A Rollercoaster of Challenges and Rewards: How Primary Early Career Teachers (ECTs) in England navigate and manage their professional identity against the current educational policy context

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is their own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on how Early Career Teachers (ECTs) manage their professional identity and how this is impacted by the employing context and the government's educational agenda. Given the recent changes to induction in England through the Early Career Framework (ECF) (DfE 2019) and the focus on teacher retention, the study looks at the challenges ECTs face in navigating their individual journeys through induction and the impact of national policy and nuances in employing contexts. Literature highlights how teacher development is often characterised by the ability to demonstrate certain competencies and identity struggles, with the emphasis on surviving induction rather than exercising autonomy or developing professional identity.

Framed within a constructionist epistemology, this small-scale case study focuses on the experiences of five ECTs during their first two years of Primary teaching. Semi-structured interviews were the main form of data collection, allowing for a deep insight into experiences. Findings identified a focus on power relations, the importance, and understanding, of support for ECTs and how their focus on care often opposes the government's emphasis on assessment and data. These themes have been interwoven through analysis chapters focusing on different levels of policy trajectory: macro (national policy), meso (school policy enactment) and micro level (individual ECTs' understanding and enactment of policy). Theories drawn upon to build engagement with the emerging issues include Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice, Noddings' (2003) ethics of care, and Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation.

Several themes were identified including the importance of ECT voice in future policy to address the divide between generation and enactment, a whole school approach towards induction and the need for greater ECT autonomy to allow for professional identity formation. The discussion also raises implications for practice for ITE providers, employing schools and the ECTs themselves.

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List of Abbreviations

CCF	Core Content Framework
CoP	Communities of Practice
CPD	Continued Professional Development
DfE	Department for Education
ECF	Early Career Framework
ECT	Early Career Teacher
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
KS1	Key Stage One
KS2	Key Stage Two
MKO	More Knowledgeable Other
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
RE	Religious Education
RQT	Recently Qualified Teacher
SATs	Standard Assessment Tests
SDT	Self Determination Theory
SIAMs	Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools
TA	Teaching Assistant
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Rationale for my study: A personal perspective

My interests in teacher induction and main motivations in the focus of this thesis are two-fold. Firstly, my own experiences as a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) and reflections of this period. Secondly, my current role within a Higher Education Institution (HEI) Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Provider as Early Career Teacher (ECT) Lead, a role which covers four ITE programmes and sees approximately 250 ECTs graduate each year. I elaborate on these below.

1.1.1 My own NQT journey

When I qualified as a teacher in 2006, the rhetoric around the induction into teaching was to 'survive' your NQT year. Although my NQT year was not without its challenges, I certainly felt that I did so much more than just survive; my induction set me up for a successful teaching career and subsequent move into ITE.

Looking back on this period and questioning the factors that allowed me to flourish, I consider two main areas: firstly, that I was employed in the same school that I had undertaken my final school placement and secondly, the relationship that I had with my mentor. The school I was employed within was a very small Church of England school in rural North Yorkshire. I had three year groups in my class, spanning the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage One (KS1)[1] with a total of 20 children. I recall saying to friends and family at the time that I would have undoubtedly found my NQT year more difficult had I not completed my final placement at that school: I knew two thirds of the class already; I knew the staff; many of the parents; the way that the three different year groups were planned for; and the flexibility of approach that was not just allowed but encouraged in the school on a daily basis. I was mentored by the Head teacher, a highly respected individual amongst all stakeholders who had held the position for some time. She encouraged me, trusted, and had confidence in me. The two influencing factors here have often led me to ponder the 'what if's'... what if I had undertaken my NQT year in a school that was I unfamiliar with and what if my mentor had not supported me in the way she did, or if our visions of education had been very different?

Transitioning from an ITE programme which taught me about the curriculum and sequencing my teaching, one of the most daunting things in my induction period was the amount of freedom and autonomy I was given. However, having a mentor/ Head teacher, who trusted that I would make the right decisions for the children in my care, meant that I built the confidence to take risks and to follow

[1] In the English schooling system, Reception children (aged 4-5 years) follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework (DfE 2021). Key Stage One covers children in Years 1 (5-6 years) and Year 2 (6-7 years) where children follow the National Curriculum (DfE 2013).

the school's ethos and values to ensure all children had a well-rounded education, which involved frequent trips out of school to explore the local area; a vision of a holistic education very much in-line with my own philosophy of teaching.

The support I received was not restricted to planning and implementing the curriculum, as at the time I also needed personal, emotional support. Towards the end of my ITE programme, my mum was diagnosed with cancer and was critically ill into my induction year. Despite this, I never considered not progressing straight into my NQT year as my mentor supported me in ensuring that I still fulfilled my ambitions. The emotional support was there throughout – an understanding nod if I needed to leave early to go to the hospital or, later in the year, open invitations for my mum to attend special assemblies and events at the school whilst she was on sick leave from her own job in a school. Looking back, if I had been employed in a school with a less understanding and less flexible approach, I may have needed time away from my job. Within the school there was a recognition of the need for emotional support and that my life spanned further than that of my role as an NQT or curriculum implementer. This went beyond any guidance or policy, but addressed the human, personal elements of induction that were so crucial for me.

1.1.2 My role as ECT Lead

My current role as ECT (formerly NQT) Lead was established in 2016 as part of a university restructure. The role was created partly in response to the ITE Inspection Framework (Ofsted 2015) which placed greater responsibility on the ITE provider for their trainees' performance in their NQT year and beyond. As the role was new and, at the time, there seemed to be very few other ITE providers with similar roles, the effectiveness of the support offered within our ECT package was dependent upon me working with NQT/ ECTs to establish what the ITE department could offer to make a positive difference to their induction. My own experiences as an NQT, as discussed previously, have led me to consider the different contexts that ECTs are employed in and the numerous variables that they can encounter, from their mentor's level and breadth of experience, to the year groups they are teaching and the parallels they can draw from their assessed placements in ITE. Putting together all these factors makes ECT induction an unknown, a minefield of different situations and possibilities.

Over the course of each trainee's ITE programme, relationships are built with academic staff members, predominantly the trainee's Academic Tutor. This purpose of this role is to consider academic support and advice needed to keep the trainee on track for successful completion of their programme, but also to offer pastoral support as needed, understanding that the transition to university can come with many challenges. Although this is different from the mentoring role which trainees will witness during their assessed school placements and during ECT induction, the principles of this are the same – to

ensure they receive, 'the support they need to thrive' (DfE 2019: 4). Therefore, the role of the ITE provider, as an establishment that already knows the ECT well, should be considered. Each year I witness trainees transitioning into ECTs with a quiet reassuring awareness that they are part of a life-long community with the ITE provider, providing that extra layer of support during induction and beyond.

The changing landscape of policy and subsequent institutional responses have framed this study in important ways. Following smaller scale research projects, including a pilot study using a similar research design which focussed on the role of ITE providers in supporting and developing new teachers (Whitfield 2019), the interviews for this thesis were undertaken from 2018-2020 with an awareness that the Early Career Framework (ECF) (Department for Education (DfE) 2019) would be launched in the foreseeable future. With the ECF (discussed further in section 1.3.2) now in place, the role of the ITE provider has once again shifted, though the need for a smooth transition into employment is now as pivotal as ever. The aim of current ITE support for ECTs is to compliment that offered through the ECF. ECT development cannot be viewed in isolation, the context of this is key, both at national and local levels. This will be discussed further within the section 1.4 which outlines the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Terminology and housekeeping

Within every perception of a unitary form, the central figure can be separated from the background (Boothby 2001). These two elements should be seen as a 'total field' in order to be fully understood. At times, it may be that the figure is prominent from the background and becomes the main attention while the background is lessened. This figural tendency which guides the mind towards the discrete forms can be viewed as operating at differing levels of complexity. In the sense of this thesis, the ECT is the prominent figure but the work of an ECT cannot be viewed in isolation, there are many factors that impact upon their progress and identity development. It is impossible to view ECT development without considering the backdrop of their transition into teaching, namely the government's agenda and associated policy interpretation and enactment. When considering ECT views, a 'deliberate shift of attitude' (Boothby 2001: 39) is needed to consider the wider context within which they are operating; Husserl (n.d. cited in Boothby 2001: 41) describes this as an 'opposition between the focus of attention and a 'halo of background intuitions''. This work therefore considers ECTs managing their professional identity against three levels of policy trajectory: the macro level (national policy), meso level (school policy enactment) and micro level (individual ECTs' understanding and enactment of policy). The background itself is not of explicit attention but it is integral in the awareness and understanding of the subject matter (Boothby 2001).

Terminology within the study has also been carefully considered. The terms 'rollercoaster', 'navigate' and 'manage' have been purposefully included within the title to document the ECTs' journeys through their first two years of teaching. 'Rollercoaster' was used by one of the research participants, Gemma, to describe her first term of teaching to highlight both the highs and lows that she felt; the times when she celebrated successes but also times when she struggled with the demands of teaching. 'Navigate' and 'manage' signal some of the strategies that the ECTs put in place during their induction period to overcome some of the barriers faced or the decisions made which they did not always feel comfortable with. Each of the ECT participants (introduced in section 3.7) gave a different narrative of their induction experiences. For example, Clare was very positive about her experiences in school from the outset, however, Gemma was uncertain about whether teaching would be a long-term career for her. Her outlook on this changed, however, as she made her way through her second year of teaching. Initially, Adam appeared to counterpose the child and the system; but throughout the second year of his career, he seemed to come to terms with, and even welcome, his own role in the system.

The use of the word 'against' has been chosen in the context, and in the figure and ground nature of the study as discussed above. Over the course of analysis of the findings it also came to be understood in an antagonistic sense, to capture how the ECTs' views may often be in opposition to central or school-level policy. The ECT participants used terms such as 'fighting for the children' and 'roll with the punches', demonstrating that they are not always in agreement with what is being asked of them. This is often centred around the government's focus on assessment and data versus their own focus on care. In support, Elmore (1996 cited in Ball 2006) points out that contradictory policies may often be in play and that the enactment of one may hinder or influence the enactment of others. This is furthered with the school's interpretation of central policy, alongside the ECT's personal philosophy and teacher identity.

It is also worth noting that as changes from the wording of 'Newly Qualified Teacher' (NQT) to 'Early Career Teacher' (ECT) were made whilst this research was being conducted, the two terms will be used interchangeably within this work. In addition, some policy guidance has been updated since the interviews with participants took place. To remain true to the discussions which took place, the versions of the guidance used by ECTs at the time of the interviews has been referenced within this work. For example, the EYFS Framework (DfE) was last updated in 2021, however discussions of this within interviews refer to the 2017 version.

1.3 The context of the study

This section will give a brief overview of the impact of neoliberalism on the teaching profession. It will begin by outlining the current context on a global scale and will then discuss the main current neoliberal policies that are impacting upon the teaching profession, focusing on ITE providers, teachers and ECTs. These areas will be discussed in greater detail within the literature review and will form strands running throughout the thesis.

1.3.1 The current context of teacher education

From the pupil-teacher system, school-based apprenticeship model of the 1800s to a more university training or college-based approach which encouraged trainees to embrace wider philosophical, historical, sociological and comparative approaches in the post-war years (Furlong et al 2000; Robinson 2020), there have been many different models of teacher education and a constant pendulum swinging between emphasis on theory and practice. There has been a changing dominance between an apprenticeship or school-based approach to training and a college/ university-led approach. In the 1960s teachers were trained to replicate skills, observing and then practising in turn (Mayer 2021). However, this transferal of skills was not always achieved and a greater shift towards addressing teachers' cognitive skills was needed, resulting in a move towards the 'learning aspect of learning to teach' (Mayer 2021: 122). During both periods, research provided evidence for the related policies (Mayer 2021). However, more recent policy decisions have seen a shift towards being driven by international comparisons and economic competitiveness; a picture that is also replicated internationally. Indeed, in what follows, although the focus is on the English context, it is important to bear in mind that national policy unfolds within and is shaped by a wider global policy context (Rizvi and Lingard 2010; Ball 2012).

Over the last thirty years, teacher education has moved to become central in government education policy in England (Furlong 2013). The view of teacher training within HEIs as being too theoretical has led to a gradual shift towards a more practical approach with greater responsibility on schools (Furlong 2013). This is due to the need for neoliberal governmentality to create compliant and competitive subjects required by today's marketised society, whereby schools are required to operate more like businesses (Ball 2021). Routes into teaching have expanded over recent years from largely university-based courses such as the BEd, to flexible Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) routes to Graduate Teacher Schemes such as TeachFirst, and School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT). This has resulted in a competitive market in teacher education. A relatively recent shift in teacher education has been towards the School Direct model which gives schools responsibility for recruiting and preparing trainees for a teaching career. This movement suggests that work experience is the

most effective form of teacher training; this was strongly expressed by Michael Gove during his time as Education Secretary (2010 cited in Furlong 2013: 43), stating, 'Teaching is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman. Watching others, and being rigorously observed yourself as you develop, is the best route to acquiring mastery in the classroom'. The White Paper on *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE 2010) set out to increase learning on the job through the introduction of teaching schools (Mayer 2021). This undermines the role of universities with a greater reliance on practice and less emphasis on theory, academic expertise and intellectual development (Clarke and Phelan 2017). This is likely to reproduce existing forms of practice rather than moving forward to produce better or different forms (Britzman 2003), suggesting that ECTs may adopt the practices of the school within which they complete placements or within which they are employed rather than exercise their own autonomy over their practice. Developments over the past decade have seen teacher education under 'intense scrutiny' as part of a broader agenda around raising teacher quality (Mayer 2021: 120). This has resulted in teacher education now being positioned as a 'politically constructed ideological problem characterised by global competitiveness and claims about evidence' (Mayer 2021: 121).

Research into teacher education is a relatively new field (Furlong et al 2000; Hudson and Zgaga 2017; Mayer 2021a). Until the 1980s, how teachers were trained and further developed was something that attracted little attention beyond that of teacher educators or teachers themselves (Furlong 2013). Provided that the supply of teachers was adequate, governments showed little interest in the area (Furlong 2013). However, over the last forty years there has been a significant change, with research into teacher education evolving and growing due to significant policies and reforms; a picture that is broadly replicated globally. By the end of the 1980s, teacher education had become a key concern for government policy and central control had significantly increased and continued to intensify (Furlong et al 2000). The focus on teacher education is part of the wider picture of accountability and performativity – a move to what Power (1997:3) describes as an 'audit explosion', whereby society is under constant surveillance and checking. A greater control over teacher education from a neoliberal standpoint sees increased surveillance of teacher performativity and thus exam results, as reflecting and promoting a market agenda.

The catalyst for change is often the use of global comparisons, dominated by 'mechanisms that measure and compare' (Henderson and Noble 2015: 4); and with teachers being central to improvement of the education system, new policies tend to focus on improving teacher quality (Henderson and Noble 2015; Mayer 2021a). This global focus on economics and productivity views education as a form of input with teachers being part of the 'human capital' to meet the needs of the

economy (Clarke and Phelan 2017). The use of data such as results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) to measure performance outcomes and make international comparisons contribute to the need for reform (Ball 2021), meaning that education is no longer merely a matter of national interest but of economic value within the international market (Hudson and Zgaga 2017); put another way, schools have been made responsible for the 'population wealth problem' (Foucault 2009, cited in Ball 2013: 102). Teachers are now seen as the key resource in ensuring the global competitiveness of each nation's education system and economy, and therefore, how teachers are selected, trained, and developed as professionals are priorities for every national or state/provincial government (Barber and Mourshed 2007 cited in Furlong 2013). The more the focus on the global market is pronounced, and the more economically developed the country is, the more central the 'neoliberal world' is to that government and society (Hudson and Zgaga 2017: 15). England therefore is not the only country to see education being framed in increasingly economic terms; however, what has made England stand out is the speed in which the government seized control (Bates, Lewis and Pickard 2011).

This shift sees a greater emphasis on performativity, a 'key mechanism' of neoliberal governance which is enacted through indicators and targets (Ball 2013: 137). With the aim of improving teacher education and subsequently teacher quality, policy reforms often focus on tighter systems of accountability, with an assumption that this will address overall quality of education. Teacher education across many high-income countries is being framed as a policy problem with national solutions and large-scale reforms developed to address this problem (Mayer 2021a). Governments often address this 'problem' by asserting tighter control and accountability on those involved in the profession with policy being viewed as the solution but never part of the problem (Ball 2006). 'Neoliberal education discourses privilege the easily counted and measured over the multifaceted and complex capacities in teacher education' (Mockler 2017: 337). This trend can be seen across all aspects of teaching from ITE to ECT induction and for those experienced within the profession, with standards, frameworks and other forms of accountability introduced at each level. As Ball (2013: 108) notes in relation to the pervasive nature of neoliberal mechanisms of control, the scope of government 'is extended into the minutiae of classroom processes'. These issues will be discussed further in the next section where the impact of government policy on teachers, ITE providers and ECTs will be addressed.

1.3.2 Challenging professionalism and autonomy

Teachers

Many policy initiatives within teacher education have been aimed towards changing the nature of teacher professionalism (Furlong et al 2000). Notions of professionalism have been widely debated, however, many would agree that a professional should have the autonomy to make judgements as the principal, not as the agent (Furlong et al 2000). Numerous policies have stripped teachers of this autonomy, leaving them only able to act as an agent in response to the government, simply implementing decisions made elsewhere (Bates, Lewis and Pickard 2011). It is this lack autonomy, reflecting the 'neoliberal distrust of teachers' judgement' (Mockler 2022a: 166), that strips teachers of their 'true professional status' (Bates, Lewis and Pickard 2011: 139).

Changes to policies impacting employment, promotion and pay have placed teachers as central to a regime of performance management. The impact of such policies has led to teachers being 'remade' within both their work and the meaning of teaching (Ball 2021: 157). This spans so far as the introduction of new working practices, a new language which teachers use to talk about themselves, their roles, how they think about and judge themselves – the effects of the political economy of neoliberal globalisation on education are profound and far-reaching (Ball 2021).

The introduction of the National Curriculum in England in 1988 saw teacher autonomy challenged in new ways (Furlong et al 2000) with an 'authoritative specification of contents and of sequencing and pacing of knowledge' (Ball 2021: 109); teachers were told not only what should be taught but also how it should be taught. The National Curriculum brought standardisation to classroom practice and associated assessments brought 'normalisation', with the idea of measuring the statistical 'norm' within the population, whilst also making it possible to monitor the performance of teachers (Ball 1994). Kelly (2009: 257) describes the documents justifying the National Curriculum's introduction as 'instrumental, vocational' and 'commercial', replete with imagery 'of the marketplace, of commerce and industry'. The National Curriculum was again revised in 2014 based on recommendations of a government-appointed panel with the rationale for this being to replicate the world's most successful schooling systems in international tests (Ball 2021). This is one example of how policy initiatives may be borrowings or adaptations of initiatives developed in other countries (Lingard 2010; Bates, Lewis and Pickard 2011), and again, are an example of policy driven by global competitiveness. Biesta (2012: 35) summarises this as a shift towards an 'authoritarian conception of teaching' whereby teaching is characterised by control. This control not only spans control over schools through prescribed curricula, assessment procedures and inspection frameworks, but also crosses into the training of teachers.

Initial Teacher Education Providers

Arguably, teacher educators have been stripped of their creativity and critical voice. Britzman (2011: 81) refers to a 'manual' which signifies 'a profession's unconscious wish for absolute knowledge and a defence against crisis'. The crisis here is a manufactured one, which has been formed through the rhetoric of reform and policy demands for change and facilitated by feelings of guilt and loss on the part of teachers and teacher educators (Taubman 2009); a discussion which will continue further in the analysis chapters.

In England, ITE Providers must now follow the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Core Content Framework (CCF) (DfE 2019a), a minimum entitlement for all trainee teachers. The framework is symptomatic of the rationale for policy change as discussed so far, with the following outlined as the purpose for its introduction: 'The quality of teaching is the single most important in-school factor in improving outcomes for pupils' (DfE 2019a: 3). This shows a marked shift from the first establishment of teacher training colleges in the 1870s where the main focus was on a teacher's character, ensuring that they were role models for the children (Ball 2021). Such a move of conformity for ITE providers via the imposition of standards and a standardised curriculum can be seen in other countries too, such as Australia where standards for ITE accreditation have been updated to reflect what is needed for 'classroom readiness' (Mockler 2017: 336). Not dissimilar to the CCF, Australia's new standards rely on a research base, albeit a selected and partial one that ignores the complexities of the profession (Mockler 2017).

Early Career Teachers

Unsurprisingly, the focus on performativity and accountability, means that there is now a greater focus on ECTs as they transition from initial training into employment. Those new to the profession will not only need to navigate the complexities of their role but also the wider changing context of education as discussed so far (Henderson and Noble 2015).

Induction for ECTs in England was revised in 2021 with the introduction of the ECF, giving ECTs entitlement to a two-year programme of 'structured training and development' (DfE 2019: 6). The ECF (DfE 2019: 4) aims to transform the 'support and development offer for teachers at the start of their career'. The ECF (DfE 2019) pledges to provide ECTs with high quality training materials, funded training for ECTs and mentors, and funded time for mentors to support ECTs. The introduction to the framework places much emphasis on ensuring that ECTs are given the time needed to partake in professional development, with teachers in the second year of their career being given 5% teaching remission for this, additional to the 10% in their first year. The expectation to undertake the provided

training and meet the requirements of the framework, however, will only serve to 'fill' this extra time provided and does not recognise that ECTs are already working to capacity. The good intention of the ECF is to support ECTs, however, this may simply add to their already heavy workload, a factor already influencing low retention in the profession (CooperGibson Research and DfE 2018; Iglehart 2022).

The current neoliberal context has had, and continues to have, significant impact on the teaching profession, as outlined above. This study therefore sets out to address how ECTs navigate their professional identities against such a backdrop. Even twenty years ago, Day (2002) asserted that ECTs are those in the profession who are under the greatest pressure to conform to performativity measures. Attrition rates may improve if trainees were encouraged and supported to build a professional identity from the outset of their studies (Henderson and Noble 2015). However, the focus within current policy remains on ECTs demonstrating certain competencies rather than exercising autonomy or building upon their own professional identity, leading to the question of how the building of a professional identity is possible within such a constrained policy environment as contemporary schools. This, coupled with a final assessment taking place at the end of the two-year induction period (DfE 2021a) to ascertain whether the ECT's performance against the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) is satisfactory, sees entry into the profession as high stakes.

1.4 The structure of the thesis

The study is focussed around the main research question of 'how do Primary ECTs navigate and manage their professional identity against the current educational policy context?' The thesis is structured around six further chapters – the literature review, research design, three analysis chapters and the conclusion.

Discussion around the neoliberal back-drop of education continues in the literature review with the impact on ECTs being further explored through consideration of current research and literature. The first section of the literature review explores national policy looking at teacher education and ECT policy in England. It highlights how many elements of teaching policy are often technocratic and uses Noddings' 1984 ethics of care (Noddings 2003) as an alternative, relational view. The second part of this chapter then moves onto discuss school enactment of policy, addressing the complexities of implementation of policy at school-level where a focus on competencies and standards does not address the context-specific elements of individual schools. The chapter then addresses the vital element of support within ECT induction and how the specifics of emotional or pastoral support that ECTs often need are not considered within induction guidance. Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice (CoP) is used to address this 'gap' within policy further. The final part of the literature review focuses on ECTs' understanding and enactment of policy and how this can aid or hinder in developing

their own professional identities. Here, Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation is considered as an alternative framework for considering identity.

The third chapter outlines the research design of the study, explaining how it is located within a constructionist epistemology. Three main theories are used throughout the study as a framework for exploring teacher identity: Noddings' (2003) ethics of care, Wenger's (1998) CoP, and Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation. The small-scale case study focuses on the experiences of five ECTs during their first two years of Primary teaching using semi-structured interviews as the main form of data. The chapter also explains the macro, meso and micro levels that are employed to structure the following analysis chapters, noting that, although these are treated separately for analytic clarity, they bleed into one another in practice.

The research design is followed by three analysis chapters: macro, meso and micro level. The macro level analysis addresses some of the policies derived at national level which govern a teacher's practice. Discussion focuses on curricula, assessment and data collection, and forms of surveillance such as Local Authority visits and Ofsted inspections. It is considered how many of these forms of control may be heightened for ECTs who have the least autonomy within their role and feel greater forms of accountability within the induction period due to monitoring within the induction period. Noddings' (2003) ethics of care is used throughout this chapter to highlight the need for a relational approach to teaching, one which national policy does not consider.

Within the meso level analysis discussion turns to the complexities of the translation of policy into specific school contexts. Support is outlined as key element in ECTs navigating this translation with a need not only for intellectual support but emotional and social support. Wenger's (1998) three-part definition of CoP (mutual engagement, joint enterprise and a shared repertoire) is used to focus on the nuances in school practices within these areas, drawing on interview findings. The focus on care continues, with discussion of how this often acts in opposition to the technocratic view of support within policy and how employing contexts balance these two areas.

The final analysis chapter explores individual ECTs' understanding and enactment of policy and how this has impacted their professional identity. Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation is used as a framework to explore the practices and self-formation of three ECTs: Gemma, Adam and Clare.

The conclusion then draws together the main themes of the study and proposes a conceptual model of ECT identity development. The discussion raises implications for practice for ITE providers,

employing schools and the ECTs themselves. The research process is critically analysed alongside potential areas for future study. The thesis closes with personal reflections of the process.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: Concepts and Contexts

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore different levels of policy interpretation and enactment, alongside relevant theories – Noddings' (2003) ethics of care, Wenger's (1998) CoP, and Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation as a framework for exploring teacher identity. The theories bring a focus to relational models of teaching and often serve to put a spotlight on what is not included within policy; as Foucault (1972) highlighted, what is not said within discourse, is just as important as what is said. A range of research and reading will be drawn upon to give an overview of current findings and theories within these areas.

To begin, this chapter will focus on teacher education and ECT policy in England, looking at how many elements of education policy are often technocratic. Here, Noddings' (2003) ethics of care will be introduced to look at how the caring dimension of a teacher's role is not documented within policy. The 'object' of educational practices are children and therefore the act of teaching implies that the teacher has a sense of responsibility for those in their care (Kelchtermans 2018), however, against the neoliberal backdrop of performativity, this can often become lost.

