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Teacher Utilisation of Role-play to Reduce Bullying in a Primary School Setting

By

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Supervised by Dr. Carmel O'Sullivan

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Dublin

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Brenda, Jessica and Christine who made it possible for me to write up the literature review and the results of this study. They have done without my full attention and participation for much too long. There's making up to be done. Thank you so very much for your support and all the love you have given me during the last five years to accomplish this significant task.

SUMMARY OF THESIS

Teacher Utilisation of Role-play to Reduce Bullying in a Primary School Setting

This thesis documents a study to analyse teacher usage of a bullying prevention resource, entitled the Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP), which uses role-play and ensuing discussion thereof, to create awareness of and reduce bullying. The aim was to ascertain if teachers could use the BPP effectively in their classrooms to reduce bullying behaviour. The content of the BPP in its first incarnation was designed for the researcher's M.Ed. where the researcher delivered the full content and was successful according to student and teacher feedback. However, the implementation of the BPP may have been aided by the researcher's rich and diverse background in drama teaching and directing. For the Ph.D. study the researcher wanted to ascertain if the BPP resource could be used by non-drama specialist teachers to prevent bullying in their schools.

Initially, an exploration of the literature on the nature of bullying and prevention programmes internationally and nationally was undertaken. A particular focus was placed on interventions that had used role-play. Additionally, as this study involved Irish schools, attention was placed on the national interventions introduced in the country. The aim of this review was to analyse the nature of school bullying, what elements were deemed most effective in anti-bullying strategies, and how these might be incorporated into the BPP in the current study.

The second part of the literature review explores the field of drama in education. A primary focus here was to track how classroom drama has developed over the last century and to examine the extent to which drama teaching and learning approaches have been incorporated into 21st century learner-centred classrooms. This led to an informed and systematic review of an earlier version of the BPP incorporating evidence based research elements from the up to date literature review.

In the empirical phase of the study a research school was compared to a control school of similar demographics. The profiles of the research and control schools were all boys, designated disadvantaged, availing of Delivering Equal Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programmes and following the Stay Safe programme. In addition to the collection of qualitative data through teacher feedback and learner focus groups,

an aspiration for this study was that a quantitative method, such as a survey, would help to create comparative measurable data aiding triangulation. The instrument employed was the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire – Revised (OBVQ-R) which was administered on three occasions in both schools during the empirical phase of the study.

The use of a standardised survey instrument to ascertain if bullying can be reduced through a prevention programme that uses role-play as its core learning resource has, as far as the researcher is aware, not been used in any other study to date. Hence, it was postulated that the BPP results in this study could add to the limited existing evidence about the use of role-play as a bullying prevention method, and could contribute to the development of a reliable statistical base to assess the impact of drama as is called for in the literature.

The results reveal that while the study was very successful at reducing levels of bullying at the research school (e.g. reports of victimisation reduced by 53%), it might have been more effective if (i) there was less information for early years children to absorb and (ii) more age appropriate resources and methods of delivery for use in early years setting were supplied. The lessons learnt from the current study will aid the future exploration and development of the BPP in terms of creating new more age and developmentally appropriate resources for early years children; further analysis of role-play as a significant bullying prevention aid; and creating activities that foster student defending culture. Finally, the study highlights that if bullying interventions are to work on a national level in Ireland they will need substantial financial government aid to support the development of whole school initiative that involve the school community on multiple levels: Principal, staff, teachers, parents and students working together to prevent bullying.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Anti-Bullying Centre
ADHA	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
Be-Prox	Burmese Programme Against Victimisation
BPP	Bullying Prevention Pack
CAPSLE	Creating a Peaceful School Learning Environment
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DEIS	Delivering Equal Opportunity in Schools
DIE	Drama in Education
f2f	Face to Face
HBSC	Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children
HSCL	Home School Community Liaison Scheme
HSE	Health Service Executive
LD	Learning Disabilities
ISPCC	Irish Society for Protection of Cruelty to Children
LGBTQ	Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgendered and Questioning
NABC	National Anti-Bullying Coalition
NEPS	National Education Psychological Service
NEWB	National Education Welfare Board
OBPP	Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme
OBVQ-R	Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire – Revised
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMEP	L'Organisation Mondiale pour Prescolaire
PEO	Police Education Officer
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
SPC	School Psychiatric Consultation Programme

SPHE	Social, Personal, Health and Education
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TIE	Theatre in Education
TUI	Teachers' Union of Ireland
TY	Transition Year
UCC	University College Cork
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
ViSC	Viennese Social Competence
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY

1.1 The Bullying Prevention Pack

The main purpose of this research study was to explore teacher ability to use and examine the effects of a bullying prevention programme entitled the Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP). The BPP is designed to be an accessible teacher led intervention that puts the learner at the forefront of the discussion and activities with the aim of scaffolding a constructivist approach to knowledge creation on the subject of school bullying and the creation of preventative measures.

The BPP is implemented over five weeks. In week one, the teacher enters into a dialogue with the learners on the topic of school bullying by inquiring about their received notions. Then the learners are presented with the literature on bullying, the sub-types and the participant players that may be present in a given bullying incident. Bullying incidents are then voluntarily discussed (without naming or blaming) with a view to examining, creating awareness and fostering empathy about the effects of bullying on peers. In weeks two to four, role-plays on the topic of school bullying are performed with ensuing discussions that aim to identify bullying, the sub-types and participant players. The discussions on the role-plays aim to engender metacognitive thinking by questioning individual and group knowledge, attitudes and assumptions about bullying and to encourage learners to create and employ bullying prevention methods in their school. In week five these group prevention methods are written up in the form of a contract that all learners are asked to agree to. The contract is then reviewed once a month to aid to the prevention of bullying longitudinally (Chapter Three will discuss these elements at length).

1.2 Research considerations and methodology

1.2.1 Knowledge gaps

Due to a lack of knowledge about the bullying topic and the use of strategies to prevent bullying, teachers are not always sufficiently prepared to tackle bullying (Smith, 2004). With regards to dealing with the issue of school-based bullying this thesis will attempt to explore and add knowledge to two areas: (1) to evaluate teacher, non-drama specialist, usage of what aims to be an effective, evidence-based anti-bullying programme that uses role-play as its central learning resource to foster group knowledge and awareness about bullying and how to prevent it, and (2) to quantify via a standardised instrument and qualitative data measures if role-play is effective in this regard. This is significant because role-play activities are quite commonly used for interventions but documentation of role-play usage by non-drama specialists and quantitative research evidence of interventions that use role-play to help prevent bullying is limited (Bradshaw, 2015; Joronen, Konu, Rankin and Astedt-Kurki, 2012). This may be due to the fact that bullying prevention interventions with ensuing evaluations are only a relatively recent phenomenon.

1.2.2 Emerging research on bullying in the literature

The view of bullying in the literature has often been depicted as an accepted part of life that one can do little about (e.g., Dickens's 'Oliver Twist', 1838; Melville's 'Moby Dick', 1851, Golding's 'Lord of the Flies', 1954) as it is often presented as being part of the human condition (Vaillancourt et al., 2008). Even in the 19th century with the public outcry and public discussion of the bullying in Hughes' novel 'Tom Brown's School Days' (1857) (Smith, Peplar and Rigby, 2004), no constructive solutions were found to deal with the problem of bullying aggression in schools (Rigby, 1997).

"Bullying at school has a history probably as long as schools have existed, and the phenomenon has doubtless been investigated for just as long" (Stephens, 2011, p. 381). This claim asserts an investigation of bullying over a considerable period of time. However, there is a distinct lack of research evidence to reflect this. Olweus (1999) proposes that historically bullying has often been minimized or overlooked as a serious problem. With the exception of a few notable studies such as those conducted by:

- Burk (1897) wrote "Teasing and Bullying" which discussed said behaviours amongst young people,
- Vaughn (1941) reported that students with weak reading skills are likely to bully peers,
- Bandura's research into the reinforcement of aggressive behaviour (Bandura, Ross and Ross, 1963),
- Hapkiewicz and Roden's (1971) demonstration of the effect of aggression on children's interpersonal play, and
- Rutter's study (1976) of psychiatric conditions in children which included survey items on bullying.

Systematic research of the bullying phenomenon only began in the 1970s in Scandinavia. The origin of which began with Heinemann's (1969, cited in Olweus, 1999) drawing of parallels from Lorenz's (2002) research on animal group behaviour. In Heinemann's 1969 article, "Apartheid" (cited in Olweus, 1999, p. 8), he introduced the concept of "mobbing" to describe a type of racial discrimination. In his view, mobbing was an expression of a kind of mental attitude, which, if not deliberately counteracted in early years, might develop into more severe group-separating activities and eventually into pogroms such as genocide and apartheid. The term 'mobbing' was taken from fellow Scandinavian Konrad Lorenz (2002). Lorenz used this term to describe a group of animals banding together to attack an animal of another species; especially when the attackers/mob were generally the hunted. Lorenz also used the term to describe the action of a school group or soldiers ganging up against a deviant individual. In 1970 Olweus initiated a large-scale project which is now internationally regarded as the first scientific study of bullying. Results and observations of the study were published in Scandinavia in 1973 and in 1978 in the U.S. under the title 'Aggression in the schools: Bullies and whipping boys.' In the 1980s, after what is believed to be three bullying related suicides, Norway's Ministry of Education commissioned Dan Olweus to conduct a national campaign to prevent bullying in schools. This was the first version of what later became known as the 'Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme' (Olweus and Limber, 1999). The programme was carefully evaluated in a large-scale project

involving 2,500 students from 42 schools monitored over a period of two and a half years (Olweus, 1999). Statistics showed reductions of 50% or more in student reports of being bullied and bullying others while peer and teacher ratings of bullying problems yielded roughly similar results. Olweus' pioneering prevention programme has been documented as being highly successful in curbing the prevalence of bullying (Batsche, 1997). Following the publication and dissemination of Olweus' work, the eighties and nineties saw the publication of much more research world-wide which highlighted the prevalence of bullying as a significant social problem that warranted serious attention (Campbell, 2005). With regards to the present study it aims to potentially help to create a safer environment for school children through the exploration and examination of an area where there is not significant research: constructive use of role-play as a bullying intervention initiative, combined with the use of a scientific measurement (Joronen, Konu, Rankin, Astedt-Kurki, 2012).

1.2.3 Research aims for the present study

The research was conducted at two similar inner city schools in [redacted] Ireland from October 2010 – June 2012. The profiles of the research and control schools were all boys, designated disadvantaged, availing of Delivering Equal Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programmes and following the Stay Safe programme.

Using a mixed methodological approach incorporating both quantifiable and qualitative instruments, the overall aim/question of the research was to ascertain the efficacy of the Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP) by identifying: can the BPP be used effectively by primary school teachers (non-drama specialists) to reduce bullying within the school environment. This is crucial to ascertain because as the researcher, I have an extensive background in directing theatre for young people and drama teaching, which may have aided my previous facilitation of the role-play components of the BPP during my M.Ed. study. Concordant with exploring the overall aim of teacher facilitation of the BPP were a number of other related aims:

- To ascertain how much assistance/coaching teachers would need to implement the BPP. This includes a review of the quality of the instructions of the BPP in terms of instructional clarity and ease of implementation.

- To ascertain if the activities of the BBP are straightforward for learners to comprehend and enact.
- To quantify via a self-report survey if the ongoing implementation of the BPP makes a difference to the levels of victimisation within the research school over a period of six and eighteen months.
- To evaluate if the BPP can engender learner knowledge creation and metacognition around the topic of bullying and empower learners to help prevent bullying in their school.
- To investigate if levels of empathy can be raised with regards to those victimised by bullying behaviour.

An inclusive mixed methods approach was developed in order to benefit from the advantages of combining deductive and inductive paradigms (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009) in the creation of a robust, valid, and reliable study.

The methods employed were:

1. Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire-Revised (OBVQ-R),
2. Teacher feedback sheets,
3. Weekly meetings with teachers and reviewing written feedback,
4. Focus group interviews with learners,
5. Teacher interviews with open and closed questions.

The content of the BPP in its first incarnation was designed for the researcher's M.Ed. In light of the literature review and current knowledge as to what works in preventing bullying the BPP was redesigned for this research study. The reasoning for the contents redesign will be discussed in Chapter Three, section 4 and a detailed presentation of the methodology will be presented in Chapter Four. Following is a description of the original study and what inspired the researcher to progress to a Ph.D. scale evaluation of the BPP.

1.3 Researcher's inspiration

The researcher has a rich and diverse experience in teaching and theatre (approximately twenty and thirty years respectively). He has taught junior infants, primary, post-primary, third level and adult education, was director of the Gaiety School of Acting in Cork for ten years, is Artistic Director of Cyclone Rep, a theatre-in-education company, based in Cork and is a part-time drama tutor at The Cork School of Music with a degree in Theatre Arts and an M.Ed.. This diverse drama education background has put the researcher in a variety of education and performance contexts that have informed his practice and aided the devising of constructivist learning scenarios involving educational drama techniques such as the BPP.

The inspiration for the development of the BPP came in 2003 from a colleague's request for the researcher to "do something" about the frequent bullying occurring in her combined third and fourth primary class of thirty-four students. At the time the researcher was a drama coach at the school. The teacher shared with the researcher that the bullying behaviour amongst her students had gotten out of hand and that they were "always at each other". The researcher agreed to help if he could. Initially, the researcher shared with the learners their teacher's concern about the levels of bullying behaviour in the class, to which there was no response. He then proceeded to write the word "bullying" on the board and the learners were asked to share their understanding(s) of the word. Tentatively, the learners began to respond with some common types of bullying such as physical and verbal. As the learners grew comfortable with the subject matter and inspired by each other's contributions the list grew to include types of social bullying (e.g. exclusion, rumour mongering and note passing). Learners were then asked if they would like to share a story, without naming or blaming, of when they were bullied or saw bullying and how it made them feel. All of the learners participated in this activity which constituted the remainder of the lesson time. What struck the researcher was how open and earnest the learners were about the negative effects of bullying behaviour. By the end of the lesson they seemed grateful to have had a forum to discuss the issue as they were much more aware of how bullying affected everyone.

On the afternoon of the next day the researcher received a phone call from the

principal. She enthused that the session had a great effect on the class group, feedback from parents was positive and the researcher was asked if he would consider extending it to the whole school. The researcher agreed but on reflection was struck by the strong effect that this lesson had had in such a short period of time and pondered the possibilities of developing the work further. It was serendipitous timing as the researcher was participating in a M.Ed. programme and was being encouraged to consider an action research project. Thus, an exploration into raising awareness about bullying and preventing it formed the basis of the project under the supervision of Dr. Mary Horgan, a lecturer at University College Cork (UCC).

In discussing the project with Dr. Horgan it was decided that the best approach to creating knowledge and understanding on the bullying topic would be to draw on the strengths of the researcher's background as a drama education specialist to incorporate role-play. The researcher primarily looked at using role-play to identify the types of bullying and their effects with no naming or blaming. No naming or blaming can be a significant strategy in achieving open and frank discussions on bullying. When working with groups naming and blaming can be counter-productive because:

> Once a student is named in the group setting of a behaviour support team, or indeed in any setting, including the classroom, it instantly moves the focus from the behaviour to the student him or herself. This dilutes and even removes the need for the teacher to manage the behaviour rather than the student...When it is understood and fully grasped that focusing on the behaviour alone is the key to the whole process, the support team process will steam ahead...because the student learns that their person and their dignity is protected and they feel safe, they settle fast and they become much more productive (MacKay, 2011, p.1).

Hence, focussing on the bullying behaviour itself without naming or blaming reduced the risk of interpersonal friction and set the stage for a classroom that benefitted from multiple perspectives and the ensuing social construction of knowledge (Bruner, 1996). Another benefit of not naming or blaming was that it helped the conducting of the role-plays. Without the fear of reprisals the learners had an opportunity to contribute to the creation of knowledge about bullying, understanding its effects on others and a fostered empathy. The data from my M.Ed. research suggests that this

social construction of knowledge from multiple perspectives may have enabled the learners to become better communicators as demonstrated from this teacher feedback:

> I feel that the children are better able to resolve problems amongst themselves. They are more able to vocalise what is going on. They seem reasonable to each other and when there is an issue they are able to speak about it more clearly and relate their feelings. Particularly, feelings they may not have realised they had before (Donohoe, 2007, p. 237).

The research was conducted over a period of two months in the spring of 2005 delivered throughout the school from junior infants to sixth class in a school of 125 students. Discussion notes and recommendations were published in the peer reviewed journal *An Leanbh Óg: The International Journal of Early Childhood* under the title "The Bullying Prevention Pack: Steps to dealing with bullying in your school" (Donohoe, 2007). In this article I provided a review of the system I had employed. The findings were presented at L'Organisation Mondiale pour Prescolaire (OMEP) conference in 2006 where I encouraged teachers to employ the BPP in their work with primary school learners but I have received no feedback. On reflection, I realised that the explanatory notes were too brief and the system lacked sufficient instructional scaffolding. However, from principal, teacher, learner and parental positive feedback it appeared that the work had merit and could potentially make a contribution to reducing bullying levels in primary schools. Realising that more time and effort were needed to develop and trial the BPP for teacher usage, I sought guidance to develop a methodology that would help to prove or disprove the efficacy of the prevention system. Hence, the decision was made to scaffold a scientific research enquiry by undertaking a Ph.D.. This longitudinal assessment period would allow evidence to accumulate with regards to the desired learning outcomes that would enable learners to:

- define bullying,
- identify the types of bullying,
- discuss the participant players in The Bullying Circle,

- relate how bullying behaviour affects one's self and one's classmates,
- know what steps to take if they found themselves a target of bullying,
- demonstrate confident behaviours,
- show how to intervene if someone is being bullied and/or how to report,
- participate in a group plan to prevent bullying in their school

with role-play as the fulcrum.

1.4 Role-play: an educational resource

A major part of the learning that is strived for in the BPP is that the learners become knowledgeable of the part and/or parts they and others play in bullying incidents through role-play. Role-play is word that is often used to describe a subset of activities within drama education (DES, 1999a). It can be about playing a part in a fiction (DES, 1999a) or it can be taking on a part that is distanced somewhat from the context (Bagshaw et al., 2005) or, as with role-play use described in this thesis, it can be simulated from real life such as students asked to prepare scenes on their experiences of school bullying (Bolton and Heathcote, 1999). Simulating real life experiences can be quite useful in the classroom as role-play in this way allows learners to become deeply immersed in the learning experience as it has:

> ...the ability to develop and enhance content skills as well as skills needed for future success by incorporating realistic, or real-world, problems. Those involved in role play are also actively involved in the construction of their learning which has also been shown to enhance student's critical thinking skills, especially when used in conjunction with good facilitator questioning techniques (Clapper, 2010, p. 40).

Significantly, role-play can help participants access a more meaningful experience of the conflict via body, feelings and though experiences – and see how opponents experience the conflict (Bagshaw, et al., 2005). Additionally, role-play can be an effective learning resource as it gives players an opportunity to deal with the disorientation of modern life (Blatner, 1995). It can give them an opportunity to

explore their unfolding identities and feelings while exploring problems imaginatively within a social learning context where there is "interaction rather than position, and the shifting among several points of view, rather than a reliance on linear reasoning" (Kottler, 1994, p. 273). Such learning environments can encourage knowledge creation from multiple perspectives as:

> When learners gain insights into the thoughts and actions of others, they at the same time gain a deeper understanding of themselves. Learning to handle conflicts constructively becomes not only a private (local) concern but should be able to permeate into all walks of life, contributing in the long run, to a more democratic and just society (Bagshaw et al., 2005, p. 433).

Over the last sixty years the recognition of role-play's "potential as a valuable education method" (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 510) has grown both as an educational resource and a research tool. Role-play's constructive use could potentially contribute to a learners' understanding of the world, clarifying or modifying it (O'Neill, 1995), helping them to gain skills in social interactions which include the "ability to communicate their understandings and feelings" (Bolton, 1979, p. 71). Role-play has the:

> ...ability to help participants consider ideas from different perspectives, to think of possibilities. Role-play is concerned with representing and exploring different people's points of view, and different points of view forge different types of knowledge. It places participants at the centre of the learning experience, and allows them to build their own bridge of understanding. As a result of this informed consideration, they are better able to resolve problems and issues (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 513).

Hence, with the aid of role-play learners may become more knowledgeable of the part and/or parts they and others play in bullying incidents and aid understanding in how bullying affects themselves and their peers on an emotional level. By seeing and perceiving the world from different role perspectives and at the same time being able to relate the role to one's own outlook, the potential for empathy and the understanding of complex situations is developed (Bagshaw et al., 2005). This potential generation of empathy is significant because the empathetic response has been shown to be stunted or lacking in those who regularly engage in bullying

behaviour (Gini et al., 2007). Therefore, it was conceived by this researcher that the constructive use of role-play could potentially aid in the fostering of an empathetic metacognitive response that could curb the prevalence of bullying.

However, this was a post research reflection on my M.Ed. project, and for the Ph.D. I planned for the teacher to be a key player in assessing if empathy was fostered. Teachers themselves would be the fulcrum of lesson delivery and their observations would be a significant source of data. In this regard the teacher-as-facilitator could make or break a learning event (Lombardi, 2007) as educators can evoke feelings in students that reinforce, support, or detract from knowledge construction (Goleman, 1996). Therefore, I theorised it was important that the role-play scenarios of BPP were user-friendly in terms of instructionality and implementation to allow teachers to implement the approach themselves and to aid the data collection.

1.5 Time for a user-friendly approach

A user-friendly approach was an important consideration for this research study, as in the Irish context teachers have the largest class sizes in Europe (McSorley, 2015). In initially developing the BPP the researcher was highly influenced by his peers on the M.Ed. In classroom discussions colleagues would often express job dissatisfaction and frustration with regards to their time being given to professional development initiatives that were only once-off courses with no ongoing follow up (OECD, 2011). Indeed, decreasing job-satisfaction levels have been linked to a lack of support for new curriculum initiatives (Hu et al., 2011; Naylor and Shaffer, 2003).

With regards to bullying prevention initiatives there is a desire for legislation, policy and investment that reflect the reality and challenges of everyday life in primary schools (Byrne, 2004; Midthassel, Minton and O'Moore, 2009). For example, the disappointing results of the Anti-Bullying Centre's (ABC) national anti-bullying programme of 2004-2005 in reducing overall levels of school bullying have, in part, been attributed to a lack of initiative and support from authorities (Midthassel, Minton and O'Moore, 2009). Unfunded mandates and financial constraints placed on schools often make it challenging for them to devote the necessary resources (i.e.

money and staff, particularly external staff or presenters) to sustain intervention programmes (Hu et al., 2011). Because of a lack of resources a substantial amount of work for the delivery of the ABC's programme needed to be delivered by volunteers with too much of a separation between the programme generators and programme implementers (O'Moore and Minton, 2008). Further complicating matters was the fact that the programme implementers were outside volunteers and not teachers from the schools themselves (O'Moore and Minton, 2008). These factors were said to have contributed to the drop-out rates of volunteers who delivered the programme which, in turn, led to low implementation and evaluation (O'Moore and Minton, 2008).

Hence, considerations of teacher time, curriculum over-crowding and follow-up support were taken into account in the subsequent re-design of the BPP for this doctoral study, and contributed to this researcher theorising that a user-friendly bullying prevention intervention needed to be streamlined for school teacher use. For example, in the initial M.Ed. version of the BPP there are eleven lessons spread over eleven weeks with individual lessons focussing on each type of bullying and lessons looking at various roles learners could play in school bullying incidents. In the revised BPP for Ph.D. research, this was reduced to five lessons spread over five weeks focussing on bullying types and role-plays simultaneously. However, unlike the M.Ed., there would be monthly reviews to ascertain how well the prevention methods were working. The monthly reviews would allow for adjustments to improve efficacy. It was hoped that all of this could be done within the teacher's Social, Personal, Health and Education (SPHE) remit, thus adding no additional curriculum burdens.

The time might be ripe for an intervention like the BPP to be taken up by schools as the political climate has become more supportive of bullying prevention initiatives. For example, in May 2012 The National Anti-Bullying Coalition (NABC) "persuaded" (NAPD, 2013, p.4) the Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs to hold a National Anti-Bullying Forum. Following the forum a working group was set up to develop a nation-wide action plan for dealing with bullying in schools. The Working Group dealt with over 60 submissions from groups invited to the forum and included representatives of Irish Society for Protection of

Cruelty to Children (ISPCC), the Samaritans, Barnardos, the Gardaí, the Department of Education and Skills (DES), Health Service Executive (HSE), National Education Welfare Board (NEWB), National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), secondary school teacher unions and management bodies. The fruit of these collaborative efforts was The Action Plan on Bullying (2013). The plan sets out twelve actions to help prevent and tackle bullying in primary and second level schools. To aid this implementation a sum of €500,000 has been allocated by the Department of Education and Skills for anti-bullying measures in schools with the suggestion that schools use the monies allocated in line with recommendations from The Action Plan on Bullying (2013). When one considers that there are 3,300 primary and 722 secondary schools in Ireland, the amount is relatively small, however, this does at least demonstrate a first step by the government to help tackle a problem that has all too often been left to Irish teachers to tackle without sufficient support (Byrne, 2004).

This doctoral research undertook therefore to gauge effectiveness of the revised and re-designed BPP as a resource to support teachers in their efforts to prevent bullying in their classrooms and schools. Therefore, a longitudinal research phase with a more robust methodology to garner evidence relating to the potential efficacy of the BPP was developed.

1.6 The need for this study

It is deemed timely to undertake a more systematic and longitudinal approach to researching the impact of the BPP in classrooms as the reported prevalence rates of bullying have risen dramatically in recent years. Half of all children are bullied at some time during their school years with more than 10% reporting being bullied regularly (Bingham, 2010). The Growing Up in Ireland (2009) survey showed that 40% of nine-year-olds reported being victims of bullying in the previous year, and boys and girls experienced similar rates of victimisation. In 2010, 24.3% of Irish children aged 10-17 reported that they were bullied at school at least once in the past couple of months (Callaghan et al., 2010). Almost a third of students 11 to 15 years old in Europe and North America reported being bullied (UNICEF, 2014). The

same UNICEF document (2014) reported high prevalence rates in Latvia and Romania where nearly 6 in 10 reported being bullied. In an international comparison across 39 countries and regions (Department of Youth Affairs, 2012), the average percentage of children who reported being bullied at school at least once in the past couple of months was 29.2%. This ranged from 11.1% in Italy to 54.0% in Lithuania. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 27.3%. On a global scale more than 33% of students between the ages of 13 and 15 reported regularly being bullied in school (UNICEF, 2014).

A possible explanation for the extent of its prevalence in schools is that authority figures, such as principals and teachers, often give once-off lectures to students with regards to their school's anti-bullying policy but do not have a culture that supports and gives meaning to this policy (Coloroso, 2004). In tandem with this, it is suggested there might be too much of a focus on direct bullying such as physical and verbal as opposed to indirect bullying such as social exclusion and cyber-bullying and this may go some way to explain why adults typically identify less than ten percent of bullying incidents (Rosenthal, 2008). Additionally, it is reported that the average bullying incident lasts for only 37 seconds with teachers intervening or noticing in only one out of twenty-five incidents (Rosenthal, 2008). It is conjectured that this short duration of the episode may explain why bullying is often hidden from teachers and parents (Skiba and Fontanini, 2000). What is notable is the gap between the levels of awareness of the learner and teacher perceptions of bullying. Research shows that learners are more aware of and experience more bullying than teachers know and/or imagine (Naylor et al., 2010). The blinkered view on the part of teachers may be due to the historic perception referred to in section 1.6.2 that bullying has not been seen as a social problem that needed attention, but rather has been accepted as a fundamental and normal part of childhood (Limber and Small, 2003). Such notions might go some way to explain why bullying behaviour endures not only as a school problem but as a wider social problem that can persist into adulthood (O'Moore, 2010). For example, with regards to workplace bullying, 27% of Americans have reported victimization in this way (Namie, Christensen and Phillips, 2014). Unfortunately, standing up to this type of bullying can be difficult as those who stand up to bullying can face being bullied themselves (*Boston Globe*, July 20,

2014). According to a *Boston Globe* Editorial Article (July 20, 2014) Deb Caldieri of South Hadley High School was one of the few teachers who openly criticized how the school dealt with the suicide of Phoebe Prince. Subsequently the school excluded her from attending Prince's funeral, reprimanded her for posting about Prince on Facebook and accused her of not reporting that the fifteen year old was being bullied. However, Prince's parents credit Caldieri as one of the few who stood up for Phoebe but Caldieri was ultimately forced to leave her job. Unfortunately, while whistleblowers like Caldieri are encouraged to come forward and report workplace bullying (Triggle, 2014), the reality is that they are often left unprotected by laws that are vague or ineffective (Johnstone and Holt, 2013; Triggle, 2014). Therefore, opportunities for more people coming forward to report bullying incidents at work are curbed because of a fear of retaliation (Johnstone and Holt, 2013). However, awareness of bullying as a major social problem is increasingly on the rise (Carpenter and Ferguson, 2013) and the moral case for interventions is robust in that bullying causes considerable pain, distress and humiliation to victims (Ahmed and Braithwaite, 2004).

1.7 Effects of school bullying

1.7.1 Introduction

Bullying prevalence in schools has been shown to have a correlation to increased levels of ill health, crime, poverty, workplace bullying and other detrimental social effects (Ttofi, Farrington, Lösel and Loeber, 2011; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 2012). The consequences of bullying behaviour affect not only the individual involved directly but their families, classmates, community and society at large, who have to pay the cost through health care, the courts and prison (Morrison, 2002; Ttofi, Farrington, Lösel and Loeber, 2011). Ongoing, unchecked bullying behaviour has been found to have short and long term negative impacts upon a person's social and emotional development, academic performance, health and success in life (O'Brennan, Bradshaw and Sawyer, 2009) with potential loss of self-esteem, higher anxiety than the norm, stress, depression, difficulties with school work, school avoidance, poor

relationships skills, higher levels of crime, and, in extreme cases, self-harm and suicide (Ttofi, Farrington, Lösel, Loeber, 2011; Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt, and Hymel, 2010, UNESCO, 2012). For both the bully and the victim, this cycle of aggression becomes an obstacle to learning, self-development and effective citizenship (Morrison, 2002).

1.7.2 Effects on academic outcomes

Victimisation can lead to depression or indeed exacerbate existing vulnerability to depression over short and long periods of time which leads to poor motivation, attitude to school, time-keeping/attendance, grades, health, academic outcomes and avoidance (Barnardos, 2011; Rueger, Malecki and Demaray, 2011). Learners may feel distracted and pre-occupied with the bullying, spending time thinking of ways to avoid it, such as avoiding the shortest route to school, the main entrance to school, hallways, toilets, the school cafeteria and other places inside the school building or on the school grounds (Barnardos, 2011; DeVoe, Kaffenberger and Chandler, 2005). In rare cases, victims could be so tormented by their antagonists that students plan and sometimes carry out retributive actions (Carney and Merrell, 2001). Ironically, the child who bullies can also suffer from stress, anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation (Rigby, 2010). Hence, learners, who persist in bullying behaviour and/or are recipients of the negative effects of bullying in their early and young adult years, could have a significant effect on society in terms of costs in the short and long term. These costs could be monetary and/or affect social welfare as the influence of bullying behaviour takes its toll in the workplace, contributes to higher levels of crime, a reduced quality of life and ill-health.

1.7.3 Effects on health

Rigby (1998) links poor academic performance and health with bullying behaviour. Over the course of their lifetimes, children who bully, those who are victimized by bullying and those who play both the roles of bully and victim are susceptible to higher levels of depression, low self-esteem, stress, anxiety, illness, self-harm, suicidal ideation and suicide and self-harm with bully-victims at an even higher risk of such symptoms (Hawker and Boulton, 2002; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; O'Moore and Kirkham, 2001; O'Moore, 2010; Rigby, 1998; Sweeting et al., 2006).

In the My World Irish National Survey (Headstrong, 2013) over a fifth of young adults indicated that they had engaged in self-harm and 7% reported a suicide attempt. This might be because:

> Bullying is so personal and focused that it can destroy a person's ego, sense of identity and ability to recover from bullying behaviour. A person may suffer from anxiety, panic attacks, depression and other psychological issues. A person who has been bullied may also be overwhelmed by guilt for having allowed bullying behaviour to impact upon them (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013, p. 33).

However, these issues are complex and the research indicates that there could be a complex interaction between causal factors of self-harm and suicidal thoughts and behaviours such as a relationship breakdown, interpersonal problems or financial difficulty, affiliations with deviant peer groups and binge drinking (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). Additionally, Hodges and Perry (1999) report that pre-existing mental health problems could contribute to becoming a victim of bullying, which again increases later symptoms. Hence, the direction of causality between bullying and mental health problems such as depression, low self-esteem and suicidal behaviour can be both ways.

Drinking and substance abuse have also been associated with mental health problems and bullying (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; McMahon et al., 2010; Vieno, Gini and Santinello, 2011). For example, students who reported experiencing bullying victimisation on a weekly basis also reported heavier drinking compared to youths who did not report experiencing mental bullying victimisation (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 1999). Another study (Kuntsche and Gmel, 2004) found that teens who drank alone were more often victims of bullying than those who drank in social settings. Those who are victimised by bullying are not the only ones to suffer as a study by Vieno, Gini and Santinello (2011) found that bullies and bully/victims were also associated with higher levels of substance use of alcohol and tobacco. Furthermore, a study by Weiss, Mouttapa, Cen, Johnson and Unger (2011) found that bully-victims were particularly prone to take on the habit of smoking. An explanation put forward by Ioannou (2003) for the positive correlation between bullying and substance use is related to a bullied child's desire to gain social status amongst the peer group in an

attempt to be perceived as cool and attractive. Peer group influences have consistently demonstrated that adolescents tend to influence each other's social behaviour and share problem behaviours, such as smoking and drinking (Kail, 2009). Homophily (Hartup, 1996) may also explain why bullied adolescents might experiment with substances as a means to become members of the group, to be more accepted by peers and, ultimately, avoid victimisation (Vieno, Gini and Santinello, 2011). Unfortunately, running with the crowd can sometimes lead to anti-social and criminal behaviour.

1.7.4 Social costs of bullying

Studies have shown that bullying in school can lead to a lifetime that has a significant higher risk factor for involvement in antisocial and criminal behaviour (DeVoe, Kaffenberger and Chandler, 2005; National Crime Prevention Survey, 1999; Ttofi et al., 2011) even after controlling for major childhood risk factors such as domestic abuse, bereavement and poor parenting (Ttofi et al., 2011). In a meta review of 18 longitudinal studies Ttofi et al. (2011) found that bullying perpetration in school was a significant risk factor for later offending. Male children who bully are four times more likely to have criminal convictions in adulthood than their non-bullying peers; for females it is 1.5 times more likely (Sourander et al., 2007). Furthermore, those who bully are more likely than other students to engage in vandalism, shoplifting, truancy, and drug use which puts them at greater risk for future criminality (Olweus et al., 1999). In short, engagement in bullying behaviours increases the probability of adverse outcomes later in life (Ttofi et al., 2011).

Contrasted with bullying perpetrators, those who are victimised had an average or below-average rate of criminal conviction (Olweus et al., 1999). However, being bullied could have a long term negative economic effect on the victimised person as a recent study by Sansone, Leung and Wiederman (2013) reported that adults who were bullied as children had reduced employment viability in adulthood with greater number of movement between jobs, a greater likelihood of having been 'paid under the table' and having experienced being fired.

It has been indicated in longitudinal research that bullying and victimisation may be linked to a higher rate of use of society's health and support systems (Barnett, 2003; Sourander, Helstela, Helenius, and Piha, 2000). Researchers have put forth that society could save large amounts of money by effective prevention of bullying problems in schools (Olweus and Limber, 2010; Ttofi and Farrington, 2011). Interventions that reduce school bullying could be followed by reductions in criminal offending which would have significant cost savings for the wider society (Ttofi and Farrington, 2011)

What is most significant about the emerging research on the effects of bullying on the person and wider society is that the dissemination and discussion of these results may be a potential catalyst to empower schools and society to change attitudes towards bullying as they have a moral and legal obligation to the children in their charge (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2001; Gini et al., 2011). Gini et al.(2011) propose that bullying behaviour is an immoral action because it humiliates and oppresses innocent victims as all children have a fundamental democratic right to feel safe and secure and to be spared violence and humiliation when they are at school (Olweus, 2003a). Dissemination of the effects of school bullying should also go hand in glove with advocacy of the rights of children to have access to education that is safe and free from bullying (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2001), as victimisation by bullying could effect a child's love of learning and willingness to go school (Rigby and Slee, 1999). Additionally, schools not actively striving to create safe, learning environments are contravening the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2014).

1.8 Conclusion

Researching if teachers can administer and facilitate the BPP was essential as, arguably, teachers are ideal candidates to administer a bullying prevention initiative. Teachers have to deal with incidents of bullying behaviour daily and are often aware of the roles students can play in school bullying incidents (Olweus, 1999; Salmivalli, 2010). Researchers have come to rely upon teachers to deliver anti-bullying

programmes on a broad scale (Olweus, 2004; O'Moore and Minton, 2007; Roland and Munthe, 1989; Salmivalli, 2004) as they are central to the practical implication of whole-school approaches toward the prevention and countering of violence in schools (Minton and O'Moore, 2007; Olweus, 1999) and as a professional body, have tremendous potential in the promotion of non-violence by promoting preventative practice (Minton and O'Moore, 2007). The results and the analysis of the impact of the teacher implementation of the BPP will be presented and discussed in Chapters Five and Six.

Below is a brief overview of the thesis chapters to follow:

- Chapter Two: a review of bullying behaviour, participants and effects and a review of anti-bullying research initiatives,
- Chapter Three: exploration of potential benefits of drama activities and role-play usage in the classroom with a critical review of the BPP role-play elements,
- Chapter Four: presentation and analysis of the methods used in the study,
- Chapter Five: presentation of the results of the research study,
- Chapter Six: discussion of results,
- Chapter Seven: major recommendations and conclusion.

The goal of the following chapter is to critically examine the existing research on bullying behaviour, the profiles of participant and non-participant behaviours in bullying incidents and the effects of bullying behaviour with a review of the impact of intervention/prevention strategies on bullying behaviour. Developing an understanding of these factors is "crucial for guiding the design of prevention strategies" (Wong, 2009, p. 211) and to creating the foundations for an argument exploring the use of the bullying prevention elements of the BPP.

CHAPTER TWO

AN EXPLORATION OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR, TYPOLOGY, THE PARTICIPANT PLAYERS AND METHODS OF PREVENTION

2.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a review of the literature in three key areas that aid the understanding of bullying behaviour and its prevention: the definition of bullying behaviour and its sub-types; examination of the participant players in bullying incidents; and a review of bullying prevention interventions. The main aim of this chapter is to critically examine the methods used in bullying prevention for schools drawing on the work that has been done by researchers such as Olweus, Salmivalli, Smith, O'Moore and Alsaker as well as researchers who have used drama activities as part of their bullying prevention resources. The aim of this examination is to identify elements of prevention initiatives that have proved efficacious in reducing bullying behaviours in schools and propose how some or all of these elements could be incorporated as part of a re-designed BPP for the current study. Also, there will be an analysis of methods and practices that have not been or have been shown to be counter-productive in reducing bullying in order to avoid replicating past mistakes. By drawing on the good work that has been done in bullying prevention over the last forty years, it may potentially aid the BPP to become a more effective resource as well as contributing to two areas where there are knowledge gaps: (1) to evaluate teacher (non-drama specialist) usage of what aims to be an effective, evidence-based anti-bullying programme that uses role-play as its central learning resource to foster group knowledge and awareness about bullying and how to prevent it, and (2) to quantify via a standardised instrument and qualitative data measures if role-play is effective in this regard. As stated in Chapter One this is significant because role-play activities are quite commonly used for interventions but documentation of role-play usage by non-drama specialists and quantitative research evidence of interventions that use role-play to help prevent bullying is limited (Bradshaw, 2015; Joronen, Konu, Rankin and Astedt-Kurki, 2012). This may be due to the fact that bullying prevention interventions with ensuing evaluations are only a relatively recent phenomenon.

2.2 Towards a definition of bullying behaviour

An extensive review of the literature on bullying suggests that a single definition is not present. From a cross-cultural perspective, one reason for this inconsistency in defining bullying stems from non-universal vocabulary (Craig, Henderson and Murphy, 2000). For example, when discussing bullying North Americans tend to use the term 'victimisation', whereas Scandinavians use the term 'mobbing' (Craig, Henderson and Murphy, 2000). In contrast, most Mediterraneans do not have a specific word for bullying but use overlapping terms that describe a person who has no discipline and order (Kalliotis, 2000). In Japan and Korea, there is no direct translation for bullying but the words 'ijime' and 'wang-ta' refer to social exclusion of the victim by their entire class or year (James, 2010).

Cultural differences aside, a definition that has come to be accepted is based on the work of bullying intervention and prevention pioneer Dan Olweus (Owens, Skrzypiec and Wadham, 2012). Olweus is one of the most cited researchers on bullying as well as providing the most widely used and accepted definition (Swearer et al., 2009). Olweus describes bullying as (1) intentional negative behaviour that (2) typically occurs with some repetitiveness and is (3) directed against a person who has difficulty defending himself or herself (Olweus, 2011b). With regards to the difficulty of defending oneself, Elinoff, Chafouleas and Sassu (2004, p. 889) suggest that the 'key' to defining a bullying situation is the existence of a power imbalance among those involved. "Aggressive behaviour may involve conflict between equals, whereas bullying always involves hurting someone who is not quite able to defend himself/herself" (Olweus, 1991, p. 413). This doesn't necessarily mean that the person bullying is physically stronger than the person being victimised but that, like the previously described Japanese 'Ijime' (Morita et al., 1999), the group can exert a social power which can manifest itself indirectly through social exclusion, rumour mongering and ignoring (Rose and Swenson, 2009).

Hence, it is important to identify two subtypes: direct and indirect bullying (Olweus, 2003a). Direct bullying can include aggressive acts such as hitting, extortion, damage to property, making nasty comments or gestures to the individual (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; O'Moore, 2010). Whereas indirect bullying or social exclusion (Cairns et al., 1989) refers to the harming of others through the

manipulation of peer relationships, such as spreading negative rumours, damaging a peer's reputation or social relationships, threatening to terminate friendships, and excluding someone from a social group (Action Plan on Bullying; 2013; O'Moore, 2010; Orpinas, McNicholas and Nahapetyan, 2014). Indirect bullying has also been called 'relational aggression' in the literature (Crick and Grotpeter, 1995). Regardless of which of the three terms has been employed to describe indirect bullying (indirect, social exclusion or relational), all refer to the use of social manipulation to target a person as opposed to a direct form such as physical or verbal bullying (Orpinas, McNicholas and Nahapetyan, 2014). In this review, the researcher will draw evidence from studies that use one or more of the three terms to highlight the impact of indirect bullying.

Sercombe and Donnelly (2012) have suggested a reworking of the influential widely used Olweus definition with regards to the target having difficulty defending themselves. Sercombe and Donnelly argue that this is too broad a statement and needs clarification. They recommend describing bullying as a relationship rather than behaviour (Sercombe and Donnelly, 2012, p. 10): "Bullying is a relationship of violence involving practices of domination that strip another person of the capacity for agency, using interventions carrying the sustained threat of harm". A key supposition of Sercombe and Donnelly's (2012) refinement of the definition is that there is relationship where the target is sub-ordinated to the bully within the social milieu. This loss of agency aims to engender long term helplessness with an inability to act. The ultimate goal is to instil abjection and a loss of hope in the targeted person. Crucially, actual bullying may not be repeated, but the threat of it can be sustained over time within the peer group. This view is reflected by the Department of Education and Skills recent update of the definition of bullying which specifies that acts of bullying can have a 'psychological' effect on a person (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). Hence a once-off isolated act of aggression can cause a child to live in daily fear (O'Moore, 2010). O'Moore's (2010) suggestion is supported by a survey of educator and student perceptions (1558 respondents) conducted by Cheng et al. (2011) which demonstrated a striking difference between teacher and student views of bullying. Sometimes students might view a single aggressive act as a demonstration of bullying whereas the teachers emphasized the repetitive nature of

the act in accordance with the Olweus definition (Cheng et al., 2011). How bullying behaviours might manifest themselves will now be discussed.

2.3 Types of bullying

2.3.1 Introduction

It is important to gain an understanding of all forms of bullying as any one or combinations thereof can have potentially insidious effects (Gini, 2008; Salmivalli, 2010). In the recent past researchers have put forward that direct, physical bullying is more characteristic of boys, while indirect, relational bullying is more characteristic of girls (Andreou and Bonoti, 2010; Besag, 1991; Crick and Grotpeter, 1995; Olweus, 2010; Stephenson and Smith, 1989). However, recent research presents evidence that boys can engage in relational bullying at the same or even higher rates than girls (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; Lansford et al., 2012; Orpinas, McNicholas and Nahapetyan, 2014). With regards to victimisation, even though research on rates of prevalence of engagement with indirect bullying is still emerging, there is a body of evidence which indicates that boys and girls are victimised about equally (Owens, Skrzypiece and Wadham, 2012). Furthermore, with regards to victimisation in terms of sex, boys tend to be bullied by boys for the most part, while girls tend to be bullied by both boys and girls (Owens, Skrzypiece and Wadham, 2012).

With regards to frequency by types, it was once thought that physical bullying was the most common form of bullying (Crick and Grotpeter, 1995) but in recent years this view has changed (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). It has now been recognised that verbal bullying and other indirect forms of bullying such as social exclusion and cyber bullying can occur with even more frequency (James, 2010; Naylor et al., 2010; Rigby, 2002b). Students view indirect bullying as being as bad as physical aggression in terms of overall negative effect (Eslea, 2010), and girls regard it as even more harmful (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013).

In reviewing the literature there is no agreement upon the list of bullying types to follow but there is general consensus that bullying is intentional negative behaviour against another person or persons (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013).

2.3.2 Verbal bullying

Verbal bullying is considered to be the most common type of bullying experienced by children and young adults (O'Moore, 2010). Verbal Bullying can leave the victimised person feeling angry, frightened, and/or powerless (Anti-Bullying Centre, 2015). The content of verbal attacks can be highly personal with negative and sarcastic comments about race and sexuality and can include forms like name calling, teasing, slagging and insults (Olweus, 2006; O'Moore, 2010). A common refrain of children who engage in this bullying type is that they attribute their behaviour as teasing (Nansel et al., 2001). However, teasing is seen as a precursor to bullying and the line between playful teasing and bullying someone with verbal taunts is easily crossed (O'Moore, 2010). Students themselves report finding it hard to identify the exact point when the line of playful teasing crosses over to bullying but it is the repetitive nature of the teasing that is noted (Sweeney, 2009). Risk factors for teasing could include differences in appearance, the clothing one wears, behaviour, mannerisms, academic ability and performance, social status, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, race, or cultural background or anything that singles a person out for difference (Horowitz et al., 2004; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; O'Moore, 2010; Wong, 2009).

As a form of verbal bullying, racist bullying warrants attention as it is becoming more common in Irish society (Fanning et al., 2011) and it is a significant factor "that contributes to the problem of school harassment and bullying" (Dessel, 2010, p. 408). A 2009 survey undertaken by Gallup on behalf of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights found that 73 per cent of black African respondents in Ireland believed that discrimination based on ethnicity or immigration status was widespread in the country. In the school setting a study published in April 2010 by the Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI), involving 332 second and third-level teachers (institutes of technology and further education colleges) found that 28 per cent were aware of racist incidents that had occurred in their school or college during the previous month. With regards to the Traveller culture in Ireland, the 2012 State of the Nation's Children Report states that 31.6% of Traveller young people aged 10-17 reported they were bullied at school at least once in the past couple of months. This compares to 24.3% of all those in the 10-17 age group reporting bullying. Minton

(2010) demonstrated findings that boys were more inclined than girls to verbally abuse their peers with regards to race and colour. Verbal prejudicial bullying can create a school culture and climate that leads to high rates of school absence with long term consequences for both the victim and perpetrator escalating to the potentially more serious incidents of physical bullying (Whitted and Dupper, 2005). While prejudicial bullying is often considered under the heading of verbal bullying, current research has begun to identify it as a distinct type of bullying called identity-based bullying.

2.3.3 Identity-based bullying

A considerable amount bullying in schools is not just behavioural, "but is rooted in lack of respect for diversity and in social inequalities, both of which have their foundation in wider society" (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013, p, 21). This understanding has led to the creation of the term identity-based bullying which takes into account vulnerable students who are bullied due to societal prejudices and stereotyping (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). Identity-based bullying can take the form of attacks on characteristics considered unique to a child's identity such as race, religion, sexual orientation or physical appearance (Equality Authority, 2015). Real or perceived differences between children are due to a poor understanding of diversity and procedures in place to promote understanding and inclusion (Tippet et al., 2010). For example, even though homophobia is a common form of school bullying, it is one of the most unchallenged (O'Connor, 1995): "Gay is commonly used by youth to generally describe anything abnormal, inferior, or worthless" (Walton, 2006, p. 13). Homophobic name calling examples such as 'faggot', 'dyke', and 'queer' are routine put-downs in school hallways and on playgrounds (Espelage, Aragon and Birkett, 2008; Poteat and Espelage, 2005). Homophobic victimisation occurs more frequently to lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered and questioning (LGBTQ) learners than among students who identify themselves as heterosexual (Espelage, Aragon and Birkett, 2008; Kosciw et al., 2010). LGBTQ learners are subjected to harassment that can lead to violence or even suicide (Kosciw et al., 2010). Homophobic harassment has been implicated in school shootings as well (Poteat and Espelage, 2007). Furthermore, about a quarter of transgender people

report having been bullied by their teachers (Home Office, 2008). Until recently there were few school anti-bullying policies that mentioned homophobic bullying (Macgillivray, 2004). Minton et al. (2008) have recommended that homophobic bullying should be explicitly considered in school anti-bullying policies and this is now reflected in the recommendations put forth in the Action Plan on Bullying (2013).

2.3.4 Physical bullying

A potential danger of physical bullying is that it:

> ...is often written off as horseplay, just messing, pretending or just a game when challenged. While children and teenagers do play roughly, care needs to be taken with such games, as they can easily lead to more vicious and repeated attacks (O'Moore, 2010, p. 34).

Both boys and girls can engage in physical bullying, but boys more so as they have a greater tendency towards physical aggression (O'Moore, 2010). Dominance theory suggests that physical bullying can be an aggressive act used to gain dominance and assert power over peers (Swearer et al., 2006). Some examples of peer on peer physical bullying are punching, shoving, tripping, slapping, spitting, pulling hair, biting, pinching, scratching, pushing, shutting a person inside a room or locker, wedgies, damage of belongings and attacks on property (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; Olweus, 2006; Wong, 2009; O'Moore, 2010). Damage to and attacks on property are sometimes part of extortion bullying (O'Moore, 2010).

Extortion bullying is a form of bullying that is not included in the Irish Acton Plan on Bullying (2013) but is often included in the literature as a type of direct physical bullying (Olweus, 2007). Some researchers argue that it is a category of its own as it is often intricately connected with verbal bullying as threats are used (O'Moore, 2010; Tatum and Herbert, 1997). It can include demands for money, making a child do things against their better judgement such as dares to bully or damage to property. It is often the ultimate goal of the bullied child to be allowed into the peer group. If threats/demands are not carried out there may be a threat of physical injury to the child, peer group exclusion or the threat of spreading damaging rumours (Olweus, 1993b; O'Moore, 2010; Tatum, 1997). Children may be dared or forced to

steal from the school leaving them at the mercy of those who bully and, hence, under their power (O'Moore, 2010). If they do not comply, this could lead to exclusion from the group.

2.3.5 Exclusion bullying

Exclusion bullying can include: keeping/excluding a peer from a classroom activity, game or social group, talking negatively about a peer while they are in earshot, spreading lies, false rumours, sending mean notes and/or cruel pictures, breaking confidences, intentionally ignoring someone, attempting to get others to dislike someone/to undermine friendships (Eslea, 2010; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; James, 2010). Generally, these activities are considered manipulative attacks and are tied to the maintaining and seeking of popularity and close friendships (Cillessen and Rose, 2005; Lease, Kennedy and Axelrod, 2002). Those who are viewed as popular by their peers might engage in this strategic aggression to maintain their status within the group, whereas unpopular individuals, who have a reputation for striving for popularity, seem to use this aggression in desperate attempts to impress popular peers (Adler and Adler, 1998; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013).

As a type of bullying, exclusion bullying, is often the preferred cited terminology in advice leaflets in handouts given to schools, parents and other social groups (Barnardos, 2002; Citizens Information, 2015; Stay Safe, 1998). However, in the literature, exclusion activities can come under the heading of relational aggression (for example, see the Action Plan on Bullying, 2015). Why the predilection for usage of term exclusion, the researcher has been unable to uncover but it may be that this term is easier for the layman to grasp.

The literature indicates (Crick and Grotpeter, 1995; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013) that since relational aggression aims to hinder the development of friendships, closeness and intimacy within the peer group it is more hurtful for girls than boys. It has been suggested that girls suffer more long term psychological damage from this type of bullying (Besag, 2006). Relational Bullying is very hard for a child or young adult to combat as it directly attacks their confidence and self-esteem (O'Moore, 2010); moreover, it can be very difficult to detect (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013).

Teachers often deem relational bullying to be far less serious than other forms of bullying (Espelage and Swearer, 2003). Therefore, it is argued that they have less empathy for the victim and, consequently, are less likely to intervene when this form of bullying occurs (Craig, Henderson, and Murphy, 2000; Hazler et al., 2001). Research has shown that indirect forms of bullying can be just as harmful to victims as experiences of direct bullying but it can be hard to detect (Crick and Bigbee, 1998; O'Moore, 2010; Storch, Brassard, and Masia-Warner, 2003). Even harder to detect is cyber bullying as this form of indirect bullying can provide anonymity with no immediate consequences for the perpetrator (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013).

2.3.6 Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is a relatively new form of bullying that children are being exposed to (UNICEF, 2014). Prevalence is increasing in both primary and secondary schools (O'Moore, 2012) where "those who have been bullied online are more likely to have been bullied on a social networking site or by instant messaging than by email, in gaming sites or chatrooms" (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013, p.26). With regards to the primary school participants in this study it is important to note that even though cyberbullying is more extensive with secondary learners (Tarapdar and Kellett, 2011), primary learners are particularly vulnerable to this type of bullying because "they have less knowledge for self-protection" (Tarapdar and Kellett, 2011, p.28). Unfortunately, there is no definition with clear criteria on this type of bullying (Menesini et al., 2012). O'Moore (2012, p. 210) has written that it is helpful to view cyber bullying as an "extension of traditional bullying with technology providing the perpetrator with another way to abuse their target". However, a recent major international study by Menesini et al. (2012) put young people's experiences of cyber bullying under the microscope and revealed significant findings that should help the formation of a definition. Menesini and colleagues (2012) systematically investigated the role of five definitional criteria for cyber bullying, in six European countries. These criteria included intentionality, imbalance of power, repetition, anonymity, and public vs. private and were combined with a set of 32 scenarios, covering a range of four types of behaviours: written-verbal, visual, exclusion, and impersonation. For each scenario, the 2,257 participants were asked whether it was cyber bullying or not.

Across the six countries respondents participating found that there was (1) clear first dimension characterized by an imbalance of power and a clear (2) second dimension characterized by intentionality. Hence, it appears that the cyber bullying definition is in strong agreement with two of the parameters of the accepted definition of bullying: imbalance of power and intentionality (Rigby, 2007; Smith and Monks, 2008).

Cyber bullying can take a number of forms such as emails, blogs, polling websites, mobile phones, Twitter, Facebook, online games or other electronic means or platforms to tease, abuse, intimidate, masquerade, denigrate, exclude, threaten, stalk, and/or attack others (Belsey, 1993; Smith et al., 2008; Willard, 2004). Those engaged in this bullying type can potentially use technology to: send mean-spirited and/or vicious texts, make silent/nasty phone calls, rumour spread, posting inappropriate pictures or messages about in blogs or on websites, exclusion (i.e., not allowing someone to be part of an online group or join a game), flaming (posting hostile messages in chat rooms or internet forums which are intended to 'inflame' the victims emotions and assert dominance over them), masquerade (pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material that makes that person look bad or places that person in potential danger), impersonation (stealing an online identity in order to cause trouble in that person's name), trolling (similar to flaming, but directed at the subject of discussion rather than participants in the discussion), happy slapping (links traditional and cyber bullying: a victim is videoed being harassed and the tape is then uploaded onto the internet), denigration (a group of bullies create a website to torment a victim (also called bashing), sexting which is texting of sexually explicit texts or nude photos about the targeted person (Cross et al, 2009; Hinduja and Patchin, 2009; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; Li, 2010; McGuckin et al,. 2010; O'Moore, 2010; Willard, 2004 and 2006).

Unlike Face-to-Face (f2f) bullying (McGuckin, Cummins and Lewis, 2010), the cloak of anonymity aids users in the feeling that cyberspace is impersonal, they do not feel responsible for their actions, there are no immediate consequences and therefore they can say and do whatever they want (Action Plan on bullying, 2013; Willard, 2004). Suler (2004) has postulated that this protection of anonymity may be a trigger for the 'online disinhibition effect'. This encourages the perpetrator to think it is safe

to bully. Ybarra and Mitchell (2004, p. 1313) suggest that "...one's ability to keep his or her identity unknown is a unique method of asserting dominance online that conventional bullying disallows." Hence, attributes of the bullying personality (i.e., use of foul language to demean others) which may not be associated with the person in their social, f2f life can be expressed through this medium. Because of technology's lack of interpersonal, real-time contact Willard (2004, p. 6) points out that:

> ...there is a lack of tangible feedback about the consequences of actions on others. People are distanced from a perception of the harm that their behaviour has caused. This lack of tangible feedback undermines the empathic response, and thus undermines feelings of remorse if one engages in irresponsible or harmful behaviour. The lack of tangible feedback also makes it easier to rationalize an irresponsible or harmful action as not having caused harm to anyone.

Furthermore, cyber bullying is perhaps more damaging than an f2f verbal assault due to its long lasting psychological damage and the frequent inability of victims to identify, avoid, and terminate its use (Underwood, 2003). This damage is further exacerbated by the Internet's 24/7 status: "a website with denigrating comments about a person might be online for weeks or months, while denigrating comments that are made in a face-to-face context 'disappear' after they have been spoken" (Van de Bosch and Van Cleemput, 2009, p. 1351). Significantly, young people who engage in this type of bullying may not be aware that the evidential nature of cyber bullying provides for a permanent record of the bullying offense which might impact on them in the future (Van de Bosch and Van Cleemput, 2009).

2.3.7 Gesture bullying

Gesture bullying, along with the aforementioned extortion bullying, is not mentioned as a type of bullying in the Action Plan on Bullying (2013) but it is significantly referred to as a way to bully and as 'a type' in the literature and online references (Brevik and Olweus, 2015; O'Moore 2010; Sticks and Stones, 2015; Tatum and Herbert, 1997). With regards to this research, gesture, along with extortion bullying,

needs to be discussed as it is referred to in Olweus' OBVQ-R which is used in this study.

Research by Ray Birdwhistell (Padula, 2009) suggests that over 65% of our communication is non-verbal and made up of facial expressions, gestures, posture, gait, and visible arm and body movements. Considered in this light, gesture bullying has the potential to be a powerfully aggressive behaviour (Olweus, 2010). It can include threatening gestures which convey demeaning and/or intimidating messages which send the message that a child is 'in for it' or is worthless (O'Moore, 2010). These gestures could include dirty looks, mime of slitting the throat, glaring, staring at another in a hostile fashion (i.e. the cold stare) and other threatening actions (O'Moore, 2010). It can also include gestures with a sexual meaning (Brevik and Olweus, 2015) and can include mimes that mock another person with the intention to hurt and demean (O'Moore, 2010).

2.3.8 Disablist bullying

Research on disablist bullying is a recent phenomenon and it is "one of the most challenging and complex issues which students and teachers are facing in the modern classroom" (Purdy and McGuckin, 2011, p. 42) as teachers have insufficient training to provide for and address the needs of learners with SEN. Frequently, children with disabilities report being called names related to their disability (Purdy and McGuckin, 2011) and they are more likely to be victimized by peers, rated less popular than their peers, and have fewer friends than other children (Monchy, Pijl, and Zandberg, 2004; Yude, Goodman, and McConachie, 1998). However, the bullying is not only in one direction, as children with SEN can be the "perpetrator of bullying" (Purdy and McGuckin, 2011, p. 41). For example, it has been reported that children with SEN can use their condition as leverage to manipulate and tell lies about non-SEN peers (Purdy and McGuckin, 2011). However, in the main, children with SEN are more frequently bullied than non-SEN peers. Following are some examples from the literature on the frequency of being bullied experienced by young people with SEN and medical conditions.

Children with Learning Disabilities (LD) are at greater risk of being teased and physically bullied than their peers (Mishna, 2003; Nabuzoka and Smith, 1993; Thompson, Whitney, and Smith, 1994). Additionally, children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) were reported more likely than others to bully their peers as well as being more likely to be targeted by bullying (Unnever and Cornell, 2003).

Children with medical conditions that affect their appearance (e.g., cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida) are more likely to be victimized by peers (Sentenac et al., 2012). Additionally, children who stutter may be more likely than their peers to be bullied. In one study, 83% of adults who had problems with stammering as children said that they had been teased or bullied; 71% of those who had been bullied said it happened at least once a week (Hugh-Jones and Smith, 1999).

Research suggests that children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are at greater risk for being bullied than non-ASD peers or children with other forms of SEN (Humphrey and Symes, 2010). One study indicated that experiences of being bullied were more than four times more likely for children with ASD (Little, 2002). A subsequent study of 34 parents of children 5-21 years of age with ASD indicated that roughly 65% of the children had been victimized by peers (Carter, 2009). In a recent study of 192 parents reporting on the bullying experienced by their ASD child, Cappadocia, Weiss and Pepler (2012) suggested that victimization rates were twice as high as those found in the general population (Cappadocia, Weiss and Pepler, 2012). It has been reported that children with ASD can struggle with initiating and sustaining peer interactions (i.e. friendships), due to difficulties with communication and social skills (Cappadocia, Weiss and Pepler, 2012) this can lead to lower levels of peer support which can isolate the child and lead to a higher frequency of being bullied (Humphrey and Symes, 2010). This is key factor as to why children with ASD are bullied more than non-SEN peers as research indicates that poor peer relationships are associated with peer victimisation (Delfabbro et al., 2006; 2010; Nansel et al., 2001; Symes and Humphrey, 2010).

2.3.9 Sexual bullying

Children, both boys and girls, as young as three years old have been found to engage in sexual bullying (Crick et al., 1999). Research has indicated that there is overlap between bullying and sexual harassment in actions such as spreading rumours of a sexual nature, casting aspersions about sexual behaviour, name calling with a sexual connotation, graffiti of a sexual nature, inappropriate touching, boys flicking girls skirts up, making sexual gestures, using derogatory names with regard to an individual's supposed sexual orientation, sexting, using porn images on mobiles to cast aspersions and/or to suggest inappropriate sexual liaisons, and ganging up on a person to molest them (Coy, 2001; Ringrose, Gill, Livingstone and Harvey, 2012; Stein, 1999; Wong, 2009).

With regards to frequency and sex girls tend to be sexually bullied more than boys (Craig, 1998; Garandeau and Cillessen, 2006). Sexual bullying combined with exclusion bullying can be devastating to a girl's sense of enthusiasm for school and learning, self-esteem, and hopes for the future (Phoebe Prince, as discussed in Chapter One, experienced this toxic combination with devastating results for her and her family). The psychological impact of sexual bullying can give rise to feelings of anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, loneliness, and feeling afraid (Nansel et al., 2001; American Association of University Women, 2001). Additionally, "there is an overlap between sexual bullying and homophobic bullying as the latter is often sexualised" (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013, p. 20) and can be fuelled by views which have social underpinnings. This brings us back to the aforementioned overlap between bullying and sexual harassment.

Sexual bullying can also be called sexual harassment depending on context (New, 2014; Strauss, 2013). For example, a school's anti-bullying policy may use the term 'sexual bullying' to describe what's against the school policy, while legally the term 'sexual harassment' may be used to define what's against the law (New, 2014). Furthermore, depending on the wording of the specific school or legal document, some behaviours might be against school policy and/or against the law (New, 2014). This overlap can lead to confusion whether to call a specific unwanted sexual act: bullying or harassment (Strauss, 2013). Often the preference is to call it bullying as

there is a fear of the potential social and legal complications of calling the unwanted act sexual harassment (Strauss, 2013). In Ireland the Health and Safety Authority's Code of Practice for Employer's and Employee's on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work (2007) differentiates between bullying and sexual harassment by asserting that, while they are closely related, harassment is governed by the Equality Act (2004) as it includes "unwanted conduct" (p. 12) towards people who are members of a particular group. In this regard, sexual bullying overlaps with identity-based bullying.

2.3.10 Summary

With regards to bullying definitions and types it is important to keep in mind that the current description of these aggressive behaviours are evolving "as the understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour has increased and new forms and types of bullying have been recognised" (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013, p. 16). When discussing bullying in this thesis, the definition will include the following, that is:

- intentional negative behaviour,
- typically occurs with some repetitiveness,
- directed against a person who has difficulty defending himself or herself,
- a relationship of violence that strips another of agency, making them feel subordinate, helpless and abject,
- direct (i.e. physical, verbal, gesture) or indirect (i.e. cyber, social exclusion),
- and in some cases once-off incidents can be described as bullying as they may have a cumulative negative effect on the person being targeted (i.e. racist comments directed against one person from a number of separate individuals) (Olweus, 2011a, O'Moore, 2010; Sercombe and Donnelly, 2012).

With regards to the types discussed the discussion will use the terminology on the types presented in the previous headings in this section. With regards to the discussion on sexual bullying and sexual harassment, the term to be employed will be 'sexual bullying'. This choice has been made because the OBVQ-R survey employed in this study describes unwanted sexual conduct as being, "bullied with

mean names, comments or gestures with a sexual meaning" (Olweus, 2006, p.4). Hence, for this study the term sexual bullying will be used to avoid confusion and aid clarity in the discussions.

This examination of how bullying is understood in the literature, reveals that peers play a significant role in the formation and maintenance of bullying behaviour (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; Jimerson, Swearer and Espelage, 2009; Orpinas, McNicholas and Nahapetyan, 2014; Salmivalli, 2010). Hence, the next section will explore the roles and contributions of peers in fostering, supporting and prolonging school bullying behaviours and incidents.

2.4. Participant players

2.4.1 Introduction

Dan Olweus, who was introduced in chapter one, has been highly influential in bullying research and his Bullying Circle (Olweus, 2001) which illustrates the potential participant players in a bullying situation, is often cited in research studies (Saleh, 2015).

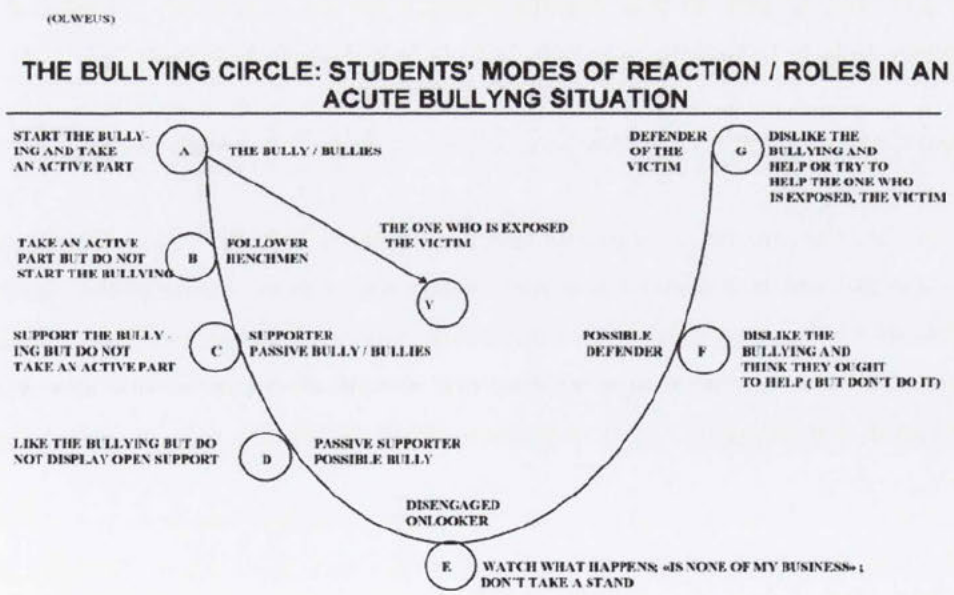


Figure 2.1 Olweus' Bullying Circle

In figure 2.1 students are given various labels such as the victim, the bully, followers/henchmen, disengaged onlookers and the defenders. The actions/positions of the particular players are represented by letters. In the centre there is the victim who is labelled 'Y', 'A' starts the bullying and may have henchmen 'B' who participate in the bullying by following the bully and his/her actions. The bully has another group of supporters 'C' who approve the bullying but act passively, and others 'D', who support the bullying act without showing their open approval. Then there is another group of onlookers 'E' who watch the bullying but do not want to get involved. Another group of onlookers 'F' dislike the bullying but do not do anything to prevent it. The last group is represented by the letter 'G' and they are the defenders of the victim who disapprove the bullying act and try to help the victim.

However, since the Bullying Circle has been created there has being growing concern about the potential negative effects of using labels with regards to school bullying as labelling a child as 'bully' or a 'victim' can be harmful and it could limit how the child sees him or herself and how other children and adults see them (Dweck, 2006). Dweck (2006) argues that every label sends a message that tells children how to think about themselves. Hence, labelling a child could result in a confirmed identity as a 'bully' or 'victim' resulting in ongoing participant player behaviour patterns based on this identity (Sercombe and Donnelly, 2012). A label could lead the person to believe the:

> ...expectations directed towards him. When a person has taken, or has been put in, a certain role, he/she might find it difficult to get out of it: the group punishes behaviours that are contrary to that role and rewards behaviours in accordance with it. Self-concept is another thing that, along with others' expectations, guides an individual's behaviour: children or adolescents who define themselves as bullies may themselves end up believing that they are completely incapable of other kinds of behaviour. The same is true of students in other participant roles as well (Salmivalli, 1999, p. 455).

Hence, labelling may suggest that the behaviour is fixed, the fault of the child and/or unlikely to improve over time (Dweck, 2006). This ignores other factors that could contribute to bullying behaviour such as peer influences, family dynamics, and school climates (Espelage and Swearer, 2011). Furthermore, using a label sends a

message that the child's behaviour doesn't change from one situation to the next (Kowalski, Limber and Agatston, 2012) whereas research shows that systems can be put in place that can encourage and support defending behaviours (Salmivalli, Kärnä and Poskiparta, 2009). In reality, a child may play different participant roles in the Bullying Circle, depending on the situation (Salmivalli, 2010). In examining the roles of the participant player behaviours in this discussion and throughout the thesis, there will be a preference to avoid the potentially negative and limiting labels of bully, victim, henchmen, etc., and instead look at behaviours (e.g. 'a child who is engaging in bullying behaviour' or 'one who is being targeted by bullying'). However, the researcher has used Olweus' Bullying Circle for this study and therefore using labels will at times, be unavoidable.

2.4.2 Participant roles in bullying behaviour

Bullying behaviour rarely involves just a child who is engaging in bullying behaviour and one who is being targeted by it (Craig and Pepler, 1995). Bullying behaviour is often a group process which can involve various participant players (Salmivalli, 2010) as depicted in figure 2.2.

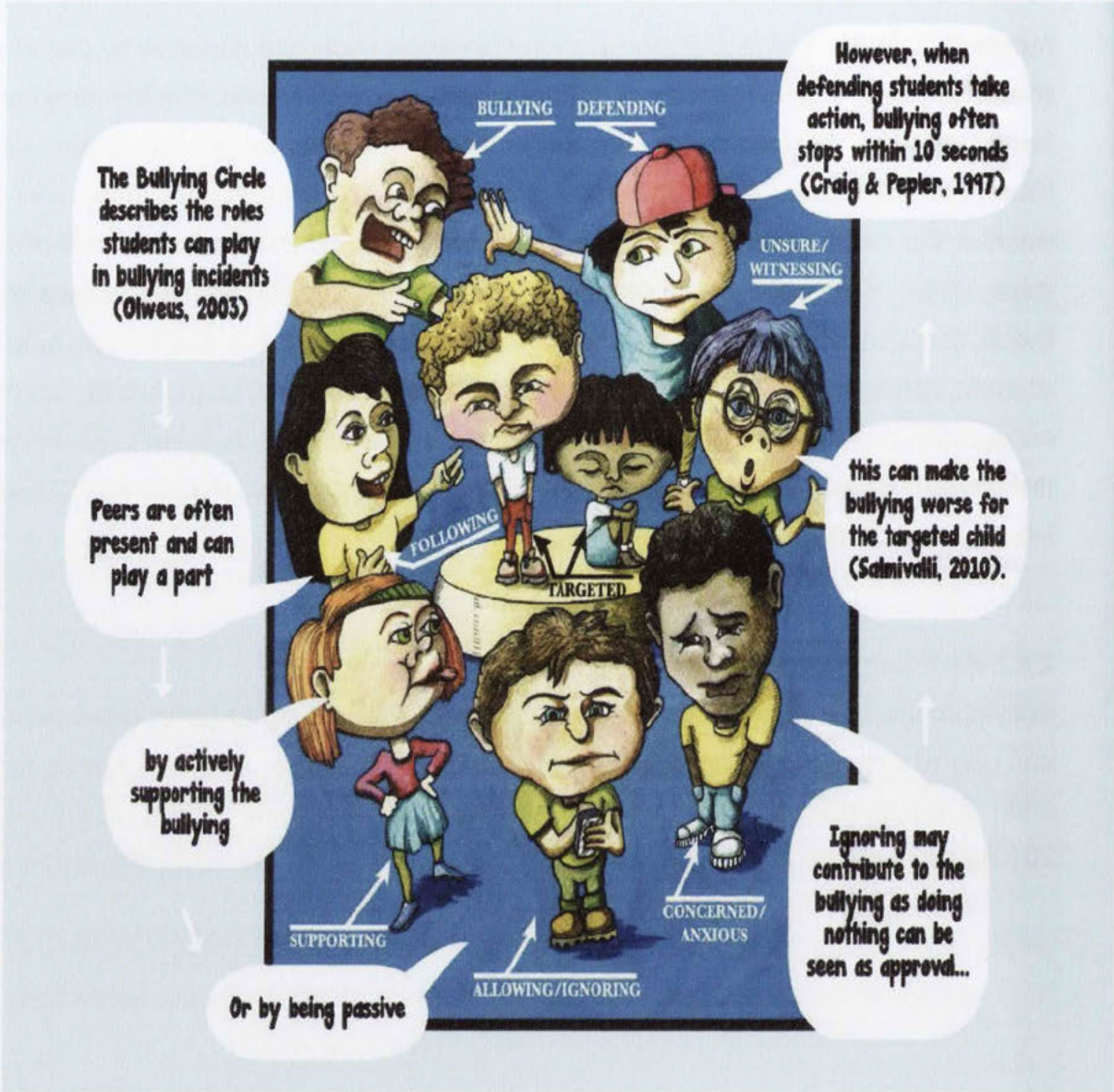


Figure 2.2 This adaptation of the Olweus Bullying Circle (Donohoe and Dummigan, 2015), used with Olweus' permission, illustrates potential behaviours of participant players in bullying incidents

The Bullying Circle in figure 2.2 depicts the socially complex nature of school bullying. In the centre there are the targeted children (a conscious decision to challenge the potentially isolating position of just one child as expressed in Olweus' schemata), anti-clockwise from the top left there is a child engaged in bullying behaviour, the one who follows by actively taking part in the bullying, the supporting one who provides an audience or laughs at it which can encourage the bullying to continue, those passively supporting by ignoring the incident which can be perceived

by those bullying as support, the disengaged bystanders who stay away, take no sides but may be distressed by the event, possible defending children who don't like the bullying but don't know how to stop it and defending children who step in, stick up for and/or comfort the targeted child (Olweus, 1994b; Salmivalli, 2008). All of these participant roles are significant in that they could influence the bullying behaviour by fostering it or creating a situation where it is discouraged (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Sinisammal, 2004). As many as 35-40% of school-age children take on the roles of bully, follower and supporter with a further twenty-five to thirty percent composed of silent bystanders who withdraw or ignore it (Salmivalli, 2004). A reason for the silence is that children who engage in bullying behaviour can be good cognitive strategists, able to sense the details of their actions and are able to notice others' pain and distress, although with limited cognitive empathy (Gini et al., 2007; Menesini et al., 2003). Hence, they tend to pick on children who are weaker, less popular and/or have little influence amongst their peers. Adopting this strategy means that there are likely to be fewer or no repercussions (Hoover and Hazler, 1991). Adoption of such aggressive social strategies may be because of the influential background of the child who is engaged in bullying (Perren, 2005) which will be discussed further in the following section.

