case study girls' and boys' attitudes towards family.

9.2 Poverty

In this study, seven case study pupils were registered for free school meals (FSMs) and there were further indications coming through from interviews that a number of the case study pupils were living in poverty. As discussed previously, disparities exist between eligibility, registration and uptake of FSMs so it is possible that additional case study

pupils were eligible but opted not to register. This unwillingness has been associated with the stigma of being labelled as poor. Poverty impacted negatively on case study pupils' experience of schooling in a number of ways through:

- a lack of material possessions,

- shame and embarrassment,

- stress on family relationships and

- disruption to the regular routines helpful to participation in schooling.

This section will examine how economic circumstances prevented the full participation in schooling of some of the case study pupils.

Schools are often aware of the economic conditions of pupils' lives but, in offering a range of extra-curricular activities to pupils, are sometimes not aware of the costs entailed, for example, for transport. It was noted previously that the case study pupils had very low involvement in school activities such as sport, music or drama.

Even within the ordinary curriculum, costs are also entailed in having the right dress and equipment. All four schools in this study had a dress code but, in addition, there was a strong imperative coming from peers for young people to be dressed in certain ways. Families relied on their children to contribute economically – Baz worked most evenings in his family's chip shop – and case study pupils themselves cited their satisfaction that they earned income. There were indications that some case study pupils were working a significant (and illegal) number of hours. For some of the case study pupils, poverty exerted a pull away from school because they had to earn money for themselves or to contribute to the family income.

One such pupil was Jack. He had already started to earn a living, working in a chip van two nights a week from 4.00 – 10.00pm. For these twelve hours he earned £30.00. Jack's mother had died very suddenly two years previously and Jack's schooling had suffered since then, although his exclusions did not start at that point. Jack was the eldest of five children and his father had struggled to maintain the family in their own home after his wife's death. He had met a new partner on the internet and she had moved in with the family. Jack does not get on with his father's new partner. His attendance was poor and his

frequent exclusions for angry and aggressive outbursts had further disrupted his school attendance. Jack indicated that when he was not at school, he helped his father with the shopping and with other household chores. Unlike many of the boys in this study, Jack was a loner and there were indications that his self-exclusion or withdrawal from the social networks of school related to poverty.

The material deprivation of poverty was not its only disadvantage; shame and embarrassment also fostered pupils' withdrawal. For pupils living in poverty, their homes did not afford the social space that would enable them to have friends to stay or even to visit. The physical restrictions of home may not have been the only disincentive to using it for social purposes - embarrassment about furnishings was also a factor The Family Support Worker reported that Kat was in this position:

> *...I think she feels embarrassed at the home situation, sort of furniture-wise, because it is very poor inside. I mean it is as clean as mum could possible keep it but, obviously, she is limited with the income. (Family Support Worker)*

The importance of schools as social sites was identified by many of the case study pupils and denial of access to that site as one of the main deprivations of formal exclusion. Poverty, too, had the effect of limiting participation in the social life of the school. This may have particular repercussions for girls who generally did not access public spaces as easily as boys, although there were signs in this study that girls used their friendships with boys to sponsor their participation in social life in outside spaces. Few other social sites would have been open to young people because many such places levy charges.

The emotional, as well as the material effects of poverty, were noted as impacting on pupils' experience of school. Kat's family received support from the Social Work Department, mostly in relation to welfare rights and benefits but also to make sure that mum was okay and that the family situation was settled (Family Support Worker). Kat's mother was on a methadone programme at the time of the research. Her partner had been very ill during the previous year and there were indications that a very stressful home life had impacted on Kat's experience of school.

There were indications, too, that poverty linked to non-attendance. Ross's attendance in S1 has been poor. His record showed 129 absences from a possible 369 openings at time of interview, giving an attendance rate of 65.04%. Only 2 of Ross's absences were unauthorised, indicating that his mother knew about, and had sanctioned, his frequent non-attendance. In addition, Ross had been late a number of times. It is possible the school, as

well as Ross's mum, colluded in his non –attendance, as a means of taking pressure off of everyone. Resources, personal, social and material, are needed to establish and maintain the routines required to ensure continuity of school experience. For families living in poverty those resources were undermined. For example, the Home/School Link Worker who worked with Ross and his family, described his first visit to the family home with the Attendance Officer after Ross had been absent from school for a few weeks:

> *I had come in and gone on a visit with the Attendance Officer who, fortunately, happened to be going on a visit that day. The Attendance Officer's approach was going in and finding Ross watching TV, at his breakfast...his dad was lying on the couch – his mum and dad have spilt up but he (Ross's dad) had just moved house recently and they had had their house petrol-bombed or burned (Home/School Link worker)*

Survival issues dominated the lives of some parents in this study. Pupils' participation in schooling was affected by material deprivation itself but also by a whole set of emotions arising from poverty – embarrassment, worry, and fear. In addition, poverty affected family routines and made difficult the patterns required for regular participation. Although superficially some pupils and their parents seemed to be choosing disengagement from schooling, the circumstances in which they were living their lives offered very little by way of choice. Where agency was demonstrated, it was directed towards keeping families together. Previous discussion has identified instances of pupils exerting agency in their engagement with schooling but it was clear that agency was constrained by economic factors.

9.3 Family

9.3.1 Girls and their families

Commentators have noted the pull of home for girls in particular, noting how often girls' non-participation in schooling culminated in withdrawal to the home, in contrast with boys (Osler and Vincent, 2003; Ridge, 2005). Girls' wellbeing was tied up with their families and, in particular, with their mothers. There was some evidence that case study girls' poor attendance, though no worse than boys', might have been for different reasons in that, for girls, there was a more of a pull to be at home. The social isolation of some girls, then, would be a matter for concern, reflecting in some cases the experience of women such as Kat's mother who was described by the Family Support Worker as withdrawn and hard to pin down for appointments and other social and support arrangements:

> *We have.....the Family Centre ...and she [Kat's mum} could go down there and go on the different courses, stress busters and different things like that. But*

> *she is not strong enough, you know, her self-esteem is not at that level yet that she would be confident to be able to do that. But, I mean, she gets by, you know, she visits her mum and different things like that....she is not in the house all the time. She does get out. (Family Support Worker)*

All three girls in this study were reported as having very strong and influential relationships with their mothers. Sometimes, there were indications that their own wellbeing was tied up with their mothers'. For example, the Family Support Worker at St Thomas's HS, speaking of Kat's social worker, said:

> *...she knows that if Kat is okay, the mum is okay and vice versa, if the mum is okay, Kat is okay. (Family Support Worker)*

Where the girls perceived their mothers to be vulnerable, or relationships affecting them to be fragile, there was an impact on their participation in school. Sometimes, this impact took the form of non-attendance whilst at other times it was apparent in challenging behaviour. As previously discussed, Lorraine's relationship with her mother had been put under considerable strain because Lorraine did not get on with her stepfather. Lorraine's mother had threatened to put her out of the house and had contacted the Social Work Department to seek help in managing Lorraine. Lorraine's fraught relationship with her mother was the cause of her exclusion. Having been referred to an AHT for not wearing full uniform, she felt this was unfair and was further angered when the AHT indicated his intention of contacting her mother. She was excluded for swearing at the AHT. The guidance teacher indicated that the difficulties she had been in during that session were attributable to her fractious relationships with her mother's partner and very difficult relationships at home. The case against a tight tariff system for exclusions is that professional judgement should come into play, allowing account to be taken of individual pupil circumstances. Lorraine's experience indicated that tariffs operated when schools decided they should operate, irrespective of other factors.

There were signs that the case study girls' experience of school was affected by their strong alignment of their interests with those of their families, and particularly of their mothers. For most girls, where families are socially, emotionally and economically stable, the support is reciprocal. For the girls here, family responsibilities to some extent undermined the extent and the form of their participation in school. Although the ostensible reasons for girls' exclusions are the same as the reasons for boys, it may be that underlying factors are different. Indications from this small sample were that girls' exclusion linked more closely to relationships and responsibilities within the family. The small number of girls in this study means that further investigation of gendered causes of

exclusions would be needed before conclusions could be drawn. The next section will consider case study boys and their families.

9.3.2 Boys and their families

As discussed in Chapter 7, the boys in this study were negotiating diverse masculinities. Those differences were reflected in their attitudes towards family, and affected the impact their exclusions had on their families. Autonomy and self-determination were highly prized by a number of boys in this study. Sometimes this encompassed responsibility for family members and at other times it caused a separating out of boys' interests from their families. The transition from boyhood to manhood entailed boys claiming and being accorded increased power and status in the domestic domain (Mac An Ghaill, 1994). This was apparent in the case studies but boys' claims for increased power and status took very different forms. For some, it led to a separating out of their interests from their parent(s), most usually their mother; whilst for others, their negotiation of masculinity was pursued through their acceptance of responsibility for family and home.

In the latter category was Dougie who lived with his mother and his younger sister. On a recent residential experience, during which Dougie's mother had been in hospital, Dougie had been very anxious about her, and continually wanted to phone the hospital. Dougie's concern for his mother extended to the research. Although she had given permission for Dougie and herself to be interviewed, Dougie did not want his mother to be interviewed. This was an interesting inversion of the protocols for gaining consent and it seemed to stem from his desire to save her from the pain of discussing difficult issues relating to Dougie's behaviour.

In contrast, were boys who, unlike the case study girls, did not openly align their wellbeing with their mothers' and seemed to have moved beyond the influence of parents. Many of the excluded boys lived with their single mothers and, in two cases, those mothers had mental health problems. Craig and Andy's mother reported that Andy has been violent towards her, kicking, swearing and screaming when she tried to get him to attend an interview at the school with her. In Craig's file it was noted that his mother had no control over her sons, that she had her arm broken by Craig and had been kicked out of the house by them. Andy and Craig's mother was willing to come to school when required but the DHT reported that she was ineffective in her efforts to influence her sons and the lack of home supervision had resulted in them having a great deal of autonomy in their lives. Speaking of the elder twin, one of his teachers said:

I get the feeling that he is his own keeper or whatever. He is in charge of his
own decisions and nobody else's. He really does not give a damn about theirs.
(RE teacher)

Some boys were exercising a surprising measure of control unmediated by caring adults. Andy and Craig were just twelve years old but they were making decisions about how to live their lives. This autonomy did not assist their participation in schooling. They lacked the routines and regulation governing the lives of most twelve-year olds and were frequently absent from school.

Boys' 'under-achievement' has been attributed to the absence of positive role models at home and in primary school in particular with a negative impact on boys' engagement with schooling. Several professionals did feel that some of the boys in the study had seen masculinities being done in ways that were both influential and unhelpful to them in negotiating their own identities. Ross was cited as one such boy. Ross's attitude to his mother is protective but he sees her as exerting very little control over him:

My older pals they will be like that 'Your maw will ground you and all that'.
She tries, she does try and discipline me, but I am just not listening. (Ross)

Sometimes, case study boys indicated that they valued and relied upon professional support. Ross, for example, had developed a positive relationship with the Home/School Link Worker and cared about the good opinion of this member of the school staff. Behaviour Support teachers, too, sometimes had significant influence over pupils who were in difficulty. The agency demonstrated by boys could bring them into direct opposition to professional advice, for example, Andy and Craig both declined referrals to Psychological Services in spite of the urgings of the BS teacher. In this study, where boys exercised considerable autonomy, overcoming their mothers' attempts to control their behaviour, there were signs that this was part of their negotiation of dominant masculinities. Alongside that, the home circumstances of these boys were fragile with boys' mothers receiving help from the Social Work Department. The next section will probe in more detail the impact of exclusions on pupils' families.

9.3.3 Parents and exclusions

There were indications from the case study pupils that exclusions could create further pressure on fraught family relationships. One indication of this was the difficulty experienced in trying to gain parents' participation in this study. Several parents consented to be interviewed but subsequently withdrew. This may have been because of embarrassment at their children having been excluded but there were also indications that

arrangements were sometimes hard for parents to follow through; several interviews were cancelled at short notice. Case study data will be probed here to determine if and how families were affected by exclusions and if the experience of exclusion varied according to family circumstances. The purposes of exclusion outlined in Chapter 5 will be considered further here and linked to the experience of case study pupils and their families.

Earlier discussion of key informant interviews highlighted that a main purpose of exclusion was to signal to pupils and their families that certain behaviour was unacceptable. In Chapter 5 it was noted that where families were very responsive to school concerns, the exclusion itself could be averted. For the mothers of Andy, Craig and Ross discussed above, exclusion could not serve this purpose for they had no capacity to respond in ways that might change the situation in school. Ross himself says that he is happy to be excluded because it gives him a couple of days off school. He says his mum tries to keep him in but even, then, it is okay because *my ma is dead soft, she gives in too easy*. He usually manages to get out. Similarly, Craig indicated that when he and his twin brother, Andy, were excluded, they were allowed to go out because their mother:

> *...doesn't like to keep us in. She likes us to go out and all and play football and stuff. She likes us to go out. She doesn't like keeping us in. She doesn't feel it is right if she keeps us in. (Craig)*

The boys' mothers were reported as being very responsive to school contacts but their personal circumstances made it very difficult for them to exercise control over their sons. On return from exclusion, the pupil and his/her parent are asked to give a guarantee of future good behaviour, sometimes even signing a contract to that effect, as a condition of the pupil's re-admission. This mechanism assumes a measure of parental control which in some cases is entirely ill-founded. Similarly, some recent policy ideas have suggested that parents be made more accountable for their children's behaviour by, for example, fining parents when children transgress. This is misguided in its assumption that all parents are able to exercise control over their children and would simply increase pressure on families whose situation is already precarious.

In other cases, exclusion did operate as a punishment because of the upset it caused to families and the repercussions to pupils from that source. From some case study pupils' accounts, it was difficult to separate out the impact of exclusions on them from the impact on their families. For Baz, exclusion was very clearly a punishment: He described himself as feeling:

...like a failure, as if I had really, really, really let myself and my family down.
And I thought that I had let good friends down as well because they did not
expect it of me and that. I did not feel too good when it all happened.

A further impact of exclusions was on Baz's relationship with his mother. He seemed to have a very caring attitude towards her and described how upset she was, particularly when he was excluded for a second time:

Well, my mum thought it would just be a one-off, then about two months later,
that happened. My mum considered getting me to see somebody to see if there
was, like, something up with me and that. My family had all split up and it
would probably have been something to do with that.

Baz is here referring to his parents very acrimonious separation and to his mother' fears that Baz's violence was a reaction to losing contact with his father. She had asked, and the school had considered, referring Baz to the educational psychologist. For Baz and his family his exclusion was a punishment, causing a great deal of stress to family relationships.

Similarly, Ewen reported that his family got very upset by the difficulties he had in school. In relation to his exclusion, he said:

I dread telling my mum because I know how much my mum is upset....She cries
a lot with me. She tells my Grans and my Grans are really worried and that.
(Ewen)

When Ewen is exluded, his family back up the punishment as he has to stay in his room and get on with schoolwork. Ewen reported that his exclusions were taken very seriously by his family:

Well, my dad sits us down and says, 'Look, what do we have to do with you?'
and sometimes I get hit or something and I get shouted at or grounded and I
have to go up to my room. (Ewen)

Exclusion was a punishment for Ewen because of his family's reaction. In spite of this, there was no deterrent effect. Ewen was excluded again and again. Support systems in schools have developed in recent years so that pupils in trouble can review their behaviour and try to learn new ways of managing their reactions and their conflict with others. For some pupils like Ewen, the changes needed to avoid further exclusion were beyond them. They seemed locked into a cycle of unacceptable behaviour followed by exclusion, ending in their permanent exclusion and removal from the register of the school.

Raj is one of the 61% of pupils in Scotland who had just one exclusion from school and that for only five days. The exclusion and the incident which caused it seem to have had a very heavy impact on Raj. During interview he was clearly very embarrassed about it, saying that he did not wish to tell me what had happened, nor did he wish me to interview his mother although she had already signalled her consent. For Raj, exclusion was clearly a punishment and a deterrent.

Conflicting views came from pupils as to whether exclusion was a punishment. It was reported in Chapter 5 that pupils saw exclusion as a welcome break. Those pupils had been interviewed as a group and there may have been some bravado in their claims. Within the case study sample, all girls and most boys, experienced exclusion as a punishment. An exception was Gary:

> *I feel quite glad because it's like a holiday to me because I still get to go out and play on my bike or whatever. (Gary)*

Parental attitudes were a key factor in whether or not exclusions were experienced as a punishment or a deterrent. Some parents were unable to back up the school's punishment. They lacked the physical and personal resources that might have made this possible. Gary's mother said that they had attempted to keep Gary in his room without his computer and television during his exclusions but they had found this very difficult to sustain over say, a period of ten days. Gary was able, therefore to, meet with his friends even when he was excluded from school:

> *See when I was suspended, I went down to the chip shop, down at the shops at lunchtime and I met them all down there and I got something to eat and all that and then we went back up to my house. (Gary)*

However, Gary was not allowed to attend football training when he was suspended and he conceded that this was a loss to him. Although Gary's mother accepted that Gary's behaviour was a problem, she was adamant that exclusions served no useful purpose. She advocated some kind of restorative approach to unacceptable behaviour:

> *I think children in general like exclusion from school. They are quite happy to be sent home. I mean, I think it's defeating the purpose sending them home. I think the best thing to do – if they break something around the school, get them to fix it in school, help the janitor, do something in school – you know what I mean? (Gary's mother)*

Rising exclusions had prompted concern about the vulnerability of children to involvement in crime and other antisocial activity when they were out of school, and about a possible

increase in crime suffered by the community when numbers of children were unsupervised. For exclusions to have a positive or even a neutral effect, on pupils and on the wider community, the active cooperation of parents is required. Many parents in this study lacked the means needed to support schools' action in excluding their child.

The impact of exclusion on families could be longer-term, colouring parents' attitudes towards school. Speaking of the impact her son's exclusion had on her, Gary's mother said that she became scared to go to Parents' Meetings:

> *I was really thinking twice about going to the Parents' Night but, once I got by that, I saw that 95% of the teachers were fantastic....It was great. I was glad I went, but I didn't want to go. (Gary's mother)*

School representatives did not mention the impact of exclusion on families' overall engagement with schooling, although this aspect came through strongly from parents and pupils. A mismatch was apparent between schools' perceptions of parents' attitudes and the evidence available of those attitudes. For example, teachers seemed not to be aware of the impact their comments and actions had. For example, Sam had been in trouble in maths for failing to complete homework and bring books back in. The maths teacher had written home on several occasions to complain about both of these problems and there had usually been an improvement after these letters. However, the maths teacher had never been able to talk to Sam's parents at a parents' meeting:

> *They did not come to Parents' Nights and Sam was probably one of only two or three in the class whose parents I would have liked to have spoken to. Not about the behaviour, just about the homework, but they just didn't come. (Maths teacher)*

There was sometimes an assumption from some teachers that some parents were uninterested – 'did not want to know'. From the parents who were interviewed for this research, this assumption was entirely unsubstantiated. In spite of their children's exclusion, parents in general were highly sensitised to feedback from the schools. For example, Gary's mother said she had taken to copying out carefully each night all teachers' comments from Gary's behaviour card. She retained these as a way of reassuring herself and her son that there were many positive remarks as well as negative ones. The family perspective on exclusion is an important one for policy. Social inclusion policy constructs education as a way of enabling mainstream participation. School exclusions had the opposite alienating effect.