The second part of the chapter will then move onto discuss the complexities of school enactment of policy and how support within induction is crucial in helping ECTs to navigate this translation at school-level. The notion of support is mentioned within induction guidance but it does not address the specifics of emotional or pastoral support that ECTs often need. To address this 'gap' within policy further, Wenger's (1998) CoP, will be used to discuss the advantages of such an approach, giving a greater focus to induction being viewed as a joint venture across the school as opposed to a heavy focus on the role of the mentor.

The final part of the literature review will focus on ECTs' understanding and enactment of policy, and how this can aid or hinder in developing their professional identities. It is here that Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation will be considered as an alternative analytical framework for considering identity and understanding the different pressures and power relations at play.

2.2 Becoming a qualified teacher: The technocratic evidencing of skills and standards

In order to ascertain some of the barriers that ECTs face within their induction period, it is first necessary to establish the requirements of the induction period. This section will discuss the ECF (DfE 2019) and the requirements of meeting the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a).

Teacher development is often characterised by the ability to demonstrate government-mandated skills (Webb at al 2004; Biesta 2012). Indeed, it can be argued that effective teaching has been conceptualised through a set of professional standards (Forrester and Garratt 2016) with this forming one of the key aspects of global education reform (Mockler 2022a). Regardless of the route into teaching, all trainees must meet the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a). These standards simplify the idea of 'best practice', an idea which is already a simplification, ignoring the complex differences characterising disparate contexts, by breaking the main elements of teaching down into eight standards which trainees are asked to evidence that they 'meet' in order to qualify. The standards alone are quite vague, for example, Teacher Standard six covers the vast, complex area of assessment in four succinct bullet points. These standards, 'fail to recognise the complex, contingent and human nature of teachers' practice' (Douglas 2017: 160) and as such undermine professional judgement (Mockler 2022a). Douglas's (2017) research highlights how the practice of meeting the standards may sometimes be prioritised before establishing an understanding of *why* they need to be met.

The Government in England has acknowledged that there are growing signs of shortages within the teaching profession and that the retention rate of current teachers could be improved (Foster 2019; DfE 2019b). Over 20% of new teachers leave the profession within their first two years of teaching, and 33% leave within their first five years (DfE 2019b). Increased levels of in-school support through coaching and mentoring, a greater focus on Continued Professional Development (CPD) and career progression and increased professional recognition can support retention (CooperGibson Research and DfE 2018; Iglehart 2022) and are shown to mediate the ways in which ECTs describe themselves as being prepared and effective within their role (Mayer et al 2017). However, the main measure in qualifying to teach is based on meeting the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a), standards which trainees must meet to qualify but also continue to meet with their induction. Within the standards there is no mention of support and with the same standards being used to measure the competence of ECTs and more experienced teachers, there is little focus on career progression or autonomy, suggesting that the ways in which teacher retention could be improved are not being addressed by the standards.

The fact that these standards must be 'met' by the end of ITE may cause tensions, with an internal expectation from ECTs that they are 'experts' within their field, ready to teach a class of their own, when, in reality, they still have much to learn (Haggarty and Postlethwaite 2012). The ECT is not a 'finished product' at the end of their initial training and much new learning will take place 'on the job' when they are experiencing new contexts and challenges. The notion of 'classroom readiness' is not a milestone to achieve by the end of ITE but should be considered a 'process of becoming' over the course of the career (Mockler 2017). Because much of the theory offered within ITE is generalisable,

it may not align with the trainees' own experience and therefore they may struggle to navigate the two (Loughran 2006). Assessment of ECTs at the end of the two year induction period goes some way to addressing this, however, this further narrows the focus of induction towards a performative, specific set of standards.

Increased accountability and tighter regulations, alongside international comparisons and economic competitiveness have seen a greater focus on teacher quality, teacher education and subsequent policies (Mayer 2021). One part of this mechanism has been a greater focus on induction. In England the induction period for ECTs was revised in 2021 with the introduction of the ECF. This indicates that the DfE has recognised that teacher development happens over time thus fitting with a perspective on teaching as sustained engagement with education; a continual journey of 'becoming' rather than an end-state of 'being' educated (Clarke and Phelan 2017). Input from teachers, school leaders and academics was drawn upon during the consultation period, thus supporting the notion that the views of those currently employed in the education sector is essential 'if we are to realise the democratic, pedagogical and social aims of education in the twenty first century' (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015: 5). However, Helgetun and Menter (2022: 89) describe the use of evidence in teacher education policy as a 'rationalised myth' with this often being politically constructed and ideologically-driven. The ECF (DfE 2019) applies a one-size fits all pedagogically-prescriptive approach, leaving limited opportunities for teacher judgement in application of the research cited and little opportunity for 'fulfilling non-performance-based educational purposes' (Iglehart 2022: 47). This is typical of teacher education policy, with most policies drawing on a limited amount of research and such research being cherry-picked according to specific criteria or to align with political positions (Mayer 2021a). The pilot of the ECF highlighted the need to align policy expectations, the ECF programmes and the time and workload required for schools to implement all the requirements (Ovenden-Hope 2022). The DfE's (2023) evaluation of the national roll out of the programme broadly highlights the same concerns.

Younger teachers are particularly under pressure to conform with competency measures (Day 2002). This can be attributed to their lack of experience in being able to exercise their own autonomy and develop their own identity, coupled with an environment of accountability (Wilkins 2011; Goepel 2012). ECTs are aware of the need to pass their induction period to proceed in their career; failure to do so means they will no longer be able to be employed in a school[2] (DfE 2021a). This process will be replete with targets, both individual to the ECT, for their class and linked to whole school

[2] 'Failure to complete the induction period satisfactorily means that the ECT is no longer eligible to be employed as a teacher in a maintained school, a maintained nursery school, a non-maintained special school or a pupil referral unit. However, this does not prevent them from teaching in other settings where statutory induction is not mandatory' (DfE 2021a: 24).

improvement. ECTs should be observed at 'regular intervals' throughout their induction with progress reviews taking place each term and formal assessments at the end of the first and the second year (DfE 2021a). This combination of targets, observations and assessments creates an induction period which is high risk for ECTs as they are continually under pressure to perform. This type of environment gives little allowance for the development of their own autonomy or consideration of their own professional identity. However, Fuller's stage model of teacher development (1969, cited in Conway and Clarke 2003), suggest that teachers' concerns and aspirations begin with a focus on self, including their personal capacity to grow as a teacher. This suggests that teachers need the opportunity to focus on the self before they can begin to move towards a greater focus on tasks, their pupils and the impact of their teaching – elements likely to be the focus of targets, observations and assessments within their induction.

Foucault described power and knowledge as a two-stage development whereby this is initially imposed as a form of control or neutralisation and then evolves into techniques for enhancing productivity (Rouse 1994). There are many examples of policy and use of accountability mechanisms such as the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) which fit Foucault's description. Policy implementation is particularly significant here as Foucault emphasised that power is not simply one action; it depends upon the re-enactment or reproduction over time (Rouse 1994). Consequently, he did not view power as a theory but considered the analytics of power – a specific domain formed by power relations (Foucault 1982a). This highlights the importance of translation of policy into practice and the role of ECTs as either drivers or by-standers within this process. Policy regimes within schools are increasingly becoming a dominant form within which teachers understand their work, as such 'normalising' this form of regime (Mockler and Stacey 2021). Foucault (1979: 184) warned that normalisation has become one of the 'great instruments of power' as it spans both disciplinary and regulatory power - disciplinary focusing on the individual, and regulatory focussing on the global, thus returning to discussions of neoliberal governmentality. Foucault characterised power and knowledge as an 'abstract force which determines what will be known, rather than assuming that individual thinkers develop ideas and knowledge' (Mills 2003: 70). Links to autonomy are also relevant here with policy enactment often determining the nature and understanding of knowledge within the teaching profession. Policy decision-making is centred around the 'human capital argument' (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015: 156) and as such the voice of those impacted directly by policy is not considered. Mockler and Groundwater-Smith (2015: 156) argue for an 'authentic desire to share decision-making and agency', however, the neoliberal nature of current policy sees the power dynamics heavily weighted towards governmental policy makers.

The induction period into teaching employment varies significantly across different countries. In England, ECTs are awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) when they successfully complete their ITE programme, however, a further assessment takes place at the end of induction to ascertain whether their performance against the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) is satisfactory. Failure to meet these requirements means the ECT is no longer eligible to be employed as a teacher and that they will be dismissed from their role (DfE 2021a). Germany and Austria have similar induction periods with formal assessments to 'officially enter the job' (Thomas et al 2021: 103). In other countries, such as Cyprus and Portugal, the 'license' has already been granted before induction begins. Contrastingly, in France and Luxembourg induction begins before the teacher has fully qualified, therefore making the transition between ITE and employment much more fluid (Thomas et al 2021). Other countries do not have formal induction programmes but still have support procedures in place. Having explored the variations within induction, it is clear to see why the format used in England is the most 'loaded' of the different options, where the ECT has the most to lose and performativity and accountability are high on the agenda. It is therefore unsurprising that the ECF (DfE 2019) focuses on knowledge and skills needed to pass the induction period based around the evidence and practice statements.

In summary, the induction period for teachers in England is loaded; accountability measures are high and ECTs have much to lose if they do not meet the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a). The use of these standards as a point of summative assessment at the end of ITE but also after the first two years of teaching can be a source of confusion for ECT development. On one hand, the meeting of these standards at the end of training may give a sense of false confidence as trainees transition to ECTs, a sense of confidence that is likely to stall or decline once they enter employment. On the other hand, a feeling of progress and growth may be stilted for those who need to develop further confidence in their abilities. These mixed messages, alongside an induction period rife with measures of accountability and performativity means that there is little room or perhaps desire for ECTs to develop their own teacher identity within the early stages of their career. The next section will move on to consider the role of the ITE provider within ECT policy.

2.3 The role of ITE Providers within ECT Policy: The problems with a one-size fits all approach to the transition between ITE and employment

With the introduction of the ECF (DfE 2019), the DfE also introduced the CCF (DfE 2019a) which all ITE providers must align their programmes with. Together these two frameworks, 'establish an entitlement to a 3 or more year structured package of support for future generations of teachers' (DfE 2019a: 3). Both frameworks follow a similar structure and themes and claim to have been drawn from 'high quality evidence' (DfE 2019a: 4). Again, as with the ECF, there is little indication of what

makes this evidence ‘high quality’ or the way in which the research has been selected, unless to reflective a specific perspective (Mutton et al 2021).

Ofsted (2015) inspection guidelines for ITE marked a shift towards the accountability of ITE providers for their trainees’ performance in their first year of teaching and beyond leading providers to explore how they can best support ECTs. There is no ‘one best practice’ for ITE providers to support ECTs; there needs to be choice to meet the needs of ECTs within different contexts (Anderson and Olsen 2006: 371). Such opportunities may include online professional development, or on-site workshops which allow teachers from different schools to collaborate and then feedback to their own school. These are all provisions that the ECF (DfE 2019) offers but not through ‘choice’, through a prescribed one-size fits all programme rather than catering to the needs of ECTs in different contexts. The core sections of the ECF (DfE 2019) cover areas such as behaviour management, an area commonly associated with causing difficulties for ECTs (Beltman, Mansfield and Price 2011; Spencer et al 2018), however, this is a broader picture and the focus on areas such as this will inevitably take focus away from areas of concern for individual ECTs. Once again, the emphasis on competencies, as with the Teachers’ Standards (DfE 2013a), shifts away from the personal element; the contextualised understanding of each ECT as an individual. Although it is difficult to argue against the idea that teachers should be competent (Biesta 2012), a focus on competencies fails to address the need for teachers to make judgements within specific situations. Despite the introduction of the ECF (DfE 2019) and CCF (DfE 2019a) being cited as creating a ‘’golden thread’ of high-quality evidence underpinning the support, training and development available through the entirety of a teacher’s career’ (DfE 2022b: 5), across some pilot models of the ECF there was a lack of attention to the ECT’s ITE programme and a sense of starting from scratch. Very few mentors discussed ITE outcomes as a basis for development and ECTs stated this was the main reason why the programme was not matched to their stage of development (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022). This highlights some of the complexities with the transition between ITE and employment and places a large onus on the mentor to ensure that the ECT’s stage of development is understood. It also draws attention to the need for ITE providers and employing schools to work together to ensure the ‘bridge’ between ITE and employment is formed and employees are clear of ECTs’ starting points.

Both the ECF (DfE 2019) and the CCF (DfE 2019a) offer statements of ‘learn that’ and learn how to’ highlighting the government’s concept of teacher education as decidedly formulaic with such notions of standardised solutions. The assumption is that trainees will use theory to guide their actions in practice, however, Trumbull (2004, cited in Loughran 2006) argues that this does not work within teacher education. Many ITE programmes are structured around modules, meaning much learning is

compartmentalised. As new teachers move into teaching jobs, there is an assumption that they can transfer this learning from the course into practice; in order to work with 'whole learners' and a 'whole curricula' (Henderson and Noble 2015: 2). When theory is promoted, it can sometimes be taken out of context and again, turned into a formula, losing its original meaning.

The ECF (DfE 2019) although beneficial in its acknowledgement of ECT learning continuing beyond ITE, does not consider the complexities of induction on an individual level. It assumes a one-size fits all approach but the transition from ITE to employment requires a level of understanding of the ECT's prior experiences. This again highlights the risk of policy in neglecting the personal element. Furthermore, the ECF (DfE 2019) fails to see the complexities of teaching and the many situations when professional judgement will be needed. Opportunities to develop this are just as important as the knowledge itself so there needs to be a focus on doing this, through collaboration, specific forms of CPD and a greater focus on relational forms of teaching. The introduction of the CCF (DfE 2019a) may only serve to compound these factors if a similar approach to delivery of ITE is taken to that of the induction period. It may mean that ECTs are less prepared for the aspects of teaching that are not documented within policy. This would result in a greater risk of 'praxis shock', where teachers are confronted with 'the realities and responsibilities of being a classroom teacher that puts their beliefs and ideas about teaching to the test, challenges some of them, and confirms others' (Kelchtermans and Ballet 2002: 105).

The role of the teacher through the eyes of government policy is viewed as technocratic, but it must not be forgotten that 'a caring dimension is inherent in teaching; the teachers' concern for and empathy with pupils, as well as their aspiration to motivate and help their pupils learn' (Aspfors and Bondas 2013: 243). This is not documented within induction guidance or centralised education policy but is an element that forms an integral part of the teacher role as supported by Douglas's (2017: 160) earlier point about the Teachers' Standards (2013a) failing to 'recognise the complex, contingent and human nature of teachers' practice'. To address this further, the next section will look at Noddings' (2003) ethics of care, focussing on a relational form of teaching. Noddings' work provides a stark contrast to that outlined within national policy and will be used to address aspects of the role that are not considered within central policy but are key to the role of the teacher.

2.4 The role of care within the teaching profession: The aspect of the profession that policy neglects

A desire to care for and make a difference to the new generation is often one of the main reasons that ECTs embark on a career in teaching (Clarke 2009; Aspfors and Bondas 2013).

'Care' can be interpreted in different ways – not only does it mean 'hands on' care or work that involves a focus on the physical or emotional needs of others, but it is also about social capacity and consideration of welfare and flourishing of life (Chatzidakis et al 2020). There are distinctions between caring for, caring about, and caring with, developed by scholars such as Noddings (1984) and Tronto (2013), but these do not always account for the conflicting emotions that will inevitably arise (Chatzidakis et al 2020). Although teaching can be considered as an intellectual profession, it is also practical and has a range of practices and methods whilst also having a basis in care and responsibility (Bates, Lewis and Pickard 2011).

Historically, care has been undervalued because it has been associated with 'feminine' care, focussing on duties understood to be women's work centred in domesticity, with the male role being viewed more as the 'breadwinner' (Noddings 1998; Chatzidakis et al 2020). However, Noddings (1998) asserts that although the ethic of care is feminine, in the sense of tasks and values, the experience and moral thought involved within the ethic of care is not limited to woman. This highlights how generalised understandings of gender can be problematic. The universalist concept of ethics focuses on using and applying the correct rules and abiding by correct procedures. Indeed, such an approach can be seen as inherently masculine with the subject being seen as a 'detached and autonomous individual' (Parton 2003: 10). Davies (2000: 348) likens this to the masculine gendered ideal of the professional, stating that this ideal is not 'uncaring', they exercise the correct professional concern but are not 'visibly moved' or become entwined in the crises or situation. Care is devalued as it embodies the opposite of what society treats as worthy qualities: public accomplishment, rationality and autonomy (Tronto 1993). Delaune (2017) implies that government policy is dominated by men for whom care is distinct from and inferior to education, as a result of this policy often privileges cognition over care.

Schools cannot 'care for' directly, however, they can establish the conditions within which caring for can effectively take place (Noddings 2015). Chatzidakis et al (2020) argue that we need a politics that puts care at the centre. The 'object' of educational practices are children and therefore the act of teaching implies that the teacher has a sense of responsibility for those in their care (Kelchtermans 2018). Central policies and reforms that underpin education do not reflect this need as they are driven by neoliberal competition and marketisation which does not always acknowledge individual contexts or individual need. As such the Government are seeking 'to reduce the interpretative act of teaching to a set of mechanistic technical practices' (Delaune 2017: 340). This highlights the 'disconnect' between policy production and of teachers' work within school contexts (Mockler 2022a). Sometimes paternalism needs to be exercised, however, schools have gone too far and are now implementing too much control and not enough 'attentive love' (Noddings 2015: 82). Policies focus on providing the

same education for all pupils; this shows failure in *caring about* as some pupils will not have opportunities to excel within certain areas; policy making is too focussed on standardised testing and any changes implemented are only considered by policy makers if this will make a difference to test scores (Noddings 2015). Noddings' (2015) example here is that of smaller class sizes and a degree of personalisation – the argument for this may stand if policy makers felt this would have a positive impact on assessment data[3], however, they do not consider the opportunities for the development of greater teacher-pupil relationships of care and trust. In this sense, care has been displaced by a view of the child as a learner to be continually assessed and a movement towards reduced forms of consideration of the individual (Alcock and Haggerty 2013) in favour of a broader neoliberal focus on education.

The role of the teacher is 'not merely a technical or cognitive practice but also fundamentally social i.e. relational and emotional, intimately intertwined' (Aspfors and Bondas 2013: 243). Although policy focuses predominantly on teaching as a technical practice, it is crucial that the relational aspects of teaching are considered as this is at the 'core' of teaching (Aspfors and Bondas 2013). Noddings (2005) discusses two different views of caring. Firstly, the ethic of care, a relational view within which both the carer and cared for contribute. Across schools, teachers try to care for their pupils and there are pupils who want to be cared for. However, the structure of current education systems and associated policies, may provide an environment that is not conducive to that relationship. This brings us to the second view of care, an opposing view that focuses on caring as a virtue belonging to carers, where carers act in what they believe is the best interests of the cared for without listening to their expressed needs (Noddings 2005). It is here the dilemma teachers find themselves in can be seen. Policy implementation is likely to dictate an emphasis on the raising of market economies through increased test scores via a curriculum that is arguably aimed at those who are academically able but is enforced upon all. In order to further address this dichotomy, Noddings' (2003) ethics of care will be used to highlight the relational role of the teacher and the aspects of policy that do not consider these aspects of the teacher role.

Noddings' (2003) ethics of care begins its theorising within basic human relationships; it is here that difficulties arise as this connects to real-life scenarios and the desires of real people. It is through the principles of ethics that we learn to respond in certain ways to situations; this suggests a level of

[3] Evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) suggests that the average impact for reducing class size is around 2 months additional progress over the course of an academic year. However, these findings should be treated with caution as the key issue appears to be whether the reduction is large enough to permit the teacher to change their teaching approach when working with a smaller class and whether, as a result, the pupils change their learning behaviours. Reducing class size | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) [Accessed 20.09.22].

autonomy and spontaneity within teaching, a stark contrast to much of the policy discourse teachers find themselves surrounded by. Principles play only a minor role within the ethics of care as it is within the most difficult situations that principles fail us; the motive to care arises on its own (Noddings 1998). In many cases we respond spontaneously to another person, a response that Noddings (1998: 186) labels, 'natural' caring. It is here that teacher judgement is required within certain situations, and where particular strategies are often tested and can become the new truth of 'what works' rather than the uniqueness of each situation being considered (Delaune 2017). Policy enactment may mean that individual circumstances or bespoke approaches are not given thought to. The media often refers to teachers' work being simplistic or having a right or wrong answer, perhaps as a result of policy being worded in such ways as 'teachers should' (Mockler 2022). The ECF's (DfE 2019) 'learn that' statements are examples of this. However, teachers find themselves having to make a multitude of complex decisions or judgements every day, including social decisions around the children's best interests. It is not a caring relationship when 'claims to knowledge' or certain procedures are actioned instead of direct engagement with the child or family to gain a greater understanding of the situation (Delaune 2017: 341). This is a risk for ECTs who want to demonstrate that they are knowledgeable and follow policy but lack experience and confidence to use their own judgements.

When considering the role of the ethics of care and perspectives around assumed and expressed needs, it is also pertinent to discuss motivations for becoming a teacher. There are two main forms of motivation impacting teacher motivation: intrinsic (internal desires for personal and professional development and working in educational settings') (Claeys 2011, cited in Salifu and Agbenyega 2013: 67) and extrinsic factors (for example, competitive salary, high occupational status) (Salifu and Agbenyega 2013). However, there is also a third category – altruistic motivation, 'a love for and desire to work with children and/or young persons, and an inclination to serve society' (Claeys 2011, cited in Salifu and Agbenyega 2013: 67). Furthering this, Friedman (2016) proposes an altruistic-narcissistic continuum conceptualisation of teachers' professional self. This continuum spans from genuine altruism and paternalistic altruism to benevolent narcissism and genuine (healthy) narcissism. Genuine altruism would see children as receivers of genuine and selfless, help, care and support whereas paternalistic altruism sees teachers regard their pupils as a means of realising their own altruistic aspirations. Benevolent narcissism sees teachers demand control over their pupils for the benefit of the pupil. Parallels can be drawn between this and addressing assumed needs through policy implementation. Genuine, healthy narcissism is demonstrated through a sense of professional importance in the role of the teacher, in the seeking of respect from pupils.

In schools most actions are based on assumed needs, but the most effective teachers also listen for expressed needs, wants and interests, thus fulfilling the basic need of having one's own interests recognised and encouraged (Noddings 2015). This is where teachers will go beyond the content of the curriculum or teaching for a specific assessment as this would reduce teaching to 'mere instruction' - they go beyond this to be 'models of intellectual, aesthetic and moral life' (Noddings 2015: 74). Standard One - 'High Expectations' (DfE 2019: 8) goes some way towards addressing this by considering the impact that teachers can have on well-being, motivation and life chances. It is suggested that teachers are 'key role models' and that a 'culture of mutual trust and respect supports effective relationships'. Here, there are undertones of the ethics of care, however, the 'learn how to' statements give a clear focus to stretching pupils within the confines of a 'challenging curriculum' and that the culture of trust and respect should support all pupils 'to succeed'. The intention here is therefore firmly on performance outcomes. Unlike the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) and other performativity mechanisms which form rules or principles, the ethics of care sees actions which are motivated by the needs of and responsibility for others, with this relationship forming the motive for action (Bergmark 2020).

Alongside considering relationships with the children, teachers also need to consider self-care; an important element within a demanding profession and a term that has become somewhat 'fashionable' in recent years. Within his work on ethics, Foucault looked at the formation of our modern selves and considered a movement from ancient self-care through self-decipherment and self-knowledge to modern self-surveillance and self-discipline (Koopman 2013). This is a movement that can be traced within the teaching profession with increased monitoring, surveillance and accountability and a decreased focus on the autonomy or self-knowledge of the teacher. Foucault suggested that the practices of self-care are oriented by a transformative reflexivity whereby we are tasked with producing ourselves, to experiment and make ourselves (Ball 2013). The themes of reflexivity and identity formation will be revisited later in this chapter and in chapter six. The importance of the satisfaction that teachers gain from being a caring teacher cannot be underestimated. These positive experiences can compensate for parts of the profession that teachers find more stressful or time-consuming and therefore more emphasis needs to be placed on giving teachers time to create 'sustainable and emotional bonds' with pupils in their care (Aspfors and Bondas 2013: 256).

The need for teachers to conform with central education policy is crucial, particularly for ECTs who are embarking on a high stakes induction programme, where they are subjected to high levels of monitoring. However, there is little consideration of the caring, relational role of the teacher and the

difficulties of fulfilling this role against the neoliberal back-drop of education policy. This dilemma between the ethics of care and government policy may leave teachers feeling torn between their accountable selves and their caring selves. The often silenced or unconsidered discourses of care are accompanied by policies which seek 'reductive' forms of the individual within which education focuses primarily on attainment targets (Delaune 2017).

Central policy does not aid ECTs in promoting caring relationships or in making decisions which relate to this part of their role. Despite this, caring is a significant part of their role as a teacher and one which for many teachers is the reason they are in the profession. 'Caring is largely reactive and responsive. Perhaps it is even better characterised as receptive', therefore once again emphasising the need for teacher judgement (Noddings 2003: 19). Noddings' (2003) work on care saw a shift to look beyond the distinguishing characteristics of care to the notion of caring as fluid, not pre-prescribed within policy or guidance. This once again emphasises the challenges of caring within a profession rife with policy. ECTs will need to exercise their autonomy in dealing with situations and guidance on this cannot be found in policy documentation. Guidance and understanding of this aspect of their role is going to be crucial for ECTs who are beginning new jobs, likely lacking in self-confidence with an awareness of the high-stakes nature of induction. It is therefore necessary to consider what can enable ECTs to navigate this part of their role. It is here that discussion turns to the importance of support within the induction period. Effective support will enable ECTs to feel cared for, to enable caring for themselves and to have the confidence and autonomy to implement care into their practice.

2.5 The crucial role of support within induction

Many education policies are technocratic and do not consider specific situations that teachers may encounter which may involve them going beyond principles and the motive of care arising. Central policy also adopts a 'one size fits all' approach and can therefore prove difficult to translate into practice. It is here that support for ECTs becomes crucial in helping them to navigate the emotional and pastoral elements of teaching and to implement policy into the specific employing context.

Teachers' actions and practices are influenced heavily by central policy on a daily basis. From delivery of curricula (i.e. National Curriculum (DfE 2013), the EYFS Framework (DfE 2021)) to statutory assessment of pupils (i.e. Reception Baseline Assessment, Standard Assessment Tests (SATs), Year 1 Phonics screening, EYFS Profile data[4]) and guidance on pedagogy and processes (i.e. Special

[4] In England, Reception baseline assessment should be completed for each child within the first six weeks of them starting Reception (ages 4-5). Phonics screening checks take place in Year 1 (ages 5-6) and end of Key Stage SATs take place in Year 2 (ages 6-7) and Year 6 (ages 10-11). Schools, colleges and children's services : Exams, testing and assessment - detailed information - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) [Accessed 09.09.22].

Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (DfE/ Department of Health 2015)). Such policies, including the ECF (DfE 2019) and the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a), are prescriptive with a lack of understanding of employing context or ECT background. As a result, policy at school level attempts to make sense of national policy within the specific context. This is needed for policy to work within the context but, as policy is open to interpretation, some fidelity may be lost. In addition, localised levels of influence happen as policy is operationalised in institutions but there is little evidence of this 'cycling back' and influencing policy trajectory (Mayer 2021: 124) meaning that often what happens at the 'chalk face' is not considered when policy is written or revised.

As ECTs begin their teaching career, they must action what they have learnt in their training in the context of their employing school. As national policy is translated and enacted at school level, teachers find themselves continuously caught up 'in a web of discourses which sometimes address them, sometimes speak about them, or impose canonical bits of knowledge on them, or use them as a basis for constructing science that is beyond their grasp' (Foucault 1981: 30). Although each school's policy will inevitably be based around the same national policy, interpretations of this will vary as national policy takes a technocratic approach to teaching giving little guidance or space to make this context-specific. It is here that ECTs will need support in making sense of the often-formulaic nature of policy. As with discussions of care in the previous section, support is an element that is crucial for ECTs, but one which is not considered in detail within policy.

2.5.1 Defining support

The ECF (DfE 2019: 4) sets out that it is about 'transforming the support and development offer for teachers at the start of their career'. The term 'support' is used on numerous occasions with reference made to teachers deserving 'high quality' and 'structured' support and acknowledgement that this has not always been in the case in the past (DfE 2019:4). However, the support outlined in the ECF is centred around a package of structured training and time set aside to focus on professional development. The ECF (DfE 2019: 4) provides a 'practical guide' centred around 'practice statements', arguably omitting the personal approach and aspects of emotional support that ECTs often need and further adding to the 'muddied' nature of the use of the term 'support'.

The ECF (DfE 2019:4) acknowledges that, 'teachers deserve high quality support throughout their careers, particularly in those first years of teaching when the learning curve is steepest'. The term 'support', however, can have different connotations and it is therefore consideration is needed, not only of the importance of support but the types of support, whose role it is to give that support and what this might look like in practice – all elements which are likely to differ significantly across contexts. Although research has highlighted the need for effective support during the early stages of

a teacher's career, there are few definitions of support in this context. To consider the definition of support further, exploration of the generic term has been considered. The Cambridge Dictionary (Cambridges University Press 2022) defines the verb 'support' in several ways. For the purposes of this research, I have considered those that can be related to teaching.

Definition 1 - Encouragement

Firstly, support is defined as to 'encourage' – to agree with or give encouragement to someone because you want him or her to succeed. It is likely that this definition would ring true for ECTs, their mentors, and other staff within the school; it is hoped that ECTs would be encouraged to succeed, though it is questionable whether there is always a need to agree.

Definition 2 – To help emotionally or practically

A second definition of support is 'to help someone emotionally or in a practical way'. Emotional support is often linked to feeling cared for or cared about. Examples of this may include showing a genuine concern about the well-being or needs of the person and a willingness to help (Cronqvist et al 2004 cited in Aspfors and Bondas 2013) or finding strategies to help boost confidence, including showing interest in their ideas, giving encouragement and highlighting strengths (Izadinia 2018).

Definition 3 – To stop something from falling

The final definition is more in the metaphorical sense, meaning 'to hold something firmly or carry its weight, especially from below to stop it from falling'. Although this definition would most commonly be associated with a building or a tree, for example, there are perhaps times when ECTs look to others to 'hold them up' or keep them in the teaching profession.

Linking to this is the term 'scaffolding', to those outside of education the immediate thought may be of a temporary structure on the outside of a building, used whilst repairing a building. To those within education, scaffolding is 'the process of giving support to learners at the appropriate time and at the appropriate level of sophistication to meet the needs of the individual' (Pritchard 2018: 28). Linked to Vygotsky's work on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the scaffolding will serve to move a learner into the theoretical space just above their current level of understanding. Scaffolding takes many forms – through discussions, the provision of additional resources or apparatus, or by designing accessible tasks. Teachers will be familiar with this notion though their role would usually be as the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) when working with children to scaffold their learning. However, their role as an ECT would likely see their colleagues or mentor as the MKO.

The focus on support in order to succeed as an ECT is apparent from many studies (DeAngelis, Wall and Che 2013, Struyve et al 2016, Kelly, Sim and Ireland 2018, Kelly et al 2019) but little attention is paid to this within policy. It is clear from the above definitions that forms of support are more complex and varied than the ECF (DfE 2019) considers. There is an assumption that the main forms of support an ECT may need will be to meet the quantifiable, standards-driven competencies of teaching. However, the transition from trainee to ECT requires not only academic, but also social and emotional support (Aspfors and Bondas 2013; Engvik and Berit Emstad 2017; Izadinia 2018), areas which are often neglected within government policy.

Guskey's (2002: 388) 'Model of Teacher Change' implies that continued support following ITE is even more crucial than the training itself as support allows those in the initial stages of their teaching career to 'tolerate the anxiety of occasional failures'. There are many opportunities for those who work with ECTs to reduce 'risk' factors and increase 'protective' factors, therefore enabling ECTs to 'thrive, not just survive' (Beltman, Mansfield and Price 2011: 185). Amongst these 'risk' factors, Beltman, Mansfield and Price (2011) identified difficulty in asking for help as a frequent factor, whereas the key 'protective' factors centred around the need for support. The next section will further explore what a robust support system within induction may entail, including the roles of different staff members.

2.5.2 The emphasis on the role of mentors and induction tutors

Within both current and previous NQT/ ECT guidance (DfE 2018; DfE 2021a), emphasis is placed on coaching and mentoring. Under current guidance, all ECTs should be assigned an induction tutor and mentor upon commencing employment (DfE 2021a). The role of the induction tutor is to 'provide regular monitoring and support', form 'rigorous and fair' judgements and co-ordinate the assessment of the ECT (DfE 2021a: 20). Mentoring is a separate role with emphasis on regular meetings to meet the needs of the ECT (DfE 2021a). Prior to the introduction of the ECF (DfE 2019) there was little guidance for mentoring and expectations for the induction programme, resulting in many 'conceptual paradigms' of mentoring across different contexts (Walkington 2005: 29) and inconsistent experiences of CPD for the role (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022). Subsequently, vast variations in terms of amount, type and effectiveness of support were evident. In O'Sullivan and Conway's (2016) study, neither ECTs nor mentors saw mentoring as having a meaningful impact on ECT progress, questioning the worth of mentoring. The mere presence of a mentor is not sufficient, it is crucial that they have the knowledge and skills to guide new teachers (Walkington 2005; Van Nuland, Whalen and Majocha 2021). Mentoring is a complex role; it is not just that of socialisation into the staff team and classroom but also critically, modelling practices, engaging in discussion, and providing feedback (Walkington 2005).

The introduction of the ECF (DfE 2019) has meant that mentoring is increasingly being recognised as a skilled professional practice (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022) with high levels of training and CPD for mentors provided as part of the ECF package being viewed as an 'essential component' (Tyreman 2022: 70). The role of the mentor is considered a key element in the induction process (DfE 2021a) and one that will 'drive the greatest improvements to ECTs' knowledge, skills and confidence' (Platt 2022: 123). Over the course of the pilot of the ECF programme, mentors gradually felt freer to adapt content to meet context-specific needs of their ECTs (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022); this is a skill not to be underestimated and one which inexperienced mentors may find challenging or lack confidence in. Mentors need to have a clearer understanding of the extent to which they can contextualise learning and exemplifications of ways that they can do this are needed (Platt 2022). This highlights the difference mentors can potentially make in supporting ECTs in translating policy at school level.

'Nurture and support can make or break a teaching career' (Worth and Van den Brande 2019: 4). As such, ECTs value colleagues who look out for or take care of them (Aspfors and Bondas 2013). Relationships are important both in terms of formal and informal support for the ECT, in a professional and more of a nurturing capacity. Indeed, The Alberta Teachers' Association (2003 cited in Van Nuland, Whalen and Majocha 2020: 171) views mentoring as a 'nurturing process' which involves a 'caring relationship' between the mentor and the novice teacher. Aspects of this may include befriending, encouraging, or counselling the ECT, suggesting a marked difference between mentoring guidance in England compared to parts of Canada. Noddings (2002) discusses the conscientiousness of being 'cared for' and how this will manifest in the recipient, be that through overt recognition, the attitude of the response, increased associated activity or generally around the recipient's well-being. These characteristics may be seen within the relationship between the mentor and ECT through the ECT's response, either verbally or in practice, towards their ability or confidence in fulfilling their role. However, returning to Noddings' definition of the alternative view of care which focuses on caring as a virtue belonging to carers, it may be that an ECT finds it difficult to accept criticism or opposing viewpoints, even if brought to them as an indirect result of policy implementation as a form of being cared for.

As a result of the need for different forms of support, mentors are often conflicted between a relational/supportive role and their role as quality assurance in terms of standards. In this sense, mentoring can be seen as a duality – both a process of planned mentoring around a structured programme and a relationship where more 'natural' mentoring occurs (Kwam and Lopez-Real 2005). Judgemental mentoring can compromise the relationship with the ECT and potentially hinder

development of reflective practice or impact the ECT's emotional well-being (Iglehart 2022). ECTs appreciate mentors who they can talk to about the challenges they face (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022) but the need to talk openly about such challenges may be perceived as a weakness by some ECTs (Hobson and McIntyre 2013). Although the distinction between mentor and induction tutor should remove the mentor from the assessment of the induction period, the two roles are inextricably linked as the mentor will be the on-going form of support throughout, therefore power dynamics come into play within the mentor/ ECT relationship, further highlighting the complexities of this role.

ECTs will bring their own strengths which can be used as foundations for future learning in the workplace into the employing context (Henderson and Noble 2015). The most effective mentors are those who draw upon these strengths whilst also working through the challenges within the profession (Van Nuland, Whalen and Majocha 2020). However, induction tutors and mentors have so far raised concerns about how the ECF (DfE 2019) will provide both support and challenge for ECTs who come from a range of backgrounds with different levels of experience, highlighting the challenges that come with the pre-determined sequencing of the programme versus ECTs' 'in the moment' needs (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022). Adaptations of the programme need to consider the individual needs of ECTs, their priorities, ITE outcomes and their stage of progression (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022). This is a significant ask of mentors and again highlights how a one-size fits all approach cannot address the individual needs of an ECT. It also raises questions about workload for mentors, particularly for those with multiple roles in school as is often the case in smaller settings; a shift in government focus is needed if small schools are not to be disadvantaged (Ovenden-Hope and Luke 2021).

Although clearer guidance and more robust training is now provided through the ECF (DfE 2019), this does not address all aspects of the mentoring role and the challenges of translating induction guidance to be specific to the ECT and the employing context. Despite the requirement for both a mentor and induction tutor, there is a growing understanding that effective mentoring of ECTs should draw on the school as a learning community (Mercieca and McDonald 2021; Daly Hardman and Taylor 2022). This shift would lessen the pressures on mentors and see benefits for ECTs through collaboration with different staff members. The following sections highlight the importance of different roles within the school and wider school network for successful induction.

2.5.3 Leading by example: The role of Head teachers

Much reading suggests that the role of the Head teacher in teacher satisfaction and as such remaining in employment in the school, is significant (Wynn, Carboni and Patall 2007; Engvik and Berit Emstad 2017). One pivotal role of Head teachers is their leadership in creating professional learning

communities which both support and encourage new teachers (Wynn, Carboni and Patall 2007). The approach to ECT induction and support is likely to indicate the type of leadership undertaken in the school and the role of the Head teacher will be emphasised within the reception of new teachers, the overall atmosphere within the school and the well-being of the staff (Aspfors and Bondas 2013). Part of their role is to create an environment within which all staff see the value of professional development and how priorities and professional learning within the school in turn supports individual development. They should also model curiosity, thus giving the green light to ECTs to explore different approaches (Crisp and Cordingley 2022).

Support for ECTs needs to be integrated with wider systems and accountability across a school's network to avoid duplication and challenges in prioritising the focus and use of time (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022: 102). It is therefore crucial that school leaders model and show openness to CPD, ensuring a focus on teacher development and well-being. This is an area which the ECF (DfE 2019) has the potential to make a difference as the pilot of the framework showed leaders to be 'actively engaged' (Tyreman 2022: 74) and saw them creating time and learning cultures conducive to the new framework (DfE 2016 cited in Tyreman 2022). This 'enabling' work from leaders had a positive impact on ECTs and mentors, ensuring that they had the time needed to engage in the programme and saw opportunities to share content more widely in the school. Support for ECTs was enhanced when frequent discussions took place between the ECT, mentor and senior leaders (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022). In summary, Head teachers can play a vital role in effective ECT induction both through leading by example and through the creation of a school environment that embraces CPD.

2.5.4 Sharing the load: Other colleagues/ ECTs

The support of colleagues in the induction period is seen as pivotal in keeping ECTs in the profession (Thomas et al 2021). ECTs recognise that in order to move beyond 'survival', they need to develop effective relationships for professional learning, notably from more experienced colleagues (Henderson and Noble 2015). Close colleagues can help them through moments of self-doubt and counterbalance some of the pressures of working in a challenging climate (Anderson and Olsen 2006). Collaborating with colleagues both within the employing school and across different schools, provides a means for staying inspired and supported and a mechanism for sharing ideas (Anderson and Olsen 2006; Ovenden-Hope et al 2018). Returning to earlier discussions of the need for making judgements as a teacher, 'practical wisdom' comes with the experience of exercising such judgements (Biesta 2012: 45), further highlighting the importance of learning from more experienced colleagues.

It is well-documented that ECTs benefit from opportunities to network with other ECTs from different schools. This includes meetings and discussions with peers, giving them opportunities to share advice

and finding reassurance in the realisation that others were in the same situation (Killeavy and Murphy 2006). 'Distributed cognition' using internal and external networks to share and experiences and collaborate can enhance teacher development (Putnam and Burko 2000, cited in Killeavy and Moloney 2010).

Different staff members play a key role within effective ECT induction. Given the different aspects that each bring to ensuring a successful transition into employment, ECT induction should be seen as a whole school undertaking, with each member of staff playing a part in this. As such, discussion will now turn to Wenger's (1998) CoP as a key potential vehicle for providing support.

2.5.5 Communities of Practice as an approach to induction

The importance of socialisation into the teaching profession and into a specific school environment should not be underestimated. The ECT will need time to develop an understanding of the working environment of their employing school. Engvik and Berit Emstad (2017: 472) describe a 'clear relationship between discourse and practice, in that identity is related to the participant circles the individual joins'. Developing understanding of their own place, or own circle, within this community is key, alongside understanding how to negotiate and build relationships within different circles. It is here that the notion of CoP (Wenger 1998) comes into play.

The three elements that constitute a CoP as described by Wenger (1998) – *mutual* engagement, *joint* enterprise and the development of a *shared* repertoire of common discursive resources – could not be effectively achieved without collaborative input and support. CoP are groups of people who share common concerns, problems or passion for a topic and 'who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis' (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder 2002: 4). Each person belongs to multiple CoP; they are an integral part of everyday lives and can be extremely complex (Wenger 1998; Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015).

The sharing of ideas, routines and practices

Wenger (1998) discusses daily activities at work, local routines, and a shared understanding of how individuals should behave, as practices within CoP. CoP may also be used as a way of seeking experience, problem solving, requesting information or identifying gaps in competence (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger Trayner 2015a), all useful mechanisms for ECTs. New teachers are introduced into CoP to become proficient at their own practice (Wenger 1998). They can retain knowledge in 'living ways' considering local circumstances (Wenger 1998a) and thus gain an understanding of policy implementation at school level.

CoP are strikingly different from the top-down, didactic transfer of information (McDonald and Mercieca 2021) that is associated with national policy. It is intended that within a CoP, members share ideas and reflections and then take these ideas into practice before returning to the community for feedback and support, thus forming a 'loop' (McDonald and Mercieca 2021). Indeed, the notion of CoP stems from Lave and Wenger's (1991) work around situated learning whereby people learn through their working environment and relationships with those around them. The way in which CoP 'preserve the tacit aspects of knowledge that formal systems cannot capture' (Wenger 1998a) further emphasises how putting into place such practices can address some of the 'gaps' that central policy does not address. Outside constraints can influence what is important within a community but members will develop practices that are their own responses to these external influences (Wenger 1998a). 'Even when a community's actions conform to an external mandate, it is the community—not the mandate—that produces the practice' (Wenger 1998a). In this sense, CoP will aid ECTs in breaking down policy requirements into more tangible practices and outcomes relevant to their employing context.

Understanding the power dynamics at play

Beginning teachers will experience different types of professional cultures within their first years of teaching. Schools are 'complex, dynamic environments composed of people, resources and policies in constant interaction with each other'; these factors each link to teacher development (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022: 100). Teacher socialisation is not simply about 'sliding into an existing context' but is an 'interpretative and interactive process' between the ECT and the employing school (Kelchtermans and Ballet 2002: 106). Schools where colleagues work collaboratively discuss challenges and share experiences are likely to be environments where novice teachers feel they are treated as equals and as such rely less on formalised guidance or support (Engvik and Berit Emstad 2017). For ECTs, gaining an understanding of how the self develops in context, is crucial on the journey to self-actualisation as a teacher (Henderson and Noble 2015). The use of CoP will enable ECTs to gain a greater understanding of the school ethos and culture and help them to feel a part of this. CoP themselves may play a large role in the ethos of the school. Each school can be placed on a continuum between being a 'restrictive' or 'expansive learning environment' (Haggarty and Postlethwaite 2012: 244). An expansive learning environment is defined as 'one that presents wide-ranging and diverse opportunities to learn, in a culture that values and supports learning', this therefore increases the affordances for learning at work and subsequently the chances that individuals will want to learn from those affordances (Haggarty and Postlethwaite 2012: 244). School culture has implications for both teacher development and teacher effectiveness (Papay and Kraft 2017 cited in Tyreman 2022). CPD is one factor here but also the nature of observations, collection of data and behaviour management

approaches all attribute to the overall level of trust and respect and working relationships between colleagues (Tyreman 2022). Murphy (2022) highlights that it is the discretionary power of teachers and an assumption that teachers are capable of making judgements that helps schools to run effectively. This requires a level of trust, however, levels of trust within the profession are declining, as is evident in the level of regulatory scrutiny that takes place in schools. Establishing a culture which supports and retains teachers, as opposed to one that constrains, is complex, once again highlighting the important role of the Head teacher.

'Discourses of truth' will impact the dynamics of a community (Foucault 1979). The way in which a CoP can shape its field of practice is limited by the politics which govern the profession, thus emphasising the relevance of this when considering the neoliberal back-drop within education. Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015:15) give the example of how teachers must impart 'the right curriculum' and praise or award those 'who get it'. Communities may react to this level of politics in varying ways, sometimes complying, sometimes disregarding it as irrelevant to their own practice, or even creating a façade of compliance whilst continuing to do things their own way (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015). It is here that power dynamics come into play and where those new to a profession will undertake the process of understanding the extent to which aspects of their identity formed elsewhere can be transferred or expressed within the community which they are working in (Fenton-O'Creevy, Dimitriadis and Scobie 2015). This will be a beneficial process for ECTs who may not demonstrate an explicit understanding of central or school-level policies which govern aspects of their practice.

In recent years there has been significant critique of Wenger's work with claims that it oversimplifies examples of such communities and has not sufficiently developed theory surrounding language, discourse and power, all of which are prominent in Wenger's ideas but not explored in terms of theorisation (Barton and Tusting 2005). Novices such as ECTs are likely to participate at a periphery to the more 'expert' within the community and work their way to becoming a full and legitimate participant (Lave and Wenger 1991). Piaget's notions of assimilation and accommodation, although usually related to child development theory (Pritchard 2018) seem pertinent here. Some CoP may be assimilative where ECTs are expected to fit in, absorb and integrate into the community. Others, however, may be more 'accommodatory', allowing themselves to be reshaped by new members by embracing new knowledge and ideas which ECTs bring to their employing contexts from their training and prior experiences. New members may also experience exclusion or conflict, aspects which are overlooked by Wenger (Harris and Shelwell 2005). Harris and Shelwell's (2005) study explored the idea of legitimacy of participants in an adult education centre and how this may be focused upon by

other members of the community. Questions about feelings of legitimacy may ring true amongst some ECTs when challenged by more experienced colleagues who may not see the relevance of some of the new ideas the ECTs bring to the school. Alternatively, it may be the ECTs who view themselves in this light if they do not have the strong sense of identity or self-efficacy. ECTs will have new ideas, knowledge and skills that they bring to an employing school. However, CoP are usually understood as being 'reproductive in nature' through the introduction of newcomers into the community who acquire knowledge and skills from those more experienced members, with new members gradually moving from being 'peripheral' participants to core members (Eraut 2002, cited in Martin 2005: 143). This perspective does not explain how communities transform themselves as Wenger focuses on commonalities, rather than diversity of participants (Eraut 2002, cited in Martin 2005). Suggestions are made as to how communities may be generated through collaboration rather than by acquiring a new member into an existing community (Barton and Tusting 2005). Therefore, it should not be underestimated how much influence an ECT could have on a school's CoP. Exploring Foucault's work on power dynamics within this study, and identifying where these may be present within schools, will serve to address ways in which CoP can be conducive to generating new knowledge rather than being reproductive. This will be beneficial for both ECTs and employing schools through the sharing of new ideas.

Addressing professional and personal needs

Effective teacher induction must consider both personal and professional needs (Bickmore, Gonzales and Roberts 2021). CoP may span across different schools and give opportunities for ECTs to collaborate with other ECTs, a benefit earlier highlighted. 'Connection, engagement, status and legitimacy are all part of what makes someone a trustworthy practitioner' (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015: 14). It is evident that ECTs may feel they fulfil these roles within a community of other ECTs, whereas they may feel lacking in legitimacy and status within a community of more experienced colleagues. The use of CoP may also be beneficial for ECTs to gain an understanding of different employing contexts. For example, an ECT working in a small village school that employs only two or three teachers, may have a vastly different experience to an ECT in a large urban school with multiple classes within each age phase. Teachers in small schools have more limited opportunities to engage with professional development (Ovenden Hope and Passy 2019); in a larger setting, the ECT will have opportunity to cultivate CoP amongst a greater range of 'experts'. Whereas once the geographical location of ECTs was a hindering factor in forming networks, advancements in technology mean that this is no longer the case. 'The web has enabled people to interact in new ways across time and space and form new breeds of distributed yet interactive communities of practice' (Wenger 2005, cited in Breen 2015: 20). This was evident at the time of the recent global COVID-19 pandemic when

the population was heavily reliant on technology. The delivery model of the ECF (DfE 2019) sees a combination of regional training, local group sessions, webinars and self-study materials. Training sessions are designed for ECTs to meet with their peers and work collaboratively; with smaller local sessions designed to build local networks (Platt 2022) an aspect which is likely to be highly beneficial for ECTs who may otherwise feel isolated.

The nurturance and support given to one another within a CoP is of at least equal importance as the content of conversations that take place (Stern 2008). Learning to care is paramount to being part of a CoP (Liedtka 1999; Klein et al 2008) as a core part of this involves, 'respecting and enhancing the other's autonomy' (Liedtka 1999: 12). Developing autonomy and teacher judgement are areas that have already been addressed as being crucial for ECTs who are entering a profession governed by policy. The joint enterprise aspect of the community is key here as there will be a shared caring for ideas and learning; the common domain within a CoP is that it provides a focus that all members care about; a commonality of purpose (Liedtka 1999; McDonald and Mercieca 2021) and will therefore aid ECTs in navigating policy implementation and balancing this with their own judgements. Noddings' (1998) four practices necessary to develop an ethic of care in a community (modelling, dialogue, practice and confirmation) are likely to be seen across CoP within schools (Klein et al 2008) highlighting how this approach can be beneficial in providing care for ECTs.

Despite this focus on care, CoP may not always meet specific personal needs, however, personal interactions in the form of one-to-one mentoring may address this gap (Bickmore, Gonzales and Roberts 2021). This highlights how a combination of CoP and mentoring as outlined in the ECF (DfE 2019) may meet these requirements, although this would require a greater understanding of the relational role of the mentor. To address this, mentors may benefit from their own CoP where they can work with other mentors to develop a common language, understanding of practice and skills and how to solve issues (Moir and Hanson 2008).

Returning to discussions around teacher motivation, Self Determination Theory (SDT) considers three innate psychological needs: competence, autonomy and relatedness (Deci and Ryan 1985). SDT also considers social environments that can have a positive impact on these needs. CoP can have a positive influence on SDT: considering the ways in which the sharing of ideas, routines and practices may impact on levels of competence; understanding the power dynamics at play and the politics which govern the profession may allow for a greater understanding of where autonomy can be exercised; and feeling that professional and personal needs are addressed through collaboration with others will add to a sense of relatedness.

In summary, CoP can address two elements which are pivotal to ECTs having a positive start to their careers and remaining in the profession: understanding the school's culture and gaining sufficient support (Hargreaves and Fullen 2012). ECTs begin their roles with different levels of experience, in different contexts, having completed different training programmes. Complexities are heightened when faced with a new employing context where there will be variation in policies, procedures and ethos. Intellectual and emotional support can help to address some of these variables and enable ECTs to make sense of policy requirements at school level. Support takes many forms but the use of CoP alongside an increased understanding of how induction should be a joint venture, involving different staff members across the school, is key. This would address some of the pressures felt by mentors when considering the requirements of the ECF (DfE 2019). CoP can also provide a home for identities, aiding members in understanding what is important to them. Understanding our identity is a 'crucial aspect of learning' within organisations (Wenger 1998a). The final part of this chapter will move onto address professional identity in greater detail.