In discussing the behaviours of the participant players it is significant to note that they are not static but can be fluid (James, 2010) and are part of what Salmivalli (2010) calls the 'bully-victim continuum'. For example, in one incident they may act as followers of the lead child instigating bullying behaviour or, in another instance, they could be the one leading the bullying (Salmivalli, 2010). Or they may fit the profile of a bully-victim, who bullies in one incident and then is targeted in another (Sourander et al., 2007). On the other hand, they may be ignored as a bystander in one incident and then defend at another time (Salmivalli et al., 1996). However, defending behaviours are rare as they often have negative social consequences (Thornberg, 2010). Defending can be an unsuccessful strategy for attaining and/or demonstrating high social status within the peer group (Kärnä, 2012). In contrast, bullying can be a strategy in attempting to gain social status (Juvonen and Galván, 2008) and bystanders play a significant part in according the status to the student or students engaging in bullying (Kärnä, 2012). For example, Craig and Pepler (1995)

found that 81% of bystanders were found to be more respectful and friendly to those engaged in bullying behaviour than those targeted. Additionally, Atlas and Pepler (2001) found in their study of playground observation that bystanders were present in over 85 percent of bullying episodes but only intervened about 10-19% of the time. Furthermore, research (Salmivalli and Voeten, 2004; Thornberg, 2010) has shown that, even concerned bystanders who hold negative views about bullying but did nothing, can be perceived as supporting the bullying behaviour. This, in turn, could contribute to the duration of the bullying incident and a higher frequency of such incidents in the future (Salmivalli, 2010).

This non-involvement by concerned bystanders could be explained by the 'bystander effect' (Darly and Latané, 1968). In certain emergency situations bystanders can be slower to help a victim or do not help at all when other bystanders are present (Darly and Latané, 1968). This may be because the social nature of the incident inhibits them as they may not want to make social blunders (Bierhoff, 2002). Therefore, bystanders look to one another for clues as to how to behave (Latané and Darley, 1970). The mere presence of bystanders could create 'audience inhibition' which is described by Hogg and Vaughan (2008) as a situation where a bystander is anxious about intervening because he or she is afraid of looking foolish or behaving in an embarrassing manner in front of others. These feelings of anxiety and/or embarrassment have been cited in research as two substantial reasons why students don't come to the aid of the targeted child (Rigby, 1997). However, it has been shown that if influential social supports for those engaging in bullying are taken away then it could have a significant effect in reducing bullying behaviour in general (Kärnä, 2012; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Sinisammal, 2004; Thornberg et al., 2012). Therefore, if bystander supporting behaviours of bullying can strengthen the possibility of victimization, it may be possible to protect the targeted children by increasing and supporting self-efficacious bystander defending behaviours (Thornberg et al., 2012).

2.4.3 Participant player profile: children who engage in bullying behaviour

Children who engage in bullying behaviour can be generally defiant or oppositional towards adults, antisocial, and apt to break school rules (Perren, 2005). It has been

widely reported in the past that the majority of those who engage in school bullying feel bad about themselves and have low self-esteem (Dijkstra, Cillessen and Borch, 2013; Frisén, Jonsson and Persson, 2007. However, research indicates that the majority of those who engage in bullying appear to have little anxiety and tend to possess high self-esteem (Dijkstra, Cillessen and Borch, 2013; Olweus, 1994b). This may explain why children and young adults who engage in bullying behaviours have been associated with low empathic responsiveness and concern for others (Gini, Albiero and Altoe, 2007).

It has been argued that the origins of these oppositional behaviours and low levels of empathy come from the quality of the child's relationship with parental role models (Holmes, 2004; Perren, 2005; Sourander et al., 2007). Research suggests that children who engage in bullying often report more negative family functioning than non-bullies (Perren, 2005) with reports of inter-parental violence (Baldry, 2003) and parental maltreatment (Shields and Cicchetti, 2001) three times higher than families of non-bullies (Mitchell and O'Moore, 1998). Members of the aggressive family may have little closeness and unity if the parents use power-assertive child-rearing methods such as physical punishment and violent emotional outbursts (Olweus, 1980; Perren, 2005). Exposure to these behaviours has knock on effects for the school and the wider society.

Research by Bauer et al. (2006) found that 73% of children who witnessed parental violence engaged in school bullying. Olweus (2003) has suggested that the development of peer bullying behaviours is indicative of the future risk of criminal involvement. Research by Craig (1998) shows a strong link between bullying at age eight and criminality in adolescence. If unchecked in the early years, those who bully are likely to maintain their aggressive behaviours throughout their school career (Olweus, 1994a) and into adulthood where there is an increased likelihood of having a criminal record (Piquero, Farrington and Blumstein, 2007). Arrest records for adult men showed that they were four times more likely to have engaged in illegal activities if they had demonstrated antisocial behaviours in childhood (Walker, 1993; Farrington, 2003). Arrest records for females demonstrated a correlation that they were one and half times more likely to have a criminal record (Bennett, Farrington

and Huesmann, 2004). Research by Bennett, Farrington and Huesmann (2004) suggest that girls acquire social cognitive skills earlier in life than their male counterparts and, hence, have better pro-social skills that are preventative in nature for involvement in overt bullying situations such as physical bullying. It is theorised that this cognitive advantage seems to aid them in making choices about getting involved in criminal activities (Bennett, Farrington and Huesmann, 2004).

2.4.4 Participant player profile: children who are targeted

Research indicates that students who are victimised tend to be smaller, weaker, anxious, insecure, quiet, lack social skills, are cautious and/or suffer from low self-esteem while rarely defending themselves or retaliating (Farrington, 1993; Olweus, 1978). They could be close to their parents and may have parents who could be described as overprotective (Olweus, 1993a; Smith 2004) and some may have experienced bullying from siblings (Wolke and Samara, 2004). Negative treatment at the hand of aggressive peers tends to be highly persistent, sometimes going on for years (Salmivalli, Lappalainen, and Lagerspetz, 1998). They could have a high rate of school absenteeism (Boulton and Smith, 1994) and look upon themselves as failures, feel stupid, ashamed and unattractive (Dijkstra et al., 2010). Children with disabilities are also at increased risk of victimisation (Mishna, 2003). Risk factors that have been identified for victimisation include peer-rejection, finding social situations difficult, and experiencing loneliness (Crick and Grotpeter, 1995; Nansel et al, 2001; Schafer et al, 2005; Scheithauer, Hayer, Petermann and Jugert 2006). According to Olweus (2003) combinations of these behaviours and attitudes tend to make these types of victims unlikeable to their peers and signal to potential bullies "that they are insecure and worthless individuals who will not retaliate if they are attacked or insulted" (Olweus, 1999, p. 16). In summary, behaviours, which indicate low confidence and insecurity, could be cues to an aggressive child that this person is 'safe' to bully. Those who are victimised may have a greater tendency than the norm towards anxiety and depression (Hawker and Boulton, 2000). The impact of bullying in childhood can be long term. Some adult victims of childhood bullying report experiencing depression, poor self-esteem and interpersonal difficulties into adulthood (Klomek et al., 2007). They may also be more prone to self-harm, higher

rates of suicidal thoughts, more likely to attempt suicide (Kim, Leventhal, Koh and Boyce 2009) or carry out acts of retribution (Carney and Merrell, 2001).

In research of victim sub-types Salmivalli et al. (1998) conducted a study drawn from peer and victim self-evaluations in which those who were targeted by bullying were divided into three victim sub-categories: counter-aggressive, helpless and nonchalant. Counter-aggressive victims are willing to confront those who bully; they will speak up when bullied and will ask for help. They may also try to win over bystanders and attempt to make others reject the bully. Helpless victims try to avoid the conflict. They are not likely to confront the bully, are apt to cry, and may try to avoid the bully by staying at home. Nonchalant victims try to stay calm and give the outward impression that they do not take the bullying seriously. Helplessness or nonchalance is more typical of girl victims while counter-aggression or nonchalance is more typical of boys.

In primary schools about 15-20% of those involved in bullying incidents are considered bully-victims (Olweus, 2003b; Salmivalli 2010). Bully-victims are those who are both targeted by bullying and bully others (Salmivalli, 2010). Research suggests that being targeted by bullying may be an antecedent to the formation of the bully-victim's aggressive behaviour (Nansel et al., 2003). Indicators associated with this type of victim are concentration difficulties, low self-esteem, behaviours that irritate and create tension, poor social skills, hyperactivity and trying to provoke reactions from the peer group (Andreou, 2001; Carney and Merrell, 2001; Griffin and Gross, 2004; Limber and Small, 2000; Minton, 2010). It is not uncommon that bully-victim behaviours provoke many students in the class, thus resulting in negative reactions from a large part of, or even the entire class (Olweus, 2001a). There is evidence that bully-victims come from families where parenting is inconsistent, sometimes abusive and lacking warmth (Schwartz et al., 2000). In the Irish context a nationwide study conducted by O'Moore, Kirkham and Smith (1997) showed that about one in seven primary students are bully-victims with 14.1% reporting involvement in both bullying and being victimised. Prevalence of this participant player is reported to be higher in primary than in secondary schools (Roland and Idsoe, 2001). It has been conjectured that this may be, because in

secondary schools, students are more accepting of their place in the social order and/or feel that there is not much they can do about their situation (Schafer et al., 2005).

It has been reported (DeLara, 2012; Salmivalli, 2010) that victimisation persists over time because of the ubiquitous nature of bullying, fearing retaliation, a sense of helplessness, concerns over inappropriate adult action/response, self-reliance, shame, parental omniscience, fearing they would not be believed, not wanting to worry their parents, having no confidence that anything would change as a result, fearing their teacher would tell the bully who told on him or her, thinking it was worse to be thought of as a snitch and/or because of peer support of those who bully. However, friendships can act as a protective factor and it is claimed that having a number of meaningful friendships reduces the risk of victimisation (Goldbaum et al., 2003).

2.4.5 Participant player profile: following and supporting

Following and supporting participant players can "offer positive feedback to the child engaging in bullying by laughing, by encouraging gestures, or just by gathering around as an audience" (Salmivalli, 2010, p. 114). Following and supporting players can reinforce the behaviour, but often do not initiate (Olweus, 1994b) unless to curry favour with the student who is leading the bullying (Salmivalli, 2010).

Rigby and Slee (1991) found that as students advanced through primary and post-primary school they became less inclined to help someone who was bullied and felt more able to join in bullying someone they didn't like. They became less upset at the bullying of others with an increasing lack of sympathy and hardening of attitudes towards those who were targeted. This may due to the aforementioned 'bystander effect' (Darly and Latané, 1968) becoming more pronounced in secondary schools with bystanders emulating leadership behaviour (Dijkstra, Cillessen and Borch, 2013). Another notable factor is that the supporters and followers may join in because they fear the bully and hope their contributions will avert any bullying reprisals on themselves (Unnever and Cornell, 2003). Unfortunately, this joining in can increase bullying incidents as "...it has been found that the more classmates

tend to reinforce the bully, the more frequently the bullying takes place" (Salmivalli, 2010, p. 114).

2.4.6 Participant player profile: ignoring and witnessing bystanders

A majority of students are neutral and are aware that the bullying is taking place but try not to get involved, tend to ignore, and/or withdraw from it (Thornberg, 2007). Although most students agree that bullying is wrong, bystanders rarely tell teachers and parents and only infrequently intervene on behalf of the victim (DeLara, 2012) for fear of their own safety and/or social status (Dijkstra, Cillessen and Borch, 2013; Stevens et al., 2000). A significant fear is that intervening will raise a bully's wrath and make the person defending the next target (DeLara, 2012). Another significant factor that can hinder intervening may be the potential social embarrassment as the learner imagines how others will react and think of him or her (Thornberg, 2007). Conversely, the embarrassment association is not only self-oriented. The bystander may have the idea that it must be embarrassing for the peer who is being targeted when others are looking (Thornberg, 2007). However this can backfire as ignoring the bullying incident can be akin to giving tacit approval to the bullying behaviour (Salmivalli, 2004; Unnever and Cornell, 2003).

Another possible contributor to a lack of defending could be due to "diffusion of responsibility" (a term used as a legal defence by Nazis tried at Nuremberg); in other words, witness bystanders may falsely believe that no one person has the responsibility to stop the bullying (Zimbardo, 2007). Therefore, unless the responsibility to help is shared by all the bystanders, the less likely any one individual will come to the victimised child's aid (Thornberg, 2007). Furthermore, a teacher is a crucial bystander in aiding the bullied child (Caplan and Hay, 1989). In a study by Caplan and Hay (1989), low rates of defending behaviours were observed of witnessing bystanders when teachers were present. Furthermore, the teachers in the study did little to encourage children to help or intervene. Hence, none of the children believed that they themselves were supposed to help when a more competent adult was present. The presence of witnessing adults who do not intervene can inadvertently support bullying and curb defending. However, there are

reports of large percentages of students who witness bullying, think it is wrong and unfair but don't know what do about it (Rigby, 2007). Coloroso (2004, p. 67) puts forth that lack of defending arises from the fact that learners haven't, "been taught ways to intervene, to report the bullying or help the target". This perception is significant when one considers that the most cited location of bullying incidents of Irish primary children was the school playground at 74% (O'Moore, 1997), which is meant to be under adult supervision all times (Primary Professional Development Service, 2008). Therefore, the researcher conjectures that Irish children may be less inclined to help because there is the expectation that the adult will step in. Such diffusion of responsibility might create a school climate characterised by fear where bullying is accepted as students feel powerless to stop it (Nishina and Juvonen, 2005; Salmivalli and Voeten, 2004). As a result, students may not come forward and report bullying, leading teachers to underestimate the extent of bullying in their school (Salmivalli and Voeten, 2004). Furthermore, from the age of five, if observers of bullying find that they are in a school where bullying goes unchecked or ignored by adults, then they are at greater risk of becoming bullies themselves (Rosenthal, 2008). Whereas if they are in a school that sends out a strong message that bullying is wrong and have procedures in place to counter such behaviour, it can have a preventative effect and children will have more respect for adult authority figures (Salmivalli, 2004) and may possibly feel safe enough to defend a child who is being bullied (Salmivalli, 2010).

2.4.7 Participant player profile: possible defenders and defending

According to research by Craig and Pepler (1997) at least 85% of bullying happens within a peer group, and that bullying stops in less than 10 seconds 57% of the time when peers intervene on behalf of the victim. Studies suggest that between 10 and 20% of non-involved students intervene when another student is victimized by comforting the victimised child or making those who bully stop by notifying peers, authority figures or by direct peer defending (Rigby 2007; Salmivalli, 2010; Stevens, Van Oost and De Bourdeaudhuij, 2000).

Sainio et al. (2010) conducted a study that looked at outcomes for those who were

defended. In comparing defended children who were targeted with undefended targeted children they found that overall those defended were less frequently targeted than those who were not, had higher self-esteem, higher social status and were perceived to be more popular by their peers. With regards to popularity, research has shown that popular children are influential in defending and can help change classroom attitudes to bullying (Caravita et al., 2009; Dijkstra, Lindenberg and Veenstra, 2008; Goossens et al., 2006; Salmivalli et al., 1996). This may be because defenders need a high social status in order to face the social risk involved in standing up for the victims and/or it is also possible that, depending on the culture in the school, defending could increase one's status in front of peers (Pöyhönen, Juvonen and Salmivalli, 2010).

Two other attributes have been highlighted in studies of defending: self-efficacy and affective empathy. In Gini, Albiero, Benelli, and Altoè's (2008) study, they discovered that social self-efficacy (i.e., students' perception of being competent in social situations) was a key component that differentiated defending behaviour from passive bystanding. In 2007 Gini (p. 145) and colleagues put forth that affective empathy, "feeling what others feel", was associated with adolescents' tendency to defend their victimized peers. Reporting on Gini's research (2007), Pöyhönen et al. (2010) suggest that affective empathy could play an important role in defending. Gini, Albiero, Benelli, and Altoè (2008) go on to say that defending behaviours can only be helped if the school fosters such pro-social behaviours and this needs to be aided by a wider pro-social society as "bullying does not occur in isolation" (Espelage and Swearer, 2004, p.3) but is influenced by a number of factors which are, perhaps, usefully described by ecological theories (McGuckin and Corcoran, 2013).

2.4.8 Bullying as part of an influential system

Ecological Systems Theory as proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) can be applied to research on school bullying (Besag, 1989; Gini, 2004; McGuckin and Minton, 2014; Ortega and Lara, 2000; Sharp and Smith, 1994; Rigby, 1996). Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) suggests that all individuals are inseparably part of interrelated systems with behaviours shaped by multiple factors within nested

contextual systems (Brown et al., 2011). Bronfenbrenner (1979) graphically represents this model of the child's environment (ecology) as a series of concentric rings proximal to the developing child (see Figure 2.2). Each of these rings represents an 'agent' that could potentially influence the developing child with varying degrees. With this model the school can be seen as a community of distinct microsystems that include "teachers, the pupils, and their families, as well as the community living around its vicinity" (Ortega and Lera, 2000, p. 117). It is arguable that bullying behaviour could be encouraged and/or inhibited as a result of the complex interactions between the microsystems of the individual, family, peer group, school, community and culture as depicted in Figure 2.3.

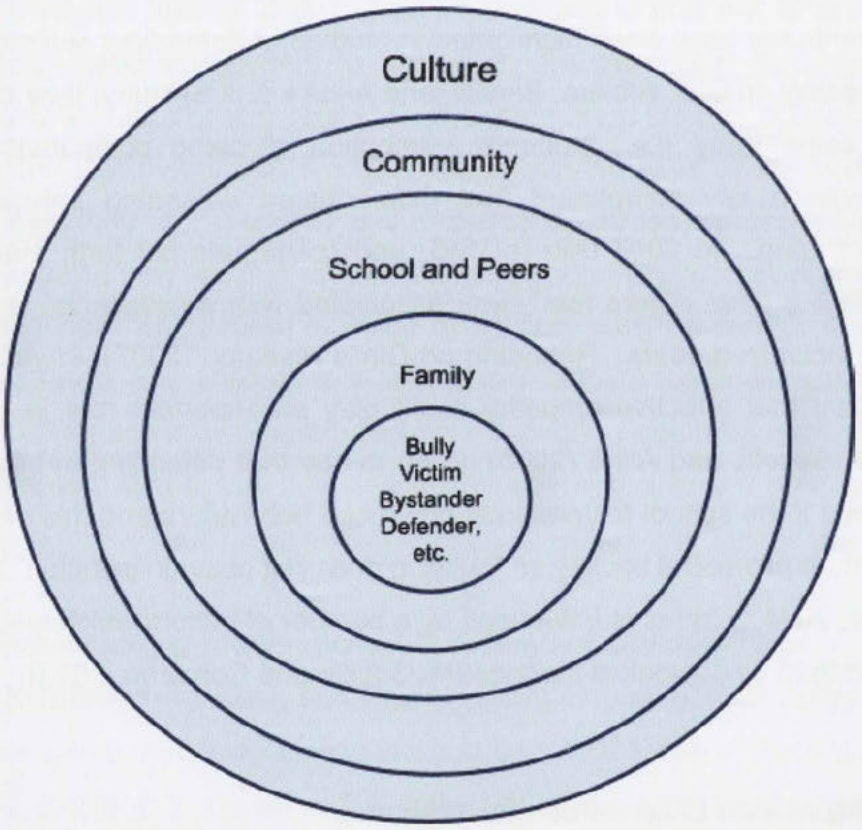


Figure 2.3 The Social-Ecological relations in a bullying context adapted from Bronfenbrenner's Social-Ecological Model

Figure 2.3 represents a summary of how Bronfenbrenner's Social-Ecological Model can be represented in the bullying context. In this illustration the participant players are located at the centre of interrelated systems that could potentially affect their

behaviour. Hence, in the school environment children are part of complex, interrelated systems, and bullying behaviour is a function of numerous interacting variables that reciprocally influence each other (Espelage and Swearer, 2010). Parents, teachers, and peers are seen as potentially impacting a child's behaviour, and in turn, are being impacted by the child in question. No one person or environmental context is regarded as causative; persons and contexts are seen as potential contributors to problematic behaviour, and consequently are eligible for intervention. For example, the microsystems of the family and school connect to and influence one another in what is called the meso-system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In this influential relationship the school authorities could contribute to bullying behaviour by having inconsistent and inflexible rules, poor staff morale, limited resources, inadequate supervision, punishment that is too harsh, abusive or humiliating, few incentives and rewards for non-aggressive behaviour, and curricula that afford too few opportunities to experience and feel success and achievement (Wolfe and Mash, 2006). Research has shown that such disorderly or disorganized schools and classrooms have higher rates of bullying (Bradshaw et al., 2009; Unnever and Cornell, 2003) with students' perceptions of such schools and classrooms as less safe, less supervised and less supportive. This kind of environment can lead to lower levels of bullying reportage and poor academic performance (Bradshaw et al., 2009). Exacerbating this could be the influence of a chaotic, violent family environment as it is suggested that aggressive children tend to come from violent homes (Piquero, Farrington and Blumstein, 2007; Oliver et al, 2004) where a lack of empathy is common (Olweus, 1978). Therefore, in the home environment a child may learn how successful bullying behaviour can be and, in turn, could project this behaviour in the environment of a chaotic school (Hunt, 1993).

It is arguable that within the meso-system of the school, the bystander's contributions are one of the most interesting areas of research on bullying behaviour to have emerged. The shared beliefs and attitudes of the group that can support and reinforce bullying behaviour may create a climate where aggression and peer victimisation are the norm (Olweus, 2003b; Salmivalli et al., 2004, 2010) fostering pro-social attitudes to bullying (Dijkstra, Cillessen and Borch, 2013). The pro-social attitudes are listed by Olweus (1994, p. 1182) as:

1) social contagion,

2) weakening of the control of or inhibitions against aggressive tendencies,

3) diffusion of responsibility, and

4) gradual cognitive changes in the perceptions of the bully and of the victim.

These pro-social attitudes can lead to the group perception of the targeted child as someone who deserves 'it' and, significantly, this perception can spread more quickly when a popular child is engaging in bullying behaviour (Card, Stucky, Sawalani and Little, 2008; Dijkstra, Cillessen and Borch, 2013). This is reflected in studies which have shown that aggressive children are often perceived as cool, powerful, and popular (Caravita, DiBlasio, and Salmivalli, 2009; Juvonen, Graham, and Schuster, 2003) with well-developed social skills that are used to manipulate and dominate others (Arsenio and Lemerise, 2001). In this scenario lower social status adolescents can strive to enhance their status by befriending the popular child and joining in with the bullying (Dijkstra, Cillessen and Borch 2013; Salmivalli, 2010). Leender (2002) stresses that this social contagion is a major support mechanism for bullying behaviour and can explain why students change roles in the bully/victim continuum towards the position more popular peers are adopting. Salmivalli (1999, p. 453, 2004) has proposed that this natural "peer group power" should be utilized to the service of anti-bullying strategies which, with adult training and encouragement of peers, take action against bullying by having popular learners taking on the role of defender in their everyday interactions. However, to be successful the adoption of peer group strategies need supports in place to be effective. What these potential supports might be are examined below.

2.5. Anti-bullying initiatives and programmes – an introduction

School bullying is a worldwide problem that knows no borders (Smith and Morita, 2004). Interventions, initiatives and programmes have been implemented in numerous countries to tackle this social problem (Ttofi and Farrington, 2011). A reason for the growth in interventions may be due to the recognition that "bullying behaviour is an immoral action because it humiliates and oppresses innocent

victims" (Gini, Pozzoli and Hauser, 2011, p. 603). Only until recently the general societal view was that bullying was s a normal part of childhood; an unpleasant factor of youth that one leaves behind when one is more mature (Lawrence, 1998) but as discussed in Chapter One, section 7, school bullying can have long term effects on physical and mental health lasting into adulthood. "Therefore, schools should have a moral responsibility to put in place measures to prevent and reduce bullying" (Stephens, 2011, p, 382). However, what measures exactly are most effective are widely debated. Hence, the objective of the sections following will be to review and discuss a growing body of evidence on the effectivity or lack thereof of bullying prevention interventions with a focus on what is has been measured as effective.

2.5.1 A review of Irish initiatives

In Ireland the problem of bullying was first officially addressed (Byrne, 2004) by the Department of Education in 1993 with publication of The Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Schools. Prior to this there had been "sporadic interest in the topic of bullying" (Byrne, 2004, p.115) with some research on the problem conducted in some secondary schools in Dublin by Byrne (1994) and some Dublin primary schools by O'Moore and Hillery (1989). Also in 1993 the First National Conference on Bullying was held in Dublin. At this conference the Sticks and Stones Theatre Company launched their anti-bullying initiative. Since then, other theatre companies such as Graffiti, TEAM and Cyclone Rep have launched their own anti-bullying Theatre-in-Education (TIE) initiatives. With the Department of Education's 1993 publication, bullying has been more widely acknowledged as a social problem that needs to be dealt with. This, in turn, has produced numerous initiatives and programmes for schools which will now be reviewed.

With regards to completed national surveys of bullying in schools, two national surveys have given a picture of prevalence in Irish primary and secondary schools: a nationwide survey (O'Moore et al., 1997) conducted in 1993-94 and the Anti-Bullying Centre's (ABC) survey (Minton, 2010) conducted in 2004-05. Results indicate that there has been a reduction of total involvement as either a victim, bully or bully/victim

by over 8% (i.e. 43.5% in 1993-94 to 35.3% in 2005) in primary schools while there has been an increase of almost 10% (i.e. 26.5% in 1994 to 36.4% in 2004-05) for secondary schools students (O'Moore, 2013). It has been theorised that the increase of bullying reportage in secondary schools has been attributed to a lack of acceptance of diversity (O'Higgins-Norman, 2012) and a rising levels of awareness of what bullying behaviour is (O'Moore, 2013). Potentially, the Growing Up in Ireland study will produce evidence for the increase.

Initiated in 2007, Growing up in Ireland (GUI), aims to give a detailed picture of children in Ireland and how they are developing in the current social, economic and cultural environment. This information will be used to assist in policy formation and in the provision of services for children including bullying prevention (Growing Up in Ireland, 2015). The first wave of the project collected survey data on 11,000 children aged nine months and their parents (the Infant Cohort) and 8,500 children aged nine years (the Child Cohort), and their parents, teachers and carers. With regards to bullying thus far, the executive summary from the Minister for Health and Children in 2009 found that 40% of the 9 year olds reported being a target of bullying in the past year with boys and girls experiencing similar rates of victimisation. The victimisation rate is considerably higher than that of the ABC survey of 2004-05 but this survey also reports on bullying outside of school and therefore, as bullying is a social issue (O'Moore and Stevens, 2013), it is reasonable to expect prevalence rates to be higher than the rates reported in O'Moore's research.

Mona O'Moore established the ABC at Trinity College Dublin in the mid-1990s and moved the programme to Dublin City University in 2014 following her retirement. For many years ABC has been the sole centre for parents, young people and others who have experienced bullying. However, there are no available statistics on ABC's impact as a support/resource. This is most likely due to the lack of staffing resources for ABC which O'Moore has expressed to the researcher in conversation (it also reflects badly on the lack of state provision by the government which will be discussed shortly). O'Moore has been an integral co-ordinator of the two aforementioned national surveys conducted in 1993-94 and 2004-05. The ABC has a website that provides information on bullying, resources, current news and events

(ABC, 2015). The ABC released a DVD resource called Silent Witness (2006). This was the first Irish produced audio-visual resource to help create awareness about and counteract bullying in Irish secondary schools. Silent Witness (2006) contains three video modules specifically designed for use in the classroom with a focus on how bystanders can contribute to bullying situations. It includes a series of dramatised pieces in which young Irish actors play the parts of people who are being bullied, people who ignore the bullying, and those who bully. While this resource is innovative and welcome in the Irish context, it has never been evaluated as an anti-bullying resource. This is surprising as O'Moore has conducted substantial research on the effects of her other anti-bullying initiatives mentioned (which will be discussed in the Intervention programmes review section following). What would be of considerable interest is an evaluation of the National Action Plan on Bullying which O'Moore has contributed substantially to and supports the implementation of (ABC, 2015).

The National Action Plan on Bullying was launched by the Department of Education and Skills in 2013. The Anti-Bullying Working Group, who developed the plan, identified priorities that needed to be addressed to combat bullying in schools. The end result was the establishment of 12 priority actions to help prevent bullying in primary and second level schools. Among the twelve actions recommended are proposals to: establish a new national anti-bullying website; develop national anti-bullying procedures for all schools (including an anti-bullying policy template and a template for recording of bullying incidents); devise a co-ordinated plan of training for parents and for school boards of management; school inspections that evaluate existing models of the SPHE curriculum; evaluate whole school actions that aim to create a positive school culture whilst preventing and tackling bullying; provide support for the Stand Up Awareness Week Against Homophobic Bullying; review current teacher education support service provisions to identify what training and continuous professional development teachers may need to help them effectively tackle bullying, conduct research on good practice and effective interventions for the prevention of bullying of children with SEN in order to disseminate good practice across the school system; facilitate a literature review to examine the prevalence and impact of bullying linked to social media on the mental health and suicidal behaviour

among young people within the school setting, and enable the development of appropriate preventative measures for the whole school community (summarised from the Action Plan on Bullying, 2013, pp. 109-112). While this resource is welcome and well-intended it puts the onus of implementing and managing an anti-bullying policy on individual schools instead of on the national level. This can result in a "great variance in the manner in which bullying is addressed" (O'Moore and Stevens, 2013, p.2). To date, there has been no publication of data on school take up of the Plans initiatives or, indeed, if schools are re-evaluating and updating their anti-bullying policies because of it. This gives cause for concern as the potential for variance in application of the National Action Plan as the collective Irish response to reports of bullying has been described as "lukewarm" with the behaviour often thought of as something to "be endured" (O'Moore and Stevens, 2013). It may be that monitoring such a wide-ranging Plan without appropriate resources may not be possible. However, Flattery and Lawlor (2012) believe that a structured national anti-bullying prevention strategy is possible within the structure of the relatively long-running Stay Safe programme.

The Child Abuse Prevention Programme (CAPP), which is also known as Stay Safe was launched in primary schools in 1991 and 1992 [Stay Safe, 2015]. Stay Safe provides a personal safety education programme for children in the 8 to 11 year old range, continuing professional development for teachers, training for Boards of Management and information sessions for parents (Lawlor and MacIntyre, 1991). It seeks to enhance children's self-protective skills by participation in lessons on safe and unsafe situations, bullying, inappropriate touch, secrets, telling and stranger danger (Flattery and Lawlor, 2012). The programme aims to give children the skills necessary to enable them to recognise and resist abuse/victimisation and teaches them that they should always tell about any situation which they find unsafe, upsetting, threatening, dangerous or abusive (Flattery and Lawlor, 2012). Since the launch of the Stay Safe User's Handbook (Cullen, Lawlor and MacIntyre, 1998) there has been only one evaluation of Stay Safe which focussed on safety skills to prevent child abuse (MacIntyre and Carr, 1999), but the study did not focus on peer bullying. The evaluation found that in comparison with a control school the research school children had enhanced safety knowledge and skills because of the programme and

these gains were maintained at follow-up. However, one has to question if there was a degree of bias in this evaluation as MacIntyre helped to create the Stay Safe programme. It may have been better if the evaluation was done by a researcher who did not have a vested interest.

Take up of Stay Safe was reported as sporadic as many schools did not take it up (*Examiner*, September 30, 2011). This changed in 2011 when employment of Stay Safe was made mandatory for all primary schools by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in a drive to ensure that child protection procedures were being fully implemented (*Examiner*, September 30, 2011). Currently, the Department of Education and Skills is supporting the revision of the Stay Safe Programme as reported in the Action Plan on Bullying (2013). Recommendations for the updated version is that it address new forms of risk, including cyber bullying, and incorporate new research and best practice in the area of safeguarding children as well as changes and developments in the educational context in terms of policies, provision and curriculum (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). However, after two and a half years there has been no reported evidence of movement on this from the Department of Education and Skills with the only version of the Stay Safe User's Handbook (Cullen, Lawlor and Macintyre, 1998) available to teachers almost twenty years old.

With regards to secondary schools, Cool Schools is a whole school anti-bullying programme developed to assist secondary schools to deal with bullying behaviour (HSE, 2015). The programme elements include: surveying levels of bullying in schools, teacher training, parental education, assisting schools to develop and implement effective anti-bullying policies, and creating awareness among students about bullying and relational aggression (HSE, 2015). While there has been data collected on student and teacher perceptions of 'Cool Schools' effectiveness (James et al., 2006), there was no pre-test or control data to make a valid comparison. Lack of this type of data is also an issue with the Meitheal Youth Leadership Programme which has received a lot of media attention since it was broadcast on RTE's Nationwide in 2011.

The Meitheal Youth Leadership Programme is a secondary school initiative where Transition Year (TY) students are trained to become a peer mediation resource for

younger students, especially those affected by bullying (Redemptorist Cala Youth Ministry, 2015). In January of each year, TY students from the participating schools are invited to fill out an application form for membership of the Meitheal team. Interviews are conducted and candidates selected for training. The aim is to select a diverse team with different personalities, skills and interests, who can work together for the good of the students in their school. Students are trained in how to conduct meetings, group dynamics, deal with peer to peer bullying problems and facilitate team-work. Each team makes a one-year commitment to Meitheal, handing over responsibility to a new Meitheal team at the end of 5th year. The programme is well-intentioned but no studies have been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of this peer mediation resource in the Irish context. However, in a meta-review of anti-bullying initiatives conducted by Ttofi and Farrington (2011) it has been indicated that peer mediation strategies are often ineffective and, in some instances, can make the situation worse for the bullied child. Clearly, more research needs to be done on established Anti-bullying strategies in the Irish context. However, there is a need for strategies such as Stay Safe for primary schools and Cool Schools for secondary schools as the best anti-bullying initiatives begin early and continue throughout the educational cycle (Twemlow and Facco, 2008). However, how well Irish schools deliver these programmes has not been adequately researched and there are reports that schools fail to implement Department of Education and Skills (DES) anti-bullying guidelines and initiatives due to a lack of time, resources and teacher training (James et al., 2006).

In spite of this initiatives in the Irish context for the prevention of bullying have grown substantially over the years. They include: the DES's section on bullying as part of their Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum (SPHE, 2015). The DES also sponsors the Anti-Bullying Campaign website which has information and resources for teachers to help them in their efforts to deal with bullying (The Anti-Bullying Campaign, 2015). The National Youth Council has published the resource 'Let's Beat Bullying' (National Youth Health Programme, 2007) which gives information, advice and guidelines to youth workers in their efforts to curb bullying. The Equality Authority's 'Making Your School Safe' (2015) initiative addresses the problem of homophobic bullying in secondary schools through poster campaigns that

aim to raise awareness. Childline is a telephone support service set up by The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC) and offers advice on all forms of aggression including bullying (ISPCC, 2015). For schools, community groups and clubs the ISPCC also supports 'The Shield My School/Shield My Club' Programme which offers a number of resources in response to the issues of bullying behaviours (ISPCC, 2015). The ISPCC also supports 'Steps' which is a network of counselling services offering help and advice to students suffering from bullying (ISPCC, 2015). The Gardaí offer support to schools in the form of a visiting Garda who talks about methods to stay safe and offers support for the school's anti-bullying policies (Byrne, 2004). The Erris Anti-Bullying Initiative is a collaborative effort between Iorras Le Chéile Community Development Project and Dr Stephen Minton of the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin to combat bullying at a whole-community level. This initiative is unique in that it is based on the principles of community development, involving schools, clubs, and organisations: "It is the first community based initiative of its kind to be piloted in Ireland and the world's first to be based entirely on the principles of community development" (Iorras Le Chéile, 2015). Lastly, there are numerous other hotlines and websites that can help with the problem of bullying and related issues such as the Samaritans, the National Parents Council, ReachOut.com, Stopbullying.gov, Suicide Aware, Belong, and School Days (Donohoe, 2014). To summarise, while there is much more information and many anti-bullying resources that Irish schools can avail of compared to 20 years ago, on a national level "there is little in the way of what can be regarded as a comprehensive anti-bullying programme" (O'Moore, 2013, p. 34) which receives full government support. Lack of evaluation of these described initiatives may be part of the problem but, arguably, the government needs to play a much stronger supportive role to protect the rights of its citizens to safe education. Irish government funding for ongoing, long term school-based anti-bullying initiatives is non-existent. This will be discussed further in Chapter Seven.

In the review to follow there is a focus on internationally recognised and peer-reviewed interventions and programmes with an examination of elements that have been successful in raising awareness of and/or reducing bullying behaviour. Additionally, since the BPP features learning from role-play as a core element,

programmes or interventions that have role-play and/or drama activities as a part of their prevention strategies will be reviewed in a later section.

2.5.2 Interventions programmes review

Globally, there has been an increasing amount of school based anti-bullying programmes from just one intervention inaugurated by Olweus in 1983, to many hundreds having been conducted in the intervening years (Ttofi and Farrington, 2011). However, these programmes have had varying degrees of success from reducing levels of bullying behaviour to exacerbating the problem (Farrington and Ttofi, 2009). In general, the programmes discussed in this section have evaluated the effects of their anti-bullying programme by using an experimental design, and comparing a research group with a control group. In Ireland, there has been a deficit of control groups for anti-bullying initiatives. However, the Donegal Primary Schools Anti-bullying Project and the ABC intervention (O'Moore and Minton, 2005; O'Moore and Minton, 2008) will be included in this review as they are the most significant interventions implemented in Ireland.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme (OBPP) was the first whole school anti-bullying programme developed by Dan Olweus (Limber, 2011). The initial impetus for this programme came from the deaths of three adolescent boys who committed suicide, most likely due to persistent bullying by peers. In response the Norwegian Ministry of Education launched a national campaign to reduce bullying in schools. The first incarnation of the OBPP has come to be known as the First Bergen Project Against Bullying. It involved approximately 2,500 Norwegian school children in grades five to eight between 1983 and 1985 over a period of 2.5 years. Findings from this initial study found a 64% reduction of reports of students being bullied and 53% reduction of students bullying others (Olweus and Limber, 2010). Since the completion of the Bergen Project the OBPP has been developed and evaluated numerous times (Olweus, 2003a; Olweus, 1999; Limber, 2011).

The OBPP relies on student self-reports to evaluate efficacy before and after implementation. After the first evaluation of bullying behaviours by survey, the programme requires significant commitment from the school during the introductory

period which covers a period of about 18 months. The OBPP utilizes a multifaceted approach that involves students, school faculty, staff (e.g. janitors, canteen workers, security) and parents, and includes the following elements:

- involving faculty in a school conference day,
- increased supervision in the yard, hallways and designated areas,
- posting and enforcing of classroom rules against bullying,
- holding regular classroom meetings,
- holding serious talks with bullies, victims, and their parents when a bullying incident occurs.

Four key principles guide the OBPP and are derived chiefly from research on the development and identification of problem behaviours that involve creating a school characterised by:

- warmth, positive interest, and involvement from adults,
- firm limits on unacceptable behaviour,
- consistent application of non-punitive, nonphysical sanctions for unacceptable behaviour or violations of rules, and
- adults who act as authorities and positive role models.

It has been claimed that Olweus has overstated the success of his programme and that results are actually more modest (Roland and Munthe, 1989). However, following the First Bergen Project, there have been six follow-up evaluations of the OBPP, involving more than 20,000 students from more than 150 schools. Findings have revealed consistently positive programme effects (Olweus and Limber, 2010). Outside of Norway, outcome studies in England and in the United States indicated a 50% or more reduction in bullying and victimization problems within two years of programme's introduction (Olweus, 1994b; Limber and Small, 2004). However, not every implementation of the OBPP has met with success as there have been a number of evaluations reporting mixed results (Roland and Munthe, 1989; Olweus and Limber, 2010; Ttofi and Farrington, 2011). Olweus has countered that fidelity of programme implementation was key to programme success (Limber, 2011). Schools that implemented key components of the programme such as rules about

bullying, class meetings, and role-playing demonstrated the greatest reduction in bullying (Olweus and Kallestad, 2010).

With regards to the role-play element of the OBPP, it is arguable that it is not role-play but more like a discussion and that is why the OBPP is included in this section. In The OBPP "role-play" exercise the class is given two stories about two children who are bullied and asked to respond to questions from the bullied child's perspective (Olweus, 2007). While there are merits to this empathy building exercise, there are no performative aspects other than a volunteer being asked to read the story aloud.

Internationally Olweus' programme has become well-regarded with numerous schools from around the world having implemented it (Farrington and Ttofi, 2009), and the Olweus Bully-Victim Questionnaire (OBVQ-R) (Revised, 2006) has come to be considered the 'Gold Standard' in self-evaluation surveys (McGuckin, 2011). Olweus' programme has also been the model and inspiration for a number of other anti-bullying programmes that have been implemented in other countries (Farrington and Ttofi, 2009) including the Dutch Anti-Bullying Programme, Bully Proofing Your School (USA), South Carolina Programme (USA), Seattle Trial of the Olweus Programme (USA), Toronto Anti-Bullying Programme, Ecological Anti-Bullying Programme (Canada), Expect Respect (USA) and the Czechoslovakian Short Intensive Intervention.

Roland has questioned the results of the First Bergen Project and has posed the question: "Is the direct approach to reduce bullying always the best?" (Galloway and Roland, 2004, p. 37). Galloway and Roland (2004) have suggested that the main focus should be on teacher training as the school climate can be a significant influence. Galloway and Roland (2004) argue that teachers are constantly called upon to deal with school bullying, and therefore, teacher knowledge and responses to bullying should be developed through professional development. The professional development should assist teachers "in their core work, from which they derive their job satisfaction and for which they are rightly held accountable" (Galloway and Roland, 2004, p. 45). Hence, the focus was on teachers in the Norwegian Anti-bullying Programme. The study was conducted in primary schools in a town in

southern Norway with 15 schools: 9 of which were experimental and 6 control. 20 teachers from the experimental cohort participated in the professional development programme (teacher numbers not given for control school). The teacher training consisted of four in-service days over a nine-month period along with 15 two-hour peer supervision sessions which gave teachers the opportunity to discuss the practical implications of concepts introduced in the in-service days. Galloway and Roland (2004) put forth that teachers who attended the professional development programme had students who reported more positive attitudes to class, school and subjects compared to the control schools. These positive attitudes also corresponded with a reduction of bullying behaviour at the research schools with reductions of 15% for bullying others and 18.7% for being bullied. While these reports results demonstrate a positive effect of a teacher-led approach, they are not near the reported positive effects of Olweus' approach in reducing bullying (that is when Olweus' programme is properly implemented). Additionally, Galloway and Roland's sample sizes are considerably smaller than Olweus'. While Roland has achieved success with his intervention, he has not done much in the way of follow-ups. This may be because his study had too strong a focus on teachers and not enough on the students themselves which is advocated in the Steps to Respect programme.

The platform for Steps to Respect is based on the social-ecological model of bullying (described in section 2.4.8) with a focus on "peer attitudes, norms, and behaviours" that influence bullying behaviour [Blueprints, 2015]. The programme seeks to change attitudes about the acceptability of bullying through clearly labelling bullying behaviour as unfair and wrong, increasing empathy for students who are bullied and educating students about their responsibilities as bystanders to bullying. A study on Steps to Respect was conducted in 33 California schools with measures obtained from three data sources on observations on playground bullying from school staff, a randomly selected subset of third, fourth, and fifth grade teachers in each school and 2940 students from classrooms of the selected teachers (Brown et al, 2011). In the research study, school staff received an overview of the programme goals and its key features. Teachers, counsellors and administrators received additional training in how to coach students involved in bullying. The student curriculum consisted of

skill and literature based lessons presented by third to fifth grade teachers over a 12-14 week period. Ten semi-scripted skill lessons focused on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills for positive peer relations, emotion management, and recognizing, refusing and reporting bullying behaviour. Parents were provided with information about the programme throughout the implementation of the classroom curriculum. Brown et al. (2011) reported that intervention effects for the prevention of school bullying were 50% across the three data sources. Additionally, there were reported increases in anti-bullying strategies, improved school climate, higher student willingness to intervene during or reporting of bullying incidents and increases in staff willingness to help students report bullying. The focus of the intervention on changing peer norms may have been the most effective element of Steps to Respect as interventions that target bullying as a group process can be highly successful in reducing bullying (Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012). This focus on peer contributions was a key element of the Greek Anti-Bullying Initiative.

The Greek Anti-Bullying Initiative (Andreou, Didaskalou and Vlachou, 2007) was a four-week intervention programme that aimed to minimize both bullying and victimization by focussing on the participant role approach (discussed in section 2.4.2) as proposed by Salmivalli and used in her KiVa programme (Salmivalli, 2010). The sample consisted of 454 pupils (206 control: 123 boys and 83 girls; and 248 experimental: 126 boys and 122 girls) drawn from the fourth- to sixth-grade classrooms of 10 primary schools in central Greece (Andreou, Didaskalou and Vlachou, 2007). Data were collected using self-report measures, before the intervention, immediately after the intervention, at the end of the same school year, and six months afterwards. The Programme was divided into three parts: "a) awareness-raising; b) self-reflection; and c) commitment to new behaviours" (Andreou, Didaskalou and Vlachou, 2007, pp. 697-698). Discussions placed emphasis on the participant roles that students took in the bullying process and looked at different ways of approaching or solving the peer-conflict situation and the formulation of class rules to prevent bullying. The programme was embedded within the wider curriculum of the fourth, fifth and sixth grade classrooms and consisted of eight instructional hours, each hour corresponding to one curricular activity. The curricular activities were presented to students by their classroom teachers who

received training beforehand. The short term results indicated there were substantial decreases in bullying behaviours as the programme helped to break a "conspiracy of silence" (Andreou, Didaskalou and Vlachou, 2007, p. 705) with regards to peer on peer bullying, enhanced self-efficacy in confronting bullying behaviour and fostered bystander intervention and defending. The study also showed that the effectiveness of the programme was greater for younger than older students. The researchers gave no conclusive reason as to why this was but conjectured that the younger students may have perceived their teachers as effective defenders since they were trusted authority figures. However, the long-term effectiveness of the programme was limited with levels of bullying returning to pre-intervention levels six months after the programme's conclusion (Andreou, Didaskalou and Vlachou, 2007). Perhaps the programme may have been more effective if it had built on strengthening of the student-teacher relationship over time as with the Kia Kaha programme.

The Kia Kaha programme implemented in New Zealand was designed as a whole school approach to prevent bullying and it also met two curriculum requirements: social sciences and health/physical well-being (Raskauskas, 2007). Kia Kaha is taken from the Maori language and translates to 'stand strong' and in this context "was chosen as the whole-school community to stand strong to prevent bullying" (Raskauskas, 2007, p. 9) with emphasis on building strong, trusting relationships between students and teachers. 15 schools were included in the study with 1168 school children (48% male, 52% female) participating. All students were in school years 4–8 (approximately 8–13 years of age) (Raskauskas et al., 2010). The programme covered issues such as peer relationships, identifying and dealing with bullying, making personal choices, developing feelings of self-worth, respecting differences and working co-operatively to build a safe classroom environment (Raskauskas, 2007). The Kia Kaha curriculum used several resources, including a teacher's guide, instructions on how to plan and implement the lessons, a Police Education Officer (PEO), a video and information on the programme sent home to parents. The video included five bullying situations that were the basis for discussions on what was happening and what could be done to prevent them. Initially, the PEO visited the school, introduced the programme and tried to convince the school to take it on. If the programme was accepted, the PEOs trained the

teachers to implement the programme, hosted parent nights and taught as many as four lessons of the curriculum to aid successful implementation. Results indicated that students at the Kia Kaha schools reported significant reductions of victimisation compared to the controls schools with teachers and students at the research schools perceiving the school climate to be more positive since the introduction and continuation of the programme. Another key finding was that self-reported data indicated that involvement in bullying was related to poor empathy and negative classroom climate, with bullies and bully/victims in these settings having the lowest connection to school and poorest relationships with their teachers (Raskauskas et al., 2010). These findings indicate that interventions should be designed that enhance children's emotional experiences at school by enhancing positive teacher-student relationships, raising empathy and improving social skills. Developing learner empathy may be a key factor in developing a successful bullying prevention intervention as a lack of focus in this area may lead the programme to be ineffective as with the Befriending Intervention Programme.

The Befriending Intervention Programme in Italy was another anti-bullying programme that was grounded in the peer support model "based on the natural ability of children to give and receive help" (Gini, 2004, p. 11). Two middle schools from central Italy took part in the study (age range of pupils, 11–14 years). In the two schools, nine classes (94 boys and 84 girls) were part of the experimental group, whereas the remaining five classes formed the control group (63 boys and 52 girls) (Menesini et al. 2003). The overall aims of the programme were: "a) to reduce bullying episodes through developing in bullies an awareness of their own and others' behaviour; b) to enhance children's capacity to offer support to the victims of bullying; c) to enhance responsibility and involvement on the part of bystanders; and d) to improve the quality of interpersonal relationships in the class group" (Menesini et al, 2003, p. 1). After the initial awareness raising part of the programme was introduced, peer supporters were trained so that they could enhance their listening and communication skills to mediate in bullying incidents. Peer supporters then worked in their classes with the assistance of their teachers. The teachers in each class organized circle time meetings during which the needs of specific children involved in bullying, called 'target children', were identified and offered help. In the

last phase of The Befriending Intervention, the peer supporters trained fellow students in the class. While there were some positive results reported as a result of this programme (Gini, 2004), it was not considered a statistically significant intervention for reducing reports of peer on peer bullying (Farrington and Ttofi, 2009). Gini (2004) says that this may be due to cultural conditioning in Italy where teasing is not considered as serious as it is in northern countries and conflicts among peers tend not to lead to breaks in friendships as frequently. The researcher speculates that if this view is held by the researchers in that study, then maybe this potential bias may permeate the intervention at a systemic level leading to the peers not taking bullying as seriously as they have not developed a strong empathetic response which was a goal of the Be-Prox Programme (Alsaker, 2004).

The Be-Prox Programme (also known as the Burmese Programme Against Victimisation) implemented in Switzerland was specifically designed to deal with bullying and victimization among kindergarten students (Alsaker, 2004) as research indicates that bullying can begin in kindergarten and pre-school (Alsaker and Nagele, 2008). The programme was implemented in 8 kindergarten schools (152 children, 50% girls) while the control group comprised another 8 kindergarten schools (167 children, 50.9% girls) (Alsaker, 2004). Central features of the Be-Prox Programme were group discussions, mutual support and co-operation between consultants and teachers and between teachers and parents. The teacher training was in six steps: 1) teachers were given information about bullying, victimization and aggressive behaviour; 2) implications of this information were discussed; 3) classroom tasks for the intervention were introduced to teachers; 4) teachers then worked in groups preparing for practical implementation with a focus on the role of the bystander and those not involved in bullying; 5) thereafter, teachers implemented specific preventive elements in the classroom with a focus on changing perceptions about bullying while training the learners in empathy and body awareness; 6) finally, teachers met and discussed their experiences of the implementation of the preventive measures. Enhancing empathy was a significant goal of the programme and this was claimed to be significantly enhanced by the end of the intervention (Alsaker and Nagele, 2008). For example, children were asked what they would do if their best friend was to bully another child. Only 9% of the children in the research

kindergarten said they would join in, this was significantly less than in the control kindergarten at 16%. Additionally, more children reported feeling sad when other children were being bullied with an increase from 61% to 75% with no change at the control school. The researcher speculates that the success of this programme may be due its sample size as running programmes on a much larger scale can lead to organisational problems as happened with the Respect Programme.

The Respect Programme in Norway aimed to tackle different types of child problem behaviour, such as disobedience, off-task behaviour, bullying and aggression (Ertesvag and Vaaland, 2007). The intervention included three primary schools and one secondary school over the course of a year. The Respect Programme systemically included all school personnel, pupils and parents in an attempt "to improve the quality of the school at the individual, at the class and at the school levels" (Ertesvag and Vaaland, 2007, p. 714). The basic principles and organising actions underlying the programme were: (1) authoritative teachers, like authoritative parents worked to build relationships of warmth, acceptance and openness, establish high standards and have high expectations of socially responsible behaviour; (2) the programme involved all staff, students and parents in schools as well as local educational authorities; (3) consistency and acting to basic principles was recognized as important when dealing with bullying behaviours (4) continuity was considered a key to successful and sustainable development, and implied a long-term commitment to the three principles referred to above (Ertesvag et al., 2010). For the one year duration of the programme students in the four schools reported a decrease in reports of being a victim of bullying, being an offender of bullying, off-task behaviour and disobedience with a stronger effect in the primary schools (Ertesvag and Vaaland, 2007). However, effects faded at three of the four schools post-programme implementation. Ertesvag et al. (2010) commented in a later study that a "1-year programme period is not long enough for most schools to implement and continue an extensive whole school programme" (p. 324). The school that continued successfully with the Respect programme was characterized by strong and supportive leadership at many levels, consistency in making plans and seeing them through, renewing activities in the new school year and introducing new members to the programme principles (Ertesvag et al., 2010). Along with this,

Ertesvag et al. (2010), suggest that a key ingredient for this school's successful formula was that, in tandem from the start, while implementing actions for dealing with bullying behaviour, staff created the organisational infrastructure to support those actions and, over time, incorporated these new activities into their everyday procedures. Therefore, it may be that organisational development needs to happen alongside bullying prevention implementation as was the case with two programmes implemented in the USA.

Two programmes introduced in the USA took a psychodynamic approach: the School Psychiatric Consultation (SPC) Programme and the Creating a Peaceful School Learning Environment (CAPSLE Programme) and were run together to compare effects (Fonagy et al., 2009). Participants were 1,345 third to fifth graders in nine elementary schools (Fonagy et al., 2009). The approach to both programmes examined and explored the relationship between bullies, victims, and bystanders and assumed that all members of the school community, including teachers, played a role in bullying (Biggs et al., 2008). The programmes aimed to improve the capacity of all community members to mentalize, that is, to interpret one's own and others' behaviour in terms of mental states in terms of beliefs, wishes and feelings (Fonagy, 2009). Durationally, SPC was run over two years and CAPSLE over three years. The SPC programme aimed to address mental health issues of individual children with disruptive behavioural problems, internalizing problems, or poor academic performance (Fonagy et al., 2009). Three child psychiatry residents, supervised bi-weekly by a senior child psychiatrist, delivered mental health consultation following the SPC manual for four hours per week. The psychiatric residents attended weekly school resource meetings and consulted directly with teachers, parents and other school personnel, through classroom observations and meetings, providing 140 consultations for 65 students in year 1 and 97 consultations for 45 students in year 2. In contrast the CAPSLE programme took a whole school approach to the relationships between bullies, victims and bystanders. In year 1, teachers received a day of group training, students received nine sessions of self-defence training, and the CAPSLE team consulted with school staff monthly. Year 2 started with a school-wide half-day refresher self-defence course, and consultation continued with counsellors, teachers and adult/peer mentor programmes. Year 3 was the

maintenance phase and continued programme elements introduced in the previous 2 years. The SPC and CAPSLE programmes failed to reduce victimisation over the duration of the study at the research schools but were successful in comparison to the control schools which experienced an increase in victimisation (Fonagy et al., 2009). This may be due to teacher adherence to programme fidelity. Biggs et al. (2008) found that the more students perceived teachers to be adherent to the programme, the more helpful they were to victims of bullying and, to a small reported degree, displayed less aggressive bystander bullying behaviours. Returning to the theory of organisation development occurring with intervention implementation, even though there was a high degree of organisational development with these programmes they may have been hampered by their design which contained many elements that needed to be introduced and managed over a long period of time (Fonagy et al., 2009). The researcher argues that these may have been an issue for two programmes that were implemented in Ireland: the Donegal Anti-Bullying Programme and the Anti-Bullying Centre initiative.

The Donegal Anti-Bullying Programme (1998-2000) and the Anti-Bullying Centre's (ABC) initiative (2004-06) were administered by Mona O'Moore (O'Moore and Minton, 2008). Following is a brief review of each programme. With regards to the Donegal Anti-Bullying Programme 100 primary schools in the Donegal region were invited to participate with 42 accepting the offer (Minton, 2005). The Donegal programme was inspired by Olweus' Norwegian anti-bullying initiative (O'Moore and Minton, 2004) and is based on four elements which included: 1) training of a network of eleven professionals to implement the programme, providing further training and support for staff, students and parents in the 3-5 assigned schools each; 2) a teachers' resource pack that contained information about bullying, an emphasis on classroom management, the development of a positive class and school culture, staff leadership, and parent-teacher cooperation; 3) an information leaflet for parents provided information about prevalence, types of bullying, causes and effects, as well as advice on how to deal with bullying; and 4) awareness-raising regarding the issue of bullying for students was facilitated through age related handbooks that were given to students with an emphasis on peer leadership (O'Moore and Minton, 2005; O'Moore and Minton, 2008). The programme had some success but overall did not

achieve substantial results with almost half of the schools not completing the research intervention (Farrington and Ttofi, 2009). In assessing the pre and post programme levels of bullying with the OBVQ the researchers eliminated almost half their potential data sample and selected survey results from twenty-two of the forty-two participating schools (O'Moore and Minton, 2008). O'Moore and Minton (2008, p. 6) cited that reasons for doing this were due to "differential responses to the pre- and post- programme questionnaires by the schools, and anomalies in the administration of the questionnaires by the schools to the correct class groupings meant it was possible to match data from only twenty-two schools". Less successful was the ABC initiative which was targeted at primary and secondary schools. Initially a selection of thirty-eight teachers and principals volunteered to be trained as professionals who would deliver and advise on the programme content to schools nationally (O'Moore and Minton, 2008). By the end of the training only eighteen professionals remained to implement the programme in 68 schools but as the programme was in progress there was an extremely high drop-out rate. This was due to:

> (I) drop-out from the professional network; (II) drop-out of schools from the programme; (III) discrepancies in the school's administration and return of the pupil questionnaires; and, significantly, (IV) low participation rates in the survey aspects of the programme (O'Moore and Minton, 2008, p. 7).

In the end the researchers stated that it was only possible to match data from four schools (three primary schools and one post-primary school). O'Moore and Minton (2008) did not estimate this intervention as successful compared to the Donegal programme due to:

- rolling out content without changes in individual and organisational behaviour and beliefs,
- lack of an effective implementation strategy,
- training was too intensive and not spaced out as with Donegal; therefore participants in the ABC intervention did not have enough time to process information,
- too much of a reliance on "volunteerism and good will" (p. 10).

Also, the researcher suggests that having the main part of the ABC training in August was not conducive to participation as this is a prime holiday month for teachers. Taking this training difference of the ABC initiative into account, the Donegal participation rate was not extremely high. Reasons cited for this were that:

- the teacher training for the intervention was extracurricular (Minton, 2005),
- and there was a significant amount of information that was meant to be assimilated through the resources of leaflets and handouts (Farrington and Ttofi, 2009).

With both programmes it appears that there was a huge demand on teacher/principal time to learn and implement the programmes which may have led to the high levels of attrition. The researcher argues that, even if O'Moore and Minton had a good organisational strategy in place and supports for its implementation with appropriate procedures, the programme demands may have prohibited levels of take up. For it has been argued that interventions that put a heavy demand on teacher time and/or are resource heavy may not be as effective as programmes that are less intensive (Horner, 2009; Rigby, 2006).

In reviewing the programmes so far, some key lessons may be drawn as to what has emerged as being potentially helpful in anti-bullying interventions: a whole school approach (Limber, 2011) with strong and supportive leadership (Ertesvag and Vaaland, 2007) that maintains sufficient fidelity in programme implementation (Limber, 2011) of sufficient longitudinal duration and/or renewal of anti-bullying activities (Beran, Tutty and Steinrath, 2004; Ertesvag and Vaaland, 2007; Raskauskas et al., 2010). Evaluation of programme efficacy is crucial with scientific surveys to determine levels of bullying pre and post intervention (Olweus, 2006). A straight forward and effective way to decrease overt bullying behaviour is to have increased supervision (Alsaker, 2004) by adults who are trusted authority figures (Andreou, Didaskalou and Vlachou, 2007). It is recommended that these authority figures have had training in bullying awareness and prevention methods through teacher professional development (Galloway and Roland, 2004) that has a focus on

changing peer attitudes, norms and behaviours to school bullying (Brown et al., 2011) concurrent with an emphasis on developing empathy (Raskauskas et al., 2010). Changing peer attitudes and developing empathy often requires an introduction of curriculum and it is helpful if it also meets/complements existing curriculum requirements as such programmes can involve learners more pro-actively in bullying prevention (Raskauskas, 2007). A common focus of many programmes is a focus on bystanders. Encouraging other children to intervene is often cited as an effective strategy to prevent bullying as it isolates bullies from their audience and social supports (Brown et al., 2011; Hawkins et al., 2001; Raskauskas et al., 2010; Salmivalli, 2010). In their meta-analytic review of programmes that influence bystander behaviour Polanin, Espelage and Pigott (2012) suggest that pro-active programmes may be more efficacious if they include activities such as role-play. Therefore, the discussion will now focus on programmes that offer such activities.

2.5.3 Intervention programmes with a drama element

As this study is particularly interested in the use of drama and role-play, a review of the relevant literature was undertaken in order to critically examine those interventions which involve a drama-based element.

The Friendly Schools programme, implemented in Australian schools, was a three year study which took a social ecological approach and included elements such as role modelling, drama activities, skills training and observational learning (Cross et al., 2004). Self-report data was collected in 29 schools over three years from a cohort of 1,968 8-9 year olds (Cross et al., 2011). The programme targeted bullying at three levels: a) the whole-school community; b) the students' families; and c) the fourth and fifth grade students and their teachers (Cross et al., 2004). In each participating school, a Friendly Schools Committee was organized with key individuals (i.e. a parent representative, a school psychologist, a school nurse, and teaching staff) who could co-ordinate and successfully sustain the anti-bullying initiative. Each committee was provided with 4 hours training, designed to build members' capacities to address bullying. Each intervention teacher was provided with 6 hours training with a manual that had information on bullying behaviour and strategies to respond to

bullying that included information on Pikas' Method of Shared Concern (1989) and the No Blame approach (Maines and Robinson, 1997). The curriculum comprised 9-learning activities which accumulated to about 8 hours of teaching per year which was taught in 3 blocks of 60 minute lessons divided over 3 school terms in the respective year (Cross et al., 2004). Cross et al. (2011) reported mixed results with children in fourth and sixth class less likely to be bullied and no change for the fifth class students while there were no reductions of student reports of bullying others across all class groups. The researchers attributed this to the narrow age range band of the study and recommended the programme may have benefited from a whole school approach. Role-play elements focussed on modelling positive language and behaviour in situations where one might be bullied, the reporting of bullying, seeking support to stop bullying and learning to respond assertively (Cross et al., 2004). Cross et al. (2011) made no assessment of how effective the role-play elements were in the study and another evaluation of the study by Pearce et al. (2011) made no mention of the role-play. However, the current Friendly Schools handbook (Hawker Brownlow, 2014) mentions role-play as an element of the programme. Therefore, it is unfortunate that there is no evidence to point to how effective this element was or not.

The Behavioural Programme for Bullying Boys conducted in South Africa targeted male youth in a disadvantaged suburb (Meyer and Lesch, 2000). The programme targeted a specific number of male students aged sixteen who were "considered to be a serious threat to the harmonious functioning of everyday school life" (Meyer and Lesch, 2000, p. 59). The programme was implemented by psychology students for ten non-consecutive weeks, with twenty hour-long sessions held twice weekly at the school, during school hours. There were 17 sessions in the behavioural programme that included homework tasks, modelling, self-observation, role-plays, and a token economy system for reinforcing positive behaviours. According to the programme designers "the chief contingency for behavioural change was the token economy system, using Wonderland Games tokens, chocolates and cinema tickets as rewards for non-bullying behaviour" (Meyer and Lesch, 2000, p. 62). Each participant was self-monitored and monitored by a 'buddy' who was selected in each session prior to the monitoring. Each session included an opportunity for feedback on the students' progress, a discussion of a relevant topic, role-playing, games and drawing. The

programme creators (Meyer and Lesch, 2000) claimed some success with their programme but conceded that if it were not for the reward component, the programme would be considered unsuccessful. An additional flaw they noted was that the 'the programme was too short and structured to address the issues that were disclosed in sessions" (Meyer and Lesch, 2000, p. 67). Unfortunately, besides the article cited above, there are no other reports on the programme or on how efficacious the role-play elements were. The researcher has tried to contact the authors on two occasions but received no response.

Expect Respect from the USA was a school-based programme, involving all members of the school community, which aimed to promote awareness and effective responses to bullying and sexual harassment (Rosenbluth et al., 2004). 929 research and 834 control fifth grade students were chosen from 12 schools in the Austin, Texas area to participate. The sample was evenly split between boys and girls. The Expect Respect programme consisted of five core components: 1) a classroom curriculum, 2) staff training, 3) policy development, 4) parent education and 5) support services. The classroom curriculum was based on 12 weekly sessions adapted from a specific manual called 'Bullyproof: a teachers' guide on teasing and bullying for use with fourth and fifth grade students' (Whitaker et al., 2004). The Bullyproof curriculum was designed to be taught in conjunction with literature typically read by fourth and fifth graders (Rosenbluth et al., 2004). The curriculum aimed to increase the ability and willingness of bystanders to intervene in bullying situations with the aim of reducing the social acceptability of bullying and sexual harassment. The Bullyproof lessons included writing assignments, class discussions and using role-play for bystanders to practice interrupting bullying situations as they occur (Rosenbluth et al., 2004; Stiller et al., 2013). The following description of the Expect Respect role-play is synopsised from Stiller et al. (2013): First, the teacher asks two students to play the roles of the student engaging in bullying and the one who is targeted. The one who is targeted pretends to be a member of the school's glee club and for this they are teased by the student engaged in bullying in a role-play improvisation. After a minute or two, the teacher stops the improvisation and the students engaged in the role-play are asked how it made them feel. Then the bystanders are asked how it made them feel. The role-play is repeated but this time bystanding students (i.e. the rest of the

class) are asked to interrupt the bullying either obviously or subtly. The teacher is instructed that the bystander interruptions can be repeated until students are familiar with the technique. Even though there is no mention that these students are practicing defending (Salmivalli, 2010), in essence, this is what they are doing. Although the programme was designed to be implemented by teachers, within the framework of the Expect Respect programme, it was jointly led by Safe Place Staff and teachers or school counsellors (Whitaker et al., 2004, p. 331). The programme required the principal to take a leadership role in presenting and launching the intervention (Rosenbluth et al., 2004). This is a significant directive as leadership by the principal is acknowledged to be a key aid to the success of ongoing school bullying prevention initiatives (Brassard and Fiorvanti, 2015; Smith, 2011). In order to facilitate the overall procedure of policy development, Expect Respect staff provided an initial policy template to school administrators (Whitaker et al., 2004, p. 332) and each school was encouraged to expand this initial policy in accordance with the specific needs of their unit. In terms of personnel resources, the intervention had considerable assets which were well beyond the everyday means of many schools. With so many supports in place, one might expect this programme to have had a high level of success. However, the reality was that, while the programme did help to increase knowledge of bullying behaviours and sexual harassment incrementally, it is reported as not reducing bullying behaviour in any substantive form (Meraviglia et al., 2003). This may be because the programme contained so many elements introduced by many individuals which echo's Horner's (2009) concern cited earlier about programmes with too many elements.

Dare to Care: Bully Proofing Your School (Beran, Tutty and Steinrath, 2004) was a modification of the Bully Proofing Your School programme (Garrity et al., 2004) which, in turn, was modelled on the Olweus Programme. Students from four Calgary elementary schools, grades four to six (N = 197, 77 boys, 120 girls) participated (Beran and Tutty, 2002). This age group was chosen as was deemed that they would be best able to read and understand the content of the self-report questionnaire (Beran and Tutty, 2002). One of the four schools the programme was offered to was not, "interested in implementing an anti-bullying prevention program" and so became the control school (Beran and Tutty, 2002, p. 8). The Dare to Care

programme encouraged the creation of solutions to prevent bullying among all parties involved in the education system (Beran, Tutty and Steinrath, 2004) with the main focus on encouraging a positive school climate and developing a caring school culture (Beran and Tutty, 2002). A classroom curriculum was implemented that educated children about the nature of bullying and strategies to avoid victimization. The curriculum included discussion, role-plays, artwork, books, videos and skits presented to school staff, parents and other children. What was very interesting about this particular programme is that an anti-bullying policy was created through the programme that aimed to identify caring and aggressive behaviours and consequences of those aggressive behaviours with a focus on reparation rather than punishment. This anti-bullying policy was posted throughout the school. The essence of the programme was that all parties were accountable for creating strategies to prevent bullying in their school. This idea of a whole school created anti-bullying policy was very organic and may be a reason why this programme was so effective. Within three months of programme implementation students reported that the frequency of witnessing bullying incidents decreased significantly at the research schools compared to the control schools (Beran and Tutty, 2002). Thereafter, three of the four research schools continued the programme. Longitudinally, there were more reports of positive attitudes towards those targeted by bullying at the research schools compared to the school that implemented the programme for a shorter duration (Beran, Tutty and Steinrath, 2004). Besides maintaining the success of the programme longitudinally, the inclusion of the student voice in creating and taking ownership strategies to prevent bullying in their school may have been a significant element as prevention efforts can be enhanced when students are included (Richard, Schneider and Mallet, 2012; Smith, 2011). Unfortunately, with regards to role-play, despite it being a suggested activity by the authors (Beran and Tutty, 2002), no research to assess its efficacy has been published to date.

The Viennese Social Competence (ViSC) Training programme drew its main ideas from "social information processing theory and from research that approached the problem of bullying as a group phenomenon" (Gollwitzer et al., 2006, p. 126). It was specifically designed for disadvantaged adolescents aged fifteen to nineteen who

were considered at risk for future problems (Atria and Speil, 2007). A research school comprising 109 sixth and eighth grade students and a control school of 75 sixth and eighth grade students participated in the study. The training of the students was conducted by trainers other than their teachers. The trainers participated in instruction workshops and were also supervised during the training by the ViSC developers' team at the University of Vienna (Gollwitzer et al., 2006). The programme consisted of thirteen lessons which were divided into three phases: a) impulses and group dynamics; b) reflection; and c) action (Atria and Speil, 2007). The first phase consisted of six lessons that aimed to teach students social competencies by looking at situations from different perspectives using vignette stories, discussions and role-plays. The second phase, 'reflection', involved one lesson during which pupils reflected on what had been learned in the first phase of the programme. The last phase, 'action', consisted of six lessons during which the trainer asked students to define how they wanted to benefit from the remaining lessons and they could prescribe activities that were in line with desired programme outcomes. The role-play was one of the sessions in the first phase. The trainer was allowed to create a scenario that was likely to happen given the dynamics of the group (i.e. exclusion, truancy). The students then were presented with questions that asked for their own personal responses to the situation. These responses were discussed and then students were then asked to role-play a positive outcome for the scenario in groups. These role-plays were then in turn reflected on. The main ideas the role-plays aimed to foster were that there were many perspectives and alternative responses to a situation with aggression being the least desirable option. To date ViSC has been implemented and evaluated three times: by Gollwitzer (2005), by Gollwitzer et al. (2006) and by Atria and Speil (2007). Gollwitzer et al. (2006) reported some small reductions in bullying behaviour due to the programme but overall reductions of aggressive behaviour were found to be non-significant. With regards to role-play, the research notes that it was one of the most liked aspects of the programme as nominated by the students.

The Finnish Anti-Bullying Programme implemented in Helsinki and Turku used the participant role approach which looks at potential parts learners could play in bullying incidents (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005). The intervention was

implemented in 48 school classes (Grades 4, 5, and 6) from 16 Finnish schools, involving 1,220 children (600 girls and 620 boys), with eight schools serving as the research schools and eight serving as the control. Levels of bullying pre- and post-test were assessed with the OBVQ. The core element of the intervention involved a one-year teacher training element which took the form of four sessions carried out throughout the school year (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005). During the training teachers were given feedback about the situation in their own classes (based on the results of the pre-intervention data) and information about alternative methods of intervening to prevent bullying at the individual, class and school level. During the training, teachers were provided with a selection of anti-bullying material which included suggestions for discussions on bullying behaviour and the possibility of using role-playing exercises. In the class level interventions there were discussions on what bullying is, how it feels to be bullied, the group mechanisms involved with students being encouraged to "reflect on their own behaviour" (Salmivalli et al., 2004, p. 255). Role-plays exercises involved rehearsing anti-bullying behaviours "such as telling others to stop bullying, and to explore feelings associated with these strategies" (Salmivalli et al., 2004, p. 255). For interventions at the individual level, teachers were presented with several methods that they could use individually with specific children involved in bullying, such as the Method of Shared Concern and the No Blame approach (Salmivalli et al., 2007). Salmivalli et al. (2004) followed Olweus' (1991) advice and encouraged the development of class rules against bullying with a focus on what the bystander can do to prevent bullying. At the whole school level, teachers were encouraged to take the anti-bullying message to their school and to promote the process of developing a school anti-bullying policy (Salmivalli et al., 2004). Regardless of the methods the teachers decided to use, the role of systematic follow-ups after the initial work was strongly emphasized in order to foster and maintain the knowledge and behaviours gained that aided the prevention of bullying incidents (Kärna et al., 2009). It is argued that follow-ups are considered crucial for the efficacy of preventing bullying over the long term (Olweus and Limber, 2008) as they can help to maintain reductions of bullying behaviour (Farrington and Ttofi, 2009). Olweus and Limber (2008) insist that if methods of prevention are not reinforced over time, then the positive effects can fade or it can make the bullying worse as learners' may perceive that authority figures as not really serious in their

intentions to prevent bullying in the first place. Christina Salmivalli and her colleagues built on the success of the Finnish Anti-Bullying Programme with KiVa (Salmivalli, Kärnä and Poskiparta, 2009).