9.4 Aggression and violence

During the 1990s, violence in schools became a major concern. Case study pupils were violent and aggressive and a number of their exclusions were for those reasons. Only some of the case study pupils were violent – it is not suggested here that violence was a pervasive feature. This section will consider if these forms of behaviour are related to the negotiation of wider class and gender identities.

As noted in Chapter 2, understandings of what constituted violent behaviour had expanded considerably to include new categories such as being ostracised by the social group, name-calling and 'dirty looks'. The expansion of the definition of aggression has introduced a gender dimension since some forms of what is classified as violent behaviour have traditionally been associated with feminine behaviour. The aggressive behaviour which all three girls in this study manifested was the result of one-off provocation, rather than symptomatic of a universal anger towards others. Their femininities encompassed aggressive behaviour, for example, sticking up for yourself and being prepared to defend family members. If aggression and violence are construed in this way, girls had a great deal in common with some boys in the study who valorised aggression and violence as a form of social competence. Brown (2005: 72) endorses this view in noting that social competence and agency of this nature is rarely, if ever, formally acknowledged in educational establishments such as schools, particularly in girls.

It is hard to see how schools could acknowledge aggression as a form of social competence when its manifestations from girls and boys were often associated with intimidation and bullying. A number of the boys who had been excluded exalted physical fitness and strength. Charlie was fourteen, tall, with an athletic build. He was very keen on sport and he had considerable ability as a boxer for which he had won medals. In addition, he was good at athletics, swimming and played for a local football club. Not surprisingly, he liked PE and felt he was doing well there. Charlie had been excluded five times during the previous session, amounting to 21 days of school missed. His first exclusion had come in Primary 6, although he indicated that he had been in trouble since his early days in primary. His first exclusion in primary school was for fighting and subsequent exclusions had also been for aggressive behaviour mainly towards teachers, although he had also punched a pupil. His most recent exclusion had been as one of a group of 15 pupils who had gone to a nearby non-denominational school to seek a fight with pupils there. It was not clear if the motives for this gang confrontation had been sectarian or territorial.

In lessons, Charlie asserted himself in ways that were very challenging for the teacher and disruptive of the lesson. Charlie was observed in maths when he became very persistent with requests to go to the toilet, all of which were turned down by the teacher. Eventually, he was taken from the room by the PT Maths. During the time when Charlie was seeking to leave the room, other pupils incited him to some extent. A boy at the back shouted to him that he should just leave anyway whilst Kat started her own line of pressure to go to wash her hands. The maths teacher later described Charlie as having to have confrontation. This was backed up by Charlie's drama teacher who described him as very self-centred and physically aggressive. He had been unwilling to take instructions from the teacher and had been verbally aggressive towards him.

Charlie demonstrated the same aggressive qualities towards his fellow pupils, too. He worked mainly with boys and he was very domineering, even physically aggressive towards them. He wanted to be the centre of attention. In Home Economics, when he did speak to other pupils, he did so fairly aggressively: What are you doing touching my.....? The teacher – a young woman - used Charlie's board and ingredients to demonstrate techniques to others but, even before this, it was clear that other pupils paid attention to Charlie. He was influential; other pupils regularly came to see what he was doing but he paid little attention to anyone. Charlie was reported as unwilling to work with others unless he was in charge.

The aggression which pervaded Charlie's relationships in school may be interpreted in some contexts as a form of social competence but in school it would more likely be interpreted as bullying. There was some indication that other pupils might be scared of Charlie. He had a reputation as a fighter. One teacher reported that younger children, on seeing his jotter in her class, would comment and ask her about him. And while he might be exercising agency in his relationships with teachers, he was also capable of losing self-control. Indeed, some of the fear he inspired may well have been because of this volatility, as well as his physical capacities. Charlie acknowledged that he loses his temper in class but said this was usually because he has been blamed for things he has not done. Charlie's HE teacher described him thus:

> *If I say something that displeases him you see like a wee flicker that crosses his face and he starts to get angry. He can set off for any reason and it can be very, very small things...he doesn't tend to like being told what to do so at times he kind of comes up against me because he wants to do things his way and I try to get round him to more my way. ......He's got a very short fuse and that is what most people would say about him. A very, very short fuse. (Home Economics teacher)*

Charlie was negotiating a very dominant masculinity and aggression and violence as part of that process. There was agency in his use of physical prowess to attract status with his peer group. In schools, this behaviour is very challenging since it is linked to the wellbeing of other pupils.

It is not argued here that aggression was a dimension of the class culture of the case-study sample. It featured more fluidly than that in the experience of pupils. Violence was not always valorised by the peer group. Some case study pupils with a history of violence were ostracised. For example, Alan had been excluded many times for a range of unacceptable behaviours. He winds up other people, annoying teachers and other pupils, he shouts out in class and has sometimes been violent towards other pupils. One-to-one he is described as 'very plausible' but he has caused real difficulties in and out of the classroom. Alan's aunt thinks he may have ADHD but the school thinks this is not the case. The DHT reported that the most serious of Alan's exclusion incidents were outwith the classroom and frequently involved bullying or harm to other people. For example, he had twice set fire to other pupils' hair while standing outside in the line waiting to go into the classroom. On the first occasion, no-one had actually seen him do this and it could not be proved but he did the same thing again. This time he was seen by many others who were reported as queueing up to 'grass' on him. Alan denied what he had done, even when faced with overwhelming evidence – for example, he had been observed when throwing a brick through the dining-room window. He had also been excluded for throwing a bottle and hitting someone on the head. The AHT indicated that Alan seems to have no close friends among his peers. His aggression entirely distanced him from his peer group, causing him to be ostracised.

There was evidence that some aggression was not the result of agency, but of its opposite, frustration at a lack of control over one's own life. Jack was very angry about his family circumstances and this had repercussions for his behaviour in school. Commenting on Jack's behaviour, the DHT indicated that his big problem was his temper:

> *He just cannot control his temper. He just flares up and is almost uncontrollable. On a one-to-one basis, he is great. I really like him and can hold a good conversation with him. (DHT)*

Jack was very self-aware. He knows that his temper causes problems and he knew that some of his teachers were frustrated because they could not teach him properly when his schooling was so discontinuous. Jack's aggression and violence brought him no status with his male peer group. It was the result of a loss of control and was interpreted as such by the

school. Jack attended classes on anger management, a common strategy in behaviour support bases but one unlikely to be helpful for pupils who, unlike Jack, were using aggression consciously to negotiate particular kinds of masculinity.

Case study pupils were the victims as well as the perpetrators of violence, sometimes in the community and sometimes in their homes. For example, Billy had 4 formal exclusions for one, two or three days and he had missed 7 days of school through exclusion. Billy had been excluded for flinging stones at buses. He had been physically abused by his father and he had witnessed his father physically abusing his mother.

Eddie was in S3 and had a long history of exclusions starting in primary school. Often in Primary and in Secondary his exclusions were for fighting, although there were other reasons as well:

> *...like sometimes it was carry on, sometimes it was fighting and then sometimes it was stealing and sometimes it was other stuff, like cheeky to teachers and that. (Eddie)*

He was the youngest in a large family and his parents had been supportive of the school when Eddie has been excluded. However, by Eddie's account that support involves the threat of physical abuse, particularly from his mother, once he is back at home:

> *...I am more scared of my Ma than my Da ....because even though my ma's weer than me – she's weer than me and I am quite wee – I am more scared of my Ma than my Da. My Ma is a very vicious woman. (Eddie)*

The DHT indicated that Eddie was a very likeable boy – blond and bubbly - and that he would try to charm teachers. His exclusions had usually been short-term but there had been a number of them, usually occurring when teachers could not take any more. The DHT reported that Eddie would cry when he got into trouble and she took this as a sign of his immaturity. However, Eddie himself reported that he feared going home after an exclusion because of his mother's violent reactions.

Violence was a feature in the lives of many of the case study boys. Sometimes they were its victims but in certain cases violence and the threat of violence were used as part of the negotiation of masculinities in school settings.

9.5 Future lives

Exclusion from school has been linked to a range of factors contributing to the social marginalisation of young people. Analyses of social exclusion (Coffield, 1995; Gormley, 2003) have argued that gender and class inequalities are unchanged and continue to ensure the reproduction of advantage and disadvantage among the younger generation. From S3 onwards, many of the boys interviewed were working part-time and a number of them had steady girlfriends. These factors were conveyed in interviews as points of pride and as indicative of the maturity of the boys concerned. The boys in the study who indicated a preference for an occupation all cited working-class jobs. The Behaviour Support Teacher commented on their limited aspirations:

> *And a lot of boys........ don't really have any aspirations. Like, if you say to them "What do you want to do when you leave school", they'll say "I want to be a scaffolder". Or "I want to be a plumber" and without downing both of those jobs, [they] could do far more than that. But that's all they want to do ....And what will happen there is that they will fulfil that. (Behaviour Support Teacher)*

Given the wider circumstances of their lives, the boys may have been realistic in their constructions of their futures. Boys themselves saw traditional routes for working-class boys, including the armed services, as a desirable option. Eddie wanted to join the RAF when he left school. This had always been his ambition because his Uncle Tam had been in the RAF and had gained a great deal from it. Eddie cited three advantages of joining up:

> *....it's good pay, you get a lot of education from it and like if I need a house, because I have done honour for- don't know how to put it- because I have done honour for the – I can't get it out - ....If I work well in there and I need a house, instead of waiting 17 years for another house, instead of waiting that long they put you up fast instead of waiting....because I have honoured Scotland and whatever. (Eddie)*

Shortly after, Eddie remembered a further reason for joining the RAF:

> *...like there is another reason I have always wanted to go to the RAF because say if I have got a car I can take it in and I can get the mechanics and the engineers and all that to fix it for me, do it up. (Eddie)*

The advantages cited by Eddie point to his valuing of security of home and job and to the importance in his eyes of acquiring marketable skills. Similarly, Sam's mother indicated that he had shown some interest in joining the army and that, should he pursue this option, she would support him:

The way I look at it is, they are in the army, they are disciplined, they are going to get a career. They have got everything they want in the services... ... (Sam's mother)

Many of the boys interviewed aspired to have a trade – car mechanic was mentioned by three of the boys as what they hoped for in the future; Andy wanted to be a plumber and that he was prepared to stay on to help achieve this. Where they cited a preference, none of the sixteen working-class boys in the study indicated that they would like to aim for anything other than working-class jobs. Ewen, the only middle-class pupil in the study, did not specify a preference but he conveyed a sense of having choices and being in control of his future:

Well, I want to get a good job and settle, well, I might not settle down too quickly... ... There is so much I want to do. (Ewen)

In addition, Ewen's family were reported by the AHT and the BST as being very ambitious for him. His two older brothers had done very well in university.

Sometimes, reality of their predicament was beginning to become clear to some of the boys who had been excluded. Joe hoped to be a joiner but he recognised that it would be difficult for him to get the qualifications because he was no longer allowed into Technical. Similarly, Charlie had hoped to be a PE teacher or a boxer when he was older. He recognised that he would need Highers to pursue his ambition to be a teacher but he did not think things at school were settled enough for this to be realistic. In fact, staff had expressed doubts that Charlie would finish his schooling in St Thomas's such was the level of disruption he caused. For other boys, too, there was some pessimism. The DHT was fearful for the future of the twin boys as there was a strong possibility that they would be taken into the care of the LA. Placement in a residential school would perhaps be the most likely outcome for them. The DHT indicated that the school had written to the LA to express their concern about the boys. Such a placement would not necessarily be a bad thing for the boys but the school certainly saw such a decision as, at least in part, indicative of their failure.

There were fears for Ross who was in S1 and just twelve. The concern was that he would make wrong choices:

Ross will probably be running a gang in Glasgow when he is twenty one... ...He is not at the stage yet when he needs to choose but soon, he is going to have to decide 'What way am I going to go?' (DHT)

For the school's part, the DHT felt that there were a small number of staff who would be prepared 'to go the extra mile' because Ross was bright but that he was uncertain whether the school would be able to engage Ross – It is in the balance. In primary school, because he was good at maths, Ross and his mother had thought that he would become a chartered accountant. Now, at twelve and because of his interest in motor bikes he thought he might become a mechanic. The boys themselves generally saw school as instrumental in helping them to get the kinds of jobs they hoped for but they had very vague notions of what was needed by way of qualifications. Several cited contacts amongst friends and family as the means by which they would get a job. School, then, served very unclear purposes for the boys in the study, exerting over them an arbitrary authority but offering limited help in their preparations for the future.

Gill's history teacher commented that, in general, girls were more focused in school because their futures were clearer to them. They knew they were going to be a teacher or a nurse whereas for boys, many of the traditional options had been closed off for them. This view was justified in relation to one of the case study girls, Gill who indicated that she intended to stay on until S6 and then she planned on going to College. She wanted to become a midwife. She was aware that she would first need a nursing qualification before going on to specialise. She seemed very focused and very clear about how to reach her goal. It was interesting that her RE teacher, who claimed to know her well, was quite unaware of these ambitions. He believed that, in spite of Gill being bright, she would not stay on after 'S' Grades:

> *I hope she will but I do not think she will. It is almost as if priority is not an education and I get that from the comments she makes about her family, that it is not a priority. (RE teacher)*

The clear disparity between Gill's view of her future and one of her teacher's is worrying in that expectations are known to play a significant part in educational achievement. Where schools have low or strereotyped expectations of pupils, it is likely that those pupils will not achieve, at least within the school setting.

All three girls were acknowledged to have a range of abilities but their schools did not predict career paths for them, even for Gill who had her own career path mapped out. It would seem that, for girls in difficulty and/or excluded, the optimism expressed by the History teacher above may be misplaced.

Commentators (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Giddens, 1990,) have noted that the changes of the past twenty or thirty years have led to a heightened sense of risk and a greater individualisation of experience among young people. Gormley (2003) notes that inequalities of class and gender remain constants in the midst of social change, insecurity now marks all transitions from childhood to adulthood. This heightened sense of risk came through in Ross's claims not to think about the future:

> *I know for me I don't think. I just take life as it comes....you don't know if you are going to be here in four year's time so why not just live for the moment? Because you don't know if your family... and you don't know if you are going to be there. (Ross)*

9.6 Conclusion

Most of the case study pupils experienced some measure of social exclusion in their lives. Poverty was seen to undermine pupils' and families' engagement with schooling and exclusion from school exacerbated that effect. For some of the case study pupils and especially for girls, family exerted a pull away from school because of their concerns with the wellbeing of their mothers. Case study boys sought to negotiate a range of maculinities, ensuring varied attitudes towards family, sometimes very strained relationships, and different effects caused by their exclusion. Where exclusions were experienced as a punishment, this was because of the impact on families. It was difficult to detect exclusions serving any purpose other than punishment for the case study pupils and their families. Exclusions caused extra pressure within some very fragile family relationships. In addition, the alienating effect of exclusions on families' attitudes to schooling lasted beyond the period of the exclusion, with parents' voicing their anxiety about routine contacts with schools. This negative and ongoing effect of exclusion seemed to be unrecognised by schools. Parents' failure to participate was attributed to their lack of interest in their children's school progress. Relationships with schooling were precarious for many of the working-class families in this study.

Pupils' futures also were uncertain and boys, in particular, conveyed this sense of insecurity. Schools were seen as helpful in enabling boys to make the transition to their adult lives but only in a general way. The scaffolding they needed, and which is provided by middle-class families, was not there for them. Some of this is economic. - their families lacked the financial means to support them through prolonged education and boys themselves wished to earn money – but the reasons were also cultural. Boys cited jobs they

knew about from their own direct experience. These issues and others arising form the two previous chapters will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 10

Discussion and implications

10.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters have outlined the findings of the study with regard to the identities of excluded pupils, the school processes shaping those identities and the broader circumstances of pupils' lives affecting their engagement with schooling. This final chapter will now discuss these findings in relation to the research questions. The aim of this chapter is to review the findings of the study in the light of policy and scholarship in the area of school exclusions and to identify if and how this study contributes to the field. Policy on exclusions was the starting point for this thesis and the discussion will revisit policy in the light of findings here. The main themes emerging from the findings chapters, agency, gender and class, will be reviewed and implications for policy identified. First, the findings will be summarised.

10.2 Summary of findings

Findings from the policy review of exclusions and from the empirical data will be summarised here. The intention is to provide a basis for subsequent discussion of the findings in the context of broader literature. This section will also identify broad themes of gender, social class and agency emerging from the findings and related to the research questions. These will be used as organisers for the rest of the chapter.

10.2.1 Policy findings

Exclusions have been steadily rising in Scotland with recent official statistics (Scottish Executive, 2007) showing a rise of 4231 between 1999/2000 and 2005/06. Research question 1 asked how the behaviours leading to exclusion were understood in policy and in school systems. For the most part the behaviours leading to exclusion were persistent disobedience and verbal abuse of teachers. Patterns of exclusion were strongly structured by gender and social class in particular but social and cultural factors were unacknowledged in policy discourses of challenging behaviour and exclusions. Policy was found to construct challenging behaviour either as a kind of special educational need or as a matter of school deficit. Neither conceptualization was found to have been helpful and both have caused tensions and inequities in resource allocation and in educational responses generally, with some pupils recognized as having 'needs' deserving of support

whilst others were perceived to be deserving of punishment.. In addition, neither conceptualisation supported an analysis of factors structuring patterns of exclusion. Broader social policy did recognise the link between educational exclusion and the marginalization of some social groups. Social inclusion strategies in education and in other service areas aimed to bring those groups back into the social mainstream by enabling increased participation in mainstream services. There was not yet evidence of the effectiveness of those policies in reducing school exclusion. Exclusions have continued to increase, even when linked to school performance through target-setting.