2.6 The complexities, pressures and understanding of the development of professional identity

The development of professional identity can be viewed as the process of integrating personal knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, norms and values, with professional demands from teacher education institutes and schools, including broadly accepted values and standards about teaching (Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop 2004). Breaking this down, personal identity is formed through our development in each stage of life and through individual and social influences outside of the school (Pollard et al 2014). It is therefore individual to each teacher. Professional identity is also largely shaped within the professional context of schools with each school having its own values and ethos. Professional identity will therefore vary by place of employment as 'identity is not just a personal attribute but is negotiated anew in each community we participate in' (Fenton, O'Creevy, Dimitriadis and Scobie 2015:33). How personal identities relate to the values and cultural context of the school is a key issue (Pollard et al 2014). Adding to this complexity are the 'professional demands' (Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop 2004) of the school including policies and expectations. These 'demands', as discussed earlier in this chapter, are areas within which schools and teachers have little control and are therefore likely to play a large role in ECTs' identity development.

In summary, there are multiple, mutually informing and overlapping layers when considering identity: the policy context, the professional context and personal context. Having already addressed the policy and professional context, the next section will focus further on the personal context and how the three areas are integrated to form a teacher's identity. The section will begin by addressing identity

'struggles' focussing on policy context and professional context and will then move onto look at Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation as an alternative framework for considering identity.

2.6.1 ECT identity struggles: The dichotomy between the personal and the pre-determined

An ECT's sense of identity is likely to be challenged greatly during their early days in the profession. It can be argued that induction into a new profession involves taking on a new identity (Henderson and Noble 2015). The transition from trainee to ECT is a struggle for many and one that is often invisible to mentors and colleagues (Pillen, Beijaard and den Brok 2013). Furthermore, this struggle could either arise from, or cause tensions in, identity development. In the early days, ECTs will internally often identify more with being a student however, outwardly they must act as 'real' teachers (Furlong and Maynard 1995). This transition can be described as 'dramatic and traumatic' (Haggarty and Postlethwaite 2012: 244). There is also the potential for significant tensions for ECTs between wanting to be seen as a 'proper' teacher and at the same time needing support (Haggarty and Postlethwaite 2012). In addition, in order to be competent in the profession and gain a true sense of identity, teachers need to find a balance between what they believe to be the 'ideal' teacher, other people's views of what this entails, and the realities of teaching itself (Clarke, Michell and Ellis 2017). Dashtipour (2012) discusses Self Categorisation Theory whereby the values of a group are prototypes and people represent the group in terms of these prototypes. A person's prototypicality is the extent to which he or she is perceived as being representative of the stereotypical attributes of the group. ECTs may feel pressure to fit this prototypicality. Therefore, strength of identity may impact on the CoP which the ECT is entering into but in turn, the CoP may help, or indeed hinder, in moulding identity. Trainee teachers should be encouraged and supported to build a professional identity from the outset, thus overcoming some of these potential challenges before induction (Henderson and Noble 2015).

Arguably, teaching should not be reduced to a set of pre-determined outcomes, however, with a statutory framework in place for ECTs, alongside many other mandatory policies and processes at school level, it is likely to be difficult for ECTs to escape these elements and focus on the personal aspects that they bring to their teacher identity. There is a distinct contrast between a view of identity being central to teachers and an emphasis on skills, methods and techniques (Clarke 2009). Learning to teach should be viewed as much broader than simply acquiring the skills and knowledge but should also be considered as 'developing a sense of oneself as a teacher' (Mayer 1999, cited in Clarke 2009: 187). Political agendas and teacher accountability in schools are becoming increasingly dominant

(Phelan and Sumsion 2008; Taubman 2009; Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015; Clarke and Phelan 2017). Numbers are becoming increasingly important in the world of education and teachers are failing to stand up to the ever-increasing practices of standards and accountability (Taubman 2009; Ball 2021). As a result of this 'shift', creative and intellectual endeavour is being lost (Taubman 2009) and consequently a feeling of own identity within the profession. There is a correlation sense of agency and sense of identity (Eteläpelto, Vähäsantanen and Hökkä 2015). With heightened accountability measures and less autonomy over practice, a sense of identity is likely to be absent for many. Bunn, Langer and Fellows (2023: 2) argue that student agency has also become a target of neoliberal ideals with knowledge being 'operationalised, nurtured and developed by mechanisms of power'. The same can also be said of ECTs. Given their perceived vulnerability during this 'traumatic' time, they may be more susceptible to this, thus raising the question as to how they can stay loyal to their own professional identity and keep a sense of agency, whilst also becoming a seamless part of the school staff team. This 'performative self-contradiction', sees ECTs struggling to retain their own professional identity whilst performing actions that are opposed to it (Zacka 2017, cited in Murphy 2022: 10). In many respects, ECTs are likely to demonstrate subservient or subsistence agency (Bunn Langer and Fellows 2022) whereby they respond to, or are passive towards, the demands of policy. However, it is subliminal and sublime agency, that have the greatest potential for agentic development, as it is here that opposition to the networks of power at work may be shown and change may be considered (Bunn, Langer and Fellows 2022).

The ECF (DfE 2019: 4) states that, 'during induction, it is essential that early career teachers are able to develop the knowledge, practices and working habits that set them up for a fulfilling and successful career in teaching'. It is therefore likely that identity will be developed around the practices and working habits of the employing school. In this sense, the ECF (DfE 2019) is driving both the policy context and the professional context as enactment of the framework is encouraging identity to be formed around the professional context. Furthermore, it can be argued that a teacher's sense of identity will be created as a result of feedback from others in the profession (Fraser 2018) notably their mentor or colleagues. The importance of feedback is highlighted within the ECF (DfE 2019: 24), outlining that ECTs should develop as professionals by, 'seeking challenge, feedback and critique from mentors and other colleagues'. Consequently, even those leaving ITE with a strong sense of professional identity are likely to be shaped or moulded by the employing school. ECTs in schools with robust support systems, and where there is a synergy between their own educational philosophy and that of the employing school, are more likely to feel well-prepared for their roles (Mayer 2021). One role of the ITE provider should therefore be to highlight to trainees the importance of finding a school which echoes their own values. The values of a teacher should be acknowledged by the employing

school and the ways in which these may enhance the school climate should be considered (Hadar and Benish-Weisman 2019), however, the extent to which this takes place is questionable as ECTs are often concerned about challenging set ways of working (Day 2002).

'No teacher identity is ever single or without contradictions' (Britzman 2003: 223); and whilst some ECTs may be aware of the ideological contradictions within their place of work and make compromises as a result of them (Moore 2004), others may not bow to them in the same way. Moore (2004: 131) describes these differences as 'principled' and 'contingent' pragmatism; the former being a more 'comfortable' solution of the teacher adopting new practices or changes to their practice more deliberately and are satisfied in justifying them, whereas the latter are more likely to adopt pragmatism as a coping mechanism. Performativity can lead to a growing loss of ontological security for teachers, both a loss of sense of meaning in what they do and what is important within the role (Ball 2013). When pragmatism takes an ideological stance, it can lead to a de-politicising agenda where teachers are less likely to be resistant to government defined education policy, including those that they themselves may be politically opposed to (Moore 2004). Much of the political agenda will be recognised by teachers as being ideological, however when this pertains to elements of practice in the classroom that must be implemented, teachers have little choice and as such adopt a form of 'reluctant compliance' (Moore and Clarke 2016).

2.6.2 Foucault's four axes of ethical self-formation

It is evident that the development of professional identity is crucial for beginning teachers, however, this is not a straightforward process; ECTs will face many barriers and struggles. Identity is an on-going process and ECTs will face many pressures to shape their identity in certain ways. This section will focus on Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation and how this can be used as an analytical grid to shed further light on this struggle. It will begin with discussion of Foucault's broader work on genealogy and will then turn to look at how his work has been adapted to focus more specifically on the development of teacher identity.

Considering Foucault's (1983) broader work on genealogy, this is linked to the history of morals and the need to understand where the history of morals is concerned and the moral code. From this, Foucault (1983) discussed 'acts' as the behaviours of people in relation to any moral code imposed on them and the continuum of whether this was accepted, forbidden or had positive or negative connotations. The other side of this considered the relationship to oneself – what Foucault called 'ethics'. This determined how the individual constitutes oneself as a moral subject of his own actions; it is here that the four axes of ethical self-formation were devised to explore this further. These axes

are: ethical substance, the mode of subjection, the self-practices – or self-forming activities, and the telos of ethics.

Foucault's conception of ethics relates to self-change or self-transformation with this being a reflexive process whereby we are both the object of work but also capable as a subject of reworking that object (Koopman 2013). As such, forms of individuality, identity and ethics are intertwined in the sense that identity is something which is created or claimed rather than pre-given (O'Leary 2002). Identity does not exist as an object but 'in the constant work of negotiating the self' (Wenger 1998: 151). As already stated, teacher identity is crucial element to address, particularly for ECTs, but the process of and influences on this are not considered in detail. Foucault's ethics have a clear direction away from excessive constraint, as can be seen within policy enactment at different levels, and towards an opening up of spaces of freedom (O'Leary 2002) therefore considering the other aspects such as the personal context which ECTs bring to teaching.

Returning to earlier discussions of ECTs not being a 'finished product' at the end of their initial training with new learning will take place 'on the job', Foucault's (1983) four axes are pertinent here. In the same way that ECTs are likely to experience many challenges including 'praxis shock' (Kelchtermans and Ballet 2002) (see section 2.3), Foucault argues that our contemporary social reality is continually prone to shocks and tremors. Thus, we must move away from the idea that a total programme is required in order to bring about any transformation (O'Leary 2002) but understand that it will come more naturally through our experiences. Foucault states that our conception comes more from our practices than our political or philosophical views (May 2006). Contrasting previous discussions of the need for ECTs to conform to accountability measures through mechanisms fed down from the government, Foucault focuses on ethics as a form of freedom with self-transformative activity forming a basis for this (Koopman 2013). In this sense, Foucault's ethics can be viewed as the task of, 'giving form to one's liberty, of moulding and giving style to one's life and relation with others' (O'Leary 2002: 170).

2.6.3 Using the four axes as an analytical framework to explore teacher identity

Clarke (2009) translated Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation into ways of exploring teacher identity through a 'diagram for doing identity work'. Foucault's four axes of the substance of ethics, the authority sources of ethics, the self-practices, and the telos of ethics (O'Leary 2002; May 2006), become the substance of teacher identity, the authority sources of teacher identity, the self-practices of teacher identity and the endpoint of teacher identity (Clarke 2009). The remit of Clarke's (2009) work is to gain an understanding of how identities are shaped in particular ways and to open up to different ways of thinking about aspects which comprise teacher identity. He also argues that

as a result, teachers may be able to conduct a 'historical ontology of ourselves' (Foucault 1984: 47) whereby through gaining an understanding of how their identity has been shaped, they become aware of other possibilities outside of this. This can be perceived as either daunting or liberating as it means letting go of what may be a stable or unchanging self. This will prove a useful tool for teachers in recognising that identities should not be pre-determined but need to be continually refashioned within different contexts and through encounters with others (Clarke 2009) as such, identity is not a label but is an on-going concept which needs to be put to work. Clarke's (2009) framework has since by used by others in the field, including Gu (2011) whose study investigated the construction of identity amongst pre-service teachers in Hong Kong. The use of each of the four axes as an analytical grid to further explore teacher identity will now be discussed.

The first axis, originally the ethical substance (Foucault 1983), or the 'prime material' of morale conduct (May 2006), addresses what part of oneself relates to teaching, thus exploring other aspects of identity and their relationship to the profession, this may be emotional or intellectual. This axis is not about what we constitute as right or wrong but how we construct this self; a crucial aspect of teacher identity is to be recognised as a teacher by the pupils (Clarke 2009). Character, passion for teaching, communication skills and subject knowledge may be considered here (Gu 2011). It is within this axis that the caring nature of the teaching may be considered through discussions of teachers' understandings of the role and what they feel they bring to it.

The second axis, Foucault's mode of subjection, looks at the way in which people are incited to recognise their moral obligation (Foucault 1983). When looking at teacher identity, the focus becomes the sources of discursive authority teachers recognise, drawing upon issues of why teachers develop certain beliefs, behaviours and attitudes. Clarke's (2009) work drew upon assumed values and actions of teachers, alluding to practices determined by policy even if not explicitly addressed. The use of this axis promotes further discussion and insight into teachers' understandings of what governs their practice, highlighting power dynamics at play. Returning to Clarke's point above, there may be aspects of policy translation that ECTs do not recognise explicitly as policy implementation.

Foucault came to increasingly value philosophical practice as a technique capable of contributing to self-transformation (O'Leary 2002). This is work 'that one performs on oneself, not only in order to bring one's conduct into compliance with a given rule but to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one's behaviour' (May 2006: 108), essentially the practices adopted to address our ethical substance (Foucault 1983). This is considered in the third axis, in what Clarke (2009) describes as the techniques and practices that shape one's teaching self. This may include seeking guidance from others or reflecting on incidents within practice (Gu 2011).

The final axis looks at the telos or endpoint – the 'kind of being to which we aspire when we behave in a moral way' (Foucault 1983: 354). When considering teacher identity, the teaching self, the ultimate goal or purpose of being a teacher must be explored. Education is always framed by a sense of purpose – or telos; teachers make judgements about what is desirable within their practice (Biesta 2012), thus being instrumental within their identity development. The teacher plays a key role in decided what is educationally desirable within each concrete situation (Biesta 2012). These judgements are not something that can be dealt with through policy directives unless the teacher is to be seen as an 'unresponsive robot' within such situations (Biesta 2012: 40). This further highlights the need for a relational approach to the development of teacher identity. It is likely that a teacher's telos will take the form of the teacher 'making a difference' (Clarke 2009). 'The main reasons people choose teaching as a career are the potential to make a difference, a desire to work with children… and – importantly – a sense that they will be good at it' (Menzies et al 2014, cited in Scutt 2020: 1). Reasons may be varied, from discussion of making a difference to their pupils' lives to financial security (Gu 2011). Foucault's telos was intended as a form of freedom, in that everything is possible (O'Leary 2002). Reflection will play a key role when considering this axis.

As will be discussed further in the next chapter, using the four axes will allow for ECTs to understand that identities should not be pre-determined and will be renegotiated within different contexts, being transformed by encounters with others and through exploring different ideas (Clarke 2009). Considering this against the backdrop of accountability and performance-driven policies and interpretations of this at school level is crucial for ECTs so they gain a greater understanding and critical awareness of some of the possible constraints within their identity development. This is not to say that they must always constrain us but that they need to be acknowledged in order to understand our identity. The task of transforming ourselves has two parts; firstly, the analysis of our historically imposed limits or 'critical ontology of ourselves' (Foucault 1984: 47). Secondly, the imaginative, creative attempt to surpass those limits which we judge to be no longer necessary (O'Leary 2002: 161). ECTs can achieve this by considering the influences that have shaped their teaching selves and recognising this as an on-going self-transformation. Again, reflection is key here but not just in terms of making sense of existing experiences but for reimagining future ones (Henderson and Noble 2015). Discussion will now turn to the importance of reflection within the teaching profession and within identity formation as highlighted throughout the exploration of the four axes.

2.6.4 The importance of being a reflective or reflexive practitioner

In the same way that ECTs are sold the narrative of 'surviving' their induction, they are also encouraged to become 'reflective' in their practice. The ECF (DfE 2019: 24) outlines that ECTs should learn that, 'reflective practice, supported by feedback from and observation of experienced colleagues, professional debate, and learning from educational research, is also likely to support improvement'. There is clearly an expectation that ECTs will reflect on practice, but they are not given the specific tools to do so (Henderson and Noble 2015). Formal support mechanisms across Canada's provinces include structured opportunities for reflection (Kelly, Sim and Ireland 2018) suggesting that reflection is given a greater focus than within induction guidance in England. The word 'reflection' may provoke different understandings and that there are several reasons why we may reflect: to look at something in more detail; to imply a purpose, or unconsciously (a form of intuition) (Moon 2008). The difference between 'reflection in action' and 'reflection on action' (Schon 1991) is pertinent here; the former is intuitive and often used as a coping mechanism when uncertain situations arise; situations that ECTs are highly likely to find themselves in. Arguably all these reasons for, and methods of, reflection are applicable in teaching, however, it is the effectiveness of the reflection that is more questionable.

ECTs need to understand the difference between reflection and reflexion and be able to practise both in order to fully benefit from this tool. Reflection is a form of self-evaluation, through which teachers focus on their own classroom practices alongside demonstrating a thorough understanding of educational theory, in order to address 'how' and 'why' questions (Moore 2004). Taking Moore's description of this process into consideration, the process of reflection seems very reliant upon the teacher possessing these tools and implementing a depth of criticality into their reflections. If this is not the case, this may result in a 'self-confirming cycle' based around their assumptions (Brookfield 2011). Reflection sits 'at the heart of ongoing professional development' as seen in the 'professional behaviour' section of the ECF' (Craster and Moore 2022: 141). However, the description of reflection within the ECF (DfE 2019: 24), stating that ECTs need to reflect on progress, identify strengths and weaknesses and points for improvement, poses the danger of assuming that ECTs have a deep understanding of reflection. Therefore, it is important to consider reflexivity in order to build upon and, as such, deepen reflection. In simple terms, reflexivity can be thought of as the 'ability to reflect on the way in which one has reflected' (Moore 2004: 148).

One key difference between reflectivity and reflexivity is that the critical stance needed to view oneself reflexively should be of a challenging, rather than confirmatory nature, and requires that we understand ourselves as having multiple rather than singular identities. As such, we need to find a lens which allows us to see a differently highlighted picture of ourselves (Brookfield 2011). Moore

(2004:147) echoes this, describing 'reflex' as the process by which something is 'illuminated by light from another part of the same picture'. Within this, it is also crucial to understand our own individuality in terms of personal attributes and the settings within which we work and have trained to work. It is here where it becomes apparent that the use of Foucault's four axes as an analytical grid would be valuable in gaining further understanding of the complexities of identity formation. Taking each of Foucault's (1983) axes will allow for different lenses to be focussed upon, for the ECTs to consider the part of themselves that they bring to the profession whilst also considering the sources of authority, the practices they have adopted and their end goal.

It is important to acknowledge that a collaborative approach to reflecting on practice, through engagement with multiple perspectives, is key to expanding repertoires of knowledge, experiences and practices. This can then lead to new ways of being, knowing and doing (Henderson and Noble 2015) and as such can impact upon identity development. Returning to discussions of CoP (Wenger 1998), one benefit of this approach is the support ECTs are given to reflect on, discuss, and make connections to their practice (Bickmore, Gonzales and Roberts 2021; McDonald and Mercieca 2021). The use of colleagues to act as critical friends is a tool often offered to ECTs, through lesson observations, formal meetings with mentors, or informal discussions with other members of staff. On the surface these may seem like equally useful means by which to reflect, however, it must be considered that those who we seek out often share the same assumptions as ourselves, and thus serve as 'mirrors', resulting in our practices simply being reaffirmed (Brookfield 2011). Moore (2004: 143) describes the most effective support as 'navigation' (helping to develop the skills needed to be successful through uncertain times) as opposed to 'control' (the imitation of conformity). Therefore, the element of criticality that is seen as crucial within reflexivity, also needs to be present in the support offered by others, again, highlighting the importance of effective mentoring and support.

In summary, reflection or reflexivity are essential tools for any teacher to possess. Developing these skills early, within ITE, could have a positive outcome on ECT success and ultimately retention. Equally, this would begin to address the simplistic approach to reflection as is outlined in the ECF (DfE 2019). It is critical to focus on reflective practice when considering the development of teacher identity (Stahl, Sharplin and Kehrwald 2018). 'Personal beliefs gain their power from personal experiences, and because of this subjectiveness, beliefs are seldom open to evaluation or criticism' (Pajares 1992, cited in Stenberg et al 2014: 214), suggesting that reflection on experience is crucial in developing one's own identity as a teacher. There are links to Foucault's 'parrhesia', the Socratic practice of truth-telling here, whereby an essential theme of parrhesia is the care of the self (Davidson 1994), talking openly about one's own ideas without concern of the opinion of the masses or the rhetoric

surrounding the subject. The use of CoP (Wenger 1998) as a collaborative approach to reflection, and Foucault's (1983) four axes as an analytical grid for ECTs to reflect on different aspects that impact identity formation, can act as complementary tools allowing ECTs to consider identity development through different lenses with an analytical and critical approach.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined some of the many complexities that ECTs face as they navigate the technocratic, formulaic nature of education policy against more relational aspects of the teaching role. ECTs cannot avoid compliance with policy at different levels – the national implementation of policy, interpretation of this at school level, and their own enactment of this within their role. However, the caring role of the teacher with an emphasis on care for the children, a role which is not always in-keeping with performativity, needs to be considered and ways within which this can be enacted within the neoliberal back-drop.

The ECF (DfE 2019) demonstrates that the government has begun to reconsider the necessity of an-depth induction programme and is recognising the 'initial' within ITE, however, the ECF (DfE 2019) does not consider the vast differences in employing contexts and levels of experience of ECTs. Mentoring is high on the agenda within the new induction programme, however, the focus on meeting competencies remains, as opposed to the emotional aspects of support that ECTs need. With a greater focus on the use of CoP (Wenger 1998), as opposed to individual roles, this could be further addressed. This would place a greater emphasis on the school as a learning community as opposed to the derivative details of induction and mentoring that focuses on the meeting of competencies.

Against such a policy-driven climate, ECT autonomy and development of individual teacher identity is an on-going challenge. The most effective teachers incorporate reflection, emotions, beliefs and agency into their knowledge, understanding and skills (la Velle and Kendall 2020). These contribute to professional autonomy, an aspect of teaching which is extremely important when faced with the current imposed accountability-focused education policy (la Velle and Kendall 2020). Such neoliberal policy is 'pervasive' and opting out is 'at least difficult if not impossible' (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015: 148). Stakes are particularly high for ECTs with constant monitoring and surveillance systems, meaning that there is little option but to comply with policies and procedures that can in many ways hinder identity development. Using Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation as a framework for exploring teacher identity can aid ECTs in understanding ways in which their identity develops, the limitations but also the possibilities.

The next chapter will outline the research design of this study. This will be addressed through the lens of four analytic strata: epistemologies; theories; approaches and strategies (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005) and will further address how the theories outlined in this chapter are grounded in a social constructionist epistemological stance. The five participants within the study will also be introduced before the findings are addressed in the subsequent chapters. The literature review has argued that there are multiple layers that need to be considered when addressing how ECTs navigate and manage their own professional identity. These layers will inform the structure of the later analysis chapters. The first of these will focus on macro level influences (national policy), followed by meso level (school level implementation of policy) and then micro level (individual ECT's understanding and enactment of policy).

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1 Introduction

Framed within a constructionist epistemology, this small-scale case study focuses on the experiences of five ECTs during their first two years of Primary teaching. Semi-structured interviews were the main forms of data collection, giving a deep insight into their experiences. Four analytic strata: epistemologies; theories; approaches and strategies (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005), will be used to structure this chapter, followed by discussion of ethical and justificatory considerations. The final section will introduce the five participants within the study.

3.2 Epistemologies

Epistemologies are concerned with knowledge and how people come to have knowledge (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005). The voice of the ECT is of notable importance with this research, therefore fitting with a social constructionist epistemology, whereby the objective of the research is to understand 'a phenomenon as it is seen and interpreted by the participants themselves' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018: 34), whilst recognising that the meaning of reality is likely to be constructed differently dependent upon the positioning of each person involved (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005). Constructionism emphasises the characteristics of social participation, relationships, the setting of activity and historical change (Packer and Goicoechea 2000). It 'has led to a shift in thinking about the constructed nature of knowledge... suggesting critical reflections of "truths" as individuals construct shared experiences of them' (Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013: 62). In terms of education policy, constructionism plays a key role in challenging taken-for-granted assumptions around concepts such as globalisation and neoliberalism and categorisations of peoples, places and things (Hyde 2020). These aspects are all imperative within this research as the impact of relationships, context and the current neoliberal climate on ECT induction will be considered.

The term 'constructionism' is not to confused with 'constructivism', a term more commonly associated with pedagogy and learning whereby 'individuals assign meaning to experiences and ideas'. Constructionism focuses more on research knowledge, taking a pluralist stance suggesting 'critical reflections on "truths" as individuals construct shared experiences of them' (Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013: 62-63). Despite these being two distinct epistemologies, many writers use them interchangeably or in complementary ways (Hyde 2020). Although this research was constructed again a social constructionist epistemology, some links will also be made to constructivism.

Much qualitative research is conducted against such a constructionist back-drop. However, this is a relatively recent movement, as in previous decades an objectivist epistemological framework was

seen as characteristic of a more 'rigorous' approach, with social sciences having to justify interpretative research as being equally as valid (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005: 14). My research considers the complexity of social contexts, how people 'actively and agentically seek out, select and construct their own views, worlds and learning' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018: 23). Many constructionists question whether a true understanding of other people is possible, as many contrasting interpretations can exist in a single context (Hammersley 2013). My research design allowed me to access nuanced, contextualised and often deeply personal findings.

3.3 Theories

Within the social sciences, theories constitute 'abstract sets of assumptions and assertions used to interpret and sometimes explain psychological, social, cultural and historical processes and formations' (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005: 15). Within any research it is important that theories are used to build upon the researcher's engagement with the issue or problem being studied in order to generate further theory. Having considered the epistemological stance of my research, it has become clear for the need to draw on other theories to give a more nuanced perspective on my work. The three main theories that will be drawn upon are Wenger's (1998) CoP, Noddings' (2003) ethics of care, and Foucault's (1983) four axes of ethical self-formation as a framework for exploring teacher identity. The combination of these three theories and engagement with them across the analysis of this study forms an original contribution to knowledge. The next section will discuss how of these theories are grounded in a social constructionist epistemological stance.

3.3.1 Foucault

Throughout the findings, several aspects of Foucault's work will be drawn upon. Foucault's work 'relentlessly challenges what counts as common-sense knowledge about human nature, history and the world, as well as the social implications of such knowledge' (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis 2006: 112), thus fitting with the social constructionist epistemology as outlined in the previous section. Foucault looked at how the social sciences developed in different ways and how they became embedded in specific institutional practices, which in many ways now govern modern life (Hammersley 2013). On-going strands include his work on surveillance and discipline within society, drawing parallels with the aspects of accountability and inspection procedures within schools, power and knowledge and the four axes of ethical self-formation. Many social constructionist formulations 'gloss over' the role of power in knowledge and truth and do not always consider the effects of this power on everyday life (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005: 46). As will be discussed further within the analysis chapters, power operates through what Foucault described as 'technologies of the self' meaning that people are complicit within these power dynamics.