The KiVa programme (Salmivalli, Kärnä and Poskiparta, 2009) is an ongoing national intervention in Finland with more than 90% of primary schools participating (UNESCO, 2015). It is the only other anti-bullying programme besides Olweus' launched on a country-wide basis to date (Salmivalli, Kärnä and Poskiparta, 2009). KiVa aims to enhance empathy, self-efficacy and support victimized students (Kärna et al., 2011). The evaluation (Kärnä et al., 2011) of the KiVa anti-bullying programme used a large sample of 8,237 youth from Grades 4–6 (10–12 years). 78 schools were randomly assigned to the intervention (39 schools, 4,207 students) and control conditions (39 schools, 4,030 students). KiVa components include classroom discussions, group work, short films about bullying and computer learning media that test knowledge on bullying, teach skills to act appropriately as potential defender during bullying incidents and how to use those skills in real life situations (Kärnä et al., 2011). Additionally, the programme has a strong emphasis on two elements: 1) engendering empathy for the plight of the victim and 2) fostering peer defending (Salmivalli, Kärnä and Poskiparta, 2009) which were two key elements of the Finnish Anti-Bullying Programme (Salmivalli, et al. 2004) discussed in the previous paragraph. As with the Finnish Anti-Bullying Programme, KiVa has a focus on bystander contributions to bullying behaviour, promotion of self-efficacy in dealing with bullying, encouraging the learning of skills that demonstrate how students might intervene safely (Kärnä et al., 2011). As with the previous study this learning can be done in a number of ways with the use of role-play being a recommended resource. However, a significant difference in this study was that learners with high social status are encouraged to be proactive in the emergent defending culture as they are less likely to have to deal with repercussions for supportive behaviour (Salmivalli, 2010). Visibility of teachers in the yard is also promoted and they are issued with special vests to enhance their visibility. Finally, on special information nights parents are given a presentation, literature and advice about bullying behaviour. After 9 months of implementation, the intervention had consistent beneficial effects including higher levels of self and peer-reported victimization and self-reported bullying with a

reduction of 30% in self-reported victimization and a reduction of 17% in self-reported bullying, compared with control schools (Kärnä et al., 2011). As mentioned previously, this is an ongoing anti-bullying intervention. Schools that have adopted KiVa will continue implementing it. Kärnä et al. (2011) will be monitoring KiVa effects to gauge if reductions of bullying behaviour are maintained or even strengthened over time. Unfortunately, no data was assessed on how well role-play helped students understand or reduce bullying in either the Finnish Anti-Bullying Programme or KiVa. This was most likely due to the fact that use of role-play was voluntary (Salmivalli et al., 2004). Furthermore, in a later study evaluating the contents of KiVa (Salmivalli and Poskiparta, 2012), the use of role-play is not even mentioned as a resource.

The Sheffield Anti-Bullying Programme also offered a variety of resources that teachers could use to address the problem of bullying (Smith, et al., 2004) including: a) curriculum work (e.g. video, drama, literature, quality circles); b) playground supervision techniques (e.g. training lunchtime supervisors in recognizing bullying, improving the playground environment); c) working with individuals and small groups (e.g. peer counselling, assertiveness training for victims, the Pikas (2002) shared concern method). A video entitled 'Sticks and Stones' had interviews with students about bullying incidents and behaviour, a scenario depicting bullying episodes and clips from the conducting of a bully-court (Smith et al., 2004). The video came with an instruction manual on how to engage learners in a discussion, drama usage and creative writing activities. A drama script, entitled 'Only playing Miss', that students could perform, aimed to address issues related to harassing behaviours. A novel, entitled 'The Heartstone Odyssey', gave teachers the chance to address through literature the issue of bullying. This was a story for primary students, which tackled the issues of racial harassment and bullying. The use of quality circles consisted of a group of students who met together to identify and address problems related to bullying, and who sought to find effective solutions that they then presented to the class teacher or senior management team. Other components of the Sheffield anti-bullying initiative involved individual work with children directly involved in bullying and peer counselling. Direct work with children involved in bullying as perpetrators was carried out though a method developed by Anatol Pikas (1989), entitled 'Shared Concern', which was based on a structured script that could guide teachers'

discussions with students involved in bullying (Smith et al., 2004). The results of the Sheffield initiative were significant with reports of victimisation reduced by 14%. Like the Finnish Anti-Bullying Programme, a significant element of the programme was flexibility given to the teachers in choosing and teaching elements of the programme along with any existing anti-bullying curricula (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005; Smith, et al., 2004). Unfortunately, the usage of drama elements in this study were not assessed.

Project Ploughshares Puppets for Peace (Woodfine, Lubimiv and Langlois, 1995; cited in Beran and Shapiro, 2005) was an anti-bullying initiative in Canada that comprised students from grades three and four from two elementary schools (N=129, 69 boys, 60 girls) with 66 students participating in the research school and 63 in the control. Students in both schools completed a self-report survey to accumulate data on levels of bullying with open-ended questions to ascertain personal perceptions on the nature of bullying. Project Ploughshares Puppets for Peace used puppets and a 30 minute script in which two puppeteers enacted a story that involved direct and indirect bullying, as well as a successful resolution to the scenarios (Beran and Shapiro, 2005). After watching the play, students were invited to identify the bullying behaviours. During discussions four main strategies known as the '4 Footsteps' to deal with bullying were presented: "a) ignore, b) say stop, c) walk away and d) get help" (Beran and Shapiro, 2005, p. 703). While the programme helped students become more aware of bullying and the frequency with which it occurs, it was ineffective in reducing bullying and/or victimization. The researchers concluded that the puppet show and ensuing discussion were not enough on their own to reduce bullying behaviours. They suggested combining it with "alternative methods" (Beran and Shapiro, 2004, p. 714) such as student role-plays of prevention behaviour before and after the puppet performances to ascertain the learning depth of new prevention strategies. While Beran and Shapiro did not call this defending in role, their recommendations suggest that it is being called for to aid efficacy. Unfortunately, in a search for any follow up in the literature, it appears that this recommendation may not have been acted upon.

Burton and O'Toole's Acting Against Bullying (2009) programme was an action research study that did not have intervention and control schools completing pre and post intervention surveys as most of the other studies in this evaluation but their use of drama and peer learning techniques as a bullying prevention resource is worth considering in light of the researcher's interests. The programme was implemented in more than 20 primary and secondary schools, urban and regional in Brisbane, Australia. The primary research question was: "Is it possible to develop an ongoing, whole-school program using applied theatre that will effectively address the issue of bullying in schools?" (Burton and O'Toole, 2009, p. 4). The drama strategy that developed from this research question was 'Enhanced Forum Theatre' which was based on improvisation using process drama (O'Neill, 1995) integrated with Forum Theatre (Boal, 1979). This integration came from observations and feedback which indicated that Forum Theatre was perceived as being very accessible and quickly comprehensible but superficial, while process drama permitted much deeper understanding of the conflict (Burton and O'Toole, 2009). Enhanced Forum Theatre was based on the three-scene version of Forum Theatre, which participants could grasp readily, but with some key strategies from process drama added. The most important aspect of process drama occurred in the preparation of the forum theatre performance where, instead of just taking a participant story, the actors worked through a range of process drama conventions to identify an appropriate story from real life and fictionalise it in order to make it safe and usable. During the performance itself other process drama techniques were incorporated such as 'hot-seating' and 'thought-tracking' to allow spect-actors (i.e. the audience of student participants) to discover more about the motives and instincts of particular players. Then the audience was given the opportunity to de-escalate the conflict with suggestions that the actors could try out through improvised role-play or that the spect-actors could demonstrate themselves. The key findings from surveys, focus groups and one to one interviews with teachers and students were that there were significant increases in knowledge about bullying, a heightened awareness about the nature and consequences of bullying amongst both students and teachers, observable declines in the amount of bullying behaviour in the schools involved and increased self-confidence and self-esteem amongst those being bullied. However, the "lack of reliable statistical information on bullying within individual schools"

(Burton and O'Toole, 2009, p.12) is disappointing as there are no measurements of the impact of the use of the drama and peer teaching on levels of bullying pre and post intervention. Regardless of this, there is sufficient qualitative evidence to demonstrate that the programme had a positive impact on many participants.

In summarising this section, the literature indicates that drama and role-play have been used as a forum for discussion, enhancing perspectives of those involved in bullying and encouraging action to be taken against bullying (Burton and O'Toole, 2009; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005; Stiller et al., 2013). While students as spectators of drama was an aspect of some programmes (Beran and Shapiro, 2004; Smith et al. 2004), Beran and Shapiro (2004) reflected that this was too passive an experience and that their programme might have benefited from a role-play element to enhance the learning experience and promote defending. Role-play was used as learning resource in a variety of ways: to discuss feelings (Stiller et al., 2013), to help build confidence (Burton and O'Toole, 2009) and the creation of alternate responses to the bullying problem (Atria and Speil, 2007).

Bystander intervention through role-play was encouraged as an alternate response in many of the studies (Beran and Tutty, 2002; Burton and O'Toole, 2009; Stiller, et al, 2013; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005). The use of role-play as a tool to train students in defending has been advocated by Sharp and Cowie (1994) in the seminal 'School Bullying: Insights and Perspectives'. Sharp and Cowie suggested that role-play would be useful in helping children to rehearse different appropriate strategies to intervene and stop bullying behaviour. This approach to bullying prevention has since been advocated by other researchers (Bagshaw et al., 2005; Burton and O'Toole, 2009; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005) with Salmivalli (2010) taking it a step further in suggesting that students with high social status may make an important contribution to the fostering of a defending culture as they are less likely to have to deal with repercussions for their supportive behaviour.

The literature clearly suggests that there is a high level of support for role-play as bullying prevention aid. For example, the results of a meta-study on bystander behaviour by Polanin, Espelage and Pigott (2012) on 12 school-based programmes

which promoted bystander behaviour found the programmes were statistically significant in increasing bystander intervention and should be researched further with recommendations that efforts should be to made to "raise awareness about the participant roles, to encourage active and pro-social behaviour, and to provide opportunities to role-play and practice bystander intervention in vivo" (p. 62). Unfortunately, while role-play is often cited as a component to aid prevention (Bagshaw et al., 2005; Burton and O'Toole, 2009; Gollwitzer, et al., 2006; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005) there is no direct evidence of teachers using it effectively to reduce bullying. This may due to the fact that it is often given as an optional element for inclusion in interventions which is left to the discretion of the school (Kärna et al., 2009; Cross et al., 2011). The researcher suggests that another possible reason for the lack of evidence on role-play is that often it is one of many elements offered in an intervention with no particular mandate for its usage. Further research on teacher usage of role-play as bullying prevention resource may be of benefit to the field.

In the end, some programmes in this review succeeded in reducing bullying and/or victimization were less effective. Potential reasons for programme effectivity or ineffectivity will be explored in the next section.

2.5.4 Synopsis of findings from interventions presented

Of the successful programmes reviewed in sections 2.5.2 and 2.5.3 many were influenced by Olweus' methods. However, it is important to note that Olweus' strategies have not always been reported as successful in achieving results. There are peer-reviewed studies that show little or no general effects from the OBPP (i.e. Bauer et al. 2007; Black et al. 2007; Bowlan, 2011; Schroeder et al. 2012). Three key criteria that appear to affect unsuccessful interventions are lack of fidelity to the programme, how they are implemented/managed and/or the level of effort involved/commitment (Brassard and Fiorvanti, 2015; O'Moore and Minton, 2008; Roland, 1989). Research has shown that the underpinnings of successful intervention are a positive whole school culture and effective leadership (Brassard and Fiorvanti, 2015; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). Leadership by the principal is

considered a key aid to the success of a bullying prevention initiative (Brassard and Fiorvantic, 2015). In fact, effective leadership may be more important to the success of an intervention than the particular elements of the programme (Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2013). Principals are considered key players in influencing attitudes, boosting morale, giving support to staff and student efforts, and setting protocols for dealing with bullying incidents (Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2013; Brassard and Fiorvanti, 2015; Charach, Pepler and Ziegler, 1995). With competent and pro-active leadership in place to steward an anti-bullying initiative, Smith (2011) claims that the combined effort of the whole school is more important than the type of intervention implemented. The whole-school approach acknowledges that bullying is a systemic and, therefore, intervention efforts must be directed at the entire school context rather than just at individual bullies and victims (Richard, Schneider and Mallet, 2012). Key to this implementation is

> a whole school policy that recognises that a cornerstone in the prevention of bullying is a positive school culture and climate that is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity and respect (Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2013, p.6).

Such a policy is required as bullying affects not only those involved but can affect everyone in the classroom, the school and in the wider community. Therefore, a whole school policy, that is consistently implemented, is arguably an essential framework to reducing bullying within the school (Horner, 2009; Limber, 2011; Thompson and Arora, 1991). Furthermore, the evidence supports that an intervention is more likely to succeed on a whole school basis if the students feel that genuine efforts are being made by the staff and that they (students) are included in the implementation of prevention tasks (Smith et al., 2004).

However, one significant element used in many programmes cited above, which often did not work well, was peer mediation and peer mentoring. Two peer mediation methods that have had considerable usage in the past are Pikas' Method of Shared Concern (1989) and Robinson and Maines' The No Blame Approach (2008). Pikas' method (Sullivan, 2011) looks initially at addressing school bullying through

discussions with the student or students engaged with bullying, then with the student who was bullied with the ultimate goal of working towards a solution to bring an end to the bullying that all parties can agree on. The No Blame Approach (Maines and Robinson, 1997) relies on group dynamics and the empathy of the group members. It focuses on how the person who has been bullied is feeling and does not seek to blame or point fingers. It asks those who engage and support bullying to consider the impact of their behaviour. It also invites non-involved students into the discussion to find a solution to the problem. The solution or solutions are then enacted with a follow-up evaluation of the method. The researcher has described these methods because mediation work with peers has been widely advocated and used but with mixed results (Vreeman and Carroll, 2007; Ttofi and Farrington, 2011; Pearce et al., 2013). The danger of working with peers in this way is that it can lead to higher rates of victimisation as peers who bully often can retaliate in response to the disclosure of their bullying behaviour (Dodge et al., 2006, Ttofi and Farrington, 2011). Because of this danger to the targeted person, Farrington and Ttofi (2009) in their meta-analysis of bullying prevention programmes recommend that peer mediation "should not be used" (p.44). The researcher refers to this quantitative meta-analysis of school interventions as it is widely recognized as the most comprehensive to date (Bradshaw, 2015; Limber, 2011; Pearce et al., 2011; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012) due to "rigorous study selection procedures" (Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt, and Hymel" (2010, p. 42) that correlated programme strategies with the effect sizes for being bullied and bullying others and found that, in many instances, peer mediation was not effective for reducing bullying but could increase it and not just for the targeted person but for peer supporters as well (Flygare et al., 2011). Based on the potential threat to peer supporters the evaluation by Flygare recommends that students are not involved in mediating bullying incidents. Due to these concerns, the researcher does not advocate that peers act as mediators. The peer mediation approaches are discussed in this review because they contain elements such as the fostering of empathy, a focus on discussing feelings, no blaming and the encouragement of the group to find strategies to prevent bullying. These elements have influenced the researcher's development of the BPP activities but a significant difference is that no one is named, blamed, singled out as being a victim or a bully, but rather that behaviours which can encourage and prevent bullying are role-played

and discussed. Additionally, the 'no name, no blame' approach aids distancing (to be discussed in Chapter Three) that allows the group to come to a deeper understanding of what types of bullying behaviours may be happening and how they affect individuals without the fear of reprisals. Thus, this understanding could potentially aid contributions from multiple perspectives which may aid knowledge formation on what bullying is, how it affects the group and what can be done to stop it. This group knowledge is then harnessed in the devising of bullying prevention strategies when the contract is created. Additionally, because the BPP is teacher led, the researcher argues this is potentially a more effective approach than peer mediation. For example, the researcher points to a study by Veenstra et al. (2014) who, through analysing the effect of the teacher in the KiVa programme (a programme that aims to foster bystander behaviour), demonstrated quantitative evidence that teachers were highly efficacious in promoting positive behaviours in decreasing bullying levels amongst their students simply by demonstrating anti-bullying beliefs and the facilitation of exercises to prevent bullying. In turn, this demonstration and facilitation encouraged peers to support those targeted by bullying and lowered the status and desirability of engaging in bullying behaviour. Additionally, Flygare et al. (2011), who advocates that students should not be involved in dealing with bullying incidents directly, recommend that they are involved in the development of preventative measures. The impact of this approach by the researcher will be evaluated and reported on in subsequent chapters.

Another factor which emerged from the review, that can hinder a bullying intervention from achieving positive results, is resource intensive programming (Limber and Small, 2004; Rigby, 2006; Stiller et al., 2013). Although resource intensive programmes like Olweus' (Olweus, 2004) and Smith's (Smith, Sharp, Eslea and Thompson, 2004) have sometimes provided efficacious results, schools have reported difficulty maintaining the fidelity needed to achieve long-term positive outcomes (Horner, 2009). As schools struggle to prevent problem behaviours, a significant element which needs further research is the use of interventions that do not place a heavy demand on teacher time or are resource heavy (Horner, 2009; Stiller et al., 2013) such as the use of role-play.

Many of the studies included here, apart from the work by Burton and O'Toole, recommend the use of drama but only in a tokenistic manner. In general, there are instructions/recommendations for a process drama approach but no primary focus on role-play as is in the BPP study. A central aim of this study is to evaluate the potential of role-play, which is manageable by most teachers, whereas what is imagined in Cooling Conflict (Burton and O'Toole, 2009), is arguably more ambitious than most teachers would attempt. Thus this study, which combines qualitative and quantitative data, will be the first to evaluate the use and impact of role-play as the primary learning resource in anti-bullying education by non-drama specialists

The fulcrum of the BPP intervention is role-play. There is evidence that students prefer the use of role-play to other approaches in anti-bullying programmes (Bagshaw et al. 2005; Bradshaw, 2015; Burton and O'Toole, 2009; Crothers, Kolbert and Barker, 2006; Gollwitzer et al., 2006; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012) with literature suggesting that role-play can be effective in enabling students to generate knowledge, understand and deal with bullying (Burton and O'Toole, 2009; Smith and Ananiadou 2003; Zins, Elias and Maher, 2007). With regards to adding to existing knowledge on combining role-play with anti-bullying strategies, the BPP will aim to evaluate quantitatively, through the OBVQ-R, the effects of the intervention in reducing levels of bullying. Evidence of which has not been documented quantitatively through such a recognised survey (Joronen, Konu, Häkämies and Åstedt-Kurki, 2012) like the OBVQ-R which is considered a gold standard in student self-report surveys (Glew, et al., 2005). Such evidence might help foster a considered use of role-play in future bullying prevention strategies.

2.6 Conclusion

The review of the literature in this chapter has revealed the difficulty of defining bullying, the variations of bullying typology, the dangers of labelling with regards to the roles of the participant players in bullying incidents and the efficacious and non-efficacious elements of bullying prevention interventions.

With regards to a definition of bullying there are variances on the definition

depending on culture as discussed in section 2. However, for the purposes of this study the focus will be on definition parameters discussed in western literature (Elinoff, Chafouleas and Sassu, 2004; Olweus, 2011b; Owens, Skrzypiec and Wadham, 2012; Swearer et al., 2010) which describes bullying as:

- intentional negative behaviour,
- which typically occurs with repetitiveness,
- directed against a person who has difficulty defending himself or herself because of a power imbalance with the
- type(s) of bullying engaged with being direct, person(s) to person(s), such as physical, and/or indirect, such as exclusion.

The types of bullying discussed were physical, verbal, exclusion, gesture, cyber, sexual, identity-based and disablist. These types have been identified as being prevalent forms of aggression which are used on targeted persons who are identified, amongst others, in the bullying circle.

The Bullying Circle (Olweus, 2001) portrays the potential participant players in bullying incidents. However, the researcher has foregone the terms originally used in The Bullying Circle (bully, victim, henchmen, etc.) as use of such labels can be hurtful or limiting (Dweck, 2006) and can re-inforce negative behaviour patterns (Sercombe and Donnelly, 2012). The researcher uses labels from his own work in schools (Donohoe and Dummigan, 2015; Donohoe and O'Sullivan, 2015) such as 'bullying', 'targeted' and 'following' to describe behaviours, not individuals, in an effort to curb negative behaviours which can foster a culture of bullying and, by attempting to do this, potentially help to create a lexicon which promotes a supportive and inclusive whole school culture.

A supportive and inclusive whole culture that curbs bullying needs a number of elements to be effective as described in sections 2.5.2 and 2.5.3. With strong leadership and a positive school culture where all participant voices are valued, there are identifiable elements of successful interventions which might decrease levels of bullying. According to reviews of interventions by established researchers such as Carney and Hazler (2006); Eslea and Smith (1998); Olweus (2004); O'Moore and Minton (2008); Polanin, Espelage and Pigott (2012); Smith, Peplar and Rigby (2004);

Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt and Hymel (2010); Vreeman and Carroll (2007); Ttofi and Farrington (2011), effective bullying prevention programmes have some of the following elements:

- recognition by teachers and the community of the seriousness of the issue,
- time spent informing parents,
- training teachers in the implementation of the programme,
- a structured curriculum with materials for at least several sessions with detailed information on how to implement each lesson,
- a whole school approach in which elements and initiatives are carefully co-ordinated through conferences and meetings that inform and train,
- a focus on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to foster: learner empathy, recognition of and ability to label feelings, perspective taking, managing conflicts non-violently.
- encouraging bystander intervention,
- increased playground supervision,
- disciplinary methods (more effective in primary than secondary),
- classroom rules and management,
- whole school anti-bullying policy that is consistent in dealing with bullying incidents,
- sufficient duration and intensity of the programme,
- following up on initiatives over time.

Hence, in attempting to harness role-play as a potentially effective resource to reduce bullying the following elements are considered:

1. looking at bullying as a whole group process that can curb, prevent and/or stop bullying,

2. creating conditions for open and honest group discussions on bullying behaviour,

3. fostering the construction of knowledge about bullying, typology and bullying circle players,

4. using role-play as resource to kinaesthetically connect learners to the bullying lexicon,
5. encouraging bystander reflection on the role they may play in encouraging bullying,
6. casting popular children as the defender in the Defender Role-play to encourage a school culture where defending is perceived as 'cool',
7. fostering a school culture where students do not want to be identified in the negative role of a student who bullies,
8. requiring the intervention to be supported by the whole school,
9. fostering empathy to encourage understanding about the effects of bullying,
10. including student recommendations for bullying prevention strategies,
11. supporting the intervention with a long term commitment by the whole school community to aid prevention.

The elements of utilising and channelling the power of the group through role-play for knowledge creation and defending hold much potential for further study, as most bullying interventions lack this element (Zins, Elias and Maher, 2007).

Within the social-ecological context of the school role-play has the potential to enhance a learner's understanding of the world and aid them through the development of social skills (Bolton, 1979; O'Neill, 1995), helping them to create understanding of each other's positions (O'Sullivan, 2011) within the meso-system of the school. Unchecked, there are implications for the social-ecological context of the macrosystem as bullying behaviour in schools could affect the wider society (Unnever and Cornell, 2003). Bullying behaviour in schools has been shown to have a correlation to increased levels of crime, poverty, workplace bullying and other detrimental social effects (Piquero, Farrington and Blumstein, 2007; Ttofi et al., 2011; UNESCO, 2012). Hence, learners, who persist in bullying behaviour and/or are recipients of the negative effects of bullying in their early and young adult years, could have a significant negative effect on society in terms of costs in the short and long term (UNESCO, 2012). These costs could be monetary and/or affect the social

welfare as the influence of bullying behaviour takes its toll in families, the workplace, on health and a reduced quality of life (Ttofi et al., 2011). Therefore, learning through role-play about what bullying is, the types, the participant players and the development of an effective anti-bullying strategy within the meso-system of the school may be an opportunity to prepare learners for citizenship and to make meaningful contributions to society.

Chapter three will consider these elements within the framework of the BPP instrument. There will be a discussion on role-play's potential to aid teachers and learners to actively construct and use knowledge to prevent bullying in the school setting. Supporting the argument for the educational use of role-play will be a discussion of classroom sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1986) and how the multiplicity of viewpoints can be harnessed to raise awareness on the topic of bullying. Thereafter, the discussion will focus on the activities of the BPP and how they could fulfil a dual remit of providing educational drama that teachers and learners want to use in tandem with a bullying prevention resource.

CHAPTER THREE

USE OF ROLE-PLAY WITHIN THE BULLYING PREVENTION PACK FOR THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

3.1 Introduction

A key aim of this chapter is to explain and theorise the framework of the Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP) as a resource for teacher led role-play activities that aim to create knowledge and understanding about school bullying and its effects and to promote actions to prevent it. At the outset it is important to note that the BPP is not operating in the realms of applied theatre and drama therapy. It focusses on the use of role-play and improvisation within the tradition of drama in education and is intended to be an accessible resource that classroom teachers can use to prevent bullying. There is evidence that role-play usage in the classroom has the "power to generate behavioural change" (Burton et al., 2015, p. 156), allowing students to experience reality from different perspectives that creates the distance which is needed for them to see themselves as others and appreciate different points of view (Bolton, 1998; Bagshaw et al., 2005; Burton, 1991; Donohoe, 2007; Neelands, 2009). The BPP intervention encourages teachers to utilise the resource of role-play along with information about bullying behaviour. The aim is to give teachers a bullying prevention programme that can empower them and their students to create a school environment that is a safer place for learning. By the end of the teacher-led intervention the aims of the BPP are for the learners to be able to define what bullying is, identify the sub-types, name the participant players, have a higher level of intellectual and empathetic awareness of how bullying affects the quality of their lives and that of their peers, give learners the knowledge and tools to defend themselves and one another, and encourage peer development of a class action plan for bullying prevention.

It is argued that the use of drama activities in the classroom can "help individuals to come to a better understanding of what life is about and to develop abilities and skills

which might be of value in the course of their education and personal development" (Schewe, 2013, p. 5). However, as discussed in Chapter Two, interventions cannot be accomplished without the help of teachers who are key agents of change in the implementation of bullying prevention interventions (Kallestad and Olweus, 2003). This consideration is highlighted as the BPP's prime learning resource is role-play and, as discussed in Chapter 2, teachers are not often supported in their use of such activities, especially if they are viewed as extra-curricular. Therefore, in designing a revised BPP for this study, prime consideration was given to creating a teacher friendly pack in terms of accessibility of instructions and ease of implementation alongside the curriculum.

This chapter examines the case for the inclusion of drama as a form of sociocultural practice in the classroom with a particular focus on role-play and how its sits within the framework of the BPP. Firstly, there will be a brief discussion of sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1986) and how a multiplicity of viewpoints can be harnessed to raise awareness of a complex topic such as bullying. Then the discussion will turn to the use of Drama in Education (DIE) as a sociocultural practice which harnesses the power of individual and collective student voice. It will explore how the multiplicity of viewpoints encouraged and indeed required in DIE can have potential benefits for classroom use. This will lead to a discussion about the challenges associated with using role-play in Irish classrooms, as the BPP has been designed to be implemented in this context. This will be followed by a discussion on how the BPP might encourage an active socio-cultural learning environment in schools through the use of role-play as a bullying prevention resource.

As an earlier version of the BPP was originally designed and developed for a smaller scale study at masters level in 2003, the final section of this chapter is devoted to an exploration of the changes incorporated into the revised BPP as a result of the extensive literature searches conducted for this study as reported upon in Chapter Two and in most of this chapter. This will allow the reader to gain an insight into the BPP and to the use of role-play as one of its central teaching and learning methods.

3.2 The socio-cultural classroom

This section will discuss how the social and cultural learning environment of the classroom exerts an influence on learner thinking processes and interactions with a view to how this context can be harnessed to achieve greater educative effects and benefits for learners and teachers when dealing with bullying as a largely group and therefore social phenomenon.

3.2.1 Social Development Theory

Social development theorists argue that mind originates dialectically through the culture in which that mind inhabits (Bruner, 1996; Von Glaserfeld, 1987; Vygotsky, 1978, 1981; Wenger, 1998) and that learning is an activity that is a combination of the social and cultural (Vygotsky, 1978) as "All higher mental functions are internalised social relationships" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 52). The educational theorist, Jerome Bruner (1990, p. 166), extrapolates this theory: "Learning, remembering, talking, and imagining: all of them are made possible by participating in a culture. So, in the end, while mind creates culture, culture also creates mind". Hence, it can be argued that in the learning environment of the school the creation of mind advances through collaborative social interactions and the social construction of knowledge (Brown, Collins and Duguid, 1989; Bruner, 1996).

This concept of interrelational learning is based on the revolutionary ideas of Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), a developmental psychologist who has been highly influential in psychology and education, especially with regards to Social Development Theory. Social Development Theory argues consciousness and cognition are the end product of socialization and social behaviour (Wertsch and Sohmer, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978):

> ...from the first moment of life, individuals find themselves in unbreakable, intricate relations with the world formed by constantly ongoing, open-ended and ever changing (dynamic) interactions and back-and-forth exchanges with the world - exchanges of energy, resources, forms, products, and so on (Stetsenko, 2012, p. 147).

A crucial interactive relationship in this learning context is the more knowledgeable other who contributes to the learner's formation of knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). The more knowledgeable other can be from multiple relationship contexts such as family, friends, peers and teachers (Vygotsky, 1978). Furthermore, within the socio-cultural classroom this more 'knowledgeable other' isn't necessarily the teacher as there can be varying levels of instructive social relationships such as teacher – classroom group, student – classroom group, teacher – student, older student – younger student, experienced student – inexperienced student with the possibility of learning going in either direction in these relationships (Bruner, 1990). Knowledge formation is created by the learner's dialogue and interactions with the more knowledgeable other, with the new knowledge becoming internalised and then externalised (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1981) called this process internalisation: in any social environment the learner has carried out activities on the external plane, processes the social phenomena internally and then makes meanings through both external and internal interactions. Vygotsky (1981, p. 162) expounds: "When we speak of a process, 'external' means 'social.' Any higher mental function was external because it was social at some point before becoming an internal, truly mental function". A technique to foster learner knowledge creation in the classroom is to work within the child's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1967).

3.2.2 Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

The ZPD is an important concept among Vygotsky's (1967) ideas. He explains that:

> The zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state. These functions could be termed the 'buds', or 'flowers', of development rather than the 'fruits' of development (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86).

Vygotsky proposes that each learner, in any domain, has an actual developmental level and a potential developmental level. The actual developmental level refers to all the functions and activities a child can perform on his/her own without help from a more knowledgeable other such as a teacher, peer or expert (Vygotsky, 1967). The

learning takes place when the learner bridges the difference from what is known over to what is unknown. This gap in knowledge is the potential developmental level and refers to all functions and activities a child can perform only with the guidance and assistance of someone else. The difference between the two levels (actual developmental level and potential developmental level) is the learner's ZPD. Therefore, within the classroom the challenge for teachers is to provide adequate scaffolding for successful learning and accomplishment of tasks (Pressley, Hogan, Wharton-McDonald, Ettenberger, 1997).

Scaffolding is a term invented by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) to describe the instructional interaction between an adult and child. In this learning scenario the child needs the leadership and competence of a more knowledgeable other to benefit from activities and interactions with others (Bruner, 1983). The scaffolded learning experience has the following characteristics (Sam, 2011).

1. Modelling: the desired learning behaviour is modelled.
2. Support: Targeted support is given to the learner to perform a task independently.
3. Fading: The support is reduced and eventually removed to foster self-reliance in the learner.

On review of Sam's (2011) characteristics, it is evident that scaffolded learning closely mirrors the approach that role-play adopts (Davis et al., 2015). It is arguable therefore that scaffolded learning experiences that use role-play to model, support and fade a learning event may be able to bridge the gap in knowledge with regards to bullying phenomena, awareness of the parts students can play and encourage the usage of defending behaviours. This will be discussed further in section 3.4. As discussed in Chapter Two, section 4, teachers' and learners' knowledge about bullying and the negative roles peers can play in bullying incidents can often be deficient or lacking. According to Social Learning Theory, students attain awareness of deviant behaviour by reproducing unacceptable behaviour (Bandura,). Thus, using role-play in an experimental and controlled laboratory type approach to reproduce unwanted behaviours in the classroom allows the learners to come to

know what bullying is from an analytical stance, what it can look like and what they should do if they are ever involved in bullying or observe a bullying situation (Sharp and Cowie, 1994). Such evidence, albeit limited, would appear to support the suggestion that a participatory and active form of pedagogical intervention, such as role-play, which can encourage contributions from a multiplicity of viewpoints, may allow learners to incrementally bridge the knowledge gap in relation to the bullying topic and defending behaviours.

3.2.3 Role-play as a socio-cultural construct

Vygotsky, a great lover of theatre and poetry (Davis et al., 2015; Wang, 2011), recognised that drama allowed learners to become personally involved in the learning process, in a context in which it was possible for them to feel less self-conscious and more empowered (Vygotsky, 1987; Michell, 2015). This may be because the staging of drama provides a pretext for "the most diverse forms of creativity on the part of children" with plays "created and improvised by them as they are played...vastly more compatible with children's understanding" (Vygotsky, 2004, p. 72). It has been suggested that this lowering of defences and openness in the drama context might be part of our cultural DNA as drama: "...is in fact a very ancient and a very effective model of human behaviour and human relationships" (Bagshaw et al., 2005, p. 86). Just how long humans have been expressing themselves through the dramatic form is uncertain but it has been suggested that it has been with us since prehistory as our ancestors discussed and dramatized the day's events around the fire (Johnson, 2000). In western culture we can trace the origins of drama to ancient Greece (Brown, 1998). The Greek word for drama: "drao" can be translated as "I do" or "struggle" and the Greek word for theatre: theatron is translated as "a place for seeing/showing" (Cassons, 1994). Theatre takes that personal experience to another level by communicating the experience to others (Cassons, 1994). Davis et al. (2015) insist that drama is a discipline to which human interactions, experience, emotional expression and attitude are central. They suggest that the understandings emerging from drama experiences can provide opportunities and ways of examining the affective relational domains, which are essential for understanding learning processes.

In the classroom this type of communicative forum that harnesses the potential of the ZPD environment could create a simultaneous learning experience in many instructive relationships. For example, as students share stories and role-plays about their experiences of bullying, they are sharing their personal knowledge with their peers, the teacher and potentially other adults in the school and the community. This sharing of personal knowledge is also the sharing of an emotional experience with learning emanating from the structured discussion through reflection and relation of emotions (O'Toole and Dunn, 2015). This new knowledge can help participants make connections between their life and the lives of others (Wilde, 1994). These connections can potentially help participants to understand the conditions that make people feel the way they do, and do the things they do. Once one understands this, there is the potential to explore what can be changed to improve everyday existence (Wilde, 1994). The researcher postulates that in the everyday learning environment of the classroom, role-play has the potential to be a highly effective learning tool as it may affect the cultural attitudes of the school community about bullying and lead to its prevention.

In order to understand the nature of the role-play which is being referred to in this study and the difficulties its implementation may face, the following section will offer a review of the historical background of Drama in Education (DIE), the challenges for DIE and a discussion of DIE's inherent socio-cultural nature and how it can enhance the learning experience of students in the exploration of bullying prevention.

3.3 Drama in Education

3.3.1 Introduction

Joronen, Häkämies and Åstedt-Kurki (2011) argued that drama for the school setting should be an aesthetic experience in the learning process that helps emotional expression, awareness and fosters self-knowledge. This approach towards drama favours the process rather than the product and seeks "to teach what it is to be human" (Anderson, 2002, p. 24). Such an enlightened view of DIE has come after a

century of teachers and researchers exploring drama as a learning medium (Bolton, 1984, 1998; Cook, 1917; Heathcote, 1980, 1984; O'Neil, 1995; Way, 1954). But still today, schools often have an ambiguous approach to DIE with no clear remit or instruction for classroom learning (Doyle, 1993). For example, DIE is seen as a potential powerful confidence builder for young people (Pierse, 1995) but its actualisation might be only a few minutes in the week or the occasional mounting of a school play (Clark, 2015; Shaw and Stevens, 1979) with little or no attention given to using drama as a potentially transformative process to foster and encourage student understanding with the goal of enabling them to make sense of and come to grips with their world (Davis, 2014; Heathcote, 1980; Vygotsky, 1981). Even with this lack of understanding of drama's potential, in the last century methods of how drama can be used to enable educationalists to give learners a sense of agency have flourished (Bolton, 1998). This section will chart the growth of these methods in order to examine and critically assess its potential as a teaching and learning strategy in the classroom and more particularly to begin to consider its potential in the area of anti-bullying education.

3.3.2 An historical overview of Drama in Education (DIE)

In the early twentieth century Harriet Finlay-Johnson (1912) felt that too much attention was given to the adult view of how a performance should be staged and proposed that the focus should be on the child and their interpretation of the piece regardless of whether the adult or audience thought it was right or wrong (Weltsek-Medina, 2007). Instead of rote learning (the predominate model of her times) Finlay-Johnson valued cooperative learning, reliance on the strength of the imagination, self-paced learning with teachers as facilitators and co-learners (Anderson, 2002). She prefigured Vygotsky's ZPD when she said, "Children have a wonderful faculty for teaching other children and learning from them" (Bolton, 1998, p.11). A contemporary of Finlay-Johnson, Henry Caldwell-Cook (1917), advocated "the play way". Caldwell-Cook argued that, as a form of learning, play was not only important for junior and senior infants but to all primary school children as he argued that play was a form of practice and preparation for adult life. Caldwell-Cook encouraged free play, followed by structured playing that included use of classical works. What is

most significant in his practice was that Caldwell-Cook was the first to embrace process rather than product: "the claim here put forward is not for the destination but chiefly for the journey" (Caldwell-Cook, 1917, p. 6). Marjorie Hourd (1949) took Cook's observations a step further by arguing that the child should not be encumbered with overloaded rehearsals that focus on character attributes but rather allow the child freedom to play at being themselves. This view was central to the work of Peter Slade and Brian Way who later saw no need for an audience or having to meet the stressful objective of rehearsals for public performance (Slade and Way, 1954). In 1954, Slade and Way wrote the influential text "Child Drama" which was a landmark in DIE because it contained the view that rather than thinking of a child as a tabula rasa, who needs training and indoctrination, the child should be thought of as an individual who has their own creative impulses which can be nurtured and who, with the aid of drama activities, can be directed and guided to tap into these impulses. Such a view of the child in the educational milieu has its foundation in the thoughts of Rousseau (1979) who conceived of the child as an active learner and this was further developed by John Dewey (1897) who was strongly critical of the didactic method with its emphasis on the mere transmission of facts. Disliking the stilted, unnatural imposed styles of speech and movement frequently bred by formal Speech and Drama training, Slade and Way were more interested in spontaneous and sustained dramatic play, requiring minimal teacher guidance (Slade and Way, 1954). The methods of Slade and Way were crystallised by Richard Courtney (1968) in his influential work, 'Play, Drama and Thought', where he put forth that theatre work in schools be downplayed in favour of children exploring drama in the private context of the classroom itself, with no external audience.

This classroom exploration of drama was taken further by Dorothy Heathcote who advocated less of Way's emphasis on individual development (Way, 1967) and more of an emphasis on the 'we', what it means to be a social being (Anderson, 2002). Heathcote encouraged a systematised use of drama as a way to humanise the school curriculum so that knowledge creation "is not an abstract, isolated subject-based discipline, but is based in human action, interaction, commitment and responsibility" (Bolton, 1998, p. 177) with the teacher in the role of facilitator and/or participant. In this social context the teacher's mission is to find techniques that

utilise the power of drama to open up, explore and influence attitudes, to create an environment where "a dynamic means of gaining new understanding" (Bolton, 1979, p. 112) can take place and that could potentially change the learner's attitudes with regards to socio-political issues and the personal (Bolton, 1979). Heathcote saw drama as a scientific mode of enquiry where each session was a laboratory with reflection in stages as a key element (Bolton, 1998). This continuous reflection on the subject matter addressed the implications of actions where attitudes, not characters, are the chief concern and that the shared analysis, discussion and judgements fill the spaces between each learner's understanding, or lack thereof, to aid them in creating a situation where they can create new knowledge and therefore be active participants in transforming the learning culture (Bolton, 1984, 1998).

In this way DIE has become both a method and a subject, with a holistic perspective, integrating feelings, thoughts and actions (Bagshaw et al., 2005, p. 21-22):

> Educational Drama can be a way of processing the experiences of conflicts. Through re-enactment or role-play the participants access a more meaningful experience of the conflict, including thoughts, feelings and body experiences...They can also explore how the conflict looks to other participants, for instance how the opponents experience the conflict, through playing the role of the opponent.

This fragmenting and examination of experiences in Heathcote's work was profoundly influenced by Bertolt Brecht (Bolton 1998; O'Neill 1985). Brecht (1964, p. 201) writes of his approach to issue-based theatre:

> ...we cannot invite the audience to fling itself into the story as if it were a river and let itself be carried vaguely hither and thither, the individual episodes have to be knotted together in such a way that the knots are easily noticed. The episodes must not succeed each other indistinguishably but must give us a chance to interpose our judgement.

Brecht wanted his audiences to adopt a critical mind-set so that they recognised injustice and exploitation (Hayman, 1983). Brecht employed the use of techniques that reminded the spectator that the play was a representation of reality and not reality itself (Willet, 1978). By highlighting the constructed nature of the theatrical

event, Brecht hoped to communicate that the audience's reality was equally constructed and, as such, was changeable (Hayman, 1983).

This powerful potential for issue-based drama to encourage change lies in its ability to connect individual experience to the role as well as seeing oneself in the role thereby (Boal, 1979; Bolton, 1984). By seeing and perceiving the world from different role perspectives and at the same time being able to relate the role to one's own outlook, the potential for empathy and the understanding of complex situations is developed (Bagshaw et al., 2005). It uniquely allows participants to see things from a number of different perspectives, while actively being involved in the situation intellectually and emotionally. Bolton (1979) contributes that emotions must be involved for drama teaching to be effective as emotional responses are complemented by intellectual responses (O'Toole and Dunn, 2015). The participants must be "touched emotionally enough to bring about a change of attitude, a change in the value" (Bolton, 1979, p. 32).

Bolton has expounded upon Heathcote's legacy and the potency of drama in several books (Bolton, 1979, 1984, 1998) and argues that DIE is the dominant and most important form of classroom drama:

> The content of a Drama lesson is interdisciplinary…[students of all ages] may have their understandings of the world clarified or modified and secondly they may gain skills in social interaction which include the ability to communicate their understandings and feelings (Bolton, 1979, p. 71).

In the meaning-making environment that deals with bullying, the teacher, along with the learners, is encouraged to be an active agent in the problem-solving process (Davis et al., 2015) as they learn about bullying and how it affects those around her/him. Hence, the teacher is facilitated to go beyond their own particular understanding of bullying in their school as they collaborate in learning about bullying and its effects with their students. This meaning-making is an intrinsic feature of the BPP resource where the learners and teacher participate in and enact, through role-play, their interpretations of the world, and through discussions involving a multiplicity of viewpoints on the subject of bullying, they learn about what bullying is,

how it affects the group and how to respond effectively as a group to reduce its prevalence.

To summarise, after a century of being used in the classroom, the following represents some of the most important areas/activities that DIE purports to foster (Bagshaw et al., 2005; Bolton, 1979; Burton et al., 2015; Davis et al., 2015; Finlay-Johnson, 1912; Hourd, 1949; Michell, 2015; Neelands, 2009; O'Sullivan, 2014; O'Toole and Dunn, 2015; Schewe, 2013):

- the child's interpretations, imagination and personal development,
- emotional expression, awareness and self-knowledge,
- enabling of confidence and agency,
- cooperative learning, reliance on the strength of the imagination, self-paced learning with teachers as facilitators, co-learners and/or participants,
- development of social skills that enable communication and inter-personal understanding,
- knowledge creation based on human interaction, commitment and responsibility,
- generate behavioural change by creating distance which can allow students to experience reality from perspectives,
- changing learner attitudes to personal and socio-political issues,
- continuous reflection on subject matter where reflection on attitudes, not characters, are the chief concern with shared analysis and discussion creating new knowledge helping to transform the learning culture,
- drama as a form of practice to improve one's life,
- preparation for adult life.

However, knowledge and/or experience of how to use role-play in the DIE setting is not widespread (Lin, 2010). Despite their claimed efficacy, role-play and drama techniques are still struggling to find their way into the modern Irish classroom in practice with drama activities too often side-lined for other curricular concerns (O'Sullivan, 2011b). However, newly qualified teachers entering the profession may be more positively disposed to using drama having "experienced its benefits, both

aesthetically and cognitively" (Trinity, 2010, p. 7) but how well they draw on their experiences in a system that is results-based (Conway, 2002; Lyons et al., 2005) remains to be seen as student teachers and newly qualified teachers can often be reluctant to implement participatory learning approaches over concerns about being viewed as ineffective authority figures who have noisy classrooms and/or are unable to impose discipline (Bryan, 2010; McMorrow, 2006). This reluctance may be heightened if they find themselves in a milieu where there is not a clear mandate to take up the challenge of enriching their pedagogical practice via the use of creative approaches in the classroom (Hennessy and McNamara, 2011). Therefore, such participatory teaching approaches may "be avoided or watered down because of fears of appearing incompetent or ineffectual or a need to appease colleagues with more traditional understandings about what constitutes 'learning' or good teaching" (Bryan, 2010, p. 30). Hence, role-play and drama techniques may still be struggling to find their way into the modern Irish classroom in practice.

3.3.3 Challenges for drama in education and the role-play activities in the BPP

After almost a century since Finlay Johnson first introduced dramatic play to schools, drama was formally recognised as part of the arts education subject area in the Irish primary school curriculum and recommended as a valid method of teaching in all subject areas (DES, 1999a, when the new curriculum was introduced). However, there is no consensus on how drama should be taught in schools (Lin, 2010). The notable pioneers of drama previously discussed have had to contend with a tension that still exists in DIE today: "...the polarisation of Drama process and product; and regimentation versus play and exploration" (Anderson, 2002, p. 23). This lack of consensus extends to the labels given to drama in school settings as practitioners struggle to agree on a name to define their practice (McCarthy, in press; Woodson, 1999), with the terminology for school based drama activities abundant and confusing (Gatt, 2009). For example, some of the names given to DIE are Process Drama, Applied Drama, Creative Drama, Creative Dramatics, Developmental Drama, Improvisational Drama, Informal Drama, Classroom Drama and Performance Drama (Woodson, 1999; Gatt, 2009). This abundance of appellations applied to DIE activities reflect the various methods practiced by different theorists of DIE teaching

(Woodson, 1999). Somers (1994) puts forth that this may be because the DIE field lacks a unified pedagogical model. Additionally, there is no national or international consensus as to the terminology associated with drama in schools (Gatt, 2009).

Although numerous researchers and practitioners have emphasized the positive effect DIE can have on children's cognitive and affective development (Bagshaw et al., 2005; Bolton, 1984, 1998; Bradshaw, 2015; Heathcote, 1980, 1984; Joronen et al., 2011; O'Neill, 1995; O'Toole and Dunn, 2015; Way, 1967) there still exists a gap between understanding its value and actually applying it (Furman, 2000). Furman (2000) summarises the reasons why teachers hesitate to embrace the ideas of utilizing drama in classroom activities as follows:

- in the search for drama resources to develop curricula, teachers can be overwhelmed by various terms used for DIE,
- dramatic activities tend to be placed at the 'edge' of the official curriculum; they seem to be time-consuming and unnecessary,
- since most teacher education programmes do not offer courses related to drama and theatre, teachers are unfamiliar with facilitating dramatic activities (Ireland is an exception as it is mandatory training for all primary school teachers but how often this is put into professional practice is questionable (Bryan, 2010)),
- dramatic activities such as role-play are can be as too playful and therefore teachers might be afraid that children will not take learning seriously.

In the Irish context the application of "Drama as a subject in the Irish Primary Curriculum is still in its infancy" (O'Sullivan, 2011b, p. 3). The core problem may be that teaching in the Irish context continues in many instances to focus on the didactic model instead of the proscribed learner-centred model (Conway, 2002; Lyons, et al., 2005; Shiel, Forde and Morgan, 1996). For example, in a review of maths classes Lyons et al. (2005) found that only approximately 2% of Irish schools endeavour to engage students in a constructivist educational approach to the subject while 98% still favoured the traditional didactic mode of delivery. In a review of Irish educational strategies, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 1991) raised serious concerns about the dominance and widespread prevalence of

the didactic model of teaching and low levels of pupil involvement in the learning process in Irish schools. The examiners of the report concluded that:

> The face...Irish schools present to the world is quite recognisably that of previous generations. There is a growing dissonance between it and the development of the learning sciences and modern teaching technologies that require a very different approach...Co-operative (team) teaching and non-instructional forms of learning have not been conspicuous elements in determining design and layout in the past (OECD 1991, p. 55).

More recently the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) for Ireland (Gilleece et al., 2009) found that little had changed since the early 1990s. While teachers across other TALIS countries favoured constructivist approaches to learning, TALIS found that in Ireland "these practices are used relatively infrequently" (Gilleece et al., 2009, p. 78) with teachers showing a preference for didactic methods more so than "teachers in comparison countries" (Gilleece et al., 2009, p. 73).

One problem may be that knowledge and/or experience of how to use role-play in the DIE setting has had mixed success (Lin, 2010; O'Sullivan, 2011). This may be due "to a degree of confusion over what it is, and how to define it" (O'Sullivan, 2011, p.511). This confusion may be exacerbated by:

- an emphasis on didactic teaching methods (Callan, 1997),
- little emphasis on group learning (OECD, 1991; Gilleece, 2009),
- no consensus on how drama should be taught (Lin, 2010),
- no agreement on what DIE is (McCarthy, in press),
- the desire for product over process (Anderson, 2002),
- a lack of a unified pedagogical model for the subject of Drama (Somers, 1994),
- a gap in understanding the value of using drama activities such role-play in education and applying it (Furman, 2000).

Even with regards to some significant challenges, the value of drama is acknowledged: "the educational use of Drama has the potential to connect with

people both emotionally and cognitively, resulting in what we call 'felt understanding'; a type of knowing which results in people taking a personal interest in issues and wanting to effect change" (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 510). The primary school curriculum (DES, 1999a, p. 2) similarly testifies to the role of drama in helping children to navigate and understand their lives in a deeper way:

> Successful Drama will reflect life in a realistic or metaphorical way and will clarify elements of real life and point up the patterns beneath it. The content of Drama is, therefore, real life in all its manifestations, and the method by which it is examined is story...It is improvisational in nature and has as its aim a quest for knowledge that involves every aspect of the child's personality: spiritual, moral, emotional, intellectual and physical. In making this Drama the child enters an imagined context (the Drama world), through enacting a fiction about characters in certain circumstances, at some particular time and in some particular situation, and so can explore in a unique way conflicts, issues, consequences, attitudes, emotions, concerns and preoccupations that are important to the understanding of real life.

The BPP fulfils this remit in a number of ways:

- a focussed real-life theme for reflection, clarification and education (bullying)
- the personal stories of bullying have a beginning, middle and end (essential to the making of a plot and creating a story)
- the making of the story through improvisation is done through re-enactments of selected significant moments of bullying
- reflection of these bullying re-enactments is essential to aiding the clarification of these real-life events and aids the spiritual, moral, emotional, intellectual and physical world of the child.

The BPP differs from the guidelines in the Drama Curriculum in the following ways:

- The recreations of the bullying scenarios do not have to be imaginary events but can be based on a student and/or students experience of bullying (albeit that experience is not strictly adhered to verbatim as all students in creating a role-play are allowed to contribute to the making of the story).

An argument could be made that since the BPP does not rely on fictional scenarios but simulates real life that its validity as a role-play method might be questioned. However, such use of role-play is not uncommon. In Bolton and Heathcote's (1999) book *So You Want to Use Role-play* they recommend numerous ways to use role-play, including students being asked to prepare bullying incident scenes based on what could happen at school. Clapper (2010) proposed that "Simulating real life experiences can be quite useful in the classroom as role-play in this way allows learners to become deeply immersed in the learning". The BPP role-play activities correspond well with successful role-play strategies employed by Burton and O'Toole (discussed in Chapter Two, section 2.5.3) which are based on real life (Bagshaw et al., 2005; Burton and O'Toole, 2009; O'Toole, Burton and Burkett, 2005) where role-play can be used to create realistic models of human behaviour experienced within or beyond the children's real experience (O'Toole and Dunn, 2015) and examine conflicts from multiple perspectives (Burton, 2010). The BPP role-plays and discussions seek to break down the students' experiences of bullying by challenging received notions, analysing the incidents from multiple perspectives, putting an emphasis on the social context and examining how it affects the 'we'. The ultimate aim is to address bullying not as a personal problem but as a type of human behaviour and group responsibility that needs to be addressed and dealt with. In acknowledging role-play's efficacy in this manner, it embraces the work of the constructivists and the improvisational techniques espoused by DIE practitioners previously discussed. It sits well with Gavin Bolton's (1984) definition of dramatic action as a tool for learning that relies on its capacity (1) to separate and objectify an event, and (2) to break down established concepts and perceptions. However, it could be argued that as the BPP relies on first-order responses (emotional reactions to the immediate event) as opposed to second order (emotional reactions to the symbolic meaning of the fictional) (Bolton, 1979), it may be a little too close to learners' real life experiences to be able to adequately objectify the experience. To deal with this potentiality, the first lesson of the BPP serves as a buffer as it allows the learner to objectify what bullying is and create distance through the voluntary disclosure and discussion of real life bullying events (without naming or blaming) before engaging with role-plays in lesson two.

The role-play activities in the BPP lessons require teachers to be creative facilitators in its application. If teachers embrace the role-play activities, then this resource might be a valuable tool in the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) of students (Joronen, Häkämies and Astedt-Kurki, 2011). It is argued that when role-play is used in this way, it can successfully engage children in learning which addresses potentially sensitive matters in the field of personal, social and health education (Denman et al., 1995). In the Irish context this type of learning falls under the remit of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). Drama under the SPHE guidelines (DES, 1999) is meant to encourage learners to solve problems and devise solutions in a safe, non-threatening situation facilitated by the teacher. Theses 'situations' are meant to foster appropriate social behaviour by expressing feelings, giving points of view, and listening to others or participating in groups.

This recommended use of role-play in the SPHE curriculum would appear to complement Social Emotional Learning (SEL) which has a key role in countering bullying behaviours. The development of SEL can help foster perspective taking, the recognition of ability to label one's own and the feelings of others, emotion management and empathy. However, an exact definition of empathy remains elusive in the literature.

3.4 Empathy

Empathy is defined in numerous ways (Oxley, 2011). According to Eisenberg and Strayer (1987) an exact definition of empathy has not been formulated primarily because the concept of this human attribute is open to interpretation and often confused with sympathy. In examining the available definitions of sympathy and empathy there are similarities. For example, a definition of empathy as described by Batson, Fultz & Schoenrade (1987, p. 3) highlights: "other oriented feelings of concern, compassion and tenderness experienced as a result of witnessing another person's suffering". Wispe's (1986, p. 318) definition of sympathy similarly refers to the awareness of another's suffering: "Sympathy refers to the heightened awareness of the suffering of another person". Both terms have their origins in the Greek word 'pathos' which is described as "an element in experience...evoking pity or

compassion...an emotion of sympathetic pity" (Brophy, 2010, p. 106). Notwithstanding their similarities, Darwall (1998) argues that what is primarily contextually different between the two terms is that sympathy is often reserved for the well-being of those we care about whereas empathy can be for the plight of anyone whose suffering we acknowledge, understand and generate feelings for. The latter is of significance in this research. The researcher hypothesises that creating situations where empathy is encouraged could be beneficial for preventing bullying and promoting positive peer relations in classrooms and schools. The BPP discussions on how bullying affects individuals aims to create empathy for all peers who are bullied including those who are not as personally well known to the child in a school context.

The personal sharing of negative emotions that are fostered by bullying can create a form of personal distress. Batson et al. (1991) suggest that inducing personal distress over the suffering of another may be socially beneficial as it encourages the child to want to remove the unpleasant feeling of seeing 'the other' in need. In the case of the BPP, this could imply wanting to refrain from bullying as learners come to recognise the feelings of others. This strategy for SEL development might also aid the promotion of positive peer relations by helping learners to manage conflicts non-violently as they come to recognise the feelings of others, and begin to work towards preventing and reporting bullying behaviour (Blueprints, 2015; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012). It is arguable that creating a situation where there is personal distress may not be conducive to positive learning experiences, but the data presented in Chapters One and Two highlights that the extent of the personal distress potentially created in SEL and role-play activities may be minimal when compared to the impact of bullying on children's lives on a daily basis. With few outlets available to discuss or prevent bullying and its affects, it can lead to ongoing and long term negative effects for both those who are targeted by bullying and those who engage in it. Thus, this study hypothesises that creating empathy through the role-play activities in the BPP could have a strong preventative effect for those involved and aid long term positive peer relations in the short and medium term development of SEL. How the BPP has been designed and scaffolded to complement the promotion of SEL will be discussed further in the next section.

3.5 The BPP role-plays

3.5.1 Introduction: evolution from the M.Ed. study

As described in Chapter One, Section 1.3 the research conducted in this study builds on work initiated in the researcher's M.Ed.. In this smaller scale study (Donohoe, 2007) the researcher focused more on designing the BPP and less on gathering evidence and theorising the designed approach. In reviewing the literature for the current study changes were made to the BPP to incorporate best practice as reflected in the literature on bullying prevention and the use of role-play in such work, and to theoretically underpin, critique and understand the intervention. Table 3.1 presents the synopsised content of the lesson plans for the M.Ed. and Ph.D. versions of the BPP.

Table 3.1 Bully Prevention Pack: Lesson Synopses of M.Ed. and Ph.D. studies

Research Study: (Lesson = Week)	**M.Ed. (Eleven 35 minute sessions)**	**Ph.D. (Five 50 minute sessions)**
Lesson 1	1. Bullying definition and typology 2. Discussion: experiences of bullying incidents and associated feelings	1. Drama game: School Pictures 2. Bullying definition and typology 3. Discussion: experiences of bullying incidents and feelings
Lesson	1. Review typology 2. Role-plays: Bullying Incident Role-play	1. Review typology 2. The Bullying Circle 3. Role-plays: Bullying Incident Role-play and Reverse Role-play
Lessons 3-8 (M.Ed. only)	1. Review typology 2. Role-plays: Focussing on a particular type of bullying.	NA
Lesson 9 (M.Ed.) Lesson (Ph.D.)	1. Review typology 2. Observer Role-play 3. Intervening	1. Review typology 2. Observer Role-play 3. Defender Role-play
Lesson 10 (M.Ed.) Lesson 4 (Ph.D.)	1. Review typology 2. Introduction of status behaviours 3. Using high status to intervene	1. Review typology 2. Drama Game: Confident Behaviours 3. Defender Role-play using

		confident behaviours
Lesson 11 (M.Ed.) **Lesson 5(Ph.D.)**	1. Using affirmations to create a positive state 2. Creating a personal affirmations posters	1. Review typology 2. Discussion: Strategies to prevent bullying 3. Contract creation
Lessons 6 and beyond (Ph.D.)	NA	1. Monthly review of contract 2. Discuss any bullying incidents and strategies to prevent 3. Agree to amendments and changes to existing bullying prevention contract

Table 3.1 provides at a glance, the similarities and differences of the M.Ed. and Ph.D. versions of the BPP. In the M.Ed. the researcher was time-tabled for thirty-five minute sessions and looked at types of bullying in individual lessons which extended the duration of the implementation. As discussed in Chapter One, the researcher was looking to streamline the resources to make the BPP teacher friendly. Many of the other changes came from a review of the literature in preparation for the research, and the rationale for most of the new inclusions and amendments are discussed in the relevant lesson descriptions below. However, an initial discussion of the changes made to the BPP is offered to contextualise the new lessons described in section 3.4.2.

Changes to Lesson 1:

The literature used to address the bullying typology in the M.Ed. was provided by the Barnardos Training and Resource services document, 'Bullying' (2002) which in turn was edited from Smith's 'Bullying in Schools' (2000) published by the UK based National Children's Bureau. This resource was distributed freely to schools in order to help them address bullying behaviours. In the interim period, the research on bullying and typology has developed considerably and this new understanding is reflected in the revised BPP, and included in the teacher instructions accompanying the pack.

In the M.Ed. study the researcher used general drama games as a warm-up for the role-plays but did not design them specifically to explore the content of the role-plays and in-class discussions as happened in this study.

Change to Lesson 2:

In this study the Bullying Circle was included to help learners identify the roles that students could play when involved in bullying incidents (see Chapter Two, section 4). This resource was developed and included to assist learners in their role-playing activities as they choose particular Bullying Circle players for their performances.

Elimination of Lessons 3-8 (M.Ed. study):

For each of these weeks the M.Ed. included role-plays on a particular type of bullying. However, a decision was made for the Ph.D. study to allow learners to choose the types of bullying which they experienced most and/or wanted to deal with in their role-plays. This suggestion was made against the background that this was a voluntary programme and that learners had the choice of creating a total fictional world if they wished. Furthermore, even though the bullying scene could contain some truth, it needed to be a collaboration of all the players bringing their own perspectives to role-play while focussing on which Bullying Circle participant player they were representing. The aim of this instruction was to allow distancing to take place so that the learners could feel comfortable in the presentations and post role-play discussions. This decision to let learners choose the type of bullying and participant players they were presenting was informed by the literature review. The researcher found that the types of bullying engaged in can vary from school to school. This is due to variables such as gender, frequency of a particular type, attitude to the type of bullying engaged in, if the behaviour(s) was/were hidden from and/or ignored by teachers, and how pro-actively the school engaged in preventing bullying (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; James, 2010; Naylor et al., 2010; Owens, Skrzypiece and Wadham, 2012; Rigby, 2002a). Hence, choosing the types of bullying would allow learners to create knowledge about the types of bullying that were happening in their school. Additionally, the literature review highlighted that the contributions and attitudes of the participant players such as the defender, follower, witness, etc. were highly significant in fostering, supporting, prolonging or preventing

school bullying behaviours (Craig and Pepler, 1995; James, 2010; Kärnä, 2012; Saleh, 2015; Salmivalli, 2010). Therefore, the performance, discussion and examination of the participant player contributions could potentially be beneficial in creating knowledge and awareness amongst the learners about the power of the group to promote or prevent bullying scenarios.

Changes to Lesson 9 (M.Ed.)/Lesson 3 (Ph.D.):

In the M.Ed. version of the BPP, the idea of intervening was introduced whereas in the present study it was named the Defender Role-play. This renaming and re-focussing of the role-play came from the literature review of the bullying circle players (see changes to Lesson 2 above).

Change to Lesson 10 (M.Ed.)/Lesson 4 (Ph.D.)

The students participating in the M.Ed. had worked with the researcher before and were familiar with working through drama activities to create characters by embodying varying degrees of status and confident behaviours (Johnstone, 1987). This enabled them to participate quite easily in the subsequent role-plays. However, in this study, the intention is for teachers themselves to lead and deliver the classes with their students, and it was deemed necessary to develop a drama strategy to facilitate the engagement with this idea of confident behaviours.

Change to Lesson 11 (M.Ed.)/Lesson 5 (Ph.D.)

Drawing on the work of Seligman (2004) the researcher originally used affirmations to encourage positive mind states amongst the learners at the end of the intervention. Suggested affirmations included: 'I am a good person', 'I get on well with my classmates' and 'I like school'. The students were encouraged to re-visit these affirmations on a daily basis. The aspiration was that the affirmations might help to create a more friendly and co-operative school environment where there was little bullying. However, in the intervening years research has indicated that affirmations may actually have a negative effect on a person if the person does not believe the state they are trying to affirm. For example, Wood, Perunovic and Lee (2009) found that the repetition of positive affirmations may induce good feelings for some. However, those who suffer from low self-esteem, may feel worse as it could

lead to a heightening of self-doubt. People who suffer from self-doubt became, in some instances, more aware of the unhappy state they were in as opposed to the state they were trying to create. This knowledge gap can lead to increased reports of self-loathing. Another reported deficiency with affirmations was that they could lead to blind optimism (Ehrenreich, 2010) and reduce the motivation to make changes in one's life (Briers, 2012). Also, Forgas and East (2008) have argued that a person needs negative states some of the time. Negative states can trigger more careful and attentive thinking, as the person is paying more attention to negative factors in the external world that may need to be addressed. Self-doubt, self-loathing, blind optimism, lack of motivation were mental states that the researcher did not want to foster in the new study. However, I did want a resource that learners could draw upon to maintain bullying prevention goals once the initial intervention was over as the effects of an intervention can fade over time (Ertesvag et al., 2010). This data prompted the researcher to develop the contract idea which is discussed in the relevant lesson description below.

The reduction from 11 to 5 lessons also resulted from a consideration related to practical implication issues which arose during the M.Ed.. The original BPP had a strong focus on exploring the types of bullying with learning about defending reserved for the end. Over the course of a school term the introduction of the BPP could take from the end of September to mid-December. In this scenario students would learn about defending close to the Christmas break. Hence, the opportunity to exercise defending skills would be limited and therefore the need to refresh lessons again in January may be required. Notwithstanding the additional challenges associated with rescheduling within the context of busy and overcrowded curricula in schools, it was also likely that the final lessons may be deferred or abandoned completely in the run up to the end of term. With the lessons reduced to five and the Bullying Circle participant players introduced in Lesson 2 students would have an opportunity to become familiar with the use of defending behaviours and potentially have opportunities to enact them on a regular basis if needed.

The revised BPP designed for the present study, and informed by the review of literature is presented in the next section.

3.5.2 The BPP for the present study

The BPP aims to give learners a sense of agency (Jeannerod, 2003) by empowering them with knowledge and resources to increase their cognitive and affective understanding of what bullying is, its effect on the individual and the group and to give students the tools to defend themselves. This socio-cultural learning environment is supported by role-play resources that place a high value on learner and group empathy. Synopsised below are the five lessons of the BPP along with instructions for the follow-up sessions. It was recommended that lessons be delivered over five weeks in five 50 minute sessions for learners from fourth to sixth class. Teacher feedback was frequent and substantive and so there were some changes. These changes may be noted briefly here but will be discussed in full in chapter six.

3.5.2.1 Lesson 1: Bullying and how it affects us

The teacher begins this lesson by informing learners that they are commencing a project called The Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP) which is a programme that aims to prevent bullying in and around the school. By the end of the programme everyone will make an agreement to prevent bullying when they see it in and around the school grounds. Most of lesson 1 revolves around discussions on bullying and its effects. Discussing bullying is encouraged by researchers (Kärnä et al., 2011; Olweus, 1993a; Raskauskas et al., 2010; Ross and Horner; Safran, 2007) as it provides students with an opportunity to share their thoughts, feelings, interpretations and/or questions about bullying with the class. Discussions on a weekly basis can help students become familiar with what bullying is, enhance their ability to discuss the topic as well as encouraging them to learn and utilise strategies that aid defending (Safran, 2007).

Initially learners are invited to discuss what bullying is. The discussions commence with questioning of what learners, in their terms, understand bullying to be, what types they are aware of and what players might be involved in school bullying incidents. Thereafter, they are presented with the literature on the bullying definition and the typology. The material for the bullying definition and typology is synopsised from O'Moore's (2010) 'Understanding School Bullying' (see Appendix 1a, pp. 364-68 for BPP Session 1). The knowledge gained in this lesson will be part of the

bullying lexicon that learners will come to use when engaging in discussions about bullying. This foundation work is important. In order to potentially decrease the frequency of bullying, the inclusion of an operational bullying definition with the identification of types can be a significant first step to counter aggressive behaviour (Ross and Horner, 2009).

Prior to commencing discussions on school bullying incidents the learners are invited to play a game entitled School Pictures (see Appendix 1a, p. 364 for detailed instructions). The aim of this exercise is to help learners embody, describe, name their emotions and recognise the emotions of others. Besides establishing a lexicon of emotions they can draw upon later, this simple acting game is significant because it attempts to create a psychologically safe foundation for the ensuing role-plays as acting in front of others could be embarrassing (Lin, 2010). Zimmerman (2004, p. 5) suggests that drama games as warm-ups can allow students to feel ready for more advanced work like role-play as "Games are fun, a non-threatening way to prepare students" especially if the warm-up game echoes themes or topics in the drama (O'Toole and Dunn, 2015). They can also establish the appropriate mood and energy level and help to practice the rules of drama work (getting into groups quickly, finding a space, agreeing to pretend and playing status for example). In addition drama games can show that the teacher accepts and values learner contributions and is encouraging their active engagement (Lin, 2010). This caring ethos can help to build mutual trust between the teacher and learners, and provide a supportive social community for learners to become confident, to be imaginative, face uncertainty, and take risks (Lin, 2010).

After playing 'School Pictures', the learners are asked if they would like to give voluntary accounts of a bullying incident that has happened on the school grounds. Prior to the sharing of experiences the following assurances are made to the learners: when we share stories about bullying which have happened in and/or around the school, we use the 'no name, no blame' strategy (see Chapter Two, section 2.5.4). This means that we do not want to know the names of those engaged in bullying or who were being targeted by bullying as we just want to focus on the behaviour itself. 'No name, no blame' is a form of distancing that allows the

group to come to a deeper understanding of what types of bullying behaviours are happening (if any) and how they affect individuals without fear of punishment and/or retribution. Ultimately, the goal is that everyone might to come to a better understanding of what bullying is and work together as a group to prevent its reoccurrence in the future. A key benefit of not naming or blaming is that it can encourage full class participation in discussions and reflections on the effects of bullying incidents by reducing the fear of reprisals as students often don't tell teachers because of this fear (Peterson, 2009).

After each learner finishes her/his story, the teacher is instructed to ask: "How did it make you feel?" Learners are told that this is a voluntary exercise and they do not have to contribute if they do not wish to. In the M.Ed. study the researcher found that learners were eager to share their feelings but had trouble naming them. This is the prime reason the researcher created the School Pictures exercise. Learners are asked to think about the feelings they embodied in the exercise and use them as a reference point (referring to the list which the teacher has been instructed to write on the board). The aim here is that sharing feelings about these incidents might engender empathy as children who engage in bullying behaviour can be unaware of how damaging it is (Guiney, 2007) and, because of a lack of awareness, can engage in the aggressive behaviour more often (Raskauskas et al., 2010). Furthermore, research has shown that children who bully can have a low empathetic response with poor understanding of the feelings and perspectives of others, and can look on their action(s) as a bit of harmless fun. By engaging in modelled bullying behaviour they have never questioned it before and can have difficulty recognising and regulating their own emotional responses (Decety and Jackson, 2004; Joliffe and Farrington, 2006; Guiney, 2007). Raskauskas et al. (2010) found that the fostering of empathy through discussion and perspective taking appeared to facilitate pro-social behaviour and inhibit bullying. Hence, classroom discussions may be an ideal opportunity to foster the empathetic response as individuals may be more likely to develop affective empathy if they are on familiar terms with the targeted student(s), perceive similarities between themselves and/or have experienced similar unpleasant experiences (Cohen, Montoya, and Insko, 2006; Smith, 1988). It is also arguable that in discussing the feelings of those involved, it is setting the stage for

the role-plays where the children are asked to take on the perspectives of others, and question how they are feeling. This SEL focus is in line with the Irish Primary Drama Curriculum (DES, 1999) which promotes that in drama activities students will work together, learn about their own feelings and those of others, develop a sense of empathy for others, and experience supportive and healthy relationships. Additionally, role-plays and discussions which include perspective taking and the development of empathy could potentially foster learner trust enabling them to "find ways of working which demonstrate reciprocal respect for each other's physical, emotional and intellectual well-being" (Nicholson, 2002, p. 83). In environments where there is an open, communicative and trusting atmosphere, bullying behaviours can be reduced (Alsaker and Nagele, 2008). The format and structure of lesson 1 is consciously designed to create such a collegial environment in the classroom.

3.5.2.2 Lesson 2: The Bullying Circle and the introduction of the role-plays

Part 1 of Lesson 2, Identifying bullying behaviours and players

In this part of the lesson learners are introduced to Olweus' Bullying Circle (discussed in Chapter Two, section 2.4.1). After the introduction and discussion of the Bullying Circle the learners are advised that everyone will have an opportunity to do a role-play based on the participants of the Bullying Circle. The learners are advised that the role-play can be based on bullying that has happened on the school grounds (classroom, playground, hallway, etc.) or they can create a short scene about bullying that could happen anywhere in the school. The teacher is instructed to scaffold the experience by taking a minor part in a sample role-play and taking part in the post role-play discussions to aid knowledge formation. The participation in the role-play can be improvised or the teacher can use the provided sample script and read this with student volunteers (see Appendix 1b, p. 369). This instruction to the teacher is based on Heathcote's (1984) strategy that the teacher plays a role that is not necessarily the main protagonist or antagonist but a supporting character who allows students to make more of the important decisions in the role-play. A potential benefit of this practice according to Balaisis (1992, p. 2) is that:

> ...the teacher, working in role, normalizes the power relationship traditionally in place in the classroom. In lieu of maintaining absolute control, Drama contexts, conducted

in roles of varying status, tend to reduce censorship and encourage authentic participation and greater risk-taking.

Additionally, in this de-centred classroom (O'Neill, 1995) the teacher-in-role can foster constructivist meaning-making with the role-play activities enabling that the learning taking place is part of a spontaneous, explorative and risk taking process (O'Neill and Lambert, 1982) where collaboration, respect, equality and mutual decision making are central to the activity (Fostnot, 1996).

After the presentation of the modelled role-play by the teacher, the scaffolding continues with questions posed such as:

- Was it bullying? If it was occurring in this scene, does it keep happening?
- What type(s) of bullying did you see?
- What players of the Bullying Circle were involved/present?
- How do you think the bullied child felt?
- What do you think the others were thinking or feeling? (see Appendix 1b, p. 369 for extended list of questions)

The learners are then coached to improvise and make up their own role-plays according to the following instructions:

- learners can either choose or be assigned to groups of two, three or four,
- learners should discuss what the scene is about and the type(s) of bullying they are demonstrating,
- the scenes should be short (a few lines at most) as modelled in the example,
- all learners will rehearse simultaneously for approximately two to three minutes (in conducting my M.Ed. research this was sufficient in most cases),
- learners are then asked to volunteer to perform their scenes in front of the class,
- learners should be prepared to answer questions from the teacher and/or rest of the class and engage in discussion about the role-plays (as described above).

Role-playing different perspectives of characters from the Bullying Circle allows students to take on a specific role in a bullying situation (e.g., bully, victim,

bystander). This could potentially provide the learner with the opportunity to empathise with the part they play or the parts observed (Gerdes et al., 2011) and therefore potentially empathise with their real life peer counterpart. Thereafter, posing questions about the bullying incident in the role-play can be a way to further foster feelings of empathy towards a targeted student (Schachter, 2011). Role-play may allow feelings of empathy to be strengthened as the sharing of a subjective experience allows students to experience the feelings of what it is like to be a part of a bullying situation (Gerdes et al., 2011). According to social learning theory, students attain awareness of deviant behaviour by reproducing unacceptable behaviour (Bandura, 1977). Role-play provides an opportunity to replicate the deviant behaviour in which the actors and audience (classmates) can observe and subsequently discuss.

Through the classroom audience questioning the observed role-play in the discussion stage, learners can be helped to assess and support newly found knowledge (Shore, 2009; Andreou and Bonoti, 2010; Scarpaci, 2006). It is an opportunity for learners to reflect on their attitudes towards the bullying incident as "it freezes a problem in time, and you examine the problem as the people go through a process of change" (Heathcote, 1984, p. 115). The process of change can involve the examination of one's actions, thoughts, interpretations of events and feelings in a purposeful way (Newell, 1992) because the role-play activity "forces participants to think about the person whose role is being assumed" promoting personal involvement in the learning (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 512). This can be an aid SEL as the active learning can also foster the capacity to recognize and manage emotions, solve problems, and establish positive learning relationships (Zins and Elias, 2007). Strategies aimed at teaching social and emotional skills may help students regulate their emotions and develop appropriate responses to bullying behaviour (Jenson and Dieterech, 2007). The acquisition of social and emotional skills may also have a positive effect on reducing the number of classroom bullying incidents by strengthening social norms against bullying in school (Jenson and Dieterech, 2007). Furthermore, Frey et al. (2005) argue that activities that promote the development of SEL can be an effective way to reduce bullying behaviour and victimisation in the group as a targeted learner's ability to respond calmly and assertively to direct and

indirect forms of bullying could be an important factor in moderating or reducing risk for subsequent bully victimization (Jimerson, Swearer and Espelage, 2009; Schwartz et al., 2000). Thus, strategies such as perspective taking in the BPP role-play, may cultivate SEL and help the learners gain new insights, ideas and understanding (Newell, 1992). This can potentially create a learning environment where they "can construct, deconstruct and reconstruct knowledge themselves" (Bagshaw et al., 2005, p. 186). This questioning and analysis may also allow "the emotional content and the subjective meaning attached to the conflict can be made visible" (Bagshaw et al, 2005, p. 96). Fostering group understanding of the negative effects of bullying is a chief aim of the Reverse Role-play.