Exclusions were noted by key informants as having a range of purposes but the official view was that there were just two: to deter bad behaviour in future and to protect learning and teaching in classrooms. The former purpose was said to serve excluded pupils in deterring them from future wrongdoing but statistics revealed that some 20% of excluded pupils had been repeatedly excluded and there was some scepticism amongst school-based key informants as to the deterrent value of exclusions. The pointers were that the overriding purpose of exclusion was the latter purpose cited by officials – to protect learning and teaching for teachers and the majority of pupils. In other words, exclusion had no benefit for the excluded pupil. This is understandable where some pupils were undermining learning and teaching but questions of social justice in education are raised when approximately 4000 pupils per year are repeatedly excluded from Scottish schools. Exclusion, especially repeated exclusion, increased existing social disadvantage by undermining the education of mainly working-class boys and could be seen as representing a much wider alienation of the working-class from education This was not acknowledged in education policy and, whilst wider social policy has recognized different social and economic groups, it had pursued strategies unlikely to address the unequal outcomes of schooling.

10.2.2 Empirical findings

Research questions 2 and 3 asked how exclusion from school was related to the negotiation of gender and social class identities in school and beyond school. Chapter 7 discussed the multi-faceted identities of the young people in the study and detected social class as a permeating feature of those cultural identities. This was particularly apparent in the Ned cultural affiliations of most of the girls and boys. That aspect of their identity was highly embodied in dress and physical appearance and, in addition, several boys in interview proudly proclaimed themselves to be Neds. This affiliation has been anathematised in the press and is associated with criminal and anti-social behaviour. In asserting that they were Neds, the boys were re-appropriating the term and attempting to valorise the value system

of Neds, for example, in a commitment to loyalty to friends above all else. They were also consciously associating themselves with the socially marginalised as a matter of pride. They embraced Ned identity as a cultural expression of their social exclusion. Similarly, their strong sense of belonging to a particular locality conveyed that social exclusion was not a source of stigma for them. For the most part those localities were very unattractive environments such as housing schemes but the boys had strong affiliations to their communities. These local affiliations enabled a collective identity – something the boys and girls enjoyed and pursued through their territorial battles with neighbouring localities. Less associated with social class were sectarian identities, although for some young people sectarian identities were tied up with belonging to particular and long-established working-class communities.

Gender identities were found to be complex with boys and girls playing out gender through allegiances as well as oppositions. Girls were seen to benefit from those allegiances; there was evidence that friendships with boys enabled girls to negotiate less conventional or 'tomboy' femininities, to 'act out' in ways very similar to boys, for example, by joining in gang fights. The same did not apply in reverse to boys. Where girls could negotiate a range of femininities, and could move fluidly between 'tomboy' and 'glamour' identities, boys were impelled towards the negotiation of a particular and dominant form of masculinity. These negotiations demanded the demonstration of physical strength and aggression, especially when used to defend or advance the interests of the peer group and the community. High status within the peer group was the reward for the successful negotiation of hegemonic masculinities but many boys found the pursuit of that kind of identity difficult and even dangerous sometimes because of its associations with violence. Chapter 8 showed that some boys were negotiating these masculinities in school and that those negotiations brought them into conflict with teachers, sometimes at the deliberate instigation of the boys themselves and resulting in their exclusion. Exclusions were shown to link to the negotiation of masculine identities, particularly hegemonic masculinities, in ways that did not generally apply to the negotiation of feminine identities. Girls who were excluded were far fewer in number but they were excluded for the same reasons as boys, and had affiliations to the same social and cultural groups.

Pupil identities were tied up with schooling and schools as well as pupils were shown to be actively involved in the negotiation of pupil identities. Schools limited the range of identities open to pupils, for example, in their assessment of abilities, and through the classifying of pupils according to ability. Some exclusions were seen to arise from pupils' attempts to resist schools' labelling of them. A 'learning difficulties' label was particularly

unwelcome and, in preference, boys were seen to create a 'challenging behaviour' label for themselves. Behaviour and learning were sometimes in tension, with very able pupils consigned to low-ability sets because of their challenging behaviour. Sometimes, schools were able to use a positive attribution of ability to encourage boys' to abandon, even temporarily in a particular curricular area, their oppositional attitudes. Boys making these accommodations were secretive about them wishing not to compromise their status with their peer group. For schools, behaviour was always the dominant factor. Organisation of the curriculum was such that pupils whose behaviour was challenging in some areas could not participate in other curriculum areas, even though their motivation and their ability there were acknowledged as very high.

Transition from primary to secondary school marked a significant change in some pupils' relationship with schooling. Pupils who had never been excluded in primary school experienced great difficulty in secondary and sometimes multiple exclusions in first and second year. The array of relationships, expectations and negotiations required by the complex organisation of secondary schools caused them to falter. A few of the boys in this position were seen to adopt very challenging behaviour which they conveyed as an attempt to negotiate hegemonic masculinity, even though there were no signs that their peer group accorded them this status. Not all case study pupils experienced secondary school so negatively. Some pupils about whom there was great concern preferred the breadth and the diversity of the secondary-school experience. They had accumulated bad behaviour records in primary school and communicated that secondary school had brought a welcome fresh start. Some of those pupils had very good relationships with one or more members of staff. In interview, these positive points of contact came across as being highly valued by the pupils concerned.

Research question 3 asked what social and cultural aspects of pupils' lives beyond school contributed to their exclusion. Family shaped children's engagement with schooling. Chapter 9 detected gender differences in case study girls' and boys' alignments with their families, affecting their participation in schooling. The case study girls were close to their mothers and saw their interests as merged with their mothers', whereas case study boys were more likely to have distanced themselves from their parents', often their mother's, influence and control. Sometimes their autonomy was used benevolently and protectively towards their mothers and younger siblings but boys were more likely than girls to convey their independence from family influence. Alignment with family and separation from it could be equally unhelpful in shaping girls' and boys' engagement with schooling. Boys who exercised a great deal of personal autonomy were too young to use this well and were

greatly at risk. Girls whose mothers were in very difficult personal circumstances were themselves affected by those circumstances, the resulting stress exacerbating the possibility of their exclusion. Although the reasons for girls' and boys' exclusions were the same, the underlying pressures on boys and girls leading to their exclusion, may be different. There were two few girls in this study to pursue this possible gender difference.

Family involvement in exclusions was mediated by social class. Exclusions were an effective punishment, that is, a deterrent for some pupils but only if their parents backed the school's action and maintained the punitive effect at home. Where parents were unable to sustain that position, exclusion served neither as a punishment nor as a deterrent. Parents' capacity to support actively the school's action depended upon their economic and emotional resources. Some case study boys reported that their mothers did not wish them to be in the house during the period of their exclusion. For those families, exclusion served only to put further pressure on already fragile family relationships. Worse than that, there was evidence that pupils' exclusion impacted on families' longer-term engagement with school, further alienating them from an important mainstream service. Social class differences in exclusion were seen most clearly in the events leading to exclusion. There was evidence that where parents responded quickly to school concerns, the exclusion could be averted. Many of the parents in this study were unable to respond in this way, indeed some were not contactable by phone in the first place. Even when contact could be established they were ill-equipped to act as the school would wish, for example, several mothers had mental health problems and needed a great deal of support to leave the house even for routine reasons.

Social class and gender were main themes in the research questions of this study and in its findings. These broad social categories are not equally represented in the literature. Neither policy nor much recent scholarly work has paid much attention to social class in school education. Gender is much more fully represented and contended in the literature but it is often discussed in isolation from other categories of analysis, including ethnicity and social class. In spite of broad theoretical agreement that gender is always intersected by other factors, the interplay between class and gender and the resulting impact on schooling has been under-researched. Gender and class are initially separated out in the discussion here but attempts are made to show how these aspects cut across each other in the identities of excluded pupils. The discussion here will conclude by considering the policy implications of the findings of the study.

10.3 Gender identities

Gender was identified alike by professionals and pupils as a factor in challenging behaviour. This section will discuss findings in connection with research question 5 which asked about the relative influences of school and wider social factors in shaping the gender and class identities of young people. Social class will be addressed in the next section. In considering gender here, masculinities will be considered first, followed by femininities and then by a discussion of gender alignments and oppositions.

Masculinities

Interesting analyses were offered as to why so many more boys than girls were excluded. Of these, coming through most strongly was the notion of the culture of the peer group and its influence on boys' behaviour. Senior managers in schools as well as pupils themselves spoke of the pressure on boys to conform to that culture and explained that, when it was oppositional to school as it often seemed to be, boys as a group showed up badly in the formal indicators of school success. There was evidence that the positioning of boys to schooling was linked to their pursuit of powerful and high-status masculinities (Epstein, 1997; Skelton, 1998; Jackson, 2002; Mac an Ghaill, 1994). Among the group of 17 case study boys were some who had been very successful in those negotiations and whose observed classroom behaviour was about the assertion of those masculinities to the undermining of teachers' authority and to the detriment of good classroom order. There were also other boys who had been less successful in negotiating hegemonic masculinity but who, nevertheless, sacrificed their relationships with teachers in order to pursue that aim. The study provided further evidence that the pursuit of the impossible fiction of hegemonic masculinity (Renold, 2004: 250) was difficult both for boys who were succeeding and for boys who were failing to establish this form of identity. Some boys were seen to juggle their claims to dominant, anti-school masculinities with their desire to use school to gain qualifications; other boys inhabiting the same kind of masculinity and from within the same peer group were moving rapidly away from school and towards uncertain futures. Different choices here seemed partly to do with families and their capacity to provide stability and support for a lengthier adolescence in which sons would not be earning. In facing uncertain futures and highly individualised choices, the boys in this study differed from Willis's 'lads' whose futures were all too evident to them and who moved towards those futures as a group. The individualisation of experience of transition from school to adult life contrasted with the strong collective identities valued by both boys and girls, for example, in their sense of community and locality, and in their support of football teams.

Femininities

There were far fewer girls who were excluded and they were excluded less often than most of the boys. Tinklin et al (2003) discussed differences in girls' and boys' engagement with schooling. These were evident in attitudes towards schooling, experiences of peer culture, experiences of teaching and learning processes, curriculum content, assessment processes, teacher-pupil interactions, parental attitudes and in post-school opportunities. Those differences were not apparent in this study because its focus was on girls and boys who were excluded and that was an experience common to boys and girls. The reasons for girls' exclusion were the same as the reasons why boys were excluded, that is, for general and persistent disobedience and for verbal abuse of teachers. Among the whole group of excluded pupils, there was some evidence that gender dichotomies broke down. Girls and boys valorized 'acting out' behaviour from both girls and boys and united with each other in school and out of school in locating the 'Other' in, for example, teachers, well-behaved pupils, young people from localities other than their own. This finding is at odds with some of the literature which has tended to characterise 'problem' girls as 'acting in' and as experiencing little commonality with boys (Brown and Gilligan, 1992; Osler et al, 2002). Further, adolescent girls were noted in the literature as experiencing a loss of voice or agency at that stage in their lives. Agency will be discussed more fully further on but the girls in this study did not conform to this description. There were only three case study girls but there is evidence from beyond the study that the problem behaviour of girls is becoming more like the problem behaviour of boys. The Herald (18/9/2006) in its front page lead story reports that the number of girls involved in crime in Scotland has increased by 40% in five years:

> *More than 4200 female offenders were referred to Scotland's children's hearing system in 2005 – 06, new figures revealed yesterday. That is up from fewer than 3000 in 2000 – 01, as increasing numbers of girls became sucked into a culture of fighting, drinking and thieving.*

The article goes on to explain that persistent young offenders have complex problems and tended to have been referred at an early age because of concerns about their care and protection. This was significantly more likely to be the case for girls than boys. However, there were indications that girls' offences were becoming more serious. A representative of the Chairs of Scotland's children's panels commented:

> *Over the years we have moved away from young women coming before us for typical shoplifting offences such as stealing make-up out of Boots'. We have moved to a much more serious type of laddish culture. With more assaults and*

fights over boyfriends. The difference between masculinity and femininity is starting to disappear (The Herald, 18/9/2006)

Similarly, most recent statistics on school exclusions in Scotland (Scottish Executive 2007) show a tenfold increase in the number of girls excluded from primary schools in the 2005/06 session. The number is still a small proportion of the total number of pupils excluded but there are indications that girls' behaviour is changing. This is not to concur with the quotation above in saying that girls are becoming more masculine but the range of femininities may be changing. This would be worth investigating further.

Gender oppositions and alignments

For boys and girls, there was strong evidence of the pull of the peer group and those peer groups were mixed-gender. In interview, many pupils talked of their pleasure in their friends' company and of friendship as a mainspring in their lives. Friendship groups were locally- as well as school-based and were strongly rooted in particular communities and neighbourhoods. Sometimes, unacceptable behaviour in school was a demonstration of solidarity amongst the friendship group. But sometimes exclusions occurred because of non-school issues in friendship groups. The sense of belonging to a particular neighbourhood was bonding for young people and allowed girls and boys to transcend. gender oppositions.

Girls' alignment of their interests with boys and in opposition to others in school could be viewed as a way of rejecting other, more passive, feminine identities. Through their friendships with boys, girls gained access to public spaces and to accepted norms of behaviour which would have been hard to reach in the company of other girls alone. Although these alignments offered advantages to girls, girls and boys were not eroding gender differences within them. Girls were able to alternate between 'tomboy' and 'glamour' images, to emphasise their differences from boys as well as their commonalities with boys. Francis (2005:14), in her study of gender identity negotiations in classrooms, indicated that girls and boys cooperated to construct genders as opposite. The evidence in this study was that gender oppositions existed within broader gender alignments. Underpinning those alignments was a shared social class positioning. Girls and boys did not have equal power and status within these alignments. For example, although girls' aggressive behaviour was sometimes admired by boys, it was also spoken of in patronising ways. This would not necessarily be offensive to the girls in question. There was no sense of girls competing with boys for power and status within the peer group. In their aggressive behaviours and in their affiliations with boys, girls were not becoming more masculine,

they were not trying to negotiate a high status gender identity nor to challenge boys' dominance. Rather, they were seeking to do femininities in fluid ways. Findings in this respect challenge newspaper reports such as the one quoted above. Although it was harder for boys than for girls in this study to negotiate and occupy different kinds of gender identities, masculine identity was higher status than any kind of feminine identity. This is consistent with Reays's finding:

> *Within both localised and dominant discourses that these children draw on being a boy is still seen as best by all the boys and a significant number of girls. (Reay, 2001:164)*

The distribution of power within gender relationships in this study shows no change since the 1980s when Willis's 'lads' dominated the girls of their acquaintance. It was not clear if the girls here were exploited in the ways apparent in Learning to Labour. What was different in this study was cross-gender friendships and affiliations, signalling a change since Willis's Learning to Labour and one that seems to impact upon the behaviours of girls, in particular. The next section will focus on social class as a dimension of the boys' and girls' identities affecting their exclusion from school.

10.4 Class identities

Social class has pervaded the findings of this study; its presence was apparent in case study pupils' articulation of Ned identities; in their experience of friendship, family and poverty; and in their constructions of their futures. Furlong (1985) noted that social class, educational attainment and challenging behaviour have long been linked but never acted upon:

> *One of the most consistent findings to emerge from sociological research on indiscipline at school is that as a phenomenon it is far more common among working-class than among middle-class children..........Pupils are seen as rejecting school because they are in the bottom stream or band, not because they are working-class. The fact that the majority of pupils in these bottom streams are working-class has remained a recognized but unexplored side issue. (Furlong, 1985: 152)*

Working-class disaffection from schooling has been located by some commentators as part of a broader pattern of social inequality within schooling. Some commentators have positioned education as instrumental in the distribution of social advantage and disadvantage (Willis, 1978; Ball, 1981; Reay, 1998). Ball (1981) addressed the question of why working-class children generally fared badly in school systems. He investigated how social class emerges as a major discriminating factor in the distribution of success and

failure (xv) in Beachside and charts the processes through which this occurs. His fieldwork, conducted in 1976, came early in the introduction of comprehensive schools in England and addressed the relationship between school stratification of pupils and the reproduction of wider social class structures. At the time of Ball's study, aspirations were that the new comprehensive system per se would bring about changes in the social class inequalities in education that had been caused by middle-class domination of the grammar schools (Ball, 1981: 31). Where in-school stratification continued through classes banded on ability, Ball's conclusion was:

> ...it is apparent that, while going some way towards solving the gross social problems and social inequalities which were a characteristic of the bipartite system, the streamed comprehensive school does produce an unstable, polarized social structure amongst its pupils, which in turn gives rise to considerable teaching and social control problems for teachers. (Ball, 1981: 283)

More recently, in relation to developments in inclusive schooling, Whitty et al (2000) have commented that even when inequalities of access have been addressed, the unequal outcomes of schooling remain (Whitty et al, 2000). The disproportionate exclusion of working-class boys may be seen as indicative of a broader working-class alienation from education. Why do working-class children experience higher levels of disengagement and disaffection in school? This section will discuss the link between working-class identities and school exclusions, first by considering economic factors and then by exploring the class cultural identities of excluded pupils.

Pupils' economic background as a cause of exclusion

Throughout this study, professionals constructed the causes of exclusions as the social, economic and cultural circumstances within which young people lived their lives. The schools across the two phases of the research served very different kinds of communities, from those showing some of the highest indicators of poverty in Scotland to very affluent, middle-class areas. None of those interviewed attributed levels of school exclusion to in-school causes and they varied in how far they thought in-school support systems could help. Where reductions in exclusions had been achieved, there was a view that only the 'soft edges' of exclusions had been tackled. What remained, it appeared, were much more hard-core difficulties beyond the school's influence. All of these professional respondents believed that exclusions would continue to be a necessary tactic for schools if they were to protect the educational experience of the majority. This is a very deterministic view and a very challenging one for those concerned with social justice in school settings.

Many young people in the case study phase were preoccupied with survival issues. Their families were struggling with problems arising from poverty - poor physical and mental health, drug and alcohol addiction, inadequate housing and limited opportunities for social life and recreational activities. Most of the young people, and all of the girls, were closely aligned with their families and some of them took very practical responsibility for them, for example, by working part-time, helping with housework or caring for a parent with mental health problems. Stress and emotional insecurity loomed large in the lives of case study pupils, rendering some of them edgy and angry and shaping their engagement with schooling. There was evidence that the negative effect of exclusions was felt through the additional stress placed on family relationships. Many pupils cited this as the main source of concern when they were excluded. A number of commentators have discussed the impact of poverty on the lives of children and particularly on their experience of school (Reay, 1998, Ridge, 2005). Its exclusionary effect on young people has been identified; the economic restrictions of some pupils' lives preventing full participation. Poverty has been noted as a factor in withdrawal or self exclusion from school, forms of exclusion particularly affecting girls. This study provided evidence that the stresses of poverty contributed to formal exclusion from school.