Foucault's work looked at power networks and discourses over different periods and how these generated various forms of practice and 'truth regimes' which defined identities and perceptions (Hammersley 2013), thus highlighting further links to a social constructionist epistemology. Foucault looked at historical discourses operating within systems of meaning, not to uncover truth, but to understand discursive formations by uncovering structures and rules embedded in discourse through which knowledge is constructed and implemented (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis 2006: 113). It is here that Foucault's notion of genealogy becomes pertinent. Koopman (2013) defines genealogy around three areas: the practice of critique; the conditions of possibility and complexity. The consideration of criticality and an awareness of limits are themes woven throughout this research, for example, the limits in how the ECTs come to see themselves as teachers. The conditions of possibility and how these conditions are contingent (Koopman 2013) are also considered within the current policy context. The complexities of the development of teacher identity are explored, acknowledging that there is not a single thread that unlocks this but that there are multiple factors. The research also considers how these themes are historically and socially constructed. The study is therefore informed by a broader genealogical sensibility.

Foucault's four axes of ethical self-formation will be used as a relational model to consider teacher identity. Using this within the study will allow the 'techniques of self', the way in which behaviour is regularised, to be uncovered whilst otherwise these may go unnoticed by the subject who is constituted by them (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis 2006: 115). This will shed further light on the way in which teacher identity is constructed against the current policy context. Foucault's work led to the concept of ethics as 'the practice of the self upon itself' with a clear attention on transformation (Moghtader 2016: 29) as opposed to 'finding' oneself (Ball 2013). Foucault acknowledged that the individual is made subject by and is subject to disciplinary power but that they can choose to engage in processes that may construct themselves differently – as such a form of resistance to power (Ball 2013). Therefore, the self is a direct consequence of power (Callero 2003), and self and identity are constructed within, not outside of discourse (Hall 1996). In this sense, the four axes can be seen as a form of working on oneself – to establish a certain objectivity or self-governance (Ball 2013). The use of Foucault's four axes as an analytical framework will allow a deeper insight into how professional identity is socially constructed within the power dynamics at play and is therefore aligned to the epistemological stance of the research design.

3.3.2 Wenger's Communities of Practice

Wenger's (1998) CoP will be used as a model to understand how ECTs are currently supported and how this could be improved through the possible convergence of different CoP. The concept of CoP

is widely accepted within business and industry, but it has not been extensively explored within education (McDonald and Mercieca 2021). However, given that learning is a core element within both CoP and education, it is a connection that is worthy of further exploration (McDonald and Mercieca 2021).

CoP are indicative of constructionism as the individual participates and forms her or his identity in activity in the world (Hyde 2020). In this sense, the social world and the person are connected. Social constructionism asserts that the world is shaped by the dialogue and discourse we have with one another and that our understanding of the world arises from our own shared construction of the world (Parton 2003; Gunawardena et al 2009). By using CoP, ECTs' understandings of policy and practice will be socially constructed. Furthering this, the three key elements of CoP: mutual engagement, shared repertoire, and joint enterprise— encapsulate the socially constructed nature of knowledge creation and transfer within and across organisations (Iverson and McPhee 2002).

Relationships are a key theme within social constructionism (Parton 2003); language and all other forms of representation gain their meanings from collaboration with others through the ways in which they are used. Therefore, relationships must first exist. These relationships are bound within broader structures of practice and traditions and, to make changes, the challenges of creating new meanings must be addressed (Parton 2003). CoP encompass this description as ECTs work together with their colleagues negotiating a shared understanding of the languages and practices within the school context.

'Identity is not just a personal attribute but is negotiated anew in each community we participate in' (Fenton-O'Creevy, Dimitriadis and Scobie 2015:33). This highlights how attention to identity has been paid within CoP, however, the development of identity is focused on as being socially constructed within the community, not as an individual. This suggests that the community is instrumental in identity development but does not explore other factors that will influence this. CoP can be seen as safe spaces for those transitioning into teaching to develop new identities (Luehmann 2007). Given the high stakes nature of induction as discussed in chapter two, many ECTs may not share this view as they are more likely to try to mould to practices that are viewed as acceptable within the school. They may change their behaviour to conform with others in the community, as such de-emphasising any disconfirmed aspects of their identity (Fenton-O'Creevy, Dimitriadis and Scobie 2015). ECTs may then find themselves in a position of conflict - either disengage in the community or risk further identity disconfirmation (Handley et al 2006; Fenton- O'Creevy, Dimitriadis and Scobie 2015). Clear links can be drawn here to the social constructionist nature of the study; as meaning is constructed differently dependent upon the position or perspective of the school context or individuals that work within the

school, this leads to 'negotiated understandings' which can take different forms and prompt different actions (Parton 2003). It is therefore key that the construction of identity is viewed through multiple lenses to aid ECTs in gaining a greater understanding of their individual self-transformation throughout induction. To address this, Foucault's four axes of ethical self-formation, as discussed within the Literature Review and section 3.3.1, will be used to complement Wenger's work.

3.3.3 Noddings' Ethics of Care

Noddings' (2003) ethics of care will be used as a framework and lens to discuss how a relational approach to each situation is necessary but how this is often opposed to the current neoliberal climate driving education policy. The ethics of care puts forward the view of the 'relational self', 'a moral agent who is embedded in concrete relationships with others and who acquires a moral identity through interactive patterns of behaviour, perceptions and interpretations' (Addelson 1991, cited in Parton 2003). This contrasts with morality being viewed as applying the correct rules to specific cases (Parton 2003) as is often the overarching stance of policy. Such traditional discourses have previously been taken for granted but from a constructionist perspective, these should be challenged by putting the practitioner into the role of 'expert searching out causes' (Parton 2003: 10). Using Noddings' ethics of care will allow for some of the taken for granted assumptions of care, mainly the lack of consideration of the complexities of care, within educational policy to be highlighted. Returning to discussions with the Literature Review of the need for teacher judgement, it is the principle of ethics through which we learn to respond in certain ways in particular situations (Noddings 1998). As such, it will raise discussions about how flexibility and autonomy need to be exercised and how effective care 'requires delimiting the power of scientific rationality in the forms of professionalism and bureaucratic government' (Waerness 1996, cited in Parton 2003: 11).

Care is a social practice, not a disposition (Tronto 1993) and as such, care is co-constructed within the groups within which we operate (Nicholson and Kurucz 2019). An understanding of effective caring is one which is relationally constructed, focussing on the relationship rather than the individual (Nicholson and Kurucz 2019). Linking to Foucault's work on the self as continually in process, morally identity is continually being developed. The construction of moral identities is a social practice, influenced and created within relationships and within specific social and political contexts (Parton 2003). Therefore, an ECTs' moral identity formed through an ethics of care will be influenced by relationships within the school context and by the political back-drop.

Noddings' attention to caring relationships complements Foucault's ethics of how the relationship of the self implies a relationship to the other (Moghtader 2016). They will therefore be used alongside each other to provide different, yet complementary, perspectives on education ethics. Foucault

focused on the self and the transformation of self. Noddings, also focussed on self-understanding and self-examination but through caring, which is embodied within relations with others, thus emphasising the importance of our interdependency on each other (Moghtader 2016). Foucault's emphasis on the understanding of ourselves and becoming the 'other' to ourselves when considering our self-transformation, aids in assisting in understanding of relation to others. As such, Foucault's ethics addresses caring for oneself in education ethics which will then in turn assist in establishing caring relationships (Moghtader 2016).

The ethics of care also illuminated the need to consider sensitive issues that may arise within interviews. I was careful not to be exploitative of participants and to ensure that ethical issues were considered. This will be discussed further within section 3.6.

3.4 Approaches

Approaches are 'systematic yet dynamic social scientific formations' that provide loosely defined structures for designing and implementing research projects (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005:17). The use of this term by Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2005) is purposeful to highlight the 'practice' dimension of engaging in research. Within any given approach, different strategies and techniques will be used, adapted or reworked in order to move the researcher on in their attempts to understand problems of interest to them (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005). A case study approach was used to gain an understanding of the experiences, both common and disparate, of individual ECTs. Case studies can be described as 'about real people, in real situations' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018: 376) which commonly rely upon inductive reasoning and 'illuminate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study' (Willis 2007: 239). The use of a case study approach for this research allowed for rich descriptions and details to be shared (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018). It also offered a nested approach, which has informed the way the subsequent analysis chapters are structured, whereby a micro level study involves an understanding of macro and meso contextual level (Chong and Graham 2013). This was achieved through the researcher intensively investigating the case often through immersion in and repeated visits to the case (Day Ashley 2017). This allowed for an insight into reality from the eyes of the ECTs (Donmoyer 1990, cited in Hitchcock and Hughes 1995) enabling an understanding of their social participation and relationships within their specific school context. These characteristics are all emphasised within constructionist inquiry (Hyde 2020).

Case studies are commonly used in educational research (Stake 2005; Atkins and Wallace 2012). Within education case studies usually investigate 'interesting aspects of an educational activity, programme, or institution or system... mainly in its natural context' and may be used to inform

decision making at different levels (Bassey 1999: 58). As will be discussed within the research analysis and conclusion, the findings from this research stretch across different levels with implications for the ITE provider, employing schools and the ECTs themselves.

There are many advantages of case studies which are pertinent to this research, including how they are 'strong in reality'; recognise the complexities of social truths (drawing further parallels here with Foucault's work on truth as previously discussed); their findings are publicly accessible and serve multiple audiences (as highlighted within the multi- level approach to this study); and they allow generalisations from a single case or in a broader sense (Adelman et al 1980; cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018: 379). Furthering the justification for this approach, case studies lend themselves to studying processes and relationships within a setting (Denscombe 2021); this correlates with the use of Wenger's (1998) CoP within this research. As outlined in the Literature Review, Wenger (1998) describes three commonalities that constitute a CoP. Firstly, members interact with each other in many ways, described as 'mutual engagement'. Here the relationships with different staff members within the school may be considered. Secondly, they will have a common goal, described as 'joint enterprise' thus addressing the prime focus of educating children. This will involve consideration of the influence of policy on practice. Thirdly, they develop a shared repertoire of common resources, including language, styles and routines by means of which they identify as members of the group. Here, discussion will turn to how ECTs juggle existing school practices with their own ideas from ITE, and the guidance they receive and the opportunities they have to learn from others. A case study approach will allow for all these aspects to be considered in depth and how these elements impact upon ECT induction and ultimately identity formation.

There are several types of case study, categorised differently by purpose or outcome with different researchers using a range of categorisations (see Stake 2005; Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018). Stake (2005) identified three types of case study: intrinsic, instrumental and multiple or collective case study but acknowledged that studies may not fit neatly into one classification. This study takes the form of an instrumental case study, as the aim is to provide 'an insight into a particular issue' (Stake 2005: 445). Although the case is still looked at in depth and the context scrutinised (Stake 2005), the intention is not to focus on the individual ECTs who take part in the research but on their insights into their teaching induction, the possibilities for generalisation, and ultimately, improved practices (White, Drew and Hay 2009). This research also extends to what Stake (2005) categorises as a multiple case study. It remains instrumental in nature but extends to several, in this case five, cases. Multiple cases are used as it is believed that an understanding of them will in turn lead to a better understanding and theorising of a larger collection of cases (Stake 2005). The research is open to

looking at both similarities and differences across cases but instrumental in that it is looking at the same particular themes of induction, support and identity development.

The aim of a case study is to, 'illuminate the general but looking at the particular' (Denscombe 2021: 93). There is a risk, however, that case studies can attempt to make claims or assumptions in ways that go beyond the actual evidence presented (Hammersley 2008) and it must be considered that the extent to which findings can be generalised depends on how similar the case study is to others of its type (Denscombe 2021). Furthermore, it can be potentially damaging to the study if researchers focus too much on generalisations as it can steer them away from the case itself (Stake 2005). Within the findings of this study, particular consideration has been made to the different contexts and backgrounds of the ECT participants. Indeed, this itself formed part of the study when considering how policy such as the ECF (DfE 2019) could serve all school settings. School contexts within this study vary significantly, including the size of the school, the geographical location and the year group in which the ECT teaches, factors which will be explored further within the analysis chapters. It is possible to generalise, provided that the research is designed with this in mind (Schofield 1990, cited in Hitchcock and Hughes 1995: 326). This centres around a 'matter of the fit' between the situation studied and others to which that situation might be of interest in terms of applying the conclusions. Generalisations can take varying forms, one of which is the generalisation of a single instance to the class of instances which it represents (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018), therefore analysis of the ECT case studies from this research will highlight significant features that may be generalisable for other ECTs whilst there may be other findings that are more context or instance specific.

Sample size considerations

There are no set rules when it comes to sample size as the goal is not to generalise but to describe and interpret (Lichtman 2017). Most qualitative research studies have only small sample sizes and it commonplace for studies to have less than ten samples (Lichtman 2017). Baker and Edwards (n.d. cited in Lichtman 2017) looked at sample size in greater detail and concluded that there are a range of factors that ascertain the appropriateness of the sample size including epistemological stance, methodological considerations and the focus of the analysis of data.

A case study approach typically looks at a small number of cases in contrast to a mass study (Denscombe 2021). This study reenforces this trend, focussing on a small number of ECTs. The advantages of this more limited focus include the potential to generate greater insights with sufficient detail being gained in order to understand and unravel any complexities. In other words, the emphasis of a case study is the depth of the research rather than the breadth, which is most appropriate when the researcher is wanting to investigate a particular issue and provide an explanation whilst addressing

complexities of real-life situations (Denscombe 2021). Contexts (in this instance schools) are 'unique and dynamic' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018: 376); case study researchers seek to investigate and report these complex dynamics by looking at events, relationships and other factors within each unique instance. It was therefore important to understand the detail and added complexities that may be present within each context. Cases studied should be 'naturally occurring', existing prior to the research beginning, and continuing once it has ended (Yin 2013), as was the case with this research.

3.5 Strategies

Research strategies are 'the specific practices and procedures that researchers deploy to collect and analyse data and to report their findings' (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005: 18). These can be grouped under three main headings: observations, interviews and archival analysis (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005). One of the strengths of using a case study approach is that a variety of research strategies can be used. The decision to use a case study approach does not dictate which methods should be used (Denscombe 2021).

Semi-structured interviews are the most commonly used form of interview in human and social science today (Brinkmann 2018). This form of interview was used for this research, with a sequence of research themes to be covered and pre-planned questions but also an openness to change questions dependent upon answers given (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018). This also allowed me to ask probing questions if further detail or examples were needed (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018). For interviews to be considered rigorous, the length and frequency should be considered alongside the question types, level of detail in the transcription and the steps taken to ensure accuracy of the transcription (Tracy 2010). Each of these elements will be considered within this section.

In-keeping with a social constructionist epistemology, a social practice approach to interviewing was taken with a focus on the 'how' of interview discourse with the interviews being viewed as a social practice (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018: 22). The interviews focussed on the ECTs' accounts of their induction experiences. One of the main challenges of this approach is to explain and justify the relevance from the interview findings. To address this, an abductive approach to interviewing and data analysis was used. This will be discussed further in the next section.

Prior to the first interviews, the participants were asked to complete a reflective journal[5] which asked some initial questions about their first term of teaching. The responses were then used to inform the questions within the first interview. This strategy added a participatory dimension to the research as the interview questions were drawn from the ideas and responses of the participants. It was initially

[5] A copy of this is available upon request if needed.

intended that these reflective journals would be used further but it was found that the responses from each interview informed the next set of questions, and this therefore eliminated a task that could prove onerous for the participants given the high demands of teacher induction. As Holliday (2021) asserts, the choice of data is not decided before the research begins but it is part of the process as the research develops. The use of the journals will be discussed further in the next section.

Kvale (2007) sets out seven stages of interview enquiry that will be used to clarify the process. Initially, Kvale's ideas from stage two: designing, stage three: interviewing, stage four: transcribing and stage five: verifying, will be used. This will be followed by a discussion of the approach to data analysis.

Designing

The 'designing' stage involves translating the research objectives into the questions themselves. Here, it was important to consider the difference between the researcher questions and the interview questions. Participants will not answer the research question directly but will be asked about related matters in order to share their thoughts and feelings; from this the information can be analysed and the research question answered (Mears 2017). Researcher questions, often formulated in a theoretical language, may not be accessible to the interview participants and therefore questions should always be expressed in everyday language (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018). This was particularly highlighted during interview two when questions focussing on Foucault's four axes were asked. Language had to be adapted and questions carefully worded to make this accessible to the interviewees whilst still retaining the true meaning of the research questions. In this instance the questions were sent out to the ECTs beforehand to ensure that they had sufficient time to consider their answers.

An interview guide or script should be used and a reflective approach to the knowledge sought should be adopted when conducting the interviews (Kvale 2007). The script for the interviews gave an outline of topics to be covered and some specific questions (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018) (see appendix 1). This allowed for flexibility and for the interviewees' answers to open up new directions, resulting in the stream of questions being more fluid than rigid (Rubin and Rubin 2012). Mainly open questions were used, with some closed questions where factual information was required. Open-ended questions have several advantages: they are flexible, allow the interview to probe, resolve any misunderstandings, can delve further into the respondents' knowledge of a particular subject, and can help to create greater rapport between the interviewer and respondent (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018). It was also important to consider whether questions would take a direct or indirect form. The indirect approach, in posing questions where the purpose is less obvious, is advantageous in terms of producing more open and honest answers (Tuckman 1972, cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison

2018), however there were times when a more direct approach was needed to focus the answer further. It also had to be considered that ECTs, being interviewed in their employing setting, may not feel comfortable discussing any concerns or difficulties which they were facing. It was therefore important that the purpose of the study was very clear and that participants understood that there would be no implications if they were to give frank answers.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 2) advocate a phenomenological perspective on interview conversations as 'inter views'. Here, they focus on the knowledge that is socially constructed 'inter the views' of the interviewer and the participant, describing this as an 'alternation between the knowers and the known, between the constructors of knowledge and the knowledge constructed'. I anticipated that the knowledge constructed would be two-way, in that the ECTs would be sharing their knowledge with me but I hoped that the questions I asked would also encourage them to reflect on their practice. Some of the ECTs confirmed this, stating how useful it had been to reflect on their own practice. This is regarded as a common response, where participants find the interview genuinely enriching, having gained new insights into their own lives or practice (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018). As discussed in chapter two, teachers are encouraged to be 'reflective practitioners' with a belief that the process of reflection enables them to develop and maintain professional expertise (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009; Boyd, Hymer and Lockney 2015; Pollard 2018). Allowing the ECTs time to reflect on their actions (Schon 1991) through the interview process was likely to raise questions for them and impact upon their future practice. The importance of reflection, 'the idea that an individual can move up and beyond the immediate unique situation… to a more reflective one, looking again at the perspective from a different perspective' (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995: 11-12) is in-keeping with the notion of retroversive causality, 'providing a general form or logic or explanation' (Glynos and Howarth 2007: 19).

Interviews took place at the mid-point and end of the first two years of teaching (some variations of this are described in section 3.7). Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. The initial interview was based upon responses given to the initial reflective journal completed by the ECTs. Subsequent interviews took into account previous discussions so emerging themes could be further considered. A script outlining the main questions[6] was emailed to participants ahead of the interviews, though some variations of this were made due to the interviews being semi-structured.

[6] A copy of this is available upon request if needed.

Interviewing

A research interview can be described as 'a conversation between two partners about a theme of mutual interest' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 123). Personal contact and the insights which are gained into the participants' world can create rich data. The first minutes of the interview can be 'decisive' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 128). It is crucial that the interviewer listens attentively and shows interest, respect and understanding for the subject. My relationship with the participants, as their tutor whilst at university, meant that they were willing to speak openly. Interviews began with a broad question to allow the ECTs to discuss any significant events within their role and to therefore allow them to decide what was the most important information that they had to share (Mears 2017). This also allowed for further questions to be shaped accordingly. As such, in-keeping with Brinkmann and Kvale's (2018: 124) 'life world interviews' whereby the interviewer is striving to understand the world from the interviewee's point of view. This correlates with earlier descriptions of the aims of a case study; essentially the interviewer striving to walk in the interviewee's shoes.

Within semi-structured interviews, there is more opportunity for the interviewer being visible as someone with knowledge in that particular area, rather than hiding themselves behind set questions as in structured interviews (Brinkmann 2018). It was crucial within this process that the ECTs were reassured of my understanding of their answers; it would come across as rather unusual for me not to respond given that they were aware of my knowledge of teaching. In comparison to unstructured interviews, as the interviewer, I had greater influence in keeping the discussion focussed on the research in-hand (Brinkmann 2018). Interviews took the form of a shorter case study interview (each lasting less than one hour) with a conversational manner but still following the case study protocol (Yin 2013).

Transcribing

As is commonly advocated, all interviews were recorded with the use of a sound recorder (Lichtman 2017; Brinkmann and Kvale 2018). These recordings could then be returned to and transcribed. Although most interview recordings are transcribed by administrators (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018), the decision was made to transcribe the recordings myself as a form of initial analysis (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018; Rubin and Rubin 2012) in order to recognise emerging themes. This also allowed me to learn about my interviewing style and to recognise emotional aspects of the interview, hearing participants' hesitations or emphasis. However, the emotional context of the interview, including any non-verbal communication, is not captured within recordings (Poland 1999). These aspects such as looks, body posture and long silences could be regarded as 'secrets' of the interview (Oakley 1981, cited in Poland 1999: 14). As the interviewees' body language and facial expressions gave deeper

insights into their thoughts than the transcripts alone (Kvale and Brinkmann 2018), it was important that I captured my immediate impressions to provide a context for later analysis of the transcripts. This was done soon after the interviews took place and noted whether I felt the ECTs were holding back, the setting of the interview, the time of day and whether there were any interruptions in order to give a 'full flavour of the interview as a lived experience' (Poland 1999: 14). Transcription itself can be complex and can produce bias in how it is read and interpreted (Coe 2021). Undertaking the transcription, conducting the interviews and listening to the recordings myself, allowed me to consider this potential bias.

When transcribing, the participants were given pseudonyms and other references that could identify the participant, for example, the school name, were removed (Vaughan 2017; Coe 2021). However, the small sample size may mean that participants can be identified by contextual information. This was outlined within the consent forms to participants.

Analysing

Although a case study approach to research is often described as a linear process, analysis of the movement from raw data to written study is a complex process which involves considering 'rationalised sections of messy reality' (Holliday 2021: 99). A researcher's own experiences of 'constantly going back and forth from one type of research activity to another and between empirical observations and theory' can gain a greater understanding of the data (Dubois and Gadde 2002: 555). This was reflected in this research where an iterative approach, moving continuously between existing theories and emerging findings, was adopted (Tracy 2018), following a similar approach to Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, whereby repeated patterns of meanings were searched for across the data set. The first stage of this involved initial consideration of the interview transcriptions where possible lines of enquiry for each participant and key questions for the next interview stage were identified. Each interview was transcribed and notes reviewed before the next one was conducted (Mears 2017). The second stage of analysis looked at these lines of enquiry in greater detail which then led to the identification of much broader themes which could be analysed across all participants, collating the all the relevant data extracts within the identified themes (Braun and Clarke 2006) (an example of this is given in appendix 2). Simultaneously, theoretical understandings were revisited and linked to the data analysis which in turn prompting further analysis of the findings. As such, an abductive approach to analysis was also adopted. Abduction is, 'a pragmatic form of reasoning that seeks the best possible explanations for phenomena that are otherwise incomprehensible' (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018: 169). Case studies gain credibility though continuous interpretation of the descriptions throughout the period of study (Stake 2005). Consistent consideration of both data

and theory allowed for links to be made and for findings to be further analysed. The use of theories, as outlined in section 3.3, to analyse data allowed for use of an interpretative lens and a critical perspective, thus aligning with a social constructionist epistemology. This approach to data analysis was most appropriate due to the nature of the data explored. Despite qualitative data usually being characterised as inductive, in this instance, the 'stable entity' to analyse data against was not present as the interview data was 'unpredictable' (Brinkmann and Kvale 2018: 119) due to this being based on the ECTs' own accounts of their induction. The broader themes of analysis were unknown until a broader view of the findings across the two years could be established. It was therefore fitting to take a more iterative approach to analysis.

Verifying

It is important to explore how this research can be used in future educational practice. Biesta (2007) raises many questions regarding what kind of epistemology might be appropriate to examine research in educational practice. Biesta draws parallels between research in medicine and in education, ascertaining that using research in order to make changes to education is much less 'clear cut' than that in a science such as medicine. It is important that any changes that are brought into place will work within all contexts, including in settings that perceive themselves as not needing to 'change'. This resonates highly within this research, as it is important to acknowledge that some ECTs will not need the same of level of support as others, and their support networks will vary. Indeed, some will disengage with any correspondence from university the moment that they graduate. Researchers need to be cautious about research providing rules around 'what works' as this would suggest a context-free view (Biesta 2007). As will be highlighted in upcoming chapters, it is not possible to view ECT induction without considering the context within which it takes place. This comprises context on several levels including national policy and the nuances of this policy translation at school level. 'Whether these expectations [of the research] are warranted ultimately depends on the epistemological assumptions one brings to the understanding of what research can achieve' (Biesta 2007: 12); the results of any research need to be interpreted against a background of purposes, aim and values. One of the aims of this study was to gain in-depth accounts from ECTs of their induction. Their voice within this research is essential 'if we are to realise the democratic, pedagogical and social aims of education in the twenty first century' (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015:5). However, it was important from the early stages to understand that the research was small-scale and therefore will not consider *all* ECTs' views or experiences; and that the results, and subsequent implications of this research, will not have the same impact for all ECTs.

Part of ensuring the quality of a qualitative study is focussed on presenting a plausible case of research contexts and participants' experiences and stories (Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013). As outlined throughout this section, the interview process was designed to collect rich, detailed data to capture the experiences of each of the five participants. This is in-keeping with the post-positivist stance on quality which focused on 'thick description' (Geertz 1973, cited in Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013). This involves the researcher presenting several lines of data in the form of quotations or extracts from the transcripts giving 'proof' to the reader that effective decisions have been made (Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013: 480). Within the analysis chapters, quotations from the participants are used to highlight how their experiences have led to the themes explored within this study. A reliance on thick description can lead to the researcher being lazy with little consideration of interpretation (Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013). An abductive form of analysis ensured that the data was analysed at several levels (see section 3.5.1) and the use of transcription as an initial form of analysis (see section 3.5.1), added further depth of understanding and use of the findings.