Part 2 of Lesson 2, The Reverse Role-play

In the second half of Lesson 2 the learners are assigned roles they would not normally be associated with (i.e. a student who has been known to engage in bullying behaviours plays the role of the targeted child). An assumption is made for this role-play exercise that the teacher has insights/experiences into which learners in her class are prone to engage in bullying behaviour, have been targeted, and/or have often been bystanders and she assigns them the roles they would not normally play in everyday school life. This strategy of assigning learners roles they may not be familiar with is an attempt to further foster empathy and perspective taking. Schachter (2011) argues that empathy can be acquired through role-play as it allows painful events to be viewed and discussed. The aspiration is to create understanding of the targeted person's plight while raising awareness about the hurtful and damaging effects of bullying. The Reverse Role-play distances the learner from attachment to a familiar perspective and offers them an opportunity to explore and to potentially understand and empathise with differing points of view (Byram, 1997). For example, in an experimental study (Varkey, Chutka and Lesnick, 2006) young, healthy medical students simulated the difficulties of old age. They wore goggles covered with transparent tape to simulate the effects of cataracts and they experienced poor motor control by wearing heavy rubber gloves. Following the experiment, the students showed greater empathy towards the elderly (Varkey, Chutka and Lesnick, 2006). Hence, fostering empathy for the targeted child would

be a prime aim of this role-play, not only for those who engage in bullying but also to possibly engender it in bystanders.

3.5.2.3 Lesson 3: What the bystander can do

Part 1 of Lesson 3, The Bystander Role-play

In primary school, the majority of bullying incidents are fuelled by the attention of bystanders (Craig, Pepler, and Atlas, 2000; O'Connell, Pepler, and Craig, 1999; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen, and Voeten, 2005). Prevention programmes that have a framework which fosters pro-social defending behaviour from bystanders may be an effective element in reducing victimisation as they can enhance student knowledge and create opportunities for reflecting on attitudes and behaviours about bullying (Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012; Raskauskas et al., 2010; Salmivalli, 2010; Farrington and Ttofi, 2010). Yet, mobilizing bystanders can be difficult because empathy and moral responsibility tend to be overridden by the intensity of the moment, fear of reprisal, stigmatization, and/or lack of self-efficacy, and/or having no instruction as to what procedures to follow when students do encounter bullying scenarios (Poyhonen and Salmivalli, 2008; Coloroso, 2004). Another factor to consider is that students may also be mirroring behaviours learned outside of school. Cowie and Smith (2010) theorised that the school could be considered as a microcosm of the wider society. Since bystanders are embedded and influenced by the wider culture, they become familiar with the abuses of power and have come to accept it and mirror it. Within the cultural context of the classroom bystanders and those who are targeted may subordinate their freedom in order to cope with ongoing bullying behaviour. However, role-playing could be a mitigating resource against learned behaviours as it is part of a process that introduces perspective taking and could encourage intervening by providing "the role modelling necessary to help students envision themselves standing up to bullying" (Haner et al., 2010, p. 57). This aim is supported by research that indicates that interventions that look to change bystander behaviours by fostering empathy, self-efficacy, and anti-bullying attitudes amongst students are predictive of greater defending and support of targeted peers (Caravita, DiBlasio, and Salmivalli, 2009; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012; Pöyhönen, Juvonen, and Salmivalli, 2010; Salmivalli and Voeten,

2004). Such interventions can reduce the positive re-enforcement rewards gained by those who bully and consequently their motivation to continue to bully.

In preparation for the Bystander Role-play student volunteers enact and discuss a bullying context they are familiar with prior to learning how they might prevent its reoccurrence. To begin with volunteers are asked to describe a bullying incident they witnessed but did not intervene in. Again, they are reminded not to name or blame as they describe the incident. Questions are posed as to why there was inaction. Then the learners are organised by the teacher into teams of four players in the roles of bully, follower, victim and bystander. It is essential that the part of the bystander is played by a popular child (the reasoning for this will be discussed in below in part 2 of lesson 3). The teams are asked to enact a story based on an event they witnessed. Questions posed in the post role-play discussion focus on the bystander's position:

- What kind(s) of bullying was/were there?
- Why do you think the bystander(s) did nothing?
- What do you think the bystander was thinking/feeling? Why do you think they felt that way?
- Was/were the bystander(s) afraid of the child who was bullying? Why? Afraid of retaliation?
- Do you think the child engaging in bullying behaviour will bully more if s/he feels supported?
- Who could the victimised child tell?

With the questioning completed the teacher then explores the role of the defender. Children typically understand that those who are bullied do not deserve abusive treatment (Almeida, Caurcel, and Machada, 2008) but don't know what to do to stop it (Coloroso, 2004). Yet, as noted previously, when bystanders do intervene, bullying stops 57% of the time within 10 seconds (Hawkins, Pepler, and Craig, 2001). Studies suggest that between 10 and 20 percent of non-involved students help when another student is victimized by comforting the victimised child or making the bullies stop (Rigby and Slee, 1991; Salmivalli, 1999; Stevens, Van Oost and De

Bourdeaudhuij, 2000; Whitney and Smith, 1993). Other studies (Sharp et al., 1994; Cowie and Sharp, 1996; Craig and Pepler, 1997) suggest that bystanders trained in the role of peer helpers could act as a resource to help children troubled by bullying. Therefore, creating an environment where defending directly or indirectly is promoted may reduce the amount of bullying in the school.

Part 2 of Lesson 3: The Defender Role-play

Some students fear that intervening will raise a bully's wrath and make him or her the next target (Coloroso, 2004). Hence, the "reluctance to tell presents as one of the greatest challenges to educators" (O'Moore, 2010, p. 47). Victims and Bystanders find it difficult to tell for many reasons (O'Moore, 2010, pp. 47-48):

- fear of reprisals,
- shame, humiliation, degradation,
- an inability to perceive how to go about changing the situation due to low self-esteem and feelings of helplessness,
- an unwillingness to publicise their unpopularity,
- an inability to explain due to emotional or intellectual constraints – may be too confused, upset or afraid,
- an inability to perceive actions such as teasing, social exclusion, etc., as bullying,
- seeking help confirms the taunts of being incompetent, being a baby, or being stupid, and they fear losing respect of teachers/parents by their inability to cope,
- the bully may claim that it is only a game, meaning the victim might been seen as a liar or being over-sensitive or that they suffer from low self-esteem,
- victims may feel this is the way they should be treated, especially if they have no confidence in an adult's ability to help.

Also, there may be a "diffusion of responsibility" where students may falsely believe that no one person has responsibility to stop the bullying, except for a teacher or a parent. This can create a school culture/climate characterised by fear where bullying is accepted and students feel powerless to stop it (Nishina and Juvonen, 2005; Salmivalli and Voeten, 2004). As a result, teachers may underestimate the extent of bullying in their school and may be able to identify only a portion of the actual bullying incidents that are taking place (Salmivalli and Voeten, 2004).

In setting the stage for the Defender Role-play the learners are advised by the teacher that they will begin learning techniques in role that they can possibly use to defend a bullied classmate. 'Possibly' is stressed because the children are advised that they should only defend if they feel it is safe to do so. If they feel threatened then they should go to someone in charge. The learners are asked to re-do the Bystander Role-play but this time the bystander, who is known to be a popular child, now plays the role of the defender (he logic for the popular learner in the part of the defender was first discussed in Chapter Two, section 4.7). Again, the role-play is followed with questions and discussion, this time focussing on the role of the defender:

- What kind(s) of bullying was/were there?
- Was the defender effective in stopping the bullying?
- Do you think the child engaging in bullying feels more or less supported?
- If they feel less supported, do you think the bullying will continue? If not, why not?
- If the defender felt nervous about stopping the bullying, and didn't want to intervene, what could they do instead? (Once again, ascertaining if children are aware of the procedures to follow to reporting bullying incidents in school.)

Besides fostering knowledge and understanding, a main aim of the questions and discussions associated with the Defender Role-play is to arouse empathy for the plight of the targeted student. Gini, et al. (2007) reported that empathy was associated with adolescents' tendency to take on the role of defending their victimized peers. Reporting on Gini et al.'s (2007) research, Pöyhönen et al. (2010) suggest that encouragement of affective empathy should play an important role in creating a defending culture.

3.5.2.4 Lesson 4: Defending

Part 1 of Lesson 4: Fostering confident behaviours

In a study of student defenders by Barchia and Bussey (2011), they report that there were higher levels of collective efficacy over time when students and teachers worked together to prevent bullying, with research by Pöyhönen, Juvonen and Salmivalli (2010) suggesting that the very act of defending increases peer status.

The researcher theorises that to enable learners to become effective defenders, it might be useful to encourage learners to experiment with high status behaviours as bullies tend to pick on children who have low status in the social group (Matthews and Kesner, 2003). This strategy could be considered complimentary to the DES Drama Curriculum's (1998) recommendation for drama to be used as a methodology to help the promotion of self-confidence by providing opportunities for children to experiment with different roles and status.

The Confident Behaviours exercise was devised by this researcher as an aid to help children become more aware of behaviours that display high and low confidence and is inspired by the status work of Keith Johnstone (1987). To begin with the teacher introduces the exercise by asking the learners what the word 'confidence' means to them. Learner answers are noted and discussed. If needed, the teacher can also provide the following definition: "assurance: freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities" (Princeton Education, 2015). Next, the teacher explains to the learners that they are going to do Confident Behaviours, an exercise on learning how to display confidence (full instructions in Appendix 2d, p. 403-04). The class is split in two with the teacher ensuring that there are learners of varying confidence in each group. One group, *Group High Confidence*, stands at one side of the room and *Group Low Confidence* on the other. The teacher assigns the behaviours (listed below) to the respective assigned groups and asks them to show what the behaviour would look like. The teacher coaches if necessary. It is then repeated vice versa so learners have an opportunity to explore both types of behaviours and to avoid any feelings of stigmatisation that could occur from playing low confidence behaviours only.

Table 3.2 High and Low Confidence Behaviours	
High Confidence Behaviours	**Low Confidence Behaviours**
Takes up space	Minimise space they take up
Good posture	Poor posture
Strong Eye contact	Poor eye contact
Stands still with good posture	Fidgety gestures
Feet and legs turned out	Feet and legs turned in
Strong handshake and speak in strong clear voice	Weak/Poorly contacted handshake and speak in weak, mumbling voice

After coaching children in the confident behaviours as described in table 3.2, the teacher asks for four volunteers to participate in a modelled Defender Role-play.

Part 2 of Lesson 4: The Defender Role-play with confident behaviours

The teacher uses the sample Defender Role-play introduced in Lesson 3 to aid modelling of confident behaviours. The instructional strategy here is that the learners have just been introduced to using confident behaviours and may need an example modelled by the teacher on how to incorporate confident behaviours in performance. The teacher assigns the part of Defender to her/himself with three other student players assigned the parts of bullying, following and targeted. The teacher incorporates confident behaviours in the defending role such as placing their hands on their hips, using strong eye contact and a clear strong voice. Once the sample role-play is finished, the learners are questioned as to what displays of confidence they noticed when the teacher was in role. The learners are then assigned into groups of four, using the same sample script. Each group presents their sample role-plays to the class with the learner in the role of the defender being coached and supported by their class peers to incorporate confident behaviours if they haven't done so. Once this is completed the learners are asked to improvise a new Defender Role-play on any type of bullying they chose with the defending student displaying confident behaviours. Scenes are constructively reviewed by the class to examine if confident behaviours are being incorporated.

- Do you think you were displaying confident behaviours when you intervened? (If yes) What were they? Can you show me?

- Do you think you might have been displaying low confidence behaviours? What were they? (This feedback is very important to help the learner understand the kind of behaviours they are displaying.)
- The teacher now coaches the child to repeat the line from the modelled script, "Hey, leave him alone", displaying confident behaviours with a clear, strong and steady voice (this type of direct defending language training has been written about in the literature (Craig and Pepler, 1995; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005) and has been advocated by Throckmorton, 2010 to be used in defender role-play training but no analysis has been done on its effectiveness. However, as previously discussed, direct defending has been reported as an effective way to counter bullying).

Ultimately, the aim of this shared analysis (Bolton, 1998) is to get the learners to reflect on what exactly the defender role-player is doing that displays confidence or not, and, if needed, adjust accordingly to incorporate confident behaviours in the role.

3.5.2.5 Lessons 5 and beyond: Making and maintaining the contract

For the last session the teacher discusses and draws up a contract to aid bullying prevention with the input of the class group. The bullying prevention items on the contract are meant to be a succinct and clear list of goals on how the group will treat one another and work together to prevent bullying. This session is less intensive than the others but no less significant as it is asking for the student voices in pro-active participation for creating bullying prevention strategies for their class. Bullying prevention initiatives that include the student voice have reported that this is an important element to aid success as it takes learner views into account, involves them in the decision making process and allows them to share power (Bagshaw et al., 2005; Burton and O'Toole, 2009; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012; Richard, Schneider and Mallet, 2012; Shier, 2001; Smith et al., 2004). Hence, the contract discussions are a significant aspect of the BPP as it creates a forum where students are treated as equals whose ideas are engaged with and acted upon. Such strategies are important if one wants to create a school culture that is more

participatory and that can potentially increase students' sense of belonging to a learning community (Rudduck and Flutter, 2004).

Veenstra et al. (2014) found that it is very helpful to consider the roles of goals that are intended to reduce bullying. Goal-framing theory (Lindenberg, 2008, 2013) argues that mental constructs have to be activated in order to potentially affect behavioural change, and that goals are particularly important mental constructs in which cognitions and motivations are intricately intertwined. Bullying has been found to be associated with a goal to feel superior (to gain status) and feel good about oneself (Adler and Adler, 1998; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; Juvonen and Galvan, 2008; Sijtsema, Veenstra, Lindenberg and Salmivalli, 2009). Goal-framing theory suggests that goals which are focused on the way one feels can be inhibited by the activation of the overarching goal to act socially appropriately in a particular situation (Lindenberg, 2008, 2013). In the BPP the overarching goal to reduce bullying is listed on the contract along with strategies to prevent bullying and posted in a central place in the classroom. The intent here is to make students focus on the anti-bullying norms they have agreed to. Given that norm is that the class agrees, that bullying is definitely not the right thing to do, the use of a goal-focussed contract could cause learners to take the norm more seriously, react negatively to those who infringe upon the new norm and promote keeping to the norm themselves. Therefore, if a strongly activated normative goal is achieved, the temptation to bully can be greatly reduced (Veenstra et al., 2014).

For the normative goal to inhibit bullying, however, strong and ongoing social support is necessary as maintaining the normative goal can be difficult (Lindenberg 2013). In the case of bullying, this difficulty is especially heightened, as the goal to gain status is strong in potential bullies (Sijtsema et al., 2009) and because peers may provide support for their aggressive behaviour (Caravita et al., 2014). Therefore, the new norms need to be strongly and continuously activated through the participation of an active agent. In the classroom this active agent is the teacher who helps to establish the contract, reminds the students of the class agreement and reviews and amends the contract on a regular basis. Additionally, the researcher argues that the contract itself could be considered another active agent (albeit an inanimate one). The fact

that the contract is intended to be highly visible in the classroom, signed by all the students, who can refer to it at will, means that the contract can potentially serve as a constant reminder of the new norm that everyone has agreed to follow.

In the instructions for lesson 5 the teacher is advised that the anti-bullying goals can take the form of a written contract that is signed by learners, teacher and school principal (see sample contract in Appendix 2e, pp. 411-12) or it can be a more creative choice if the teacher and learners desire (see Appendix 5a, p. 427 for a sample picture from this research study). Prior to creating and making their own contract the teacher reviews the school's Anti-Bullying Policy with the learners either to affirm it or to avoid repetition with their own ideas. In written form, the contract should include the areas listed below as well as any ideas or actions that the class believes could help:

- Why they want to stop bullying (e.g. everyone has a right not to be bullied)?
- The kinds of actions one can take when bullying is taking place (defending directly, getting help from the yard supervisor, reporting to teachers, etc.).
- A method for putting forward new ideas on bullying prevention (e.g. a suggestion box or class diary that learners have access to).

To engage multiple perspectives in contributing to this process, learners are organised into groups and the teacher gives them approximately 10-15 minutes (depending on age and stage of development) to discuss, formulate and put their ideas down on paper. Then the teacher nominates one person from each group to present the group's suggestions to the rest of the class. These are written up on the board and discussed. In the group discussion the teacher should facilitate learners to agree on ideas that are potentially most helpful and workable. These suggestions are then edited into the contract and signed by the group. The contract is then put in a highly visible place in the classroom for all to view.

Thereafter, once a month a period is set aside to review how well the pact has been working. These regular class meetings with students can be helpful in establishing and enforcing class rules against bullying (Olweus, Limber, and Mihalic, 1999). If strategies seem to have been unsuccessful, this should be discussed, reviewed and

updated/changed as necessary. Other follow-up and assessment activities could include: learners sharing stories about any bullying that has been happening in or around the school, role-plays around these bullying incidents could be performed, questioned and discussed as before. Then the contract is reviewed and updated with a renewed commitment to preventing bullying incidents in the future.

3.6 Concluding remarks

The main aim of this chapter has been to discuss and theorise the case for the BPP's potential as an anti-bullying resource for teachers to use in their classrooms. In the discussion the key areas reviewed have been:

- harnessing the potential of the socio-cultural learning environment,
- use of role-play in the classroom,
- encouraging pro-active teacher usage of the BPP in the Irish context in recognition of the evidence that teachers are agents of change in introducing anti-bullying resource to learners (Kallestad and Olweus, 2003),
- presenting, explaining and theorising the design of the revised BPP as a potentially teacher-friendly resource.

As argued in this chapter, the educational use of drama activities such as role-play has the "potential to connect with people both emotionally and cognitively, resulting in what we call 'felt understanding'; a type of knowing which results in people taking a personal interest in issues and wanting to effect change" (O'Sullivan, 2011b, p. 4). Role-play is central to the BPP as it is an activity which could encourage teachers to bring about a kind of change which could give their learners a sense of agency (Bolton, 1998) to empower them when dealing bullying behaviour:

> It is much harder for bullying behaviour to exist, in an environment where all children are empowered and there is good awareness amongst the whole school community about what bullying is and what to do about it if it happens (National Parents Council Primary submission to the Action Plan on Bullying, 2013, pp. 84- 85).

The evidence conclusively suggests that without resources in place to foster

empowerment, bullying behaviour can occur in schools on an ongoing basis with or without regards to procedures (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). The role-play activities that have been described in this chapter can possibly aid empowerment. It has been argued that exposure and utilisation of drama activities promotes greater democracy in the classroom with activities that offer a learning context for understanding bullying. These activities empower students, nurture innovation, play, depth, development, and self-determination in a dynamic learning process that involves physicality, a high level of focussed involvement, interpersonal interactions and strengthening of the learner's SEL (Joronen, Häkämies and Astedt-Kurki, 2011; Lin, 2010). Researchers who have used role-play to aid conflict management in school settings report findings which indicate that learners were using the knowledge they gained to help them negotiate real life conflicts (Bagshaw et al., 2005; Burton and O'Toole, 2009). However, with regards to anti-bullying initiatives, it is argued that teacher utilisation and channelling of the power of the group via role-play for knowledge creation and defending is lacking in most intervention programmes (Zins, Elias and Maher, 2007). Hence, the aim of this research study is to assess and, if needed, modify and adapt the design of the BPP to a level where teachers (non-drama specialists) are facilitated to use it and consequently tap into the socio-cultural power and dynamics of their class to prevent bullying with little or no intervention from the researcher. As stated previously findings from my M.Ed. research and supported by evidence from the literature, would suggest that this is not necessarily an easy task. Hence, creating an appropriate research design and associated methods to evaluate the BPP's efficacy was paramount. These design elements are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR
METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research aims for the present study

Using a mixed methodological approach incorporating both qualitative and quantitative instruments which include written and oral feedback, learner focus groups, teacher interviews and surveys, the main aim of this thesis is to ascertain the efficacy of the Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP) by identifying if it can be used by primary school teachers to reduce bullying within the school environment. This is crucial to ascertain as the researcher has an extensive background in directing theatre for young people and in drama teaching, which may have impacted upon the researcher's previous facilitation of the role-play components of the BPP during his master's level studies when he taught the lessons in schools himself. O'Toole and Dunn (2015) have reported that, even though teachers may have experienced drama activities and used role-play in their training, they often don't feel able to build on the experience in their own classrooms. Reasons cited for these feelings include that they might think that they need the performers' theatrical skills to model good acting, or lack understanding of the scope of possibilities for drama in the classroom or have insufficient training and/or experience in classroom drama planning and management skills. Thus, if teachers lack experience in working through drama, the concern was that they may have difficulty with the implementation of the revised BPP. Concordant with the aim of ascertaining teacher ability to use the BPP were a number of other related objectives as follows.

- To ascertain how much assistance/coaching teachers would need to implement the BPP. This includes a review of the quality of the instructions of the BPP in terms of instructional clarity and ease of implementation.
- To ascertain if the activities of the BBP are straightforward for learners to comprehend and enact.

- To quantify via a self-report survey if the ongoing implementation of the BPP makes a difference to the levels of victimisation within the research school over a period of six and eighteen months.
- To evaluate if the BPP can engender learner knowledge creation and metacognition around the topic of bullying and empower learners to help prevent bullying in their school.
- To investigate if levels of empathy can be raised with regards to those victimised by bullying behaviour.

Placing reported concerns about the challenges associated with teacher facilitation of role-play to one side, inviting teachers to administer and facilitate the BPP as opposed to using outside specialists, this study sought to ascertain and evaluate whether generalist teachers could use the BPP in their classrooms and to what effect. Teachers have to regularly deal with incidents of bullying behaviour (Olweus, 1999) and often are very aware of the roles students can play in such incidents (Salmivalli, 2010). Such intimate knowledge of student bullying behaviour has led many researchers to rely upon teachers to deliver anti-bullying programmes to good effect (Olweus, 2004; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012; Roland and Munthe, 1989; Salmivalli, 2004) as they often are central to the effective implementation of whole-school prevention approaches (Minton and O'Moore 2007; Olweus, 1999). A core element of the BPP requires teachers to lead discussions with students on bullying behaviour in their schools, thus putting them in a place where they can gain much more intimate knowledge of ongoing student bullying behaviour. This acquired knowledge could potentially help teachers facilitate student and school bullying prevention strategies more effectively. This strategy places a high premium on human perception and experiences (Spies, 2006) which, with appropriate methodological instruments, can generate data that can aid triangulation which, in turn, may create robust evidence for discussion and dissemination (Newman et al., 2013). The research design focussed on finding verifiable answers to the research questions. Figure 4.1 provides a visual representation of the research process in this study.

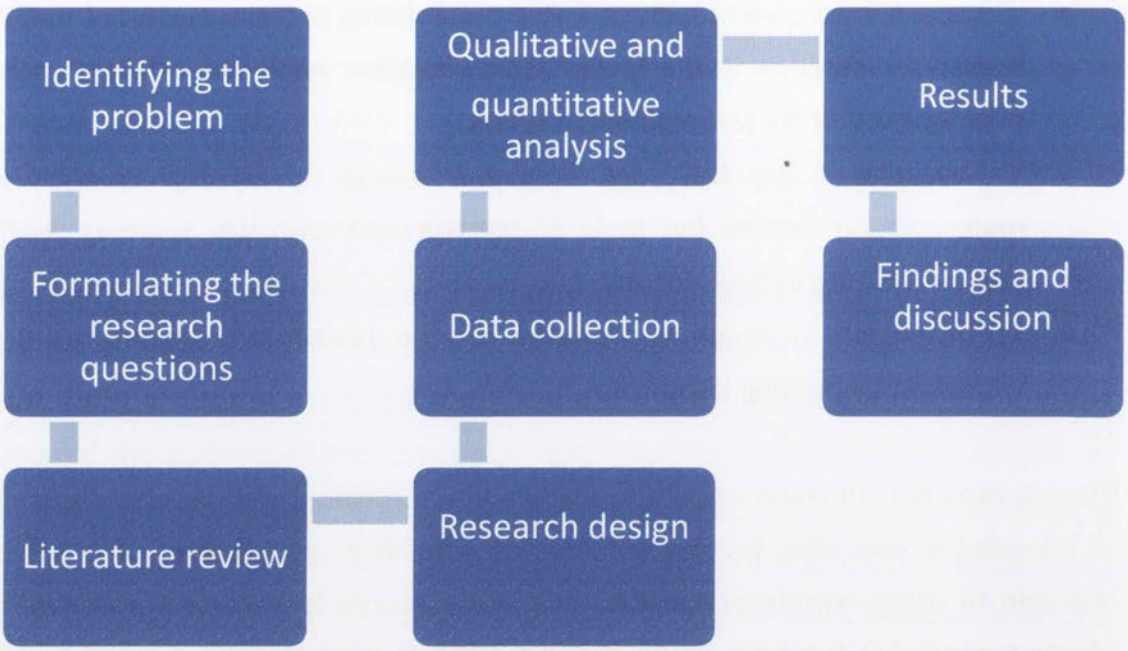


Figure 4.1: Presentation of the research process

In contrast to the earlier masters level exploration of the BPP, an important consideration in this study was to have a sufficient assessment period to explore the research aims and objectives. It is argued that bullying prevention programmes that attempt to bring about substantive and lasting change need a longitudinal design (Pepler, Smith and Rigby, 2004; Smith, 2011). It has been shown that while positive results may be evident following a 4-8 week intervention, these positive effects can fade if the prevention methods are not sustained (Pepler, Smith and Rigby, 2004). To achieve long term benefits, a long term investment in the prevention programme is required (Pepler, Smith and Rigby, 2004). To evaluate the efficacy of the prevention potential of the BPP in the present study, the selection of the qualitative and quantitative elements needed to be carefully planned.

4.2. A case for mixed methods

A discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative methodologies is relevant to the overarching question: 'Can the BPP be effectively used by primary school teachers to reduce bullying within the school environment?' The quantitative inquiry has significant relevance for this research study as role-

playing methods have been used for bullying prevention interventions but they are rarely the main method of learning about and coming to understand bullying (see Chapter Two, sections 2.5.3 and 2.5.4). Use of a quantitative instrument such as a survey to measure prevention effectiveness in a study involving role-play in this way is extremely limited (Joronen, Rankin and Astedt-Kurki, 2008; Joronen, Konu, Rankin and Astedt-Kurki, 2012). The Olweus Bullying Victim Questionnaire-Revised (2006) (OBVQ-R) will explore the impact of the BPP, and will help to assess whether the role-play based intervention reduced the incidence of bullying behaviour at the experimental school.

In reviewing qualitative and quantitative methods Sagan (1997, p.21) has argued:

> If you know a thing only qualitatively, you know it no more than vaguely. If you know it quantitatively - grasping some numerical measure that distinguishes it from an infinite number of other possibilities - you are beginning to know it deeply. You comprehend some of its beauty and you gain access to its power and the understanding it provides.

This statement, which is biased towards one method over another, appears to denigrate the rich data that can be achieved through qualitative research (which is the backbone of this research study). The UN Convention (1989) recommends that less rigid, inclusive approaches are especially applicable where children are active participants in the research process, as in this study. Hence, a mixed methods approach may best serve the participants in this study as it can aid data gathering, analysis, interpretation, and presentation (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). However, Sagan's preference for quantitative over qualitative data is reflective of an argument which is ongoing in the research methods community and which the researcher will now discuss.

It is argued that quantitative research offers a deductive approach based on traditional scientific criteria which is positivist, realist and objective with strong claims to validity of data because it is systematically rigorous in dissemination as it seeks to test a theory or a hypothesis (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). However, Denscombe (2003) notes that quantitative analysis is, "not as scientifically objective as it might seem on the surface" since data collected is only as good as the impartiality of the

researcher's questions. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is claimed to be inductive, based on a social constructivist criterion which is naturalistic, interpretive and idealist (Patton, 2002). If the research is based on reflexivity and a rigorously triangulated construction, qualitative research can be deemed trustworthy and authentic. The research contributes to an ongoing dialogue as it develops theory based on recurring phenomenal patterns (Patton, 2002). Stringer (2007) defends the case for qualitative methodologies in social and behavioural research as quantitative findings do not inform us "what the information 'means', or suggest actions to be taken" (p. 203). Spencer et al. (2003) note that quantitative and qualitative research borrow from each other's paradigms. For example, both quantitative and qualitative surveys can generate open-ended questions, can analyse and report data numerically and can make judgements and interpret data patterns (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Spencer et al. (2003, p. 47) argue that "what is important is the methods fit the question" not that a method makes a superior claim to quality over another. Mixed methods can aid the triangulation of findings by either validating, confirming, refuting or corroborating analysis from another discipline (Creswell and Clark, 2007). They can also be used specifically for different parts of the research design where the questions being asked would be best answered or supported by a quantitative or qualitative method. For example, the statistical data from the OBVQ-R serves this research study in helping to answer the sub-question: can the BPP reduce bullying? Creswell and Clark (2007) argue that qualitative researchers should not shun or shy away from such statistics but regard them as an available source of information with which to support or contest qualitative observations and, in the case of a small case study sample (as with the OBVQ-R in this study), could contribute to questions on the representativeness of the contributors to the wider population.

However, the issue then arises as to which method dominates the study. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003, p. 219) put forth that a "researcher can give equal priority to both quantitative and qualitative research, emphasize qualitative more, or emphasize quantitative more". In this study, equal priority is placed on both traditions, as they both serve to serve to address aspects of the research question: 'Can the BPP be used effectively by primary school teachers (non-drama specialists) to reduce

bullying within the school environment?' To answer the first part (can the BPP be used effectively by primary school teachers) the researcher will need to rely on teacher and learner data. Instruments such as feedback sheets and focus groups can yield rich qualitative data in this regard. The researcher postulates that if the BPP resources are implemented effectively by the teachers, the levels of bullying may be reduced. Therefore in addressing the second part of the research question, the quantitative data derived from the OBVQ-R can enrich the emerging data profile overall, and strengthen the study as to whether the intervention had any impact on the levels of bullying on the school over a sustained period of time. In sequencing the primacy of the data sources, the qualitative has priority as teacher ability to utilise the BPP effectively is deemed of most significance in this study. It serves as a reference point for the quantitative data. Furthermore, the qualitative data addresses two sub-aims of this study: ascertaining how much assistance/coaching teachers need to implement the BPP, and if the content is accessible for learners to engage with and enact. This requires a level of reflexivity that cannot be met in a methods design where quantitative instruments dominate.

The need for reflexivity in this study is essential as the participants are engaging in transformative thinking (Mezirow, 1997). It is arguable that teachers and learners are also contributors and practitioners: they are part of the social world that is being studied as their responses and experiences form a significant component of the evidence. They are not reliant on didactic explanations from an authority figure but are asked to engage in a process where they can make their own interpretations of events (e.g. via discussions on bullying incidents). By participating in this process they can learn about the negative effects of bullying and, through participation in the contract, "advocate for change" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003) in their school. However, as many participants are children, this gives rise to a number of issues with regards to the ethical remit of the study.

4.3 Ethics

Obtaining informed consent is a necessary part of the research as "cooperation of subjects who are to assist in investigation…arises" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison,

2011, p. 77). Informed consent is recognised as an essential part of ethical research methods as there has been a "growing awareness of the attendant moral issues implicit in the work of social researchers and of their need to meet their obligations with respect to those involved in, or affected by, their investigations" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000, p. 49). There is an argument by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) which suggests that each research project is an event 'sui generis' because a study, based on real people, in real time, will not be predictable - and is unique. Therefore, when it comes to the resolution of specific ethical issues, there could be any number of moral responses. Hence, where children are involved, a key ethical approach of "Flexibility and sensitivity to children's interest" (Christensen and Prout, 2002, p.492) might be deemed appropriate.

In view of this the researcher has to "consider how the research purposes, contents, methods, reporting and outcomes abide by ethical principles and practices" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p. 76). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) have noted that one of the principal dilemmas for researchers is striking the balance between the desire for a truth and the subject's rights and values being potentially threatened. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) named this the 'cost/benefits ratio' - the possible social benefits of the researcher's discoveries set against the possible personal cost to the participants of time and dignity. This placing of the self "within ethical negotiations" (Mauthner et al., 2002, p. 6) is designed to ensure that both the contributors and the researcher are given equal status as they seek: communitarian moral ethics based on:

- dialogue,
- commitment to the common good,
- a stress on human dignity, care, justice, and interpersonal respect,
- a belief that those studied have the right to be active participants in a collaborative research process (Denzin, 1997).

Hence, negotiating informed consent prior to research recognises this movement of the balance of power with respect to the "subject's right to freedom and self-

determination" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p. 77) and was practiced in this study.

Furthermore, in conducting research with children in the Irish context it is important to consider the three goals of the primary curriculum (DES, 1998) which aim to:

- enable the child to live a full life as a child and to realise his or her potential as a unique individual,
- enable the child to develop as a social being through living and co-operating with others and so contribute to the good of society, and
- prepare the child for further education and lifelong learning.

These aims help to fulfil the obligation that adults have to empower the young to "develop the self-belief in their ability to influence outcomes" (UNCRC, 2003, p. 21) an underpinning characteristic of the active learning practices in the BPP.

In the design of this study an awareness of the flexible and reflexive combination of the quantifiable and qualitative approaches in leading to results that have merit, are reliable and possibly have an influence in future bullying prevention education efforts was paramount in the design of this study which sought to contribute to the greater good (Mills, 1972). However, the study was potentially fraught with ethical issues as classroom discussion and exploration of the subject of bullying may be unpleasant and intimidating, particularly as the topic of bullying moves from the "general to the particular, and from the abstract to the concrete" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p. 75) with participants potentially at risk of having their feelings mocked or being embarrassed by the process. Efforts to minimise this included:

- receiving ethical approval from The School of Education's Ethics Committee to conduct this study,
- letters of consent detailing intervention information and the study's objectives sent out to parents and returned prior to research commencement,
- learners were informed that their responses to the OBVQ-R were anonymous and would only be viewed and analysed by the researcher and his supervisor,

- participation in the exercises, role-plays and discussions was always voluntary: learners were informed by their teachers that they could opt out at any time,
- repeated requests to the learners that the participants of disclosed bullying incidents were to remain anonymous, as the goal was not to name or blame but to analyse bullying behaviour and how it affects the individual and the group,
- information letters detailing the aims and format of the focus group interviews, and seeking parental consent were sent out and returned prior to commencement of the interviews with learners,
- prior to conducting focus group interviews learners were assured that their identities would remain anonymous and that pseudonyms would be used,
- prior to conducting the conducting of the teacher interviews, teachers were assured that their identities would remain anonymous and that pseudonyms would be used,
- the identities of the research and control schools are not disclosed.

4.4 Recruitment and profile of participating schools

The first phase of data collection commenced in 2009 with the recruitment of the research and control schools with similar demographics. As the researcher was



recommended another [redacted] city school with a similar profile that was to become the control school.

The profiles of the research and control schools were all boys, designated disadvantaged, availing of Delivering Equal Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programmes and following the Stay Safe programme (as discussed in Chapter Two). Under the DEIS programme, the Home School Community Liaison Scheme (HSCL) supported by the Department of Education and Skills Social Inclusion Unit, provides its services to all DEIS Urban Band 1, Urban Band 2 and DEIS Post Primary schools (Department of Education and Skills, 2015). The HSCL was established in 1990 and since then has grown to provide services for 857 primary and secondary schools. One of the main objectives of the scheme is to maximise participation of children in the learning process, particularly those at risk of failure. The scheme focusses on encouraging parents and teachers to be pro-actively involved in children's learning and to deal with issues that may prevent learning from happening such as involvement in bullying.

The fact that the research and control schools were all boys schools did not affect the main research question on teacher ability to use a role-play based intervention. Despite the lack of intentionality in seeking two all boys schools, their experiences and reports of bullying and bullying types as experienced by boys may prove insightful in this study.

With regards to the numbers of students in the research and controls schools: the research school had a total school population of 176 learners, 19 teachers (including 6 Special Needs Assistants (SNA's)), with 55 potential learners in the fourth, fifth and sixth classes that could participate in the OBVQ-R survey. The control school had a total school population of 150 students, 14 teachers (including 3 SNA's) with 61 learners in the fourth, fifth and sixth classes that could participate in the OBVQ-R survey. In addition to more usual qualitative evidence associated with studies involving role-play or arts based elements, the aspiration in this study was that a quantitative method, such as a survey, would help to create comparative measurable data aiding triangulation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

4.5. Quantitative surveys

4.5.1 Selection of a bullying assessment survey

Surveys such as the OBVQ-R self-report survey employed in this study, gather data to describe existing conditions at particular points in time (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Surveys tend to be a reliable method of inquiry as they are standardized with the same questions, phrased in exactly the same way, and are posed to multiple participants in the group (Blackstone, 2012). As noted in Chapter One, it is hypothesised that a scientific assessment measurement such as a survey, which supplies quantifiable data, could add to this study's rigour in the field of anti-bullying intervention evaluation (You et al., 2008). However, deciding on the type of survey to use is important as it needs to complement the qualitative instruments.

Bullying assessment surveys can be classified into three categories (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013):

- Teacher Nominations,
- Peer Nominations,
- Self-Report.

Self-reports are used in most studies evaluating anti-bullying behavioural interventions (Vreeman and Carroll, 2007) but they do not correspond well with peer and teacher reports (Lee, Cornell and Cole, 2006). Kärnä et al. (2011) advise the use not only of self-reports but peer reports as well and possibly teacher reports to thoroughly assess perception levels. Controversially, these different methods to assess the extent of bullying behaviour can produce different estimates (Bradshaw, 2015; Lee, Cornell and Cole, 2006; Pepler et al., 2004; Salmivalli et al., 1996). The discussion will now focus on why these discrepancies can occur.

Teacher nominated questionnaires rely on teacher observations of bullying behaviour in the yard and/or within the school and can provide results that help teachers address the problems associated with school bullying (Frey et al., 2009). If teachers are trained in how to detect bullying in this age range (Alsaker, 2008), then teacher nominated questionnaires are one of the best techniques for assessing early years levels of bullying behaviours. This is because self-report survey measurement

techniques are considered inappropriate for this age range and boys tend to report more bullying than girls as they can be more physical (Temkin and Snow, 2015).

However, teacher nominated surveys can have two major problems: bias and context. With regards to bias, it is claimed that teachers can find it hard to detect relational bullying strategies and tend not to report it as frequently as more observable forms of bullying such as physical and verbal (Pellegrini and Smith, 1998). For example, teachers often may not identify exclusion as bullying (Boulton, 1997; Craig, Henderson, and Murphy, 2000) which has been identified as one of the most common forms of bullying among young children (Paley, 2009). Additionally, teachers have been reticent to identify the perpetrators of bullying episodes (Alsaker, 2004). With regards to context, research indicates, teachers think they are aware of the majority of bullying incidents going on in their class and/or school whereas students report that teachers are aware of the minority (Craig and Pepler, 1998; Kazdin and Rotella, 2009; Veenstra et al., 2014). According to Petrosino et al. (2010) a prime reason for this lack of awareness is that pupils do not tell teachers as they can come to see them as ineffective in dealing with bullying behaviour, potentially making the situation worse for the bullied person(s) and/or for the person(s) reporting. Additionally, context can play a major role as teachers cannot be everywhere at once and so do not observe a significant amount of bullying that takes place (Kyriakides, Kaloyirou and Lindsay, 2006) but when it comes to playground observations context is important. Here, it has been reported that the discrepancy between student and teachers reports of bullying is not as great (Craig and Pepler, 1997). Therefore, using a teacher nominated survey might be a better option for this study as it could have lent to more robust reportage on prevalence and helped with teachers coming to know the bullying behaviour patterns of their students at a deeper level. However, the budget and man-power for such an extensive review of prevalence at the research school was not within the means of this study.

Anonymous self-report surveys (where students do not name themselves) and peer nominated surveys (where students list names of classmates who were victims of bullying or have bullied others) are considered a cost-effective assessment method compared to teacher observational studies which require significant human

resources (Lee, et. al, 2006; Pellegrini and Bartini, 2000). However, because of anonymity, it can be difficult to assess if a student's self-report of being bullied or bullying others is correct (Smith and Sharp, 1994). Additionally, aggressors can be reluctant to identify themselves and therefore self-report surveys could underestimate the problem (Smith and Sharp, 1994). Therefore, an argument could be made in support of peer nominated surveys.

A study by Kärnä et al. (2011) which utilized self and peer nominated surveys found that both survey types indicated a reduction in levels of victimisation and peer-on-peer bullying but noted that the largest reduction was in the peer-nominated survey. This result was not unusual as it has been reported that peer nominated surveys can indicate a higher frequency of bullying than other survey assessments as peers can accuse schoolmates of bullying even though it was a once-off incident (Lee, Cornell and Cole, 2006; Pellegrini and Bartini, 2000; Pepler et al. 2004). Over-reportage via a peer nominated survey was also reported in research by Frey et al. (2009). Post-intervention, the peer nominated survey indicated significant reductions in bullying behaviour but not student self-reports of bullying (Brown et al., 2011; Frey et al., 2009). Hence, on a quantitative level, the programme was deemed efficacious according to the peer nominated survey but not in the self-report survey (Brown et al. 2011). However, depending on whether a peer-nominated or self-report survey was used, a bullying prevention programme could be deemed efficacious or not (Bradshaw, 2015; Bradshaw, Sawyer and O'Brennan, 2007; Vaillancourt et al., 2008). It appears that research is indicating that peer-nominated reports may over-inflate the problem of bullying initially and that when it comes to the post-intervention data, it may appear that there has been significant bullying reductions. Bradshaw (2015, p. 327) points out that "This is not a trivial point as it has direct implications for conclusions regarding the efficacy of bullying prevention strategies".

The researcher argues that the cloak of anonymity that self-report surveys provide may encourage more truthfulness in student responses about bullying behaviour as they have less of a fear of reprisal by those who engage in bullying behaviours (Pellegrini and Bartini, 2000). Conversely, those who engage in bullying behaviours partaking in a self-report survey are less worried about being punished (Pellegrini

and Bartini, 2000). Hence, the data gleaned from this type of survey may be more reliable for this study than the peer nominated. Some researchers argue that use of all three methods might be the best way to achieve a more accurate indication of the levels of bullying behaviour (Bradshaw, 2015; Branson, Dewey and Cornell, 2009). However, employing all three methods would be time consuming and costly, and would consequently reduce the time available for more potentially in depth findings that qualitative data may produce (Blackstone, 2012).

In reviewing the selection of the survey types on bullying behaviour there were four significant factors that contributed to the researcher's selection of a self-report instrument as opposed to employing a teacher or peer nominated survey. As mentioned, teacher nominated surveys have been widely used but teachers often underestimate the prevalence of bullying in their classrooms and schools (Bradshaw, Sawyer and Brennan, 2007). Secondly, "One of the greatest strengths of group-administered surveys...is the high rate of response. ...when students in classrooms ... are asked to complete questionnaires, the rate of responses is near 100% (Flower, 2009, p. 75). Hence, the opportunity for collecting a large of amount of quantifiable data from student survey responses at the research school was quite high. Thirdly, the researcher's design of the BPP included a no blame approach (Robinson and Maines, 1997). Therefore, use of a peer nominated survey would undermine this aspect of the BPP design as fear of retaliation might affect student responses and, as discussed, over inflate reportage of bullying. Lastly, a prime goal of the researcher was to assess the effectiveness of the BPP in reducing bullying behaviour so that he could make international comparisons. With regards to this the OBVQ-R is internationally recognised and the most widely utilised self-report survey available (Kyriakides et al., 2006; Lee, Cornell and Cole, 2006; McGuckin, 2011; Mesenini, 1997; O'Moore, Kirkham and Smith, 1997; Smith and Sharp, 1994; You, et al., 2008) and considered a "gold standard" (Glew et. al., 2005, p.1030) in survey instruments. Use of the OBVQ-R is significant for this study as there is a paucity of quantitative research evidence derived from a scientific instrument on the effects of a role-play based intervention to reduce bullying behaviours (Joronen, Konu, Rankin and Astedt-Kurki, 2012). Therefore, the status of the OBVQ-R might potentially

facilitate consideration and comparison of the researcher's results with other studies in the field.

4.5.2 The OBVQ-R Survey

The OBVQ-R was created by Dan Olweus (2006) to quantify levels of bullying in schools. The following description of the structure of OBVQ-R is taken from Olweus' (2006, p. 2) instructions: "The OBVQ-R consists of 39 questions for the measurement of the following types of bullying either inflicted on a person targeted by bullying or perpetrated by a person engaging in bullying behaviour: physical, verbal, indirect (exclusion and rumours), racial, sexual forms of bullying harassment". Additionally the survey examines where the bullying occurs, pro-bullying and pro-victim attitudes and the extent to which teachers, peers, and parents are informed about and react to the bullying (Olweus, 1997).

The questions are divided into two halves. The first half, questions 4 to 23, concern victimization and the second half, questions 24 to 39, refer to expressions of bullying behaviour against a peer or peers. The duration and frequency of the problem are also examined as these dimensions distinguish a bullying act from an accidental incident. Moreover, pupils are prompted to refer to the place or places where bullying occurs most often, who is informed about the bullying incidents, and the role of their teachers, parents and peers in addressing the problem.

The explanation of bullying, which is included in the OBVQ-R, captures three main elements of the definition of bullying (Olweus and Solberg, 2003; You, Furlong, Felix, Sharkey, Tanigawa and Green, 2008): the intention to harm the victim, the repetitive nature of bullying, and the imbalance in power between the victim and the perpetrator(s). In addition, it makes clear when teasing should and should not be considered bullying.

4.5.3 Survey administration

The surveys were administered at three points in the research timeline: December 2010, June 2011 and May 2012. The aim of this strand of the data collection

strategy was to examine if the BPP had short-term and longitudinal efficacy in reducing student reports of bullying incidents. The reason for three administrations of the survey is that short-term interventions can demonstrate a short-term effect in reducing bullying incidents but it is claimed this short-term reductions can evaporate if strategies to prevent bullying behaviours are not maintained over the longer term (Smith, 2011). Learners from 4th to 6th class (typically 9/10-12/13 years old) were chosen as learners in this age range were considered best able to read and understand the content of the OBVQ-R (Beran and Tutty, 2002). This is a key consideration as measurement methods need to be age-appropriate, when comparing results across grades, the questionnaire items should function in an invariant way (Kärnä et al., 2011).

Potential answers were coded on a five-point scale from one to five and responses inputted via SPSS software (version 18.0). While the OBVQ-R can be administered by the researcher or teachers of individual classrooms, teachers in both schools in this study requested that the researcher conduct the survey administration as they were not familiar with it and cited that they were inundated with work already.

December 2010 was chosen for the first survey administration because learners would have been in school for several months and, therefore, would be able to answer questions concerning experiences or non-experiences of bullying behaviour. June 2011 was chosen as the second administration date as the BPP would have been introduced several months previously at the research school and this would have allowed time to pass to assess if it had had short term durational effects. May 2012 was chosen as the third administration date as this would have been approximately a year and a half since the BPP's introduction and would provide longitudinal results to assess the programme's efficacy. The following table summarises the classes and numbers of respondents from each school.

Table 4.1: Respondents to OBVQ-R as part of the BPP intervention 2010-201		
Administration Date	School Type & Classes	Number of Respondents
December 2010	Control: 4th, 5th & 6th	57
December 2010	Research: 4th, 5th & 6th	52
June 2011	Control: 4th, 5th & 6th	55
June 2011	Research: 4th, 5th & 6th	53
May 2012	Control: 5th & 6th	34
May 2012	Research: 5th & 6th	30

Even though there were larger numbers that could have potentially participated in the surveys (Control = 61, Research = 55), this was not possible due to absences. The numbers present on the survey implementation days were as follows: in December, 2010 the research school had 52 students self-reporting in the pre-intervention analysis and 52 reporting in June, 2011. The control school had 57 self-reporting in December, 2010 and 55 in June, 2011. For the May, 2012 survey 30 students self-reported at the research school and 35 at the control school. Since there was a natural progression of the sixth class group from 2010-11 into secondary school, there were consequently fewer respondents.

On the survey administration days at the research and control schools, learners were taken through the instructions for marking their survey responses. The definition of bullying was shared and discussed with the students as per the OBVQ-R survey instructions. Participants were advised that the survey was voluntary and therefore they were free to withdraw from participating if they wished. They were informed that the survey was anonymous and that their responses were to be used for research purposes only. Students were encouraged to ask questions at any time if they did not understand the meanings of questions. The intention here was to encourage them to respond truthfully without the worry of their responses being followed up. Additional help was offered to students who had reading difficulty. This was

provided by either the teacher and/or a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) in the classroom. Learners were seated separately in order that no copying or conferring transpired. In the case of crowded classrooms, school bags or text books were placed between students to facilitate private completion of the survey. Once the surveys were completed they were placed in sealed envelopes and subsequently collected by the researcher. The same procedures were followed during each administration. With the first OBVQ-R survey completed the stage was set for the next element of the research.

4.6. Conducting the BPP study

4.6.1 Administration

Early in October 2010 an introductory meeting outlining the BPP elements and aspirational outcomes was held with the research school principal and a lead teacher who would be the main of contact for the researcher. This senior member of the teaching staff (the fourth class teacher) was chosen by the principal to liaise with the other teachers in the event that the researcher was unavailable as a resource and to help ensure that the BPP kept to the intervention timeline. It was agreed that the fourth class teacher would pass on any information and/or instructions to other teachers in the event they were absent from meetings. At the initial meeting the researcher gave a presentation detailing the BPP elements. In November 2010 a second meeting was held with the fourth, fifth and sixth teachers who would be implementing the BPP and in whose classes the OBVQ-R would be administered. The BPP objectives and timeline was introduced along with a review of the OBVQ-R. Late in November 2010 another meeting was held to review the letter of informed consent with the principal and teachers at the research school. The letter was approved and in December 2010 the letter of informed consent (see Appendix 4d, p. 418) was distributed to, and retrieved from learners of the research school prior to administration of the OBVQ-R. Once the OBVQ-R survey was completed in December 2010, the next stage commenced in January 2011 with the fourth, fifth and sixth teachers introducing the BPP to their students and the researcher documenting its delivery via the qualitative instruments. A similar process and

timeline occurred at the control school with the relevant staff in relation to informing them about the aims of the overall project, their role in it as a control school, and the format of the OBVQ-R. The control school also received details about the contents of the BPP, but their prime contribution was to serve as a statistical comparison to levels of bullying compared to the levels at the research school.

4.6.2 The qualitative instruments

4.6.2.1 Introduction

With regards to the collection of qualitative data from the BPP implementation phase, there were three main data sources: written feedback and meeting notes from the weekly implementations and monthly check-ups, focus group interviews with selected learners and semi-structured teacher interviews with open and closed questions. With regards to the focus groups and conducting of the teacher interviews permission was sought to audio record these sessions from the parents, teachers and school management as appropriate. The aim of this reliance on multiple methods and multiple viewpoints is to help avoid distortion of "the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality she is investigating" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000, p. 112) and it adds to the study's reliability as it aids triangulation.

Triangulation has the advantage of adding reliability and validity to research findings, which, may be questioned if only one method is used (Denzin, 1997). Lin (1976) suggests that the exclusive reliance on one method may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality being investigated, and acknowledges the importance of being confident that the data generated are not simple artefacts of one specific method of collection. However, triangulation does have its critics as it is considered positivist (Silverman, 1993) for its presumptive taking of the high ground as a superior method of data collection compared to a single data source. Furthermore, it is argued that having multiple qualitative data sources does not ensure consistency (Patton, 1990) or bring objectivity to the research (Fielding and Fielding, 1986). Therefore, it is argued that with this study the quantitative data which will be derived from the OBVQ-R adds another layer of

objectivity and potential robustness when combined with multiple sources of qualitative data elicited from teachers and learners.

4.6.2.2 Documentation and feedback

According to Mittag and Hager (2000, citied in Gollwitzer et al., 2006), quality of programme implementation includes both feasibility and acceptance. Feasibility was assessed in weekly meetings held between the researcher and the participating teachers. The researcher introduced each lesson prior to implementation and asked the teachers to review the lesson carefully and ask questions for clarification if needed. Additionally, the teachers were advised that they could contact the researcher or senior teacher if they had any further questions prior to implementation. Then for the post lesson reviews, the researcher generated a list of key questions to guide teacher reflections. This was essential as prioritizing the list of questions can help a study focus on what is most relevant to the research question (Friends, 2009). The weekly feedback sheet (see Appendix 3a, p. 413 for sample sheet) asked teachers to:

1. Describe how lesson implementation went overall.
2. Indicate how much time was spent on the lesson.
3. Indicate how easy or difficult they found the lesson to deliver.
4. Were there any learner responses they thought noteworthy or significant?
5. Feedback on clarity of the lesson handout and if there was anything that could be changed/added/improved to aid the BPP as an instructional resource in the classroom.
6. Lastly, an opportunity was given for any other suggestions or comments.

These questions were formulated to ascertain if teachers could deliver the lesson as presented, whether the lesson plan was well structured in their opinion, and to elicit which activities worked well and those which did not.

In year 1 documentation of teacher implementation of the BPP at the research school was done via the weekly face to face meetings and a review of feedback forms which the researcher reviewed prior to each meeting. Prior to the introduction

of first lesson of the BPP the researcher met with the teachers and reviewed the contents of Lesson 1 to ascertain if there were any issues with regards to instructions or delivery/facilitation of content. Thereafter, the researcher met with the teachers once a week to review their written feedback and to introduce the next lesson. In the first year, the level of interaction between the teachers and researcher was planned to facilitate the ironing out of potential difficulties with the BPP implementation and to aid instructional clarity with regards to the provided materials. By the second year the handouts had been revised based on teacher feedback in Year 1. The teachers, who had delivered the BPP intervention lessons in Year 1, were on hand to assist new teachers with implementation in Year 2. Hence, the face to face meetings were not used in Year 2 as the aim was to assess whether teachers could use the BPP instructions as a standalone resource themselves. However, written feedback was still requested from every teacher on each lesson delivery in order to assess if the BPP was being effectively comprehended and used by the Year 2 teachers, alongside the Year 1 teachers who were still participating in the study. This data was emailed to the researcher directly. The Year 2 feedback forms were referred to during open questions in the individual teacher interview sessions at the end of Year 2, if/when the researcher needed elucidation and/or clarification of teacher responses to matters arising from the BPP lessons implementation.

It was recommended that the five lessons of the BPP be delivered during five consecutive weeks if possible, accommodating the February school break. Following the initial intervention in January-February, monthly reviews of the anti-bullying contract, which the learners create during the intervention, are undertaken with the teacher for the rest of the academic year (see Chapter Three, Section 3.4.2.5). Feedback forms were given to the teachers to assess if any intervention effects were being maintained or not. The decision to have monthly reviews in the classroom between teacher and learners after the initial intervention is over was inspired by the negative results that short term bullying interventions can have (Pepler, Smith and Rigby, 2004). The ongoing, monthly review is an attempt to reassure learners that teachers and those in authority in the school are serious about dealing with bullying. This monthly review is a form of bullying prevention maintenance that aims to include the student voice on a regular basis as bullying

prevention strategies need the ongoing pro-active input of all members of the school community if they are to be successful (Action Plan Bullying, 2013; Olweus, 2010; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012; Smith, 2011). Whilst the teachers were given a voice via the feedback forms and regular meetings, the focus groups were a forum for including the student voice in ascertaining the effectiveness of the BPP.

4.6.2.3 Focus groups

In June 2011 and June 2012 focus groups were conducted with learners at the research school (see Appendix 4e, p. 419 for schedule of questions). The aim was to obtain information in the following areas:

- learner knowledge of bullying, typology and participant players of the bullying circle,
- group interactions with regards to the BPP initiatives,
- their thoughts on the effectiveness/non-effectiveness of BPP strategies in their classroom, and
- their opinion about their ability to apply the BPP strategies in their school environment on an ongoing basis.

Initially the focus groups were intended for use with the fourth, fifth and sixth class students in Year 1 and then to monitor the fifth and sixth class students in Year 2. However, a request was made by the school principal to extend the intervention to the whole school for Year 2. This request was complied with and the discussion of this decision is elaborated upon the relevant chapter (Chapter Five). It is mentioned here because it affected the focus group samples.

Representative sampling is key to the success of focus groups (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Three focus groups of six students each from the fourth, fifth and sixth classes were interviewed in Year 1. In Year 2 this was also extended to the third class students. These particular groups were chosen, as opposed to younger groups, as they were deemed mature enough to comprehend the content of the questions. Prior to the interviews, letters of information and permission for participation in the focus groups were issued to the relevant learners for their parents

to read, sign and return (see Appendix 4d, p. 418). Six learners were selected by the class teachers from each group. Each focus group comprised three subsets of two learners each, which were identified by the teacher as having attributes from the following participant roles: bullying, targeted or defending. This was intentionally organised so that the participants were more likely to represent particular characteristics of players in The Bullying Circle and may be able to contribute different perspectives on their experience of the BPP. Additionally, the size of the focus group was essential as if too large, it would fragment the discussion, and if too small, there may be insufficient group interaction on the topics at hand (Morgan, 1988). It was hoped that the data generated from the focus group interviews, could potentially add greater depth to the study by seeing the subjects not simple manipulable data generators but regarding knowledge as something that generated between conversing humans (Kvale, 2008).

It is argued that the reliability of questions for research participants can be enhanced when the interviews are highly structured with the same format and language used for each question (Silverman, 1993). In addition, the researcher wanted to ensure, as far as possible, respondent ability to comprehend and answer freely to the questions. Therefore, it was essential that prior to using the questions in the research school that they be piloted in order to maximise information transfer (Kitwood, 1977), avoid bias (Oppenheim, 1992) and heighten awareness that it is not strictly simply a sharing of information but also a social encounter that requires, as much as possible, for the researcher to create rapport, trust, prudently question and to make meanings clear (Cicourel, 1964). The piloting of the questions was completed with a similarly aged group of children in a local area who were informed of the purpose of the exercise and briefed about the nature of the BPP intervention. Very minor amendments were made to the wording of the questions as a result of the pilot exercise.

4.6.2.4 Teacher semi-structured interviews

A semi-structured teacher interview was created for this study that contained open and closed questions to allow both qualitative and quantitative data to be collected simultaneously (please refer to appendices 4f and 4g).

With regards to operationalising the interview, a semi-structured format of open and closed questions were designed to ascertain teachers' experiences of using the BPP, whether all lesson elements were implemented, if levels of bullying were reduced through increased levels of knowledge of bullying by learners, and if empathy levels were increased. The closed questions response choices were either 'Yes', 'No' or 'Don't Know'. These response types enabled the researcher to generate statistical data and make comparisons across groups in the sample (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). It is significant to note that in addition to the OBVQ-R data the closed questions created the opportunity for another source of quantitative data to aid concurrent validity. In contrast the open questions allowed for a more exploratory approach that allowed the teachers to respond as much as they wished, and which assisted the researcher in assessing their personal experiences of utilising the BPP.

In piloting the teacher interview schedule the researcher approached a County [redacted] school teacher. This teacher had been unaware of the intervention and therefore was an ideal candidate to assess the questions. For the purposes of this pilot exercise, the teacher was briefed about the research and the BPP lessons that the research teachers had been implementing. No amendments were proposed to the questions as a result of piloting.

Twelve appointments for twelve participating teachers were made in Year 2 at the end of the active research phase. In conducting the interviews the researcher gave each teacher approximately twenty minutes to answer the open and dichotomous questions. In an effort to avoid bias (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) and to put the teacher at their ease, each interview began with an open question to give the teacher an opportunity to express her/his own opinions on their experiences with the BPP. Thereafter, there was a series of dichotomous questions that allowed closed data to be collected. The final part of the interview referred to data from the written

feedback sheets about the BPP lessons which had been submitted by the teacher over the course of the study period. The teachers found the interview schedule to be clear and concise (see Appendix 4g, p. 424). The interviews were recorded with an iPhone voice recorder and transcribed verbatim.

4.7 Data analysis

Analysing data for recurring themes is arguably the most complex phase of research. In order to generate findings that transform raw data into new knowledge, a researcher must engage in active and demanding analytic processes that include reading, understanding, organising, interpreting and explaining data (Bryman, 2006; Creswell, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1997; Taylor and Gibbs, 2010; Thorne, 2000) to draw out the themes. MacMillan and Schumacher (2001) state that it is an "eclectic activity" and there is no "right" or "wrong" (p. 461) to analysing data. However, special care needs to be taken with the degree to which "mixed methods researchers genuinely integrate their findings...so that they are mutually illuminating...", and that, "the end product is more than the sum of the individual quantitative and qualitative parts" (Bryman, 2007, p8). This advice is helpful with regards to this research as the multiple viewpoints of learners and teachers in this study could aid the triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative methods which acknowledge the nonlinearity of developmental pathways and human life trajectories (Denscombe, 2003).

With regards to quantitative data, one can make sense of survey data by organising, summarising and doing exploratory analysis on and communicating the meaning of data by presenting it the form of tables, graphs and summaries of statistics. Quantitative data analysis can also be used to see where responses are similar, if there are differences between the things studied and if there is a relationship between the things studied. A significant aid to the researcher in this study for analysing the quantitative data was SPSS (version 18) software. The package enabled the researcher to analyse data more fully than using a spreadsheet programme such as Microsoft Excel (Bryman, 2006). Data was entered in columns,

with each column being set up as a separate, defined variable. The OBVQ-R data was then worked on using the menu options to provide output in the form of tables, graphs and statistics. This use of the OBVQ-R in addition to the qualitative elements offered an opportunity for discoveries to be seen "from different perspectives" (Denscombe, 2003, p.132) which added validity, reliability, objectivity and understanding of the research question under investigation in a more holistic fashion than is possible using one approach only. However, as the study sample is relatively small, the data emanating from the quantitative inquiry via the OBVQ-R was secondary to the analysis of the qualitative findings.

In order to examine the meaningful and symbolic content of the qualitative data in relation to the research question, it needed to be deconstructed and coded. By analysing teacher interview and focus group data the researcher may be attempting to identify any or all of:

- someone's interpretation of the world,
- why they have that point of view,
- how they came to that view,
- what they have been doing,
- how they conveyed their view of their situation,
- how they identify or classify themselves and others in what they say (Taylor and Gibbs, 2010).

Coding and summarising large amounts of data allows potential themes to emerge. In general it is the identification of passages of text and applying labels to them that indicate they are part of an overall thematic idea. Coding enables the researcher to link data that they have associated with a theme so that it can be examined and compared together. This allows for a reflexivity that Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) claim is central to a rigorous research process as it recognises that researchers are part of the social world they are researching. The social world is already interpreted by the participants in the study including the researcher who needs to be aware of their own biases. Hence, the researcher needs to distance himself and allow rigorous, systematic and auditable analytical processes to take

precedence. Giving primacy to these processes are among the most significant factors distinguishing good from poor quality research (Boutain, 1999) as studies that involve a significant amount of qualitative data can be very time consuming (Creswell, 2005). Hence, a great deal of insight is required to for the researcher to interpret the data and make inferences. To facilitate this twelve practical tactics described by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 215) were drawn upon in the research analysis:

1. counting (noting those that appeared more or less than others),
2. noticing patterns and themes,
3. identifying new concepts an conclusions,
4. clustering (group together those that belong together),
5. making comparisons,
6. splitting categories (breaking a theme into more than one part),
7. including (smaller elements group with larger),
8. factoring (considering if dissimilar facts have something in common),
9. noting relationships,
10. finding prevailing themes,
11. constructing a logical sequence for interpretation,
12. creating unity (find answers for the research question).

Articulation of the logical processes of the research strategy and design need to be accessible to the reader so that the relation between the "actual data and the conclusions about data is explicit, and the claims made in relation to the data set are rendered credible and believable" (Thorne, 2000, p. 70). Therefore, an inclusive approach was designed to evaluate the BPP in order to benefit from the methodological advantages of combining deductive and inductive paradigms (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009) with the evidence potentially arising from the following inquiries:

- A quantifiable measurement (i.e. survey),

- Reportage on teacher use of BPP materials,
- Written and oral teacher feedback,
- Ongoing assessment and revision to BPP materials as needed,
- Learner focus group interviews,
- Teacher semi-structured interviews combining open questions with dichotomous questions for further data collection.

This combination of mixed methods allowed for what Reason and Bradbury (2001, p. 148) call the researcher's task, the "Aristotelian concept of 'phronesis', a day-to-day participation in the common affairs of the city-state", or school-state, in order to explore the complex ways that change manifests itself. Pettigrew (1995, p. 95) notes that there is an explicit recognition that change is multifaceted, involving: "political, cultural, incremental, environmental, and physical" inputs and that research methodology should factor in these influences, as the participants' attitudes, values and beliefs change through time. Lewin's (1948) model of the stepping stones action research cycle is a useful aid in planning a methodology that allows and prepares for change and reflexivity and shown in figure 4.2 below.

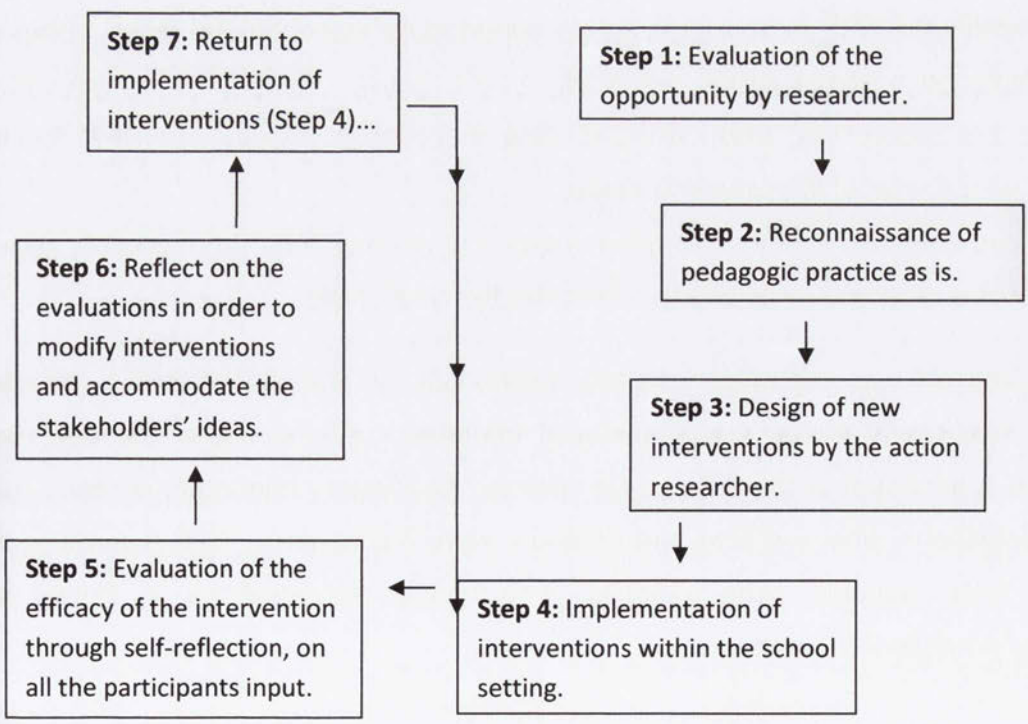


Figure 4.2 Illustration of Lewin's Stepping Stones

Even though this is not an action research project (as the researcher is not actively participating in the BPP implementation), Lewin's model serves as a useful tool in analysing the BPP research cycle in the following ways:

- Step one: an evaluation of the problem: Can the BPP be used by primary school teachers to reduce bullying within the school environment?
- Step two was a reconnaissance of pedagogic practice, which in this research, was a review of bullying, typology, participant players, bullying prevention initiatives, socio-cultural teaching strategies and the exploration of role-play as a learning resource as presented in Chapters Two and Three.
- Step three was the re-design of the BPP intervention for this research initiative, based on learning from the extensive review of literature and new knowledge in the field as presented in Chapters Two and Three.
- Step four was the implementation of the intervention within the school setting.
- This was followed by Step five which was an evaluation of the efficacy of the intervention with reflection on all participants' feedback and input (see data itemisation in table 4.2).
- Step six was the researcher's reflection on these evaluations in order to modify the BPP intervention and accommodate stakeholders' ideas. Step six included a review of the feedback sheets, learner focus groups (transcribed audio recordings) and OBVQ-R data in order to modify the BPP for the second year of the research study.
- Step seven is a return to implementation of interventions (from Step 4, above) as the research cycle evolved over the two year cycle.

Finally step six was repeated with the addition of the transcribed audio recorded teacher responses to the semi-structured interview. At this stage the data was reviewed a minimum of three times for coding. Key issues relating to content, role-plays, definitions, peer learning and empathy were highlighted. With regards to the teacher data, patterns were identified with coding abbreviations to signify the following emerging themes:

- I = Instructionality,
- RU = Role-play usage,
- CA = Cognitive acquisition,
- M = Metacognition,
- AL = Affective Learning.

These were collapsed into over-arching themes of Content Delivery, Knowledge and Understanding which cut across the data sets.

4.8 Summarising the research strategy and design

In summary the data strands employed in this study were:

1. Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire-Revised (OBVQ-R), a student self-report survey, facilitated in December 2010, June 2011 and May 2012 in the research and control schools,
2. teacher feedback sheets collected from January-May 2011 and January to May 2012,
3. weekly meetings with teachers reviewing written feedback and ongoing implementation of the BPP from January-February 2011,
4. focus group interviews conducted with learners in June 2011 and June 2012,
5. teacher semi-structured interviews combining open and closed questions conducted in June 2012.

Bryman (2007) suggests that consideration and attention should be given to the data strands of a study design that recognizes in advance the implications of the different time lines and rhythms of quantitative and qualitative investigations as presented in the table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Data collection timeline

Aims and Objectives	Data Strand	Timeline
Main aim		
Evaluate teacher implementation of BPP as a bullying prevention resource	1, 2, 3 & 5	1. Surveys: December 2010, June 2011 & May 2012 2. Written Feedback: January-May 2011 & January-May 2012 3. Oral Feedback: January-February 2011 5. Teacher interviews: June 2012
Sub-Objectives		
Quantify if bullying behaviour has been reduced	1 & 5	1. Surveys: December 2010, June 2011 & May 2012 5. Teacher interviews: June 2012
Are BPP activities comprehensible to learners?	2, 3, 4 & 5	2. Written Feedback: January-May 2011 & January-May 2012 3. Oral Feedback: January-February 2011 4. Focus groups June 2011 & June 2012 5. Teacher interviews: June 2012
Has there been a demonstrable increase in learning knowledge of bullying behaviour, typology and participant players because of the BPP implementation	1, 2, 3, 4 and 5	1. Surveys: December 2010, June 2011 & May 2012 2. Written Feedback: January-May 2011 & January-May 2012 3. Oral Feedback: January-February 2011 4. Focus groups June 2011 & June 2012 5. Teacher interviews: June 2012
Has the BPP implementation fostered learning understanding of the effects of bullying behaviour on peers?	2, 3, 4 and 5	2. Written Feedback: January-May 2011 & January-May 2012 3. Oral Feedback: January-February 2011 4. Focus groups June 2011 & June 2012 5. Teacher interviews: June 2012
Are learners more empathetic to each other?	1, 2, 3, 4 and 5	1. Surveys: December 2010, June 2011 & May 2012 2. Written Feedback: January-May 2011 & January-May 2012 3. Oral Feedback: January-February 2011 4. Focus groups: June 2011 & June 2012 5. Teacher interviews: June

		2012
What could be done to make the BPP a better resource?	2, 3, 4 and 5	2. Written Feedback: January-May 2011 & January-May 2012, 3. Oral Feedback: January-February 2011 4. Focus groups June 2011 & June 2012 5. Teacher interviews: June 2012

In the following chapter data from these strands will be analysed and discussed. There will be an exploration of the interlocking pieces of data which may offer a "portrait of reality" (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004, p. 89) from the research school as seen through the lens of research participants. The mixed methods design employed in this study recognises that the convergence of the two interpretive methodologies allows for greater dialogue:

> that yields real answers to real questions, that is useful in the real world, that avoids mistaken allegiance to either quantitative or qualitative approaches on their own, that enables rich data to be gathered which can afford the triangulation that has been advocated in research for many years, that respects the mixed, messy real world, and that increases validity and reliability; in short, that 'delivers' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p. 26).

CHAPTER FIVE
RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

The principal aim of this study was to ascertain the extent to which teachers could utilise the BPP for classroom use, and to determine if the BPP was effective in reducing bullying at the research school. The qualitative data in this chapter provides substantive information in terms of addressing the primary research question in this study and is augmented by quantitative data from the learner surveys. A thematic and chronological approach to analysing the qualitative data has been employed for the most part. When relevant, the survey data is compared with the qualitative data strands. The data sets analysed in this chapter are presented in the following chronological order:

1. Quantitative data from the first learner survey, December 2010
2. Emerging themes from teacher feedback, fourth to sixth class, January – May 2011
3. Emerging themes from learner focus group interviews, fourth to sixth class, June 2011
4. Quantitative data from the second learner survey, June 2011
5. Emerging themes from teacher feedback and semi-structured interviews, junior infants to sixth class, January – May 2012
6. Emerging themes from learner focus group interviews, third to sixth class, June 2012
7. Review of quantitative data from the third and final learner survey compared to data from first and second surveys, May 2012

In the planning stages it had been anticipated that there would be two streams of qualitative data: teachers and learners. However, in analysing the qualitative data from the second year, when the BPP was launched as a whole school intervention, it emerged that there were three distinct groups emerging in the data: teachers of

learners from junior infants to first class, teachers of learners from second to sixth class, and the learner focus groups. The teachers of early year's learners encountered some difficulties in their utilisation and experience of implementing the BPP, including problems with following the instructions, the lexicon of bullying terminology, and utilising role-play with very young learners. As a result the data from teachers will be presented as two strands: teachers of junior infants to first class and teachers of second to sixth class. The aim of this division is to facilitate a more accurate analysis of the teacher's experiences of using the BPP which, in turn, may allow "themes, patterns and similarities to be seen at a glance" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p. 551). A summary of the Identified themes, sub-themes and issues are presented in the table below:

Table 5.1: Coded teacher themes		
Theme	**Sub-theme**	**Issues**
Content Delivery	Instructionality	Content
	Role-play usage	Bullying Enactments
		Reverse Role-play
		Observer Role-play
		Defender Role-play
Knowledge	Cognitive Acquisition	Bullying Definition
		Identification of Types
		Identification of Roles
Understanding	Metacognition	Discussion/Peer Learning
	Affective Learning	Engendering Empathy

With regards to the learner data patterns, the following emerging themes were identified and coded:

- CA = Cognitive Acquisition
- M = Metacognition

These were collapsed into over-arching themes of Knowledge and Understanding. A summary of the identified themes, sub-themes and issues are presented in the table below:

Table 5.2: Coded learner themes		
Theme	**Sub-theme**	**Issues**
Knowledge	Cognitive Acquisition	Definition, Types and Roles
		Defending
Understanding	Metacognition	Thinking about/discussing bullying
		Thinking about/discussing feelings

A thematic approach, as employed here, seeks to identify a patterned meaning across the dataset (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This can help the integration and interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative findings which could be mutually informative and yield rich data. The aim is to aid the presentation of the data in this chapter so that it is more than just an analysis of its linear parts. This approach was also used to enrich the discussion in Chapter Six where connections were made, that integrated the quantitative and the qualitative findings in illuminating answers to the research question.

Section 5.2 below presents the results of the first OBVQ-R survey and is used as a baseline to present the learners' experiences of school bullying in both the research and control schools.

5.2 Results from the first OBVQ-R survey (2010)

Prior to reviewing the survey responses it may prove useful for the reader to be reminded of the number of respondents. The table of respondents from Chapter Four represented here to aid this.