Poverty also impacted on the procedures resulting in exclusion. Vincent (2000) argued that the reforms of the 1980s and 90s which claimed to increase parents' role in education had failed to recognize the differential positioning of parents to schooling, positions largely determined by social class. Some parents had little effect in the school processes which helped to shape their children's identity; other parents had a formative effect on schools' views of their children (Reay and Wilian, 1999; Hamilton, 2002). Families' differential relationships to schooling were illustrated with regard to exclusion. Some parents could be proactive in allaying schools' concerns and forestalling the exclusion of their child. Once the exclusion had been effected, parents with greater resources were more likely to ensure the deterrent effect of the exclusion and prevent future exclusions. For other parents, exclusion was experienced as a direct punishment for themselves and an experience which impacted on their engagement with schooling into the future (Parsons, 1999; Hanafin and Lynch, 2002; MacDonald and Thomas, 2003). Economic circumstances and their impact on families were a clear contributory factor to pupils' exclusion from school, and in their wider non-participation in education.

In discussing their futures, the economic circumstances of pupils' lives came to the fore. A number of them were earning and the boys in particular spoke of the need to get a good job and cited this as a main reason for continuing in school. Only one of the twenty case study

pupils, the middle-class boy, indicated his intention of proceeding to Higher Education, although a number of the case study pupils were acknowledged as bright by their schools. Teachers saw this as a result of pupils' limited horizons and saw schools as having a part to play in raising the aspirations of boys:

> *I keep saying to C----, "Why don't you just get your head down, pick something you would really, really, love to do" and he can't see why a scaffolder isn't the best thing he can ever do. And obviously, education has a part to play in that. (PT Behaviour Support)*

Education can open up options for pupils but the real circumstances of their lives may motivate against pursuing those options. For example, considerable financial resources are required for participation in Higher Education, resources not available to most of the families in this study. There was a sense in which the pupils in this study were moving into adult life more quickly than their middle-class counterparts who would expect their transitions into adult life to be scaffolded for them by their families through continued financial support, for example. Case study pupils were moving towards independence, speaking of joining the army or becoming a car mechanic, jobs which for some of them marked a lowering of expectations as adult life approached. There were echoes of Willis's Learning to Labour in the ways working-class boys in this study constructed their futures from their experience of the working lives of those around them. Family and community could be seen as limiting the aspirations of girls and boys. Alternatively, the paths pupils were mapping out for themselves could be the only paths open to them, offering them financial independence in their teens. Willis's analysis has been criticised as attributing no individual agency to the 'lads'. Their transition from school to work was determined by the economic order of industrial capitalism and was experienced collectively by the lads. The same economic determinism shaped the future lives of most of the pupils in this study but, unlike Willis's lads, their transitions were not experienced collectively. This bears out findings of other studies which have noted that contemporary transitions of working-class young people are more extended and more laden with risk. Commentators (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Giddens, 1990, 1991) have noted that the changes of the past twenty or thirty years have led to a heightened sense of risk amongst young people. This heightened sense of risk came through in Ross's claims not to think about the future because it was too uncertain. Moreover, unlike Willis's lads, young people perceive themselves as having to negotiate risk and insecurity at an individual level (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Gormley, 2003). In the midst of social change, however, Gormley (2003) notes that inequalities of class and gender remain constants.

Questions are opened up as to the role schooling should play in the lives of young working-class people. There were signs that case study pupils were moving away from schooling as they reached adolescence; their formal exclusions were part of a wider pattern of disengagement from schooling. In marked contrast to the PT Behaviour Support suggestion that schools should raise pupils' aspirations, some schools have tried to increase engagement and counter disaffection by providing a more 'relevant' curriculum of basic skills and vocational courses. By attempting to engage pupils in this way, schools could be seen as preparing their pupils for lives of social exclusion. The development of school provision is discussed further on under the implications of the study.

Class cultural identities and schooling

Willis's explanation of disaffection from school was persuasive when considering young men who were moving towards a world of work where male identities in particular were shaped by relationships to the means of production. However, that world of work was not open to the case study pupils and the values and forms of social organisation arising from work no longer prevailed for them. Willis's 'lads' had a very strong collective opposition to school reflecting the strong value placed by their community upon workplace solidarity. The four case study schools in this study were in urban, post-industrial communities formerly dominated by the steel and mining industries. Attitudes similar to those noted by Willis were evident in this study, for example, the value placed on humour and the ability to entertain, solidarity with the peer group and a sense of belonging, the importance of sporting prowess, physical strength and fitness. Also similar to Willis's 'lads' was young peoples sense of being socially as well as physically anchored in working-class communities. Archer and Yamashita (2003:119) noted that boys in their study in the North-east of England articulated a sense of belonging to a place as constituting an important part of their identities. This linked to their need to feel safe, to be known and accepted. This was true in this study but there was evidence that sense of belonging to one place was constructed also as not belonging to other places. Territorial conflicts figured largely in the lives of girls and boys interviewed.

It is hard to separate locality from community in the sense of belonging articulated by case study pupils. Belonging to a place could also be a metaphor for cultural affiliation. This class cultural identity came across in a number of ways but most conspicuously in their speech. It has not been possible in this thesis to convey the vibrancy of the dialect/language used by the pupils interviewed for this study but their speech was a confident assertion of their working-class, west of Scotland identities. Archer and Yamashita (2003:119) detected

agency in the ways in which working-class boys in their study in the North-east of England constructed their identities through speech, dress and physical presentation They argued that the adoption of particular kinds of embodied masculinities would be likely to hinder the social mobility of the boys, for example, through job interviews.

There was no indication for the pupils in this study that they sought social mobility. Where pupils belong to socially excluded communities their strong and self-conscious sense of belonging may operate against educational achievement. The economic barriers to Higher Education were discussed above but it is possible that cultural factors also posed a barrier to participation in education beyond the compulsory phase of schooling. The credentials offered by educational success may have been viewed as threatening dislocation and cultural disconnection. It was noticeable that only the middle-class boy in this study saw a future for himself in Higher Education.

The complexity of the identities pursued by young people in this study points to how important out-of school influences were for adolescents. Archer and Yamashita (2003: 129) argue that education policy has taken too narrow a perspective on boys' relatively low attainment by attributing this to 'laddishness' and neglecting the impact of social and cultural change on the identities of working-class men. Gormley (2005) summarises these thus:

> *Young people's relationships with family and friends have changed, their experiences of education and the labour markets have altered dramatically, while their leisure and lifestyle choices have developed in ways that reflect the post-industrial consumer culture that they are immersed in (www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/social/eyps-02.asp, accessed 29/7/2003)*

The experience of case study pupils reflected these changes. The implications for policy and schooling are discussed further on but first the question of agency in pupils' exclusion will be considered.

10.5 Agency and exclusions

Discussion throughout this thesis has touched upon a longstanding sociological debate as to whether structure or agency is the dominant force in working-class alienation from education. Research question 4 asked how far pupils were exercising agency in the processes leading to their exclusion. There were indications that oppositional attitudes to schooling were a matter of pupil choice. For example, pupils such as Ross were challenging teachers in classrooms in a deliberate and controlled way. On the other hand,

there was evidence that factors such as poverty and pupils' views of their own futures impelled them towards conflict with schooling. Agency was detected in pupils' behaviour but not always in opposition to school. The economic and social circumstances of some case study pupils' lives made engagement with schooling difficult and so their attendance could be seen as a considerable personal commitment in overcoming barriers to their participation. This section will consider directly how far and in what ways pupils were excluded as a result of their agency, or the agency of others.

There was evidence that schooling became less and less important in the lives of some young people as they started secondary school and moved towards leaving school. Attendance declined and participation in voluntary school activities, for example, sports, was minimal for the group of excluded pupils. In many cases, this was in contrast to their engagement with primary education where some, but not all, excluded pupils such as Gary had been happy, settled and engaged. Pupils could be seen as exercising choice in turning away from school as they grew up. The challenge they presented to school systems and to prevalent norms of behaviour could be interpreted as a means for adolescents to distance themselves from schooling. Their oppositional behaviour could be viewed as part of a conscious process of negotiating independent adult identities. Such a construction would not explain why the majority of excluded pupils are working-class adolescents.

Munn and Lloyd (2005) discuss the concept of agency in relation to excluded pupils:

> *A consideration of agency opens up questions of responsibility, resistance and compliance both at individual and institutional levels (Munn and Lloyd, 2005: 208)*

They argue that the concept is helpful in determining the extent to which the school has been the agent of exclusion, through, for example, the unfair behaviour of the teacher. Pupils in this study on occasions saw teachers as the cause of their exclusion, explaining their own anger and verbal abuse as having been provoked by teachers' failure to treat them with respect. There were also some indications that pupils believed their exclusion had been brought about because teachers expected them to misbehave based on their past behaviour, or sometimes even on the behaviour of an older sibling. The fairness or otherwise of exclusions was an important issue for young people. They believed they were sometimes the victims of deliberate, highly subjective and even whimsical judgements leading to their exclusion. Professionals argue against a strict tariff system for exclusions because the rigidity of that system would limit their scope for considering all of the circumstances of the pupil's life at the time of the incident. This is a strong argument but

there was no evidence that it was appreciated by pupils – they saw differences as unfair rather than appropriate to individual circumstances.

Munn and Lloyd also note that excluded pupils sometimes saw themselves as the agents of their own exclusion and demonstrated a tendency to individualise problems and see them as private troubles (Munn and Lloyd, 2005: 213). This was not the case for a number of pupils in this study who saw themselves as the agents of their own exclusion but they valorized their actions as asserting their right to be treated respectfully by teachers. For pupils, their agency had a social purpose and was related to their negotiations of particular kinds of identity. School staff were more likely to attribute exclusions to individual or private difficulties. This contrast again illustrates how pupils sometimes resisted the label, or the identity, schools attempted to construct for them, especially where that label was demeaning. Social interactionists argued that for someone to be successfully 'typed' or labeled, s/he had to cooperate in accepting the label. Gender theorists (Connell, 1995; 2002; Francis and Skelton, 2001; Francis, 2005) offered a more developed view whereby identities were fluid, layered and subject to ongoing negotiations in school settings and elsewhere. In resisting attempts to pathologise their behaviour, pupils were negotiating identities more powerful and attractive than those offered by the school. By attributing behaviour difficulties to pupils' individual and personal troubles, teachers would see themselves as embodying a 'welfare approach' to young people, rather than a wholly punitive one. Parsons (2005: 199) argues that a genuine support-based, nurturing approach is 'aspirational' only without a global redistribution of wealth. Most approaches to challenging behaviour in his view embody 'a third way' approach, combining individual and structural solutions. Even those attempts to label which were well-intentioned could deny agency to pupils themselves.

Power is distributed and withheld in school communities in ways which minimize participation for some within the school community. Schooling does not generally involve pupils in 'naming the world' (Freire, 1970). Pupils are not actively engaged in the web of social relations through which common understandings are constructed and shared values are formed. They tend to be on the receiving end, rather than the formative end, of the judgements which matter. Schools allow very little control to pupils, in part because they are seen to be children and also because schools are traditionally very hierarchical. For pupils such as Andy and Ross, who were organising their own lives, school seemed to be challenging their self-determination and exerting over them what Willis (1979) called 'an unjustified authority'. Excluded pupils may be seen as exercising agency, therefore, in the

conscious and continuing challenge they present to the authority of the school. This challenge is part of a process of negotiation of particular kinds of masculine identities:

> *...the relationships constructing masculinity are dialectical; they do not correspond to the one-way causation of a socialization model (Connell, 1995: 37).*

Schools could do more to recognise the dialectic involved in processes of identity negotiation by increasing opportunities for pupil participation. This would help to avoid the attribution of labels unwelcome to pupils.

Pupils demonstrated agency in their anti-school behaviour and exclusion but that agency was shaped by the particular circumstances of their lives. For many pupils, schooling was perceived to be irrelevant to the lives they were leading and were likely to lead in the future. They and their families were ill-placed to engage with schooling in ways helpful to their attainment and to their life chances. For other pupils – all boys-, impact on family was no deterrent. They exercised control over their own lives and parental involvement in their exclusion was token only. In the processes leading to and following on from exclusion, schools attribute an agency to parents which many do not possess. Poverty and its associated problems had overwhelmed some of the families in this study and rendered them less able to intervene to forestall exclusion or to ensure its deterrent effect in the future. As well as being preoccupied with survival issues, some parents also lacked the economic resources which would have enhanced their participation in their children's schooling, for example, they had no land lines and sometimes no contact phone at all. Thus, pupils from working class families, especially those living in poverty, were more likely to be excluded initially and more likely to be excluded on repeated occasions.

Pupils in this study were engaged in the active negotiation of gender and class identities and to that extent they exercised agency. The range of identities open to pupils was set by structural factors, by the economic circumstances of their lives. Indications came from schools of their limited influence over the lives of pupils, as was sometimes expressed by school staff:

> *Sometimes they are a bit of an enigma to me.........all these boys actually, I would say that all of them are probably bright enough to play their future out so differently but they just can't. (Behaviour Support Teacher)*

The next section will consider the implications of these discussions for policy and for school practices.

10.6 Policy implications

Evidence from this study and others (Munn et al, 2000; Parsons, 2000) is that issues of social justice are raised by the disproportionate exclusion of working-class boys and girls. The final section of this chapter will consider what this means for policy and school provision. The problem for schools will be outlined and set against the wider problem schools cause by excluding some pupils. Attempts to reduce exclusions will be critically reviewed in the light of findings here on pupils' gender and class identities. The discussion will address research question 6: how can school provision be developed in ways that reduce exclusion? Finally, the wider social and economic context of schooling will be considered and its impact on experience of school evaluated.

10.6.1 School exclusion and social exclusion

The final research question asked how schooling should be developed to reduce exclusions. School exclusions present a dilemma for social policy in Scotland. Exclusion was noted as serving only one purpose for 20% pupils repeatedly excluded in any one year; it protected learning and teaching in the classroom for teachers and other pupils. From classroom observation and from interviews with staff and pupils, there was considerable evidence that the behaviour of some pupils was undermining of teaching and learning. The exclusion of those pupils was indeed helpful to the calm functioning of classrooms. Teachers' views of exclusions varied slightly from SEED's here in that they saw exclusions as not just ensuring continuity of learning and teaching but also as providing respite from the hostile and sometimes highly abusive behaviour of some pupils. Some of those repeatedly excluded were working-class children living in poverty. Along with their families, they experienced the emotional, social and physical stresses of poverty, as well as its material deprivations. Those circumstances affected their engagement with schooling and contributed to their repeated exclusion. In turn, their exclusion undermined their education, compounding their social marginalization for the present and into the future.

Attempts to break this cycle have come from school policy initiatives and broader social policy. Through a welter of initiatives under the Better Behaviour Better Learning banner, schools have addressed the development of school and classroom ethos, with some success in reducing challenging behaviour and exclusions. For example, one issue raised by classroom disruption was teachers' skills in managing behaviour; the same group of pupils may work purposefully with one teacher whilst creating havoc with another teacher. Staff development and implementation of behaviour management packages such as Discipline for Learning may help teachers to improve their skills. Such measure went only so far in

the view of professionals interviewed. There were behaviours that were not caused by school factors, nor were those behaviours susceptible to school remedies. Schools had moved some way to improving provision and practice but school improvement in itself was seen to address neither the causes nor the symptoms of some very challenging behaviours.

Social inclusion policy and school policy have recognized the difficulties of some groups in engaging with mainstream services. In education, initiatives such as the New Community Schools roll-out and, more recently, Schools of Ambition, have tried to foster the educational prospects of marginalized groups. From evaluative studies (Munn et al, 2004), there were indications that additional staffing provided under Better Behaviour, Better Learning funding was helpful to some of the young people, especially where that staffing related to the whole experience of young people. Home/School Link Workers, in particular, had gained the trust and confidence of some of the case study pupils who were experiencing greatest difficulty in their home lives. As a result of the support they received, young people were perhaps less angry and brittle in school settings, more able to deal with the stresses of their lives, and had access to an adult who could mediate on their behalf with the school. While this helped maintain pupils' connection to schooling, and reduced exclusions, it did not assist with their participation in the curriculum. Learning within the curriculum is the core function of schooling, providing amongst other things the credentials necessary for young people to make successful transitions to work and wider social participation. Retaining children on the margins of schooling is better than allowing them to become detached altogether but it will not equip them for a future away from the periphery of society.

Some commentators have detected a 'welfare' approach to challenging behaviour rather than a punitive approach (Parsons, 2005; MacLeod and Munn, 2005) in some anti-exclusion policy initiatives. Such approaches may be stigmatizing of families (Millbourne et al, 2002) and have no impact on the wider context causing their social exclusion in the first place (Riddell and Tett, 2000; Whitty, 2001; Macrae et al, 2003). There was evidence in this study that case study pupils did not welcome 'welfare' approaches from teachers, preferring conflict and exclusion. Their negotiation of working-class, masculine identities in particular precluded their acceptance of labels demeaning to them. They and their families were not well-positioned in relation to education because of wider structural inequalities. The social inclusion initiatives they experienced were not intended to tackle those inequalities and were seen in this study to be capable of supporting pupils on the margins but not of moving them into the mainstream processes of schooling.

10.6.2 Policy initiatives to reduce exclusion

Social policy has targeted, sometimes literally, a reduction in school exclusions and schools have developed a number of strategies to achieve that end. One such strategy has been the development of stronger systems of behaviour support, sometimes in the form of bases or units within the mainstream school (Head et al, 2002, Kane et al, 2004). Behaviour Support Bases in secondary schools have been used flexibly for number of purposes but have sometimes been used as means of reducing exclusions by enabling 'internal exclusion' (Munn et al, 1997). In addition, schools have been criticised for under-reporting exclusions (Munn et al, 2000) and there was further evidence here that this is, indeed, the case. For example, Craig's exclusions seemed not always to be recorded. In primary school he was sent home a few times but this was not 'suspended' as such:

They just called it a cooling-off period or something (Craig)

However, schools were very open about their use of the 'sending home' mechanism whereby pupils were sent away with a letter home and told to return only when their parent could come to the school to discuss matters. Schools' frankness here suggests that they saw this tack as a means of managing responsibly fraught situations, of defusing conflict and preventing exclusion and not just as a means of massaging exclusion statistics. The monitoring of numbers of exclusions was viewed by schools as framed by the school improvement discourse (rather than a social justice discourse) and, as with the monitoring of attainment through Scottish Qualifications Agency data, there was scepticism that this exercise (even without the target-setting dimension) could assist the capacity of schools to provide well for young people. In fact, in their openness about sending pupils home, schools seemed to see themselves as setting their care/welfare responsibilities against their accountability function in terms of reporting exclusions.