3.6 Ethical and justificatory issues

Ethics has been defined as 'a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others' (Cavan 1977, cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018: 112) and its importance is now widely recognised when conducting research (Macfarlane 2009). Qualitative research is more entangled in ethical constraints than most quantitative research as it can be argued that its very purpose may be political or ethical (Hammersley 2008). Furthermore, case study research shows, 'an intense interest in personal views and circumstances' (Stake 2008: 140).

In order to conduct this research, an ethics approval form was completed and approved by the university's ethics committee. Signed consent was sought from the participants[7] outlining the background and aims of the study. The same information was shared with employing Head teachers, as gatekeepers to the school, via email prior to the interviews to also seek consent for the ECT to be involved in the research and for access to the school to conduct interviews to be granted. The right for both participants and their Head teachers to withdraw from the research at any point was outlined.

3.6.1 Positionality

A constructionist perspective fits 'naturally' with research conducted around schools and classrooms (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018). As my own background is that of a primary teacher and ITE

[7] A copy of this is available upon request if needed.

practitioner, it is not possible to be completely objective when collecting this research. Research always involves constructing interpretations from the standpoint of the researcher; however, it should be recognised that subjectivity is 'shifting and contradictory – not stable, fixed and rigid' (Richardson 2018: 821). Furthering this Poststructuralist stance, qualitative researchers should view themselves reflexively, writing from a particular position at one particular point in time (Richardson 2018). Qualitative researchers accept the fact that their research is ideologically driven and how it is not possible for research to be value or bias-free (Janesick 2000). Therefore, it was important that I identified and reflected upon my positioning within this research, understanding that because I have a vested interest in the development of ECT participants, having been involved in their training and in my role as ECT Lead. I had to mindful that it may be difficult to accept any criticism, should it have arisen, of the ECTs' preparation for induction. As qualitative research is in itself social action, the relationship between the researcher and participants is one which will encompass all parts of the research (Holliday 2021).

Positionality reflects the position a researcher has chosen to take with a specific study (Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013). This next section will address primary ways of acknowledging positionality – locating the researcher in relation to the subject and context and the participants.

Researcher positioning in relation to the subject and context

Locating a researcher's influence within the study requires an awareness of their contribution to the construction of meaning and acknowledgement of the 'impossibility' of remaining outside one's own subject matter within the research (Willig 2001, cited in Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013: 73). This is not the researcher separating themselves from the research and acting as though they are not a 'social person', but more about distancing themselves from the assumptions that that shape their own 'spontaneous perceptions and convictions' (Harding 1992: 571). This leads to questions around whether it is truly possible, or even desirable, to set aside your own experiences, values and assumptions regardless of how reflexive one might view themselves to be (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018). Unlike a positivist approach to research, whereby the desire is to eliminate or control researcher presence, post-modernist research recognises that the presence and influences of the researcher is not only unavoidable but should be viewed as a resource to be used (Holliday 2021).

The context of the ECTs' employment had to be considered; I was not familiar with any of the employing schools, however, I had to mindful to not make any assumptions based on size of the school and my own experiences of employment. The researcher should find the balance between the unavoidability of interacting with the setting or culture they are researching with the advantages of

gaining an insight into what is revealed during this process (Holliday 2021). A researcher's experience of relations with people in the research setting are an important source of data as it will aid in gaining a greater insight into the culture (Holliday 2021). The researcher and the participants enter into a 'relationship of culture making as they construct the culture of dealing' (Holliday 2021: 148), further aligning this research with a social constructionist epistemology.

My own positioning within the research, including my background, interests and experiences, had to be considered. Having been a trainee teacher at the university where I am now employed, an NQT and then teacher with leadership responsibilities including NQT mentor, this could easily be over-simplified to draw parallels with the ECT participants. My current position as ECT Lead and involvement within the participants' ITE programme was also a prominent factor. However, I was careful to acknowledge that every person is different and that there are many factors or 'axes' that make us who we are that even those who share positionings similar to our own, can still be very different from ourselves (Sedgwick 2008). Within my current position, I appreciate the neoliberal context of education and the broader educational policies that often drive school practice in ways that are often opposed to a school's ethos or an individual's teaching philosophy. However, I am also aware that often these influencing factors are not recognised by the ECTs themselves and that they have little power within any decision-making. Therefore, this research serves to consider their journey within induction, their experiences and voice, something which policy often does not account for. Adopting a constructionist epistemology invites the ECTs to question the top-down structure of policy implementation, previously taken for granted and calls for a collaborative approach whereby their views, experiences and voices are valued (Parton 2003).

The choice of literature used within the study also served to bind 'the researcher to their own and/ or disciplinary perspectives' (Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013: 71). There was an awareness of this at the time of study and the choice of literature served to document and consider a range of perspectives and to allow for a thorough exploration of the topic at hand.

Researcher positioning in relation to the participants

Researchers should consider how participants' perceptions of themselves and others shape the contexts that they are part of (Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013). This was indeed a significant part of the study itself, focusing on identity.

I considered my prior knowledge of the participants and how their role in the school was very different to the role of student that I have previously known them in. My background knowledge of the participants also needed to be considered so as not to have any pre-conceived thoughts or ideas about

their capabilities or attitudes towards teaching. It also had to be considered that participants may behave in an uncharacteristic way because they are interacting with the researcher (Holliday 2021). It is here that my relationship with the ECTs may have been advantageous as they were likely to discuss their experiences more openly with someone known to them. The interviews were also likely to encourage greater reflection and to open up discussions and thought processes that otherwise they may not have considered. That is not to say that the possible limitations of this relationship as discussed in section 3.6.2 should be overlooked.

It could easily be viewed that interviews focus on listening to what the interviewee says to add to our knowledge of the situation, however, 'we do not really see through our eyes or hear through our ears, but though our beliefs' (Delpit 1988: 297). Putting beliefs aside will not be easy but this is the only way we can begin to understand what it is like to be in someone else's shoes (Delpit 1988). As such, 'bracketing' – 'the setting aside [of] judgement about the expected 'nature' 'essence' and 'reality' of things' (Schutz 1970, cited in Holliday 2021: 38) is pertinent here. There needs to be an awareness of the various discourses and power relations that the research is positioned within, but they cannot be completely eliminated. To manage this, it is important to uphold the perspective that people are experts on their own lives; to not be too quick to jump to conclusions, to be flexible enough to comprehend the realities of others and to distance oneself from our own prejudices (Delpit 1988; Holliday 2021). Reflexivity is key for the researcher in finding the balance between recognition of the research intervention and sensitivity of this (Holliday 2021).

3.6.2 Participant bias

Although interviews are commonly used in case study research (Yin 2013), it should be considered that concern with accuracy and bias is not solely restricted to the researcher themselves, but interviewees' accounts are more likely to be affected by bias as they have many other concerns rather than providing unbiased information (Hammersley 2008). This is where it should be considered that the ECTs' relationship with me may have impacted their answers, for example, if they wanted to prove what an effective teacher they are, or being unwilling to share thoughts on how their training has impacted on their transition into teaching, if their view on this was negative. However, the fact that every interviewee will possess their own preferences, interests or assumptions, does not always equate to their accounts being biased. These assumptions and preferences may provide more accurate representation as they involve relevant knowledge from within the context within which they are employed or from their own cultural experiences (Hammersley 2008). Other difficulties include the element of unpredictability from the interviewees (Mears 2017) and the large amounts of data to process (Lichtman 2017).

3.7 Introducing the participants

Five ECTs took part in this study. They gained QTS in 2018 after completing a BA (Hons) Primary Education degree and volunteered to take part in the study following an initial email outlining a brief rationale. Three of the ECTs, Adam, Clare and Gemma, were interviewed over the first two years of their teaching career with a total of four, approximately 30 minute, interviews at the mid-point and end of their first and second years of teaching. The first two of these interviews were held in person with the interviewer visiting the school. The final two interviews were held on the phone due to COVID-19 restrictions. These three ECTs also completed an initial 'reflective journal' which aided in forming questions for the initial interviews. The remaining two ECTs, Ella and Rebecca, were interviewed for a one-year period, taking part in two interviews, both conducted in person. After this point, Rebecca was seeking new teaching employment and Ella opted not to continue with the process due to other commitments. Ella also completed the initial journal.

Adam was employed in large urban Primary school with approximately 260 pupils on roll. Over his first two years of teaching, he was a Reception teacher. He taught one of two Reception classes (ages 4-5) with the other being taught by the EYFS Lead, Jill. Adam was mentored by the Deputy Head teacher who taught in KS1. Throughout the interviews Adam came across as the most confident of the ECTs. He was not afraid to voice his opinions, even if they challenged some leadership decisions within the school. He was particularly vocal about the use of assessment, data and pedagogy. As alluded to in the introductory chapter, Adam initially seemed to counterpose the child and the system, using terms such as how he would 'fight' for the children. However, by his second year of teaching and with ambitions to move into middle leadership roles, Adam seemed to come to terms with his role.

Clare was employed in a large urban Primary school with approximately 320 pupils on roll. She was one of three Year 1/ 2 teachers, with one of the other Year 1/ 2 teachers also being her mentor. Clare came across as the most settled within her first year of teaching. She rarely spoke out against any decisions made by the school and often used terms such as 'lovely' to describe her employing context. Clare became a little more unsettled within her second year of teaching. She saw the shift from NQT to Recently Qualified Teacher (RQT)[8] as considerable and this was compounded by another ECT joining her team and Clare therefore no longer being the least experienced.

Gemma was employed in a small village school with approximately 25 children split across two classes. She taught one of these classes spanning Reception to Year 2 (4-7 years) and crossing two Key Stages

[8] Until the introduction of the ECF, when the term 'NQT' was still used, teachers in their second year of teaching were often referred to as Recently Qualified Teachers (RQTs).

– EYFS and KS1. Gemma was mentored by her Head teacher. Gemma left her initial employment in February 2020 to move to a much larger inner city school with approximately 420 children on roll. Within this school she was one of two Reception (ages 4-5) teachers. Within interview three, Gemma reflected on her time at her previous school as she had only been in her new employment four weeks at this point. Interview four focussed upon her new school. There was a significant shift in Gemma's attitude towards teaching after she moved school. From beginning initial employment, she struggled with workload and the small nature of her school. She doubted that she would stay in the profession long-term and gave examples of being teary in front of the children (interview 2). Once she moved to her new school, she described how she had got her love for teaching back, and she understood once again why she had chosen the profession (interview 4).

Ella was employed in a single-form rural Primary school with approximately 210 pupils on roll. She taught in Year 1 (ages 5-6 years). Ella's mentor was her Head teacher but she was also assigned a 'coach' the Deputy Head teacher/ Year 2 teacher. Ella described the difference between these two roles as using her mentor for more 'major' issues and her coach for everyday queries (interview 1). Ella seemed very content within her employing school and felt she had a good level of autonomy over her work despite acknowledging the often restrictive nature of policy.

Rebecca was employed in a small village school with approximately 12 children on roll split across two classes. Rebecca had six children in her class, spanning Reception to Year 2 (4-7 years) and crossing two Key Stages – EYFS and KS1. Rebecca was mentored by the Key Stage Two (KS2) class teacher, Alison, who had also taken on extra leadership responsibilities at this time. Rebecca's contract was for one year as a maternity cover. At the point of her second interview, she had not found another teaching job to move into. Rebecca was slightly older than the other participants and spoke about how her experiences prior to ITE meant she did not have an 'idealistic view of teaching' (interview 2) and she felt she was as prepared as she could be. Rebecca was quite upfront about her feelings around teaching and the policy-driven aspects of practice. She was the only one of the participants who herself had a child, also going through Primary School. This added to her understanding of the system but also meant additional challenges in workload when balancing this with family commitments.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the four analytic strata: epistemologies; theories; approaches and strategies used in this study. The use of a constructionist epistemology has ensured that the voice of the ECTs to challenge sometimes taken for granted assumptions (Hyde 2020) about ECT induction and to allow for critical discussion about the nature of education policy and the nuances between rhetoric and reality. The small-scale case study approach and use of semi-structured interviews has enabled rich

data and 'thick description' (Geertz 1973, cited in Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013). The interviewer's own transcription of interview data and an abductive approach to analysis has ensured rigorous consideration of data. The use of three different yet complementary theories will help to build upon engagement with the topic and generate new knowledge around ECT induction.

The next three chapters will begin to analyse findings from the participants interviews against relevant literature and theories. The chapters will focus on three different levels of policy trajectory: the macro level (national policy); meso level (school policy enactment) and micro level (individual ECTs' understanding and enactment of policy).

Chapter 4: Analysis - Macro Level

4.1 Introduction

This chapter and the two subsequent analysis chapters will look at different levels of policy enactment, it is therefore pertinent to begin with a discussion of policy and the forms it may take. It is not possible to give a single definition of policy as it can be found everywhere within education (Ozga 2000). The word 'policy' derives from the Greek 'polis', meaning 'city' or 'state'[9], or from the French 'policie' meaning 'rule', 'law' or 'regulation'[10]. Policy can therefore be seen as regulating the practices of a community, with schools being a prime example of this; one 'peculiar' feature of education policy is the extent to which policies must be visibly enacted, reported to be in place and accounted for (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012: 56). Policy does not only address the written rules and regulations but should be regarded as 'any vehicle or medium for carrying a policy message' (Ozga 2000: 33). These may be explicit or hidden, implicit messages or even 'silences' - aspects that are not stated (Bell and Stevenson 2006: 12). Policy also addresses the processes of enactment, the influence of policy and policy advocacy, as such addressing how it is imposed and performed (Bailey 2013). As Foucault asserted, power may be exercised discreetly through surveillance or documentation, however, power becomes further embedded when actions are orientated towards what is evidenced or recorded (Rouse 1994), this therefore becoming the more explicit part of the policy message. Vidovich (2007) argues for the importance of policy analysis which not only considers the broader picture of global and national policy influences but the 'on the ground' practices and policies within schools and classrooms. ECT findings highlighted the significant impact of policy on their practices, both in terms of national, government policy, such as the ECF (DfE 2019) and the ways that such policies are interpreted within their employing context. In order to look at each 'level' of policy enactment, Vidovich's (2007) levels of policy trajectory: macro (global influences), meso (national policy) and micro (individual schools) will be adapted to consider national policy at the macro level, individual school policy enactment at meso level and case studies of individual ECTs at micro level. The use of these three levels of policy enactment and engagement with the theories, as outlined in the previous chapter, forms part of this study's original contribution to knowledge.

Policy may be conceptualised as text or discourse; policy as text is the element of policy that can be worked on, interpreted and contextualised (Ball 1993), all aspects which may cause tension. However, it should be acknowledged that policy does not work in a straight line from formation to implementation. For teachers, policy requires some acceptance of intended courses of action,

[9] See policy | Etymology, origin and meaning of policy by etymonline
[10] See Policy etymology in English | Etymologeek.com

constraining their ability to form independent judgements. Ozga (2000) argues that these two concepts are relational not dichotomous and therefore the two concepts will be discussed simultaneously throughout the findings. Policy trajectory is not a one-way influence, policy documents and their enactment can become influencers at different levels (Mayer 2021), however, there is little evidence of meso or micro levels of policy enactment influencing the macro level. The following three chapters will outline the ways in which different levels of policy can influence the autonomy of ECTs and how policy enactment varies significantly between school contexts. Key themes from interview findings including power, support and identity will be considered throughout.

This chapter will analyse some of the risks and limitations that national policy poses for ECTs within their practice, induction and subsequent development of their own professional identity. Continuing from discussion of national policy in chapters one and two, this chapter will further analyse policy, with reference to relevant literature. Participant findings will be interwoven into this discussion, though their voice will grow through the following analysis chapters (meso and micro level) as these are the elements that they considered more explicitly within the interviews. The chapter will begin by briefly outlining some recent developments in main forms of national policy present within teaching. The main discussion will centre around curricula and statutory assessment including forms of monitoring and surveillance – themes that featured frequently within interviews with the ECT participants. Attention will then turn to the ECF (DfE 2019) as the statutory framework for teacher induction. Each of these areas will be discussed in turn and considered against Noddings' (2003) ethics of care, highlighting how the requirements and pressures of these national policies is often opposed to a focus on care.

4.2 Education policy in the last 30 years: A move towards greater control and accountability

Over recent decades, there have been frequent changes to education policy in England. Such changes are typically accompanied by a rationale from the government which imposes them. This often involves crisis talks around significant changes that need to be made in order to deflect an impending crisis, or to remedy a situation left by the previous government, thus positioning it as, 'a policy problem needing a solution' (Mayer 2021: 123). This process draws parallels with Foucault's work on power and knowledge, where he describes a two-stage development (Rouse 1994). Firstly, power is instituted as a means of control, or as previously mentioned, a rationale to neutralise an impending crisis. The power then evolves into more tangible techniques for implementing this control, thereby creating new types of practices and measurements, such as those within schools. Foucault argues that from this, new kinds of human subjects and new kinds of knowledge are produced (Rouse 1994).

Over the last thirty years, a number of new ways of controlling and measuring attainment have been implemented, leading to new forms of performance data. When the National Curriculum was first introduced in England in 1988 it was seen as the key to raising standards in schools (Abbott, Rathbone and Whitehead 2013). The introduction of the 'Schools Examination and Assessment Council' (SEAC), and SATs where school results could be quantified into league tables, were measures considered to be 'essential' to give parents as much information about schools as possible (Abbott, Rathbone and Whitehead 2013: 111), thus promoting a marketised discourse of 'choice'. Since this time, further reported testing and profiling such as Phonics Screening Check (DfE 2022) for all Year 1 children and the reporting of EYFS profile data (DfE 2022a) has also been introduced. Brundrett (2015: 56) highlights the surprisingly little protest from teachers towards these on-going changes to policy, attributing this to their 'exhaustion' from 'multiple processes of innovation and change', perhaps symptomatic of exhausted compliance. The reasons for, or rationales behind, policy agendas lead to discussion of policy's ontological role. Aside from considering a world existing for policy to impact on, it must also be considered how policy assumes and often constitutes the world which it seeks to change (Carusi 2021). In this sense, changes to education policy often formulate ideas of failings in schools or widespread low standards or expectations, often with an overall outcome focussing on economic growth (Ozga 2000). Foucault's (1972: 49) notion of discourse also embodies this social constructionist ontology when he defined discourses as 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak'.

4.3 Attitudes towards national policy

The government's power over, and the economisation of policy, sets limits to the capacity that teachers have to follow alternative values or to seek 'real democracy' (Ozga 2000: 7). Moore and Clarke (2016) created a broad categorisation of stances towards central policy: teachers who are broadly supportive; teachers who substantially resist or reject key aspects; teachers who are unhappy with key aspects of policy but feel that they have no option but to go along with it, resulting in 'reluctant compliance'. This group of teachers often find themselves doing things they do not believe in and may also see themselves investing in ideas which they were previously opposed to and may potentially oppose again in the future. Despite this notion of 'doing without believing'; this group of teachers are not uncritical or without an awareness of what was being asked of them (Braun and Maguire 2020: 440). Teachers may move between the position of policy regimes being unhappily enforced upon them and those who accept and concur with such regimes (Mockler and Stacey 2021). Reluctant compliance is most notably seen when the ECTs discuss their experiences of curricula

expectations and statutory assessment requirements, therefore these are the areas which will be considered in the following sections.

4.4 The National Curriculum: what is prescribed and what is missing

The National Curriculum (DfE 2013) is an example of a centrally imposed policy[11] (Moore and Clarke 2016). In 2011 the government launched a review of the existing national curriculum to ensure 'rigour', 'high standards' and 'coherence across schools' with the aim of allowing 'teachers greater freedom to use their professionalism and expertise to help all pupils realise their potential' (DfE 2013: 4). A main objective of the curriculum reform was that 'all pupils – irrespective of their background or circumstances – have the opportunity to acquire the essential knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life' (DfE 2013: 6). Gemma (interview 2) and Adam (interview 2) both identified the National Curriculum (DfE 2013) as one of the main barriers opposing their vision of what teaching should be like. In her discussion of this, Clare contested all the aims outlined above. She stated that expectations are too high, and that progress rather than attainment should be the focus. She also described the 'jump' from Reception to Year 1 as too big and how it is hard to get the children to the expected level (interview 1). Noddings (1998) argues that a curriculum such as this, where all children are required to study the same subjects, favours those with intrinsic interests or those whose families focus on extrinsic interests to favour these, therefore, suggesting that despite the intentions of the National Curriculum being to offer equal opportunity to all, a democratic curriculum must recognise that treating all the same is not actually 'the same at all' (Nodding 1998: 176). Whilst the rhetoric of the National Curriculum (DfE 2013) suggests more freedom for teachers, the reality is that they are restricted in the decisions they can make (Forrester and Garratt 2016) and is an example of one way that teachers feel 'de-professionalised' (Ovenden-Hope and la Velle 2015: 578). For ECTs this restriction is magnified, as they are relying upon 'interpretations of interpretations' (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012: 63). As such, the ECTs are putting into practice policy that has already been interpreted by the school through their consideration of specific pedagogies and long-term plans. The ECTs themselves must then translate this into their own practice and make sense of this given their own emerging philosophies of teaching. Gemma (interview 1) described the pressures of having to 'juggle' all the curriculum subjects; she stated, 'when you sit down and think what you're meant to have covered, it's crazy'. She used the terms, 'broad' and 'balanced' curriculum, words used within the introduction to the National Curriculum (DfE 2013), as something she aspires to achieve, saying 'we

[11] Academies do not have to teach the National Curriculum and 'have more control over how they do things' (Types of school: Academies - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) but they do have to conduct the bigger issue of statutory testing. Such high stake testing ultimately means that schools will all adhere to the National Curriculum so the notion of choice is a false one.

do a very good attempt'. In this recount Gemma is simplifying the curriculum into a tick box exercise, stating that everything must be covered but that a lack of time means this is not always done in the most effective way. Developments in both England and Australia in positioning the curriculum as a 'shopping list of facts and figures' that children must remember (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015: 143) sees the role of the teacher ignored within its enactment. Gemma alluded to this in her attempts to try to ensure that she was doing everything to meet the expected requirements but admitted that this was not what she perceived to be 'best practice'. Within discussions of the curriculum, one thing that ECTs felt was distinctly missing was the focus on the child.

All participants described their focus on the child and the importance of the teacher forming a relationship with the child and understanding their needs. From the outset of interview 1, Gemma focused on a particular child and how getting to know him, his preferences and characteristics, was crucial to his learning and development. Similarly, Adam (interview 2) talked about the importance of not having an 'umbrella view that one size fits all' and how everything needs to be tailored to individual children. However, is it possible for there to be a true focus on the child if policy dictates what should be taught, how it should be taught and performative measures to make judgements against the effectiveness of this are used? Gemma (interview 3) argued that this is possible. She described how she felt that the children and their interests 'need to be the centre of everything' but that you can 'make the National Curriculum fit what you want to teach'. Her points somewhat echo the National Curriculum's introductory section which states that, 'the school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that each school plans for its pupils. The national curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum' (DfE 2013: 5). However, Ozga (2000: 57) highlights how technical pedagogies, as often outlined in policy, limit the capacity for 'autonomous judgement, emotional investment and moral purpose' on the part of teachers, thus, outlining how educational policy and the ethics of care are in opposition. Furthermore, the way in which curricula have been 'teacher proofed' to limit professional judgement and decision-making, 'fails to recognise the essential humanity of education' (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015: 27). The points Gemma raised relate to the content of the curriculum rather than the implementation of different practices, for example, data collection. Discourses of care are becoming ever more displaced with policy that shows 'reductive forms of consideration of the individual' (Delaune 2017: 342). The generic nature of education policy is opposed Noddings' (2003) consideration of each situation being unique and needing a relational approach to gain understanding. This reflects how centrally imposed policies such as the National Curriculum and the ethics of care are largely incompatible discourses. This discussion will be furthered in the next section where attention turns to different forms of statutory assessments within schools.

4.5 Statutory assessment: measuring 'success' but neglecting care

A further area where 'reluctant compliance' amongst the ECTs could be seen was within discussions of statutory assessment. National large-scale assessments are increasing across many countries and are often being used for monitoring and evaluation purposes (Mockler and Stacey 2021). These include: Reception Baseline Assessment; SATs; Year 1 Phonics Screening Checks; and EYFS Profile data. Gemma discussed statutory assessment and data as a main source of tension throughout her interviews. She felt that there was far too much focus on data, particularly from external sources such as the media, and she worried that the publication of school data may be seen as a reflection of her capabilities as a teacher (interview 1). On many occasions Gemma expressed how she adhered to policy even though she felt it was unfair or knew that it may have a negative impact on her own well-being or passion for teaching, further supporting Moore and Clarke's (2016) notion of reluctant compliance. Ozga raised concerns about teachers' capacities to pursue alternative approaches than those imposed by the government at the time of her publication in 2000. Even twenty years ago she discussed how, 'new more powerful strategies for central control' had begun to erode this capacity for opposition (Ozga 2000: 15). This leads to questions about the nature of policy over the last twenty years and how this has become more controlling, reductive and less understanding of the nature of teaching as a profession. Of the key areas focussed upon with the ECF (DfE 2019), assessment and curriculum are measures of accountability. Global education policy is now equivalent to neoliberalism (Rizvi and Lingard 2010); it 'emphasises performance and product over personal enrichment' (Moore and Clarke 2016: 666). Gemma (interview 4) acknowledged that tests are 'sort of important to make sure you can see the progress' but she then went onto state that regardless of these forms of assessment, 'a good teacher would ensure that the progress is there already', therefore questioning their role. Adam (interview 4) also questioned the usefulness of statutory assessments and data as he commented, 'I think the government just likes to track all children... I think it's quite an inaccurate representation of where they are but that's what they like – they like the numbers'. As highlighted in chapter two, numbers are becoming increasingly important in the world of education (Taubman 2009; Ball 2021) and as a result of this 'shift', creative and intellectual endeavour is being lost (Taubman 2009) as teachers face increasing attempts to constrain and 'lock down' practice related to curricula and its associated assessments (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015: 149). The ECTs' discussions of data collection and analysis and the pressures that this puts upon them demonstrates how numbers have become part of the governance of schools within neo-liberal policy agendas (Ozga and Lingard 2007) and how schools have become learning 'machines' for 'supervising, hierarchising and rewarding'

(Foucault 1979: 147). Within assessment policy in England, there is a little evidence of this having a formative use and therefore considering learner needs. The primary function is performative meaning it focuses on the teacher or school. This is opposed to the overall visions of the ECTs whose role as a teacher they believe to be first and foremost about the children in their care. This will be discussed further within chapter six.