Table 5.3: Respondents to OBVQ-R as part of the BPP intervention 2010-2011

Administration Date	School Type & Classes	Number of Respondents
December 2010	Control: 4th, 5th & 6th	57
December 2010	Research: 4th, 5th & 6th	52
June 2011	Control: 4th, 5th & 6th	55
June 2011	Research: 4th, 5th & 6th	53
May 2012	Control: 5th & 6th	34
May 2012	Research: 5th & 6th	30

The numbers present on the survey implementation days were as follows: in December, 2010 the research school had 52 students self-reporting in the pre-intervention analysis and 52 reporting in June, 2011. The control school had 57 self-reporting in December, 2010 and 55 in June, 2011. For the May, 2012 survey 30 students self-reported at the research school and 35 at the control school. The reduction in numbers in May, 2012 is due to the fact that by the end of the second year only the fifth and sixth class learners completed the questionnaire, as the sixth class pupils had moved on to secondary school. To accurately reflect the decreasing amount of respondents in this study, the analysis will be presented in percentages. Additionally, on occasion, numbers do not tally with the expected number of students as respondents did not always answer every question. Where this is the case, an asterisk (*) has been inserted at the top of the respective response column to alert the reader that this has been accounted for by the researcher.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 below illustrate the responses from the research and control schools in 2010 to the question, "How often have you been bullied?" Responses to the question are considered particularly significant for gauging overall levels of school bullying victimization (Hazelden Foundation, 2014). The results serve as a baseline from which to compare the surveys administered in 2011 and 2012.

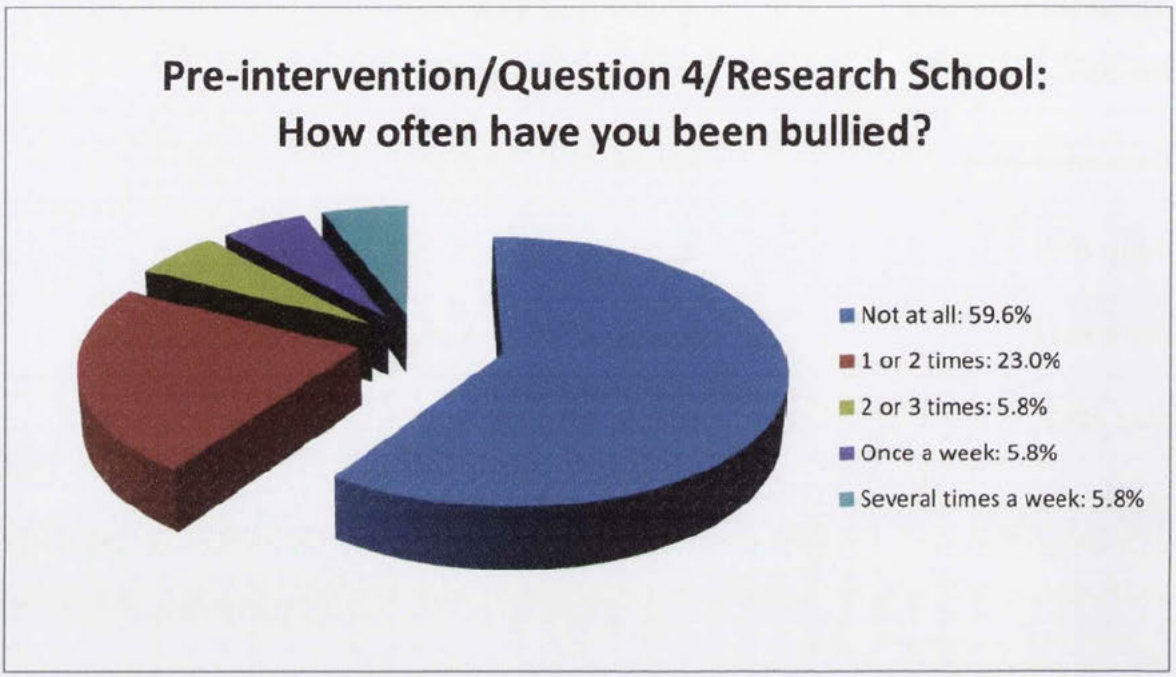


Figure 5.1 Learner responses to OBVQ-R Question 4 pre-intervention, research school December 2010

Figure 5.1 shows that at the research school in December 2010 59.6% of pupils reported not being bullied with 23.0% pupils reporting being bullied once or twice a month and 5.8% of pupils reporting being bullied several times a week. Results from the control school were comparable as can be seen in Figure 5.2.

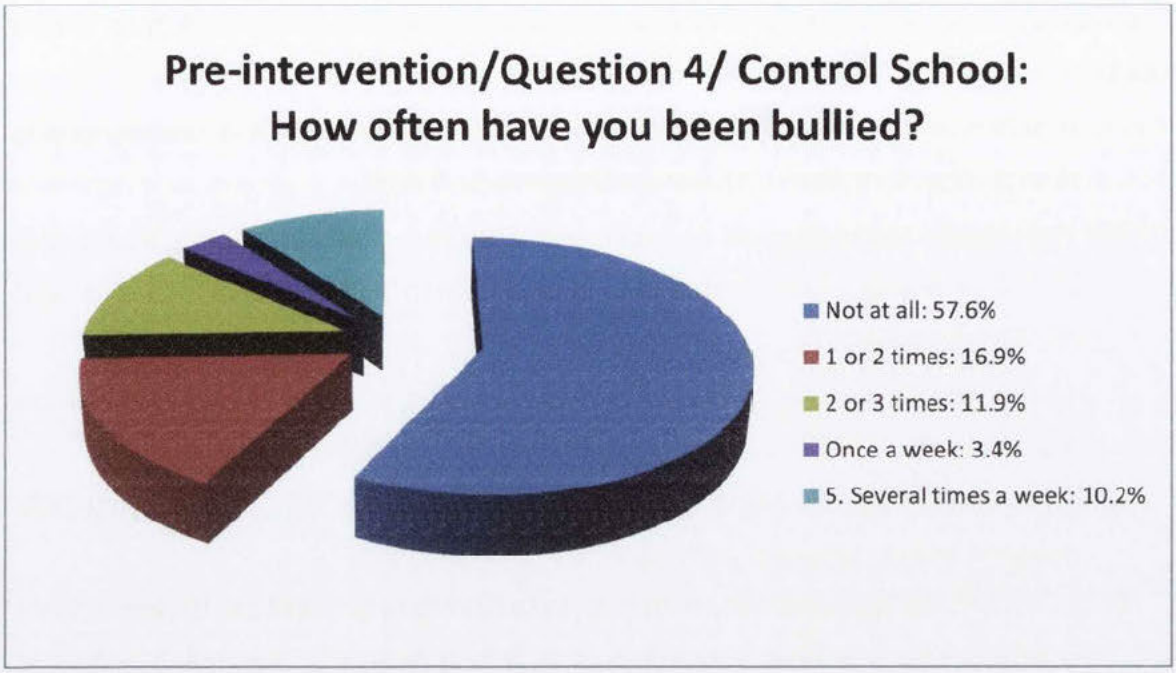


Figure 5.2 Learner responses to OBVQ-R Question 4 pre-intervention, control school December 2010

The research and control schools are also comparable in terms of rates of victimization with 40.4% reporting at the research school and 42.4% reporting at the control school (see fig. 5.3).

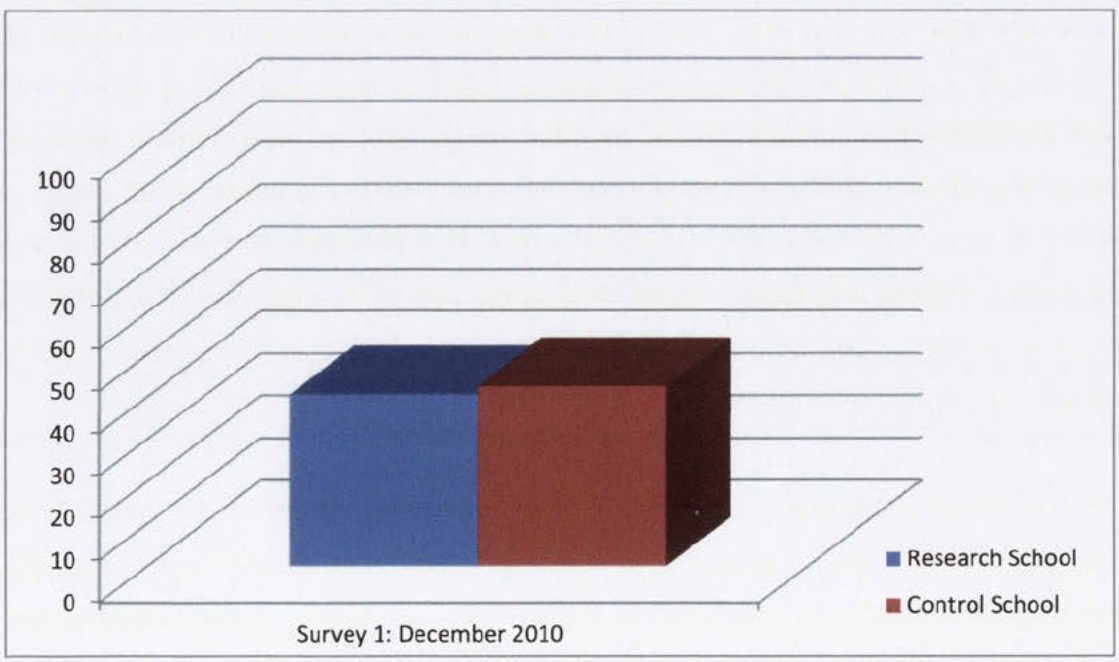


Figure 5.3 Comparison of bullying victimization reportage at the research and control schools pre-intervention

Comparing these percentages to other surveys conducted in Ireland may prove useful.

A. A nationwide survey conducted in 1997 found that 31% of Irish primary pupils reported being bullied (O'Moore, Kirkham and Smith).
B. The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey found that 23.3% of primary school children reported being bullied (Walsh, Clerkin and Nic Gabhainn, 2002).
C. 15.6% reported being bullied in primary schools in the ABC survey (Minton and O'Moore, 2008).
D. The Growing Up in Ireland (2009) survey showed that 40% of nine-year-olds reported being victims of bullying in the previous year.
E. In a 2010 survey which combined reports from primary and secondary school children, 24.3% of respondents aged 10-17 reported that they were bullied at school at least once in the past couple of months (Callaghan et al., 2010).
F. In Minton's (2010) survey of Irish secondary school pupils, 35.3% was the average reportage of victimisation.

Comparing this data to the present study survey results above it is clear that both the research and the control schools are at the top of the bullying reportage range with victimisation rates of over 40% each. This may be attributable to the fact that both are inner city schools and designated disadvantaged. It has been reported in some of the literature that schools in low income areas tend to have higher levels of bullying (Farrington, 1993) with Rosenstein-Manner (1991) reporting higher levels of bullying in inner city schools. Internationally, the phenomenon of low income appears to correlate with higher levels of bullying with more than half of the student population of low to middle income countries reporting that they experience bullying (UNICEF, 2014).

What has been presented so far is a broad overview of the survey results to contextualise the levels of reportage of bullying in the research and control schools. However, it is important to note that the OBVQ-R is a thirty-nine point questionnaire, and the rest of the data will be presented strategically in the following sections to support, refute or problematise the data from the BPP intervention. It will be used to

throw light on the emerging patterns of change in frequency of types, perceptions, attitudes and behaviours towards bullying over the course of the BPP intervention. Therefore, the experiences of teachers and learners will be presented next, and compared with the survey data to inform the overall analysis of the BPP and its impact on reducing levels of bullying at the research school.

5.3 Emerging themes from teacher feedback

Over the course of the study the amount of data increased as the full school participated in the project in its second year. In Year 1 however only three teachers from fourth to sixth class were involved in the study, but by Year 2 this had increased to thirteen teachers. Participating teachers are identified as follows:

J1 = Junior Infants Teacher One
J2 = Junior Infants Teacher Two
Sr1 = Senior Infants Teacher One
Sr2 = Senior Infants Teacher Two, Maternity Substitute
F1 = First Class Teacher One
F2 = First Class Teacher Two
Se1 = Second Class Teacher One
Se2 = Second Class Teacher Two
Th = Third Class Teacher
Fo = Fourth Class Teacher
Fi1 = Fifth Class Teacher, Year 1
Fi2 = Fifth Class Teacher, Year 2
Si = Sixth Class Teacher

Notes on participating teachers: One of the senior infant teachers left for maternity leave on the fourth week of the second year of the intervention. Another teacher filled in for her on the last week of the intervention. The fifth class teacher from Year 1 went on sabbatical after the first year of the study and was replaced by a new fifth class teacher (Sr2) in Year 2.

5.3.1 Teacher themes coded from feedback responses, Year 1

Table 5.4 represents the data received from the participating teachers in fourth, fifth and sixth class in the research school in year 1. Their responses to actioning the

BPP, derived from written feedback sheets and notes from meetings with the researcher, are presented under three main themes:

1. Content Delivery,
2. Knowledge,
3. Understanding.

With regards to *Content Delivery* the study sought to ascertain if the written materials in the BPP were clear, comprehensible and deliverable by the teachers. *Knowledge* related to teacher perceptions of learners demonstrating knowledge of the bullying phenomena. The category of *Understanding* sought to determine if teachers perceived their learners as being able to use their knowledge gained from the BPP constructively in discussion, reflection and to ascertain if an empathetic response was engendered.

Table 5.4: Teacher themes coded from feedback responses January – June, 2011

Theme	Sub-theme	Overview of feedback and/or issues
Content Delivery	Instructionality	Content: Over-long instructions, too much content, need for brevity
	Role-play usage	Bullying Enactment: Overt physicality reported in role-plays
		Reverse Role-play: Overt physicality, teachers reported that learners tend to follow lead of child with high social status
		Observer Role-play: Child with high social status was useful as role model
		Defender Role-play: Child with high social status leading initial role-plays made the defender a role of choice for learners
Knowledge	Cognitive Acquisition	Bullying Definition: Repetition reported to be key component of definition
		Identification of Types: Amount of types surprised learners
		Identification of Roles: Time consuming for learners

		to learn all the roles, within the same bullying event a learner can play more than one role in bullying circle
Understanding	Metacognition	Discussion/Peer Learning: BPP open questions were generative for fostering peer learning about bullying
	Affective Learning	Engendering Empathy: The BPP encouraged an awareness of the feelings of others, discussions sometimes became heavy

In the following tables, the responses are labelled numerically from fourth to sixth class. As the BPP implementation was responsive to teacher feedback, the 'Actions Taken' category reflects changes that were made in response to feedback during the first stage of implementation. The majority of feedback is from the teachers' written feedback sheets. Where this is not the case, it is noted.

5.3.2 Content Delivery

Table 5.5 Content Delivery 2011

Instructionality	
Class	Issues reported
4	-Too much content, concise instructions needed, definition needs to be abbreviated
5	-Too much content, concise instructions needed, definition needs to be abbreviated
6	-Too much content, concise instructions needed, definition needs to be abbreviated
Actions Taken	-Content, instructions and references to the literature edited for Year 2

As the researcher, I was interested in the teachers' responses to the written instructions provided in the BPP and Fo shared that this "took quite a bit of time" (25/1/2011) to go through. Si added that instructions were "too long" (1/2/2011) to assimilate which led to "timing" (Fo, 25/1/2011) issues for lesson delivery. Over-

elaboration also applied to the definition of bullying behaviour in the BPP handout. Abbreviating this was a common theme expressed by the three teachers. Additionally, the BPP provided current knowledge with references on the topic of bullying. While much of this was background information for the teachers' benefit and not intended for learner delivery, the teachers pointed out that they were very busy in their work and these literature references added to the amount of information they were trying to assimilate. They expressed a need for shorter instructions that were concise and to the point. Taking this feedback on board I examined the amount of material I was presenting to teachers in the BPP and reduced the amount of references to the literature considerably and looked to make instructional content more concise with the definition of bullying considerably reduced in the Year 2 handout. In case teachers needed or wanted additional information or background on bullying phenomena, a resource copy of O'Moore's (2010) book "Understanding School Bullying" was given to the school at start of the second year of the intervention.

The constructive feedback from the teachers after lesson 1 was instrumental in my review and revision of future lessons of the BPP. The editing and revisions had an immediate positive effect as Fi1 expressed in session three that instructionally "was all very clear" (1/2/2011) with Fo contributing that in session four that there was "no confusion, well laid out" (8/2/2011).

Table 5.6 Content Delivery 2011: Role-play usage

Bullying Enactment and Reverse Role-play	
Class	Issues reported
4	-Boys were overly physical in role -Too much content -Bullying enactment could have been at end of session one
5	-Boys were overly physical in role -Popular boy in role of victimised child is helpful for reverse role-play
6	-Boys were overly physical in role
Actions Taken	-Popular child to lead Defender Role-play -Note added for second year handouts to advise pupils that not all Role-plays have to feature physical bullying and think about other ways one can be bullied

-Note made on the possibility of including Bullying Enactment Role-play in session one

Teachers reported that overt use of physicality in role was frequent. Fi1 recommended that "It could be worthwhile to add a reminder that the role-play does not have to feature physical abuse" (25/1/2011). In the review meeting (26/1/2011) it was agreed with the teachers that they would encourage the boys to explore other forms of bullying in their role-plays. However, this was not entirely successful as reported by Fi1: "The children are pre-disposed to seeing violence as a solution to bullying so the emphasis had to be placed on other non-violent contributions" (28/3/2011). These valuable contributions were noted for the second year handouts but it is important to point out that the boys were asked to create improvised role-plays based on scenes of bullying that may have happened at the school. According to 2010 survey data from the learners, the majority of bullying incidents were taking place in the yard (see section 5.8.2) where there was a naturally high level of physical activity. Learners also indicated that physical bullying was one of the most common forms of bullying, as 32.4% of boys, who were bullied, reported that they were bullied in this particular way (see table 5.46). Hence, the learners were displaying bullying type behaviours in the role-plays that they were familiar with, but surprisingly, the teachers didn't seem to be aware of this.

When it came to playing the Reverse Role-play there were unexpected developments. Fi1 reported that "Children who do not fit the victim profile were reluctant to play the role, however after some coaxing they became involved" (25/1/2011). This became less of a problem once "the children with high social status took on the role of the victim" (Fi1, 26/1/2011). Including children of high social status in the role of the victim was not the exact instruction of The Reverse Role-play. The instruction was to put a learner who was known to have been bullying in the role of the person victimised by bullying. Of course, this could have been a popular student as sometimes bullies enjoy high social status (Salmivalli, 2010). The primary intent of the Reverse Role-play was rather to engender empathy for the plight of the person being victimised. However, the use of a student with high

social status in role was to have a marked effect on the BPP role-play recommendations in the coming weeks and will be discussed shortly.

Fo reported that having to do two role-plays in session two was a bit overloaded and he recommended that we could "have had the re-enactment @ (sic) the end of the previous lesson" (25/1/2011). However, Fi1 and Si felt that there was enough material in session one already, and thus it was decided to leave it as it was for the second year phase.

Table 5.7 Content Delivery 2011: Role-play usage

Observer Role-play	
Class	Issues reported
4	-Popular pupils may be helpful leaders in role-plays
5	-Discussions on role of observers were generative -Learners feel comfortable following lead of popular pupil -Popular pupils could be helpful role models for defending
6	-Pupils with high social status biggest contributors in discussions
Actions Taken	-Popular child to lead Defender Role-play in BPP session four -Note made to second year handouts: Learners lacking in confidence should start Confident Behaviour exercise as high confident players

In session three children had the opportunity to play the Observer Role-play. At this point teachers reported that learners were becoming familiar and comfortable with the bullying role-plays as the, "Boys took lead this time as they did not need coaching" (Fo, 1/2/2011). The Si teacher reported that the concept of observing bullying behaviour was something that boys could all relate to and, "most of the boys wanted to be involved in one way or another" (1/2/2011). The Fi1 teacher added that, "it also sparked a lot of conversation on the role of an observer" (1/2/11). This learner familiarity in the research school with the role of the observer in bullying incidents concurs with research which has demonstrated that in school bullying incidents, peers were present 88% of the time (Hawkins, Pepler and Craig, 2001).

In the week two meeting with the teachers (26/1/2011) the researcher had asked for clarification on the following written feedback from the Si teacher, "More popular kid

[sic] gave most feedback and had more input" (25/1/2011). Here a discussion ensued with all of the teachers contributing that in their opinion it was strategic to have popular children as defender role models in the role-plays. Fi1 had observed that "children felt more comfortable following the lead of the popular pupils who weren't fearful of repercussions" (8/2/2011). Evidence from the literature (presented in Chapters Two and Three) concurs with the views expressed by the teacher respondents, suggesting that children with high social status could potentially be good defenders (Pöyhönen, Juvonen and Salmivalli, 2011) as they aren't as fearful of repercussions (Salmivalli, 2010). Hence, the overall strategy was to make the act of defending more palatable to the class in general and promote its usage.

Table 5.8 Content Delivery 2011: Role-play usage

Defender Role-play	
Class	Issues reported
4	-Child with high social status is over-reactive in role of victimised child -Intervention should have been inaugurated earlier in the school year
5	-When performing the Confident Behaviours exercise children with confidence issues were uncomfortable starting in group low confidence -Recommended that they should be assigned to group confident to start -Not enough sample role-plays, more needed
6	-Children of low confidence realised they lacked confident behaviour
Actions Taken	-Recommendation made for Year 2 that children with low social status in group commence Confident Behaviours exercise in group High Confidence -Sample Defender Role-play added for Year 2 research -Earlier intervention noted for Year 2 implementation

Data from the feedback sheets following the administration of the third session and thereafter indicated that there was considerable interest in the Confident Behaviours exercise with the potential use of high status behaviours in defending. Fo shared that, "Boys were surprised by different characteristics of confident behaviour" (1/2/2011) and observed that the characteristics of low confidence made the boys with low social status insecure as "They realised they lacked confident behaviour" (1/2/2011). Si added that it created a situation where they "didn't like being in the unconfident behaviours" (1/2/2011) group. Fi1 observed that it inhibited them from

trying high confidence displays thereafter. Fi1 recommended that teachers should use their discretion and "assign children who are lacking in confidence" (1/2/2011) to the high confidence group at the beginning of the Confident Behaviours exercise.

Following the Confident Behaviours activity the BPP directed the teacher to hand pick learner role models to perform the sample Defender Role-play with the defender being coached to incorporate high confidence behaviours in role. According to the teachers the popular defender worked well as, "the quieter lads get a chance to see popular kids doing it and it gives the popular kids a taste for doing it (Si, 1/2/2011). Fo contributed, "The boys are really getting into the roles of intervening when bullying occurs. Their confidence in intervening was very good" (1/2/2011). Fi1 added: "The children felt more comfortable following the lead of a popular pupil who wasn't fearful of repercussions. It is a must do in this role play" (1/2/2011). According to Si defending was considerably influenced by the involvement of boys with high social status and it "gave the popular kids a taste for doing it" (1/2/2011). Fi1 reported in the first post-intervention feedback that the role of the defender was very influential as "All children were eager to play the role of defender and this could be indicative of willingness to play that role in real life situations provided they have been trained in intervention technique" (28/3/2011). Fo concurred with this opinion and added, "The roles of defender and victim were most popular in our role-plays as boys playing the offender/bully were not as willing" (28/3/2011) to play those roles. Fo added that the effects of defending were so positive by the end of the first year that, "One boy asked why we have it [the BPP] because we don't need it anymore" (9/5/2011).

However, it was reported that children with high social status often were overly physical when defending and when in the role of the victimized child. Fi1 contributed that "the role-plays have consistently featured physical bullying with the defender reacting in a physically aggressive manner" (9/5/2011). Fo shared that when the child of high social status was in the role of the victim, he was more inclined to react to the bullying instead of being bullied himself. Fi1 suggested that there were "not enough types of role-play examples" (1/2/2011). Adding that more sample scripts in

the BPP with an emphasis on exclusion would be helpful. Thus in Year 2, a second defender sample script was added to the BPP to aid non-aggressive defending.

5.3.3 Knowledge

Table 5.9 Knowledge 2011 – Cognitive Acquisition

Definition, Types and Roles	
Class	Issues reported
4	-The repetitive nature of bullying was noted as an important part of the definition as the boys were citing once-off arguments as bullying -Learners surprised that there were so many types of bullying -Amount of information to assimilate was time consuming
5	-The repetitive nature of bullying was noted as an important part of the definition as the boys were citing once-off arguments as bullying -Boys 'shocked' at the amount of types
6	-The repetitive nature of bullying was noted as an important part of the definition as the boys were citing once-off arguments as bullying -Learning the roles of participant players was time consuming -Learners became aware that they could move from one role to another within the same bullying event
Actions Taken	-None, for as intervention progressed, it was reported that knowledge was assimilated

Fi1 shared that classroom discussions on the bullying definition needed to focus on the repetitive nature of the behaviour as the learners were "unable to make a distinction between consistent bullying and once-off arguments" (18/1/2011). Fo reported that as the classroom discussion on the definition of bullying was prolonged, "They understood that bullying is repetitive" (18/1/2011). At the teacher meeting (19/1/2011) all three teachers reported that often they had learners approaching them with stories of once-off arguments that were not bullying. Fi1 added that "Therefore the bullying defined section was vital" (18/1/2011). This view was reinforced throughout the administration of the BPP sessions. The researcher did advise the teachers to be aware of once-off threats. Once-off threats can intimidate young people and can cause them "to live in daily fear of that threat being

carried out" (O'Moore, 2010, p. 24). Additionally, a ring-leader bully can have various supporters carry out bullying acts for them without doing any direct bullying themselves (O'Moore, 2010). Therefore, the teachers were advised to treat complaints of once-off incidents seriously and take the time to listen to the child reporting.

With regards to types of bullying the Fo shared that the "Boys were shocked at all the different types. They were unaware that bullying could take so many different forms" (18/1/2011). In contrast Si reported that "The boys knew a lot of the types without knowing the names" (18/1/2011). Both these comments reinforce the effectiveness of the BPP in the classroom, which identifies 7 forms of bullying. For example, with respect to the feedback above, the fourth class learners were learning about types of bullying they may encounter (i.e. Cyber-bullying) whereas the sixth class learners were learning to label the types.

Learning about the potential of The Bullying Circle was a time consuming task for the Fo class as "It took quite a bit of time to first revise previous lesson and then start this lesson" (25/2/2011). However, this resulted in "Significant change in boys' ability to identify roles played" (25/2/211) with the acute observation by learners, as reported by the teacher, that "observers of one role-play were both supporters and onlookers based on different reactions (i.e. silence/laughter)". This observation of the fluidity of roles in the Bullying Circle corresponds with research by Salmivalli (2010) that pupils can play a number of potential parts during the same bullying incident. This knowledge gained by the fourth class learners about the role of the observer is significant. Learners don't often realise that their choice to remain an observer as the bullying incident progresses, potentially sends an inadvertent message to the bully that the bullying behaviour is acceptable and possibly approved of (O'Moore, 2010). Hence, the heightened learner awareness of the Bullying Circle roles acquired through role-play could potentially set the stage for greater engagement in the class discussions.

5.3.4 Understanding: teacher perceptions of learner conceptions

Table 5.10 Understanding 2011	
Metacognition: Discussion/Peer Learning	
Class	Issues reported
4	n/a
5	-Initially, some learners were less willing to engage in discussions about bullying in their school, but as the intervention progressed they saw that their contributions were valued and they became more engaged
6	-Over time learners came to trust the open "no name, no blame" discussions on bullying -Learners wanted their reports of bullying to be taken more seriously. Teacher expressed that it is difficult to listen to every story in the course of a day.
Actions Taken	-Note made to second year handouts for teachers to listen to learners as often as they can

Teacher feedback on the post role-play discussion and discussions in general, which are recommended in the BPP, appeared to be very positive with the teachers specifically commenting on the instruction from the BPP whereby "telling them not to name or blame, created a safe environment to talk" (Fo, 18/5/2011). Fo reported that all his boys "opened up and were not afraid to talk" (18/5/2011). However, these open discussions on bullying behaviour in the school and their effects on peers were slower to take hold in the fifth and sixth classes. Fi1 observed that in the first session that "some were more willing to engage than others" (18/5/2011). However, by the time of the first post-intervention review Fi1 reported that the class was fully engaged "and felt that their contributions were valued" and added that they "were happy to see their suggestions (for bullying prevention in the school) taken on board" (28/3/2011). According to Si familiarity with the discussion activity helped the boys become "a lot better at giving feedback" over time (28/3/2011) and added on the last post-intervention written feedback (9/5/2011) that "The more the programme went on the more the boys were opening up and accepting that bullying occurs and they may be a part of it". The boys also expressed a need to Si "for reports to be followed through when pupils reported bullying to teachers" (28/3/2011). This suggests that the participants were becoming more vocalised and proactive in their responses to

and understanding of bullying behaviours. This is significant in that the BPP activities were reported as encouraging open discussions about school bullying, which contrasts with research which shows that creating such an environment can be difficult to achieve (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013).

Table 5.11 Understanding 2011

Affective Learning: Engendering Empathy	
Class	Issues reported
4	-What to do when a student becomes upset discussing a bullying incident?
5	-Believed some boys were making up stories
6	-Some boys were "telling tales" -Talking about emotions should not end session one -Boys have difficulty talking about emotions
Actions Taken	-For the second year instructions it was stressed that not all pupils have to talk about bullying incidents. Furthermore, if they feel they are going to be upset then it is recommended that the teacher talks to individual learners in private -Note added to second year instructions for teachers to end session one with a game that boys like so as to end lesson on a lighter note

The data reveals that discussions on feelings was an area where caution should be called for as a boy in the fourth class became upset when discussing the bullying he was experiencing. In relation to this Fo asked "how to deal with those who get upset" (18/1/2011). In response to this feedback the second year instructions stressed that not all pupils have to talk about bullying incidents. Furthermore, if they feel they are going to be upset then it is recommended that the teacher talks to individual learners in private. Additionally, Si had a concern with the lesson ending with the discussion of feelings related to bullying incidents as it created a heavy atmosphere. He recommended that "the emotions part could be part of another lesson" (18/1/2011). However, the researcher was concerned about adding emotions into another lesson as he wanted the learners to get used to talking about feelings early on so as to aid the possible engendering of empathy. Taking note of Si's concern, a new instruction was added to the session one handout recommending that the teacher play a game with boys that lightens the mood. Fi1

had a mixed report on learners' sharing their feelings as some stories "were obviously untrue" and others were "heartfelt and concerning" (18/1/2011). His point regarding the comment "obviously untrue" was referring to his belief that some boys were making up stories. Si added to this view at the face to face review session, contributing that some of the boys have a tendency to "tell tales" (19/1/2011). This teacher view of learners lying about bullying scenarios was a topic that would have repercussions for the research. Evidence of this will be presented later in this chapter and discussed in chapter six.

In discussing their feelings Fi1 shared that the boys "expressed feelings of anger and sadness when in role of victim" (25/1/2011). Si reported that his pupils had more difficulty expressing their feelings and reported in the session one teacher review meeting (19/1/2011) that one boy contributed that they were men and had a hard time talking about feelings. In reviewing the feedback from the fourth, fifth and six class teachers a trend was emerging where younger children were able to discuss feelings more readily than older ones. However, over the course of the first intervention year, there is evidence to suggest that the discussions may have had an overall empathy engendering effect on the pupils. This view is synopsized here by a sixth class learner in the Year 1 post-intervention phase expressing how he felt when he saw a peer being targeted, "It's easier to have sympathy for the boy being bullied" (Learner Focus Group, Year 1, 10/6/2011). This learner view is reflective of focus group data which, as a whole, was very generative and will now be presented.

5.4 Learner focus group data, Year 1

On June 17, 2011 three separate post-intervention focus group sessions were scheduled with learners from fourth, fifth and sixth class respectively. The data which follows is from transcriptions of the focus groups which took place with a representative sample of six learners from each participating class. The focus group learner names have been changed to aid anonymity. Opinions represented in the theme boxes are those shared by the focus group. Differences of opinion are noted in the commentary.

Table 5.12 Learner themes coded from focus group responses June, 2011		
Theme	Sub-theme	Overview of feedback and/or issues
Knowledge	Cognitive Acquisition	Definition, Types and Roles: Understood bullying is repeated, identification of bullying types and players enhanced
		Defending: fear of repercussions, learned that defending can be accomplished with help of the teacher and/or agreed methods of reporting, Bullying Prevention Contract was beneficial for fourth and fifth but not for sixth as these learners reported it was not used
Understanding	Metacognition	Thinking about/discussing bullying: 'No name, no blame' approach enabled frank discussions, evidence that discussions foster peer learning
	Affective Learning	Thinking about/discussing feelings: Discussing feelings may be useful for engendering empathy

The following tables present the feedback which emerged from the focus group data themes and sub-themes. Each class is represented in individual rows to highlight similarities and differences which are discussed in the commentary that follows.

5.4.1 Knowledge

Table 5.13 Learner Feedback 2011	
Knowledge: Definition, Types and Roles	
Class	Issues reported
4	-Understood bullying is repeated aggression -Ability to list attributes of bullying phenomena enhances ability to defend against it -Understood that observers are participants who can exacerbate bullying incidents -Enhanced ability to discuss bullying
5	-Understood bullying is repeated aggression -Some confusion on what Cyber-bullying is

	-Fear of repercussions if one defends -Person who bullies would not instigate behaviour if there was no support from participant players in the Bullying Circle
6	-Understood bullying is repeated aggression -Survey helped identify types of bullying -Identification of bullying behaviour enhanced -Understood that observers can become defenders
Actions Taken	n/a

In reviewing the learner feedback from the Year 1 focus group interviews (17/6/11) there was considerable commentary from the participants on the knowledge gained about the types of bullying and the roles participants can play. Ron of fifth class reported that, "Bullying is not just once. Once is just messing". Richard of sixth class contributed that, "The Questionnaire helped us with the bullying problems. Knowing the different types of bullying." Charlie and other classmates of sixth class added to the conversation:

Charlie:	Because I know the types I can explain it better. I never knew about bullying like. The teacher told us like.
Researcher:	What did he tell you?
Charlie:	About the types.
Researcher:	What types?
Charlie:	Physical, verbal.
Richard:	Exclusion,
Don:	Cyber-bullying,
Richard:	Relational
Researcher:	What's that?
Richard:	When people are telling lies about you.
John Paul:	Bullying Circle. I learned how to be a defender.
Researcher:	What do you mean?
John Paul:	I learned I don't have to be an observer. I can stop it.

This conversation highlights a number of areas where knowledge and skills have been gained from the discussions on the types of bullying, the ability to discuss the

topic, the ability to defend and knowledge of the Bullying Circle. The Bullying Circle was also commented on by members of the fourth class who shared, "We know about the people in the bullying circle" (Mike) with Dennis adding that they are, "The people who egg things on." Ron (5th) demonstrated knowledge of two bullying circle participants with "The bully could not attack without the follower or supporter".

Wayne of sixth class shared the knowledge of what bullying is and how it has helped him identify bullying behaviour:

Wayne:	I know what bullying is now.
Researcher:	What do you mean?
Wayne:	I didn't know before when someone was bullying me.

This knowledge of bullying phenomena may be a key resource in defending as described by Simon of fourth class, "At first I didn't know the bully, what is the bully, now I know and how to defence it (sic)". There is evidence to suggest that the ability to describe the bullying phenomena may have helped the boys move from being the object of blame as described by Philip of fifth class: "I can talk more. Usually I got the blame. And now I tell the teacher and I don't get the blame anymore".

Table 5.14 Learner Feedback 2011

Cognitive Acquisition: Defending	
Class	Issues reported
4	-Recognised adults as being helpful defenders -Teachers presence needed to aid defending -Empowered to report bullying -Confident Behaviours adapted for Defender Role-plays and put to practical use, especially beneficial for the smaller boys -Bullying Prevention Contract aids defending as it is preventative
5	-A person who might be inclined to bully will not do it if he doesn't feel supported -Defending can done through third party means such as an incident report box -Bullying Prevention Contract helpful in preventing bullying
6	-Increased ability to inquire of peers as to why they are fighting -Tendency to be physical in the act of defending -Found the role-plays useful and fun

	-The Bullying Circle was one of the most useful parts of the BPP -Bullying Prevention Contract was not useful -Learners reported that their teacher does not listen to their reports of bullying incidents -Learners reported that their teacher does care about them
Actions Taken	-Prior to the rollout of Year 2 the researcher will recommend at a whole school meeting for teachers to take the time to listen to reports of bullying as much as possible and to take these reports seriously

When discussing defending it appeared that many boys relied on the teachers to help them with problems. Robert of fourth class shared, "I'd get the closest adult and make them to sort it out". Simon of fourth class explained how defending is facilitated by the presence of a teacher or an adult and shared that this factor made defending "Easy. It's easy to defend in school because there's an adult around. Always". The act of defending also took other forms with Paul (5th) sharing that, "I'd put a note in the box". Here he is referring to an incident report box that their teacher had placed on a table at one end of the classroom. This was a defending solution that the class agreed to when devising their Bullying Prevention Contract. However, it was not always necessary to report to a teacher as John Paul of sixth class seems to indicate that role-play enabled his ability to defend, "I learned how to be a defender...I learned I don't have to be an observer. I can stop it." However, direct defending was not always a straight forward method as reported by Seamus and Richard of sixth class who each had different strategies:

Seamus:	I'd go up and say why are you fighting?
Richard:	I'd break it up.
Researcher:	How?
Richard:	I'd push them away.

Seamus' form of defending would have been the proscribed means learned during the BPP intervention while Richard's commentary concurs with the teachers reports in section 5.2 of the boy's tendency to be physical when defending. Another reported aid to defending was the display of confident behaviours as shared by Roger (4th):

Roger:	You know about the defending?
Researcher:	Yeah.
Roger:	It would make people want to help people more. Before they'd probably be afraid.
Researcher:	What made defending easier?
Roger:	You know the bit that you'd be confident?
Researcher:	Yeah .
Roger:	Some people would probably think they'd be too small and they'd be afraid.
Researcher:	So, the confident behaviours helped them defend?
Roger:	Yeah.

This data on effectively employing confident behaviours concurs with teachers views in section 5.2. The teachers reported that it captured the boys' imaginations and the sixth class teacher recommended that it be a "lesson on its own" (feedback sheet, 1/2/2011). However, this feedback was not acted upon for Year 2 because the teachers found that the five lessons were enough given the pressures of other school commitments.

It was reported that a key resource which aided defending was the use of The Bullying Prevention Contract. Desmond of fourth class reported, "I think the most helpful thing would probably be how it reduced the bullying. It doesn't go round that much in school since we did the Bullying Prevention Contract. They don't do it anymore." Roger (4th) added, "It stops most of the bullying". When asked whether it would be easy or difficult to be a defender several boys in fourth class reported that it would be "easy". As to why it would be easy Desmond (4th) replied, "Cause we went through the bullying contract and we know how they felt and you shouldn't be afraid of bullying. You should stand up for yourself or stand up for the person that is being bullied". Simon (4th) added, "You know the contract? From the first class up it should be the same". The positive opinion of the contract was shared by the fifth class as they agreed that "the poster" was helpful in preventing bullying (The Bullying Prevention Contract was offered as a template but teachers were allowed to create their own versions such as the poster described. See Appendix 5a, p. 427 for a picture of the fourth class contract). However, the sixth class boys felt that the

contract was of no benefit at all as voiced by Don, "No. We don't even look at it. Our teacher doesn't care".

This comment by Don concerned the researcher as the sixth class teacher, at times, appeared not fully engaged with the facilitation of the BPP. For example, in terms of written feedback, the sixth class teacher had given the least amount compared to other teachers (approximately 50% less written feedback). Also, he had not attended two of the post session review teacher meetings (25/1/11 and 28/3/11), citing other school demands on his time. When he did come to the review sessions he made poor eye contact with the researcher and little feedback compared to the fourth and fifth class teachers. This lack of engagement concerned the researcher as he speculated on how well the BPP was being transmitted to the learners in this teacher's care. On the day the second OBVQ-R survey (10/6/2011) was administered by the researcher in the teacher's homeroom, the researcher observed that all the learners had their heads on their desks and the room was totally quiet. The sixth class teacher informed the researcher that they were acting up and this was their punishment. This concerned the researcher as to how well the learners were engaging with the BPP resource if punishment was associated with it. Furthermore, at the focus group interview the sixth class learners noted the following with regards to recommendations for improving the BPP:

Seamus:	Maybe if the teachers actually listen.
Richard:	The teachers need to listen.
Wayne:	You see, they don't really care if we're being bullied. They get to go home at the end of the day. They don't have to deal with nothing.
Researcher:	So you feel you're not being listened to when bullying happens?
Martin:	Yeah.
Wayne:	Cause they don't care like. He sends us off to a corner and he goes off at the end of the night. He don't care about any of us like. We still have to deal with it in ourselves.
Don:	Yeah. All they do is give lines and send you to the corner of the room.
Wayne:	He never listens to your side of the story.

Researcher:	So you think one of the ways the bullying prevention programme can be improved is if the teachers listen more and took the bullying seriously?
Don:	Yeah.
Wayne:	They don't care. You can say that to them if you want.

These concerns of the sixth class boys moved the researcher to recommend at the whole school meeting in autumn 2011 that, as much as possible, teachers take the time to listen to reports of bullying as some learners had reported that they felt they weren't being listened to.

5.4.2 Understanding: Learner perceptions

Table 5.15 Learner Feedback 2011: Understanding	
Metacognition: Thinking about/discussing bullying	
Class	Issues reported
4	-No blame approach made it easy to discuss bullying
5	-Not giving the names of those involved in bullying incidents made it easier to discuss
6	-Peer learning potentially at work -'No name, no blame' approach may foster defending
Actions Taken	n/a

Robert of fourth class shared that the 'No name, no blame' approach made it easier to discuss the subject of bullying, "You don't have to name anyone, so then no one will get angry at you". This was a desired goal for the BPP approach overall. Punishment is not the recommended outcome. Rather the discussion is meant to facilitate coming to an understanding of bullying phenomena and effect on one's self and others. It appears that this knowledge may have been helpful in encouraging Richard in coming to the defence of a sixth class peer. He made an interesting comment about approaching the person bullying and asking him the open question: "I'd ask him if he knows he's bullying". On a theoretical level this is an example of a learner making an effort to bridge the knowledge gap with a peer. Encouraging

peers to question knowledge is a core goal of peer learning. Additionally, it may be that the 'No name, no blame' rule helped to create conditions where learners could be in a place where they could become the peer teachers in the discussions and thereby aid the learning process. However, there is a lack of data to support this commentary in Year 1 but in Year 2 there was much more evidence to support this argument. Hence, it is presented here as a preliminary comment.

Table 5.16 Learner Feedback 2011: Understanding

Metacognition: Thinking about/discussing feelings	
Class	Issues reported
4	-No blame approach made it easy to discuss feelings -Evidence that the activity of discussing feelings might be helpful for engendering an empathetic response -Reviewing the event could be negative
5	-No blame approach made it easy to discuss feelings
6	-Males discussing feelings can find it difficult -Talking about feelings engenders sympathy for the victimised peer
Actions Taken	n/a

Both of the fourth and fifth class focus groups reported that discussing feelings related to bullying events with the proviso of the 'no blame' approach made it relatively easy. However, the sixth class group expressed reservations as voiced by Wayne and Don:

Wayne:	The stories were easy except when it came to the feelings.
Don:	That was hard.
Wayne:	We're men and we find it hard to talk about them.

With regards to describing feelings, the boys in sixth class shared that the bullied child could feel, "Nervous, afraid, angry, feel like crying". Fourth class boys reported that the person being victimised could be, "Very nervous, sad and frightened in case he gets hurt". Wilbur of fifth class added "frustrated" to the list. In discussing these feelings Patrick (4th) found it helpful, "Just to get it off your chest". Wilbur (5th)

contributed an empathetic response, "Bullying is mean to the human heart". The BPP activities for naming and describing feelings may have made it easier for learners to name and describe feelings in general, thereby engendering empathy for the targeted individual. For example, when asked if they have more or less sympathy for the bullied child since the BPP intervention had been completed, this sixth class comment is representative of the response from all of the focus groups, "More sympathy" and "It's easier to have sympathy for the boy being bullied" (Richard). Robert of fourth class stated that being aware of the other person's feelings changes perceptions about bullying "With the bullying prevention you know what happens and you know how they feel so then you think more of it". This awareness of the feelings of the other made it easier for the learners to put themselves in the bullied child's place as detailed in the following conversation with the fourth class boys:

Researcher:	Since the BPP intervention has been completed is it more or less easy to put yourself in the bullied child's place?
Several voices:	Easier.
Simon:	Cause you understand how they felt.
Researcher:	What sort of things do you think a bullied child feels?
Patrick:	Very nervous and sad.
Dennis:	Frightened in case he gets hurt.
Desmond:	They'd be kind of angry too but they don't show it.

Overall, the evidence presented from the focus groups demonstrated that the BPP helped learners in their ability to name and discuss feelings while also aiding them to empathise with the plight of the victimised peer.

5.4.3 Concerns

With regard to perceptions of levels of bullying in the school the boys in all classes reported that the BPP had helped reduce bullying in their school (see section 5.5 for statistical corroboration). However, as previously discussed, the sixth class boys expressed a degree of dissatisfaction with the response of their teacher to the activities undertaken during the intervention. A further concern of the researcher with the sixth class teacher was with the class pupils' responses to the second

administration of the OBVQ-R survey. According to the boys this instruction from the teacher happened just before I came into the sixth class room to administer the survey:

Richard:	It was boring.
Sean:	We all rushed through it. We wanted to get it done quickly.
Paul:	I didn't read them properly.
Mike:	Didn't even look at it.
Researcher:	Why did you feel that way about that, the questionnaire?
Richard:	Cause the teacher said before just remember now I'll be looking at everything you say.
Researcher:	Before we did it?
Richard:	He said so make sure now everything you say is the right thing to say. So then I felt conscious. But he shouldn't have said that now should he have?
Researcher:	No, it's all anonymous and nobody's meant to know your answers.

This data concerned the researcher in how it might affect the quantitative results of the second survey (see section 5.5), but additionally it highlighted the central role that a teacher plays in the dissemination of the BPP. With regards to this the sixth class teacher shared that "it needs to be done early in the school year especially in sixth as there is already a lot going on in the second half of the year" (Written Feedback, 9/5/2011). For example, commitments such as communion and confirmation rehearsals, band, trips and play rehearsals were cited as examples of extracurricular activities that compete for the teacher's time to deliver the programme as well as their own teaching commitments. Si's concerns with regards to the timing of delivery for the BPP and the pressures upon him may be a possible explanation as to why his pupils felt he wasn't listening to them. This issue of curriculum overcrowding and the role of the teacher in exploring anti-bullying education will be considered in Chapter Six.

5.5 Results from the second OBVQ-R survey (2011)

The second OBVQ-R was conducted in June 2011 in both the research and control schools. The tables below compare responses by the research and control school pupils to question four: "How often have you been bullied in the past couple of months?" Percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth. The research school had 52 pupils reporting at both administrations of the questionnaire. The control school had 59 reporting in December 2010 with 55 pupils reporting in the June 2011 survey.

Table 5.17 Research School 2010 and 2011 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 4:

How often have you been bullied in the past couple of months?				
How often:	% 2010	n	% 2011	n
1. Not at all	59.6	31	73.1	38
2. Once or Twice	23.0	12	13.5	7
3. 2 or 3 times	5.8	3	5.8	3
4. Once a week	5.8	3	3.8	2
5. Several times a week	5.8	3	3.8	2

Looking at the data in table 5.17 it can be seen that prior to the implementation of the BPP, 40.4% of pupils reported having been victimised, as compared to 26.9% after the intervention. Hence, looking at reports of victimisation solely (items 2-5) post intervention there was a general reduction of 40.1% in reports of being victimised (the percentage difference between 40.4% and 26.9%). There was also significant reduction in reports of bullying happening only once or twice in the past couple of months (item 2). Prior to the BPP intervention 23.0% of pupils reported that they had been bullied while post intervention 13.5% reported having been bullied. This is a significant reduction of 52.5% (the percentage difference of these numbers) in this category three and half months post intervention in year 1.

While there was a reduction in the number reporting being bullied at the research school there was mixed reporting at the control school as can be seen in Table 5.18.

Table 5.18 Control School 2010 and 2011 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 4:				
How often have you been bullied in the past couple of months?				
How often:	% 2010	n	% 2011	n
1. Not at all	57.6	34	58.2	32
2. Once or Twice	16.9	10	14.5	8
3. 2 or 3 times	11.9	7	12.7	7
4. Once a week	3.4	2	9.1	5
5. Several times a week	10.2	6	5.5	3

The data reports that in December, 2010 42.4% of pupils had been bullied at some point in the past couple of months. In the June survey, an almost identical figure of 41.8% of pupils reported having been bullied. In the response choice of once or twice (item 2) there was a small decrease of 2.4%, whereas the frequency of being bullied once a week (item 4) had increased almost three-fold, while there was a 50% decrease in pupils being bullied several times a week (item 5).

While there was a small decrease in pupils reporting having been bullied at the control school, at the same time at the research school there was a significant reduction of 40.1%. While results from the survey look promising, it is important to remind the reader that there is evidence that short term interventions can be successful in showing reductions but can have negligible or negative effects longitudinally (Ttofi and Farrington, 2011). Additionally, it is acknowledged that completing the survey itself can help pupils become more aware of bullying (Olweus and Limber, 2010). Therefore, the survey may have been a possible bullying prevention aid for the control school. Hence, the results for the second year of the intervention will be scrutinised at length to ascertain if the BPP was efficacious in reducing bullying over a 2 year cycle.

The overall quantitative results indicate that there is a downward trend in bullying incidents at the research school. However, in light of the feedback from the sixth class boys' focus group, the researcher was also interested to know what perceptions of bullying were at the individual class level over the same period. Table 5.19 indicates an overall reduction in each group:

Table 5.19 Research School: Individuated class group perceptions

OBVQ-R, Question 4:

How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months?			Research Phase		Total
			Pre research phase	Post research phase	
I haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months	4th, 5th or 6th class	4th Class	10	11	21
		5th Class	12	14	26
		6th Class	9	13	22
	Total		31	38	69
It has only happened once or twice	4th, 5th or 6th class	4th Class	3	3	6
		5th Class	3	1	4
		6th Class	6	3	9
	Total		12	7	19
2 or 3 times a month	4th, 5th or 6th class	4th Class	2	1	3
		5th Class	0	2	2
		6th Class	1	0	1
	Total		3	3	6
About once a week	4th, 5th or 6th class	5th Class	1	0	1
		6th Class	2	2	4
	Total		3	2	5
Several times a week	4th, 5th or 6th class	4th Class	1	1	2
		5th Class	2	0	2
		6th Class	0	1	1
	Total		3	2	5

Table 5.19 indicates that there were significant reductions for all classes including the aforementioned sixth class where there was more than a 30% reduction in reports of pupils being bullied. While these results are encouraging, as they point to a reduction in bullying incidents, it is not indicative of an effective study. As discussed earlier the sixth class pupils, who expressed dissatisfaction with their teacher, may not have taken the time to fill out the survey carefully or with consideration.

However, the researcher received positive feedback from the school principal prior to the start of the second year intervention (Phone conversation, 5/9/2011). He expressed satisfaction with the effect that the BPP had on the learners' behaviour and instead of just running the programme for fourth, fifth and sixth classes, he requested that the programme be inaugurated on a whole school basis.

5.6 Emerging themes from teacher feedback, Year 2

In early September 2011 it was agreed with the principal at the research school that the BPP would be re-introduced in late September – early October 2011 on a whole school basis. Written feedback would now be received from teachers of junior infants to sixth class (see list on page 217). However, the BPP would not now involve weekly face to face feedback and discussion sessions with the teachers as had been the case in year 1, as the aim of the second stage of the research was to assess if the written instructions of the BPP, including the new amendments arising from Year 1 of the study, could be implemented by teachers who did not have access to the same level of support from the researcher as their colleagues had the year before. In summary, the aim was to assess if the BPP could be implemented – directly from the written instructions which each teacher would receive. It was additionally agreed that the previous year's intervention teachers would act as mentors locally in the school if needed. The fifth and sixth class learners (who were the fourth and fifth class learners in the previous school year) would continue to participate in the study to gauge longitudinal efficacy of the BPP. However, by mid-September 2011 the principal asked the researcher to delay the start date as the

previous fifth class teacher had gone on sabbatical. There was no new permanent fifth class teacher in place and he recommended starting in October when the position should be filled. Unfortunately, this position was not filled until the first week of November 2011 and the principal suggested that it would be best to begin the programme in January 2012 as there were too many scheduling conflicts with Christmas projects and performances. This timeline was agreed to reluctantly on the researcher's part as there were concerns that it would affect the longitudinal nature of the intervention. However, it should be noted that it was reported by the sixth class teacher (whole school meeting with teachers, 9/11/2011) that the sixth class learners were inquiring as to why the programme wasn't continuing and, on his own initiative, he had been continuing with The Bullying Prevention Contract the learners had used when they were in fifth class. The researcher did not have a problem with this and was encouraged by the new found enthusiasm of the sixth class teacher (reasons for this will discussed further in Chapter Six).

This data for the second year of the BPP research study is based on whole school responses from January-May 2012 and is divided as follows:

1. responses to closed questions from the teacher interviews conducted at the end of the second research phase (June, 2012),
2. Themed breakdown and coding of open questions and all forms of feedback (feedback sheets, meetings, emails and recorded responses to teacher interviews).

5.6.1 Teacher Interviews

Researcher conducting of teacher interviews with open and closed questions were recorded on June 19, 2012. In total there were twenty-one questions. Questions 1, 18, 20 and 21 were open questions and data emerging from these questions will be presented within the breakdown of the emerging themes in the following sections.

The teacher identification labels are repeated here for ease of reading. A reminder to the reader that there were 11 teachers available as SR1 went on maternity leave during the BPP implementation and Fi1 was on sabbatical.

J1 = Junior Infants Teacher One
J2 = Junior Infants Teacher Two
Sr1 = Senior Infants Teacher One
Sr2 = Senior Infants Teacher Two, Maternity Substitute
F1 = First Class Teacher One
F2 = First Class Teacher Two
Se1 = Second Class Teacher One
Se2 = Second Class Teacher Two
Th = Third Class Teacher
Fo = Fourth Class Teacher
Fi1 = Fifth Class Teacher, Year 1
Fi2 = Fifth Class Teacher, Year 2
Si = Sixth Class Teacher

Tables 5.17 and 5.18 summarise teacher responses to questions two to seventeen by strand: a) 'Junior Strand' which includes junior infants to first class teachers and b) 'Senior Strand' which includes second class to sixth class teachers. Teachers were given a choice of three response types: 'yes', 'no' and 'don't know'.

Table 5.20
Junior strand responses to closed questions

Question:		Yes	No	Don't know
2.	Can learners define bullying now?	4	1	
3.	Can learners list the bullying types?	5		
4.	Are learners knowledgeable of players in the Bullying Circle?	3	2	
5.	Can learners discuss players in the Bullying Circle?	3	2	
6.	Can learners relate Bullying Circle players to their own school experiences?	4	1	
7.	Do learners have more empathy towards others after having done the BPP?	4		1
8.	Do learners know what steps to take if they were a target of bullying?	5		
9.	Do learners know what to do if they saw a peer being bullied?	4		1

10.	Can learners demonstrate confident behaviours when defending?	1	2	2
11.	Has peer influence had a positive effect on learner knowledge of bullying?	5		
12.	Do you think role-play usage has had a positive effect on learner understanding of bullying?	4	1	
13.	Do you think peer learning has had a positive effect on learner knowledge of bullying circle players?	3	2	
14.	Do you think role-play has had a positive effect on learner understanding of bullying circle players?	4	1	
15.	Do you think peer learning has had a positive effect on learner knowledge of how to deal with bullying?	5		
16.	Do you think role-play has had a positive impact on learner understanding of how to deal with bullying situations?	4		1
17.	Do you think the BPP has had an impact by decreasing bullying in your school?	3	1	1

Teachers elaborated on their responses to some of the closed questions, and these are presented below as they highlight differences of teacher interpretation of ability to implement the BPP within the junior strand of the primary school.

The lexicon of the BPP, which includes the bullying definition, the bullying types and the players of the bullying circle, was an area that some teachers in this strand had problems with in one form or another. The F2 teacher reported a concern that the word bully could 'stigmatise' and could be misused for once-off incidents of aggression. There was a fear that this could lead to a significant amount learners to "tell tales" (F2 teacher). This view is accurately summarised by the response from the J1 teacher: "They'd be going home telling their moms they were being bullied even though it wouldn't be a bullying offence." Out of concern for this, the J1 teacher reported that "We took it on ourselves (referring to the J2 teacher as well) that we

wouldn't use the word bullying in the infant classes" and made the decision to use the phrase "hurting others" (J1 teacher) when talking to the learners about bullying. With regards to learner understanding of the definition of bullying the F1 and F2 teachers noted that the children understood bullying as "Something bad that keeps happening".

Another area of mixed response for the junior school teachers was the Confident Behaviours exercise. The J1 teacher felt that this drama activity was over the young learners' heads and reported that it was "heavy going" while the Sr1 teacher did not attempt the exercise. The F1 teacher reported that it was "easy to set up and coach but a bit of giddiness occurred when practicing handshakes". The F2 teacher was the only teacher of this strand who thought the exercise had a beneficial effect. Overall, the majority of responses from this group indicate that the teachers felt that this exercise was not appropriate for younger learners. These mixed responses to the "Confident Behaviours" exercise contrast very differently with those of the teachers from the second to the sixth class who overall reported positive experiences (see table 5.21).

Role-play was reported as being problematic by the Sr1. She did not attempt the role-plays for this age range as she found them "unsuitable". Additional negative comments on role-play came from the first class teachers. The F1 teacher reported that the role-plays were sometimes teaching learners to be "better bullies" as "they've found the bully powerful" (the potential of role-play to create/reinforce negative behaviours will be discussed further in Chapter Six). F2 reported on the Defender Role-play:

> Sometimes not everyone was able to find themselves to be a defender. So, they weren't able to successfully act that out. I think failing that in the role-play has undermined them from what could happen in real life. Possibly, I don't know.

In contrast, both junior infants' teachers reported positive experiences of using role-play: "We did the role-play with them which they enjoyed, they love that. We made up scenarios about something (bullying) that would happen in the yard and the

classroom. They understood." (J2). When commenting on the impact of role-play on the learners, the J1 teacher noted that:

> They are much more aware of the effects it has on other people. That's one of the biggest benefits that they could see how it could hurt other boys in the classes. It's amazing how their behaviour has changed towards one another in the class. It has been positively affected as well as out in the yard.

It is interesting that the teachers of the junior infants were positive about role-play compared to senior infants and first class teachers. This not only raises the issue of teacher ability to adapt the BPP for classroom use but also teacher comfort levels with and ability to use role-play. These topics will be discussed further in Chapter Six. In contrast to the junior strand, senior strand feedback on teacher implementation of role-play and other BPP tasks met with little difficulty as shown in Table 5.21. However, there were some areas of concern.

Table 5.21
Senior strand responses to closed questions

Question:		Yes	No	Don't know
2.	Can learners define bullying now?	6		
3.	Can learners list the bullying types?	6		
4.	Are learners knowledgeable of players in Bullying Circle?	6		
5.	Can learners discuss players in The Bullying Circle?	6		
6.	Can learners relate Bullying Circle players to their own school experiences?	6		
7.	Do learners have more empathy towards others having done the BPP?	6		
8.	Do learners know what steps to take if they were a target of bullying?	6		
9.	Do learners know what to do if they saw a peer being bullied?	6		
10.	Can learners demonstrate confident behaviours when defending?	5		1

11.	Has peer influence had a positive effect on learner knowledge of bullying?	6		
12.	Do you think role-play usage has had a positive effect on learner understanding of bullying?	6		
13.	Do you think peer learning has had a positive effect on learner knowledge of bullying circle players?	6		
14.	Do you think role-play has had a positive effect on learner understanding of bullying circle players?	6		
15.	Do you think peer learning has had a positive effect on leaner knowledge of how to deal with bullying?	6		
16.	Do you think role-play has had a positive impact on learner understanding of how to deal with bullying situations?	6		
17.	Do you think the BPP has had an impact by decreasing bullying in your school?	5		1

Overall table 5.21 reflects very positive teacher experiences of implementation and usage of the BPP. There were only two questions which individual teachers did not answer in the affirmative. For example, Question 10 queries if learners can use confident behaviours. Fi2 responded "Don't know" and qualified her response with the comment that most of her pupils did know how to use confident behaviours but they got a bit silly when doing the exercise.

Question 17 queries if the teacher thought the BPP had an effect in reducing bullying at their school. The third class teacher replied "Don't know" and then qualified his response with the following comment: "There was no repeated aggression in my class. There was just yelling at each other. I definitely think it has been preventative." The Se1and Se2 teachers felt that the lessons were too long with "too much oral words for students" (Se2), being "cumbersome towards the end" (Se2). Se1 reported though "I thought there was a lot of content. Decrease the content". Se2 shared that "As teachers we don't need a lot of instructions really because we

have other manuals to guide us as well". To address the lessons being "cumbersome" from week four, the Se1 and Se2 teachers decided to split their groups to aid facilitation. This reduced their lesson time to twenty-five minutes. Supporting this decision the Se1 said "For the age range, the attention span, to make the lessons shorter. The attention span is better to make it in shorter spurts."

With regards to the Confident Behaviours exercise Se2 shared that the "Children didn't understand confidence" and Se1 reported that words like 'confidence' and 'belief in yourself' were "too abstract". With reference to the word confidence Se1 reported that, "A word like confidence for them needs to be fleshed out more" as "I found the concept of confidence difficult to explain". This is in keeping with the data from the junior strand teachers who reported similar concerns about the level of the language and the concepts explored in the BPP and their appropriacy for young children. However, from third class on there were no reported problems with these exercises with the Fi2 teacher reporting, "They were excellent at displaying confident behaviour – easy to set up and teach". Overall, the teachers indicated a highly positive response to the Confident Behaviours exercise.

In a comparison of responses to the closed questions between the two strands there are more positive responses provided by the senior strand school teachers. Looking at each group's total responses as a number, there were ninety-six answers given by the senior strand. Ninety-four responses were positive. This is a rate of 97.92% positive responses to BPP programme usage; whereas with the junior strand , the positive feedback percentage is not as high. There were thirteen negative responses which represent 16.25% of the total. There were six "Don't Knows" which represent 7.5%. Sixty-one responses were positive which represent 76.25% of total responses. Table 5.22 below presents both groups overall answers as a percentage within the three categories of response.

Table 5.22 Synopsis of closed question teacher responses to the effectiveness of the BPP in reducing bullying	Yes	No	Don't Know
Junior strata responses	76.25	16.25	7.5
Senior strata responses	97.9	0.0	2.1

The survey data appears to indicate that the BPP was a useful tool for teachers from second class to sixth and somewhat less useful for teachers from junior infants to first class. However, overall feedback is positive and encouraging for the future development of The BPP. The following section offers a detailed consideration of these responses through themed analysis in an effort to determine strengths and weaknesses of the BPP programme for the earlier years in primary school education.

5.6.2 Teacher themes coded from feedback responses January – June 2012

Once again to aid analysis, the data is presented according to the junior and senior strands. An overview of this themed data is presented in the tables below. It is a compilation of feedback, recommendations and responses collated and analysed from written feedback and open questions from the individual teacher Year 2 interviews.

Table 5.23 Teacher themes coded from feedback responses January – June 2012

Theme	Sub-theme	Overview of feedback and/or issues
Content Delivery	Instructionality	Content: Overlong instructions, need to be more concise
	Role-play usage	Bullying Enactment and Reverse Role-play: Junior strand reported difficulties with role-play, Senior strand found role-play an effective teaching aid
		Observer Role-play: Role-plays simplified for junior infants but senior infants teachers found role-plays difficult to implement, senior strand found that Observer Role-plays were useful for identifying participant players
		Defender Role-play: Junior and Senior infants teachers found Defender Role-play unsuitable, defending worked well for senior strand but there were doubts about how well peer defending would work for fifth class
Knowledge	Cognitive	Bullying Definition: Once-off incidents reported as

	Acquisition	bullying, repeated nature of bullying emphasised, the phrase 'hurting others' was used by early years teachers, teacher expressed concerns regarding learner's telling parents that once-off incidents of aggression were bullying
		Identification of Types: Reduced list of bullying types used for early years
		Identification of Roles: Number of roles in Bullying Circle needs to be reduced for early years
Understanding	Metacognition	Peer Learning: Learners demonstrated that discussions enabled ability to discuss bullying types, roles and ability to defend, peer discussions reported as superior resource to didactic methods, discussions enabled learners to reflect on school bullying incidents
	Affective Learning	Engendering Empathy: Role-play activities foster development of empathy, talking about and labelling feelings in the discussions also aids development of empathy

The following tables present a strong consensus of responses to each emerging sub-theme. The responses labelled junior represent classes from junior infants to first class and the senior group represents the second to sixth classes. As the BPP implementation was reflexive and responsive, the 'Actions Taken" box reflects changes that were made or recorded in response to feedback.

5.6.3 Content Delivery

Table 5.24 Content Delivery 2012	
Instructionality	
Strand	Issues reported
Junior	-Instructions were overly long -Reduce materials -Teachers do not have enough time to read lengthy instructions

	-Overload of work for young learners -Materials need to be re-written for younger years
Senior	-Instructions were overly long -More concise instructions needed
Actions Taken	-Bullet point instructions inserted in each session handout

Over long instructions was a common feedback feature from both the senior and junior school teachers. Even though this had been addressed to a satisfactory extent in Year 1 of the study when three teachers were involved, there were now eleven teachers reporting and, except for the fourth and sixth class teachers who had implemented the BPP in Year 1, it was still a problematic area. Sr1 of the junior strand reported that there was "...too much work for young students" and that the lessons "Need worksheets, writing, drawing to help them assimilate information" (Written Feedback, 30/1/2012). Sr2 specifically shared in her written feedback that "Lesson 1 needs to be re-written as it is not child friendly for younger children" (16/1/2012). In the senior strand Fi2 contributed in written feedback that, "Shorter instructions would be easier to follow" (23/1/2012). Several teachers recommended using a bullet point format. The researcher reviewed the materials again and edited instructions as much as possible for subsequent handouts. Bullet points were inserted at the end of each lesson for a handy review. Fi2 reported in the written feedback of week three that the actioning of the recommendations had a positive effect as the instructions of the BPP became "really clear and concise" with bullet points proving "useful" (30/1/2012).

Table 5.25 Content Delivery 2012: Role-play usage

Bullying Enactment and Reverse Role-play	
Strand	Issues reported
Junior	-Difficulty in coaching young learners to role-play -Younger children preferred mime to language -Concern that learners could learn to be better bullies through role-play -Boys were overly physical in role -BPP concepts grasped by first class learners

Senior	-Role-play is an effective tool for learning -Fifth class teacher reported that boys were overly physical in role -Reverse Role-play helps learners open up about their experiences of bullying
Actions Taken	-Noted the use of mime as an effective form of expression for young learners in sharing information about bullying incidents

As reported in table 5.25 there were mixed reviews from junior strand teachers on role-play usage. The J1 and J2 teachers were highly enthusiastic about the efficacy of role-play as a learning tool. The J1 teacher reported that, "We did the role-playing with them which they enjoyed, they loved that. We made up scenarios about something that would be happening in the yard and the classroom" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). In comparison, the teachers of the senior infants and first classes were negative in their feedback about the use of role-play as a bullying prevention resource. They shared the opinion that the role-plays were teaching the children to be "better bullies" (F2, Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). F1 elaborated on this (Teacher Interview,19/6/2012):

Researcher: How was your experience of using the BPP?

F1: It was interesting. It was straightforward and well laid out. However, it was the boys, maybe it was their age, maybe they were treating it like a game but it was all how to be a better bully. When they were doing the bullying role-plays, we had to remind them, they were laughing at what was going on, now if this was real bullying who are you? It was quite interesting to see that it was a game rather than an actual thing that could go on in the yard. They'd realise they were the onlookers encouraging what was going on. They were actually very good at getting the concepts. But when they actually slipped into the role they found it kind of fun. Even some of the quieter children who wouldn't bully took on that persona and enjoyed being the bully. But isn't it with drama anyway what you're not used to you want to take on that role. They were probably a bit young to grasp everything there but still the message got through. And they had very good insights in that the bullying could actually be helped, you could negotiate, that there was a

saviour for everybody and that the bully wasn't a totally bad person. They could help the bully to be better.

F1's comments reveal that the young learners found the role-plays fun and generative. The idea that learners became "a better bully" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012) may have been speculation on the part of the F1 and F2 teachers as they provided no evidence of it. However, what is revealed in the data above is that through the BPP learners became aware that bystanders "encourage" bullying, they understood the overall concepts with regards to the bullying definition, types and roles, children who are bullied can be helped, bullying situations can be negotiated, the bullying child is not a bad person and the child who is engaging in bullying could be helped to do better.

Notable feedback from the junior infants teachers was that learners were more inclined to engage in mime rather than use language when enacting the bullying role-plays as the teacher reported that it was "...heavy going for them" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). This extract from this open question highlights this concern:

Researcher:	You said you simplified the role-plays, could you tell me how you simplified them?
J2:	I took part as one of the people first. Then they showed me how they had similar incidents in the yard. Obviously they didn't use names and that. But it's very hard for the infants not to use names because they do love telling tales. So, that would be another issue with it. They kind of look to tell tales which is another kind of thing as why the role-play doesn't work as well with the infants.
Researcher:	What sort of incidents did they mime?
J2:	Exclusion was the biggest thing really. Some of them have strong bonds from pre-school. Letting other boys play was a big thing. There was a friendship week that worked well with it as well. So, if there was some boy on his own, they bring him in.

The first class teachers also reported using miming for the role-play and reported that "it took a bit of coaching to get the groups to use words instead of miming actions at first" (Written, Feedback, 23/1/2012).

Overall, the senior strand teachers responses were positive to role-play's potential as a learning tool "I found that as a teaching aid it has been brilliant, a very good idea in how to deal with bullying" (Si, Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). Once again, the concern about boys being overly physical was shared by all teachers. The Fi2 teacher reported that "...all the groups tended to concentrate on incidents of physical bullying and other forms of bullying were not looked at" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). The boys' predilection for engaging in physical bullying is not surprising as the literature indicates that this type of bullying is more characteristic of boys (Andreou and Bonoti, 2010; Crick and Grotpeter, 1995; Olweus, 2010). With this in mind advice was included in the handouts for the Year 2 teachers to coach learners to use other forms of bullying in their improvised role-plays besides physical. Also, it is worth noting that the fourth and sixth teachers, who were familiar with the BPP from the first year intervention, did not report an overt use of physicality. Therefore, it may be that the fourth and sixth class teachers' experience of the previous year's learner focus on physicality, along with advice in the Year 2 handout, aided them in advising the learners to focus on other forms in the role-plays.

Table 5.26 Content Delivery 2012: Role-play usage

Observer Role-play	
Strand	Issues reported
Junior	-Role-plays simplified for junior infants age range -Senior infant's teacher found lesson unsuitable -First class teachers reported that lesson was easy to implement
Senior	-Observer Role-play potentially creates knowledge about participant players -Realisation by learners that they play a part as observers -Potential of observers to exacerbate bullying situation -Roles can change in the bully-victim continuum within the same bullying incident
Actions Taken	-None

Jr1 reported that the "Role-plays done but simplified to suit class" (Written Feedback, 30/1/2012). This teacher was following the researcher recommendation in the session three handout. In contrast, Sr1 "found the lesson structure unsuitable for this class level" (Written Feedback, 30/1/2012) and went on to say that this was "Not how I would choose to deliver content". With regards to the first class teachers there were no notable issues and they commented that the lesson was "Easy to set up" (Written Feedback, 30/1/2012). This feedback was of prime interest to the researcher as the teacher ability to adapt BPP lessons as and when needed addresses a core query of the research question: how well teachers could adapt the researcher's methods in their own classrooms. The research indicates that some teachers may not be willing to take a flexible approach to adapting materials and require an age specific approach. This will be discussed further in Chapter Six

Fi2 reported that the "Boys found it interesting how many people could be involved in a bullying incident" (Written Feedback, 23/1/2012). This realization that bullying incidents could potentially have a number of participant players was shared by Si, "Noteworthy was the amount of boys who had been onlookers. Almost half" (Written Feedback, 30/1/2012). In discussing the role of observers the boys "acknowledged that they occasionally egg people on" (Fi2, Written Feedback, 30/1/2012). Here, the boys are demonstrating understanding that they "can go from one role to the next even during a bullying event" (Si, Written Feedback, 23/1/2012). This may have been a significant realisation in lowering the rates of bullying because bystanders don't often understand that they are making a contribution to the bullying by offering a sideline commentary (Salmivalli, 2010). Learner responses to survey question thirty-six appear to corroborate this (see table 5.27 below). The data below reveals that there was a significant reduction in willingness to participate in bullying by the end of the Year 2 intervention.

Table 5.27 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys: Question 36				
Do you think you could join in bullying a student whom you didn't like?				
How often:	% 2010	n*	% 2012	n
Yes	73.5	25	3.3	1
Yes, maybe	8.9	3	0.0	0
I don't know	14.7	5	23.4	7
No, I don't think so	2.9	1	6.7	2
No	0.0	0	33.3	10
Definitely no	0.0	0	33.3	10

*There were 34 respondents in fourth and fifth class in 2010

Table 5.27 tracks learner responses from fourth and fifth class in 2010 to their responses in 2012 when they were fifth and sixth class students respectively. In 2010, prior to the BPP intervention, 73.5% indicated that they would be willing to bully someone they didn't like but by the end of the intervention in 2012 only one student responded in the affirmative to this. Significantly, the number of learners who responded "No" or "Definitely no" to joining in bullying a student they didn't like has gone from zero to more than sixty-six percent of respondents. The knowledge gained from the BPP Observer Role-play, that bystanders contribute to bullying, may have had a strong effect on reducing learner willingness to participate in bullying incidents.

Table 5.28 Content Delivery 2012: Role-play usage	
Defender Role-play	
Strand	Issues reported
Junior	-Shyer children found it difficult to portray confident behaviour -Junior and Senior infants teachers found session four unsuitable for learners and did not facilitate it
Senior	-Confident Behaviours drama activity worked well -Fourth and Sixth class reported no difficulties with peer to peer defending -Fifth class teacher reported that defending worked well in class but learner's questioned their ability to overly defend in reality -Discussing the act of defending may have been helpful in encouraging fifth class

	learners to defend
Actions Taken	-Will create lessons more suitable for early years in future BPP handouts

The concept of using confident body posture and voice worked well with Fi2 contributing that "They were excellent at displaying confident behaviour – easy to set up and teach" (Written Feedback, 6/2/2012). Th found, "...the concept to be effective" (Written Feedback, 6/2/2012). However, as in Year 1 they were reservations about some children not being able to do the behaviour, "They understood completely why it would work but as expected the shyer and quieter boys found the confidence difficult to portray during a role play" (Th, Written Feedback, 6/2/2012) and "Observers spotted quickly when the defender wasn't showing confident behavior" (F1, Written Feedback, 6/2/2012).

In the senior strand overall, learners found the lesson useful in illustrating "the role a defender might take" (Th, Written Feedback, 6/2/2012). However, defending peers was a topic of concern for the fifth class learners. "Some boys said they would feel too 'shy' or 'uncool' or 'stupid' to be a defender" (Fi2, Written Feedback, 6/2/2012). However, the very act of talking about feelings on the topic made it easier for the learners to consider defending. The fifth class teacher pointed out at the end of the discussion, "Many boys said perhaps they would defend someone more easily now" (Fi2, Written Feedback, 6/2/2012). This feedback seems to indicate that the act of discussion aids learners in processing and internalising new information and could pave the way for the externalised peer defending. However, after the facilitation of session 5, Fi2 reported in her written feedback that, "Pupils brought up again how difficult it would be to be a defender and many said they would not be able to do it in reality" (13/2/12). By the end of the intervention this observation had been maintained by the fifth class teacher who shared in her feedback, "...many (learners) said they would be reluctant to be a defender and things like that. They know within themselves that they wouldn't be able to stand up and defend themselves you know" (Teacher Interview, 19/2/2012). It is worth restating here that in the BPP learners are instructed that it is perfectly acceptable if a learner does not want to defend overtly. There are ways to defend that avoid direct confrontation such as telling the

teacher or getting the help of the nearest adult which are also recommended strategies in the BPP. The strategy of reporting the bullying incidents can possibly help the learner defend and give them peace of mind as reported in this transcript excerpt from the fifth class focus group (15/6/2012):

Researcher:	Why does that worry go away?
Billy:	Somebody else knows [the teacher] and they could put a stop to it. They could tell the bully to stop what they are doing.