Behaviour support in the four secondary schools in this study was much more refined than simply a means of 'internal exclusions'. Again and again in interviews, school staff spoke of their desire for flexibility to accommodate the range of pupil needs. Since Warnock (DES, 1978) and the HMI Progress Report in Scotland (SOEID, 1978) this flexibility has been in terms of the curriculum with differentiated approaches taking all pupils towards the same broad educational aims. Indeed, the 5 – 14 initiative in Scotland was heralded as offering the Scottish system, for the first time, an inclusive curricular framework. Some have argued that this framework provides all the inclusion that is needed, with special and mainstream schools continuing to operate in parallel towards the same goals. There is evidence emerging from schools to suggest that this concensus around the common goals

of education is breaking down. Schools are again looking for 'alternative curricula' and perceptions of the relevance of education to the prospective lives of young people is taking schools towards very functional, skills-based curriculum packages for some children (Dyson, 2001).

There was evidence from key informant interviews that schools' attempts to avoid the exclusion of some young people had led them to patronize alternative forms of provision outwith the school sector, for example, provision offered by the FE sector and by private providers traditionally associated with post-compulsory and vocational education. This practice was an expensive drain on public resources and, in addition, the provision was not quality assured and supported through, for example, systems of staff development. The symbolic importance of these practices outweighs pragmatic considerations – they reveal not only individual schools but the state system itself to be shedding responsibility for some pupils. The impetus for schools to build their own inclusive capacity had been made explicit in *Better Behaviour....Better Learning* (SEED, 2001) but, nevertheless, schools in areas with high levels of social exclusion were reported as seeking solutions elsewhere. This would seem to indicate an abandonment of some of the principles of inclusion and breadth of access which have been pursued for decades in Scottish education. Inclusion is constructed as education which is relevant to the current circumstances of the pupil rather than appropriate to their higher aspirations. Rather than schools enabling upward social mobility in Scottish society, the practice points to schools educating some children for a life of exclusion.

Exclusion is the effect rather than the intention of school policy, particularly with regard to raising attainment. The tension between the policy priorities of inclusion and raising attainment have been noted by some commentators (Parsons, 1999; Cooper, 2000) as contributing to rising rates of school exclusion. Clark et al (1998) set this particular conflict in priorities in a broader incompatibility in the purposes of schooling between, for example, the achievement of equity alongside the maximising of individual achievement and the development of the nations's economic infrastructure. (Clark et al, 198: 167). Through empirical studies, commentators (Florian and Rouse, 2003) have explored whether inclusion and raising attainment are mutually exclusive and have found this to be not necessarily the case. Evidence emerged in this study, too, of classrooms where cooperative teaching was used to great effect in ensuring the learning of all pupils, including one case study pupil who was observed to be very disruptive in another lesson. School staff in this study reported difficulty in pursuing both priorities simultaneously, especially when raising attainment was linked to academic targets. Respondents

emphasised the purpose of exclusions as to protect ongoing learning and teaching and suggested that some of the pressures felt by teachers (and communicated to pupils) to ensure coverage of the curriculum resulted in a less tolerant approach to distraction. In the drive to raise attainment, those who were perceived to counter the school's efforts could be excluded in a variety of ways, including self-exclusion, segregation in a base or attendance at provision outwith formal school settings. With regard to raising attainment in this study, there was an indication that parents and young people were selecting schools according to their image as either 'inclusive' or 'strict'. The key informant boys interviewed suggested that the two local secondary schools had very different images in the community, so much so that parents would cross the denominational divide and split siblings to try to gain schooling appropriate to their child's needs. This suggests that, at least in the perception of the community, schools are choosing to prioritise academic attainment or supportive/ inclusive practices. In some communities, there would seem to be a danger of a bipartite system of education emerging.

10.6.3 Development of policy and provision

Study of class and gender identities, the means by which they are negotiated in and beyond school settings, and the structural limits to those negotiations, can offer insights into the disproportionate exclusion of some groups. What do those insights mean for how school provision is developed? There is an extensive literature on the development of inclusive schooling (for example, Thomas and Loxley, 2001; Skidmore, 2004; Thomas and Vaughan, 2004; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Rix et al, 2005), particularly on the development of inclusive schooling for pupils with SEN/ASN. More recently that body of literature has been extended to encompass inclusion as it pertains to socially excluded pupils (Whitty et al, 2000; Dyson, 2001). Discussion of inclusive approaches for pupils with SEN/ASN has focused recently on pedagogies to support classroom inclusion (Norwich, 1989; Davis and Florian, 2004). This study did not contribute to that aspect of the inclusion debate although there was a startling contrast in the behaviour of one case-study boy between two different lessons, indicating the importance of teachers' values and commitment to inclusive pedagogies in ensuring positive experiences of schooling. This is not to argue that the development of pedagogies will in itself prevent exclusion in all or even most cases. This thesis argues that some pupils are negotiating particular identities through individual and collective opposition to schooling and that those negotiations relate to lives beyond schooling. Some pupils in this study behaved very badly: their presence in school made life very difficult for teachers and sometimes for other pupils. They present a substantial challenge to advocates of inclusive schooling. At the moment, the solution for schools is to discard those pupils through repeated and ever-lengthening exclusions. This

practice is incompatible with a commitment to social justice in the education system and so there is an imperative towards their inclusion. This is not to suggest a utopian vision of school inclusion whereby intractable educational problems related to structural inequality might be resolved. The impact of the wider social context on schooling is discussed below. In pursuit of equity, though, development of school provision may be helpful for some pupils.

How can schools respond to the disengagement of some pupils, mainly working-class boys? In this study some boys were given space to move away from the peer group by setting and streaming but for many others, those organisational practices consolidated their disengagement from schooling. Other strategies used by schools to address gender inequalities were underpinned by the misguided notion that masculinity is one-dimensional, inherent and static. Munn and Lloyd (2005) argue that schools can promote inclusion by tackling the strong sense coming from excluded pupils that teachers do not listen, do not treat pupils with respect, and do not behave fairly. Excluded pupils in this study shared these perceptions of some teachers but they also had contrasting experiences of other members of staff, some of whom were teachers. Where there were mutually-respectful relationships between pupils and a member of staff, a very valuable point of contact with schooling was created for pupils who were otherwise rapidly disengaging. The rigid organisation of secondary schooling prevented the maximum opportunity being made of those positive relationships. In pursuit of increased flexibility, schools have developed much stronger systems of pupil support, including behaviour support. In the case study schools, there were well-developed and sometimes highly individualized systems of pupil support. However, as pupils spent more and more time in Behaviour Support classes and bases, their curriculum shifted towards personal and social development (PSD), counselling and anger management. Some had cause to be angry and anger management was helpful to them but it was usually provided at the expense of an academic curriculum, even where pupils had high levels of ability in the subjects they missed. In those circumstances, subject teachers sometimes expressed their sense of the unfairness to pupils.

The flexibility offered by systems of behaviour support has been helpful for schools but it has also increased their capacity for curricular exclusion. More flexible ways of organising the curriculum could help pupils to make the most of positive connections some had. For example, options available to pupils at the end of S2 have become increasingly restricted as the curriculum has become ever more prescribed. A core plus options curricular structure, separated out from age and stage correspondences, would enable all pupils to

spend more time in areas where they were doing well and where their motivations were higher. According greater scope to pupils and families generally in planning their curriculum would also be consistent with increasing their participation in schooling. Within such a structure, behaviour support could become itself less marginalised if it fulfilled a curricular planning role for some pupils within a broader system of pupil support. Dyson et al (2003) reviewed the literature on school inclusion and identified the need for schools to build close relations with parents and communities based on developing a shared commitment to inclusive values. The study offered some insight into how school organisation might be developed to allow greater participation of parents. The Scottish Executive coordinating the development of a single curricular framework covering the age range 3 – 18 (Scottish Executive, 2006). Progress towards *A Curriculum for Excellence* offers an opportunity to enable greater choice and flexibility within the curriculum and thereby increase the participation in schooling of pupils and families.

10.6.4 The social and economic context and its impact on schooling

Both of the ways of conceptualising challenging behaviour in policy – as a kind of SEN/ASN and as a deficiency in schools - were criticised in Chapter 2. Behaviours characterized as social, emotional and behavioural difficulties were seen to have been pathologised. It is the contention of this study that, although there were case study pupils for whom this label was appropriate, there were more for whom the label simply obscured a proper focus on what their education should be. A number of pupils in this study were very bright but were increasingly disengaged from schooling. For those pupils, challenging behaviour should be understood not as pathologised difficulties, nor as a systemic school deficiency, but as tied up in pupils' negotiation of particular gender and working-class identities. Increased exclusion from school is related to economic and social change and to resulting poverty and inequality. Such change and its impact on individuals, families and communities is neglected by school improvement projects that attribute only one form of identity to working-class boys and girls – that of school pupils.

As indicated above, the causes of school exclusion are not to be located only in schools and nor will the remedy be found there. Nayak (2003), writing about how boys in the North-east of England constructed their identities in an industrial context much-changed since their fathers' and grandfathers' days, argued that the gender identities of young people cannot be adequately comprehended within the microcosm of the school institution alone (Nayak, 2003: 148). Connell (1989: 292) similarly argues the need for research on identities and identity construction to see the school as located in a larger process. The larger processes of identity construction for pupils in this study were located in a context of

economic disempowerment and social exclusion. Economic factors impacted directly on pupils' engagement with schooling but so, too, did cultural factors arising from working – class identities. Boys in particular were seen to be moving away from schooling, negotiating masculine identities offering high status in their peer group and in their communities but which were very challenging for schools. The 'welfare' labels accorded to them by schools were unacceptable to many of them.

Social inclusion policy offered only weak attempts to address the alienation of pupils and families and may even have exacerbated the problem by stigmatising further those targeted for help. This study showed that some families had no power to influence their children's experience of schooling. Their positioning in relation to schooling was highly disadvantaged for economic and cultural reasons, presenting a significant challenge to schools in enabling their participation.

10.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed exclusions in relation to class, gender, agency and policy. Exclusions have been related to the negotiation of particular gender and class-cultural identities. The economic circumstances of pupils' lives and the identities they negotiate within those circumstances have been shown to tie up with their exclusion from school and with broader working-class experience of education. Pupils exercised agency in the processes leading to their exclusion but that agency was heavily circumscribed by the economic, social and cultural circumstances of their lives.

Repeated experience of school exclusion was seen to undermine and sometimes destroy pupils' participation in schooling and to deny them the benefits accruing from education and formal credentials. A reduction in school exclusions is viewed in policy as a means of tackling future social exclusion. This study questions that policy assumption. The manner in which exclusions are reduced is such that pupils are usually left still on the margins of schooling, attached but not involved. School approaches to tackling exclusion would require greater flexibility of provision for all pupils and much stronger attempts to engage pupils, families and communities in articulating the purposes of schooling and in designing curricular paths related to those purposes. This would help ensure greater consistency between school policy discourse and wider social policy with its emphasis on stakeholding as a means of reconnecting people to mainstream services and opportunities. This would provide a more consistent and a more committed attempt to address social exclusion but still seems unlikely to solve the problem. Structural factors such as poverty and inequality

have been identified as a main cause of exclusion requiring a political commitment; to lift children out of exclusion and marginalisation within schooling, families and communities have to be lifted out of relative poverty.

Just before this thesis went to print the headline of the Guardian (14/2/07) was *'British children poorer: at greater risk and more insecure'*. The article went on to say that with 16.2% of its children living below the poverty line, the United Nations had placed Britain at the bottom of a children's well being league table of advantaged nations. This thesis has argued that poverty is one of the causes of school exclusion because of the stresses caused to pupils and families by material deprivation. Policy constructs the relationship between school exclusion and social exclusion as a causal one: school exclusions are seen to undermine pupils' education and to damage their prospects of gaining the skills and the credentials needed to gain more than low-skill jobs. The causal relationship between school- and social exclusion is two-way, however. Poverty also causes school exclusion but this side of the relationship is less conspicuous in policy. Families living in poverty are disadvantaged in their engagements with schooling: higher rates of exclusion are symptomatic of that disadvantage.

List of references

Ainscow, M. (1993) *Towards Effective Schools for All* National Association for Special Educational Needs

Alvey, S. & Brown, U. (2001) *Social Exclusion: Briefing Sheet 13* Scottish Poverty Information Unit

Archer, L. and Yamashita, H. (2003) Theorising Inner-city masculinities: 'race', class, gender and education *Gender & Education* 15:2: 115 – 132

Arnot M. (2003) Male working-class identities and social justice: a reconsideration of Paul Willis's Learning to Labour in light of contemporary research in C. Vincent *Social Justice, Education and Identity* Routledge-Falmer

Ball, S. (1981) *Beachside Comprehensive* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Ball, S. (1999) Labour, Learning and the Economy: a 'policy' sociology perspective Cambridge Journal of Education 29:2: 195 - 204

Ball, S. (2003) *Class Strategies and the Educational Market: the Middle Classes and Social Advantage* London, Routledge-Falmer

Batchelor, S., Burman, M. & Brown, J. (2001) 'Discussing violence: let's hear it for the girls' *Probation Journal* 48: 2: 125 – 134

Barbour, R. (1998) Mixing Qualitative methods: Quality Assurance or Qualitative Quagmire? Qualitative Health Research 8: 3: 352 – 361

Barbour, R. (2001) *Qualitative Research Methods* Lecture Series, University of Glasgow

Becker, H.S. (1964) *The other side: perspectives on deviance* London, Collier MacMillan

Becker, H.S. (1966) *Outsiders: studies in the sociology of deviance* London, Collier MacMillan

Benn, C. & Chitty, C. (1996) *Is comprehensive schooling alive and well or struggling to survive?* London, David Fulton

Blyth, E. & Milner, J. (1996) Black boys excluded form school: Race or Masculinity Issues? Exclusions from School: In Blyth & Milner (Eds) *Interprofessional issues for policy and practice* London, Routledge

Booth, T., Ainscow, M., Black-Hawkins, K., Vaughan, M. and Shaw, L.(2000) *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools* Bristol, Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education

Bourne, J. & Bridges, L. & Searle, C. (1994) *Outcast England: How schools exclude black children* London, Institute of Race Relations

Broadfoot, P. (1996) *Education, Assessment and Society: a sociological analysis* Buckingham, Open University Press

Brown, J. (2005) '*Violent Girls*': *same or different form 'other' girls?* In Lloyd, G. (Ed) '*Problem Girls: understanding and supporting troubled and troublesome girls and young women* London, Routledge-Falmer

Burman, M., Brown, J. & Batchelor, S. (2003) 'Taking it to heart': girls and the meaning of violence. In Stanko, E. (Ed) *The Meanings of Violence* London, Routledge

Campbell, R. (1995) Weaving a New Tapestry of Research: A Bibliography of Selected Readings on Feminist Research Methods *Women's Studies International Forum* 18: 2: 215 - 222

Campbell, C., Gillborn, D., Lunt, I., Sammons, P., Vincent, C., Warren, S., Whitty, G. & Robertson, P. (2000) *Interchange 66: Developments in Inclusive Schooling* Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

Caulfield, C & Hill, M. (2002) *The experience of black and minority ethnic young people following the transition to secondary school* Glasgow, Scottish Council for Research in Education

Cogan, N. (2004) *Young Carers of Parents with Mental Health Problems*: PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow

Cohen, R., Hughes, J., Ashworth, L. & Blair, M. (1994) School's out: the family perspective on school exclusions Family Service Unit, Barnardo's

Collins, J. & Johnston-Wilder, S. (2005) 'I was never really there': Reflecting on girls' non-participation in school. In Lloyd, G. '*Problem Girls: understanding and supporting troubled and troublesome girls and young women* London, Routledge-Falmer

Connell, R.W. (1995) *Masculinities* Cambridge, Polity Press

Connell, RW (2002) *Gender* Cambridge, Polity Press

Conrad, P (1992) Medicalisation and Social Control *Annual Reviews Social* 18: 209 – 232

Cooper, P., Hart, S., Lovey, J.& McLaughlin, C. (2000) *Positive Alternatives to Exclusion form School* London, Routledge

Cooper, P. & Bilton, K. (2002) *AD/HD: a practical guide for teachers* London, David Fulton

Cribb, A. & Gerwitz, S. (2003) Towards a sociology of just practices: an analysis of plural conceptions of justice in C.Vincent (ed) *Social Justice, Education and Identity* RoutledgeFalmer

Davis, P. & Florian, L. (2004) *Teaching Strategies and Approaches for Pupils with Special Educational Needs: A Scoping Study* London, DfES

Deem, R. (1984) *Unit 26: Gender Differentiation in Schools* Open University Press

DES (1978) *Special Educational Needs: The Warnock Report*, London, HMSO

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2003) *The Landscape of Qualitative Research* London, Sage Publications

Dyson, A (2001) Special needs in the twenty-first century: where we've been and where we're going *British Journal of Special Education* 21: 8: 24 - 29

Dyson, A., Howes, A.& Roberts, B. (2003) *What do we really know about inclusive schools? A systematic review of the research evidence* Paper to AERA, Chicago, April, 2003

Edwards, A. & Talbot, R (1994) *The Hard-pressed researcher: a Research handbook for the caring professions* London, Longman

Epstein D (1997) *Boyz, own stories: masculinities and sexualities in schools* Gender and Education 9: 105 – 115

Epstein D (1998) Real boys don't work: 'underachievement', masculinity and the harassment of 'sissies'. *Failing Boys? Issues in gender and achievement.* D Epstein, J Elwood, V Hey and J Maw. Buckingham. Open University Press

Erikson, E.H. (1968) *Identity: youth and crisis* London, Faber

Florian, L. (1998) An examination of the practical problems associated with the implementation of inclusive education policies *Support for Learning* 13:3:105 – 108

Florian, L. and Rouse, M. (2001) Inclusive Practice in English Secondary Schools: lessons learned *Cambridge Journal of Education* 31:2: 399 – 412

Francis, B. (2000) *Boys, girls and achievement: addressing the classroom issues* London, RoutledgeFalmer

Francis, B. (2005) Not/Knowing their place: girls classroom behaviour. In Lloyd, G. *'Problem Girls: understanding and supporting troubled and troublesome girls and young women* London, Routledge-Falmer

Francis, B. & Skelton, C. (2001) *Investigating Gender: Contemporary Perspectives in Education* Buckingham, Open University Press

Frank, B., Kehler, M., Lovell, T. & Davison, K. (2003) A Tangle of Trouble: boys, masculinities and schooling – future directions *Educational Review* vol.55, no. 2, 119 - 133

Fraser, N (1997) *Justice Interruptus: critical reflections on the 'postsocialist' condition* London, Routledge

Freire, P. (1970) *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* London, Penguin

Furlong,V.J. (1985) *The Deviant Pupil: Sociological Perpectives* Milton Keynes, Open University Press

Galloway, D & Goodwin, C. (1987) *The Education of Disturbing Children* London, Longman

General Register for Scotland (2001) Census 2001
http://www.scrol.gov.uk/scrol/metadata/topics/socio_economic_classification Accessed 28 November 2005

Giddens, A. (1998) *The Third Way: The renewal of social democracy* Cambridge, Polity Press

Gillborn, D. (1999) Fifty Years of Failure: 'Race' and education policy in Britain. In Hayton, A. (Ed) *Tackling Disaffection and Social Exclusion* London, Kogan Page

Gilligan, C. (1982a) *In a Different Voice* Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press

Gilligan, C. (1982b) *Why should a woman be more like a man?* Psychology Today 16: 68 – 77

Gipps, C. & Murphy, P. (1994) *A Fair Test? Assessment and Gender* London Routledge

Goodlad, R. & Riddell, S. (2003) *Disability and Social Justice* Unpublished paper, Scottish Centre for Research in Social Justice & Strathclyde Centre for Disability Research, University of Glasgow

Gormley, N. (2003) *Excluded Youth: What works? A Review of Practice in Tackling Youth Exclusion* Edinburgh, Scottish executive

Gray, J., Hopkins, D.,Reynolds, D., Wilcox, B., Farrell, S., Jesson, D. (1999) *Improving Schools: Performance and Potential* Buckingham Open University Press

Grove, W.R (1975) (Ed) *The labelling of deviance: evaluating a perspective* London, Sage

Hammersley, M. (1995) *The Politics of Social Research* London Sage

Hamilton, L. (2002) Constructing pupil identity: personhood and ability *British Educational Research Journal* 28: 4: 591 - 602

Hanafin, J. & Lynch, A. (2002) Peripheral voices, parental involvement, social class and educational disadvantage *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 23:1: 35 – 49

Hargreaves, D., Hester, S. & Meller, F. (1975) *Deviance in Classrooms* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul

Hargreaves, D. (1976) Reactions to Labelling

Hayden, C. (1997) *Children Excluded from Primary School: Debates, Evidence, Responses* Buckingham, Open University Press

Head, J. (1997) *Working with adolescents: constructing identity* London, Falmer Press

Head, G., Kane, J. & Cogan, N (2001) *An Evaluation of Behaviour Support in Secondary Schools in South Lanarkshire* University of Glasgow

Head, G., Kane, J. & Cogan, N. (2003) Behaviour support in secondary schools: what works for schools? *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* vol. 8, no.1, February 2003

Hooks, b. (1981) *Ain't I a Woman? Black Women and Feminism* Boston, South End Press

Jackson, C. (2002) 'Laddishness' as a self-worth protection strategy *Gender & Education* vol. 14, no.1 37 – 51

Kane, J., Head, G. & Cogan, N. (2004) Towards Inclusion? Models of Behaviour support in secondary schools in one local authority in Scotland *British Journal of Special Education* 31: 2: 68 – 74

Kenway J and Fitzclarence L (1997) *Masculinity, violence and schooling: challenging poisonous pedagogies.* Gender and Education 9 (Special issue on masculinities), pp 117 – 133.