The assessment standard within the ECF (DfE 2019) highlights pitfalls that ECTs should avoid, for example, by 'drawing conclusions about what pupils have learned by looking at patterns of performance over a number of assessments (e.g. appreciating that assessments draw inferences about learning from performance)' (DfE 2019: 19). This suggests that the ECF is encouraging ECTs to look at the bigger picture of assessment over time rather than individual tests or assessments, however, it does not remove the pressure which ECTs feel they are put under through statutory assessments. Accountability is not a new concept for ECTs; attitudes to and understanding of this will have been conditioned during ITE as achieving QTS is demanding and exposes them to 'a real risk of failure' (Crisp and Cordingley 2022: 270). They are then being inducted into a profession where they need to prove and evidence their judgements; pressures for on-going assessment and testing adds to this further. Wilkins (2011) calls these individuals, 'post-performative' teachers who are aware of accountability demands which conflict with their desire for autonomy but feel that they can balance these. Indeed, the EYFS is now the first of what can be seen as a 'data delivery chain' through the Primary system (Roberts- Holmes and Bradbury 2015: 313), with both a baseline assessment and the summative profile assessment, followed by Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 and then SATs and other end of key stage assessments. It is therefore unsurprising that ECTs such as Gemma and Rebecca, working in mixed EYFS and KS1 classrooms, sight assessments and data as a main form of tension. This pressure is compounded within small schools where government percentages are skewed by small numbers of pupils making statistics an 'unreliable guide to the school's efficacy' (Ovenden-Hope and Luke 2021: 118). Gemma (interview 4) summarised that the lack of assessments during the time of the national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic had led her to feel 'a lot calmer'. In contrast, Ella (interview 2) discussed how the results from her Year 1 Phonics screening tests gave her 'a really big confidence boost' as she achieved 100% pass rate in her class. This highlights how ECTs may view data as a measure of their own success within their new role; a view that has been reflected in multiple government policies which denote that better teaching leads to better pupil learning and therefore 'test success' and a message that is also voiced through Ofsted inspections with pupil results proving crucial within inspection gradings (Adams 2014). The increased evaluation of data within schools has led to the growth of self-governance amongst teachers (Ozga and Lingard 2007). The process of producing and using data extends governance to a form of self-regulation and arguably, this becomes

a form of self-evaluation for ECTs. Here it is evident that the ECTs are doing what is needed to survive within the teaching profession, what Bunn, Langer and Fellows (2022) describe as 'subsistence agency' - they are accepting that they need to undertake the assessments as a necessary part of their teaching career.

Returning to discussions of the ethics of care, Noddings (2005) argues against the emphasis on test scores and an academic focus in schools but states that children should have opportunities to care for themselves, others, and the world. She describes the academic demands on teachers as 'misdirected' (Noddings 2012: 777) and calls for a system that focuses further on pupils' expressed needs in terms of what they want to learn or achieve rather than the prescriptive nature of current curricula. However, with statutory assessment data which is reported within league tables, it is unlikely that schools will not focus on 'test success' (Adams 2014). 'In classroom contexts, care is necessarily enacted through the provision of learning experiences that recognise and value students' differences' (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015: 27). Therefore, teachers may feel torn between doing their best to meet their school's external targets but also doing what is best for the children in their care, following policies they do not always see as 'pedagogically appropriate' (Braun and Maguire 2020: 444). Adam (interview 3) gave a clear example of this, saying that he shared the same values as his Early Years team, 'we've got really strong values that it should be very child-led and open-ended and imaginative, rather than sitting with a pen and paper at a table'. He stated that if the Head teacher requested changes that were opposed to these values, the team were confident in challenging this. Furthering discussions of the National Curriculum's (DfE 2013) intent to promote equality amongst children (see section 4.4), the continual assessment of children also promotes inequalities as it labels children into specific learner identities within which early assessment may prescribe teacher expectations (Bradbury 2013). This again highlights opposition to an ethics of care. It is evident from discussions within this chapter that the focus on curricula and data is high on an ECT's priority list, regardless of their feelings towards these areas.

The high stakes use of data in the primary years is a contentious point for all participants. Chatzidakis et al (2020) argue that key aspects of the economy, including education, have been subjected, for far too long, to neoliberal marketisation and privatisation. Hands on care, or caring for, differs from other commodities as they can only flourish under mutuality, endurance and patience; market logics do not share the same vocabulary or have a means for measuring such values (Chatzidakis et al 2010). They summarise that care and capitalist market logistics cannot be reconciled, thus again emphasising the tensions between two such areas.

Trust forms the foundations of risk-taking (Murphy 2022) and is increasingly threatened by over-regulation of education. However, in an ethics of care, trust is needed. Teachers need to build relations of care and trust with their pupils in order to address their expressed needs and not purely their assumed ones, in relation to the curriculum or demands of the school (Noddings 2012). 'Good teachers must be allowed to use their professional and moral judgement in responding to the needs of their students' (Noddings 2012: 774), however, with teachers having little opportunity to exercise their own discretion due to an over-regulated system, this poses many challenges. With forms of surveillance and curricula demands, ECTs are more likely to question whether they are doing things 'correctly', such as Gemma (interview 1) when discussing teaching the curriculum questioning, 'I don't know whether that's how we should do it', rather than exercising their own autonomy for the expressed needs of the children. In many situations the pressure to teach the subject may mean that the relational carer gives up and settles for a virtue-caring attitude (Noddings 2012); this is likely to be the case for many ECTs as they feel the pressures of accountability.

Rebecca's discussion of, and attitude towards, SATs highlighted the dilemma in her ethical decisions. In interview two, she explained how being involved with SATs had not changed her view of them. She described the system as trying to 'box children up like little Lego figures', how they are a 'waste of time' and 'cruel' for some children. She gave an example of one child who she felt should not have completed the papers but the process for her to be withdrawn from these assessments was too complicated. This can be attributed to what Moore and Clarke (2016: 670) describe as, 'sustaining the fantasy of equality of opportunity' as a result of the injustices of the education system. Rebecca summarised that there is no 'ideal' and even the EYFS Framework (DfE 2017) which initially she thought was more holistic, is flawed. She also described Phonics screening as 'a pointless exercise as it doesn't tell you anything about [the children's] reading' (interview 2). Caring does not solely reside with the intentions of the carer but questions must be asked about the effects on those being cared for (Noddings 1998). Rebecca described several practices which she had to adhere to even though she did not feel they benefited the children in any way, and in some instances may even have had a negative impact on the child. This highlights the paradox between practices being implemented in school to fulfil statutory assessments and The Care Manifesto (Chatzidakis et al 2020) which emphasises that a caring state must consider the well-being and foster the capabilities of all human life within its domain. Rebecca's example is likely to have the opposite impact on both herself as the teacher and the children who she refers to. What Rebecca described highlights how she was denied the ability to show her caring skills towards the children as every child had to complete the assessments despite her knowing this was not appropriate for certain individuals or that the results would not reveal anything she did not already know. Many examples given in this section highlight

how the bureaucratic nature of statutory assessment and data collection and reporting is opposed to the humanistic and relational nature of the ethics of care.

4.6 Feeding the power dynamics: Forms of accountability and surveillance

In recent years accountability regimes have intensified and shifted from the traditional focus on professional accountability to an 'interdependent set of surveillance technologies' which set to govern behaviour and set standards (Murphy 2022: 5). Ofsted inspections were initially introduced to oversee the implementation of the National Curriculum and to demand accountability from schools and teachers (Bates, Lewis and Pickard 2011) thus forcing teachers to adhere to the over-prescribed nature of curricula and its associated assessment procedures (Ovenden-Hope and la Velle 2015). These forms of regulation highlight the avoidance of trust within the profession; as Power (1997:1) highlights, 'trust releases us from the need for checking'. However, in the current climate, 'checking' has become the norm with heightened forms of risk management and over-regulation. Trust is a foundation for risk work and is pivotal in a teacher's capacity to make judgements and exercise autonomy (Murphy 2022). Scrutiny through mechanisms such as Ofsted inspections and Local Authority visits have made schools and teachers averse to risk. For ECTs this is likely to be further heightened due to the high stakes nature of induction as discussed in chapter two.

Throughout the interviews, the participants pinpointed significant events which impacted on their induction period. These events were predominantly forms of monitoring through mechanisms such as Ofsted inspections and local authority moderation procedures and, although viewed as a less formal surveillance technique, teacher observation is also a form of policy translation, a 'technique of power enacted by teachers one upon the other' (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012: 46). These are all examples of how education has become increasingly quantified and controlled by various 'surveillance and accountability mechanisms' (Adams 2014: 152). Such forms of surveillance are often justified by 'the need to maintain a relentless focus on raising attainment as a proxy measure for a good education' (Priestley, Biesta and Robinson 2015: 115). Knowing that inspections are impending is likely to create an environment in which teachers constantly behave like that they are about to be inspected (Broadfoot 2007), as such, an attempt by the government to drive up standards'. Gemma (interview 3) stated 'although I don't teach for Ofsted, I feel like from above, the management is linked with what Ofsted think which is such a shame really, but I feel like that is the reality of most schools'. This demonstrates the power network present within schools and that power is co-constituted by those who support, or indeed, resist it (Rouse 1994). Gemma, as an ECT, was not in a position to challenge this but was clearly aware of these dynamics.

Clare (interview 2) explained how both Ofsted and local authority moderation were events that she was pleased to have experienced and how she viewed them as reassuring mechanisms. There were suggestions of this in Ella and Rebecca's recounts too. Although Ella (interview 2) discussed Ofsted in quite a passive manner, she said the inspection was reassuring and it was good to be able to talk to inspectors about the support she had received as an ECT. Rebecca, although mostly voicing her frustration with policy, described how local authority moderation gave her reassurance that she was doing 'at least one part of my job right' (interview 2). Gemma (interview 3) spoke about how her love for, and effort she had put into phonics was 'reflected in the [Ofsted] report'. The participants here are seeking reassurance of their own practices; although they are becoming self-regulatory, they still strive the affirmation and crave the acknowledgement of the powerful 'other'. Foucault describes how the practice of surveillance constrains behaviour by making it more known (Rouse 1994). As the participants are at the start of their careers and are, at every opportunity, looking for acknowledgement that they are effectively 'performing', this type of surveillance will only serve to enable more continuous and pervasive control. As such, this is a hidden form of power as the ECTs are agents themselves; they are agreeing with the judgements and by being unquestioning of this, they are driving it. However, it should be acknowledged that not all such experiences acted as forms of reassurance for the ECTs. Gemma (interview 2) spoke about her 'bad experience' at a moderation event, after which she cried for two hours. She discussed how others did not agree with her judgements and that they wanted to push her judgement down further, concluding that it was 'awful'. The ECTs are beginning their careers during a time when teachers have come to live and think this form of constant surveillance within their profession and accept it as non-problematic (Bottery 2000, cited in Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012). As previously outlined, ECTs are subject to progress reviews and assessment points within their induction period (DfE 2021a). This cumulates with a decision as to whether their performance against the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) is satisfactory. This likely to mean that they take the least line of resistance when faced with feedback and exercise undue caution when taking this onboard, therefore the process that the ECTs are going through is feeding the power dynamics at play.

Having discussed aspects of policy that ECTs identified as challenges within their practice, discussion will now turn to the ECF (DfE 2019) as a government policy aimed at ensuring a smooth transition into teaching employment and how this may support, or indeed heighten, some of the challenges they face.

4.7 Directing ECT development: The Early Career Framework

The introduction of the ECF (DfE 2019) and changes to statutory induction for ECTs meant that from September 2021, the previous 'NQT year' became a two year induction period. Many examples of teacher education policy represent teacher education as a 'complicated system' with an assumption that 'fixing' one part of the system will lead to improvements across the whole (Mayer 2021: 125). Savage (2020: 2) describes this as 'alignment thinking', a form of technical rationality that seeks to impose systems that are 'made to cohere'. The concept of the ECF (DfE 2019) was first proposed in the DfE's (2017) consultation on strengthening QTS and improving career progression. It can be argued that this stems from a wider focus on teacher retention and perceived teacher effectiveness, ensuring that education serves the national interests of the global marketplace (Vidovich 2007). As outlined in chapter two, teacher retention is a significant challenge for the sector with one third of teachers leaving the profession in the first five years (DfE 2019).

Even from interview one, Clare had mixed feelings about finishing her NQT year. She explained, 'I'm looking forward to my NQT year being over but then I kind of don't want it to be over because it's a really nice year… but... I don't want the support and things to stop but I really don't think it will in this school, I think they'll always be supportive'. This was clearly on Clare's mind even at the mid-point of her NQT year. In interview four, Clare defined the difference between her NQT and RQT years stating, in your NQT year, there's a lot of support and then in your RQT year, it's like, 'right, you're ready now'. Do you know? And I don't think I maybe quite was, and I maybe needed a little bit more time'. She reflected that she would have liked the opportunity to complete her induction under the new two year framework, particularly with the extension of CPD/ NQT time into the second year, summarising, 'I think it's a *really* valuable time if you use it well then it can be really beneficial'. Within interview two Adam reflected that he felt the support would continue in his RQT year as it had mainly come from within his phase team, summarising that it, 'will continue as long as I work in the phase'. However, by interview four, he echoed many of Clare's thoughts, stating that he felt the two year induction period, 'will be good for the support for NQTs 'cos I do think after your NQT year, you're left to your own devices which in a way is good'. Clare and Adam's comments suggest that prior to the ECF's introduction there was a significant shift between the first and second year of teaching and that changes to the induction period would be welcomed to address this. This may go some way to addressing the 'praxis shock' that ECTs experience. This is when teachers are confronted with the 'realties and responsibilities of being a classroom teacher that puts their beliefs and ideas about teaching to the test, challenges some of them and confirms others' (Kelchtermans and Ballet 2002: 105). It is evident that both ECTs focus on the advantages of additional support in their second year

of teaching and the additional time they would be given. Both these aspects will be considered further within the next chapter.

Hidden assumptions within the ECF suggest that ECTs will approach their first years in teaching on a level playing field, however, it is unlikely that this will be the case due to the large number of variables. Carusi (2021: 233) considers the 'is' of policy and how policy 'assumes and constitutes the world it seeks to change'. The ECF (DfE 2019) firstly makes the ontological assumption that a new form of induction is needed for ECTs and that this will ultimately make a difference to retention in the profession (Iglehart 2022). It then sets about to order things instrumentally (Carusi 2021) by assuming that the areas covered within the framework are those which will make a difference to ECTs in setting them up 'for a fulfilling and successful career in teaching' (DfE 2019:4). Although focussing on a different type of policy implementation within their study, Adie and Wyatt-Smith's (2020: 270) identification of the balance between the 'comparability of conditions which suggests standardisation, and responsiveness to context which suggests flexibility in implementation' is also true of being a crucial issue for the ECF. The ECF (DfE 2019) is generic, therefore creating some forms of consistency and coherence across schools (Craster and Moore 2022), however, the framework needs to consider subject, phase or contextual specific needs. To address this, some of the risks to fidelity in the implementation of the ECF need to be identified and understood by all parties involved. The term 'fidelity' suggests faithfulness to an original; furthering this, 'a frequently quoted' definition is the 'extent to which an enacted program is consistent with the intended program model' (Century, Rudnick and Freeman 2010: 202). Variations within structure and process of the intended programme will be responsible for varied outcomes (Adie and Wyatt-Smith 2020) as can be seen in the ECTs' diverse experiences of induction into teaching.

Learning is often discussed in abstract terms, for example, 'learning outcomes' or 'supporting learning', taking away from the specifics of 'what' and 'for what' (Biesta 2015). The ECF core areas are divided into two types of content: key evidence statements ('learn that') and practice statements ('learn how to'). It aims to address knowledge and application within these statements, however, due to its generic nature, there is a risk that the purpose of these statements may be lost within different contexts. The ECF (DfE 2019: 5) states that it draws upon the 'best available research evidence'. However, some forms of evidence-based education suggest that research evidence can tell teachers what they should do on the premise that these forms of research can 'provide clear and unambiguous knowledge about 'what works'' (Biesta 2015: 80). Here the purpose needs to be focused upon and this will need to be grounded within the context of the school and the many variables at work. Returning to earlier discussions of how many forms of national policy focus on performativity, the

statements within the ECF (DfE 2019) seem to follow this remit. However, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, in order to focus on teacher retention, more holistic views of education will need to be focused on, alongside teacher support and well-being.

Foucault's four axes of ethical self-formation (May 2006; Foucault 1983), will be used as a framework in chapter six to discuss identity formation. However, it is pertinent to begin discussion around one of the four axes, the authority sources of ethics, when considering risks to fidelity. May (2006) describes this axis as the 'why'? It is about establishing relations to the rules that we feel obliged to put into practice. For the participants, this was about considering why they cultivate certain beliefs, attitudes and behaviours around teaching and which authority sources they recognise within this (Clarke 2009). There are two ways in which Foucault's work should be considered here. Firstly, the extent to which the ECTs will view the ECF (DfE 2019), and other central policy directives, as an authority source and the different interpretations of this when considering the risks of fidelity; as May (2006) describes, this is the way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognises him/herself as obliged to put it into practice. Secondly, the tensions that may arise if directives such as the ECF (DfE 2019) question or challenge the ECT's own teaching philosophy and values. Which will triumph as the dominate authority source? Notably, many teachers find little difference between their own classroom practices and that outlined within central policy. However, opposition may appear when central policy directives challenge a teacher's own motivations or ethical underpinnings within the profession (Moore and Clarke 2016). Therefore, it is important to identify risks to fidelity of the ECF and imposed curricula and the tensions that may be present when considering a teacher's own values and philosophies. These risks and tensions will be interwoven across the three analysis chapters, beginning with the discussion below of balance versus a targeted approach towards the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a).

4.7.1 Consideration of the Teachers' Standards: Balance versus a targeted approach

The most pertinent dilemma within the current discussion is whether equal weighting should be given within the ECF (DfE 2019) to all the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a). As already highlighted, assessment and data collection were the main focus for the participants. The ECF (DfE 2019) focuses on assessment as one of the eight standards in the framework, suggesting that all are given equal weighting. This leads to questions as to whether ECTs' time would be best spent focusing on areas which they find the most difficult or identified as targets at the end of their training, rather than spanning the whole framework. A study of ITE programmes in Australia, showed that it was the assessment standard, specifically around interpretation of data, which those at the end of their training were less prepared to meet, suggesting that ITE providers were not well placed to provide a

range of data types for analysis and identifying ways of further developing this (Wyatt-Smith et al 2017). This is likely to be the case for ITE providers in England too since the removal of National Curriculum levels in English Primary schools in 2014, giving schools freedom to use their own systems, resulting in a wide range of approaches and therefore impacting on fidelity of approach. Using an analysis of targets set at the end of ITE in England, would allow for a greater focus on areas such as assessment and data; this is arguably needed given the removal of gradings for the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) at the end of ITE meaning there is little data to base ECTs' need on. Arguably, ensuring that all standards are covered, building upon the CCF (DfE 2019a) in ITE, ensures nothing is missed. However, a more tailored approach, aimed towards areas identified as more problematic would surely be beneficial to meet the needs of individual ECTs.

The ECF's (DfE 2019) programme follows a modular structure, decided by the ECF provider[12]. Teach First's programme begins by focussing on behaviour and classroom and the science of learning, as identified as priorities by initial working groups. Schools prioritised behaviour as being a focus in the first few weeks of teaching due to the need to establish routines and expectations with children (Craster and Moore 2022). Although the rationale for this is clear; it is not reflected in the research findings; none of the ECTs interviewed cited behaviour as a priority within their first six months of teaching. Their focus areas of assessment and data collection are not addressed until the fourth and fifth modules of Teach First's programme. Regardless of the sequencing, it would not be possible to meet all ECTs' needs in an order most effective to individuals. This is one way in which the ECF adopts a one size fits all approach, a topic which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

4.7.2 The conflicted role of the teacher

The ECF (DfE 2019) and ethics of care can be seen as reflecting largely incompatible discourses - the one bureaucratic, techno-rational and contractual, the other humanistic, affect-oriented and relational. Professional discretion is a vital element of a teacher's role as it demands human judgement that 'cannot be programmed and for which machines cannot substitute' (Lipsky 2010, cited

[12] Schools have three delivery options for ECT training. Option one is to use a DfE funded training provider of which there are six lead providers (Ambition Institute, Best Practice Network, Capita, Education Development Trust, Teach First, UCL Institute of Education). Option two is to use DfE accredited materials for schools to deliver their own training. Option three is for schools to design and deliver their own programme based on the ECF. Guidance for schools: how to manage ECF-based training - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) [Accessed 31.08.22].

in Murphy 2022: 7). This aspect of a teacher's role is part of their professional practice but is often forgotten within the climate of accountability (Murphy 2022).

As discussed within Chapter two, teacher self-care is crucial within such a demanding profession as teaching. Gemma (interview 1) described the role as 'exhausting - mentally and physically', describing how she arrived in school early, went home late and did not 'switch off' from the job. She explained that she had tried doing things for her own personal well-being such as swimming but said, 'I physically can't do it'. It was during her first interview that Gemma already summarised that she could not continue as she was. Rebecca (interview 2) spoke about the difficulties of juggling workload with family life and how it was usually 9pm before she was able to sit down and complete work. She said that by this time, 'there was nothing – I didn't have the brain left to do it'. It is questionable whether the ECF (DfE 2019) will simply add to teachers' workload or whether it will provide a supportive mechanism for ECTs such as Gemma who, at times, felt quite isolated in a village school. This is a theme that will be considered further in the next chapter where support and the use of CoP will be discussed.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has addressed some of the policies derived at national level which govern a teacher's practice. Curricula, the assessment of outcomes at the end of each key stage, alongside mechanisms such as moderation, Local Authority visits and Ofsted inspections mean that teachers have little autonomy over their practice. Many of these forms of control may be heightened for ECTs who have the least autonomy within their role and feel greater forms of accountability within the induction period due to monitoring within the induction period and assessment to ensure that are meeting the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a).

Findings have highlighted that ECTs are often aware of the accountability mechanisms in place but feel that they have little say in their actions as such resulting in 'reluctant compliance' (Moore and Clarke 2016). The participants' discussion of their reasons for choosing teaching as a profession are discussed further within chapter six, however, analysis has already revealed that all the ECTs described their focus on the children, their needs and an ethics of care (Noddings 2003). The challenges here are clear as a performative education background is at odds with an ethics of care. Against such a back-drop, caring for pupils has perhaps become redefined as ensuring that they make progress and achieve academically (Braun and Maguire 2020).

The next chapter will continue to analyse findings, turning to the meso level of policy implementation within schools. Here, discussion will turn to the translation of policy discussed within this chapter into

specific school contexts. Support will be discussed as key in ECTs navigating this translation with a need for not only intellectual support but also in terms of emotional and social support.

Chapter 5: Analysis – Meso Level

5.1 Introduction

Having explored national policy at macro level, this chapter will focus on policy implementation within employing schools, the meso level. The chapter will begin by addressing the complexities of the translation of policy into specific contexts. It will then go on to discuss the importance of support within the ECT induction period. Wenger's (1998) three-part definition of CoP (*mutual engagement* in a *joint enterprise* involving a *shared discursive repertoire*) will then be used to engage with the focus on nuances in school practices within these areas, drawing on interview findings. The focus on care, and how this often acts in opposition to the technocratic view of support within policy, as outlined in the previous chapter, will be explored further through discussion of how employing contexts balance these two areas.

5.2 The significance of employing contexts

As outlined in the previous chapter, many of the policy tensions identified within interviews with ECTs relate to central policy. However, a significant factor will be the employing school's interpretation of central policy and how this is transferred into practice. This can be a notable source of tension as reform policy tends to assume a homogeneity across all policy receivers (Ozga 2000) whereas it is likely that national, institutional and classroom policy and priorities will clash and overlap in practice (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012). The current focus on 'what works' within practice and the notions of 'evidence-based practice' privileges forms of policy that can be implemented across a range of contexts over local and contextualised forms of practice (Mockler and Groundwater-Smith 2015: 28). 'The intrinsic logics of policy collide in a complex manner with the institutional logics of the contexts within which the policy is supposed to be enacted' (Priestley, Biesta and Robinson 2015: 124). In this sense, an understanding of 'the classroom' does not exist as one thing, as diverse school contexts means that there are many different classrooms for which ECTs are expected to be prepared to teach in (Mayer 2021). Policy documents such as the ECF (DfE 2019) assume a causal view of practice whereby there is a universal knowledge discovered through research and that the teacher's role is to apply this (Biesta 2010). There needs to be a shift away from a causality to a complexity view of practice which assumes that research is always culturally and historically situated (Biesta 2010). Teachers therefore need to have the freedom to question the research which informs their practice, to reflect on its relevance for their role and context.

Returning to discussions of national policy in the previous chapter, a further risk to fidelity is the 'one size fits all' approach which many policies adopt. The ECF (DfE 2019) adopts a 'pedagogically prescriptive' approach with little scope for teacher judgement (Iglehart 2022: 47). Similarly statutory curricula outlines the same expectations for all children, a mechanism which Noddings (1998) highlights is counterproductive as treating all children the same does not promote the same opportunity for all. The next section will further discuss some of the risks of a one size fits all approach can bring when national policy is translated to school-level.

5.3 Striving for the unobtainable: A one size fits all approach

It must be acknowledged that school contexts vary significantly in terms of demographics and cultural and community variables (Adie and Wyatt-Smith 2020). The ECT participants were employed in schools of different sizes and within varied geographical locations (see section 3.7). Gemma referred to her setting of a small village school as 'unique' on several occasions. Although it is apparent that she is not the only ECT to work in such a context, this is clearly how Gemma was made to feel through discussion with other ECTs during CPD courses where she found that her own practice did not bear much resemblance to that of ECTs employed in larger schools. She discussed how larger schools 'sort of look down' on smaller schools and 'feel like we get it easy 'cos of our numbers or we don't do it by the book' (interview 2). In the same sense that Noddings (2005) describes how the present educational system forces the same form of schooling on all, the ECF (DfE 2019) is prescribing that ECT induction is the same for all. Findings outline that this prescriptive nature will not meet the needs of all ECTs; the context of the school can be significant factor here. Two key elements of effective teacher professional development are that it is differentiated and contextualised (Mockler 2022a). However, both Gemma and Rebecca highlighted on numerous occasions within interviews that the small size of their school meant the content of some courses they attended were not relevant to them, or how, the prescribed nature of the curriculum was not suited to a mixed key stage class, again, relating back to some of the possible risks to fidelity of such approaches.