Faith in the teacher's ability to do something about the bullying was strengthened over the course of the intervention. Looking to Question 20 of the OBVQ-R the survey data demonstrates that learners of the fourth and fifth class who continued to work with the BPP from Year 1 to Year 2 reported that teachers became a more trusted resource over the course of the intervention.

Table 5.29 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys: Question 20

How often do the teachers or other adults at school try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at school?

How often:	% 2010	n*	% 2012	n**
Almost never	23.5	8	0.0	0
Once in while	2.9	1	3.4	1
Sometimes	2.9	1	13.8	4
Often	17.7	6	37.9	11
Almost always	53.0	18	44.9	13

*There were 34 respondents in fourth and fifth class in 2010
** Respondent left the answer section blank

The data in table 5.29 reports the boys' responses over the course of the two school years. It demonstrates that by the end of the research period learners perceive the adults at the school to be more pro-active in stopping bullying. In 2010 more than 23% of pupils perceived teachers or adults at the school as non pro-active in stopping bullying whereas in May 2012 this category is non-existent. This corresponds to data from the focus groups where learners nominate the teacher as a resource in preventing bullying (see section 5.7). It is noteworthy that the category "Often" has almost doubled in learners' perception of the teacher as a resource.

However, the category of almost always indicates a decrease. This could be because the learners are more able defenders themselves. Data that supports this is presented in section 5.7 which examines learner data.

5.6.4 Teacher Themes: Knowledge

Table 5.30 Knowledge 2012 - Cognitive Acquisition	
Bullying Definition	
Strand	Issues reported
Junior	-Five teachers found that the word 'Bullying' confused young learners and chose to use the phrase 'hurting others' used instead -Once-off incidents reported as bullying -Repeated nature of bullying was noted as important in explaining the definition
Senior	-At the start learners were often reporting once-off incidents as bullying -Repeated nature of bullying was noted as important in explaining definition
Actions Taken	-Noted that some teachers were wary of the word bullying especially when it comes to younger learners. -Recommendation noted that future editions of BPP should have a note for teachers to give to parents about the repeated nature of bullying so as to allay teachers' worries about once-off incidents being reported as bullying

The junior and senior infants teachers were wary of the word 'bullying' as they felt the word, "is very strong for young children" (Sr1, Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). J1 noted "we didn't use the term bullying. We felt that they would all be going home saying there were being bullied. That they wouldn't understand that it was repeated. We used the term 'hurting others'" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). J2 echoed this concern, "They'd be going home telling their moms they were being bullied even though it wouldn't be a bullying offence. And that would obviously cause a lot of trouble" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). When asked for specific incidents of parents contacting the school about once-off incidents, the teachers could not provide any examples but thought that this was a scenario that could likely happen. Interestingly, J1 reported that, "One or two of them (learners) did mention bullying and we said yes that's what we're talking about but we kept reminding them about

different ways we hurt others repeatedly and things like that" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). Teachers of both strands found that they had to consistently emphasise the repeated nature of bullying to learners as they thought, "...it included once-off incidents" (Se1, Written Feedback, 16/1/2012). Th noted that learners "...were surprised it wasn't once-off incidents and shared that "repeated aggression was a phrase we spent some time on" (Written Feedback, 16/1/2012). In the senior strand Fi2 shared that "Pupils reported a lot of isolated incidents of aggressive behavior and an emphasis on 'repeated' acts of aggression needed to be clarified" (Written Feedback, 16/1/2012). As the BPP intervention progressed Si believed that the emphasis on repetition had, "decreased false bullying" and aided "the ability of most boys to distinguish between what is and isn't bullying" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). Se2 reported that "They now understand that bullying is repeated behaviour" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). Incidents of aggression during recess were still occurring but these incidents were, "...issues with managing their behavior when playing" as there was "a lot of pushing and messing going on" but now learners were "aware that this is not bullying" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). The researcher speculates that the fact that there was "a lot of pushing and messing going on" is evidence of physical bullying which, as mentioned earlier, is normative for boys (Olweus, 2010). However, this fear of the 'bullying' word concerned the researcher as he had no problems with junior and senior learner comprehension of bullying in his previous research (Donohoe, 2007). Additionally, it is worth commenting at this point that the teachers' fear of using the 'bullying' word may have stemmed from an incident where a pupil reported being bullied to an outside authority. In September 2011 a pupil reported being repetitively bullied to teachers and the principal at the school. He was not believed. The principal shared with the researcher that no one saw evidence of it (Teacher Meeting, November 7, 2011). It was reported to researcher by the principal that the pupil then went on to report the bullying to a counsellor. The counsellor in turn reported it to the school and asked what they were going to do about it. As the staff had a legal responsibility to protect the student (The Education Act, 1998) they were very concerned. It was suggested to the researcher by the principal at the whole school meeting for the Year 2 implementation review that the child might be making it up. At the time I shared with the principal and teachers that research indicates that bullying can be well-hidden

and that often victims are not believed (O'Moore, 2010). As the Year 2 intervention progressed teacher concerns emerged that the BPP role-plays were putting thoughts into children's heads and that it, in fact, was maybe the cause of some of the bullying in Year 1. This reasoning was not unfounded as research has shown that interventions can raise learner knowledge of what bullying is and this in turn can increase reportage in the short term (Olweus, 2007). In contrast to the principal and teacher concerns, the preliminary quantitative data from the learners was indicating that levels of bullying were reduced since the implementation of the BPP (see section 5.8). It appeared that this incident of the learner reporting bullying to an outside authority figure was of deep concern to the principal and teachers. However, by the end of the intervention fears of the 'bullying word' may have been allayed as the J1 teacher had these final thoughts to share on the topic (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012):

> If I was to do it again with junior infants I think I would use the term bullying this time but to make sure parents were aware (of the definition from the literature). Because children might say they were being bullied when they were just tripped in the yard. And to have a story where a boy was being repeatedly bullied, it would help them to understand it.

Table 5.31 Knowledge 2012: Cognitive

Identification of Types	
Strand	Issues reported
Junior	-Junior and Senior infants focussed on physical, verbal and exclusion bullying -Sr2 reported that material was difficult to implement and suggested that lesson be re-written for early years
Senior	-No issues or concerns for the identification of types -Learners surprised by the variety of types
Actions Taken	-Researcher will revise and adapt BPP for early years in future editions

In the junior strand teachers reported that the lexicon of types was too much information and followed the revised BPP recommendation to focus on physical, verbal and exclusion bullying. This reduction in the amount of types for young

learners was beneficial as J2 reported "Children were able to identify different ways we can 'hurt others' (physical, verbal, exclusion)" (Written Feedback, 16/1/2012). Sr1 reported that "Lesson 1 needs to be re-written for younger children as it was not child friendly" (Written Feedback, 16/1/2012). As previously discussed, this concerned the researcher as it was a prime goal of the research to ascertain teacher ability to adapt materials. Emerging feedback data was revealing more flexibility from the junior infants' teacher than the senior infants' teacher who by the third lesson stated "the lesson as given was difficult to implement at this class level" (Written Feedback, 30/1/2012). As reported previously, this demonstrates that not all teachers take a flexible approach to adapting materials. Therefore, it was becoming evident to the researcher that re-writing of the BPP for early years would be a necessary exercise for future editions as not all of the teachers felt empowered to adapt the lessons for themselves.

In the senior strand Se1 noted that at first the boys thought that, "...bullying was physical only" (Se1, Written Feedback, 16/1/2012). As the work progressed with bullying re-enactments it emerged that "name calling" (Se1, Written Feedback, 23/1/2012) was also a common form of verbal bullying that second class learners experienced. Fo reported that the "Boys were shocked at all the different types. They were unaware that bullying could take so many different forms". The fifth and sixth class teachers did not report issues about learner confusion or surprise over the forms bullying could take. This may suggest that the learner knowledge gained from the BPP intervention in Year 1 was still in active use.

Table 5.32 Knowledge 2012: Cognitive

Identification of Roles	
Strand	Issues reported
Junior	-Roles need to be reduced -Young learners are literal: Olweus' Bullying Circle is in fact not a circle
Senior	-Terms too difficult for learners initially but assimilation did occur
Actions Taken	-Consideration will be given to designing a new version of the Bullying Circle for future work. With the possibility that the Bullying Circle for early years will have fewer roles and easier names to aid assimilation and comprehension.

Teachers of the junior strand felt that there was too much information for the early years. J1 recommended that the "Names of roles needed to be simplified" (Written Feedback, 30/1/2012). Fi1 reported this learner observation on The Bullying Circle: "They pointed out that the diagramme for the Bullying 'circle' is actually a semi-circle!...the shape was wrong...I just laughed. I was impressed with them actually. I was taking it as it is" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2013). This comment from the young learners was insightful. The Olweus Bullying Circle is a diagramme with dots arranged in a semi-circle to represent the players (see Chapter Two, section 2.4.1).

In the senior strand there was also some confusion with regards to The Bullying Circle. Fo commented that "The boys were surprised about how many people were involved" (Written Feedback, 23/2/2012). Th related that in session two of the intervention she, "...used the exact handout and for a lot of the boys, the terms were too difficult for them...The terms all had to be explained more simple to them - henchmen, disengaged. They had trouble pronouncing the words even when they had been explained" (Written Feedback, 23/2/2012). However, this appeared to be only teething problems with the amount of information boys were taking on as by session five Th went on to share that the boys were, "Very good at identifying members of the bullying circle" (Written Feedback, 13/2/2012). There were no issues reported with regards to the fifth and sixth classes who had learned about the Bullying Circle players in Year 1 of the intervention. Their learner knowledge appeared to be in active use.

5.6.5 Teacher Themes: Understanding

The post role-play discussion questions and reflections were intended to engage the learners in metacognition, peer learning and foster their empathetic nature by questioning individual assumptions while generating knowledge from the whole class. Data presented below shows some evidence of this.

Table 5.33 Understanding 2012	
Metacognition: Discussion/Peer Learning	
Class	Issues reported
Junior	-Learners were able to discuss verbal, physical and exclusion bullying -Learners demonstrated ability to discuss defending
Senior	-Peers listen to each other more than teacher -Discussions aided generation of knowledge -Role-play discussions effective in enabling learners to talk about experiences of bullying incidents
Actions Taken	n/a

By session two Ji1 reported that learners were able to discuss "verbal, physical and exclusion" bullying with clear understanding of the types (Written Feedback, 23/1/2012). The senior infant teacher didn't report on the discussions as she found much of the material unsuitable. By session five the first class boys were able to discuss and elaborate on ways that they would defend: "The boys suggested that the bully could be converted to defender status by a) talk to bully, b) negotiate if that fails, c) tell an adult" (F1, Written Feedback, 13/2/2012). These forms of defending discussed by the learners demonstrate their familiarity with defending. F1 added at the end of the written feedback for session five that the Bullying Prevention Contract "appears to be working well for 1st class boys".

Fo reported that the post role-plays discussions helped the learners understanding by "identifying members of the circle" (Written Feedback, 6/2/2/2012) and that at the second post intervention review discussion the boys were very "knowledgeable" on the topic of bullying and "still well aware of all its aspects" (13/2/2012). Fi2 commented that discussion following the role-play "was very effective in getting them to open up about their own experiences". Discussing their own experiences may have been a key area for aiding the learners' metacognition as talking about and questioning each other's views engages learners' intellectually, emotionally and socially (Boud, 2001). This potential of encouraging peer learning as a metacognitive strategy is summed up by the third class teacher, "They listen to their

peers far more than me" (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012). There were no negative issues reported with regards to the sixth class learners' understanding. Si shared that the pupils range of knowledge on the topic was "improving all the time" (Written Feedback, 23/2/2012). The metacognitive discussions were helpful in aiding the learners in thinking about discussing feelings as shown in table 5.34 below.

Table 5.34 Understanding 2012: Affective Learning

Engendering Empathy	
Strand	Issues reported
Junior	-School Pictures was a beneficial exercise for discussing feelings -More exercises on feelings recommended
Senior	-The act of doing role-play itself may foster empathy -Talking about feelings in the discussions was a useful exercise to engender empathy
Actions Taken	-Researcher will look to include more exercises on feelings in future editions of the BPP for young learners

School Pictures was included in the BPP as a warm-up exercise for discussing feelings. In the written feedback for the junior strand J1 reported that the "Children enjoyed School Pictures" (16/1/2012). However, J1 added the following (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012):

> We had to do a lot of prior work on feelings because you wouldn't cover that in junior infants. Trying to relate how the person was feeling when they were being excluded or when being bullied or hurted (sic).

Junior strand teachers recommended that more exercises on feelings would be useful to aid discussion with the early years as they see saw a strong positive effect (see Chapter Five, section 6.1).

In the senior strand teachers felt that the activity of doing the role-plays was significant for empathy generation and creating knowledge about bullying. The third class teacher reported that, "Getting to act it out and empathise with their character that was very important for their understanding of bullying (Teacher Interview,

19/1/2012). Teachers reported that the discussions following the role-plays, which focussed on feelings of the players involved, were a positive strategy for fostering empathy. This was confirmed by the learners as reported in the following section.

5.7 Learner focus group data, Year 2

On June 15, 2012 four separate focus group sessions were scheduled with representative samples of learners from third, fourth, fifth and sixth class respectively. The decision to add the third class boys was for two reasons: 1) it was agreed with the third class teacher that the questions would be appropriate for learners of their age range (Teacher Meeting, May 23, 2012) and 2) it was agreed with my supervisor that it was an opportunity to collect more data to aid the evaluation of the study. However, on the day scheduled for the focus group interviews, the third class were on their annual school trip. The researcher was asked to return on June 22 to conduct the interview for the third class focus group. Theme table 5.35 below gives a representative summary of responses. Also, the fifth and sixth class boys participating in these focus group sessions were not the same boys from fourth and fifth in year 1. This was intentional in order to generate a greater variety of responses for the data.

Table 5.35 Learner themes coded from focus group responses June, 2012

Theme	Sub-theme	Overview of feedback and/or issues
Knowledge	Cognitive Acquisition	Definition, Types and Roles: The idea that bullying is 'repeated' aggression was drilled into students
		Defending: Confident reporting of bullying incidents to adults, approached peer defending with caution
Understanding	Metacognition	Thinking about/discussing bullying: 'No name, no blame' approach facilitated discussions about bullying and may have fostered defending behaviours
		Thinking about/discussing feelings: Discussing

		feelings may have heightened awareness of personal feelings and those of others with regards to bullying incidents, fear of being socially embarrassed for discussing feelings was a noted concern

The following tables present the feedback which emerged from the focus group sub-themes. Each class is represented in individual rows to reference similarities and differences which are discussed in the commentary that follows. There were three main objectives of the learner focus groups: 1) to ascertain their knowledge and understanding of the bullying topic, 2) their ability to defend, and 3) if they felt that bullying had been reduced at their school. The data which follows is taken from transcriptions of the focus groups which took place with representative samples of six learners from each participating class. Year 2 findings will be compared and contrasted with those from Year 1. As with Year 1, the Year 2 focus group learners' names have been changed to aid anonymity.

5.7.1 Learner sub-themes: Knowledge

Table 5.36 Learner Feedback 2012

Knowledge: Definition, Types and Roles	
Class	Issues reported
3	-Understood bullying is repeated aggression -Knowledge of bullying aids learners to discuss and seek help
4	-Understood bullying is repeated aggression
5	-Understood bullying is repeated aggression -Listed knowledge of types -Fear of repercussions if one defends
6	-Understood bullying is repeated aggression

In table 5.36 it is evident that all groups reported that "Bullying is repeated aggression" as quoted here by Max of fourth class. It appears this important part of the bullying definition had been successfully communicated to them by their teachers

and through the BPP. This was evident in year 1 as well and will be discussed further in chapter six.

With regards to the types of bullying most boys displayed clear knowledge of the types as demonstrated in the extract below from the fifth class focus group:

Researcher:	Does anyone else know what verbal bullying is?
Timmy:	It's like when you call 'em names and stuff. Make fun of them.
Researcher:	Does any else know something about bullying that they didn't know before?
Jack:	Cyber-bullying. I didn't know what that meant.
Researcher:	What is that?
Jack:	It's like over the internet. Like on Facebook they are constantly disliking things, mocking 'em.

With regards to the Bullying Circle the boys demonstrated a good knowledge of the players involved with Donal of third class sharing that he knew, "All the players like the defender, the supporter, the spectators". Eric of fourth class also shared his knowledge of the word passive in the following exchange:

Eric:	I've learned that there was more than just the bully and the victim.
Researcher:	Who else beside the bully and the victim?
Eric:	There's the followers, the onlookers, the defenders, the passives supporters, the passive defenders, the victim, the bully.

It appeared that the knowledge of bullying may have empowered learners as was demonstrated by this third class conversation:

Jim:	Yeah, I got bullied but I know more about it.
Researcher:	How do you know more about it?
Jim:	Because I can talk.
Paul:	I haven't been bullied but I know what to do if I did.
Michael:	I was bullied that's why I know how to handle it now.
Researcher:	How do you handle it now?

Michael:	Like I tell somebody and the person I tell will do something about it.

In this extract the boys appear to be demonstrating a degree of comfort in discussing the subject matter and knowledge of how to protect themselves through non-violent self-defence. This may be due to the fact that the boys are empowered by knowledge to defend as is demonstrated in this following conversation from the learners in fourth class:

Researcher:	Why, how are you better able to talk about it?
Eric:	I'm more able to talk about it because we know more about it.
Craig:	Cause the teachers [in the year] are helping us as well talk about it. And if it happens, they are telling us not to mind what they say but to go straight into the teacher [homeroom teacher] and tell them.
Eric:	If it happens near you, you know what it's about and you go in and tell an adult or someone like that.
Researcher:	Is there anything else you might do?
Jimmy:	I would stand up for him.
Lawrence:	I would too.

Eric appears empowered to talk about the topic of bullying because of the knowledge he has gained. Craig attributes his knowledge acquisition to the teacher led discussions. Then Craig adds that this has helped defending by reporting which is seconded by Eric. It appears that the social nature of the discussions has encouraged the boys not only to defend in this way, but to defend directly; as Jimmy and Lawrence contribute that they have no problem defending directly. The researcher theorises that this ability to discuss the nature of bullying in the post role-play discussions may have helped encourage and empower the emerging defending culture in the school. As the reader is about to see, defending was a discussion topic which resonated with many of the boys during the focus group interviews.

Table 5.37 Learner Feedback 2012	
Cognitive Acquisition: Defending	
Class	Issues reported
3	-Empowered to report bullying -Reduced fear of retaliation
4	-Empowered to report bullying
5	-There is evidence that there is still a tendency to be physical in the act of defending -Fear of defending has been reduced -However, fear of retaliation for the act of defending is a concern -Demonstrated knowledge that telling an adult is the safest way to defend
6	-Indicated the first responses is to tell the teacher -Willingness to confront a fellow pupil who is bullying
Actions Taken	n/a

A prime concern of the researcher was to ascertain the boys' knowledge and ability to defend. This extract from sixth class is representative of their knowledge and ability:

Researcher:	If you saw someone being bullied, what would you do?
Clark:	Tell the teacher and back up for him.
Researcher:	How would you back up for him? Would you explain a bit more?
Clark:	You say, "Stop what you're doing". If they don't, then tell teacher.
Jake:	Back up for the person getting bullied, and if the bully doesn't,
try	to stop them.
Researcher:	How would you stop them?
Jake:	By stand up to him or just tell someone (sic).
Snowden:	By stopping the fighting.
Researcher:	How would you stop the fighting?
Snowden:	By going between them.

Compared to Year 1, when these boys were in fifth class and expressed their reluctance to defend a person who was targeted by bullying, by Year 2 there now seems more of willingness to stand up to bullying as it is happening. However, as demonstrated in the conversation above, the first preference is to tell the teacher if the learners are concerned about defending overtly. The degree of comfort or confidence in talking about the act of defending was notable to the researcher and a significant factor for this may be gleaned from the following conversation from fifth class:

Researcher:	Now that the BPP has been done, would you find it easy or more difficult to be a defender?
Mike:	Easy because we are not afraid.
Researcher:	Why are you not afraid?
Mike:	Don't know.
Billy:	You learned how to be confident and how to back up the person who's being bullied.
Sean:	I find it easy. I'm not afraid.

This lack of fear about being bullied when defending echoes the discussions with the Year 1 focus group, who also reported not being afraid to defend. This attitude is supported by learner responses to Question 38 which asks how often the learner is afraid of being bullied and responses indicate that there was marked decrease in learners' concerns of being bullied as shown in table 5.38 below.

Table 5.38 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 38:

How often are you afraid of being bullied?				
Frequency:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n
Never	67.6	23	76.7	23
Seldom	11.8	4	13.3	4
Sometimes	11.8	4	6.7	2
Fairly often	5.9	2	0.0	0
Often	2.9	1	0.0	0
Very often	0.0	0	3.3	1

Table 5.38 shows that there is a percentage increase in the amount of learners who are never afraid of being bullied, but there is one learner who indicates that he is very often afraid of being bullied. However, by 2012 overall responses show a decrease of the fear of being bullied with reductions in the categories of 'sometimes', 'fairly often', and 'often'. This indicates that, in general, the learners are reporting that they find school a safer place after the BPP intervention.

This reduction in fear also seems to have empowered the learners in their ability to report bullying. This feedback from Philip in third class is representative of this attitude, "If I was a target of bullying, I would tell my Mom and my Mom would go in and tell the teacher and the teacher would punish whoever was bullying me". The learner confidence in adults to help seems to have aided reporting and defending as Craig in fourth class contributed that defending is, "A lot easier because now you know what steps you have to take. You can tell the teacher or you can stand up for the victim and tell the bully to stop picking on your friend".

It appears that the fear of retaliation for defending has been reduced by having procedures in place as reported by Philip of third class:

Philip:	By start helping him (victimised child) more and then get the bully after me.
Researcher:	Why isn't that happening anymore?
Philip:	Because I know what to do…instead of getting carried away.

The phrase "getting carried away" refers to the tendency for the boys to get physical. As discussed, teachers have referred to this as a somewhat problematic issue with the boys. The issue of overt physicality when defending is exemplified in the following extract from fifth class on how to defend.

Researcher:	Who is that person who is going to tell the bully to stop?
Billy:	Could be your friend, be an adult or a teacher.
Jack:	I'd tell the teacher or nearest adult.
Sean:	I'd just tell them to stop and push them away.
Researcher:	Pushing away, is that one of the recommended ways you deal with bullying?
Sean:	No.

Researcher:	What happens when you push someone away?
Several voices:	They might push you back.
Researcher:	They might push you back.
Mike:	And you might have to fight.
Billy:	And they might start bullying you.
Jack:	That's what I worry about when I'm stopping bullying. If some boy is getting bullied I get a bit nervous if I try to stop it because the bully might start going at me instead.
Researcher:	(Addressing Billy) What did you say earlier about the best way to stop bullying?
Billy:	Tell the nearest adult.

Jack's fear of retaliation reflects the boys' qualms about defending overtly. The belief that intervening will only make things worse is one of the biggest fears of potential defenders in schools (Rigby and Johnson, 2006). Hence, Jack and Billy's preference for defending by reporting it to an adult demonstrated knowledge of a recommended way to defend by the BPP, especially if a child is worried about retaliation. Jim of third class shared the same view of teachers as a defending resource: "It's easy to talk about it because I know I can talk to the teacher will [sic] do something about it".

The data presented thus far suggests that the BPP may have helped to create pro-active defending culture at the research school whether it is by defending peers directly and/or reporting bullying incidents to trusted authority figures. Questions 21, 37 and 39 of the OBVQ-R support this view.

Table 5.39 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 21:

How often do other pupils try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at school?				
Frequency:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n*
Almost never	17.6	6	6.9	2
Once in a while	17.6	6	6.9	2
Sometimes	11.8	4	51.7	15
Often	20.6	7	24.1	7
Almost always	32.4	11	10.4	3

*Survey respondent left the answer section blank

The responses in Table 5.39 are encouraging as by post-intervention it suggests that learners perceive a strong defending culture amongst their peers at their school. The categories of "Almost never" and "Once in a while" which perceive peers to be of little help in defending are reduced by two-thirds each. Looking at the category of "Sometimes" there is a substantial increase in this category whereas "Almost always" has been substantially reduced. One might expect that this last category should show an increase if learners are more willing to defend. Responses to Question 37 also demonstrate a decrease in learner willingness to help the bullied pupil.

Table 5.40 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 37:				
How do you usually react if you see or understand that a student your age is being bullied by other students?				
Reaction:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n
Haven't noticed bullying	26.5	9	23.3	7
I take part in bullying	2.9	1	3.3	1
I just watch what goes on	5.9	2	6.7	2
I think I ought to help	11.8	4	16.7	5
I try to help the bullied student	52.9	18	50.0	15

In the first category, "I haven't noticed students my age being bullied", we see that there is decrease which may indicate that learners are now more aware of what bullying is and that there is less bullying happening. The following two response categories are unchanged with regards to the quantity of respondents. With the category "I don't do anything but I think I ought to help the bullied student" there is an indication that there is more of a desire to help which is line with data from the learner focus group interviews. In the last response category, "I try to help the bullied student" there is a small decrease. But why is there less of a desire to help the bullied student? Shouldn't this category be on the increase if learners have become more able defenders as they are reporting in their focus groups? The answer to these questions may be found in the responses to Question 39 where learners report that the teachers have become a much more effective resource in bullying prevention.

Table 5.41 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 39:				
Overall, how much do you think your class (home room) teacher has done to counteract bullying?				
Perception:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n
Little or nothing	8.8	3	0.0	0
Fairly little	14.7	5	0.0	0
Somewhat	3.0	1	3.3	1
A good deal	14.7	5	60.0	18
Much	58.8	20	36.7	11

At the pre-intervention stage the first two responses at the research school comprise approximately 24.5% of learners who do not perceive their teachers as a defending resource. However, this is contrasted sharply with the post-intervention results which show that there is a zero response rate for the first two response categories. Hence, by 2012 most of the learners perceive their teacher as an effective defending resource. This result is in line with research which asserts that interventions which have a lasting impact are those in which the learner has a strong belief and faith in the teacher's ability to deal with bullying (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). However, a notable change has occurred in the response category of "much" which has decreased from 58.8% to 36.7%. Hence, a substantial amount of learners now perceived that the teacher is not as effective as before. This view may due to the previously reported data which suggests there is less bullying in the school and a number of the learners themselves have become able defenders who do not need as much help from the teachers. This is one of the desired outcomes of the BPP, that once the learner's zone of proximal development is equal to that of the teachers' with regards to defending technique, there would be less need for teacher involvement in bullying incidents overall. Therefore, based on this evidence presented, the researcher hypothesizes that the BPP potentially creates a pro-active defending culture in the school which, if shared by learners and teachers, reduces overall levels of bullying in the school and the need for either party to defend on a frequent basis.

5.7.2 Understanding

Table 5.42 Learner Feedback 2012: Understanding	
Metacognition: Thinking about/discussing bullying	
Class	Issues reported
3	-Discussing bullying incidents was easy -'No name, no blame' approach aided discussions -Discussing bullying aided the concept of defending
4	-Not naming players in bullying incidents made it easy to discuss the incident -Discussing bullying aided the concept of defending
5	-'No name, no blame' approach aided discussions -Found discussing bullying incidents easy -Discussing bullying aided the concept of defending
6	-Discussing bullying incidents described as easy and hard -Fear of being embarrassed when describing verbal bullying incidents
Actions Taken	n/a

Discussing bullying was often described as an easy task for the classes of the senior strand. For example, third class learners Jim and Barry shared:

Jim: It's easy to talk about now because I know I can talk to the teacher who will do something about it.

Barry: It's easier now. Before it was hard because in the back time, if you told, you'd be bullied.

Jim demonstrates that he has faith in the defending action of reporting to a teacher which has been encouraged by the BPP intervention while Barry reports that he does not have a fear of discussing bullying because he does not have to worry about repercussions. The lack of fear of repercussions from the discussions on school bullying incidents helped the boys of third, fourth and fifth class in the act of defending as reported here by Billy in fifth class:

Researcher: Why, how are you better able to talk about it?

Billy: Because we've been talking about it for a year and everyone's been bullied at least once.

Researcher:	Could you explain why the talking helps?
Billy:	If you were bullied before, it's just better to tell people instead.
Researcher:	Why is it better to tell someone?
Billy:	Because you might be depressed or it might make you mad. It's just better to put it out there.
Researcher:	And what happens when you do put it out there?
Billy:	You don't have to worry about it anymore.
Researcher:	Why does that worry go away?
Billy:	Somebody else knows and they could put a stop to it. They could tell the bully to stop what they are doing.

Billy had been working on the BPP programme for more than one year as he was a fourth class learner involved in the Year 1 study. His familiarity with the programme and the task of discussing bullying incidents has potentially aided his levels of comfort with discussing bullying and aided his trust in the power of an adult to deal with the bullying incident.

Understanding that the defender doesn't have to be physical or vocally aggressive (as was a concern of the teachers in year 1) was expressed Jim of third class. Here he explains his understanding of the defender role:

Jim:	I would be a defender. I wouldn't going in their face shouting or tell them to stop. I would look at it and like tell. I would ask the person if they would want me to tell about the bullying and if they said "yeah". And I would help them more about the bullying (sic).

What is also notable about this feedback is that it demonstrates that Jim shows understanding of the role of the defender and not just demonstrating knowledge of a Bullying Circle player that he can simply list off.

Table 5.43 Learner Feedback 2012: Understanding	
Metacognition: Thinking about/discussing feelings	
Class	Issues reported
3	-Discussing feelings made learners more aware of their feelings and those of others -The belief in the teacher as an effective defender -Fear of being mocked and or embarrassed when discussing feelings -Awareness of one's own sad feelings about being bullied could make a learner more willing to defend someone who is being bullied
4	-Discussing feelings made learners more aware of their feelings and those of others -Reviewing bullying incidents and discussing could make the person re-live the sad feelings related to the event
5	-Discussing feelings made learners more aware of their feelings and those of others -Discussing feelings was simple because learners were not afraid of repercussions
6	-Discussing feelings made learners more aware of their feelings and those of others -Pupils expressed that discussing was easy and hard -Talking about feelings as a group makes it easier to discuss them
Actions Taken	n/a

Overall the discussions about bullying incidents and how it made the learners feel had very positive reports in each class group as Jim of third class stated: "it's easy to talk about because I know I can talk to the teacher – will do something about it". However, there were some learners with reservations on the topic of discussing feelings as Michael in the same class reported his fear that "they'd all mock us". Kevin of third class said that after he shared his story of being bullied he "felt a little more sadder". However, awareness of sad feelings had a positive effect in that it aided the engendering of empathy as Paul of third class reported that awareness of his feeling sad made him more willing to help a student who was bullied: "I would feel sad and feel I would have to do something for him."

A key research objective of the intervention was to facilitate conversations on feelings so as to generate thoughts about one's own feelings and those of others and hence generate empathy about those who are bullied. Philip, Paul and Kevin of third class share how thinking about their feelings made it easy for them to be a defender:

Researcher:	Why is it easier for you?
Philip:	Because I know how it feels so I can help him.
Paul:	I would feel sad and feel I would have to do something for him.
Kevin:	I'll be a defender because I've already been bullied.
Researcher:	It's because you have been bullied that you find it easy to be a defender?
Kevin:	Yeah.

However, sharing feelings was not always reported as a positive activity as shared by Craig and Jimmy in fourth class:

Researcher:	And then you shared your feelings about the bullying event. Do you remember?
Several voices:	[General 'yes' responses]
Researcher:	Did you find this easy or hard to do?
Craig:	It was a bit easy and it was a bit hard. It was kind of in the middle. Cause if it's happened to you, you feel bad but if you say it, one side you feel good that you finally got it out. But then you feel bad going back to it.
Researcher:	Going back to it makes you relive it?
Craig:	Yes.
Jimmy:	Sometimes it's hard when you're trying not to name out names or anything, share your feelings, it's kind of hard. Sometimes when I think of something that happened to me I feel a bit of pain.

Brian of sixth class found it difficult to discuss bullying incidents at times:

Researcher:	On the first day you did the BPP, you shared stories of bullying. Do you remember?
Several voices:	[General 'yes' responses]

Researcher:	Did you find this easy or hard to do?
Brian:	A bit easy and a bit hard.
Researcher:	Could you explain what you mean?
Brian:	Um, like some of the stories you couldn't be able to like tell people as it was happening to ya but some it was easy to tell.
Researcher:	So some stories were easy and some hard to tell?
Brian:	Like you wouldn't tell your parents or a teacher. And some would be easy to tell 'em.
Researcher:	What's the difference between these stories if you don't mind?
Brian:	Some would be more like personal to ya and some wouldn't then. The easy ones to tell would be like someone hitting ya but then the hard ones would be people abusing you and stuff.
Researcher:	Hard ones? Abusing you in what way?
Brian:	Like calling you names and stuff.
Researcher:	Is it because of the nature of the names?
Brian:	Yeah.
Researcher:	So the type of names calling you would be hard to explain?
Brian:	Yeah.
Researcher:	And why would it be hard for you to explain that?
Brian:	Cause you'd be, you'd think you'd be embarrassed.
Researcher:	Embarrassed?
Brian:	Yeah. It'd embarrass like to tell (sic).
Researcher:	So verbal bullying is harder to tell than physical bullying is that what you're saying?
Brian:	Yeah.
Researcher:	So the names were embarrassing in the first place and it would be hard saying the names again?
Brian:	Yeah.

Fear of embarrassment is a significant reason why bullying is often not reported (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). Brian's fear of embarrassment may be indicative that he didn't trust the discussion process as there might have been socially humiliating repercussions for revealing the names he was called. However, further

on in the discussion Brian revealed that the act of discussing feelings as a group made the task an easier activity.

Researcher:	Did you find it (talking about feelings) easy or hard to do?
Brian:	Bit of both I'd say.
Researcher:	Could you explain it a bit further?
Brian:	Well, I'd say I wouldn't necessarily talk about it all the time but I'd talk about it an odd time like. Like, if people were talking about it now, I'd probably join like.
Researcher:	If people are all talking about it together, it makes it easier to talk about feelings?
Brian:	Yeah.

Brian points out that the social nature of the discussions facilitates the ability to discuss feelings. The reader may recall that in section 5.7.1 there was indication that the social nature of the discussion may have helped the emerging defending culture. Furthermore, compared to Year 1, the boys of fifth and sixth class are more able to discuss feelings. They have the ability to label their feelings and discuss them at length. A key aid to this may be the role-plays as the third class teacher hypothesised that they might be empathy engendering (Teacher Interview, 19/6/2012):

> It was just theory but actually putting it into practice, exploring difficult issues through the fictional lens is very important. Getting to act it out and empathise with their character that was very important for their understanding of bullying. If we didn't have the role-plays, I don't think it would have been half as effective.

This teacher's theory of the effects of role-play on empathy levels (originally presented in section 5.6.5) reflects literature which has suggested that the act of defending strengthens associations between self-efficacy and empathy (Salmivalli, 2010). With regards to the thoughts of the learner focus groups on role-play, when asked what they thought were the most effective and least effective aspects of the intervention, drama and role-play were always recommended as positives in all classes. Therefore, the researcher hypothesises that the role-plays have the

potential to strengthen the associations between self-efficacy and empathy even further. This topic will be discussed in chapter six.

What is evident across all class groups is that the 'no name, no blame' approach of the BPP in discussing bullying incidents was significant in aiding reporting as described by Craig in fourth class: "It was easy because we didn't have to name out names and we could just tell out what happened without feeling bad about it". Significantly, the transcriptions above also display evidence that the boys have developed a degree of comfort in their ability to describe and talk about feelings. This enhanced ability is discussed in the next section along with an overview of learner responses from the research school to the remainder of the OBVQ-R questions.

5.8 Analysis of the responses to the OBVQ-R

The use of the OBVQ-R is just one measurement in determining the impact of the BPP in the research school. Hence, in this review of learner responses to the OBVQ-R not all of the responses from the control school will be included (space restrictions), as the focus of this study is to assess if teacher usage of the BPP has been effective in reducing bullying at the research school.

5.8.1 Overview of reports of victimisation by bullying at the research and control schools

To begin, we will look at the responses to Question 4 by the research school at the end of the BPP intervention in 2012 in order to get a picture of learners' perceptions of victimisation by bullying at the end of the intervention in 2012. The figure representing the results from the 2010 survey is re-presented in order to aid direct comparison.

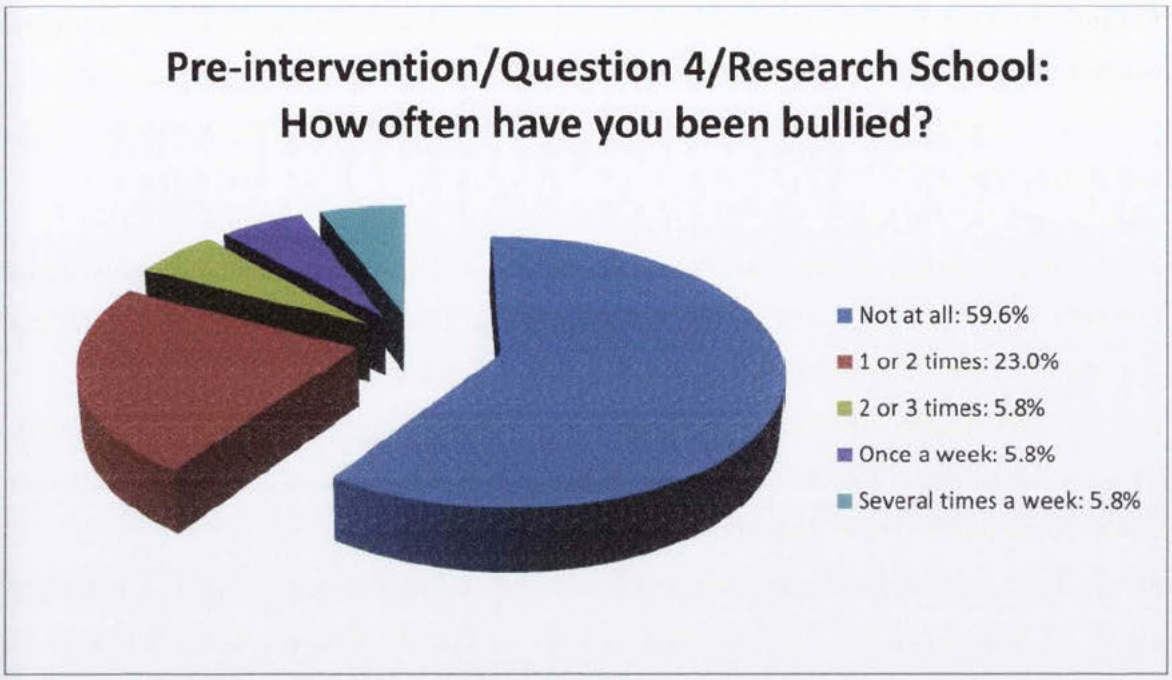


Figure 5.4 Learner responses to OBVQ-R Question 4 pre-intervention, research school, December 2010

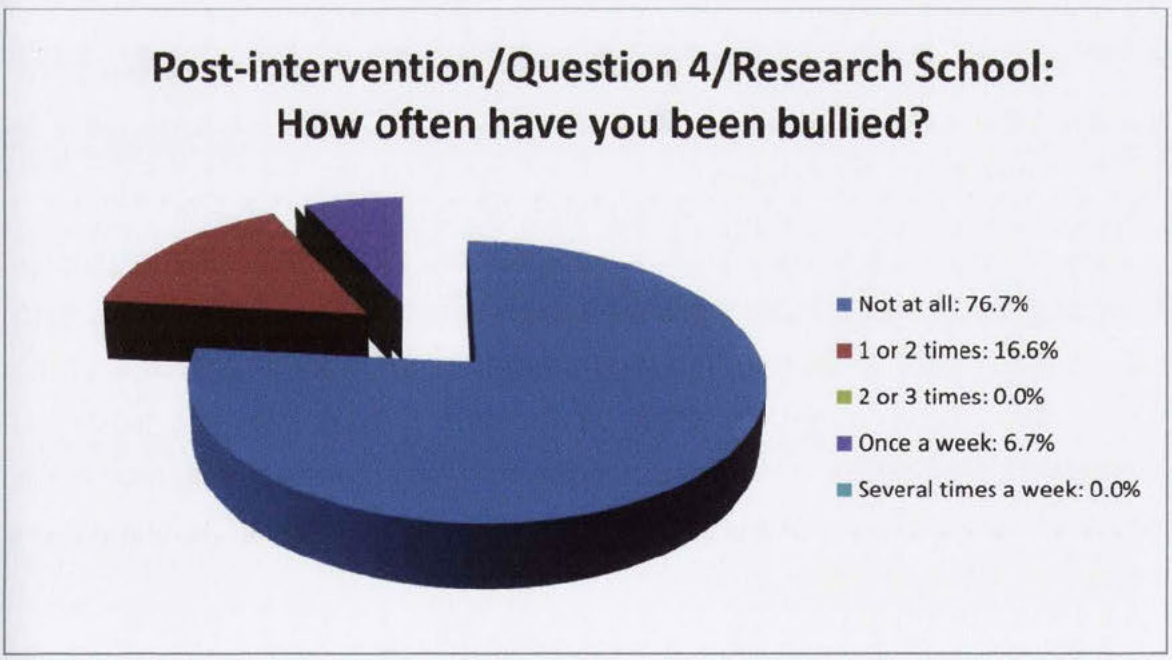


Figure 5.5 Learner responses to OBVQ-R Question 4 post-intervention research school, December 2012

Below is a breakdown of the changes in responses to Question 4 by the research school respondents over the eighteen month period of this study (as illustrated in

Figures 5.4 and 5.5). A reminder to the reader that the numbers are in percentages because the numbers tracked in surveys administered varied in Year 1 and Year 2 (52 = first survey, 30 = third survey) as the sixth class respondents moved on to secondary school.

1. 59.6% of pupils reported not being bullied in December 2010. By May 2012 this had increased to 76.7%. This indicates a 25.1% increase of learners reporting not being bullied for this category over the research period.
2. 23.0% pupils reported being bullied once or twice a month in December 2010. By May 2012 this has decreased to 16.6%. This indicates a 32.2% decrease in bullying incidents for this category.
3. 5.8% of pupils reported being bullied two or three times a month in December 2010. By May 2012 this had decreased to 0.0%. This indicates a 100% decrease in bullying incidents for this category over the research period.
4. 5.8% of pupils reported being bullied once a week in December 2010. By May 2012 this had increased to 6.7%. This indicates a 14.4% increase in bullying incidents for this category.
5. 5.8% of pupils reported being bullied several times week in December 2010. By May 2013 this had decreased to 0.0%. This indicates a 100% decrease in bullying incidents for this category.

Looking at the overall findings, learners indicated that there was a 53.4% decrease in reportage of bullying incidents (the percentage difference between 40.4% in 2010 and 23.3% in 2012 of learners reporting being bullied). This initial review of the survey data shows a positive effect in reducing bullying pre- and post- the intervention. Responses to the same question from the second administration of the survey in June, 2011 (midway through the intervention) highlight a progressive improvement was recorded:

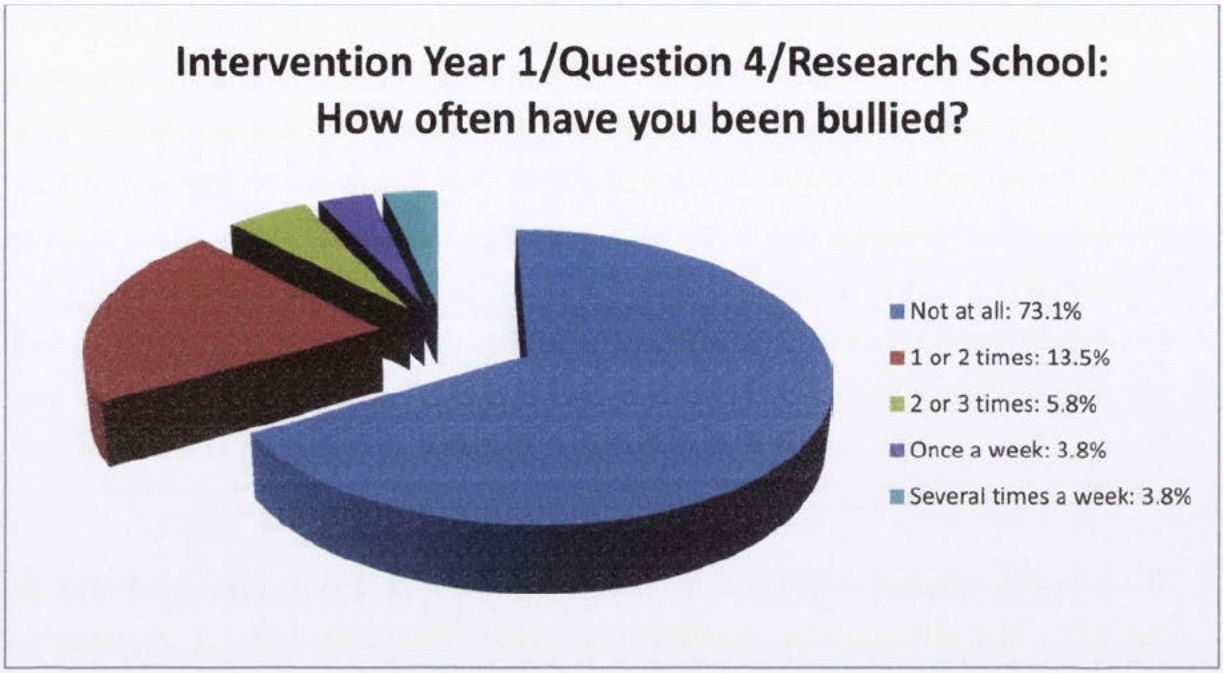


Figure 5.6 Learner responses to OBVQ-R Question 4, mid-intervention, research school, June 2011

Table 5.44 below gives an overview of learner responses to the three surveys over the course of the intervention.

Table 5.44 Research School 2010, 2011 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 4:

How often have you been bullied in the past couple of months?						
How often:	% 2010	n	% 2011	n	% 2012	n
Not at all	59.6	31	73.1	38	76.7	23
Once or Twice	23.0	12	13.5	7	16.6	5
2 or 3 times	5.8	3	5.8	3	0.0	0
Once a week	5.8	3	3.8	2	6.7	2
Several times a week	5.8	3	3.8	2	0.0	0

Looking at trends over the course of the intervention there has been a sustained reduction in reports of being bullied with an even greater reduction reported after the administration of the third OBVQ-R survey. From the 2012 survey it can be seen that there are no responses in the categories of being bullied '2 or 3 times' in the past couple of months or 'several times a week'. This is significant because these

are higher frequency categories than the category of 'once or twice' in the past couple of months. If one looks at categories three, four and five in 2012 compared to the 2010 data it can be seen that there has been an 88.8% decrease in these higher frequency categories (percentage difference between 17.4% and 6.7%). Therefore, the continued use of the BPP resource appears to have a strong longer-term positive effect in reducing frequent levels of bullying. This may be due to the fact that it has begun to affect the school culture as there is now a regular forum and knowledge of methods on how to deal with bullying. This provides learners and teachers with the opportunity to discuss bullying openly and objectively and deal with it through ongoing evaluations of strategies that have been put in place.

The presented survey results, which demonstrate the potential ongoing efficacy of the BPP, are significant as research has shown that often bullying intervention programmes can have a short term positive effect but can fail to make a long-term impact (Smith, 2011). Also, according to Olweus (2008, p. 5):

> ...the questionnaire may actually show an increase in reports of bullying problems after the first year-behaviours that have been previously hidden or underreported are now brought to light.

The survey results illustrate that the levels of bullying were on the decrease at the research school over the short and longer-term. However, this reduction may be ascribed to other factors such as SPHE and the "Stay Safe" programme that the research school were also following. Therefore, it will prove useful to look at the survey data from the control school as they also had SPHE and stay safe programmes in use over the same period. Below are two figures that illustrate perceptions of bullying at the control school between December 2010 and May 2012.

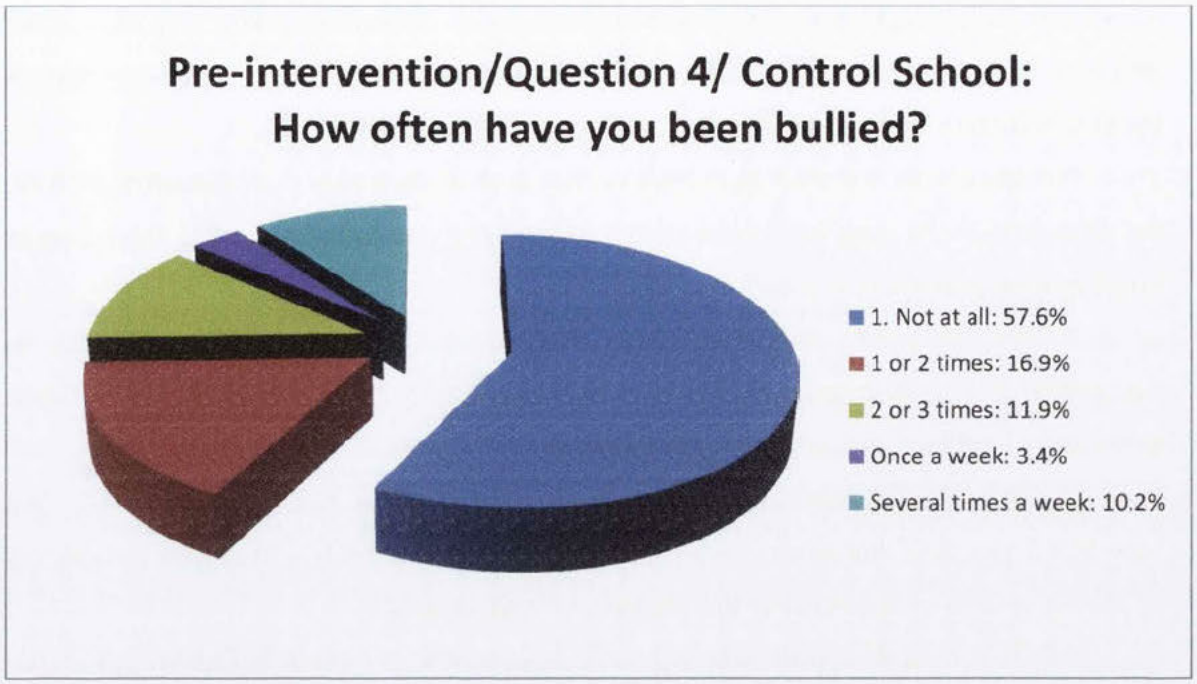


Figure 5.7 Learner responses to OBVQ-R Question 4, pre-intervention, control school, December 2010

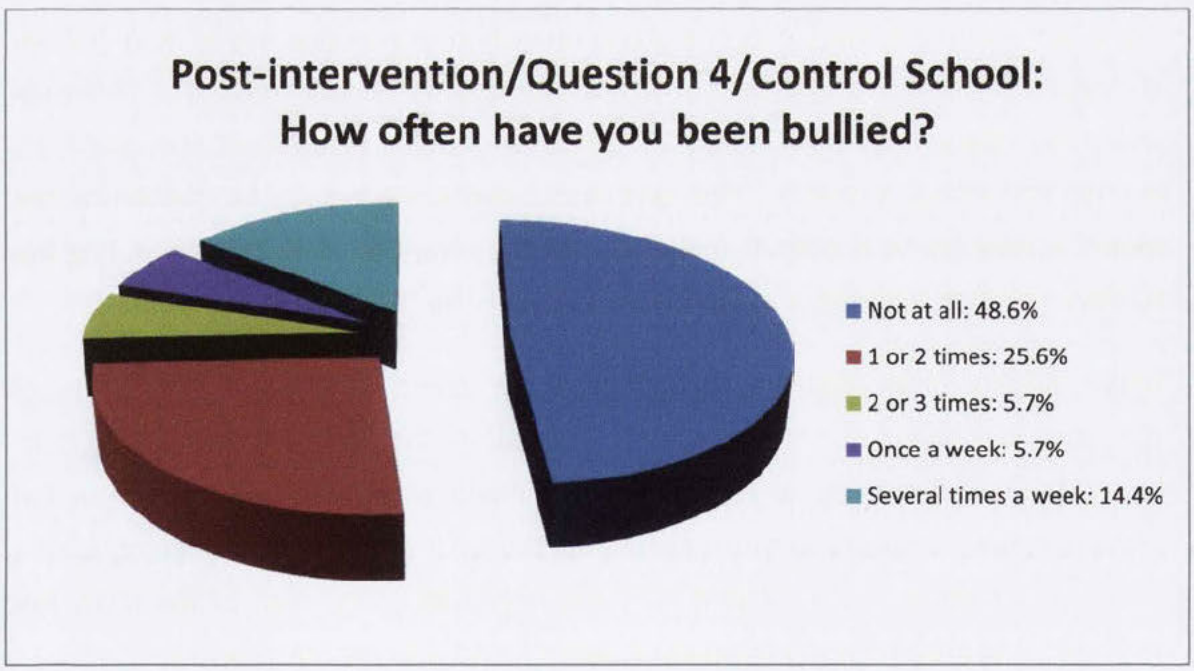


Figure 5.8 Learner responses to OBVQ-R Question 4 post-intervention control school, May 2012

Figure 5.8 illustrates that here has been a significant increase of bullying at the control school during this period. Below is a breakdown of percentage changes in responding to Question 4 by the control school respondents over the period.

1. 57.6% of pupils reported not being bullied in December 2010. By May 2012 this had decreased to 48.6%. This indicates a 16.9% increase in bullying incidents for this category over the eighteen month research period.
2. 16.9% pupils reported being bullied once or twice a month in December 2010. By May 2012 this has increased to 25.6%. This indicates a 41.3% increase in bullying incidents for this category.
3. 11.9% of pupils reported being bullied two or three times a month in December 2010. By May 2012 this had decreased to 5.7%. This indicates a 70.5% decrease in bullying incidents for this category.
4. 3.4% of pupils reported being bullied once a week in December 2010. By May 2012 this had increased to 5.7%. This indicates a 50.5% increase in bullying incidents for this category over the eighteen month period.
5. 10.2% of pupils reported being bullied several times week in December 2010. By May 2013 this had increased to 14.3%. This indicates a 33.5% increase in bullying incidents for this category.

If one looks solely at the levels of bullying reportage (categories two to five), learner responses show that there was a 16.9% increase in bullying over the 18 month period from December 2010 to May 2012 (the percentage difference between 57.6% in 2010 and 48.6% in 2012). The data would give some reason for concern at the control school, as both schools indicated that they were tackling bullying during the 18 month research period, and both were following the "Stay Safe" programme.

Figure 5.8 illustrates reportage of bullying victimization as a whole, regardless of frequency compared to non-reportage. The survey data shows that by the third survey in 2012 there was a 75.2% more likelihood of bullying victimization at the control school compared to the research school by the end of the research period (research school = 23.3%, control = 51.4%), whereas at the start of the study the likelihood was only 4.6% more (research school = 40.5%, control school = 42.4%).

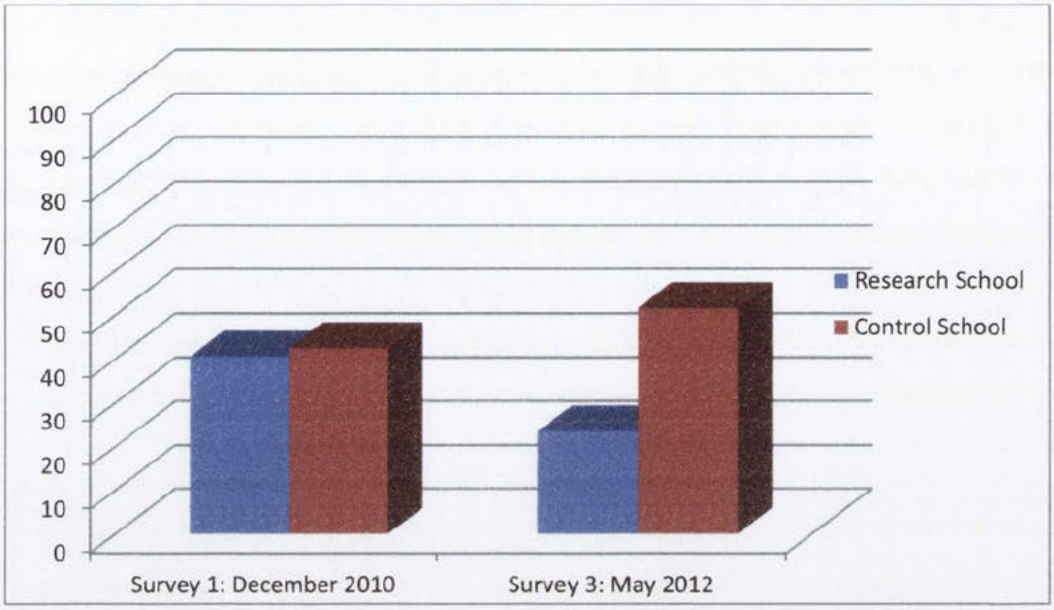


Figure 5.9 Comparison of bullying victimization reportage at the research and control schools pre and post-intervention

Considering the teacher and learner data already presented in the previous sections have suggested reduced levels of bullying at the research school, this would appear to suggest that the BPP activities may have been a crucial factor in reducing bullying. However, what has been presented so far is a review of survey responses to Question 4 of the OBVQ-R. Even though this is one of the most significant questions in terms of gauging overall levels of bullying (Hazelden Foundation, 2014), it is important to note that the OBVQ-R is a thirty-nine point questionnaire. Therefore, it will prove valuable to look more deeply at individual categories of learner responses to help note emerging patterns or changes (if any) in frequency of types, perceptions, attitudes and behaviours towards bullying over the course of the intervention at the research school.

5.8.2 Research school responses to OBVQ-R: additional questions

The following data tracks learner OBVQ-R responses of the fourth and fifth class students December, 2010 in comparison to their responses in May, 2012 when they were in the fifth and sixth classes respectively. Unless noted, the sixth class responses of 2010 have been omitted to aid the tracking of response changes of the

fourth and fifth classes. The number of respondents for the December 2010 survey was 34 and 30 for May 2012 instrument. However, on occasion numbers do not tally as sometimes a respondent did not answer a particular question. Where this is the case, an asterisk (*) has been inserted at the top of the respective response column to alert the reader that this has been accounted for by the researcher. The responses to all of the questions have relevance to the overall research question in this study, except for Question 2 which inquired if the learner was a boy or girl. As this is not relevant to this research, analysis of this question has been foregone.

Question 1 inquired how much the learner liked school. Learners were given a range of five responses from "I dislike school very much" to "I like school very much". Overall, there was much more dislike of school in the May 2012 survey than the December 2010 survey. I queried teachers as to why they thought this was and I was told by the end of May into June the children are pretty much fed up of school and want their summer break. It was reported that absenteeism is also a more of a problem at this time of year. This was borne out one occasion when the final survey date had to be moved because of low attendance numbers. While learner (dis)liking of school concerns this researcher, it is beyond the immediate scope of this study.

Question 3 inquired how many good friends the learner had in his class. Here a slight improvement was noted over the duration of the study but nothing significant.

After these initial questions the remaining 36 questions are focussed on three categories: 1) being bullied, 2) bullying others, and 3) perceptions and attitudes about bullying. In general, the questions on being bullied and bullying others are presented in order. Questions on perceptions and attitudes about bullying have already been presented within the focus group learner data from Year 2.

5.8.3 Questions on being bullied

Question 4 captured an overall response to personal perceptions of being bullied and the data has already been presented. Therefore, the subsequent presentation and analysis will begin with Question 5 onwards.

Table 5.45 presents the percentage of learners being bullied with regards to specific types of bullying pre- and post-intervention. An overview of Questions 5-13 is presented (The OBVQ-R questions have been shortened for space considerations. See Appendix 6b, p. 430 for questionnaire sample). As each question had a choice of five responses from "I haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months" to being bullied "several times a week", summarising each of the response types in one table would be difficult. Furthermore, what is of most interest to this researcher is if there was an overall reduction or not in the types of bullying post-intervention. Hence, the percentages presented below are based on learners who said yes to being bullied and are grouped together as an overall response. In other words, if learners responded in the affirmative to being bullied in the past couple of months, then the four frequency response choices of: "only once or twice", "2 or 3 times a month", "about once a week" and "several times a week" were grouped as one.

Table 5.45 OBVQ-R Question Numbers 5-13	%2010	n=34	%2012	n=30	%▲
5. I was verbally bullied	35.3	12	20.0	6	-43.3
6. I was excluded	25.6	8	6.7	2	-73.8
7. I was physically bullied	32.4	11	10.0	3	-69.1
8. Targeted by lies and false rumours	32.4	11	16.7	5	-46.5
9. Money/Possessions taken away	11.8	4	3.3	1	-72.0
10. Forced to do things against will	11.8	4	0.0	0	-100.0
11. I was racially bullied	14.8	5	10.0	3	-32.4
12. Comments/gestures with sexual meaning	8.9	3	10.0	3	+12.4
12a. I was Cyber Bullied	5.9	2	3.3	1	-44.1
13. I was bullied in another way	2.9	1	6.7	2	+131.0

Table 5.45 above shows that there were decreases in all categories except for Question 12 and 13 where there were increases in the percentages. With regards to Question 12, in each of the pre- and post-intervention surveys, there were three respondents reporting being bullied with "comments/gestures with sexual meaning". Hence, the actual numbers of respondents are the same in each survey for the

replies. Additionally, with regards to frequency the three respondents of the final survey were responding that they were bullied "Once or twice in the past couple of months" whereas in the pre-survey all the responses of being bullied in this way were "Two or three times a month". Hence, there was an overall reduction in frequency of this type of bullying. With regards to Question 13 "I was bullied in another way" there were two respondents in the final survey who made notes of the ways there were bullied. One pupil noted cyber-bullying and the other noted that he was thrown against a wall at least once a week. These responses were not lumped into the categories of cyber-bullying and physical bullying because the respondents, for some reason, believed there were different. However, as the survey was anonymous, there is no way to question why the learner thought this.

Question 14 of the OBVQ-R asks which class(es) the student(s) who are bullying are from. Responses to this question are shown in table 5.46.

Table 5.46 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 14:				
In which class(es) is the student or pupils who are bullying you from?				
Which class:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n
Haven't been bullied	67.7	23	86.7	26
In my class	14.7	5	13.3	4
In a different class	0.0	0	0.0	0
In a higher grade	17.6	6	0.0	0
In a lower grade	0.0	0	0.0	0
In different grades	0.0	0	0.0	0

The 2012 survey data shows there are no learners reporting being bullied by peers from a higher class. However, at this point in time there are only fifth class learners who have peers in a higher class. Therefore, it may be useful to examine results from the June 2011 survey which includes learners from both the fourth and fifth classes who both had higher classes above them.

Table 5.47 Research School 2010 and 2011 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 14:				
In which class(es) is the student or pupils who are bullying you from?				
Which class:	% 2010	n	% 2011	n
Haven't been bullied	67.7	31	86.7	37
In my class	14.7	15	13.3	13
In a different class	0.0	0	0.0	0
In a higher grade	17.6	6	3.9	2
In a lower grade	0.0	0	0.0	0
In different grades	0.0	0	0.0	0

It can be seen that learners at the end of the first year of the intervention had responded that they had noticed a substantial reduction in bullying from peers in a higher class by mid-research phase. Looking at the 2012 survey responses in table 5.47 it appears that long term use of the BPP as a whole school intervention may have significantly reduced bullying from learners of higher classes as all pupils are aware of their right to be free from bullying and have methods in place to defend themselves and one another.

Question 15 asks if the learner is being targeted by boys and/or girls and, if so, how many. Again, with regards to this research only the parameter of boys was pertinent and responses to this showed substantial decreases at the research school as shown in table 5.48.

Table 5.48 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 15:				
Have you been bullied by boys or girls?				
How many boys:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n
Haven't been bullied	58.8	20	86.7	26
By one boy	35.3	12	13.3	4
By several boys	5.9	2	0.0	0

Question 15 shows that bullying by groups of boys is non-existent in 2012 and that only incidents of one on one bullying are occurring. This may be due to the BPP emphasis on educating bystanders about the Bullying Circle which examines participants who contribute to bullying by supporting it, in that they "egg things on"

(Ron from fifth, Focus Group, Year 1), or by doing nothing which may send a message that to the child bullying that their behaviour is acceptable. This knowledge about the power of the group to re-enforce or discourage bullying behaviour may have helped encourage learners to desist from supporting bullying behaviour while also enabling them with the knowledge and skills to become potential defenders. What is also demonstrated is that bullying is not happening in groups. This could be indicative of an emergent group norm against bullying behaviour and evidence of this is supported by data from Question 16. Question 16 asks for further information about the quantity of boys bullying.

Table 5.49 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 16:

By how many students have you usually been bullied?				
By how many students:	% 2010	n*	% 2012	n
Haven't been bullied	60.6	20	86.7	26
By one student	30.3	10	13.3	4
By group of 2-3	6.1	2	0.0	0
By group of 4-9	3.0	1	0.0	0
By group of more than 9	0.0	0	0.0	0

*A respondent left the answer column blank

The data in Table 5.49 above shows that the amount of learners being bullied by one boy or more has reduced from thirteen to four reports. Furthermore, the reports in 2012 are of only being bullied by one other student. This data supports the responses to question 15 as, again, four learners reported being bullied by one boy. This demonstrates a consistency of reporting from the respondents that aids study validity and potentially points to emergent culture against bullying by groups.

Table 5.50 below presents data on the duration of bullying. 2012 responses showed that there was a decrease in learners reporting that they were being bullied over long periods of time with only two learners reporting that they were being bullied repeatedly over the period of one month.

Table 5.50 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 17:				
How long has the bullying lasted?				
By how many students:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n
Haven't been bullied	67.6	23	93.3	28
Lasted one or two weeks	20.6	7	0.0	0
Lasted about a month	8.8	3	6.7	2
Lasted about 6 months	3.0	1	0.0	0
Lasted about a year	0.0	0	0.0	0
Gone on for several years	0.0	0	0.0	0

What is highly significant about the data in table 5.50 is that 93.3% of learners report that they have not experienced durational bullying at all. This demonstrates that continued use of the BPP may have helped reduce long term bullying.

"Where have you been bullied?" was the topic of Question 18 and for those learners who said they had been bullied there was a choice of eleven responses to indicate location. Learners were advised that two of the items "in gym class or the gym locker room/shower" and "in the lunch room" were not applicable as the school did not have such facilities. Learners were given the option to mark as many places as they had been bullied. Hence, a learner could indicate one location or nine. Of pupils who said they have been bullied, the quantity of each specific location is represented in the table 5.51

Table 5.51 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 18:		
Where have you been bullied?		
Location	No. of Responses, 2010 Survey	No. of Responses, 2012 Survey
Playground	11	2
Hallway/Stairwells	1	0
Class (Teacher in room)	2	0
Class (Teacher not in room)	1	0
Bathroom	0	0
Gym Class	1	0
To and from school	2	1

At the school bus stop	1	0
On the school bus	1	0
Somewhere else in the school	2	0

By 2012 the places where bullying had occurred in 2010 had been greatly reduced. There were only two responses to in-school bullying with one fifth and one sixth class pupil reporting that it was the playground where it occurred. This is significant as the playground has been reported as a bullying 'hotspot' (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013, p. 90) in Irish schools and, as previously discussed, could be indicative of an emergent group norm against bullying. All other areas on the school premises had no reports of bullying incidents. Outside of school only one sixth class respondent reported he had been bullied to and from school. Pupils also had the option of writing in other places they may have been bullied. With regards to the 2010 survey one fifth class respondent noted that he been bullied in another teacher's classroom and one fourth class respondent noted that he had been bullied somewhere else in the school but didn't say where. In the 2012 survey there were no additional written notes. This potentially demonstrates that by 2012 learners had more knowledge about bullying and there were considerably less incidents occurring.

Table 5.52 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 19:

Have you told anyone you have been bullied in the past couple of months?

Person told	No. of Responses, 2010 Survey	No. of Responses, 2012 Survey
Haven't been bullied	22	26
Have been bullied but have not told anyone	2	2
Classroom teacher	5	0
Another adult at the school	1	0
Parent(s)/guardian(s)	4	1
Brother(s)/sister(s)	1	0
Friend(s)	4	2
Somebody else	1	0

With regards to this question each student could tick as many people as they wished. So, in theory, a student could tick all the boxes. Table 5.52 above shows that in 2010 approximately 35% (12 out of 34) of fourth and fifth class pupils were reporting bullying to someone. By 2012 this number had been reduced to approximately 10% (3 out of 30). As previous data has indicated the overall incidents of reporting bullying were down and hence the need to report is correspondingly reduced. However, the numbers of learners who have been bullied but have not told anyone is still the same. Possible reasons for this will be discussed in chapter six.

Responses to Question 20, which asked how often learners perceive teachers put a stop to bullying, were discussed in section 5.6. Question 21 looked at learner perceptions of peers preventing bullying and has been presented in section 5.8.5. Question 22 seeks to ascertain the necessity of parents having to get involved in order to prevent their child from being bullied.

Table 5.53 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 22:				
Has any adult at home contacted the school to try to stop you being bullied at school in the past couple of months?				
Contact made:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n*
Haven't been bullied	73.6	25	82.8	24
No, they haven't	20.6	7	13.8	4
Contacted school once	2.9	1	3.4	1
Contacted several times	2.9	1	0.0	0

*A respondent left the answer column blank

There has been a downward trend in all categories with the category of "No, they haven't" almost halved. This indicates that pupils are not reporting being bullied at home as much as in 2010. This could be that they are coping better with bullying incidents at school, possibly owing to teacher support, their own resilience, and to their reported perception in Question 4 that the overall prevalence of bullying had been reduced at their school.

Responses to question 23 were of interest to the researcher as the BPP specifically addressed and aimed to encourage a higher empathetic response among learners.

Table 5.54 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 23: When you see a student your age being bullied at school, what do you feel or think?				
Feeling or thought:	% 2010	n*	% 2012	n*
What he deserves	0.0	0	0.0	0
I don't feel much	3.0	1	10.3	3
I feel a bit sorry	9.1	3	24.1	7
I feel sorry and want to help	87.9	29	65.6	19

*A respondent left the answer column blank

In the category of "I feel sorry and want to help" there has been a significant reduction where one might have expected an increase. However, with respect to the data presented on learner defending in section 5.7, it could be argued that there is less of a need to help because a robust defending school culture has evolved. Therefore, the decrease in this category may be reasonable as there are now more resources available to prevent bullying. Of course, it could also be argued that the learners are demonstrating a decrease in empathy levels. However, this would be contrary to the data presented in the learner focus groups where they expressed unanimously that they feel more empathy for the bullied peer because of the BPP intervention. Additionally, the learners have reported in the survey and focus groups that there is considerably less bullying in 2012 and therefore, there may be fewer occurrences where they have occasion to feel sorry for someone if they are being bullied. The data could be explained by the fact that respondents may have replied to this question in the literal or concrete rather than aspirational or abstract sense. The question is phrased in the present tense rather than the conditional, which would further bear this line of thought out.

5.8.4 Questions on bullying others

Question 24 in table 5.55 below seeks to ascertain the overall frequency of peer to peer bullying and is inclusive of all the types.

Table 5.55 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 24:				
How often have you taken part in bullying in the past couple of months?				
Frequency:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n
I haven't bullied	76.5	26	83.3	25
It has only happened once or twice	20.6	7	10.0	3
2 or 3 times a month	2.9	1	6.7	2
About once a week	0.0	0	0.0	0
Several times a week	0.0	0	0.0	0

There has been an encouraging drop in the reports of bullying others. In 2010 23.5% of learners were bullying others, by 2012 this had been reduced to 16.7%. Significantly, in the category of 'once or twice' there has been more than a 50% decrease. However, there has been an increase in the category of '2 or 3 times' a month, albeit, it is only one more person reporting this frequency than in the 2010 survey.

Table 5.56 looks to ascertain the types of bullying the pupil who bullies carries out. Each question has a choice of five responses from "I haven't bullied another student(s) at school in the past couple of months" to bullying a peer "several times a week". As with table 5.45 the overall responses have been summarised. Hence, the percentages presented below are based on learners who said yes to being bullied at least once over the last couple of months and are grouped together as an overall response.

Table 5.56 OBVQ-R Question Numbers 25-33	%2010	n=34	%2012	n=30	%▲
25. Verbally bullied a student?	29.4	10	20.0	6	-31.2
26. Purposely excluded a student?	17.7	6	0.0	0	-100.0
27. Physically bullied a student?	11.8	4	3.3	1	-72.0
28. Spread lies and false rumours?	11.8	4	3.3	1	-72.0
29. Took someone's money /possessions?	2.9	1	3.3	1	+13.8
30. Forced someone to do things	5.9	2	0.0	0	-100.0

against their will?					
31. Racially bullied a student?	8.9	3	6.7	2	-24.7
32. Made comments/gestures with a sexual meaning?	14.7	5	6.7	2	-54.4
32a. Cyber bullied student?	2.9	1	3.3	1	+13.8
33. Bullied student in another way	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Except for Questions 29 and 32 there are reductions in all categories. With regards to the increases in Questions 29 and 32 the number of respondents was one individual in each category for each survey. As there are fewer respondents in the 2012 survey, this accounts for the percentage increase. However, in terms of prevalence, a respondent in the 2010 survey reported to Question 12 that he "Took someone's money/possessions away" at least "several times a week" whereas in the 2012 survey a respondent reported that he did this "one or twice...in the past couple of months". Therefore, this was a notable reduction and may have been influenced by BPP discussions of bullying and its effects on peers; potentially engaging an empathetic response from the learner who was bullying in this way. With regards to Question 32 there was no change in prevalence as in both surveys it was reported that the prevalence of cyber-bullying was "once or twice in the past couple of months" which was the least rate of frequency a respondent could report. The responses to Question 26 are highly significant as they demonstrate that learners in this sample are not purposely excluding peers from activities in 2012 and could indicate that promoting positive peer relations through a culture of inclusion is highly efficacious in preventing bullying.

Question 34 asks if learners have had a conversation with a teacher about their bullying of other students.

Table 5.57 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 34:				
Has your class (home room) teacher or any other teacher talked with you about your bullying other pupils at school in the past couple of months?				
How often:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n
Haven't bullied	73.5	25	83.3	25
Haven't talked to me	8.9	3	10.0	3
Talked to me once	14.7	5	6.7	2
Talked to me several times	2.9	1	0.0	0

The categories of "Talked to me once" and "Talked to me several times" have both shown reductions. This also corresponds to response rates in Question 35 below which asked if learners had a conversation with an adult at home about their bullying.

Table 5.58 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 35:				
Has any adult at home talked with you about your bullying other pupils at school in the past couple of months?				
How often:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n*
Haven't bullied	73.5	25	86.2	25
Haven't talked to me	8.9	3	6.9	2
Talked to me once	14.7	5	6.9	2
Talked to me several times	2.9	1	0.0	0

*A respondent left the answer column blank

Only in the category of "Haven't talked to me" is there a quantifiable difference from Question 34. Responses to Questions 34 and 35 indicate that there is an overall decrease in teachers and parents having to talk to learners about their bullying. This is most likely due to the fact that there are overall decreases of incidents of bullying as reported previously.