Laslett, R. (1977) *Educating Maladjusted Children* London, Longman

Lewis, A. & Norwich, B. (2005) *Special Teaching for Special Children? Pedagogies for Inclusion* Maidenhead, Open University Press

Lloyd, G. (2005) *'Problem Girls: understanding and supporting troubled and troublesome girls and young women* London, Routledge-Falmer

Lloyd, G., Stead, J. & Cohen, D. (2006) *Critical New Perspectives on ADHD* London, Routledge

Lucy, H. (2001) Social class, gender and schooling In Francis, B. & Skelton, C. *Investigating Gender: Contemporary Perspectives in Education* Buckingham, Open University Press

Mac An Ghaill, M. (1994) *The Making of Men: Masculinites, Sexualites and Schooling* Buckingham, Open University Press

MacLean, A. (2003) *The Motivated School* Paper to Chartered Teacher Conference, University of Glasgow October, 2003

Macleod, G, & Munn, P. (2004*) Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties: A Different Kind of Special Educational Need?* Scottish Educational Review 36: 2: 169 – 176

Macrae, S., Maguire, M., Millbourne, M. (2003) Social Exclusion: Exclusion from School *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 7: 2: 89 – 101

Martino W and Berrill D (2003) Boys, schooling and masculinities: interrogating the 'Right' way to educate boys. *Educational Review* 55: 2: 99 – 117

Martino W & Pallotta-Chiarolli (2003) *So what's a boy? Addressing issues of masculinity and schooling* Buckingham: Open University Press

Mason, J. (1996) *Qualitative Researching* London, Sage Publications

McDonald, T. & Thomas, G. (2003) Parents' reflections on their children being excluded *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 8: 2: 108 - 119

McLaughlin, C. (2005) Exploring the psycho-social landscape of 'problem' girls. Embodiment, relationship and agency. In Lloyd, G. *'Problem Girls: understanding and supporting troubled and troublesome girls and young women* London, Routledge-Falmer

McRobbie, A. (1980) 'Settling Accounts with Sub-Culture' *Screen Education* 34: 37 - 50

Millbourne, L. (2002) Life at the margin: education of young people, social policy and the meanings of social exclusion *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 6: 4: 325 – 343

Mills M (2001) *Challenging violence in schools.* Buckingham: Philadelphia: Open University Press

Millward, A., Riddell, S., Banks, P., Baynes, A., Dyson, A., Kane, J. and Wilson, A. (2002) Individualised Education Programmes: Part 1: a literature review *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs* NASEN, vol. 2, no. 3, pp1 -11 November 2002

Millbourne, L., Moore, S. & Maguire, M. (2003) Collaborative solutions or new policy problems:exploring multi-agency partnerships in education and health work *Journal of Education Policy* 18: 1: 19 – 35

Milliband, D. (2003) *Class Haunts the Classroom* Guardian 18/9/03

Morley, L. & Rassool, N. (1999) *School Effectiveness: Fracturing the Discourse* London, Falmer Press

Mortimore, P. (1999) *The Road to Improvement: Reflections on School Effectiveness* Lisse, Swets and Zeitlinger

Munn, P., Cullen, M.A., Johnstone, M. and Lloyd, G. (1997) *Interchange 47: Exclusions and In-school Alternatives* Edinburgh, SOEID

Munn, P. & Lloyd, G. (2005) *Exclusion and Excluded Pupils* British Educational Research Journal 31: 2: 205 -221

Munn, P., Lloyd, G. & Cullen, M.A. (2000) *Alternatives to Exclusion from School* London, Paul Chapman

Munn, P. (2004) *Scottish Teachers' Perceptions of Indiscipline* Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

Nayak, A. (2003) 'Boyz to Men': masculinities, schooling and labour transitions in de-industrial times Education Review vol55. no. 2, 147 – 159

Norwich, B. (2003) *Is there a distinctive pedagogy for learning difficulties?* ACCP Occasional Papers 20: 25 -37

OECD/CERI (2005) *Students with Disabilities, Learning Difficulties, and Disadvantages: statistics and indicators* Paris, OECD/CERI

O'Connor, W. & Lewis, J. (1999) *Experiences of Social Exclusion in Scotland: Research Findings Number 73* Edinburgh Scottish Executive

Oliver, M. (1992) Changing the Social Relations of Research Production *Disability, Handicap and Society* 7:2: 101 - 114

Oliver, M. (1999) Emancipatory Research: Realistic Goal or Impossible Dream? In Seale, C. *The Quality of Qualitative Research* London, Routledge

Orme, J. (2000) Interactive social sciences: patronage or partnership? Science and Public Policy 27:3: 211 - 219

Osler, A., Street, C., Lall, M. & Vincent, K. (2002) *Not a Problem? Girls and school exclusion* London, National Children's Bureau

Osler, A. & Vincent, K. (2003) *Girls and Exclusion: rethinking the agenda* London RoutledgeFalmer

Paechter, C. (1998) *Educating the Other: Gender, Power and Schooling* London, Falmer Press

Parsons, C. (1999) *Education, exclusions and citizenship* London, Routledge

Parsons, C. (2005) School exclusion: the Will to Punish *British Journal of Education Studies* 53: 2: 187 – 211

Phillips, A. (1997) *From Inequality to Difference: A Severe Case of Displacement?* New Left Review 224: 143 - 153

Plummer, G. (2000) *Failing Working-class Girls* Stoke-on Trent, Trentham Books

Poland, A. & Pederson, A. (1998) Reading Between the Lines: interpreting silences in social research *Qualitative Inquiry* 4: 2: 293 – 312

Powell, J. (2002) The Changing Conditions of Social Work Research *British Journal of Social Work* 32:17 - 32

Reay, D. (1998) *Class Work: Mothers' Involvement in Children's Schooling* London, University College Press

Reay, D & Wiliam, D. (1999) 'I'll be a nothing': structure and agency in the construction of identity through assessment *British Educational Research Journal* 25:3: 343 – 354

Reay, D. (2001) In Francis, B. & Skelton, C. (Eds) *Investigating Gender: Contemporary Perspectives in Education* Buckingham, Open University Press

Reay, D. (2002) Shaun's story: troubling discourses of white, working-class masculinities *Gender & Education* vol. 14, no. 3, 221 – 234

Reay, D. (2006) The Zombie Stalking English Schools: Social Class and Educational Inequality *British Journal of Educational Studies* 54: 3: 288 – 307

Renold E (2004) *'Other' boys: negotiating non-hegemonic masculinities in the primary school.* Gender and Education, Vol 16, No 2, June 04

Renzetti & Lee, R.M. (1995) *Researching Sensitive Topics* Newbury Park, Sage

Riddell, S. (1992) *Gender and the Politics of the Curriculum* London, Routledge

Riddell, S. (2000) Equal opportunities and Educational Reform in Scotland: The Limits of Liberalism. In Salisbury, J. & Riddell, S. (Eds) *Gender, policy and Educational Change: Shifting Agendas in the UK and Europe* London, Routledge

Riddell, S & Tett, L. (2001) *Education, Social Justice and Inter-agency working: joined up or fractured policy?* London, Routledge

Riddell, S., Kane, J., Banks, P., Baynes, A., Dyson, A., Millward, A. & Wilson, A. (2002) An Investigation of Individualised Education Programmes: Part 2: Raising the attainment of pupils with special educational needs *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs* NASEN 2: 3: 1- 14

Ridge, T. (2005) Feeling under pressure: low income girls negotiating school life. In Lloyd, G. *'Problem Girls: understanding and supporting troubled and troublesome girls and young women* London, Routledge-Falmer

Rix, J, Simmons, K. Nind, M., Sheehy, K. (2005) *Policy and Power in Inclusive Education: values into practice* London, RoutledgeFalmer

Rubington, E. & Weiner, M. (1973) *Deviance: the interactionist perspective: text and readings in the sociology of deviance* New York, MacMillan

Rutter, M., Maughan, B. Mortimore, P., Ouston, J., Smith, A. (1979) *Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children* London, Open Books

Sammons, P. (1999) *School Effectiveness: Coming of Age in the Twenty First Century* Lisse, Swets and Zeitlinger

Sammons, P., Powe, S., Elliot, K., Robertson, P., Campbell, C. and Whitty, G. (2003) Insight 7: Key Findings from the National Evaluation of the New Community Schools Pilot Programme in Scotland http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/ins7-00.pdf. Accessed February 2005

Scottish Education Journal (2002) *Improvements in Discipline will come at a Price* Edinburgh, Educational Institute of Scotland

Scottish Executive (1999) *Social Justice....a Scotland where everyone matters* Edinburgh

Scottish Executive (2001a) Better behaviour – Better Learning: A Joint Action Plan Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

Scottish Executive (2001b) Learning with Care: The Education of Children Looked After Away form Home by Local Authorities: Report of Joint Inspection Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

Scottish Executive (2004) *Statistical Bulletin: Education Series* Edinburgh, Scottish Executive National Statistics

Scottish Executive (2005) *Statistical Bulletin: Education Series* Edinburgh, Scottish Executive National Statistics

Scottish Executive (2006) *A Curriculum for Excellence: progress and proposals* Edinburgh, Scottish Executive http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/cerv-00.asp

Seale, C. (2004) *Social Research Methods* London Routledge

SED (1978) *The Education of Pupils with Learning Difficulties in Primary and Secondary Schools in Scotland* Edinburgh, HMSO

SEED (1999) *Raising Standards- Setting Targets Support Pack: Special Educational Needs*, Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

SEED (2000) *Better Behaviour, Better Learning* Edinburgh Scottish Executive

SEED (2000) *News release: exclusions from school 1998/99* Edinburgh Scottish Executive

SEED (2001) *News Release: exclusions from school 1999/2000* Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

SEED (2002) *News release: Exclusions from school* 2000/2001 Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

SEED (2003a) *News release: Exclusions from school* 2001/2002 Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

SEED (2003b) Scottish Executive Circular No. 8/03 *Revised Guidance on Issues Concerning Exclusion from School* Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

SEED (2004) *News release: Exclusions from school* 2002/2003 Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

SEED (2005) *News release: Exclusions from school* 2003/2004 Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

SEED (2006) *News release: Exclusions from school* 2004/2005 Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

SEED (2007) *News release: Exclusions from school* 2005/2006 Edinburgh, Scottish Executive

Seidman, S. (2002) *Contested Knowledge: Social Theory Today* Oxford, Blackwell

SEU (2002) *Truancy and School Exclusion* London, Social Exclusion Unit

Skeggs, B. (1992) Paul Willis, Learning to Labour. In Barker, M. & Beezer, A. (Eds) *Readings into Cultural Studies* London, Routledge

Skeggs, B. (2004) *Class, Self, Culture* London, Routledge

Skelton, C. (1996) Learning to be Tough: the fostering of maleness in one primary school *Gender & Education* 8: 185 - 197

Skelton, C. (1997) Primary boys and hegemonic masculinities *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 349 – 369

Skelton, C. (2003) Male Primary Teachers And Perceptions of Masculinity *Educational Review* vol.50, no.2, 195 – 209

Skidmore, D. (2004) *Inclusion: the dynamic of school development* Maidenhead, Open University Press

Slee, R., Weiner, G. with Thomlinson, S. (1998) *School Effectiveness for whom? Challenges to the School Effectiveness and Improvement Movement* London, Falmer

SOEID (1994) *Effective Provision for Special Educational Needs* Edinburgh Scottish Office

SOEID (1997) *Incidents of Violence and Anti-social Behaviour against Local Authority School Staff in 2001/2002* Edinburgh, Scottish Office

SOEID (1998a) *Circular No. 2/98 Guidance on Issues Concerning Exclusion from School* Edinburgh Scottish Office

SOEID (1998ʙ) *Setting Targets – Raising Standards in Schools Edinburgh*, Scottish Office

SOEID (1998c) *Manual of Good Practice* Edinburgh, Scottish Office

SOEID (1998d) *New Community Schools Prospectus* Edinburgh, Scottish Office

SOEID (1999) *Raising Standards – Setting Targets for Pupils with Special Educational Needs* Edinburgh, Scottish Office

Silver, H (1994) Social exclusion and social solidarity: Three paradigms *International Labour Review* 133(5/6): 531 – 578

Stirling, M (1996) Government Policy and Disadvantaged Children. In Blyth & Milner (Eds) *Interprofessional issues for policy and practice* London, Routledge

Smith, D. (1990) *The Conceptual Practices of Power: a feminist sociology of knowledge* Boston, Northeastern University Press

Smith, H. & Thomas, S. (2000) *Violent and non-violent girls: contrasting perceptions of anger experiences, school and relationships* Issues in Mental Health Nursing 2:1: 547 - 575

The Herald (20/6/01) *Indiscipline on the rise, say teachers* Glasgow

The Herald (5/10/04) *A Depressing Picture: Verbal Abuse and Physical Aggression on the Increase* Glasow

The Sunday Herald (16/1/05) *Inclusion has become a dogma.........it's a mistake* Glasgow

Thomas, G. & Loxley,A. (2001) *Deconstructing Special Education and Constructing Inclusion* Buckingham, Open University Press

Thomas, G. & Vaughan, M. (2004) *Inclusive Education: readings and reflections* Maidenhead, Open University Press

Tinklin, T. (2003) Gender Differences and High Attainment *British Educational Research Journal* 29: 308 - 324

Vidich, A. & Lyman,S. (2003) Qualitative Methods: Their History in Sociology and Anthropology. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2003) *The Landscape of Qualitative Research* London, Sage Publications

Viet-Wilson, J. (1998) *Setting Adequacy Standards* Bristol Policy Press

Vincent, C. (1996) *Parents and Teachers: Power and Participation* London, Falmer Press

Vincent, C. (2003) *Social Justice, Education and Identity* London, Routledge-Falmer

Visser, J. (2004) *'What shall I do with Wayne on Monday?'* Paper presented to SEBDA Annual Conference Heriot Watt University, April 3rd, 2004

Wearmouth, J.(1999) Another one flew over: 'maladjusted' Jack's perception of his label *British Journal of Special Education* 26:1 15 - 22

Whitty, G., Power, S., Gamarnikow, E., Aggleton, P., Tyrer, P., Youdell, D. (1999) Health Housing and Education. In Hayton, A. (Ed) Tackling Disaffection and Social Exclusion London, Kogan Page

Whitty, G. (2001) *Education, Social class and Social Exclusion* London, Routledge-Falmer

Wilkinson, R. (2005) *The Impact of Inequality: How to Make Sick Societies* Healthier London, Routledge

Willis, P. (1978) *Learning to Labour: why working-class kids get working-class jobs* London, Saxon House

Wilson, M. & Evans, P. (1980) *Education of Disturbed Children* London, Methuen

Wragg, E.C. (2003) *An Introduction to Classroom Observation* London, Routledge Falmer

Young, I.M. (1990) *Justice and the politics of difference* Princeton, University Press

List of Appendices

1. Sample key informant interview schedule

2. Demography of case study sample

3. Briefing paper for participants

4. Sample case study interview schedule

5. Range and type of data for each case study

6. Consent letter

7. Classroom observation schedule

8. Focus group schedule

9. Sample case studies

        a. Ross

        b. Jack

        c. Andy

Appendix 1

Key Informant Interviews

Interview Schedule

1. General

Could we begin by establishing your own role and responsibilities?

Does your position connect you to exclusions through policy or through practice (e.g. appeals against exclusions)?

Have you had earlier experience of exclusions and how they operate?

2. Rationale

What purposes are served by exclusions from school?

Do different kinds of exclusion (eg 3-day, 1-week, 4-week) serve different purposes?

3. Policy

What is SEED/EA/school policy with regard to exclusions? In what circumstances are they considered to be appropriate?

Are there guidelines/policy statement? Is it possible to have a copy?

What criteria operate when decisions to exclude are made? Are these explicit criteria? Are these criteria applied irrespective of individual factors (eg home circumstances).

Are there times when exclusion would be considered inappropriate? If so, what other sanctions would apply?

Is the policy consistently applied?