The 2011 survey results presented in section 5.5 demonstrated that the levels of bullying were on the decrease at the research school over the short term. However, as stated earlier, this reduction may have been due to other factors such as SPHE and the Stay Safe programme that the research school was following. The 2012 survey results indicate a consistent reduction of bullying at the research school over

the long term with overall learner responses demonstrating that, in their opinion, bullying had been reduced at their school.

5.9 Conclusion

There is a double-edged sword with implementing bullying interventions that take a whole school approach such as the BPP. Sometimes bullying interventions can have a strong impact in the short term but cannot maintain results in the long term (Olweus, 2007). Conversely, sometimes short term interventions report an increase in reports of bullying as short term interventions can make learners more aware of bullying behaviour and types and increase reportage. The BPP did not engender either of these scenarios. With the presentation of 2011 and 2012 survey results there is strong evidence that the BPP had been effective in reducing the bullying over the longer term at the research school. This is also confirmed by the data from the teacher feedback, interviews and learner focus groups as a majority perceive that bullying was reduced at their school.

The researcher postulates that the BPP emphasis on including the learners' voice with role-plays and ensuing discussions on their experiences of bullying was instrumental in reducing the levels of bullying at the research school. However, improvements as suggested by the teachers will be needed if the BPP is to be developed as a resource for whole school interventions. Meeting teacher needs with the BPP is crucial as teachers play a vital role in the management and implementation of interventions (Frey et al., 2011). Items that hinder teachers from successful implementation of the BPP need to be addressed. These items will be discussed in Chapter Six along with other areas of concern in the study which include how scheduling delays may have affected the BPP, teacher views of learner reports of bullying, adaptations of role-play for younger learners, and recommendations for age-appropriate resources.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

Using a mixed methodological approach incorporating both quantifiable and qualitative instruments, the chief aim of this research was to ascertain the efficacy of the Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP) in a primary school setting. In conducting the research there were two main concerns: appropriateness of resources and teachers' abilities to implement them. Gauging the appropriateness of resource materials for use by non-drama specialists was crucial for the researcher to ascertain as he has an extensive background in drama teaching and directing theatre for young people which may have impacted upon his previous facilitation of the role-play components of the BPP for master level study. The second issue related to a concern featured regularly in the literature that teachers might be reluctant to use role-play and warm-up activities for some of the following reasons: that they don't know how to use the activities, inexperience with role-play, limited resources, time constraints and possibly a fear that the lesson will become chaotic and unstructured contributing to a teacher fear of looking and feeling foolish (Marshall, 2012; Royka, 2002; Stinson, 2009; Wessels, 1986). Also, some teachers may have identified with the didactic approach (Dawson, Cawthon and Baker, 2011) seeing teaching as a "one way transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the student, rather than the creation of a learning situation where the student is also a teacher" (Wessels, 1986 p.14). Concordant with reviewing these concerns there were a number of sub-aims:

- To ascertain how much assistance/coaching teachers would need to implement the BPP. This included a review of the quality of the instructions of the BPP in terms of instructional clarity and ease of implementation.
- To ascertain if the activities of the BBP were straightforward for learners to comprehend and enact.

- To quantify via a self-report survey if the ongoing implementation of the BPP made a difference to the levels of victimisation within the research school over a period of six and eighteen months.
- To evaluate if the BPP engendered learner knowledge creation and metacognition around the topic of bullying and empowered learners to help prevent bullying in their school.
- To investigate if levels of empathy can be raised with regards to those victimised by bullying behaviour.

The discussion in this chapter will address the findings related to these research concerns as presented in Chapter Five. First, a review of the quantitative data from the current research compared to other prominent international interventions may offer a useful perspective as to the effectiveness of the BPP in reducing levels of bullying at the research school. Then, the discussion will focus on areas of concern based on the thematic analysis presented in Chapter Five.

6.2 Quantitative review

Results presented in Chapter Five demonstrated a positive correlation between teacher and learner's perceptions of a reduction in bullying behaviour due to the BPP implementation at their school. The quantitative data derived from the OBVQ-R shows these perceptions to be well-founded with a 53.4% reduction in learners reporting being bullied over the course of the study. This is a significant reduction compared to other anti-bullying initiatives and in line with some of the best results achieved. Table 6.1 below lists several internationally recognised bullying prevention interventions along with Ttofi and Farrington's (2011) meta review of 44 successful bullying prevention interventions. While programme contents are not like for like and, therefore, direct comparisons cannot be made; results are worth considering as these interventions all have striven for the common goal of reducing bullying in their research schools.

Table 6.1 Comparison of Successful Bullying Prevention Interventions			
Programme/Review	Victimisation reduced by	Assessment Means	Source
First Bergen Project (Olweus)	64%	Survey	Olweus and Limber (2010)
Sheffield Anti-bullying Project	14%	Survey	Eslea and Smith (1998)
The Seville Anti-Violence Project (SAVE)	57%	Survey	Smith et al (2003)
Steps to Respect	55.1%	Playground Observation	Frey, Erdstrom, and Hirchstein (2005)
KiVa	30%	Survey	Salmivalli and Poskiparta (2012)
Review of Successful School Based Bullying Prevention Interventions	17-20%	Systematic review of 44 programmes	Ttofi and Farrington (2011)
The Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP)	53.4%	Survey	Present Study

Table 6.1 provides a quantitative comparison against some of the major studies in the field in relation to the effects of the BPP in reducing bullying victimisation at the research school. Statistically, it can be seen that the BPP was highly effective. In comparing the programme content against the programmes above the BPP has similarities in the areas of:

- information on the topic of bullying,
- bullying as whole group process,
- fostering empathy to encourage understanding about the effects of bullying,
- the role peers can play in its prevention,

- the long term commitment to engage in anti-bullying strategies with a buy in from the principal and school staff.

With regards to differences with the programmes listed above the core issues were:

- the relatively short amount of time it took to implement the programme,
- it was inexpensive,
- the surveys indicated that it was effective in the short and long term in preventing bullying,
- the use of role-play as the central learning resource.

A key difference between the BPP and the programmes cited above is the amount of time necessary to implement the prevention system. The prevention programmes listed require a considerable amount of time in the pre-planning stage, buy in from the principal in terms of support and leadership, training of the teachers and school staff and implementation. For example, the Olweus system requires a considerable commitment in terms of time and money (up to two years to implement the programme fully with costs for the programme materials itself and the necessity of outside trainers running costs into the many thousands (Blueprints, 2015)). The BPP on the other hand, involved initial contact with schools to test the clarity of its instructions but is intended as a stand-alone resource to be run over five weeks with monthly follow-ups. Hence, it can be introduced and implemented quickly to reduce rates of bullying. An effective prevention programme of short duration such as the BPP may be a desirable resource for Irish schools where teachers are often pressurised by results-based, curriculum demands that put the use of instruction time at a premium. There is evidence to suggest that the use of role-play in the BPP significantly increased the impact of this short programme owing to the power and kinaesthetic impact of learners engaging role-play to learn about and prevent bullying.

Unfortunately, while role-play is often cited as a component to aid anti-bullying interventions (Bagshaw et al., 2005; Burton and O'Toole, 2009; Gollwitzer, et al., 2006; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005), there is no direct evidence of teachers using it effectively to reduce bullying in the

studies listed in table 6.1. This may be due to the fact that it is often given as an optional element for inclusion in interventions which is left to the discretion of the school (Kärna et al., 2009; Cross et al., 2011). Based on the findings, there is evidence to suggest that the optional element of or total lack of role-play in interventions may be an oversight due to a non-recognition of its power and potency as a learning aid. Role-play can enhance the learning potential of learners considerably because it is essentially a kinaesthetic learning method. The potential of kinaesthetic activities such as role-play to enhance learning is illustrated by Edgar Dale's (1969) Cone of Learning as presented in figure 6.1

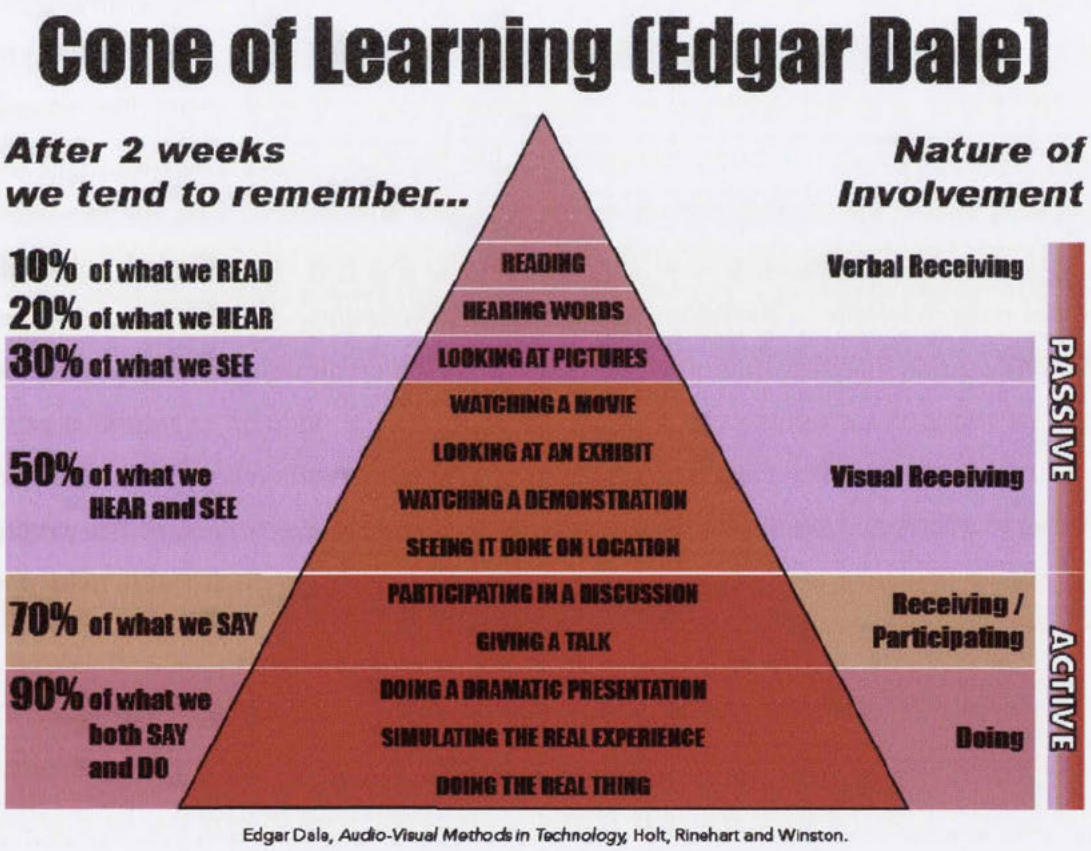


Figure 6.1 Dale's Cone of Learning

According to Dale our tendency to remember increases with our level of involvement in the type of activity as shown in table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Activities that aid retention of knowledge (as proposed by Dale, 1969)	
Activity	Retention Rate
Reading	10%
Hearing words	20%
Looking at pictures	30%
Watching, looking, seeing	50%
Participating, giving a talk	70%
Dong a dramatic presentation, simulating and doing the real thing	90%

Dale has suggested that the more the activity asks of the whole person the greater the retention rate of the new knowledge. The educational theorist Bruner (1973) has labelled these learning activities as three basic modes of instruction: the enactive mode (doing), the iconic mode (imagery) or the symbolic mode (words). The BPP role-plays with their enactive focus for the players and iconic focus for the viewer incorporates two of the modes, while the symbolic mode is incorporated in the post role-play discussions. Therefore, as a form of learning, the BPP activities are potentially a rich learning resource as, "The things we remember most are those that engaged most of our neurology" (Beaver, 2002, p.11). In addition to retentive power of the BPP activities, the children responded positively to and enjoyed the role-plays and this is especially significant because "In play a child is always above his average age, above his daily behaviour, in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 129).

The evidence from the study would suggest that the confluence of role-play and discussions which aimed to foster metacognition and empathy created a strong bullying prevention formula and was possibly the prime reason why the BPP proved so successful in reducing bullying victimisation. The use of role-play as the central learning resource to prevent and learn about bullying is where the BPP differs distinctively from the other studies. Furthermore, the use of a survey instrument to ascertain if bullying has been reduced with a prevention programme that has role-play as its core learning resource has, as far as the researcher is aware, not been used in any other study to date. Hence, the BPP results may add to the weak existing knowledge base about the use of role-play as a bullying prevention method

and contribute to the need for "reliable statistical information" to assess the impact of role-play as has been called for by other researchers who use role-play activities as a resource to help reduce bullying (Burton and O'Toole,, 2009, p. 12; Joronen, Häkämies, and Åstedt-Kurki, 2011).

While the comparison of quantitative data is important and could potentially support an argument for the efficacy of the BPP to reduce bullying, the main body of research evidence regarding BPP efficacy or lack of it comes from the qualitative data. To analyse this, the discussion will now focus on teacher and learner critique and recommendations for improvements of the BPP with a review of the themes as presented in Chapter Five: Content Delivery, Knowledge and Understanding.

6.3 Content Delivery

With regards to Content Delivery the core concern was to ascertain if the written materials were clear, comprehensible and executable. As the findings reveal, in the first year of the intervention the content of the BPP was generally accepted as a coherent and valuable resource by the fourth, fifth and sixth class teachers with recommendations for shorter instructions, less research quotes and more sample role-plays given. These recommendations were implemented for Year 2 of the study.

In the senior strata, over the course of the two years, the content was delivered with relative ease. However, there were two areas where recommendations were made.

In his second year of programme delivery, Fo shared that he felt there was information overload in the first lesson and that the first role-play should be introduced here to get the young learners on their feet. It was suggested that instead of too much chalk and talk, teachers might see from lesson one that role-plays about school bullying work well with learners as it is a form of pedagogy that children generally understand and relate to. Fo appears to have come to recognise the strength of the kinaesthetic approach of role-play as a valuable learning tool. Learning kinaesthetically through role-play has been demonstrated to provide

benefits in other learning areas such as language acquisition (Schewe and Shaw, 1993), science (Aubusson et al., 1997) and computing (Pivec and Pivec, 2009). Fo's suggestion could potentially help to get the BPP off to a productive start with reluctant teachers who may have reservations about or are uncomfortable with the idea of role-play and the use of drama techniques in general. With a potentially heightened and enthusiastic learner involvement through role-play usage, reluctant and/or inexperienced teachers might be more encouraged to embrace the BPP coming to see role-play as a significant tool for embedding learner knowledge on the topic of bullying as happened with the teachers in this study. With regards to the role-play exercises that contribute to the embedding of knowledge teachers also requested more content on confident behaviours.

With regards to the Confidence Behaviours exercise, which included displays of high and low confidence, there was much positive feedback. The teachers reported that it captured the imagination of learners and they related that the children never imagined that the signals that one displayed by body and voice tonality could indicate how confident a person was feeling or not: "they were surprised by different characteristics of confident behaviour" (Fo). Si added that the learners found it very useful and that, "Confident Behaviours would need a lesson on its own". This reporting of how well the Confident Behaviours exercise was received was revelatory for the researcher. In his own work the researcher had been using status exercises for many years in drama classes as a resource to explore character creation and relationships. The idea came to him to use status in the BPP based on literature about the high status needed for successful defenders (discussed in Chapters Two and Three). However, in the bullying prevention literature on defending, as far as the researcher is aware, there is nothing about making learners aware of actively using confident behaviours to stand up to bullying or to enhance defending. Furthermore, even though practitioners such as Augusto Boal (2000) have advocated the use of status to explore conflict situations with non-actors, as far as the researcher is aware, there has been no research to date on encouraging learners to be aware of their own status displays for everyday life situations by using them pro-actively in an educational setting for their own potential personal benefit. In light of the positive response from teachers and learners in this study, it would seem that there is work to

be done in this area, and that the use of status/confident behaviours as an aid to developing learners' Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills should be researched further. Indeed, the teachers in the study indicated a need for more confidence behaviours exercises as the concept needed "to be fleshed out more" for the learners (Se1). Hence, it is an area that the researcher will explore and add to further in the future development of the BPP.

In the second year there were two problematic areas identified: the perception of the inappropriateness of resources and the delay of the BPP implementation. Firstly, during the course of the second year intervention the chief concern for the researcher was the reservations and some refusals of teachers from the junior section of the school to implement sections of the BPP lessons. The primary reasons given for not fully implementing the BPP by these teachers was a lack of age-appropriate materials and resources. This feedback was of concern to the researcher as the teacher ability to transmit the BPP lessons was a prime inquiry of the research. Suggestions given by teachers in the junior strata to make the BPP more age-appropriate included: adapt the language for early years, provide stories, rhyming poems, pictures, a picture book with stories to follow, posters, songs, exercises asking learners to create images about bullying, predicting, connections, more work on feelings, drama activities following on from stories about bullying, three or four lessons for younger years and not the recommended five as prescribed by the BPP, mime activities, and a reduced amount of bullying types and players in the bullying circle (see Chapter Five for more detail). Based on this feedback the researcher will review the contents of the BPP for age-appropriate content for early years.

Secondly, the delay of the programme from a September/October start to January was disappointing but not hugely detrimental as there was strong positive effect in reducing bullying. Potentially the BPP may have reduced bullying victimisation even further if it had commenced in the September/October time period and continued for a full year, but this speculation cannot be answered in this study, and it is possible that a ceiling effect may have resulted irrespective of whether the programme ran for 5 or 9 months during year 2. The student's report of school bullying to the counsellor, as discussed in Chapter Five, may have also added to the delay of the

programme as the principal was more cautious about the programme's whole school implementation in Year 2 as the fear of more students coming forward with complaints of being bullied was expressed to the researcher by staff. This concern affected the knowledge content for the junior strata.

6.4 Knowledge

An area of particular concern for the researcher was that the teachers in the junior strata had decided not to use the word 'bullying' to describe repetitive aggressive acts but chose to use the phrase "hurting others" (J1 teacher) instead of bullying because of what parents might think:

Researcher:	Why do you think that phrase "hurting others" works better than bullying?
J1:	It's more related to the parents. Any sort of physical contact to them it's, "Oh, I'm getting bullied". Going home and saying that. It'd be worry to the parents even though it would be a once off minor incident. I think it's just safer saying "hurting others".

And in terms of the repetitive nature of the bullying act they encouraged the learners to understand that this was "Something bad that keeps happening" (F1 and F2 teachers).

The five junior strata teachers were wary of the word bullying as they felt the word, "is very strong for young children" (Sr1). F2 reported that the word bully could "stigmatise" a child, and could be misused for once-off incidents of aggression. There was also a fear that once-off incidents could lead to a significant amount of "telling tales" (F2). This view is reflected by the J1 teacher's response: "They'd be going home telling their moms they were being bullied even though it wouldn't be a bullying offence". When asked for specific incidents of students going home and telling their parents they were being bullied, when in fact it was a once-off incident, the teachers could not provide any specific examples but thought that this was a scenario that could happen.

Another reason for using the phrase 'hurting others' was related by Sr2 as it was, "just one of those words that gets thrown around but they didn't really know what it meant". The researcher proposes that since the learners were not introduced to the terminology in accordance with the BPP, they had no opportunity to comprehend it correctly.

Research on learner conceptions of bullying in early childhood development is limited (Temkin and Snow, 2015). It has been observed that early years children (kindergarten) are capable of displaying different forms of bullying such as verbal, physical, social exclusion, and rumour spreading (Alsaker and Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger, 2010; Monks and Smith, 2006). However, assessing the bullying perceptions of early years children is often a difficult process for researchers mainly due to the age of the young participants (Vlachou et al., 2011). There is debate in the field about how to distinguish between typical, sometimes aggressive behaviour that young children display and the more socially strategic and deliberate behaviours that define bullying (Temkin and Snow, 2015). Well-known measurement techniques that are considered appropriate for estimating bullying in older age groups cannot be comprehended fully by early learners. However, observations made by early learners about bullying have been found to be often astute (Alsaker and Nägele, 2008). There is strong evidence to support that preschool child observers can provide reliable information in regard to recognising the repetitive nature of the aggressive act (a key criterion in defining bullying) and an ability to label clearly the participant roles (Alsaker and Nägele, 2008). In fact, in this study junior infants children queried if the phrase 'hurting others' was bullying to which J2 reported, "We said yes that's what we're talking about but we kept reminding them about different ways we hurt others repeatedly and things like that". This resistance to using the bullying lexicon by this junior strata teacher is disappointing. With regards to using bullying terminology the Bernese Programme against Victimization in Kindergarten and Elementary School (Be-Prox), described in Chapter Two, section 2.5.3, encouraged such usage. Be-Prox is the only known anti-bullying prevention programme for early years (Alsaker and Valkanover, 2012). In the Be-Prox programme young children were introduced to vocabulary about bullying and participant players with positive effects. The knowledge gained enabled children to

identify bullying, the sub-types and participant players. Significantly, the Be-Prox programme had sessions with the teachers prior to implementation helping them to identify bullying behaviours in early years. The researcher acknowledges that teachers in this study may have found such training helpful as might have avoided the fear of the bullying word expressed by some staff and the principal. In addition, the previously mentioned fear of learners going home and telling their parents they were bullied was expressed at the staff meeting for the roll-out of the BPP in Year 2. At the meeting the principal made his concerns known that he was very worried about the possibility that more children would be reporting behaviour that was not bullying behaviour as bullying to outside authority figures. He made it quite clear to the staff that he found no evidence that the child, who reported being bullied, was in fact bullied at all. He expressed a theory that the child may have been making up the story. At this meeting, the researcher shared with the principal and staff that it is often very hard to detect bullying as it can be subtle (Alsaker and Valkanover, 2012). The researcher speculates that this public and strong expression of the principal's concerns may have impacted on the roll-out of the second year of the BPP especially with regards to the teachers who were new to the programme. Consequently, it may have undermined delivery of the BPP to a degree, and may have been a contributory factor as to why the teachers in the junior strata thought less favourably of the programme than the senior strata teachers in the school.

These teachers' concerns about labelling aggressive actions as bullying is reflected in the literature. Teachers are often reticent to label aggressive behaviours as bullying or label individual players in bullying incidents (Alsaker, 2003). It is argued that behaviours observed in young children should not be considered bullying but developmental in nature. Children in the early years are learning to navigate their interactions with peers. Many young children who are aggressive with their peers will not engage in bullying behaviours in later childhood and adolescence. Likewise, being the target of an aggressive behaviour does not mean that child will be victimized for life. Still, these early aggressions can be precursors to later behaviour, and it is important to intervene early with SEL skills (Temkin and Snow, 2015). Engaging in exercises to aid young children's social and emotional skills can help them to understand and control their own emotions and understand those of others.

This can significantly reduce conflict and aggression and foster the early learning skills of sharing, listening and empathy.

Unfortunately, as there were no other measurements from the early years learners in this study other than the evidence supplied by teachers, it is difficult to be conclusive about how well the learners' knowledge about the bullying topic was developed over the course of the study. However, with regards to the early years teachers' data presented in table 5.22 over 76% of the responses were positive about the effects of the BPP. Combined the data presented in Chapter Five, section 6.4) about teacher awareness of bullying there is a clear growth in the teacher's knowledge about bullying. Hence, even though there were issues with the appropriateness of materials within the junior strata, it would appear knowledge was being imparted by the teachers and, as it is noted in the following section, it did have a positive result with learners coming to understand the negative impact of bullying, which in turn, may have helped to reduce it.

6.5 Understanding

The theme of understanding examined teacher perceptions of learner ability to use knowledge constructively in role-plays, discussions and to ascertain if an empathetic response was engendered. As reported in Chapter Five, there were mixed reports of teacher usage of role-play to learn about and identify bullying. While use of role-play to prevent bullying was highly successful in the senior strata, there were mixed reports from the junior strata.

6.5.1 Role-play usage

With regards to the use of role-play there were marked differences between teachers' experiences within the junior strata. The two junior infant's teachers reported positively on the effectiveness of role-plays in contrast to the negative reports from the senior infants and first class teachers. For example, Sr1 reported that the coaching of role-play was problematic. She stated that she did not attempt

the role-plays for this age range as she found them "unsuitable". Additional negative comments on role-play came from the first class teachers as were present in Chapter 5, section 6.1. These teachers negative perceptions of role-play usage do not reflect the research literature in this area. Sharp and Cowie (1994) recommend using role-play to reproduce unwanted behaviours in the classroom to allow learners to come to know what bullying is from an analytical stance, what it can look like and what they should do if they are ever involved in bullying or observe a bullying situation. The feedback from F2 on the Defender Role-play concerned the researcher as this teacher may have needed more detailed instructions on coaching defending to scaffold the desired learning outcome. However, the comment from F2, "failing that the role-play has undermined them from what could happen in real life", was speculative and may well have reflected a negative bias towards the BPP activities as discussed earlier. The use of role-play to explore new skills such as experimenting with status does not require learners to be successful at every point. According to the DES Drama Curriculum's (1998) recommendation, drama and role-play activities are to be used as a methodology to help the promotion of self-confidence by providing opportunities for children to experiment with different roles and status. The learner's experience of playing the Defender Role-play is meant to be part of a learning experience that should allow failure to happen, with the teacher, Vygotsky's 'more knowledgeable other' (discussed in Chapter Three, section 2.1) coaching the learner to learn from their mistakes so that they may be more successful in the future. The aim of this experimenting with defending skills might encourage the promotion of a defending culture amongst the learners.

In contrast, both junior infants teachers reported positive experiences of using role-play (see Chapter Five, section 6.1). It is noteworthy that both junior infants teachers were able to deliver the role-play elements of the BPP reporting that they felt that the intervention had helped to decrease the levels of bullying in their school. Therefore, if the junior infants teachers were able to coach role-plays on bullying with their students, one might make the assumption that it would not be an issue for senior infants and first class teachers but, as previously stated, the BPP role-play instructions were cited as "unsuitable" by Sr1. This may be that because of a lack of knowledge about the bullying topic and the use of strategies to identify and prevent

bullying, teachers are not always sufficiently prepared to tackle bullying (Alsaker and Nägele, 2008; Smith, 2004). This lack of knowledge may have worked against the full implementation of the BPP as some of the teachers in the junior strata felt that imparting knowledge on the topic of bullying could lead the students to report bullying to outside authority figures. In the Irish context this may also be due to a "climate of teacher fear around using the 'bullying word'" (O'Moore and Stevens, 2013, p.1). This climate of fear may have influenced Fi2 to make this comment:

> I think there's possibly an assumption that there's a lot of bullying going on in the school when our experience is that there isn't. It's a fairly close knit school. I think that a lot of stuff is written with the view point that the children are experiencing a lot of this bullying and they have a lot of experience and they are carrying that with them. There were times when they were trying to come up with situations where they hadn't such experiences. From that point of view we were trying to drag things out. You're nearly giving them ideas where they wouldn't have had those ideas naturally. They wouldn't have those experiences in the school. It's an unusual school.

The comment "It's an unusual school" is interesting to the researcher as there are no studies of schools reporting next to no bullying. Even though there is no prevalence data on early years levels of bullying published in Ireland, it is unlikely that bullying wasn't happening in this age range in this school. International research shows that children can experience even higher levels of bullying in early years education than in later years (Alsaker and Valkanover, 2012; Temkin and Snow, 2015). The researcher conceives that there was not enough scaffolding for the early years teachers in the research study to help them identify bullying. It has been reported that teachers are often unaware of the amount of indirect/relational bullying (harder to detect than physical and verbal) that goes on in these years and they need training to identify it (Alsaker and Valkanover, 2012). A lack of belief in the BPP as a resource may have also affected teachers' perceptions of it as an effective tool to prevent bullying as will be seen in table 6.3 below. Lack of belief in a bullying prevention initiative can prevent an intervention's success as teachers are key agents in bringing about change to prevailing attitudes about bullying (Kallestad and Olweus, 2003).

Another factor which may have affected teaching ability to use role-play was that both teachers of the junior infants classes were relatively new to teaching. While the researcher never asked their ages, he would guess the junior infants teachers to have been in their mid to late 20's and the senior infants and first class teachers to be around 40 year old range. The researcher speculates that the differences in age range may have affected pre-existing disposition to using role-play in the classroom. Use of drama learning activities has grown in Irish education in recent years with the introduction of the new curriculum in 1999 in which Drama as a subject was included for the first time.

With regards to the senior strata there was a very positive pre-disposition to the role-play activities with 100% agreement by the six teachers in the senior strata that role-play had a positive effect on:

- learner understanding of bullying,
- learner knowledge of the bullying circle players,
- learner role-play had a positive impact on learning how to deal (defend) with bullying situations.

With the exception of the sixth class teacher, who had difficulties with the BPP in Year 1, the age profile of these teachers in this strata would have been in the mid to late twenties. Hence, the predisposition to use role-play activities for defending may have been positive because of the aforementioned introduction of the new curriculum. However, as reported in Chapter Five, direct defending was still an issue as some learners reported feeling uncomfortable doing it themselves. It is important to highlight that defending doesn't always have be direct learner defending of other learners but that the learner can use others methods such as enlisting help from a teacher or using another method such as reporting in a log book or suggestion box as mooted in the BPP. By the end of the study this strategy of reporting the bullying incidents possibly helped learner defend indirectly which appears to have given them a sense of security as reported in Chapter Five, section 6.3. Indeed, faith in the teacher's ability to defend was strengthened over the course of the intervention, as by the end, 100% of students believed teachers to be more effective defenders (see table 5.29, Chapter Five).

6.5.2 Discussions with learners

Defending peers was a significant topic of discussion amongst learners as reported by the teachers in their written feedback from third to sixth classes. In general there was a very positive and pro-active embracing of defending techniques except for among the fifth class as reported by Fi2. According to Fi2 in February 2012, her learners understood that bullying must be stopped but reported that they felt that defending a peer, as they were being bullied, would be difficult. In her written feedback she reported, "Some boys said they would feel too 'shy' or 'uncool' or 'stupid' to be a defender – we discussed these feelings in detail". The discussion of feelings may have helped the boys come to terms with the use of defending behaviour as Fi2 went on to say by the end of the discussion: "Many boys said perhaps they would defend someone more easily now." This feedback on the progression of the discussion may indicate that the act of discussion of feelings aids learners in processing the new information and paves the way for the acceptance of peer defending. However, Fi2 reported two weeks later, "Pupils brought up again how difficult it would be to be a defender and many said they would not be able to do it in reality." By the end of the intervention this line of thinking had been sustained by the teacher as she shared in her questionnaire feedback in June 2012, "...many said they would be reluctant to be a defender and things like that. They know within themselves that they wouldn't be able to stand up and defend themselves." It is worth reminding the reader, as discussed in 6.5.1, that learners were instructed that not wanting to defend overtly is perfectly acceptable. Defending has to be within their comfort zone. If they are worried about retaliation they are coached to report it to a teacher or in some other way such as leaving a note in a bullying incident report box.

However, as reported in Chapter Five, section 7.1, the fifth class leaners were clearly more confident by the end of the study. The evidence presented in Chapter Five suggests that the discussions of defending and the time given to process the information, along with role-play actions on how to defend through confident behaviours, may have helped the fifth class learners to become more positively predisposed to defending options in general by the end of the intervention.

What's also evidenced in the learner transcript is that Billy is able to describe feelings in the first and second person of reported speech. It demonstrates Billy's awareness of how bullying might affect others on an emotional level. This understanding of feelings might generate a desire to seek help to make the bullying stop. This is significant in that it appears to demonstrate that discussing the role-plays could have helped to foster empathy.

6.5.3 Empathy

Teachers from the senior strata of the school agreed unanimously that learners were more able to discuss their feelings by the end of the BPP intervention. In this regard the role-plays were cited as significant in enabling defending as reported by the third class teacher: "Getting to act it out and empathise with their character, that was very important for their understanding of bullying. If we didn't have the role-plays, I don't think it would have been half as effective". This teacher's thoughts reflect the literature which suggests that the act of defending strengthens associations between self-efficacy and empathy (Salmivalli, 2010). The evidence suggests that the role-plays and ensuing discussions may have strengthened these associations for defending even further as they were key in aiding the discussion of empathy as demonstrated by this fourth class learner discussing how the victim might be feeling, "Cause you understand how they felt". This strengthening of association between self-efficacy and defending is a significant result from the implementation of the BPP, as increasing students' empathy for the victim is a difficult task according to a meta-study on interventions with similar aims (Polanin et al., 2012). The BPP mirrors these aims but with the additional resource of role-play as the central learning tool. The evidence would suggest that role-play, with its kinaesthetic focus, was one of the most significant learning tools for young learners in this study as observed by the sixth class teacher:

> The fact that they are learning about bullying, the terms, the definitions, they are learning it through role-plays. They have a link in their heads so they know what it is. So they can very quickly identify it. And they know the steps in how do deal with it again because they've dealt with it through drama in the class.

This potential of kinaesthetic activities such as role-play to enhance learning is illustrated by Edgar Dale's (1969) schemata as presented in section 6.2.

Both of the fourth and fifth class focus groups reported that discussing feelings related to bullying events with the proviso of the 'no blame' approach made it relatively easy. However, the sixth class group expressed reservations as voiced by Wayne and Don:

Wayne:	The stories were easy except when it came to the feelings.
Don:	That was hard.
Wayne:	We're men and we find it hard to talk about them.

Wayne may have learned that society expects boys to suppress their feelings (Pollack, 1998). However, opportunities to talk about feelings are very important for the development of SEL skills (Swearer and Espelage, 2012) especially with regards to bullying prevention, as successful interventions have been found to foster attitudes against bullying, increase empathy and promote self-efficacy for defending (Pöyhönen et al., 2010; Salmivalli and Voeten, 2004). Unfortunately, with regards to discussing feelings there is evidence that gender inequality exists. A gender problem is cited by Garaigordobil and Peña-Sarrionandia (2015) in that education for girls can be more focused on discussing an awareness of emotions, whereas boys are taught to minimize certain emotions (Sánchez-Núñez et al., 2008) and may learn to think that "they must be strong, practical and unemotional" (Garaigordobil and Peña-Sarrionandia, p.2, 2015), as suggested in the present study.

Interestingly in terms in promoting higher levels of emotional intelligence (EI) studies have shown that interventions which promote SEL skills can have a stronger effect on boys than girls (Castillo et al., 2013; Eisen, Zellman and Murray et al., 2003; Kimber, Sandell and Bremberg, 2008). This may be due to the fact that boys generally have a much lower pre-test EI than girls and therefore have more room for improvement (Garaigordobil and Peña-Sarrionandia, 2015). What is most promising here is that research is indicating that if boys are given SEL opportunities that it can help to increase their EI with a high probability that it will have a positive knock-on effect on the intervention. However, regardless of the gender, girls also benefited

from SEL. Therefore to aid potential effectiveness of bullying prevention, programmes should consider implementing SEL alongside the intervention.

6.6. The role of the teacher

The majority consensus by teachers and students at the research school was that the BPP was an effective resource. However, there were reservations in some responses from a minority of junior strata teachers as can be seen in table 6.3.

Table 6.3 Synopsis of closed question teacher responses to the effectiveness of the BPP in reducing bullying	Number of 'Yes' Responses	Number of 'No' Responses	Number of 'Don't Know' Responses
Junior strata responses (out of 80 total responses for group)	61 (76.25%)	13 (16.25%)	6 (7.5%)
Senior strata responses (out of 96 total responses for group)	94 (97.9%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.1%)

Each teacher had 16 closed questions to respond to. For the junior strata, which had 5 teachers, this amounted to 80 total responses for the group and, in the senior strata, which had 6 teachers; this amounted to 96 total responses for the group. In the junior strata in can be seen in table 6.3 that 16.25% of junior strata teacher responses reflect the belief that the BPP was ineffective with a further 7.5% of responses indicating a degree of uncertainty about BPP efficacy. Given that there were only 5 teachers responding in this strata, the positive responses regarding the overall beneficial effects of the BPP far outweigh the negative. The minority of negative responses were generally concerned with the appropriateness of resources as discussed in section 6.3. Therefore, future editions of the BPP will feature more age-appropriate resources to aid teachers in delivering lessons for their early year's learners.

However, it is the teachers' fear of 'bullying' being reported in their school as discussed in section 6.5.1 which may have led the learners to believe that teachers

were less of an efficacious resource in preventing bullying. Learner responses to question 39 in table 6.4 illustrates that this view was on the increase over the duration of the study.

Table 6.4 Research School 2010 and 2012 OBVQ-R surveys, Question 39:				
Overall, how much do you think your class (home room) teacher has done to counteract bullying?				
Perception:	% 2010	n	% 2012	n
Little or nothing	8.8	3	0.0	0
Fairly little	14.7	5	0.0	0
Somewhat	3.0	1	3.3	1
A good deal	14.7	5	60.0	18
Much	58.8	20	36.7	11

Compared to the 2010 responses, more learners overall perceive their teacher as an effective defending resource in 2012. This result is in line with research which claims that interventions which have a lasting impact are those in which the learner has a strong belief and faith in the teacher's ability to deal with bullying (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). However, a notable change has occurred in the response category of "much" which has decreased from 58.8% to 36.7%. At this point in time a substantial amount of learners viewed their teacher as not as effective. This view may have been due to the previously reported data which demonstrates that there was less bullying in the school, and the learners themselves had become more efficacious defenders who did not need as much help from the teachers. Or it may be attributable to the belief that the teachers were not as effective as a defending resource. The data which emerged whereby some junior school teachers appeared to be somewhat in denial about bullying taking place in their school at all could also be a factor here. This view contradicted student perceptions of bullying that was still happening in the school as reflected in this extract from this sixth class focus group at the end of the BPP intervention:

Researcher: Does bullying still happen?

Snowden: Sometimes. And if you tell them [teachers] they don't believe you.

Researcher:	If you tell them about bullying they don't believe you?
Snowden:	Sometimes.
Jack:	It's a small bit better.
Researcher:	How do you know it's a small bit better?
Jack:	Before it used to happen to me twice-three times a week. Now it's only happening to me twice a week.

This observation by Jack also reflects the survey results, presented in Chapter Five, which demonstrate that while students believe bullying to be reduced, they are reporting that incidents are still occurring. As discussed in 6.5.1 junior strata teachers' denial that bullying incidents were occurring may have impaired fidelity to the BPP programme implementation and potentially made it a less effective resource in those classes. According to survey results from Rigby and Bauman (2009), the teacher 'fear of bullying' may in part be due to a lack of knowledge on the topic of bullying, of how cases of bullying can be addressed and/or a belief that teachers will learn how to do deal with bullying on the job. Additionally, it may be that the failure to deal with cases of bullying adequately emanates from a non-recognition of the problem (Rigby and Bauman, 2009) as it has been reported that adults are aware of only about 4 to 5 percent of the bullying that occurs in schools (Kazdin and Rotella, 2010). It is suggested that this may be that when students do report bullying incidents they are afraid they won't be believed, or that when adults do act, they will make things worse with reporting students becoming a target and so less students come forward (Buckie and MacGregor, 2013). Therefore, as discussed, lack of fidelity to the BPP implementation, may have more to do with a lack of teacher training on the topic and an awareness of bullying than the implementation of the programme in isolation.

Student perception of teachers responding to bullying effectively is critical for the development and successful implementation of whole school anti-bullying programmes as reported by Veenstra et al. (2014) with regards to the KiVa anti-bullying programme. Analyses of data from 2,776 fourth to sixth graders showed that students' perceptions of their teachers' efficacy in preventing bullying correlates highly with the fostering of anti-bullying attitudes and the encouraging of peer

reporting of bullying. Over the duration of the intervention faith in the teacher as an efficacious defender in dealing with bullying incidents effectively correlated with lower levels of peer-reported bullying as students perceived that an effective way to deal with bullying was in place and, to an extent, this appeared to have acted as a safeguard to prevent bullying itself. Hence, the results presented in table 6.4 indicate that over the duration of the study the BPP had become an effective teacher led bullying prevention resource and therefore, there was less of a need for teacher intervention.

6.7 Conclusion

The evidence would suggest that the BPP was successful as a whole school intervention to reduce bullying. With regards to the main research question: Can the BPP be used by primary school teachers to reduce bullying within the school environment? The answer is yes, with the following caveats:

- efforts are made to have teachers more positively engaged with the BPP activities prior to programme implementation (e.g. to avoid negative bias to the programme as discussed in Chapter 5, section 4.3),
- teachers are aware that discussing feelings can be more difficult with boys as they may not be comfortable talking about them but such awareness can be generative in promoting positive peer relations (see Chapter 3, section 3.4),
- teachers are made aware that when students are working in role that they are allowed to make mistakes,
- materials need to be tailored for teachers of junior students.

Overall, the evidence presented in Chapters Five and Six from the teacher feedback and interview, learner surveys and focus groups indicate that the majority perceive that levels of bullying are reduced at the research school. The researcher supported the implementation in the first year and then by the second year the teachers were on their own. During the second year the teachers used the BPP resources without qualification or intervention from the researcher. While there were some reported

difficulties within the junior strata, the overall effect of teacher usage of the BPP was positive. However, if the potential of using the resource of the researcher had not been in place for the second year, would the intervention have been as successful? In one sense it is arguable that the researcher was a leader or a champion of change for anti-bullying, and without the support leadership, as discussed in Chapter Two, section 5.4, bullying prevention programmes can have less of a chance of success. Without leadership and sustained mentorship of the programme, there may have been a diffusion of responsibility which may have led to a nil or negative effect. There was a significant risk of this in Year 2 with the principal's slightly changed perspective. In the final chapter, recommendations to develop leadership and other methods of assistance will be discussed as any potential roll-out of the BPP to other schools would require supports in place to enable and/or enhance its efficacy.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the lessons learnt from the research study and the implications for further development of the BPP in the Irish context. To inform this discussion a return to the research question and its sub-aims is appropriate: 'Can the BPP be used effectively by primary school teachers (non-drama specialists) to reduce bullying within the school environment'. The sub-aims were:

- To ascertain how much assistance/coaching teachers would need to implement the BPP. This included a review of the quality of the instructions of the BPP in terms of instructional clarity and ease of implementation.
- To ascertain if the activities of the BBP were straightforward for learners to comprehend and enact.
- To quantify via a self-report survey if the ongoing implementation of the BPP made a difference to the levels of victimisation within the research school over a period of six and eighteen months.
- To evaluate if the BPP engendered learner knowledge creation and metacognition around the topic of bullying and empowered learners to help prevent bullying in their school.
- To investigate if levels of empathy can be raised with regards to those victimised by bullying behaviour.

As reported in Chapter Six these aims were successfully achieved as well as addressing two significant knowledge gaps: (1) the evaluation of teacher (non-drama specialist) usage of the role-play activities in the BPP to prevent bullying, and (2) to determine via the OBVQ-R whether using the BPP can reduce bullying in the school. These were significant aims to have achieved as role-play activities are commonly used in interventions but documentation of their usage by non-drama specialists and quantitative research evidence of interventions that use role-play to prevent bullying

has been extremely limited heretofore (Bradshaw, 2015; Joronen, Konu, Rankin and Astedt-Kurki, 2012), The question now is where does the research go from here?

The recommendations that follow will look to the potential of the BPP as a resource for bullying prevention education in primary schools and the supports that would be needed to facilitate its implementation on a wider scale. These supports include teacher facilitation, leadership by the principal, parental involvement, whole school implementation and government supports. Research internationally indicates that these supports are needed in order for bullying prevention strategies to achieve statistical success in bullying reduction (Bradshaw, 2015; Carney and Hazler, 2006; Marshall, 2012; Olweus, 2004; O'Moore and Minton, 2008; Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012; Smith, Peplar and Rigby, 2004; Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt and Hymel, 2010; Veenstra et al., 2014; Ttofi and Farrington, 2011).

However, with regards to Ireland, the evidence suggests that these supports and resources are not in place, and:

> It is evident that bullying in all of its forms still presents a significant problem for Irish schoolchildren with related risks for educational attainment and well-being. (McGuckin and Corcoran, 2013, p 15)

To begin to counter this problem the integration of the whole community needs to be strengthened in terms of knowledge, understanding and, most importantly, support. It is arguable that the chief financial supporter needs to be at government level in order to have sustainable impact and leadership at a macro level in bullying prevention. The following recommendations and implications draw from the extensive literature review conducted to underpin this study, and from the findings presented previously. In addition, this chapter will identify the limitations of the study and areas for further research.

7.2 Recommendations and implications arising from this study

7.2.1 Government support

The researcher argues that more pro-active support from the government would aid the tackling of bullying in schools, in which funding for schools is a prime consideration. Underfunded and unfunded mandates and financial constraints placed on schools often make it challenging for them to devote the necessary resources to sustain a bullying intervention programme (Hu et al., 2011). Unfortunately, Irish government funding for ongoing, long-term school-based anti-bullying initiatives is not provided. Even though the government is currently taking a firmer stand after the launch of the Action Plan on Bullying (2013) with €500,000 put in place to support the implementation of this plan (DES, 2013), if structures of oversight and accountability are not implemented then the specific recommendations listed below will amount to little more than lip service. For example, the 2015 update on the Action Plan on Bullying (DES, 2015) has no mention of how oversight and accountability will be structured other than reporting that anti-bullying procedures are being implemented in all schools in Ireland with training materials for parents, teachers and boards of management being developed and rolled out. What organisational supports and training for the dissemination of these materials will be is not made clear. Additionally, who will supervise and make schools accountable in initiating and evaluating new anti-bullying procedures? Furthermore, the researcher cannot find any literature on how the €500,000 allocation is being spent. In his current work nationally with teachers, they report having received no information on how to access this funding. Therefore, as the Action Plan on Bullying was launched by the Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairí Quinn and the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Frances Fitzgerald in January 2013, the researcher has been in touch with their respective offices. However, besides acknowledgment of my emails, there has been no information forthcoming as yet. Furthermore, there have been no reports of any additional finances being made available by the government for bullying prevention initiatives. Considering that there are 4022 primary and secondary schools in Ireland, the €500,000 that is supposed to support the Action Plan on Bullying amounts to approximately €124 per school. Also for consideration is that we are now in the 2015-16 school year. The initial €500,000 of support for the Action Plan on Bullying was made in 2012-13 school year. Hence, dividing the

€500,000 over four school years, the funding amounts to approximately €31 per school per school year. This lack of financial support and accountability could lead to the government's good intentions falling short of desired outcomes for tackling bullying.

According to O'Moore and Minton (2008) substantial governmental support needs to be put in place as was the case in Norway with Olweus' First Bergen Project (discussed in Chapter Two, section 2.5.2). O'Moore and Minton (2008) argue that such support would enable "substantial in-roads into preventing and countering bullying behaviour" (p. 11). Notwithstanding that if this foundation was in place then there is evidence to suggest that the following additional supports would be needed to facilitate intervention success: 1) national and local supports prior to programme implementation, 2) developing positive working relationships amongst all stakeholders, 3) sufficient training, 4) steering structures in place to aid schools with the implementation of programmes to help avoid drop-outs.

However, Bradshaw (2015) points out that the cost and related resources needed to service bullying prevention programmes like those recommended by O'Moore and Minton (2008), may be perceived as barriers since implementing multi-component prevention models requires intensive training, can be expensive to implement, requires strong stewardship and high fidelity to programme guidelines to achieve results. Indeed large scale interventions like Olweus' First Bergen Project achieved substantial results as it had a hands-on approach from Olweus himself. Subsequently though, Olweus' programme was used in other countries and results have not matched the results of the First Bergen Project and at times, have had mixed results due to lack of fidelity and oversight (as discussed in Chapter Two, section 2.5.2).

In the Irish context, the Donegal Primary Schools Anti-bullying Project and the ABC intervention (O'Moore and Minton, 2005; O'Moore and Minton, 2008) were well planned but lacked the financial support to enable the success of the infrastructure underpinning the interventions. If we are to take lessons from these examples, then a national intervention for Ireland would have to be well managed, with reportage to a clear and accountable senior agency or organising body. Also, as shown in this

study, it would need to be appropriately detailed for teachers and not overloaded with information, instructions and resources (Stiller et al., 2013).

The study provides evidence that the BPP, as it has been revised in this doctoral study, is an effective and inexpensive bullying prevention programme for learners from second to sixth class. It demonstrated that the supports needed to scale it up are not prohibitively expensive. These would include inclusion of the BPP in SPHE materials and a mandate for schools to follow the programme; specifically being mindful of incorporating student ideas to prevent bullying into the school's anti-bullying strategy. This would be a key consideration as the inclusion of student voices in creating bullying prevention strategies is seen as a necessary ingredient to aid whole school intervention success (Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012; Richard, Schneider and Mallet, 2012; Smith, 2011). In terms of the learners in this study the children had a say in developing the bullying prevention strategies in each participating classroom with good results. This is significant in the Irish context, as according to the National Children's Strategy (2000), children should have a voice in matters which affect them as they are experts on their own lives and should be able to contribute to material that aims to improve their well-being (Mason and Danby, 2011). Giving children a voice optimises their learning and empowers them to enhance their skills and self-esteem which in turn has the potential to improve teacher-pupil alliances and the quality of school life as there is enhanced interest and participation in school activities which can lead to positive social and academic behaviour (Cefai and Cooper 2010).

However, complications arise for pre-packaged bullying prevention programmes which can be limited by:

> the lack of support and engagement of teachers, who may feel the program is one additional burden on their already busy schedules, and that programs are not specifically tailored to the needs of their particular school and students (Orpinas, Horne and Staniszewski, 2003, p. 433).

As demonstrated in this study, teachers need to be encouraged to come on board as they play a vital role in the management and reduction of bullying (Frey et al., 2011). Teachers should view preventing and reducing bullying as one of their basic tasks,

not some additional work imposed on them by external education authorities (Kärnä et al., 2011). This view might be encouraged if the work teachers do in research participation is formally recognised by the Teacher's Council of Ireland and accredited as part of their professional development (Stinson, 2009). This recommendation could help a cost-effective intervention like the BPP to be viewed more favourably by teachers and it might appeal to the Irish government as it could be a cost effective successful bullying prevention strategy.

Ineffective school policies, lack of administrative support, curriculum over-crowding, inadequate school-based resources, and the support of other educators (e.g. the principal), lack of time and/or skills can mitigate against the implementation of a prevention programme (Marshall, 2012). To counter this, the evidence is conclusive that there must be leadership, accountability and whole school support in the ongoing implementation of a successful prevention programme (Brassard and Fiorvanti, 2015).

7.2.2 Whole school support

O'Moore and Minton (2008) argue that teachers need to be supported by the whole school community with particular support from principals. Principal leadership and proper management are considered essential aspects of an effective bullying prevention programme and without these in place, the likelihood of an intervention's success are greatly diminished (Brassard and Fiorvanti, 2015; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). For this reason, many researchers stress the importance of a systemic and ecological approach to tackle and prevent bullying behaviours in schools (Besag, 1989; Action Plan on Bullying, 2013; Sharp and Smith, 1994; Rigby, 1996; Veenstra et al., 2014). In Ireland such an approach is supported by a Code of Behaviour as required by the Education (Welfare) Act (2000). This lends itself to codes of good practice in dealing with bullying as described in the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013) published by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). In its recommendations it puts forth that effective anti-bullying school policies need to be supported by:

- positive school culture and climate,
- effective leadership,
- a school-wide approach,
- a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact,
- implementation of education and prevention strategies including awareness raising measures that-
    - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils, and
    - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying,
- effective supervision and monitoring of students,
- supports for staff,
- consistent investigation, follow up and recording of bullying behaviour,
- use of established intervention strategies,
- ongoing (yearly) evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy.

Aligning these recommendations with a multi-component bullying prevention programme would be daunting if the government supports were not in place. Ongoing supports are needed for schools to ensure continuation of changes implemented at the end of a programme (Ertesvag et al., 2010), as few programmes actually reach the continuation phase to become a routine and relatively effortless part of teachers' and schools' practices (Fullan, 2007). This study provided support to demonstrate that the BPP was relatively easy to manage and proved effective over the longer term.

In terms of improving the BPP further, some teachers in the junior strata recommended that more information was needed for the parents of participating children on the definition of bullying: "Because children might say they were being bullied when they were just tripped in the yard" (J2). This concern refers back to the discussion on a fear of the word bullying presented in Chapter Six, section 6.4. This fear stemmed from a report of bullying to an outside counsellor as the student felt

that the teachers were not doing anything about the ongoing bullying he was experiencing. However, both the student's teacher and the principal reported they saw no evidence of bullying. This highlighted a potential mis-match between teachers', children's and parents' understanding of what bullying is. To avoid this situation from arising the researcher recommends that parents be given more information about the BPP programme via a leaflet that would describe its aims. This would be supported by a parents' information night where they would be given a presentation on the BPP programme objectives and invited to ask questions, express concerns and/or seek advice. In this way the BPP would involve a segment of the whole school community which was not involved in the original study outside of the parents giving their permission for their children to participate in the study. Incorporating such improvements the BPP would be following recommendations of other prevention programmes that have achieved success in reducing bullying behaviour (Brown et al., 2011; Limber, 2011; Raskauskas et al., 2010).

However, a recommendation for whole school community inclusion may be nothing more than a wish list as it is claimed that schools can be slow to embrace change (Hennessy and McNamara, 2011). To counter this, principal 'buy-in' to a prevention strategy is key to its promotion and implementation (Biggs et al., 2008). This is of prime importance in the school hierarchy as leadership and energy from the principal are needed to promote greater adherence to a prevention programme in a school environment (Vernberg and Gamm, 2003).

7.2.3 Supporting teachers

As discussed in Chapters One and Three there is a concern that teachers may sometimes be reluctant to use role-play activities in the classroom due to an unfamiliarity with drama warm-up exercises, inexperience with role-play, limited resources, time constraints and possibly a fear of looking and feeling foolish (Marshall, 2012; Royka, 2002). Such concerns had relevance for this research as how effectively an intervention is implemented by a teacher can contribute significantly to its success or otherwise (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Voeten, 2005).

In tandem with this a teacher's positive or negative perception of an intervention can affect how well it is effectively implemented (Lane et al., 2004).

Reflecting on this it is appropriate to return to the research question: Can the BPP be used by primary school teachers to reduce bullying within the school environment? This was crucial to ascertain as the researcher has an extensive background and experience in drama teaching, which may have aided his previous facilitation of the role-play components of the BPP during his M.Ed. study. In terms of what the researcher originally set out to do, the answer to the research question is a definite yes. Data from the OBVQ-R, teacher feedback, teacher interview and learner focus groups provided conclusive evidence that bullying had been reduced at the research school in comparison to the control school over the same period.

With regards to two sub-aims of the study, notably 1) how much assistance/coaching teachers would need to implement the BPP and 2) if the activities of the BBP were straightforward enough for learners to comprehend and enact, the study concludes that the approach was successful on both counts with the senior strata primary school teachers (second to sixth classes), but less so with those working at the junior school end (junior infants to first class).

The following list synopsises junior strata teachers' concerns and recommendations:

- too much information,
- types of bullying needs to be reduced,
- roles of bullying circle players needs to be reduced and simplified,
- the diagramme for the Bullying Circle was a semi-circle, not a circle and this led to confusion and distraction as "the shape was wrong" for younger learners,
- more age-appropriate content and methods of delivery (i.e., more discussions on feelings, stories, songs and games on the topic of bullying).

These recommendations will be incorporated into future versions of the BPP, which will be targeted at two levels: a manual for teachers working with learners in junior infants to first class and another for those working with learners from second to sixth

class. Senior strata teachers reported being largely happy with the BPP as presented and were able to use it in their day to day teaching practices with few adjustments. However, in addition to devising new content for early years classroom, the next step for the researcher would be to trial new versions of the bullying types and players with early years primary school teachers and learners. The aim here would be to gauge if the new content, learning strategies and information are appropriate and understandable in order to foster the cooperative learning environment that is necessary to reduce bullying in the classroom (Thompson and Smith, 2011).

7.2.4 Wider inclusion of drama in the curriculum

Notwithstanding the specific focus of this study, it is suggested that "Since ancient times, dramatic art has raised fundamental questions about both the limits and the possibilities of human existence" (Schewe, 2013, p. 5). Questioning the status quo, the way things are, is a necessary first step to reducing bullying behaviour. Drama activities such as role-play are ideally suited to foster socially responsible behaviour as they provide the role modelling necessary to help students envision themselves standing up to bullying (Haner et al., 2010). Indeed, utilising and channelling the power of the group through role-plays for knowledge creation and defending hold much potential for further study, as most bullying interventions lack this element which proved pivotal to the success in this study.

Many intervention approaches seek to prevent bullying behaviour by asking learners to report it (Action Plan on Bullying, 2013). However, as students are fearful of retaliation (DeLara, 2012; Salmivalli, 2010) and question teachers' competency in dealing with incidents effectively (James et al., 2006), the method of reporting is rarely successful on its own. Added to this, children who engage in bullying behaviour do not always intend to bully or recognise the potential negative impact of their words and actions on others (Rigby and Johnson, 2006). Furthermore, negative actions and words that foster bullying behaviour are more likely to occur when peer group pressure is applied. Therefore, harnessing the power of the group

as advocated in the BPP, to question bullying and how it manifests itself is a key element in reducing bullying behaviours.

In a recent meta-analytic review Polanin, Espelage and Pigott (2012) summarised that state and national bullying legislation should implement and evaluate programmes that address bullying behaviours as a group process. Prevention frameworks and programs that attempt to abate bullying within schools are increasingly emphasising changes in school climate that desist reinforcing bystander behaviour of bullying (Cohen, 2006). To aid these changes opportunities should be provided to role-play and practice bystander intervention (Polanin, Espelage and Pigott, 2012). The results of this study conclusively support the impact of raising awareness about the participant roles in bullying incidents and their effects on peers. The lesson on defending through role-play encouraged active and pro-social behaviour to prevent bullying. Indeed, the use of role-play activities was shown to be central to the effectiveness of this study in reducing bullying at the research school.

Role-play can be a powerful tool to harness the power of the peer group as learners generally enjoy it, seeing it as fun way to learn, and teachers find that it is a quick method to uncover and explore the themes of a topic under review (O'Toole and Dunn, 2015). Indeed, in terms of 'likeability', the focus groups of this study identified drama activities as one the most successful elements of the BPP ("drama" was mentioned as a key activity by 4 fifth class focus group students and "role-plays" by 3 sixth class focus group students) and, when it came to nominating the least successful elements, drama activities and role-play were not mentioned as being undesirable elements. Teachers and learners commented on its ease of use, appropriacy for the subject matter under exploration, and its power and potency in engendering empathy. The role-play format was highly structured, with clear definable roles for participants, and a clear operational mandate to explore either defender or onlooker statuses. It fitted almost seamlessly into the teachers' tight time schedules without requiring much pre-planning or devoting an unequal share of class instructional time to the tasks. Additionally, the literature identifies that the use of drama activities can encourage motivation to learn as well as aiding the social ecology through the fostering of empathy, self-knowledge and group dynamics (Laakso, 2005). These were attributes positively reported upon by the teacher and

learner participants in this study. Indeed, schools with the most successful approaches to bullying take full account of pupils' views and dedicate curriculum and tutorial time to discussing relationships and matters like bullying (Thompson and Smith, 2011). However, to foster such an environment teachers need to be encouraged and supported in working with students more closely. Hence, a chief recommendation emerging from this study is a greater level of support for all teachers so that they will be encouraged and empowered to continue to expand their use of drama learning strategies such as the role-plays implemented in the BPP. As was evident in this study, some teachers need additional time to feel comfortable in the use of these techniques which place a high value on the relationships, feelings, attitudes, and values of all participants in the learning environment (Ortega and Lara, 2000). Building these relationships is critical to success in a bullying prevention intervention, and it can take time to achieve, as happened in the case of the sixth class teacher in this study.

To summarise, the recommendations arising from the results of this study are as follows:

- Government supports, financially and organisationally, need to be in place for an effective long term bullying prevention initiative to succeed.
- Encouraging and organising a positive whole school climate that supports a bullying prevention initiative is necessary to give teachers the remit and supports they need to enact prevention methods and strategies.
- Formal recognition that participation in initiatives such as the BPP, should count towards teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements.
- Overly pressurised teaching and learning environments appear to detract from more holistic learning experiences such as the use of role-play in the classroom.

- Additional training time should be given to role-play usage in teacher education as it can be a highly effective kinaesthetic method of learning.
- Teachers should be educated that bullying is a common childhood behaviour and that in the school environment they will be supported in their endeavours to identify and prevent it.
- As a result of undertaking this study, future development of the BPP will include:
    - the development of resources for early years education that helps learners come to understand what bullying is and how to prevent it,
    - the development of a scientific survey instrument which seeks to ascertain if bullying is reduced because of the exact use of role-play,
    - assessing if harnessing the power of students with high social status to defend can help change peer attitudes to bullying and reduce it,
    - further resources to develop student usage and exploration of confident behaviours to prevent bullying and
    - charting learner perceptions of the usefulness of incorporating confident behaviours to prevent bullying.

7.3 Limitations of the study

The study was limited by a number of factors that may have had direct bearing on the results. The factors of geographic location, gender, type of survey, class size, school size and age range could have all contributed to the success of the BPP study.

Both schools were inner city [redacted] schools and disadvantaged and this may have been a factor for the reported high rates of prevalence. As discussed in Chapter Five levels of victimisation by bullying were more than 40% in the research and control schools. This was higher than the norm. In the literature it has been reported that

school populations in disadvantaged areas report higher levels of prevalence than middle to upper socio-economic areas (Farrington, 1993; Rosenstein-Manner, 1991; UNICEF, 2014). Therefore, it could be argued that the BPP had more of a chance of success in reducing bullying as the prevalence rates were so high. Had the BPP been run at a school with a different socio-economic demographic, the results may not have been the same.

With regards to gender correlating with survey responses, boys tend to report more bullying on surveys than girls (Pintado, 2006). The problem is that indirect bullying behaviour (e.g. rumour spreading, cold-shouldering), which can be more common among girls, can be harder to detect than physical and verbal bullying and therefore may not be reported as research indicates that indirect bullying becomes more prevalent in secondary schools than in primary schools (Olweus, 2010). Therefore, using a survey might be a better option for primary schools but, if the survey was combined with teacher observations, it could have lent to more robust reportage on prevalence and helped with teachers coming to know the bullying behaviour patterns of their students at a deeper level. However, the budget and man-power for such an extensive review of prevalence at the research school was not within the means of this study.

Class sizes at the research and control schools were approximately 15 students per teacher. This is much more favourable than the average Irish classroom size which is approximately 25 students per teacher with more than one in four students in class sizes of 30 or more (UTV Ireland, 6 April, 2015). Therefore, due to the relatively small class sizes, it is arguable that the teachers were better able to conduct the role-plays as opposed to working with a larger class size. It is likely that larger class sizes may necessitate that additional time needs to be allotted for role-plays and post role-play discussions for non-drama specialists in the future development of the BPP.

Another factor to consider was the size of the research school. The school was relatively small and therefore, the influence of the anti-bullying strategies may have had a strong influence in reducing bullying over the reasonably small student population. It is possible that the BPP may not have been as effective in a larger school with a bigger population.

Finally, the BPP was created with primary school students in mind. It is difficult to know if the results would have been as effective in a secondary school. It is suggested that young children can be more open to social situations and experimenting (Fox et al., 2005). Whereas in adolescence, social inhibitions can play a part in reduced participation rates as adolescents are more likely to be inhibited in a public setting where they could be vulnerable to and influenced by the opinions of peers (Essex et al., 2010). In his own professional work with secondary school students, the researcher is aware that it is more difficult to engage learners of this age range in active learning exercises such as those described in the BPP. Furthermore, in his experience of enrolment numbers when it comes to drama participation in elective drama classes for teenagers, the number of boys participating is much lower with males accounting for only 20-25% of the class group whereas in primary elective classes the enrolment numbers are approximately even. Although, this is speculation on the researcher's part, research on social inhibition demonstrates that it can develop in adolescence and into adulthood (Essex et al., 2010; Gladstone, Parker and Malhi, 2006). The researcher theorises that this could have an inhibiting effect on participation on a role-play based programme such as the BPP at secondary school level.

The issues above and previously identified in this chapter have relevance for practice for areas of further research, and would require additional research to assess their applicability to other contexts.

7.4 Areas for further research

The data accumulated from this study is rich and the researcher realises that there is more work to be done in reviewing the results. The OBVQ-R data clearly demonstrates that victimisation by bullying and bullying behaviour was reduced at the research school, while the qualitative data demonstrates a correlation that use of role-play has been highly effective in bringing these reductions in bullying behaviour about. Within the research literature there is limited evidence on role-play to ascertain its efficacy in reducing bullying (Joronen, Häkämies and Åstedt-Kurki,

2011). Hence, this study could mark a significant contribution to bullying prevention research, and could trigger additional studies in different jurisdictions to assess and evaluate its impact with other groups. For example, research to assess if the BPP would be as effective in larger primary school of 300-400 students should be undertaken. In this study and the earlier M.Ed., the research schools were under 200 students. Other scenarios could include assessing the applicability of the BPP in other contexts such as mixed schools, an all-girls school, boarding schools, country versus city schools, and/or schools with different socio-economic status. Employing mixed methods in each context to assess the BPP could add richly to the research knowledge database on preventing bullying with role-play.

Wheeldon (2010) points out that each study that uses mixed methods potentially adds to the body of knowledge by which information can be extracted to support the development of other studies. In the further analysis and publication of the research data it is hoped that this study might add to this body of knowledge to help future development of materials for classroom use and may prove beneficial in building an argument to integrate role-play into intervention programmes as a part of whole school bullying prevention education.

With regards to other areas to be applied for future investigations, the researcher intends to explore the use of confident behaviours in everyday life, and creating a scientific questionnaire to explore if learners perceive that dramatic confident behaviours exercises can be effective in reducing bullying. In future investigations the researcher will create specific instruments to determine quantitatively if bullying has been reduced in tandem with the use of role-play. Using a role-play approach, future studies will seek to explore the claims in the literature that harnessing the power of students with high social status to defend, can help change classroom attitudes to bullying (Caravita, DiBlasio and Salmivalli, 2009; Dijkstra, Lindenberg and Veenstra, 2008; Goossens et al., 2006; Salmivalli et al., 1996). The ideas and actions of students with higher social status are more likely to be valued, while ideas and actions of students with lower social status are likely to be ignored, rejected, or absent (Matthews and Kesner, 2003). This potential of students with high social status to be influential concurs with the findings from the current study. However, there were reported issues surrounding the use of overt physicality in defending

which was not a desired outcome. Therefore, future studies will look to examine and potentially limit this, and encourage high status defenders to use more socially pro-active defending strategies such as questioning the behaviour as it's happening and/or using the teacher as a resource to defuse situations.

7.5 Conclusion

Within the past two decades Ireland has witnessed the development of public policy and legislation that attempts to enshrine the rights of the child to an appropriate education (Shevlin and Flynn, 2011). Efforts by the school, community and wider society need to be fueled by the belief in the rights of children to be free from the scourge of school bullying as:

> all children have the right to accessible high-quality education free from violence, harassment and bullying with schools providing a supportive learning environment where all students feel safe and can reach their potential (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2000)

Schools that allow bullying are not meeting the requirements of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNESCO, 1989). It was the belief in the rights of children to be free from the stress and fear of being bullied that inspired the researcher to develop the BPP, inaugurate and complete the research study and produce something that may be of use to the wider society. Furthermore, I established that the constructive use of role-play is one of the most significant elements of the BPP. This theory is corroborated by this view of a sixth class teacher who, by the end of the research study, had significantly changed professionally himself as a result of the experience:

Researcher:	Is there anything you would like to add?
Sixth Class Teacher:	The fact that they are learning about bullying, the terms, the definitions, they are learning it through role-plays, they are actually able to link in their heads so they can very quickly identify it. And they know the steps in how to deal with it again

> because they've dealt with it through drama in the class. They know what from a to b to c to d should be. They know the steps and how to do it. I found that as a teaching aid it has been brilliant, a very good idea in how to deal with bullying. I personally found it very helpful.

The future of the BPP and interventions like it in the Irish context needs to inspire teachers in this way. This inspiration, in turn, needs to be congruently aligned with governmental policy, practice and research. Such an alignment may be a significant feature in reducing bullying in the Irish school context and, as has been demonstrated in this study, could help create a learning environment that children can happily participate in.

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INTRODUCTION TO APPENDICES

1. Appendices 1a – 2e inclusive

These appendices present The Bullying Prevention Pack Lessons that were distributed to teachers over the two years of the study. Appendices 1a-1e are from Year 1 (2010-11 school year) while appendices 2a-2e are from Year 2 (2011-12 school year).

Besides displaying content these lessons are presented for comparison so that the reader can track changes made to the BPP lessons following teacher feedback over Years 1 and 2 of the study.

2. Appendices 3a-b inclusive

Appendices 3a and b respectively are an example of the feedback sheets teachers returned to the researcher once a lesson was completed and a sample of a completed feedback sheet.

3. Appendices 4a-g inclusive

Appendices 4a-g are letters sent to the teaching staff and parents advising of the study, its stages and, where indicated seeking informed consent.

5. Appendices 5a-b inclusive

Appendices 5a and b are samples of learner contracts completed during the study.

6. Appendices 6a-b

Appendices 6a and b are the OBVQ-R survey and survey instruction respectively.

APPENDIX 1a – BPP LESSON PLAN 1, YEAR 1

Bullying Prevention Pack Week One

Session 1: Bullying in our school.

Suggested Duration: 50 minutes

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

Learners are informed that they are commencing an anti-bullying programme entitled The Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP). The BPP programme is designed to prevent and stop bullying in and around the school with the aim of making the school a happier place where everyone gets along. The duration of the program will be 5 weeks with one session per week. It is important that the following assurances are made to the learners:

> That when we share stories about bullying that has happened in around the school we do not want to know the names of those who are bullying or those who were targets of the bullying. This is because no naming and no blaming make it easier to talk about how the bullying affects all of us.

However, to begin with they are going to play a fun game called School Pictures.

2. School Pictures (10 minutes)

School Pictures is a warm up activity to aid learners in naming/describing their emotions around the topic of bullying.

Directions: Class is assembled for group photos. They are coached to freeze as a statue with an emotion on their face. For example, "Everyone put on your happy face. Now freeze!" This continues with the students expressing other emotions or states such as happy, sad, friendly, angry, funny face, scared, surprised, shy, cheeky, troubled, hopeful, sneaky and concerned, etc. Then finish with a face of someone who is bullying and then a face of someone who is being bullied to set the stage for ensuing discussions.

Note: If you take actual photos, you can put the pictures up on the class wall which may help to create a sense of group comradery and will also mark the start of the intervention.

3. Learner understanding and interpretations of bullying (10 minutes)

The teacher commences this exploration by writing the word "Bullying" on the board. Learners are asked what they think bullying is. Their responses are written on the board. However, if learners are initially quiet, then the teacher might ask the following questions:

- Have you ever been called names, made fun or pushed on the school grounds? Raise your hands if this has happened to you.
- Without naming names can someone tell us in what way exactly?

4. Bullying defined (20 minutes)

Now the teacher refers to the definition of bullying as described in Mona O'Moore's "Understanding School Bullying". Extracts are below with some of the most salient points. (Your school has been given a resource copy of the book. Please refer to this if you need more information or clarification). Importantly, you will have to pitch the definition for the comprehension level of your class group (teachers of younger students please see the note at the end of the handout). Below is extract from the book with some of the most salient sections (from pp. 24 and 26):

> Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, can scarcely be described as bullying. However, when behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.
>
> While we may accept this definition, we need to be mindful that there are also many instances where once-off or isolated acts of aggressive behaviour can cause children and adolescents to feel harassed on a continual basis. A 'once-off' threat, for example, can cause young people to live daily in fear of that threat being carried out on them or on their friends and families.

> ...we should be aware that very young children do put the same emphasis as older children on the repeated nature of aggressive acts. Their understanding of the bullying is very much based on whether the perpetrator's actions hurt them. They are, therefore, more likely than older children and adults to report once-off aggressive acts as bullying...their complaints should be treated in a sympathetic manner and in a way that does not make the young child feel foolish in coming forward to tell of their own experience of 'bullying' or that of others. Rebutting children's attempts to tell is one of the biggest hurdles we face in counteracting bullying, with silence becoming the bully's best friend.

The most important items to note from the above extract are:

- The repeated nature of bullying – does this keep happening or is it a once-off (but not exclusively)
- The teacher needs to take the time to be a sympathetic listener and needs to be seen by all involved as being effective in dealing with the incident

Taking the time to listen is very important and your response to the learner's report will help to clarify for them what bullying is. The fruits of this will be realised in a more engaged experience in learning about bullying as children become assured that you are serious about encouraging everyone to prevent and stop bullying.

5. Types of Bullying Behaviour

At this stage the learners are asked questions about the types of bullying that may have not been brought up. For example: "Cyber-Bullying - does anyone know what this kind of bullying is?" This is added to what may be missing from the learners list (with regards to early years you may want to disregard this). The list of the types of bullying could include:

- Verbal Bullying: name calling/abusive comments which can include name-calling, slagging, teasing and taunting with comments about how one looks, the clothes they wear, race, gender, sexuality, religion or disability

- Physical Bullying includes pushing, shoving, hitting, hair-pulling, scratching, punching, etc.

- Gesture Bullying is non-verbal aggression that includes intimidating behaviour such as the cold stare, slitting the throat, dirty looks, looks that could kill and/or behaviour that mocks someone.

- Social Exclusion/Relational Bullying is one of the most insidious forms of bullying because it can be hard to detect. A child is isolated from a peer group by preventing her/him from joining in games, school activities and other social activities. Behaviours/actions include cold shouldering, nasty notes, spreading false rumours and offensive graffiti (often this bullying is intertwined with verbal and physical bullying, especially among earlier years).

- Extortion Bullying can include demands/threats for money, possessions or equipment. Targets may also be blackmailed to engage into anti-social acts. (may not be necessary to discuss with younger learners)

- Cyber Bullying can take the forms of text messages, phone calls, online chat rooms such as Facebook or Spillit, YouTube clips, blogs, websites and other forms of electronic communication (may not be necessary to discuss with younger learners).

6. Experiences of bullying (15 minutes)

Sharing personal stories and feelings about bullying is an empathy building exercise and is a very important part of the intervention. Empathy develops as children grow more aware of the feelings of others and learn to put themselves in one another's shoes. Often children are unaware of how damaging bullying is. They could look at it as a bit of harmless fun or it could simply be a modelled behaviour they have never questioned. Hence, sharing their stories and feelings about bullying is the first step in creating greater empathy and understanding.

Learners are asked to recall a bullying incident, **without naming names***, of when they were targeted, bullied, or witnessed bullying in or around the school (playground, classroom, hall, toilets, etc.). This is voluntary but it works best if everyone participates as it shows that bullying behaviour is something everyone in the class is aware of. When each learner finishes their story, the teacher asks: "How did it make you feel?" It is important to note that children may be a bit dumbfounded when asked, "How did being bullied make you feel?" Expressing feelings in the classroom, never mind in other social contexts, is not something they may be used to. If they have trouble naming/describing their feelings, remind the learners about the "School Pictures" exercise and the feelings they used. If necessary, give learners examples such as: "It made me angry" or "It made me sad".

At the end of this session inform the students that in the next few weeks they are going to do role-plays/drama around the bullying issue and that should be a lot of fun. Everyone will learn more about bullying and how it affects all of us. When they finish remind them that they will make a plan to prevent bullying at their school.