What would account for the wide variations in levels of exclusions across the country?

Why are some groups (eg boys) over-represented in the exclusion statistics?

4. Operation

Are there different kinds of exclusion (eg duration, location)?

What factors would govern decisions to use particular forms of exclusion?

How are decisions to exclude arrived at? What is the process culminating in an exclusion?

Who has the power to exclude? What would he/she consider in deciding on an exclusion?

Are other professionals involved in the decision or in subsequent arrangements? How?

Are parents involved? How?

Is the young person contacted in any way during the exclusion? Is he/she excluded from school or excluded from education? How are educational factors considered during exclusions?

Is there a right of appeal? Can you outline how this would operate? How frequently used is the appeals procedure?

What arrangements would be made at the end of the term of exclusion? Do pupils return to the same school or to a different school? Is there support offered on his/her return?

What records of exclusions are kept and how would these be used?

5. Effectiveness

Do exclusions fulfill their purpose? When might they be considered to be effective? When are they less effective?

Is there monitoring of exclusions? How would this operate?

Are there alternatives to exclusion available? What are they? When would these be used?

6. Developments

Has exclusions policy and/or practice changed in your experience? Could you chart those changes?

What factors would influence changes in exclusions policy and practice?

Are there changes you would like to see?

7. Further comment

Are there any points you would like to add?

Appendix 2

Overview of case study sample

20 case study pupils in 4 secondary schools in one local authority

3 girls and 17 boys

3 first-year pupils, 5 second-year pupils and 12 third-year pupils

Case study pupils' experience of exclusion ranged from just one exclusion incident (all three girls were in this category) to multiple and lengthy exclusions.

Reasons for exclusions ranged from minor indiscipline (e.g. refusing to wear school uniform) to aggressive/violent behaviour to staff and to other pupils

Appendix 3

Briefing Paper

Pupil Identities and School Exclusions: Research Project

National statistics on school exclusions (Scottish Executive, 2001) indicate the over-representation of particular groups within the whole group of those excluded. Boys, for example, account for 92% of exclusions from primary school, 79% from secondary schools and 87% from special schools. Children living in poverty (as indicated by receipt of free school meals), children who are Looked After and children with Records of Needs also experience a disproportionate rate of exclusion from school. This research investigated these apparently inequitable patterns by considering the experience of a case study sample of twenty excluded pupils in four secondary schools. Although the main focus of the enquiry was gender, and especially masculine identities, social class was recognised as underpinning school exclusions and as shaping other forms of identity. The research will address six questions:

1. How are the behaviours leading to exclusion understood in policy and in school systems?

2. How do the negotiation of gender and class identities in school settings relate to exclusion from school?

3. What other social and cultural aspects of pupils' lives contribute to exclusion from school? How?

4. How far are excluded pupils exercising agency in the processes leading to their exclusion?

5. What are the relative influences of school and wider social factors in shaping the present and future identities of young people? How do these influences relate to one another for the pupils in this study?

6. How can school provision be developed in ways that reduce exclusion?

The research will be undertaken by Jean Kane towards a PhD thesis in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of Glasgow and will be supervised by Professor Sheila Riddell and Professor Nick Watson of the Strathclyde Centre for Disability Research, University of Glasgow. The work will be sponsored by the Faculty of Education, University of Glasgow.

Appendix 4

Sample Case Study Interview Schedule

Case study pupil schedule

1. Background

Could you tell me a bit about yourself and your time at school so far? Do you live in this area? What primary school(s) did you attend? How do you feel you are doing in school? Are you happy in school? Are your friends in school or are they outside of school?

2. Experience of exclusions

Have you been excluded? When and why were you excluded?

What happened when you were excluded?

Has anything changed since you were excluded (in the way the school handles referrals, in you, in other circumstances)?

What do you think exclusions are for?

3. Behaviour

What kind of behaviour has got you into trouble in the past? Where are you most likely to behave in ways that get you into trouble? Why?

Are you able to avoid that kind of behaviour? How? What help have you had in trying to change your behaviour in school?

What other kinds of behaviour lead to exclusion for other people?

4. Gender

Who are your friends in school? Do they get into trouble or have they ever been excluded?

Do you have boys and girls as friends?

Across Scotland, many more boys than girls are excluded. Why is that?

Are boys and girls treated the same or are they treated differently? How?

Do women teachers treat boys differently from girls? Do men teachers treat boys differently from girls?

5. Future

What could the school do that would help to reduce exclusions further? What changes would you like to see?

Appendix 5

Type and range of data for each case study

Key to abbreviations overleaf

CSP   interview with case study pupil

T1, etc.   interview with subject teacher

BS   interview with behaviour support teacher

SMT   interview with member of senior management team (HT, DHT or AHT)

Par   interview with parent/carer of case study pupil

Ob1, etc.   episode of classroom observation

Rec   study of school's behaviour records/files

Carrick High School

Case Study Overview

		CSP	T1	T2	Ob 1	Ob 2	SMT	H/S	Par	Rec
Ross	S1	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Dougie	S3	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
Jim	S1	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓
Jack	S3	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓
Billy	S1	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓

General

- interviews and focus groups in school with pupils from classes of case study pupils

- interview with SMT person re policy in school

- documents (handbook, policies, etc) collected from school

- attendance and exclusion statistics for case study pupils collected

Easton High School

Case Study Overview

		CSP	T1	T2	Ob 1	Ob 2	SMT	H/S	Par	Rec
Alan	S3	✓	✓				✓			✓
Lorraine	S3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Sam	S2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gary	S2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Joe	S2	✓					✓			✓

General

- interviews and focus groups in school with pupils from classes of case study pupils

- interview with SMT person re policy in school

- documents (handbook, policies, etc.) collected from school

- attendance and exclusion statistics for case study pupils collected

St Thomas's High School

Case Study Overview

		CSP	T1	T2	T3	Ob 1	Ob 2	SMT	H/S	BS	Par	Rec
Ewen	S3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Charlie	S3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Eddie	S3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
Kat	S3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		

General

- interview with SMT person re policy in school

- documents (handbook, policies, etc.) collected from school

- attendance and exclusion statistics for case study pupils collected

Hammond High School

Case Study Overview

		CSP	T1	T2	T3	Ob 1	Ob 2	SMT	BS	Par	Rec
Davy	S3	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Andy	S2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Craig	S2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Raj	S3	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Gill	S3	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
Baz	S3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓

General

- **interview with SMT person re policy in school**

- **documents (handbook, policies, etc) collected from school**

- **attendance and exclusion statistics for case study pupils collected**

Appendix 6

Request for Consent: Parents

30 April 2003

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am conducting a research project into school exclusions and, as an important part of this study, I hope to gather the views and experiences of young people who may or may not have been excluded themselves. I would be very grateful if you would give your consent to your child being involved.

Approximately forty minutes of his/her time would be needed for an interview which would be conducted in school during the school day. The interview might be taped for research purposes but the interview would be entirely confidential. Your child will not be identified at any time and he or she will have the right to withdraw at any stage.

Attached is some further information about the research and a consent form. I would be very grateful if you would return this form to the school. I do hope you are able to allow your child to participate.

Yours faithfully

Jean Kane

Appendix 7

Classroom Observation Schedule

School:

Case study pupil:

Date:

Class:

Lesson:

Teacher:

Period:

1. **Description of group, adult involvement, etc.**

2. **Layout of class and CSP's position**

3. **Description of lesson**

4. **Interactions with peers**

5. **Interactions with teacher/other adults**

6. **Behaviour during lesson**

Appendix 8

Focus Group Schedule

1. General

Could we begin by asking everyone to introduce himself/herself and to say a little bit about his/her experience of exclusions here and in the past.

2. Rationale

What purposes are served by exclusions from school? Why do some young people get excluded?

Do different kinds of exclusion (eg 3-day, 1-week, 4-week) serve different purposes? Are they used at different times? For different reasons?

3. Policy

Have things changed at all in your experience? How are they different?

Are there times when exclusion would be wrong? If so, what other sanctions would apply?

Are exclusions used fairly?

Why are some groups (eg boys) over-represented in the exclusion statistics?

4. Operation

What happens before you are excluded? What is the process culminating in an exclusion?

Who has the power to exclude? What would he/she consider in deciding on an exclusion?

Who is involved in decisions to exclude? How?

Is your family involved? How?

Would you be contacted in any way during the exclusion? Is he/she excluded from school or excluded from education? How are educational factors considered during exclusions?

Is there a right of appeal? Can you outline how this would operate?

What arrangements would be made at the end of the term of exclusion? Do you return to the same school or to a different school? Is there support offered on your return?

5. Effectiveness

Are there times when exclusion is a good thing? When might they be considered to be effective? When are they less effective?

Are there alternatives to exclusion available? What are they? When would these be used?

Your personal learning plan gives targets for attainment in the curriculum and for behaviour. Are you involved in setting targets? How do you decide which strategies you will use?

6. Developments

Has exclusions policy and/or practice changed in your experience? Could you say a bit about those change

Are there changes you would like to see?

7. Further comment

Are there any points you would like to add?

Appendix 9a

Case Study 6

Ross (S1)

School: Carrick High School

Data: Interviews with pupil, Home/ School Link Worker, teacher, Depute Headteacher, classroom observation and documentary analysis. An interview with Ross's mother had been arranged and cancelled several times through the H/S Link worker. Data was gathered in June 2003.

Pupil information:
Ross is just twelve and he lives with his mother and his older brother. His mum and dad are separated but his dad moves in and out of the family home. Ross's father is reported (by the Home/School link worker) as having quite a good relationship with Ross and of using that relationship as a means of access to the family home. The Home/School link worker reported that Ross has a difficult home life and that his mother struggles at times to keep the home going. Ross is very protective of his mother and she of him, challenging at times the school's account of Ross's bad behaviour (see below – Behaviour). Ross is eligible for free school meals.

Ross's father has wider family in the area and they are reported as being well-known locally and as having connection with drugs. These links are reported to have made Ross himself streetwise and as having street-cred well beyond his age.

Ross is tall, of good physical stature and he carries himself well. His friends are older than himself but it was reported by several staff that he does not seem out of place, physically or socially, in the company of sixteen- and seventeen-year old boys. This marks him out in a group of first-year boys:
…he has got to be the big guy and you can see the fear factor with some of the other kids. (Home/School link worker)

Exclusions and attendance record:
Ross's attendance in S1 has been poor. His record shows 129 absences from a possible 369 openings at time of interview, giving an attendance rate of 65.04%. Only 2 of Ross's absences were unauthorised, indicating that his mother knew about, and had sanctioned, his frequent non-attendance. In addition, Ross had been late a number of times.
Ross had been excluded just once, for one day, during S1. This was surprising to the researcher in the light of comments made about his behaviour and having observed him in a history lesson – see below. However, his poor attendance might explain this to some extent. The link between non-attendance and exclusion is recognised in the literature. It is possible the school, as well as Ross's mum, colludes in his non –attendance, as a means of taking pressure off of everyone, including Ross.

This would assume, though, that the main pressures in Ross's life come from school, whereas there is some evidence to show that school is relatively insignificant in Ross's life and that his poor attendance is a bye-product of other influences rather than a reaction to school events. For example, RM, the Home/School Link Worker who works with Ross and his family, described his first visit to the family home with the Attendance Officer after Ross had been off school for a few weeks:

I had come in and gone on a visit with the Attendance Officer who, fortunately, happened to be going on a visit that day. The Attendance Officer's approach was going in and finding Ross watching TV, at his breakfast...his dad was lying on the couch – his mum and dad have spilt up but he (Ross's dad) had just moved house recently and they had had their house petrol-bombed or burned. The dad was lying on the couch. He was drunk. I think he had been at a party the night before. They say he is using the house as a kind of halfway house instead of going to his own house basically. (Home/School Link worker)

Attainment and abilities

Ross is a very able boy. His abilities are demonstrated not just in traditional measures of attainment but in his social interactions. He did well in primary school and, on transfer to secondary, he was working at Level E in maths. In spite of poor attendance and behaviour records, he is still in the top maths section.

There is a sense of Ross's life taking on a very different orientation now, though:

He is a very bright boy but he is out till 1.00 or 2.00am and he cannot get up in the morning for school. He has a difficult home life but there is a lot of pressure as well with peers. (Home/School link worker)

Ross knows that he is able. It seems to be a point of pride with him:

I was one of the brightest in my class at primary school. I still am really in most of my classes. I can do the work; but I just don't do it most of the time. (Ross)

Behaviour:

The difficulties Ross experiences in school are not attributable to any loss of self-control on his part. During interview for this research, he was highly articulate, confident and self-aware. The DHT indicated that he found Ross to be a very personable boy, able, streetwise and very astute – 'if you shut your eyes you could be talking to an adult'.

During the lesson observed for this research, far from losing self-control, Ross demonstrated his ability to orchestrate the lesson. It was on a Friday afternoon and was a history lesson on the Scottish Wars of Independence and focussed particularly on William Wallace. The teacher introduced the lesson by saying that pupils should not confuse history with the film, Braveheart, although all subsequent questions and comments (many from Ross) did just that.

Ross sat at the front of the class, in clear view of everyone and close to the teacher. He used his position to establish himself as the leader of disruptive behaviour. He answered in a funny voice when his name was called from the register. He made some play of putting on his reading glasses and he called out:

'Sir, they are slagging me for my reading glasses.'

He then took off his specs, put them on again upside down and smiled around at the class to their evident enjoyment. Ross made a point of capping the remarks of the teacher to provide amusement for the class, for example:

Teacher (getting annoyed): I have had better from this class

Ross: A lot better

Teacher: Thank you, Ross.

It was clear that others in the class looked to Ross for their lead. He was literally laid back during the lesson, leaning back with his feet on a chair and his hands clasped behind his head. He asked a girl at the other side of the room for a drink from her bottle of Irn Bru.

This was thrown from one pupil to another until it reached Ross. He drank and then threw it back across the room.

The teacher did not challenge Ross in a direct way. Instead, he went twice to have a quiet word with him. This tactic had no effect. Ross continued to run the lesson for his own and others' enjoyment, making noises and asking superfluous questions. In fact, the teacher seemed to try to establish an accommodation with Ross. For example, he had refused permission for one of the class to go to the toilet. However, when Ross asked he was granted permission immediately.

When Ross contributed to the discussion, he was articulate and to the point, answering a question about the likely reaction of Edward I of England to the Battle of Stirling Bridge with the comment that he would have been 'furious' and 'paranoid'. Ross concluded the lesson by initiating a class rendition of 'Flower of Scotland' – although relevant to the theme of the lesson it was unwelcome to the teacher. However, he was powerless to stop it. In an interview after the lesson, the teacher, ST, indicated that Ross usually behaved better in history but that there had been an incident in the maths class that morning when Ross had come into conflict with him as cover teacher and, as a result, had spent lunchtime in detention.

Ross's reaction to me during the lesson was interesting. I had spent some time with him that morning when I had interviewed him and had some informal discussion with him. When he came into the lesson and saw me sitting at the back of the class, he very amiably and publicly smiled and said hello. At the end of the lesson, when he was on his way out, he turned and with a wave called to me: 'Right, miss? See you again'. I had been part of his audience. It is possible that Ross's behaviour here was not designed to amuse the class. Rather, it was to establish for them, for the teacher and for me that he is the main man. I was being used as means of enhancing further his status with the class and the teacher.

Ross is noted as demonstrating very 'acting out' behaviour in the playground, etc (e.g. throwing a plastic bottle while going along the corridor). He answers back and is cheeky to teachers. He is generally disobedient, refusing, for example, to cooperate over uniform. One incident resulting in exclusion was when Ross and some friends (older boys) stole material from a nearby building site. He brought a length of heavy chain into school and was excluded for stealing and for bringing an offensive weapon into school.

The file shows that Ross's mother has taken issue with the school on occasion. A note on Ross's behaviour card reads:
'Ross explained to me why he got a D on his card and, if what Ross is telling me is the truth, then I must disagree with him getting a D. He is part of the class and the same as every other person in that class. He is no different or should be treated any different. If it comes to it, I will come to the school and see Mr Sime about it.'

Impact of exclusions:
Ross himself says that he is happy to be excluded because it gives him a couple of days off school. He says his mum keeps him in but even, then, it is okay because 'my ma is dead soft, she gives in too easy.' He usually manages to get out.
There is no sign that exclusion has had, or is likely to have, any impact on Ross. Even his academic prospects are not undermined by missing school, since they seem to rest primarily with Ross's own view of his future. He is conscious, though, that the high potential he showed in primary is now in decline, or at least perceptions of it have changed:

> Well, for a while there everybody thought that I was a right bright wean when I was in primary but, see now, I am just like your average wean, just normal. (Ross)

Friendships:
Alongside family, friendships are the other main influence in Ross's life. Ross is part of a gang, composed mainly of sixteen- and seventeen year-olds and having a strong territorial orientation to their locality, W_____. Ross is reported (by the H/S link worker) as showing some hostility to fellow pupils belonging to another gang from H_____. After one session, Ross told the group leader that he did not get on with one of the other boys and that he (the other boy) would be 'getting it' when they left:

> There is a lot of rivalry here... a lot of tension actually getting some of these boys working together (Home/School link worker)

Ross does not appear to have friends in his class in school. His male classmates seem to regard him with a mixture of admiration and deference, perhaps fear? One of his teachers commented:

> Pupils want to be his friend because I think it is the power he has outwith the school, or the perceived power he has outwith school. (Teacher)

The teacher indicated that Ross was very protective of people in the class, offering to 'get' anyone who bullied his fellow classmates. Ross is powerful enough to be able to offer patronage to other boys. This is not heroic altruism, although Ross would seem to construct it as such, but is a means for Ross to demonstrate and to advance further his control and his status.

Gender:
The influences on Ross seem to be strongly gendered, principally through his mother's and his father's roles in his life and their attitudes to each other. The Home/School Link worker described their behaviour during one of his visits when he met Ross's dad, temporarily staying in the family home:

> This guy was lying on the couch and he woke up during the meeting and asked her (Ross's mum) to make his breakfast, disrupting the whole system....There was no...she apologised, I have got to say, but she had no control over that. He woke up and it was kind of, straight up, get my breakfast and she did it. So Ross is seeing that – he is sitting there watching the TV. (Home/School link worker)

Ross's attitude to his mother is protective but he sees her as exrting very little control over him:

> My older pals they will be like that 'Your maw will ground you and all that' . She tries, she does try and discipline me, but I am just not listening. (Ross)

Speaking of the differences between boys and girls in relation to exclusion, Ross said that girls try harder than boys, they have 'standards', whereas boys are more 'laid back'.