APPENDIX 1b – BPP LESSON PLAN 2, YEAR 1

Bullying Prevention Pack Week Two

Session 2: Bullying Role-plays

Suggested Duration: 50 Minutes

1. Review (5 minutes): Begin with a recap of the previous session and include a review of the types of bullying

2. The Bullying Circle (5 minutes): The Bullying Circle Handout (attached) developed by Dan Olweus is copied and given to each of the students. The Bullying Circle illustrates the players involved in bullying incidents and is aimed to foster awareness of the possible players students in the school might be playing in bullying incidents. The teacher can lead discussion in this way, "As well as the bully and the victim there are other players involved in bullying incidents as well, such as:

- Followers who join in but do not start the bullying
- Supporters or Passive Bullies who support the bullying and often urge others on but do not take active part
- Passive Supporters or Possible Bullies who like to see bullying, find it fun/entertaining, but do not display active support
- Disengaged Onlookers who see the bullying but do not consider it relevant to him/her
- Possible Defenders who dislike bullying, think they should step in, but don't
- Defenders who come to the aid of the victim

3. Role-play Round One: Bullying Incident Re-enactment (20 minutes): Learners are advised that they are going to perform a role-play based on bullying incident that could have happened in the school (classroom, playground, hallway, etc.). The role-play can be based a bullying incident but no naming or blaming is allowed. Teams of 3 or 4 players are assigned or students can make the teams themselves. The scenes need only be a few lines long but need to clearly show the type of bullying and the bullying roles learners are playing. It is

suggested that the teacher model and improvise a bullying incident with two volunteers to give students a sample of the task and play a minor. If you are more comfortable with a written script, then the following Exclusion and Verbal Bullying example can be used with the teacher playing the part of Learner 3 (handout attached):

Learner 1: Can I play on your team?
Learner 2: We don't want you.
Learner 1: Please.
Learner 2: Are you stupid or what?
Learner 3: Definitely stupid.
Learner 2: Just go away!

After the reading of the scene is completed and discussed, the learners are instructed to form their own teams. Importantly, the learners are counselled again that, as in session one, that there is no interested in naming or blaming anyone. All we want to do is learn about bullying and how it affects us. So, all real names are left out of the role-play. All learners are coached to discuss and agree on the incident they are going to play, they rehearse simultaneously (simultaneous rehearsal will help learners be less self-conscious and have more fun). Students are given up to five minutes to rehearse the role-play but often they finish before this allotted time. Once the rehearsal is finished, learners are then asked to volunteer to perform their scenes in front of the class. After each performance, scenes are discussed with these following questions and any others that may be deemed appropriate*:

- What type(s) of bullying did you see?
- What Bullying Circle players are involved? (i.e. bullying, follower, student who is bullied)
- How do you think the bullied child felt? (Encouraging empathy and understanding of another's point of view)
- What happened to the bullied child? (Were there any repercussions?)
- Did the bullied child do anything about it? React or ask for help? (Ascertaining if the children are aware of the school procedures in place to help them with regards to bullying incidents)

- What could be done to stop this? (Again, ascertaining knowledge with regards to school bullying prevention procedures)
- Was/were there any onlooker(s)? What kind of onlookers were they? (Testing knowledge with regards to the passive participants of the Bullying Circle)
- Was/were the onlooker(s) going along with it, just watching, upset about it or just ignoring it? (Attempting to get specifics on the types of onlookers)
- Could the onlooker have done anything? What? (Again, ascertaining knowledge of school procedures)
- Did anyone tell the teacher or someone in charge? If not, why not? (Ascertaining if they are knowledgeable of authority figures in charge. Also, gauging learner attitudes to authority figures as possible source of help.)
- If you need to tell someone about the bullying, who would you go to? (Creating awareness about sources of help in the school)

*It is not necessary go through the whole list of questions for each scene. As a general rule begin the questioning and discussion with an inquiry as to the type of bullying followed by questions that you feel are relevant and promotes productive discussion.

4. Role-play Round Two: Reverse Role-play (20 minutes): In this second role-play students engage with roles they would not normally be associated with (i.e. the bully plays the victim and vice versa). As a teacher you undoubtedly have insight into which learners:

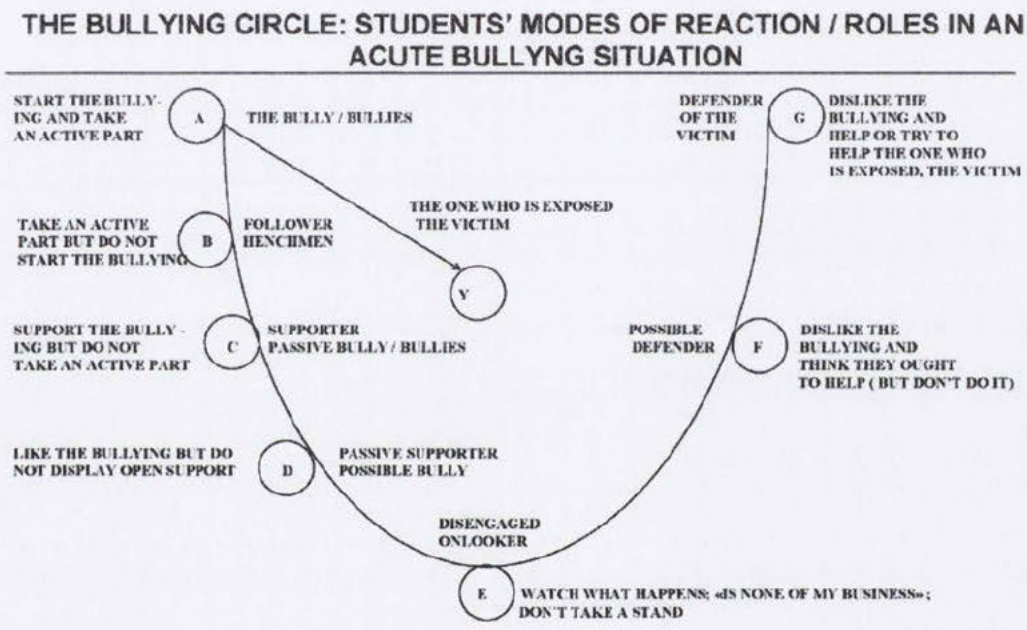
- Are prone to engage in bullying behaviour
- Have been victimised, and
- Have more often been observers.

Hence, in this role-play the teacher assigns the roles that they know or suspect are **not** the norm for the learner. (Note: Do not share your reasons for role assignments as this might stigmatise and blame). A main point of this role-play to foster empathy the victim's plight and raise awareness about the hurtful and damaging effects of bullying. Follow rehearsal guidelines from **Role-play Round One**.

Lastly, the role-plays tend to put children in a good mood but if you feel emotions were stirred up with regards to bullying, then finish with a game that the students know and enjoy and allows them to return to the routine of schoolwork.

The Bullying Circle

(OLWEUS)



Session 2 Dialogue Handout:

Exclusion Bullying example with Verbal Bullying

Assign three players the parts of Learner 1, Learner 2 & Learner 3.

Scenario: Learner 1 wants to join a game of football with Learners 2 & 3.

Learner 1: Can I play on your team?

Learner 2: We don't want you.

Learner 1: Please.

Learner 2: Are you stupid or what?

Learner 3: Definitely stupid.

Learner 2: Just go away!

APPENDIX 1c – BPP LESSON PLAN 3, YEAR 1

Bullying Prevention Pack - Week Three

Session 3: What the Onlooker Can Do

Suggested Duration: 50 Minutes

1. Review (5 minutes): Begin with a recap of the previous session and review the types of bullying and players in the bullying circle.

2: Onlooker Role-play

Part 1: Discussion (20 minutes): In preparation for this role-play the teacher asks learners to describe a bullying incident they observed but did nothing about (once again, without naming or blaming). After each learner shares their story, the teacher asks what kind(s) of bullying was observed.

Onlooker Role-play: Next the children are organised into teams of at least four players to create an improvised role-play based on one of their classmate's stories of an observed bullying incident. Each team needs to include a bully, a follower, a victim and an onlooker (If you cannot divide the class into fours neatly, create group(s) of five children, adding the additional role of passive bully or another onlooker). **It is very important that the part of the onlooker is played by a popular child.** (The reason for this will be discussed in the next section). The teams decide whose story they will re-enact, everyone in the class rehearses simultaneously and then the role-plays are discussed.

Questions to pose in the post role-play discussion are:

- What kind(s) of bullying was/were there?
- Does it keep happening?

- What players of the bullying circle were involved?
- Why do you think they did nothing?
- Did they enjoy watching it? If so, why do you think that might be? (i.e. It might be that they though it was a bit of fun)
- Do you think the bully will bully more if s/he feels supported?
- Was/Were the onlooker(s) afraid of the bully? Why? Afraid of retaliation?

3. Defending (25 minutes): In primary school, the majority of bullying incidents are fuelled by the attention of onlookers (Craig, Pepler, & Atlas, 2000; O'Connell, Pepler, & Craig, 1999; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen, & Voeten, 2005) and children typically understand that those who are bullied do not deserve abusive treatment (Almeida, Caurcel, & Machada, 2008) but don't know what to do (Coloroso, 2004). A prime reason according to Coloroso (2004, p. 67) is that the onlooker, "hasn't been taught ways to intervene, to report the bullying or help the target". Yet, when onlookers do intervene, bullying stops 57% of the time within 10 seconds (Hawkins, Pepler, & Craig, 2001). In this role-play the learners will re-do the onlooker role-play but this time as a defender. The children will begin learning techniques that they can *possibly* use to come to the defence of a bullied schoolmate. "Possibly" is italicised because it must always be stressed that children should only defend if they feel it is safe to do so. If they feel threatened then they should go to someone in charge. This should be communicated to them as part of the procedures for what to do when they witness bullying.

In this role-play the defender should be played by a popular student. This is helpful for the following reasons:

- it is often the case that popular children are onlookers;

- popular children can be an influential resource in changing classroom attitudes to bullying (Dijkstra, Lindenberg & Veenstra, 2008)
- students with higher social status can affect group thinking (Matthews & Kesner, 2003);
- the action of a popular child coming to the defence of the victim has the potential to make the exercise more noteworthy to the group;
- popular children are not as fearful about repercussions
- children feel comfortable following the lead of popular child
- a popular child can help sway class attitudes away from bullying behaviour.

The exclusion example role-play below is an expanded version from Session 2 (Dialogue handout provided on p. 6). As in Session 2, this role-play example is modelled for the class. Ask students to volunteer for the scripted example. Once again, the teacher can join in if they wish. But be sure to assign the part of Learner 4, the defender, to a popular child. The other players are:

- Learner 1, the child being victimised;
- Learner 2, the child doing the bullying;
- Learner 3, a follower.

Don't tell children which part they are playing as this may stigmatise the learners playing the parts of the bully or victim.

Learner 1: Can I play on your team?

Learner 2: We don't want you.

Learner 1: Please.

Learner 2: Are you stupid or what?

Learner 3: Definitely stupid.

Learner 1: You always call me names and never let me play.

Learner 4: Hey, leave him alone.

Learner 2: What's it to you?

Learner 4: You're bullying.

Learner 2: We're not bullying.

Learner 4: Yes you are. You're calling him names and won't let him join in. Don't you see that?

Learner 2: (To Learner 4) Well, will you play too? That way we have even numbers?

Learner 4: Ok, so.

Again, the role-play is followed with questions and discussion, this time focussing on the role of the defender:

- What kind(s) of bullying was/were there?
- Was the defender effective in stopping the bullying?
- Do you think the child who is bullying feels more or less support because of this?
- If the feel less supported, do you think the bullying will continue? If not, why not?
- If the defender felt nervous about stopping the bullying, and didn't want to intervene, what could they do instead? (Once again, ascertaining if children are aware of the procedures to follow in reporting bullying incidents)

This role-play can be a lot of fun for the children and put them in good spirits as they see that something proactive is being done about bullying.

Session 3 Defender Dialogue Handout:

Exclusion Bullying with Verbal Bullying

Learner 1: Can I play on your team?

Learner 2: We don't want you.

Learner 1: Please.

Learner 2: Are you stupid or what?

Learner 3: Definitely stupid.

Learner 1: You always call me names and never let me play.

Learner 4: Hey, leave him alone.

Learner 2: What's it to you?

Learner 4: You're bullying.

Learner 2: We're not bullying.

Learner 4: Yes you are. You're calling him names and won't let him join in. You never do.

Learner 2: (To Learner 4) Well…will you play too? That way we have even numbers?

Learner 4: Ok, so.

APPENDIX 1d – BPP LESSON PLAN 4, YEAR 1

Bullying Prevention Pack - Week Four

Session 4: The Defender

Suggested Duration: 50 Minutes

1. Review (5-10 minutes): Begin with a recap of the previous session, review the types of bullying, players of the bullying circle and discuss the onlooker session from the previous week with a particular focus on the Defender Role-play.

2: Confident Behaviours (10 minutes): In a recent study of student defenders by Barchia & Bussey (2011) it was reported that there were higher levels of collective efficacy over time when learners and teachers worked together to prevent bullying. Children need to learn how to defend with confident behaviour as bullies tend to pick on children who have low status in the social group (Matthews & Kesner, 2003). Children who display low status behaviour are giving social cues to their peers that shows they are not confident and secure (i.e. poor eye contact, fidgety, poor posture) (Pierse, 1995). Research by Pöyhönen, Juvonen, Salmivalli (2010) suggests that defenders need a high status in order to face the social risk involved in standing up for the victims and/or it is also possible that the very act of defending increases ones status in front of peers.

To aid the learner's awareness of social cues the *Confident Behaviours* exercise was developed to aid children to become more aware of behaviours that display high and low confidence. The teacher begins the exercise by asking the learners what does the word "confidence" mean to them. Learner answers are noted and discussed. If needed the teacher can also provide the following definition of confidence: "assurance: freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities" (from the Princeton Education website).

Next, the teacher explains to the learners that they are going to do *Confident Behaviours*, an

exercise on how to show confidence. The class is split in two with the teacher ensuring that there are learners of varying peer group status in each group. One group, *Group High Confidence*, stands one side of the room and *Group Low Confidence* on the other. The teacher assigns the behaviours (listed below) to the respective groups asking the learners to show what that behaviour would look like. For example let's begin with the first behaviour at the top of each list: the teacher can begin the instructions by saying, "Confident people tend to take up space. So, let me see the high confidence group take up space. Confident people are not afraid to be seen. Stand tall. Put your hands on your hips. Now, to the other side of the room. People with low confidence take up less space as if they don't want to be seen. They hang their heads and might try to make themselves small" And so on. (Throughout this exercise the teacher should give positive feedback to the learners as they play with the high and low confidence behaviours. This will help to encourage them to use the behaviours in the role-play to come.) After the list of behaviours is completed, the High Confidence Behaviours group now becomes the Low Confidence Behaviours group and vice versa. This is important as we don't want any child to feel stigmatised by being in the Low Confidence group.

High Confidence Behaviours	**Low Confidence Behaviours**
Takes up space	Minimise space they take up
Good posture	Poor posture
Strong Eye contact	Poor or no eye contact
Stands still with upright posture	Fidgety
Feet and legs turned out	Feet and legs turned in
Strong handshake and speak in strong, clear voice	Weak/Poorly contacted handshake and speak in weak, mumbled voice

3. Modelled Defender Role-play (10 minutes):

The teacher uses the sample Defender Role-play introduced in Lesson 3 for modelling and assigns the part of Defender to her/himself. Three other student players are assigned the parts of bullying, following and targeted. The teacher incorporates confident behaviours in the defending role-play such as placing their hands on their hips, using strong eye contact and a clear strong voice. Once the sample role-play is finished the learners are assigned into groups of four, are told to use the sample script and make sure that whoever is defending uses the confident behaviours. In assigning parts the teacher is instructed that the role of the Defender should be given to a child who has low to middle social status as these are children who may have most difficulty adopting confident behaviours. Each group presents their sample role-plays to the class with the child in the role of the defender being coached to incorporate confident behaviours if they haven't done so. The instructional strategy here is that the children have just been introduced to using confident behaviours and may need to be coached in using these behaviours in playing the part of defender. If the teacher ascertains that help is needed, some of the following coaching suggestions may prove useful:

- Do you think you were displaying confident behaviours when you intervened? If yes: What were they? Can you show me?
- Do you think you might have displaying low confidence behaviours? What were they?
- Coach the child to repeat the line from the modelled script, "Hey, leave him alone", displaying confident behaviours with a clear, strong and steady voice tone and hands on hips.

Once this completed the learners are asked to improvise a new Defender Role-play on any type of bullying they chose with the defending student displaying confident behaviours.

Scenes are reviewed first to examine if confident behaviours are being incorporated and then the bullying behaviours content of the scenes are questioned and discussed as in lesson 3.

4. The Defender Role-play with confident behaviours: Once the sample role-play is finished the teacher assigns teams of four with learners playing the parts of bully, follower, victim and defender. In assigning parts it is important that the role of the defender be assigned to a child who has **low to middle social status in the class group** as these are children who may have most difficulty adopting confident behaviours. Then the groups are asked to create a new role-play with the defender showing confident behaviours in helping the bullied classmate. As before the learners engage in simultaneous rehearsal.

When presenting the rehearsed Defender Role-plays to the class group, it is extremely important that the teacher coaches the defender to adopt high status behaviours from the *Confident Behaviours* exercise. For, even though a learner might not have had any problems displaying confident behaviours in the group exercise, the learner may forget or be unsure how to put it into practice in the actual role-play. Hence, they may need coaching on confident behaviour specifics. For example, when the bully denies they are bullying, the child who is the defender is coached to be more aware of how to use their body confidently. For example:

- Put your hands on your hips and tell the child who is bullying that: "You excluded her/him from the game" (an example of the most common form of primary school bullying).
- Look at the child who is bullying in the eye ask him/her if they understand.
- If s/he does understand tell them in clear, steady voice to stop.

Once the coaching has been conducted, then the content of the scenes are questioned and discussed as in Session 3:

- What kind(s) of bullying was/were there?
- Was the defender effective in stopping the bullying?
- Do you think the bully feels more or less supported because of this?
- If they feel less supported, do you think the bullying will continue? If not, why not?
- If the defender felt nervous about stopping the bullying, and didn't want to intervene, what could s/he do instead? (Once again, ascertaining if learners are aware of the procedures to follow to reporting bullying incidents.)

Once the discussion is finished advise the learners that in the following week they will be working on a plan to prevent bullying in their class group. They are asked to have a think about what ideas or strategies they can come up with to help this. These will be discussed in the next session.

Session 4 Dialogue Handout:
(also used in Session 3)

Exclusion Bullying with Verbal Bullying

Learner 1: Can I play on your team?

Learner 2: We don't want you.

Learner 1: Please.

Learner 2: Are you stupid or what?

Learner 3: Definitely stupid.

Learner 1: You always call me names and never let me play.

Learner 4: Hey, leave him alone.

Learner 2: What's it to you?

Learner 4: You're bullying.

Learner 2: We're not bullying.

Learner 4: Yes you are. You're calling him names and won't let him join in.

Learner 2: (To Learner 4) Well, will you play too? That way we have even numbers?

Learner 4: Ok, so.

APPENDIX 1e – BPP LESSON PLAN 5, YEAR 1

Bullying Prevention Pack - Week Five

Session 5: The Contract

Suggested Duration: 50 Minutes

1. Review (5-10 minutes): Begin with a recap of the previous session, the types of bullying, players in the bullying circle, discussion/observations on the onlooker and defender sessions.

2. Contract creation (40-50 minutes)

For this last session a contract is drawn up to aid bullying prevention within the class group. It takes the written form of a bullying prevention contract that is formulated by the learners and teacher in tandem with the schools Anti-Bullying policy.

Prior to creating the action plan the teacher reviews the Anti-Bullying Policy with the learners. It is then emphasised that they can feel free to add to this policy via the contract. In written form, the plan should include the areas listed below as well as any ideas or actions the group feels could help:

- The definition of what bullying is (from session one)
- Why learners want to stop bullying (A review of lessons learned from the previous sessions could be included bulleted here as well as any new ideas)
- The kinds of actions one can take when a bullying incident is taking place (reporting to a yard guard or lunchtime detention)
- A method for reporting bullying that does not put learners at risk (i.e. bullying report box or class diary that learners have access to)

To engage and empower the learners in this process, they are organised into groups and teacher gives them approximately 10 minutes to discuss and write their ideas down. Then the teacher nominates one person from each group to present the groups suggestions to the rest of

the class. These are written up on the board and discussed. In this discussion the teacher should thrash out with the learners ideas that are most helpful and doable. These are organised into a contract that everyone agrees on. The contract should be completed and signed as soon as possible and put in a highly visible place in the classroom. If desired, use the template on page three.

Follow up activities:

Once a month a period needs be set aside where learners discuss what has been working and not working with regards to the contract, sharing stories about any bullying that has been happening in or around the school, do role-plays around these bullying incidents, review the contract and make any necessary additions and/or changes.

Bullying Prevention Contract Template

If desired the following is a template that can be added to and/or revised with regards to specifics of classroom strategies for bullying prevention and your school's policy on anti-bullying behaviour.

The purpose of this contract is to prevent and stop bullying in our school. The more we know about bullying and how it affects each and everyone of us the more we can do to stop it.

What is bullying?

A person is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly over time, to negative

actions on the part of one or more other students.

What is our school policy regarding bullying?

(Insert School Anti-Bullying Policy here)

What we do we know about bullying in our school?

(The information under the headings below should be relevant and is therefore drawn from the learners experiences and knowledge with advice and suggestions from the master learner)

The Types: *(Insertion)*

Bullying happens in the following places in our school: *(Insertion)*

Who are types of players involved? (Bully, Victim. Onlooker, etc. - Refer to Bullying Circle):

(Insertion)

What will we do to prevent and stop bullying in our class?

(Insert brainstorming ideas here along with reference to any procedures already in place as well as a method for reporting bullying that does not put learners at risk)

We will review how our bullying prevention strategies are working once a month with our teacher and make any additions or changes as necessary.

By signing this contract we all agree to work together to stop bullying when we see it happening. We want our school to be a happy and safe place for learning.

Signatures/Names:

Date:

APPENDIX 2a – BPP LESSON PLAN 1, YEAR 2 – REVISED

Bullying Prevention Pack

Session 1/Week 1

What is bullying and how does it affect us?

Suggested Lesson Duration: 50 minutes

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1. Introduction to the BPP (5 minutes)

The teacher informs learners that they are commencing an anti-bullying programme entitled The Bullying Prevention Pack (BPP). The BPP is designed to help prevent and stop bullying in and around the school with the aim of making it a happier and safer place where everyone gets along and receives a good education. The duration of the program will be 5 weeks with one session per week and monthly follow-ups thereafter.

Additionally, it is important that the following instruction is made to the learners: We may want to share stories about bullying that has happened in around the school but we do not want to know the names of those who are bullying or those who were targets of the bullying. When we don't name and/or blame it makes it easier to talk about how bullying and how it affects us. But before we do anything like that, we are going to play a fun drama warm-up game called School Pictures.

2. School Pictures (5 minutes)

Objective: School pictures is a drama warm-up activity to aid learners in naming/describing their emotions.

Instruction: The class is assembled for group photos. They are coached to freeze as a statue with an emotion on their face. For example, "Everyone put on your happy face. Now freeze!" This continues with the students expressing other emotions or states such as: happy, sad, friendly, angry, funny face, scared, surprised, shy, worried cheeky, troubled, questioning,

hopeful, sneaky, concerned and any other emotions that would be appropriate. Many of the suggested emotions listed above are emotions that one might experience around bullying and may help the ensuing discussions on how bully affects one emotionally. Finally finish with a face of someone who is bullying and then a face of someone who is being bullied.

Recommendation: You may wish to take actual photos as you coach School Pictures. Later, you can place pictures of positive emotions on a class wall or bulletin board. This may help to create a sense of group comradery and will also serve as a reminder of the start of the BPP.

3. Learner Conceptions of Bullying (10 minutes)

Objective: To explore learner conceptions of bullying.

Instruction: The word 'Bullying' is written on the board. Learners are asked what they think bullying is. Their responses are written under 'Bullying'. However, if learners are initially quiet, then the teacher might ask the following questions: In school have you ever been:

- called mean names more than once by the same person or persons?
- pushed more than once by the same person or persons in a mean way?
- excluded from games more than once by the same person or persons?

Each of the questions above includes the phrase 'more than once' to prepare the learner's for an important criterion in the definition of bullying: that is generally repetitive by nature.

4. The Definition of Bullying and the types (15)

4.1 The Definition

Objective: Teacher presents the definition of bullying and the types

Instruction: The teacher refers to the definition of bullying as described in Mona O'Moore's "Understanding School Bullying". Extracts below contain some of the most salient points. (Your school has been given a resource copy of the book. Please refer to this if you need more information or clarification). Importantly, you will have to pitch the definition for the comprehension level of your class group (teachers of younger students please see the note at the end of the handout).

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others.

An important item to note in this definition is the repeated nature of bullying. Does keep happening or is it a once-off incident? Keep this question in mind when students share their stories about perceived bullying incidents in part 5.

4.2 The types of bullying behaviour

Objective: Teacher presentation of the types of bullying

Instruction: The types of bullying are reviewed:

- **Verbal Bullying** can include name calling/abusive comments which can include slagging, teasing and taunting with comments about how one looks, the clothes they wear, race, gender, sexuality, religion or disability
- **Physical Bullying** includes pushing, shoving, hitting, hair-pulling, scratching, punching, etc.
- **Gesture Bullying** is non-verbal and includes behaviour such as dirty looks, the cold stare, slitting the throat and non-verbal mocking
- **Exclusion Bullying** includes preventing a classmate from joining in games, school activities and other social activities. Behaviours/actions include cold shouldering, sending nasty notes, spreading false rumours and offensive graffiti* (for example: mean comments on the back of a toilet door)
- ****Extortion Bullying** can include making someone do something they may not want to do such as damaging school property, demands/threats for money, possessions or equipment.
- ****Cyber Bullying** can take the forms of text messages, phone calls, online chat rooms such as Facebook or Spillit, YouTube clips, blogs, websites and other forms of electronic communication (may not be necessary to discuss with younger learners)*

*Offensive graffiti and cyber-bullying can be once-off actions but, because multiple people can see the offended comment, it is considered bullying,

**Teachers of early years can use their discretion with regards to discussing these types of bullying.

4. Experiences of bullying in the school (20 minutes)

Objective: To aids students to more aware of the negative effects of bullying on their peers. This sharing personal stories and feelings about bullying is an empathy building exercise. Often children are unaware of how damaging bullying behaviours are to their peers. They could look at it as a bit of harmless fun or it could be a learned behaviour they have never questioned. Hence, the goal of sharing experiences and feelings about bullying that have happened in the school can be first step in fostering greater empathy and understanding.
Instruction: Learners are asked to recall a bullying incident, without naming names or blaming anyone***, of when they were targeted, bullied, or witnessed bullying in or around the school (playground, classroom, hall, toilets, etc.). Then they are asked to share their version of the event. It is important to note that this is a voluntary exercise. If a learner feels uncomfortable or does not what to participate for whatever reason, then they are free to do so.

When each learner finishes their story, the teacher asks one of the following questions:

- How did being bullied make you feel?
- How did witnessing bullying make you feel?
- How did bullying make you feel?

It is important to note that children may be a bit dumbfounded when asked about their personal feelings with regards to bullying. If they have trouble naming/describing their feelings, remind the learners about the "School Pictures" exercise from the start of the class and the feeling words that were used. If necessary, give learners examples such as:

- It could have made you angry, or
- It could have made you sad

* The chief aim of not naming or blaming is to encourage full class discussions and reflections on the effects of bullying incidents by reducing the fear of reprisals as students often don't tell teachers because of this fear

5. Conclusion (5 minutes)

At the end of this session inform the students that in the next few weeks they are going to do drama to help review bullying behaviour and how it might be prevented. The aim is for everyone to learn a lot more about bullying and how it affects us. At the end of review everyone in the class will be asked to contribute to a plan with the help of the teacher to prevent bullying in their school.

Lastly, as the discussion around bullying might have stirred up emotions, it is recommended to finish with a game/exercise that the students know and enjoy. This will allow them to return to the routine of schoolwork.

Notes to teachers of younger students: Learners in junior, senior infants and first class will need greater care so that the content is pitched aged appropriately. It is recommended that when describing what bullying is, begin with exclusion bullying as this is the most common form of bullying experienced in this age range. If you being with starting point, the discussion can easily lead to verbal and physical bullying as these are often part of exclusion bullying behaviour.

APPENDIX 2b – BPP LESSON PLAN 2, YEAR 2 – REVISED

Bullying Prevention Pack

Session 2/Week 2

Role-playing Bullying Scenarios

Suggested Lesson Duration: 50 minutes

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1. Review of previous lesson (5 minutes)

Objective: Recap the previous session including a review of the bullying definition and types.

2. The Bullying Circle (5 minutes)

Objective: To introduce players of The Bullying Circle

Instruction: The Bullying Circle (handout attached) illustrates the potential players involved in school bullying incidents. Discuss the diagramme with students. Refer the following descriptions: Besides bully and the victim there can be other students involved in bullying incidents as, such as:

- Followers who join in the bullying
- Supporters or Passive Bullies who support the bullying and egg it on
- Passive Supporters or Possible Bullies who like to see bullying, find it fun/entertaining, but do not display active support
- Disengaged Onlookers who see the bullying but do not consider it relevant to him/her
- Possible Defenders who dislike bullying, think they should step in, but don't
- Defenders who come to the aid of the victim

3. Role-play Round One: Bullying Incident Re-enactment (20 minutes):

Objective: To role-play a bullying incident that could happen in school.

Instruction: Learners are advised that they are going to perform a role-play based on bullying incident that could have happened in the school (classroom, playground, hallway, etc.). The role-play can be based a bullying incident but no naming or blaming is allowed. Teams of 3 or 4 players are assigned or students can make the teams themselves. The scenes need only be a few lines long but need to clearly show the type of bullying and the bullying roles learners are playing. It is suggested that the teacher model and improvise a bullying incident with two volunteers to give students a sample of the task and play a minor. If you are more comfortable with a written script, then the following Exclusion and Verbal Bullying example can be used with the teacher playing the part of Learner 3 (handout attached):

Learner 1: Can I play on your team?
Learner 2: We don't want you.
Learner 1: Please.
Learner 2: Are you stupid or what?
Learner 3: Definitely stupid.
Learner 2: Just go away!

After the reading of the scene is completed and discussed, the learners are instructed to form their own teams. Importantly, the learners are counselled again that, as in session one, that there is no interested in naming or blaming anyone. All learners are coached to discuss and agree on the incident they are going to play, they rehearse simultaneously (simultaneous rehearsal will help learners be less self-conscious, have more fun and will save time). Students can be given several minutes to rehearse the role-play but they may finish before this allotted time. Once the rehearsal is finished, learners are then asked to volunteer to perform their scenes in front of the class. After each performance, scenes are discussed with the following questions and any others that may be deemed appropriate (see Recommendation below):

- What type(s) of bullying did you see?

- What Bullying Circle players are involved? (i.e. bullying, follower, student who is bullied)
- How do you think the bullied child felt? (Encouraging empathy and understanding of another's point of view.)
- How do you think the child who was doing the bullying was feeling?
- What happened to the bullied child? (Were there any repercussions?)
- Did the bullied child do anything about it? React or ask for help? (Ascertaining if the children are aware of the school procedures in place to help them with regards to bullying incidents.)
- What could be done to stop this? (Again, ascertaining knowledge with regards to school bullying prevention procedures.)
- Was/were there any onlooker(s)? What kind of onlookers were they? (Testing knowledge with regards to the passive participants of the Bullying Circle.)
- What do you think the onlookers were thinking or feeling?
- Was/were the onlooker(s) going along with it, just watching, upset about it or just ignoring it? (Attempting to get specifics on the types of onlookers.)
- Could the onlooker have done anything? What? (Again, ascertaining knowledge of school procedures.)
- Did anyone tell the teacher or someone in charge? If not, why not? (Ascertaining if they are knowledgeable of authority figures in charge. Also, gauging learner attitudes to authority figures as a possible source of help.)
- If you need to tell someone about the bullying, who would you go to? (Creating awareness about sources of help in the school.)

Recommendation: It is not necessary go through the whole list of questions for each scene. For example, as students begin to use the terminology, they will quickly identify the types of bullying and players. This will allow you to focus on other important questions about

feelings and how to report bullying. Hence, as the discussion progresses, choose and/or ask questions that promote productive discussions.

4. Role-play Round Two: Reverse Role-play (20 minutes)

Objective: To foster empathy through learning about the perspectives and feelings of others.
Instruction: In this second role-play students engage with roles they would not normally be associated with (i.e. a child who has known to bully plays the bullied child and vice versa). As a teacher you undoubtedly have insight into which learners:

- are prone to engage in bullying behaviour
- have been targeted, and
- have more often been observers.

Hence, assign roles to learners that you believe may not be the norm for them. However, do not share your reasons for role assignments as this could stigmatise. Follow rehearsal and discussion guidelines from Role-play Round One.

Recommendations:
1) If the learners are predominantly showing scenes with physical bullying, it would be helpful to encourage them to try a different type of bullying in this scene.
2) If you feel emotions are stirred up with regards to bullying, then finish with a game that the students know and enjoy and allows them to return to the routine of schoolwork.

Note to teachers of younger students: Exclusion bullying is one of the most common forms of bullying among young learners. Junior and Senior infants are often well aware of this bullying type and should be able to easily play it after a teacher led example. This can be improvised and/or mimed to keep things simpler.

Outline of Session 2:

1. Review
2. Bullying Circle handout given to students and discussed

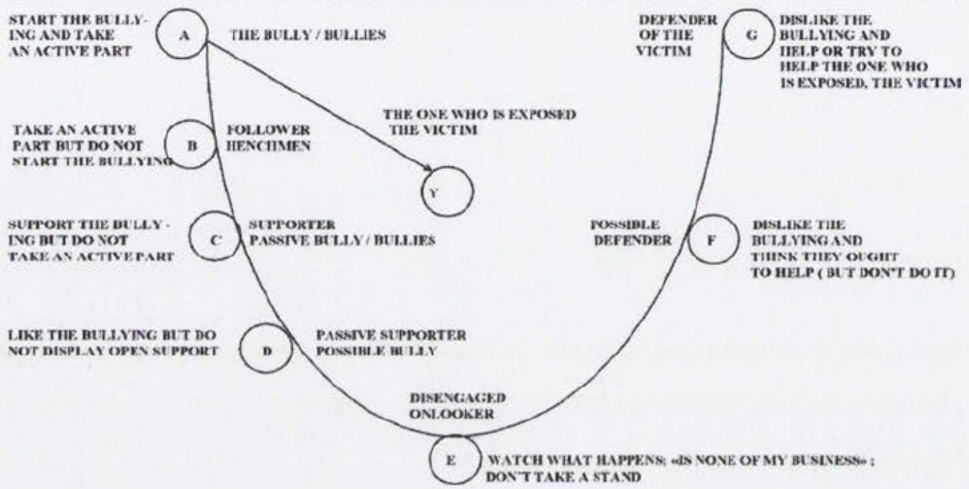
3. Bullying Incident Re-enactment

4. Reverse Role Play

Bullying Circle handout

(OLWEUS)

THE BULLYING CIRCLE: STUDENTS' MODES OF REACTION / ROLES IN AN ACUTE BULLYNG SITUATION



Session 2 Dialogue handout

Exclusion Bullying example with Verbal Bullying

Assign three players the parts of Learner 1, Learner 2 & Learner 3.

Scenario: Learner 1 wants to join a game of football with Learners 2 & 3.

Learner 1: Can I play on your team?

Learner 2: We don't want you.

Learner 1: Please.

Learner 2: Are you stupid or what?

Learner 3: Definitely stupid.

Learner 2: Just go away!

APPENDIX 2c – BPP LESSON PLAN 3, YEAR 2 – REVISED

Bullying Prevention Pack

Session 3/Week 3

What the Onlooker Can Do.

Suggested Lesson Duration: 50 minutes

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1. Review of previous lessons (5 minutes)

Objective: Recap the previous session including a review of the bullying definition, types, the Bullying Circle and what others might be feeling when bullying happens. Formulate the review as questions to ascertain if the students conceptions of the bullying terminology is correct.

2. Onlooker Role-play (20 minutes)

Objective: To foster awareness of the roles onlookers can play in bullying incidents.
Instruction: In preparation for this role-play the teacher asks learners to describe a bullying incident they observed but did nothing about (once again, without naming or blaming). After each learner shares their story, the teacher asks what kind(s) of bullying was observed. Next the children are organised into teams of at least four players to create an improvised role-play based on one of their classmate's stories of an observed bullying incident. Each team needs to include a bully, a follower, a victim and an onlooker (If you cannot divide the class into fours neatly, create group(s) of five children, adding the additional role of passive bully or another onlooker). It is very important that the part of the onlooker is played by a popular child. (The reason for this will be discussed in the next section). The teams decide whose story they will re-enact, everyone in the class rehearses simultaneously and then the role-plays are discussed with the suggested questions below:

- What kind(s) of bullying was/were there?

- Does it keep happening?
- What players of the bullying circle were involved?
- Why do you think they did nothing?
- Did they enjoy watching it? If so, why do you think that might be? (i.e. It might be that they though it was a bit of fun)
- Do you think the bully will bully more if s/he feels supported?
- Was/Were the onlooker(s) afraid of the bully? Why? Afraid of retaliation?

3. Defender Role-play (25 minutes)

Objective: To discuss and play the role of the defender.

Instruction: In this role-play scenario the learners will re-do the onlooker role play but this time the onlooker will be given the role of a defender. The children will begin learning techniques that they can *possibly* use to come to the defence of a bullied schoolmate. Possibly is stressed because it needs to be communicated to the children that they should only defend if they want to and feel it is safe to do so. If they feel threatened then they should go to someone in charge. As the onlooker role was given to a popular child in the first role-play, they now assumer the part of the defender. This strategy may be helpful as popular children can be influential and help sway class attitudes away from bullying behaviour.

The exclusion example role-play attached is an expanded version from Session 2. As in Session 2, this role play example is modelled for the class. Ask students to volunteer for the scripted example. The role play is followed with questions and discussion, this time focussing on the role of the defender:

- What kind(s) of bullying was/were there?
- Was the defender effective in stopping the bullying?
- Do you think the child who is bullying feels more or less support because of this?
- If the feel less supported, do you think the bullying will continue? If not, why not?
- If the defender felt nervous about stopping the bullying, and didn't want to intervene, what could they do instead? (Once again, ascertaining if children are aware of the procedures to follow in reporting bullying incidents)

Note to teachers of younger students: Exclusion from play and classroom activities has been documented to occur from early years. So, if children are unsure as to what kind of bullying they should do in their role-play coach them to do exclusion bullying. You can suggest that they mime the scene or have the defender say: "Let him play with us" if the young learner is unsure what to say.

Session 3 Summary:

- Review of previous sessions including bullying types and players in The Bullying Circle
- Discussion of bullying incidents students have observed
- Learners improvise role play based on one of their classmate's stories of an observed bullying incident. Each team includes a bully, a follower, a victim and an **onlooker who is played by a popular child.**
- Discussion of Onlooker Role-plays
- Defender Role-play conducted with teacher in role
- Discussion of Defender Role-play

Session 3 Defender Role-play Dialogue Handout:

Exclusion Bullying with Verbal Bullying

Players: Learner 1 - the child being victimised; Learner 2 - the child doing the bullying; Learner 3 - a follower; Learner 4 – a defender

Learner 1: Can I play on your team?

Learner 2: We don't want you.

Learner 1: Please.

Learner 2: Are you stupid or what?

Learner 3: Definitely stupid.

Learner 1: You always call me names and never let me play.

Learner 4: Hey, leave him alone.

Learner 2: What's it to you?

Learner 4: You're bullying.

Learner 2: We're not bullying.

Learner 4: Yes you are. You're calling him names and won't let him join in. I've seen this happen before.

Learner 2: (To Learner 4) Well…will you play too? That way we have even numbers?

Learner 4: Ok, so.

APPENDIX 2d – BPP LESSON PLAN 4, YEAR 2 – REVISED

Bullying Prevention Pack

Session 4/Week 4

The Defender

Suggested Lesson Duration: 50 minutes

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1. Review of previous lessons (10 minutes)

Objective: Recap the previous sessions including a review of the bullying definition, types, the Bullying Circle and discuss the onlooker session from the previous week with a particular focus on the Defender Role-play. Formulate the review as questions to ascertain if the students conceptions of the bullying terminology is correct.

Note to teachers of younger learners: Always keep the discussion within the frame of reference for the young learners understanding. For example, when referring to bullying you can explain that this how others sometimes do mean things when they don't let classmates join in class activates or play, push them away or sometimes say mean names.

2. Confident Behaviours Exercise (20 minutes)

Objective: To foster awareness of confident behaviours when defending

Background: Research suggests that defenders need a high status in order to face the social risk involved in standing up for those targeted by bullying. The *Confident Behaviours* exercise was developed to aid children to become more aware of behaviours that display high and low confidence.

Instruction: The teacher begins the exercise by asking the learners what does the word "confidence" mean to them. Learner answers are noted and discussed. If needed the teacher

can also provide the following definition of confidence: "assurance: freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities".

Next, the teacher explains to the learners that they are going to do *Confident Behaviours*, an exercise on how to show confident behaviour. The class is split in two with the teacher ensuring that there are learners of varying peer group status in each group. One group, *Group High Confidence*, stands one side of the room and *Group Low Confidence* on the other. The teacher assigns the behaviours (listed below) to the respective groups asking the learners to show what that behaviour would look like. For example, you can begin the instructions by saying, "Confident people tend to take up space. So, let me see the high confidence group take up space. Stand tall. Put your hands on your hips. Whereas, people with low confidence take up less space as if they don't want be seen. They could hang their heads and might try to make themselves small" And so on. (Throughout this exercise give positive feedback to the learners as they play with the high and low confidence behaviours. This may encourage them to use the behaviours in the role-play to come.) After the list of behaviours is completed, the High Confidence Behaviours group now becomes the Low Confidence Behaviours group and vice versa. This is important as you don't want any child to feel stigmatised by being in the Low Confidence group.

High and Low Confidence Behaviours	
High Confidence Behaviours	**Low Confidence Behaviours**
Takes up space	Minimise space they take up
Good posture	Poor posture
Strong Eye contact	Poor eye contact
Stands still with good posture	Fidgety gestures
Feet and legs turned out	Feet and legs turned in
Strong handshake and speak in strong clear voice	Weak/Poorly contacted handshake and speak in weak, mumbling voice

Notes to teachers of younger learners: If you feel learners have difficulty with the word confidence, then use the phrase "feel good about yourself" (i.e. "People who feel good about themselves smile and want others to see them whereas people who feel bad about themselves don't smile and maybe try to make themselves smaller so that no one will notice them"). Also, you may want to model the behaviours to help the children catch on.

3. Modelled Defender Role-play with confident behaviours (10 minutes)

Objective: Teacher modelling of confident behaviours in the defender role.

Instruction: The teacher uses the sample Defender Role-play introduced in Lesson 3 for modelling of confident behaviours and assigns the part of Defender to her/himself. Three other student players are assigned the parts of bullying, following and targeted. The teacher incorporates confident behaviours in the defending role-play such as placing their hands on their hips, using strong eye contact and a clear strong voice.

4. Defender Role-play with confident behaviours (10 minutes)

Objective: Encourage learner adoption of confident behaviours in role.

Instruction: Learners are assigned into groups of four, are told to use the sample script and make sure that whoever is defending uses the confident behaviours. In assigning parts the teacher is instructed that the role of the Defender should be given to a child who has low to middle social status as these are children who may have most difficulty adopting confident behaviours. Each group presents their sample role-plays to the class with the child in the role of the defender being coached to incorporate confident behaviours if they haven't done so. If the teacher ascertains that help is needed, some of the following coaching suggestions may prove useful:

- Do you think you were displaying confident behaviours when you intervened? If yes: What were they? Can you show me?
- Do you think you might have displaying low confidence behaviours? What were they?
- Coach the child to repeat the line from the modelled script, "Hey, leave him alone", displaying confident behaviours with a clear, strong and steady voice tone and hands on hips.

Once this completed the learners are asked to improvise a new Defender Role-play on any type of bullying they chose with the defending student displaying confident behaviours. Scenes are reviewed first to examine if confident behaviours are being incorporated and then the bullying behaviours content of the scenes are questioned and discussed as in lesson 3.

Note: Make sure to ask this question: If the defender felt nervous about stopping the bullying, and didn't want to intervene, what could s/he do instead? (Once again, ascertaining if learners are aware of the procedures to follow to reporting bullying incidents to teachers or other adults.)

For the end of the session advise the learners that in the following week they will be working on a plan to prevent bullying in their class group. They are asked to have a think about what ideas or strategies they can come up with to help this. These will be discussed in the next session.

Notes to teachers of younger learners: Once again keep the scenes to three players: A bully, victim and defender. Forego the simultaneous rehearsal and take turns coaching the children in groups of three.

Session 4 Summary:

- Review of previous sessions including bullying types, players in The Bullying Circle, Observer and Defender Role-plays
- The concept of confidence is introduced and discussed.
- Then the Confident Behaviours exercise is played.
- Modelled Defender Role-play: learners are coached to use confident behaviours in a role-play using the handout on page six.
- Defender Role-play: learners of mid to low confidence improvise and perform as a defender along with other learners playing the parts of bully, follower and victim.
- Discussion of Defender Role-plays
- For next session: Invitation to present bullying prevention ideas

Session 4 Dialogue Handout:

(Also used in Session 3)

Exclusion Bullying with Verbal Bullying

Learner 1: Can I play on your team?

Learner 2: We don't want you.

Learner 1: Please.

Learner 2: Are you stupid or what?

Learner 3: Definitely stupid.

Learner 1: You always call me names and never let me play.

Learner 4: Hey, leave him alone.

Learner 2: What's it to you?

Learner 4: You're bullying.

Learner 2: We're not bullying.

Learner 4: Yes you are. You're calling him names and won't let him join in.

Learner 2: (To Learner 4) Well, will you play too? That way we have even numbers?

Learner 4: Ok, so.

APPENDIX 2e – BPP LESSON PLAN 5, YEAR 2 – REVISED

Bullying Prevention Pack

Session 5/Week 5

The Contract

Suggested Lesson Duration: 50 minutes

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1. Review of previous lessons (10 minutes)

Objective: Recap the previous session including a review (as necessary) of the bullying definition, types, the Bullying Circle, what others might be feeling when bullying happens and ways one can defend. Formulate the review as questions to ascertain if the students conceptions of the bullying terminology is correct.

Note to teachers of younger learners: Always keep the discussion within the frame of reference for the young learners understanding. For example, when referring to bullying you can explain how others sometimes do mean things when they don't let classmates join in class activates or play, push them away or sometimes say mean names.

2. Contract Creation (40 minutes)

Objective: To create a contract with agreed strategies and rules to prevent bullying.
Instruction: Prior to creating the contract the teacher reviews the Anti-Bullying Policy with the learners. It is then emphasised that they can feel free to add to this policy via the contract. In its written form, the contract should include the areas listed below as well as any ideas or actions the group feels could help:

- Why learners want to stop bullying (A review of lessons learned from the previous sessions could be included bulleted here as well as any new ideas)

- The kinds of actions one can take when a bullying incident is taking place (e.g. defending directly and/or reporting to a teacher)
- A method for reporting bullying that does not put learners at risk (i.e. bullying report box or class log that learners have access to)

To engage and empower the learners in this process, they are organised into groups and teacher gives them approximately 10 minutes to discuss bullying prevention ideas and record them for presentation. One person from each group volunteers or is nominated to present the groups suggestions to the rest of the class. These are written up on the board and discussed. In this discussion the teacher should thrash out with the learners ideas that are most helpful and doable. These are included in the contract. The contract should be completed and signed by the entire as soon as possible and put in a highly visible place within the classroom. If desired, use the template on page three.

Note to teachers of younger learners: In the case of very young learners it may be enough that they are all in agreement that bullying is wrong. The contract could take the form of a poster that everyone puts their hand print on with finger paints with names spelled out underneath.

Follow up activities:

Once a month a period needs be set aside where learners discuss what has been working and not working with regards to the contract, sharing stories about any bullying that has been happening in or around the school, do role-plays around these bullying incidents, review the contract and make any necessary additions and/or changes.

Session 5 Summary:

1. Review of lessons learned from previous four sessions
2. Learners are organised into groups to brainstorm bullying prevention ideas
3. Bullying prevention ideas are organised into a contract that includes the definition of bullying and why learners want to stop bullying
4. Contract is signed by all learners including the master learner (teacher)

Bullying Prevention Contract Template

If desired the following is a template that can be added to and/or revised with regards to specifics of classroom strategies for bullying prevention and your school's policy on anti-bullying behaviour.

The purpose of this contract is to prevent and stop bullying in our school. The more we know about bullying and how it affects each and everyone of us the more we can do to stop it.

What is bullying?

A person is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students.

What is our school policy regarding bullying?

(Insert School Anti-Bullying Policy here)

What we do we know about bullying in our school?

(The information under the headings below should be relevant and is therefore drawn from the learners experiences and knowledge with advice and suggestions from the master learner)

The Types:

(Insertion)

Bullying happens in the following places in our school:

(Insertion)

Who are types of players involved? (Bully, Victim Observer, etc. - Refer to Bullying Circle):

(Insertion)

What will we do to prevent and stop bullying in our class?

(Insert brainstorming ideas here along with reference to any procedures already in place as well as a method for reporting bullying that does not put learners at risk)

We will review how our bullying prevention strategies are working once a month with our teacher and make any additions or changes as necessary.

By signing this contract we all agree to work together to stop bullying when we see it happening. We want our school to be a happy and safe place for learning.

Signatures/Names:

(Insertion of names to include master learner (teacher))

Date:

APPENDIX 3a – TEACHER FEEDBACK SAMPLE SHEET

Bullying Prevention Pack Feedback for Session 4

Please take a few moments to fill out this form. Your feedback will help evaluate how well the research is going and help to devise to best possible bullying prevention resource for teachers. At times I might want to consult you on your feedback. To facilitate this please give your contact number and email. Thank you.

Teacher Name: Telephone:

Class: email address:

How much time did you spend on Session 4?

Session 4, part 1, Review: Any comments or notable discussions?

Session 4, part 2, Confident Behaviours Exercise: How easy or difficult did you find this to set up and coach? Were there any learner responses you thought noteworthy or significant?

Session 4, part 3, Modelled Defender Role Play: How easy or difficult did you find this to set up and coach? Were there any learner responses you thought noteworthy or significant?

Session 4, part 4, Defender Role Play: How easy or difficult did you find this to set up and coach? Were there any learner responses you thought noteworthy or significant?

Did note or have any concerns with regards to learner sensitivity as the session was being delivered?

How did you find the handout in terms if instructionality? Were there any spelling mistakes and issues regarding syntax? Does anything need to be made clearer? Anything that needs further development? Added or left out?

Any other suggestions/comments? (Please use the other side if necessary)

APPENDIX 3b – TEACHER FEEDBACK EXAMPLE

Bullying Prevention Pact Feedback for Session 3

Please take a few moments to fill out this form. Your feedback will help evaluate how well the research is going and help to devise to best possible bullying prevention resource for teachers. At times I might want to consult you on your feedback. To facilitate this please give your contact number and email. Thank you.

Teacher Name: [redacted] Telephone:

Class: 6HC email address: [redacted]

How much time did you spend on Session 3? Approx 50 mins

How did the review go? Good.

Session 3, part 1, Review: Any comments or notable discussions?

/

Session 3, part 2, Onlooker Role Play: How easy or difficult did you find this to set up and coach? Were there any learner responses you thought noteworthy or significant?

Fine, just to make sure that you have enough copies. Noteworthy was the amount of boys who have been onlookers. Almost half.

Session 3, part 3, Defender Role Play: How easy or difficult did you find this to set up and coach? Were there any learner responses you thought noteworthy or significant?

Fine. The belief of alot of the boys that they are defenders

How did you find the handout in terms if instructionality? Were there any spelling mistakes and issues regarding syntax? Does anything need to be made clearer? Anything that needs further development? Added or left out?

Fine. Didn't notice any problems with it. Lesson is a bit packed so might consider having it done over two lessons. Especially if you haven't done the pact before

Any other suggestions/comments? (Please use the other side if necessary)

APPENDIX 4a – LETTER TO TEACHERS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF STUDY

September 15, 2010

Peadar Donohoe
Ph.D. Researcher
Trinity College Dublin
pdonohoe@tcd.ie
Tel: 0863477867

Mailing Address for Peadar Donohoe:
Cork School of Music
Union Quay
Cork

Dear Colleague

Bullying is a major problem in Irish schools and affects children of all ages. Learners are rarely encouraged to discuss the bullying incidents which take place amongst themselves. This contributes to their ignorance of the hurtful and damaging impact of bullying behaviour on them and by them. The Bullying Prevention Pack puts the learner at the forefront of the discussion and activities. The issue of bullying is addressed through identifying the types of bullying, recounting bullying incidents that happened in and around the school (without naming or blaming), sharing thoughts and feelings about these incidents with the aim of engendering empathy, re-playing a selection of these bullying incidents in classroom role-plays, questioning received notions about bullying while creating a forum for discussion and peer feedback, encouraging learners to identify bullying in their and each other's behaviour and lastly, embracing confident behaviours when dealing with bullying, making a pact in the physical form of a contract to prevent bullying that incorporates learners ideas, rules and methods to prevent bullying.

This metacognitive method of addressing the bullying issue has can empower children, give them a sense of agency, and boost their confidence to help to create a more harmonious school environment.

I want to thank you for supporting this project and hope we can all make a positive difference in the children's lives together.

Sincerely

Peadar Donohoe

APPENDIX 4b – INFORMED CONSENT LETTER PRIOR TO RESEARCH

Peadar Donohoe, Ph.D. researcher Mailing Address:
Trinity College Dublin Cork School of Music
Tel: 0863477867 Union Quay, Cork
p.donohoe@tcd.ie

Dear Parent(s)

I am doing research Ph.D. entitled "The Bullying Prevention Pack" through Trinity College Dublin that looks at ways of preventing bullying using drama. In this intervention, bullying is addressed through identifying the types of bullying, recounting bullying incidents that happened in and around the school (without blaming or naming), sharing feelings about these incidents (with the aim of engendering empathy), re-playing incidents in classroom role-plays, creating a forum for discussion and encouraging the children to identify and use methods to prevent bullying. The hope is that this approach to curbing bullying will empower children, boost their confidence and help to create a more harmonious school environment.

I have already used these prevention techniques successfully elsewhere but this is meant to be a scientific study and the results will be measured. The active part of the study will take place from mid-January and will continue for approximately one month. Once a week for a fifty- minute period _____ (teacher's name here) will introduce the theme of bullying with related activities. Prior to your child partaking in this bullying prevention program your consent is requested. If you could fill in the reply slip below and have your child return it to school as soon as possible it would be most appreciated.

Sincerely

Peadar Donohoe/Trinity Researcher

I hereby give my consent to allow my child to participate in the research entitled "The Bullying Prevention Pack".

_____ _____

Child's Name (print) Parent's Name (print)

_____

Parent's Signature

APPENDIX 4c – LETTER TO TEACHERS FOR FINAL STAGES OF STUDY

April 19, 2012

Peadar Donohoe, BA, M.Ed., Ph.D. researcher
Trinity College
Tel: 0863477867
p.donohoe@tcd.ie

Mailing Address:
Dublin Cork School of Music
Union Quay, Cork

Dear Teachers

I want to thank you very much for putting in the time and effort on this research and I hope that there are noticeable benefits in the reduction of bullying behaviour amongst your learners. Below are four elements of research that need to be completed to aid the integrity of the study and need to be completed in the following chronological order:

1. Two post intervention review sessions to assess how well (or not) adherence to the contract has been going. One of these sessions needs to be conducted by next week. The second by May 25 at the latest. (Instructions for sessions to follow for Monday's meeting.)
2. During the week of May 28 I would like to administer the Olweus Bullying Survey with the 5th and 6th classes. This will take approximately 45 minutes for each group.
3. At some point following this I would like to conduct 5-10 minutes interviews with each teacher (this means all teachers who have administered the intervention) which will include questions which have the primary focus of assessing how teacher application of instructions has been going and if the BPP has had an effect in reducing bullying behaviour amongst the school population.
4. Focus groups with students from the third to sixth classes.

With regards to your schedules I hope there are no problems with actioning these elements, but if there are, please let me know and I will work with you so that they are not too disruptive.

Once again, thank you very much for your time and effort. It is most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Peadar Donohoe

APPENDIX 4d – LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT - FOCUS GROUP SAMPLES

June 5, 2011

Peadar Donohoe, BA, M.Ed., Ph.D. researcher
Trinity College Dublin
Tel: 0863477867
pdonohoe@tcd.ie

Mailing Address:
Cork School of Music
Union Quay, Cork

Permission for Your Child to Participate in a Recorded Interview

Dear Parent(s)

My name is Peadar Donohoe and I am a Ph.D. research student at Trinity College under the supervision of Carmel O'Sullivan of the School of Education. As part of my doctoral studies I am evaluating research entitled the "Bullying Prevention Pack" which looks at ways of preventing bullying in school by creating knowledge about bullying behaviour with the aid role-play & drama activities. I have received permission from the principal and teachers to conduct this research at [redacted].

One of the ways I collect data is to conduct focus group interviews with students. This letter is requesting your permission to allow your child to participate in a focus group interview with five other students. The content of the interview will be their experiences and participation in the activities of the Bullying Prevention Pack.

I would like to record the interview for the purposes of this study only. Confidentiality will be insured and in no way will your child be identified or named in any form. This recording will be just for the purpose of recording the voices so that I can transcribe them accurately at a later date.

I would be grateful for your kind permission. Please sign below if you agree or do not agree to allow your child to participate in this interview.

Thank you

Peadar Donohoe, BA, M.Ed., Trinity Doctoral Researcher

Please tick the appropriate box.

□ I hereby give consent to allow my child to participate in the focus group interview.

□ I do not give consent to allow my child to participate in the focus group interview.

_____ _____

Child's Name (print) Parent's Name (print)

_____

Parent's Signature

APPENDIX 4e – FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Bullying Prevention Pack – Focus Groups

The focus group questions will look at two areas to obtain student views about:

- Group knowledge of bullying since the Bullying Prevention Pack has been actioned
- How the group interacts and feels about the BPP initiatives
- Have they been able to apply the BPP strategies in their school environment

Below is a script outline of how the focus group will be run:

Welcome and introductions
Good morning, my name is Peadar Donohoe and thanks for coming to talk with me today about the Bullying Prevention Pack which you have been using in your school to learn about, discuss and do drama about bullying. The aim of the BPP is to reduce the amount of bullying in your school. Do you understand? *Wait for response.*

Purpose of group
The purpose of our discussion today is to hear from you how the Bullying Prevention program has been working. I want to ask you what you know, think and feel about it. Also I want to let you know that I'm having discussions with students from 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th classes today.

Check OK about taping and being here
I'm going to record the discussion so none of what you say will get missed. I see that you have signed the agreements but I want to double check that everyone is OK with that. Is it OK? *Wait for response.*
Also, is everyone here because they want to be? If you've changed your mind it's okay to say so. *Wait for response.*
OK, I'm now going to tell you a little about the interview and what you can expect.

Who'll do most of the talking
Our discussion should last about 30 minutes. I'm going to ask you questions and I'd like you to share your views and opinions. I'll leave most of the talking to you and I'll do a lot of listening. I want to learn from you.

Agreement about confidentiality
During our discussion try not to use real names of students who are not here. Just explain your thoughts. For example if you share a bullying story with me, don't mention any names of students here at the school. I want to keep personal information private. If others ask you about the group later, I'd like you to follow a 'no gossip agreement'. This means you can talk about the questions and **your** answers, but not other people or what they say. Does everyone agree? *Wait for response.*

If uncomfortable
Please tell me if the discussion makes you feel uncomfortable at any time, or if you want to say something but don't want it to be recorded. If something personal comes up you'd like to talk about, you can talk to me and your teacher later.

How the group will run
Lastly I want everyone to have a chance to answer. Please let everyone speak . There are no right or wrong answers. It's okay to have different thoughts from one another. Do you understand? *Wait for response.*

Ok, now I'm going to review the Bullying Prevention Pack that you have been using in your school. If you forget or don't what I'm talking about pleas raise your hand. The BPP has the following parts:

- Definition of bullying. How we describe it.
- Learning about the types of bullying
- Learning about the players in the Bullying Circle
- The School Pictures Game (where you played as a group show the same feeling)
- Sharing Stories about bullying in the school and naming feelings about what it felt like to be bullied.
- Role-plays about bullying (If they are unsure about the word role-play then the following will be related: A role-play is a drama where you play a part such as the child being bullied or the child doing the bullying. Do you understand? *Wait for response?*)
- Confident Behaviours
- Defender Role-plays
- Contract
- Contract follow ups

Does everyone remember these parts? *Wait for response.* Any questions? *Wait for response.*

Does anyone have any questions about why we are here? *Wait for response.* Ok, I'm going to start recording now and can everyone please give their names? This is just for my reference, it will help me remember who is saying what but as I said it will all be anonymous. Do you understand that word? Anonymous? If not, I will explain it.

Questions:

1. Since the Bullying Prevention Pack started at your school do you think you know more or less about bullying now? If yes, what do you know that you didn't know before?

2. Do you think you are more or less able to talk about bullying now? Why/how are you better able to talk about it?

3. If you saw someone being bullied, what would you do?

4. If you were a target of bullying, what would you do?

5. On the first day you did the BPP, you shared stories of bullying. Do you remember? Did you find this easy or hard to do? If it was easy, why? If it was hard, why?

6. And then you shared your feelings about the bullying event. Do you remember? Did you find this easy or hard to do? If it was hard, why?

7. Did your class do the School Pictures exercise? Do you think if you did this exercise before sharing feelings it would make it easier to talk about your feelings? Why?

8. Is it now more or less easy to put yourself in the bullied child's place? Why?
9. Now that the BPP has been done, would you find it easy or more difficult to be a defender? Why?

10. Do you think the bullying prevention contract has been helpful in preventing bullying? Why?

11. Do you think bullying has been reduced at your school because of this program? If no, how do you know that? If yes, how do you know that?

12. Do you have any suggestions for improving the program?

Probing Questions to be used for interview:

1. Would you explain further?

2. Could you give me an example of what you mean?

3. What did you mean when you say…?

4. How did you handle that?

5. Does anyone see it differently?

Brief oral summary of points: (I will briefly sum up the group responses and finish with) Is everyone happy with what we covered? Have we missed anything? Does anyone want to add anything?

Thank you for your time and for sharing your ideas today.
for being so considerate and respectful of one another and **please remember the 'no gossip agreement'** and that you can talk with (school staff member) if something said in the group bothers you.

What happens next?
Thank for your contributions. They'll be used to aid the development of this bullying prevention program.

APPENDIX 4f – TEACHER INTERVIEW BRIEF

Brief for Interview on Bullying Prevention Pack Efficacy

Dear Research School Teacher

Thank you very much for taking the time out of your busy schedule to participate in this interview. The objective of this interview is to explore your experiences of delivering the learning strands of the Bullying Prevention Pack and if you think learners were able to assimilate and use the knowledge in their school environment to become more aware of bullying behaviour and how to prevent it.

A few notes for the interview:

- Please feel free to ask any questions and/or seek clarification now or at any point during the interview.
- All responses will remain anonymous.
- I will write your name on my interviews sheets only for reference purposes in case I need to refer back to you for further information or clarification.
- If agreeable, your responses will be recorded (if not, notes will be taken).
- There will be some open questions along with yes/no questions. The yes/no questions will allow some raw data to be collected.
- In the wording of the questions students will be referred to as learners.
- Your written feedback, which you have already submitted, may be referenced during the interview for elucidation or further commentary (if not, it will be because you answered the query earlier in the interview)

Once again, thank you for your valuable time.

Sincerely,

Peadar Donohoe

APPENDIX 4g – TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher Interview Questions

Name: Class:

1. **How was your experience of using the Bullying Prevention Pack?**

I will give the teacher approximately five minutes to respond to this question. Thereafter, I will continue with the following dichotomous questions to ascertain if learner knowledge about bullying and its affects have been enhanced.

2. Can learners define bullying now?

   Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

3. Can learners list the bullying types?

   Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

4. Are learners knowledgeable of the players in The Bullying Circle?

   Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

5. Can learners discuss the players in The Bullying Circle?

   Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

6. Can learners relate The Bullying Circle players in relation to parts they may have played in their own school bullying experiences?

   Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

7. Do you think learners have more empathy and understanding regarding the thoughts and feelings of others after having done the BPP?

   Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

8. Do learners know what steps to take if they find themselves a target of bullying?

   Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

9. Do learners know what steps to take if they saw a peer or peers being bullied?

   Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

10. Do learners know how to demonstrate confident behaviours when dealing with bullying?

Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

11. Do you think peer learning and influence has had an effect on learner knowledge of bullying behaviour?

Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

If yes, has it been positive or negative learning experience?

12. Do you think using role-play and drama activities has had impact on learner understanding of bullying behaviour?

Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

If yes, has it been positive or negative impact?

13. Do you think peer learning and influence has had an effect on learner knowledge of the players in the bullying circle?

Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

If yes, has it been positive or negative learning experience?

14. Do you think using role-play and drama activities has had an impact on learner understanding of the players in the bullying circle?

Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

If yes, has it been positive or negative impact?

15. Do you think peer learning and influence has had an effect on learner knowledge of the how to deal with bullying situations?

Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

If yes, has it been positive or negative learning experience?

16. Do you think using role-play and drama activities has had impact on learner understanding of how to deal with bullying situations?

Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

If yes, has it been positive or negative impact?

17. Do you think the BPP has had an impact on the levels of bullying in your school?

    Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know

    If yes, has it increased or decreased bullying incidents?

Following the dichotomous questions, the following questions will be asked which relate to quality issues:

A. Did you need assistance from [redacted] Buckley or [redacted] Murphy with regards to BPP instructions or implementation? (Mr. Buckley and Mr. Murphy previously participated in the first phase of the program and were meant to be a resource for teachers in the school).

    Answer: Yes, No, Don't Know.

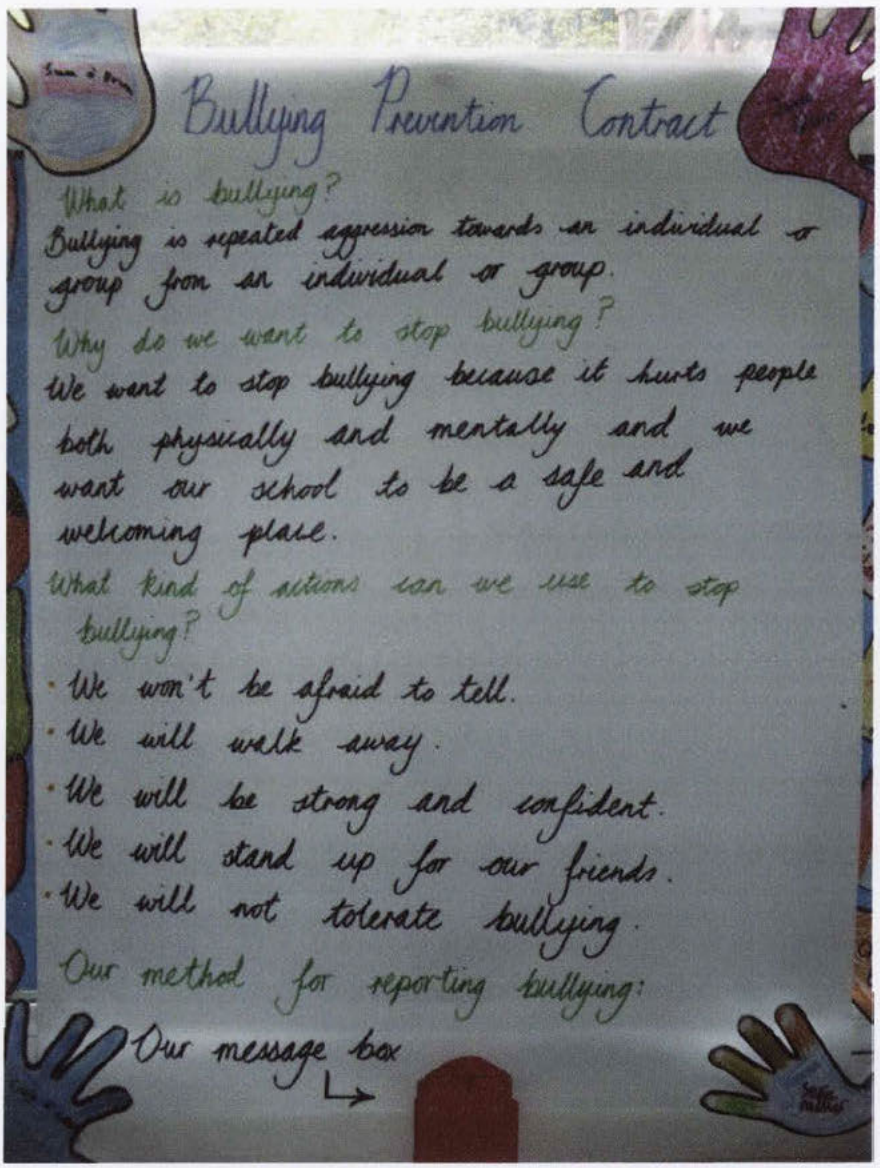
    If yes, please detail the assistance received?

B. Refer to feedback queries if there are any issues arising (i.e. You said you had a problem with x can you tell me a bit more, etc.)

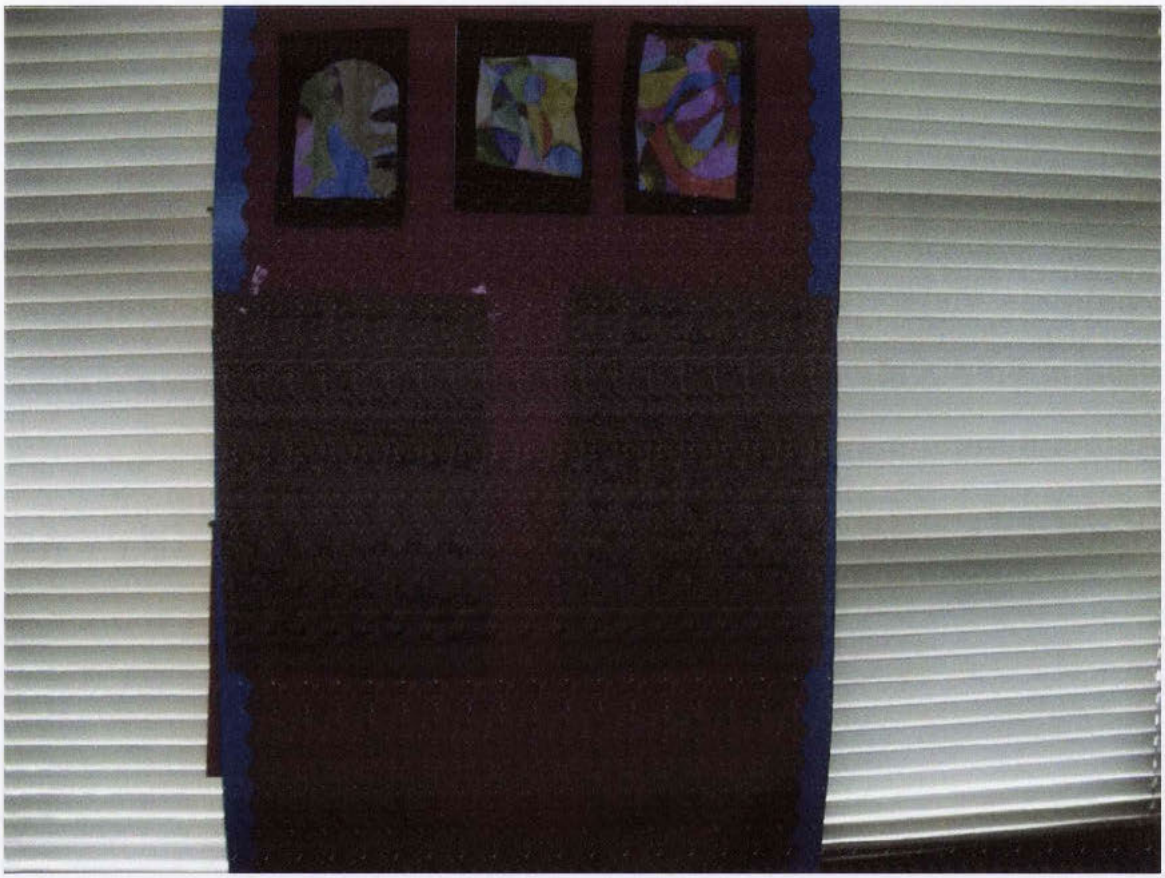
C. If the BPP were to be implemented in another school, would you have any constructive recommendations for it as a resource?

D. Final Question: Is there anything you would like to add?

APPENDIX 5a – FOURTH CLASS CONTRACT



APPENDIX 5b – SIXTH CLASS CONTRACT



APPENDIX 6a – DOCUMENT: CORRESPONDENCE TO OBTAIN PERMISSION TO USE OBVQ-R

Peadar Donohoe Request date: 28/06/10

Hello Professor Olweus

I am PhD research student at Trinity College Dublin under the supervision of Professor Mona O'Moore. My research is a testing of a bullying intervention using elements of drama in a primary school in Cork, Ireland. Mona has suggested that I contact you and seek permission to use a modified version of the questionnaire. Would this be possible?

Thank you

Dan Olweus Reply date: 28/06/10

Hello-
that would be quite OK. I would be interested
in learning about your results in due time.
Send my regards to Mona, please.

Dan O.

PS
Please note that, due to copyright regulations, you are not
allowed to include a copy of the Questionnaire in a thesis/
dissertation or any other unpublished or (to be) published
materials. However, selected text portions from the Questionnaire that I have
already published, for example, in the attached paper can be
included/published without restrictions. For additional information,
you may contact Sue Thomas - srthomas@hazelden.org ..

Dan Olweus

Research Professor of Psychology

The HEMILCenter , University of Bergen
PB 7800
NO-5020 Bergen
NORWAY

APPENDIX 6b – SELECTION OF QUESTIONS FROM OLWEUS BULLYING VICITIM QUESTIONNAIRE-REVISED (OBVQ-R)

QE06

Have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months in one or more of the following ways? Please answer all questions.

5	I was called mean names, was made fun of, or teased in a hurtful way	❑ it hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months ❑ only once or twice ❑ 2 or 3 times a month ❑ about once a week ❑ several times a week
6	Other students left me out of things on purpose, excluded me from their group of friends, or completely ignored me	❑ it hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months ❑ only once or twice ❑ 2 or 3 times a month ❑ about once a week ❑ several times a week
7	I was hit, kicked, pushed, shoved around, or locked indoors	❑ it hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months ❑ only once or twice ❑ 2 or 3 times a month ❑ about once a week ❑ several times a week
8	Other students told lies or spread false rumors about me and tried to make others dislike me	❑ it hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months ❑ only once or twice ❑ 2 or 3 times a month ❑ about once a week ❑ several times a week
9	I had money or other things taken away from me or damaged	❑ it hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months ❑ only once or twice ❑ 2 or 3 times a month ❑ about once a week ❑ several times a week
10	I was threatened or forced to do things I didn't want to do	❑ it hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months ❑ only once or twice ❑ 2 or 3 times a month ❑ about once a week ❑ several times a week

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20	How often do **the teachers or other adults at school** try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at school ?	❑ almost never ❑ once in a while ❑ sometimes ❑ often ❑ almost always
21	How often do **other students** try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at school ?	❑ almost never ❑ once in a while ❑ sometimes ❑ often ❑ almost always
22	Has **any adult at home** contacted the school to try to stop your being bullied at school in the past couple of months ?	❑ I haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months ❑ no, they haven't contacted the school ❑ yes, they have contacted the school once ❑ yes, they have contacted the school several times
23	When you see a student your age being bullied at school, what do you **feel or think**?	❑ that is probably what he or she deserves ❑ I don't feel much ❑ I feel a bit sorry for him or her ❑ I feel sorry for him or her and want to help him or her

About bullying other students

24	How often have you **taken part in bullying another student(s)** at school in the past couple of months ?	❑ I haven't bullied another student(s) at school in the past couple of months ❑ it has only happened once or twice ❑ 2 or 3 times a month ❑ about once a week ❑ several times a week

38	How often are you **afraid of being bullied** by other students in your school?	❑ never ❑ seldom ❑ sometimes ❑ fairly often ❑ often ❑ very often
39	Overall, how much do think **your class (home room) teacher** has done to counteract bullying in the past couple of months?	❑ little or nothing ❑ fairly little ❑ somewhat ❑ a good deal ❑ much