Future:
There was some indication of Ross being torn between his mother's aspirations for him and the pull of his life on the streets:

> He is a likeable character, but I think he is in with an old crowd too early. I think he has had to be because of this family – they are well known. (Home/School link worker)

The same view of Ross came from the history teacher whose lesson Ross had been seen to disrupt:

> He is likeable. I have got a lot of time for him. He's one of those guys that's...well, I have got a lot of time for him because he is interested in history, maybe that is the reason, but I like him a lot. You can see what his problems are but if he can manage to harness his intelligence in the right direction, he will do well. (History teacher)

The Depute Headteacher fears that Ross will make wrong choices:

> Ross will probably be running a gang in Glasgow when he is twenty one.....He is
> not at the stage yet when he needs to choose but soon, he is going to have to decide
> 'What way am I going to go?' (DHT)

For the school's part, the DHT felt that there were a small number of staff who would be
prepared 'to go the extra mile' because Ross was bright but that he was uncertain whether
the school would be able to engage Ross – 'It is in the balance'.

In primary school and because he was good at maths, Ross had thought he would become a
chartered accountant. Now, because of his interest in motor bikes he may become a
mechanic, but he claims not to think about the future:

> I know for me I don't think. I just take life as it comes....you don't know if you are
> going to be here in four year's time so why not just live for the moment? Because
> you don't know if your family… and you don't know if you are going to be there.
> (Ross)

Appendix 9b

Case Study 9

Jack (S3)

School: Carrick High School

Data: Interviews with the case study pupil, his physics teacher, the Headteacher and the Depute Headteacher; classroom observation and documentary sources

Pupil information:
Jack in in S3 and he has a history of exclusions. He is described by the DHT as 'very bright and very angry'. He is wiry and quite small for his age, well-turned out, very self-assured and articulate during interview, maintaining good eye contact throughout. He has already started to earn a living, working in a chip van two nights a week from 4.00 – 10.00pm. For these twelve hours he earns £30.00.

Jack's mother died very suddenly two years previously and Jack's schooling has suffered since then, although his exclusions did not start at that point. Jack is the eldest of five children and his father struggled to maintain the family at home after his wife's death. He then met a new partner on the internet and she has moved in with the family. Jack does not get on with his father's new partner and has given vent to angry outbursts in school, resulting in exclusion. He has been attending anger management classes at the instigation of the school.

There is wide agreement that Jack is very able and that, in different circumstances, he would be going to university. The Headteacher, who had not been nominated as one of the interviewees for this research, took time to come and talk to me about Jack:

> Of all our pupils, Jack is the one I fear most for – so bright but how he copes with the circumstances in which he is living I do not know. (Headteacher)

He has attended south Lanark support base for 2 x 0.5 days per week. He was on a part-time timetable. The home/school link worker has had input and there is liaison with the SW Dept.

Exclusions and attendance record:
Jack had been excluded in primary school and had been asked to leave his first primary school in Primary 6 because of his behaviour. Jack has had six exclusions during S3, one of them for three weeks. In all, he has missed 37 school days in S3 because of exclusion. His overall attendance record is 67.75%, though some of that attendance has been at South Lanarkshire Behaviour Support Base where he would not follow a normal curriculum but would focus on Personal and Social Development in areas such as anger management. The amount of time he has had out of the ordinary curriculum has had an impact on his educational attainment.

Attainment and abilities
Jack's abilities lie in the area of mathematics and physics. His physics teacher described him as gifted but his frequent non-attendance has had repercussions for his Standard Grade courses which are assessed partly through continuous assessment.

It is interesting how a pupil's ability in a subject shapes teachers' perceptions of that pupil, even when the teachers know the extent of the pupil's bad behaviour elsewhere. RP, Jack's

physics teacher, has never had a problem with Jack in his class and is therefore grieved that Jack's exclusions have undermined his performance in physics:

> His last non-attendance was due to the school deeming him not to be suitable in my class (Physics teacher)

He had found that Jack responded well to positive feedback:

> If you push Jack too hard you get a bad reaction. If you encourage he tends to go with you. He likes, not direct compliments, but reminders that he is good. He likes reminders that he is good, he is quality. (Physics teacher)

Behaviour:

He is reported as being very confrontational with teachers, refusing to cooperate and then becoming abusive when he is pressured. One referral describes how he was asked to stand outside the room because of an outburst he had had. When the teacher came to speak to him he called him 'a fucking bastard', 'fucking black jake', 'fucking poof'. This resulted in one of his exclusions.

The DHT indicated that Jack's big problem is his temper:

> He just cannot control his temper. He just flares up and is almost uncontrollable. On a one-to-one basis, he is great. I really like him and can hold a good conversation with him. (DHT)

Jack is very self-aware. He knows that his temper causes problems and he knows that some of his teachers are frustrated because they cannot teach him properly when his schooling is so discontinuous:

> I cannot stand teachers in my face shouting at me. At C.. Primary, they did not have the best teachers in the world. They were always shouting at me so I have got a temper that I find really hard to control. At C primary, the teachers were always shouting at me so I always shouted back, swearing and all different things. So I always go suspended. (Jack)

Impact of exclusions:

When he is at home during his exclusions, Jack helps his father in the house, with shopping, etc. He admits that he sometimes would rather be in school because it is boring at home. He does not have schoolwork to do at home but when he comes back after an exclusion he is usually able to pick up again on the classwork.

Jack believes that exclusions sometimes serve a purpose but, at other times, there is no point in them at all:

> I have been suspended before for asking for a red pen in my English class. I have turned round to my mate and said 'Can I have a loan of a pen, please?' He gave me his pen and the teacher took it the wrong way – she put me outside the class. She was standing shouting at me and I do not know how I managed it, I kept my mouth shut. I says 'Yes, miss; No, miss' and all that and she thought I was being cheeky so she sent me to Mr McDaid and he suspended me for, I think it was for three days. I got suspended for that and there was no point in it at all. (Jack)

Friendships:

Jack seems to get on well enough with other pupils but there is no sign that he has any real friendships in school. He is described as a loner, as assuming that when he leaves the class he will not contact any of the other pupils. This is attributed to his maturity to his being very worldly-wise and therefore finding very little in the company of other young people his age.

Gender:
Jack thinks that some girls are different but he also knows other girls who are just like him except they are never in school to get into trouble and whenever they are, they are always in trouble. He does believe that teachers behave differently to girls. They tend not to shout at girls.

Future:
There was widespread concern that Jack would not go on to take a degree although some hope that, if he could move away and make a life for himself then he might be able to go to Higher Education later on.

Jack's physics teacher hoped that he might get a job in something like electrical engineering:
.....working with his hands and probably working in a small group, maybe working with a partner but not with a boss on his back. I do not think John would respond to a workplace in a big factory....(Physics teacher)

RP, the physics teacher, argued that it would be important from a societal point of view to get Jack into an apprenticeship of some kind and away form possibly a very violent life on the streets. He argued, too, that education should take different forms so that exclusion form ordinary school should never be exclusion from education. For example, RP says he would be delighted to teach physics to Jack six times a week and he feels that the system should be flexible enough to allow for this. He argued strongly for multiple solutions to the problem of bad behaviour and exclusions to accommodate the wide range of pupils affected.
Jack had some clear opinions aboput what was needed to improve schools. He argued that teachers need more self-control, need to 'lay-off a bit'. When teachers are having a bad day, Jack feels they take it on the class, shouting and bawling. However, when pupils do this, they are excluded:
It's not fair. Teachers need to learn the same as us. That is what I say. (Jack)
Jack also argues that there should be more flexibility within lessons so that when work is finished, pupils can get on with other things, maybe a bit of drawing or working on the computer.

Appendix 9c

Case Study 12

Andy

School: Hammond High School

Data: Interviews with the case study pupil, three of his teachers, the DHT and the behaviour support teacher; observation of two lessons; and documentary material.

Pupil information:
Andy has just finished S1. He has a twin brother, Craig, in the same year and both boys stay with their mother and their grandmother. Their grandfather and an aunt stay close by. Andy is the older and has been the more dominant twin. He is smaller and slighter than his younger brother and there is concern that he is not thriving as he should. The boys give cause for concern, not just to the school because of their behaviour, but also to other services. The boys have been identified as lacking proper care and supervision outwith school. The Social Work Department have been involved with the boys since primary school and they have, on a number of occasions been referred to the Children's Panel. An extract of a report from the local police to the boys' primary school indicates this concern:

> Caught with drugs. Kept in cell overnight because no responsible adult could be found to take them. They have a den where they sleep overnight.

The DHT reported that the boys are beyond their mother's control. At times, there seems to be a reversal of responsibility with the boys trying to protect their mother in certain situations. However, she has reported that Andy has been violent towards her, kicking, swearing and screaming when she tried to get him to attend an interview at the school with her. The boys are reported to have a very strong relationship with each other, for example, they have a tendency to look out for each other (see below).

Andy's file contains a number of letters from the boys' mother. These are well-written and are usually concerned with explaining the boys' absences. The DHT indicated that the boys' mother suffers from mental illness. She is willing to come to school when required but her contributions are sometimes not appropriate:

> The boys themselves are quite bright and you can just see them look at their mother as she starts to go off at a tangent. She starts talking about, 'You should really stick in at school. When I was at school ...I did secretarial...' And the boys themselves are bright enough to know and I do not think they have a lot of respect for her.
> (DHT)

The lack of home supervision has resulted in Andy having a great deal of autonomy in his life:

> I get the feeling that he is his own keeper or whatever. He is in charge of his own decisions and nobody else's. He really does not give a damn about theirs. (RE teacher)

The control that Andy claims for himself has had negative implications for his relationship with the school. Schools allow very little control to pupils, in part because they are seen to be children. For pupils such as Andy, who are organising their own lives, school may seem to be challenging his self-determination.

A further example of the control exercised by Andy and his brother is that they have refused a referral to the Educational Psychologist even though their mother and the school are advocating this course.

They were described by the DHT as coming from primary school with 'an absolutely horrific report'. The school has found that both boys are very influential on their peer group, setting an example to others as to how to challenge teachers and disrupt lessons in a calculated way. The boys' primary school had them in separate classes and the secondary school has continued that practice. Both boys attend the local Behaviour Support Base for two mornings a week. The behaviour support teacher at Hammond expressed had felt some reservations about the effectiveness of this split provision:

> We have got kids in the base but I am not sure the kids are coming back from the Base and carrying through. . There is no real big liaison that connects the kids with the two places (BST)

Whe a teacher form the base came to the school for one afternoon a week however, this seemed to make a big difference:

JW was coing and doing Outreach with the kids who attend the base and that was working really, really well. On a Tuesday afternoon JW and I would meet with the kids... and we would debrief them. We would talk about the connection between the Base and school. (BST)

Exclusions and attendance record:

Andy is recorded as excluded just once in S1 but Andy himself says he has been excluded six times, all in S1. The DHT explained that the single exclusion given to Andy was in line with the LA policy of not excluding pupils wherever possible. However, he also explained that Andy had been 'sent home' a number of times pending his mother coming to the school to discuss his behaviour. She would usually come on the following day. 'Sending home' would not count as an exclusion. This would account for the disparity between Andy's account and the school's account.

Andy's attendance record is described as very poor. His frequent absences, his exclusion and the fact that he attends the Behaviour Support base for two mornings a week mean that he regularly misses a significant part of the ordinary timetabled classes. For subjects where learning is highly structured and progressive, this is a problem. His frensh teacher indicated that she was never sure why Andy was absent but that he missed a good many lessons.

Attainment and abilities

Andy is described as 'extremely able' but as working always to the minimum needed to pass. For example, when doing the National Test for Level D maths, Andy's maths teacher reported that he tallied up his points as he went along and when he calculated that he had enough marks to pass, he stopped and handed in his paper.

Andy's RE teacher also described Andy as an 'extremely, **extremely** intelligent young man' whose misbehaviour evaporates when he engages on an intellectual level with the subject:

> .....at the moment we have been doing stuff on the Jewish Holocaust and we have been looking at racism and prejudice in America and he just understands. He is totally and utterly wrapped up in it all. He is the guy who is putting his hand up and he is the guy who is asking all these questions. But the only reason he is quiet is because he is interested. Not because it is a discipline issue. It has got nothing to do with being a discipline issue. It is because he is actually interested and he is wrapped up in it all. (RE teacher)

Andy's English teacher also spoke very positively about Andy:

> To be honest, I found him really good. He is very cooperative and he is quite bright. He is just not keen to sit and write. You really have to jolly him along to sit

and write........When you meet him, he has got a sort of cheeky wee aspect about
him which is quite endearing if you stay on the right side of him (English teacher)

However, this teacher had seen a glimpse of what caused Andy's problems in classes:

My experience of Andy was very simple. If you were too antagonistic with him he
wouls react in a similarly antagonistic way and that happened once – the first time I
met him. He was showing off to other people and we hit a brick wall quite
quickly.....He reacted and he was quite aggressive. His body language was quite
aggressive. I quickly learned from that that if you are full on .....he will just shout
back at you. He will actually use expressions like 'Don't speak to me like that' or
'Don't shout at me'. (English teacher)

This teacher wondered if other pupils would feel that Andy were receiving preferential
treatment because, from then on, the teacher softened her tone when she spoke to him.
However, she felt there had been no problems – the class accepted the different approach.

Andy's French teacher offered a contrasting picture of his behaviour in S1:

Last year, it was horrendous. Andy led the class as it were. He would tell people,
you know, it was him, he was the King. And you know, he strutted in my class....
That is how he would do it. He would strut into class and his behaviour was awful.
(French teacher)

This teacher also said that Andy was very bright, had a lovely French accent and with one-
to-one coaching could be really good at French.

Behaviour:

Andy's behaviour has been very challenging for the school. He is able to exercise a great
deal of self-control and a great deal of control over others. An extract from a report from
his primary school gives an indication of this:

Andy is not interested because he feels he knows it all and it is not worth bothering.
He is dangerous in gym as he follows no rules. He is a leader in class, planning and
organising disruption. He will argue back with the teacher and he will then get the
class to back him up. Andy is not allowed to stay in school at lunchtime. He has to
go home.

In secondary school the same behaviour has manifested itself. Andy has been very
disruptive in class and is reported as aggressive towards pupils and teachers. He has
accused a teacher of assault and this has been investigated. Andy's RE teacher explained
that Andy reacted strongly to teachers shouting at him:

If you know about Andy it would be wrong to shout your head off at him as I have
done. I did last year and he walked out of my classroom and I thought, 'Well, that's
understandable because all I have done is shout and roar at him.' But then I am
only a human being as well. But you do learn. (RE teacher)

This teacher attributes the lack of cooperation from Andy to his not knowing the rituals
and etiquette of classroom life, for example not knowing that he should get out his
equipment and have everything ready; that there are times when he should be quiet. This
seems to be a very charitable view because of Andy's age. He has been through primary
school and a great deal of effort is made in the early stages to socialise children into the
ways of school life. It seems more likely that Andy is consciously rejecting those social
mores. A further explanation is that Andy is not used to functioning as a member of group
where others have to be considered and where personal choice has to be moderated by
responsibilities towards others.

Andy himself has no real explanation to offer when asked why he gets into bother – 'I
don't know. I haven't a clue.' He knows that he himself sometimes tries to annoy the
teacher but he also feels that sometimes it is the teacher's fault. He rejected the idea that
there were good subjects and bad subjects, pointing out that he had had '4s' (the lowest
grade) on his behaviour card for all subjects at some time or another.

The greatest concern, though, is about his experience out of school. The boys are known to a range of community services, including police and social workers – 'They are so well-known to everyone these boys, to the police, to everyone.' (DHT)
The boys are hostile to the involvement in their lives of professionals. They would prefer not to have a social worker and, as indicated, have declined the intervention of an Ed Psych.

Impact of exclusions:
Exclusions have not had a deterrent effect on the boys' behaviour as witnessed by their behaviour throughout S1. During interviews when Andy is returning to school after a period of exclusion or having been 'sent home', Andy's mother is reported by the DHT to have no control over her son, talking to him inappropriately, as if he were a small child. She is always willing to work with the school – she responds to all contacts, which is difficult because she does not have a phone. However, she seems to be quite ineffective in her efforts to influence her sons.

Andy does not like to be excluded. He did not think it was 'cool'. He explained that he had to go home and think about what he had done. He does not agree with exclusions, feeling that it is wrong to put young people out of school

Friendships:
Andy and his brother, Craig, have a number of friends but their relationship with each other seems particularly strong. Craig has been excluded because of his intervention in incidents with Andy that did not concern him. For example, the DHT recounted how Andy had stormed off having been in trouble in detention. He walked across the playground at lunchtime calling back to the DHT and another teacher, 'You are a pair of dafties. Your school stinks. It is a dump.' The verbal abuse continued as he walked across the playground to the school gate. Other pupils, some of whom were his friends, observing this, called on him to come back and not to be so daft but Andy continued on his way. Then Craig realised what had happened and approached the DHT insisting that his brother could not be sent home in this way:

> What have you done to my brother? You can't send him home. Get him a taxi.
> (Craig)

The DHT explained that Andy was going home of his own free will and would not be getting a taxi. Craig then turned away saying to the DHT, 'Fuck off'. He was then excluded himself.

A number of his teachers spoke of how influential Andy is in class. His English and his RE teachers thought this was because he was funny and stuck up for himself but his French teacher form SI thought, too, that others might be intimidated by him:
…..he is the big chief and they are almost…it is like they are scared to do anything other than laugh at him when he says something. (French teacher)
His current French teacher thought that Andy had a wide circle of friends. He was well-liked and that this was down to his sense of humour. When Andy himself spoke of his friends, he indicated that they were boys attending local special and residential schools for pupils with behavioural problems.

Andy reported that he likes football and used to play for a local boys' club. He gave this up and when asked why, he replied that he could not be bothered getting up at 8.00am on a Saturday morning.

Gender:
The Re teacher attributes Andy's misbehaviour to his need to have power and control in situations. He has this in common with many other boys who are and are not excluded. Sometimes, this urge is deep-seated but, at other times, it is about a desire to demonstrate power by being familiar with the teacher. For the pupil, this is about two human beings establishing a basis of mutual respect but, within a school setting, it can be interpreted as over-familiarity, an attempt publicly to undermine the authority of the teacher.

Future:
Andy hopes to be a plumber or an engineer of some kind. He says that all he wants out of school is a trade and he will be happy to stay on to make sure he gets that opportunity. The DHT, however, is fearful for the future of the boys. There is a possibility that they will be taken into the care of the LA and then it may be thought that placement in a residential establishment would be best for them. The DHT indicated that the school has written to the LA to express their concern about the boys.

There is particular concern for Andy, who although, then older of the two, is smaller and slighter. He is not putting on weight while his younger brother is growing and is filling out as he goes through adolescence. Andy is not thriving in the view of the school. His mother reports that he does not eat. The very high levels of aggression he demonstrates give real cause for concern.