Gemma's defence of her position within a small school may also encourage responses of power unbeknownst to herself or contrary to her intentions, if such feelings are shared with teachers working in larger schools due to power often being distributed amongst complex social networks (Rouse 1994). In Gemma's situation, it is possible that this could impact on social alignments, for example with a larger network of schools or of colleagues defending their own views of schools in different contexts. Wood and Stanulis (2009) identify CPD as a key form of support for ECTs therefore heightening the crucial impact of this experience for Gemma. Clare (interview 2) highlighted how she had been able

to observe other teachers' practice across nearly all the year groups in her school, an opportunity not possible for Gemma. Gemma's frustrations also revealed some of her insecurities within her role and perhaps a desire to herself work in a larger school as she suggested, 'we've got two curriculums and I think I'd rather have 20 Year 1s so they can all have the same objective' (interview 2). This move to a larger, single form entry school is one which Gemma makes part way through her second year of teaching, indicating a desire for a simpler working life. This highlights the somewhat linear approach of the English education system being organised into year groups based on the child's age with specific curriculum outcomes for each year group. In England, a move to a mixed age class is often as a result of school numbers rather than a conscious decision of how mixed ages may be advantageous. Even when this practice is in place, the separate outcomes will still be upheld. In other countries, for example, Australia, composite classrooms are more common with grade structure being considered 'immaterial' as adapted teaching should be in place to cater for all individuals regardless of their grade/ year group[13].

Despite being employed in what from the outside may seem like two very similar contexts of small village schools, Rebecca and Gemma experienced very different inductions into teaching, therefore emphasising that size of the school is not the only factor present here. The introduction of the ECF (DfE 2019) could result in a positive move towards some consistency of approach, however, there needs to be further acknowledgement of differences in practice or context, as 'schools are not neutral sites and teachers cannot assume the posture of being neutral either' (Giroux 2010: 203). When discussing the ECF (DfE 2019), Gemma was very positive about its introduction and a more consistent approach; she expressed that she felt that it should be down to the employing school to then 'tailor' the induction to the context (interview 4). The national roll-out of the ECF highlighted potential issues in alignment to school contexts and meeting teachers' needs (Ovenden-Hope 2022). This suggests that the complexities of the employing context should be used as a starting point for discussion at the outset of induction and further guidance for mentors is needed to enable the balance between policy enactment and relevance to the context.

A further consideration when discussing context, is the ECT's prior experiences of schools with a similar demographic to their employing school. The ECF (DfE 2019: 5) discusses that the 'areas covered within initial training will be covered in greater depth as part of induction'. Whilst this will arguably be the case for all ECTs, their starting point will differ dependent upon their experiences during, or prior to, training. Some may be employed within one of their placement schools, others will be

[13] See Many parents dislike composite classes but the evidence does not support their anxiety (smh.com.au) [Accessed 03.05.22].

employed in contexts similar to those they have previously experienced, whilst others will be employed in contrasting contexts. Clare (interview 2) spoke about how her range of experiences in different schools had helped to inform her choice of school (this will be discussed further in section 5.4.3). Reflecting on the national roll out of the ECF (DfE 2019), one of the ECF providers, Ambition Institute, highlighted how they expect ECTs and mentors to reflect on the content of the ECF in the context of what they already know, thus acknowledging the different existing skills that need to be considered around the ECF statements (Ovenden-Hope 2022). As such, the success of the ECF rests, in part, on whether it is 'supportive of development rather than becoming an assessment tool' (Iglehart 2022: 36).

With many variables present when the ECTs begin their induction period, it is evident that support to transition into the specific employing context, with its own interpretations of policy and associated practices, is needed. This was a theme that came through strongly across all interviews. The introduction to the ECF (DfE 2019) also highlights the importance of support within the early years of a teacher's career and uses this as a rationale for change within induction processes. However, the DfE's interpretation of support and ECTs' understanding of it are significantly different as will be explored further below.

5.4 Communities of Practice: A relational view

Wenger (1998) uses a three-part definition to define CoP: mutual engagement in a joint enterprise utilising a shared discourse repertoire. In interview findings, it is evident that the ECTs discuss many elements of CoP. For example, they share information, insights and advice with their colleagues, they discuss their situations, aspirations and needs and contemplate common issues, ideas and act as sounding boards (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder 2002). This section will be structured using Wenger's (1998) three-part definition of CoP. Mutual engagement will focus on relationships built with colleagues both within and outside of the employing context; joint enterprise will focus on the education of children and ways in which the prescriptive nature of curricula may challenge or inadvertently affirm this; shared repertoire looks at some specific practices of different schools. ECT interview findings will be discussed within the framework of Wenger's (1998) CoP to highlight a relational approach to support. Consideration of the more technocratic view of support taken by education policy, including that of the ECF (DfE 2019), will be interwoven throughout the discussion.

5.4.1 Relationships, support and teamwork: Mutual engagement

In interview three, all participants were asked to define and give examples of support from their first eighteen months of teaching. They all referred to support coming from one or multiple people. They used terms synonymous with, or related to, being encouraged, for example, giving advice, guiding, offering a listening ear, someone you can turn to and can trust. The examples given mostly related to discussion with mentors or other members of staff about the ECTs' concerns or to give feedback to the ECTs.

Practice exists, not in the abstract, but because people are engaged in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another (Wenger 1998). Mutual engagement defines how the community and membership within the community is reliant upon this. From the outset of interview one, Clare identified the main 'high' of her teaching career so far as, 'all the lovely staff members, everybody's so kind, they can't offer enough support'. This was furthered in interview two when she went onto say that when she took the role, she intended to stay at the school for one year and then look into teaching abroad but she now felt that she would stay there long-term. When asked further about this, she replied, 'the factors in that are the lovely children we get coming through the school, the lovely staff and the amount of support and help they offer… and there's lots of – for professional development, I can see myself developing and I think that plays a big part … I can see myself really progressing'. It is evident from Clare's recount above that support in the induction period is crucial. What she emphasises is the role of many different staff members, highlighting the need for a CoP rather than an over-reliance on one mentoring role within the school. The next section will consider different staff roles and how each of these are important in forming a CoP.

Leading by example: The role of Head teachers

Those within senior leadership positions can lead by example and as such encourage mutual engagement within a CoP. Within the introduction of the ECF (DfE 2019: 4), the need to develop 'working habits that set [ECTs] up for the fulfilling and successful career' is mentioned but ways in which these working habits will vary across school contexts is not expanded upon. The presence of the Head teacher within the CoP may be more visible in some schools than others and this is likely to have consequences. This section will discuss the Head teachers' role in supporting well-being and workload, with findings highlighting a varied approach and understanding of this within schools. It will then move onto discuss some of the risks of 'normalisation' through Head teachers leading by example.

Much of the ECTs' discussion around their Head teachers focused on their role supporting workload and well-being rather than a focus on vision or leadership. In 2019 Ofsted published a research report focusing on teacher well-being[14]. Findings highlighted the following as negative elements that lead to poor occupational well-being: high workloads; lack of work-life balance; a perceived lack of resources and a lack of support from senior managers (Ofsted 2019). Research suggests that school leader support needs to focus on both pupil and staff well-being as well as progress and curriculum development (Crisp and Cordingley 2022). It is commonly documented that ECTs struggle with workload; Rebecca and Gemma both talked openly about their struggles to keep a healthy work-life balance. Their guidance around this varied, from Gemma whose Head teacher was regularly in school at weekends and therefore acted as a role model for Gemma to also do this (interview 1), to Rebecca who had little communication or guidance from her Head teacher at all, commenting that she rarely saw her. In contrast, Clare recalled how her Head teacher sat with her one day after school to help her complete tasks and regularly encouraged her to go home promptly (interview 1). Clare's discussion of the need for emotional support, turned to some home issues that she had during her first year of teaching and how she knew she could turn to the Head teacher. She talked about feeling 'close' to the Head teacher and some teachers within school and how they checked in with her regularly to make sure she was ok (interview 3). Clare's description highlights that ECTs value colleagues who look out for or take care of them, and that school leadership is vital in this respect (Aspfors and Bondas 2013). ECTs need to feel that fellow colleagues, including Head teachers are interested, listen to them, understand and show consideration (Aspfors and Bondas 2013).

Clare and Gemma both talked about how their school leaders focused on well-being, however, Gemma did not support this with the narrative of her experiences. In interview one she stated 'I've not got a work life balance, it's just non-existent... I don't do anything for myself during the week'. She also stated that if she was not working at weekends she felt 'guilty'. By interview three she stated that things had improved, explaining herself and a fellow teacher tried to ensure that they left school in good time and met at weekends in a social context. She described how they were 'both in it together' and sometimes needed to have a 'rant' or a 'moan' suggesting that she was struggling significantly with the demands of the role, thus highlighting the difference here between rhetoric and reality. Concerns around teachers' well-being may exist in the rhetoric, however, within policy enactment these become subordinate to productivity (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012), therefore if such levels of accountability within policy exists, long working hours are somewhat inevitable for ECTs.

[14] The What Works Centre for Well-being was used as a guiding framework in this research. The main elements of this are: health; relationships with others at work; purpose; environment and security. Summary and recommendations: teacher well-being research report - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) [Accessed 16.11.22].

On the other hand, Clare talked about staff meetings focusing on well-being with activities such as yoga introduced to staff (interview 3). Ella claimed that she had a healthy work-life balance due to the fact there was no pressure from senior leaders about what time she arrived or left school, she summarised, 'it's just what suits you' (interview 2). Gu et al (2018: 330) bring together an extensive body of research which highlights how the values of Head teachers impact on how schools respond to policy reforms, surmising that, 'schools that have the capacity not only to survive but also to thrive in the face of considerable and continuing external policy demands'. It is evident that there are differences in the degree to which ECTs receive and rely on guidance, however, there is a responsibility on senior leaders to either guide or lead by example. In some respects, Head teachers and Senior Leaders can be viewed as those who enable professional development by ensuring that time is allocated to this, opportunities are given and a culture conducive to this is developed (Tyreman 2022). Having discussed the role of the Head teacher in supporting teachers' well-being and workload, attention will now turn to how leading by example may have negative implications if 'normalisation' is used as a technique of power.

Much interpretation of school policy views all those within the process as equal, with the exception of school leaders (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012), therefore suggesting that the ECTs look to those who have influence over the policy for guidance around this. As Foucault discussed, 'normalisation' can be a technique of power (Rouse 1994: 98) as it is the criteria against which all are to be measured, evaluated and judged (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012). This technique could lead to ECTs being in danger of becoming, or trying to become, the kind of teacher that fits the school's notion of being an effective teacher (Haggarty and Postlethwaite 2012) as with the example of Gemma echoing her Head teacher's working habits of going into school on weekends. Clarke (2021:10) furthers this discussing how schools often demand 'unwavering loyalty and total commitment', resulting in teachers feeling enormous pressure to align with the school's policies and practices. The ECF (DfE 2019: 4) claims that it gives 'practical guidance on skills that early career teachers should be supported to develop', however, the guidance does not address the complexities of different contexts; examples of how different practices may vary from school to school may be beneficial but conversely may also lead to 'normalisation' becoming further embedded in practice. For ECTs there is a danger of practices being developed for the specific context and not for career long development, a criticism applied to School Direct models of training[15].

[15] School Direct is a school-led route in ITE. It is run by a partnership between a lead school, other schools and an accredited teacher training provider. School Direct enables schools to: select and recruit their own trainees – with an expectation that trainees will be employed by the school or partnership of schools once they are

Although Rebecca left the school after her first year due to her role being a maternity cover, it must be questioned whether she would have looked to move school anyway. She reflected, 'what surprised me was that how much I would have liked more leadership and guidance' (interview 2). There is little evidence of Rebecca's school being an 'enabling environment' - an aspect that is needed to make mutual engagement possible (Wenger 1998). Within discussion of this element of mutual engagement, Wenger proposes that participation involves being included in what matters within the organisation. Within interview one, Rebecca expressed frustration at the lack of information fed back to her from a chief local authority advisor visiting the school. She clearly felt that this was important and that she was being given small pieces of information from different sources, not directly from the Head teacher. This suggested that she did not feel involvement in some of the wider considerations of the school. Power dynamics are clearly at play here, a risk that Wenger does not sufficiently explore within his work on CoP (Barton and Tusting 2005).

Discussion of the role of Head teachers also included their role in monitoring and surveillance of the ECTs, though this sometimes appeared in indirect forms. Gemma (interview 1) discussed how she did not have to give planning into her Head teacher, viewing this as a positive element, stating that she did not have 'pressures' from her Head teacher. On the surface, this suggests that Gemma had autonomy in her approach to planning and there was a level of trust for her Head teacher. However, Gemma went onto say that due to the small size of the school, her Head teacher could not 'avoid coming into the classroom, she's always in and out, she looks at books' and as a result did not need to see Gemma's planning. This suggests that Gemma was under more constant surveillance than she recognised. This is fitting with Foucault's description of surveillance as a way of exercising power in a more subtle, yet more complex way, as opposed to a display of power as a 'spectacular display of force' (Rouse 1994: 95). Accountability regimes are now embedded within education policy and practices and therefore increasingly seen as part of the 'professional repertoire of the teacher' (Braun and Maguire 2020: 444). ECTs are most likely aware of the constant surveillance that they are under, however, as this is now seen as a standard form of practice, in Gemma's case, this is not seen as anything unusual or worth further discussion.

Head teachers play a crucial within ECTs induction, both in ensuring well-being and workload are effectively considered but also emphasising the power dynamics that are at play within schools,

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qualified; agree the content and focus of the training programme depending on the needs of both the trainees and the school. School Direct: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) [Accessed 12.08.22].

something that is not considered within a CoP. Discussion will now turn to the role of mentors, a role more commonly discussed within induction guidance and research.

Mentoring: The demands and unrealistic expectation of the role

It is widely documented that mentor support is crucial within the early years of a teacher's career (Auletto 2021; Platt 2022). A benefit of the ECF (DfE 2019) is the focus on mentor development and the heightened awareness to all stakeholders, particularly senior leaders, of the importance of this role (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022).

The ECF (DfE 2019) outlines that ECTs should develop as professionals by, 'seeking challenge, feedback and critique from mentors and other colleagues in an open and trusting working environment' (DfE 2019: 24). What the ECF (DfE 2019) does not address is what constitutes 'an open and trusting working environment' for the ECT, how all parties involved can ensure this is in place, and what might be done if it is not. Furthering this, due to the nature of the relationships in question, is it possible to create such an environment? As Foucault (1979) asserts, there is no neutral when it comes to power relations, therefore making this highly questionable. Within CoP there are likely to be disagreements, tensions and conflicts, as well as mutual support and interpersonal allegiance (Wenger 1998: 77). The positioning of ECTs at the beginning of their careers, with the least experience in the profession, puts them in a position, however, where they are unlikely to challenge processes or practices. It is these modes of agency that are most likely to be silenced (Bunn, Langer and Fellows 2022). If ECTs remain silent or passive when faced with practices with which they do not agree, or which they perceive to be oppressive or unjust, they are implicitly condoning these practices (Clarke 2021). Clare (interview 3) spoke about the need for approval, admitting that she is a 'worrier' and often asked for her mentor to watch small portions of lessons to make sure she is 'doing it right'. She was clear that she viewed support as someone telling her what to do and how she would always take this onboard. This suggests that the mentor has the control and power to validate. Bunn, Langer and Fellows' (2022: 2) work focuses on Higher Education, describing student agency as, 'a target of knowledge to be operationalised, nurtured and developed by mechanisms of power aligned with neoliberal ideas about what the education of business should be'. However, this is also relevant to ECTs as policy in schools is in the most-part grounded in subservient and subsistent forms of agency where they have little voice and are expected to comply to given standards and frameworks.

The mentor should be the person who the ECT turns to, but unequal power relations mean that these conversations may be contrived or false. The ECT may be reluctant to raise any difficulties in case these are perceived as weaknesses (Hobson and McIntyre 2013). They are likely to consider it too

'risky' to speak out or challenge school practices to somebody employed within the context and somebody who is within an assessment role (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022). The ECT induction period is loaded in that ECTs need to successfully pass this induction, particularly with this now being over a two-year timeframe. University College London (UCL), one of the main providers of the ECF programme, chose ONSIDE[16] mentoring for Year 1 of the programme, with one principle of this being that mentors are 'allies, champions and advocates for their mentees' (Quinn 2022: 165). This form of mentoring suggests a move towards a balance in power dynamics. However, it needs to be considered that the mentor will still be employed by the school and therefore unequal power relationships will be at play, making this balance technically impossible. This will constrain an ethics of care as honest, open relationships between the ECT and their mentor are unlikely to be possible. It must be considered the extent to which mutual relations are complex mixtures of power and dependence, expertise and helplessness (Wenger 1998). Perhaps the exception to these dynamics is Adam's discussion of how he felt that his mentor's advice was not always relevant as she was based in a different key stage to him. He stated that he felt confident to address this in meetings and then they would look at other strategies together which were more pertinent to EYFS practice (interview 3). Power dynamics must also be considered in the lack of acknowledgement to the prior experiences of ECTs within the ECF (DfE 2019). Training sessions within the ECF programme are led by 'expert' practitioners (Platt 2022) with the ECT as the novice; Craster and Moore (2022) argue that an understanding of the novice to expert continuum is needed for the ECF to make more sense. ECTs are encouraged to make changes to their practice based on CPD they have undertaken (Crisp and Cordingley 2022). However, the needs of ECTs vary significantly based on prior experience, school context and their stage of development when leaving ITE (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022) therefore suggesting that these factors also need to be considered when planning CPD. This again highlights some of the challenges of a one size fits all approach to induction.

Although protected time for mentoring is recognised as being 'essential' for the successful implementation of the ECF, the amount of time needed has still been underestimated (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022: 106) and induction relies heavily on the goodwill and skills of mentors (Quinn 2022). Mentors are therefore likely to focus on *what* needs to be covered with the framework rather than *how* it is approached, thus connecting back to earlier discussions of a surface or strategic approach to the framework (Mann 2001, cited in Bunn, Langer and Fellows 2022). As discussed within chapter two, England's induction system makes this a high-stakes process for ECTs, more so than many other

[16] ONSIDE = **O**ffline and non-hierarchical; **N**on-evaluative and non-judgemental; **S**upportive of mentees' psycho-social needs and well-being; **I**ndividualised; **D**evelopmental and growth-orientated; **E**mpowering (Quinn 2022: 165)

countries. The approach encourages more of a tick-box approach whilst engendering subsistence forms of agency. Furthermore, in smaller schools, staff members are likely to have several roles within the school, meaning less time to devote to ECT support. This is evident in Rebecca's case where, despite speaking very highly of her mentor, she admitted that her mentor had very little chance to meet with her due to wider responsibilities within the school. Talking, listening and giving time are forms of support and that with these in place, specific advice can be given (Noddings 2005). This raises questions about the balance between emotional and intellectual support that are further explored in the following section.

Emotional or intellectual support?

Relationships between people and to care are basic needs in all people's lives (Noddings 2002); a rushed or piecemeal approach to mentoring may not reflect the care that is needed within the role. The relationship between ECT and their mentor can prove pivotal in their progress in the early years of their careers (Tyreman 2022). More specifically, the importance of emotional and personal support is vital in heightening retention amongst ECTs (Squires 2019) as teaching is an 'emotional practice' which needs 'emotional understanding' (Hargreaves 1998, cited in Bates, Lewis and Pickard 2011: 139). Little attention has been paid to emotional and relational aspects of support needed within the teaching profession (Aspfors and Bondas 2013). However, within interview three, when asked what forms of support the participants most related to and considered to be of greatest importance, they all identified emotional support, thus suggesting that this there is a much greater need for this than often documented. Clare gave a clear rationale for this being the most important form of support, stating that if you are not supported emotionally, you cannot deliver the best you can be and therefore the other forms of support become meaningless. ECTs spoke about the importance of emotional support, however, it was not always their mentor who they would turn to for such support but often other colleagues within the school.

Adam (interview 3) drew upon the need for support with 'intellectual stuff'; the example he gave was around early years pedagogy. He discussed how his phase lead was always 'checking research' and how the whole team discussed and reflected upon research that they then put into practice. However, there are few further examples from within the findings that relate to this form of 'intellectual' support despite this being commonly documented within NQT 'survival guides'. Taking Teach First as an example, their ECF programme follows modules that focus on areas such as creating an effective learning environment and understanding how pupils learn (Platt 2022). There are suggestions for the focus of mentor meetings linked to the content such as addressing persistent and challenging behaviour, however, the focus is largely on the pedagogy and curriculum content rather than the

emotional aspects of support. Even within standard eight of the ECF which focuses on professional behaviours, there is no guidance as to the nature of the support needed or the complexities of this, the orientation of this 'transactional, rather than reflective of the collective efficacy which underpins school life' (Crisp and Cordingley 2022: 269). 'Support' is referred to in a simplistic way, suggesting that ECTs learn how to build effective relationships by, 'Seeking ways to support individual colleagues and working as part of a team' (DfE 2019: 24) but not outlining any strategies to enable this. The linguistic constructions of the ECF (DfE 2019) with terms such as 'learn that' and 'learn how to', mean that the ECTs do not have opportunity to exercise agency, with agency only being permitted within the narrow diameters of the framework itself. In some cases, ECTs may adopt a surface or strategic approach to their learning with a focus on meeting the requirements of the ECF (Bunn, Langer and Fellows 2022), particularly given workload demands. This is evident in Clare's discussion of meeting the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) where she adopts a 'tick box' approach to evidencing her CPD in each standard. (This is discussed further in section 6.3.3). The ECF makes several references to working with or alongside colleagues (DfE 2019). Although the benefits of this are clear, the social dynamics and associated processes in establishing these networks and forms of collaborative working are not adequately considered (Priestley, Biesta and Robinson 2015).

Noddings (1998) argues that the ethics of care need not lead to uniform, impartial practices as would perhaps be expected from the prescriptive nature of the ECF (DfE 2019), but can, in contrast, lead to the widening of answers and the understanding that our recommendations are the product of our own standpoint. For practices to be widened, mentors and colleagues working with ECTs would need to recognise their own standpoint and that of the school, something that is not considered within the ECF. There is a clear tension between the ethical underpinnings of Nodding's approach and the technocratic orientation of the ECF (DfE 2019). The ECF (DfE 2019) 'dilutes' the nature of support around professional development into tangible standards, suggesting a consistency across schools that is not likely to be present. In this sense, there is a focus on a specific vision rather than looking at the complexities of practice within different contexts or situations. When asked about her views on the introduction of the ECF, Gemma reflected that her own NQT programme was, 'pretty useless' (interview 4) and needed updating but the sessions could have been useful. She felt that ECT induction needed to be tailored to the school context, describing her school as a 'unique setting', however, she felt that there should be a consistent approach to induction. This raises questions as to whether a tailored, yet consistent approach is possible. The inclusion of further guidance, or perhaps examples of practice in different settings may go some way towards solving this problem, yet in parallel will only further a school's reliance on policy when looking further at these intricacies and identifying what may or may not apply to that context.

Considering the two different views of care, as outlined by Noddings (2005), the ethics of care is a relational view, whereas caring can also be seen, in a more 'paternalistic' sense, as a virtue belonging to the carer. In this sense, carers may follow a path along which they do not consider the expressed needs of the cared for, but instead pursue what they think might be in their best interests. Noddings (2005: xvi) describes this as a one of 'the greatest tragedies in traditional education'. Here, attentions turn to the motivation of one's actions within this role. Friedman (2016) explored altruistic and narcissistic behaviours in teachers, devising a continuum from genuine altruism whereby the final objective is the pupil, or in this case, the ECT, with no expectation of reward; to genuine (healthy) narcissism demonstrated through a personal and professional sense of self-importance, demanding gratitude and respect. For mentors, motivation for their role may span from that of genuine altruism to that of genuine narcissism, for example, a desire for promotion. Although Noddings' work focuses on this from the child-teacher perspective, this can also be related to the mentor- ECT relationship, in that mentors may use the ECF as the driving force for meetings and the need to be shown as complying with the framework and fulfilling their position as mentor (a more narcissistic stance), as opposed to the expressed concerns or wishes of the ECT (implying altruism).

The expectations of mentors poses many challenges with guidance emphasising the role of intellectual support as opposed to the emotional support that ECTs so often need. This leads to discussion of the role of other colleagues in supporting ECTs.

The hidden yet crucial role of other colleagues within induction

Mutual engagement draws upon what we do and know as well as our ability to connect with what we do and do not know (Wenger 1998). In this respect, we look to the knowledge and contributions of others, particularly the 'tacit knowledge' of experienced colleagues (McDonald and Mercieca 2021: 22). This was certainly the case when the ECTs discussed the colleagues who they worked most closely with. Adam identified the Early Years Lead, Jill, as his main form of support. He discussed Jill's years of experience in the role and how he had learnt from her (interview 1) suggesting some forms of intellectual support. This resonates with Wenger, McDermott and Snyder's (2002) description that the knowledge gained by an 'expert' is an accumulation of experience and reflections of practice and conversations with others.

Adam also discussed his colleagues' roles in supporting him emotionally. He described how he took home a 'lot of emotional baggage' (interview 2) when referring to child protection issues and how he often struggled to switch off from this on evenings. He explained that having phone conversations with his Teaching Assistant (TA) about these issues helped. He described teaching as being a 'draining

profession' (interview 3) and how speaking to other staff members helped to 'lighten the air'. Adam's focus on caring is significant here; this is an important aspect of teaching but can also be exhausting and emotionally draining (Aspfors and Bondas 2013). This highlights a tension between what can be described as the 'true joy' of being a caring teacher and the exhaustion that can be caused over time (Aspfors and Bondas 2013: 255). Expertise will not develop unless practitioners have opportunities to work with and learn from others who face similar situations (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder 2002). For Adam, his TA was the person who understood his concerns the most, working in the same classroom as him. Adam explained that he felt gaining emotional support was, 'difficult, even with other teachers because they're not in the same environment as you' (interview 3). As the interviews progressed, he felt like he was able to switch off further from these issues, suggesting that this emotional support from someone who understood was effective. This echoes Aspfors and Bondas's (2013) findings that new teachers need 'emotional relief'.

Clare advocated that in order to be an effective teacher you must have a healthy work-life balance, otherwise you will not do your job to the best of your ability. She went onto say that she felt this would not be possible if she did not work in a phase team with two other teachers (interview 3). Clare regularly talked about feeling part of the school team and how she felt she could turn to any member of staff, knowing they would be willing to help. She discussed the advantages of being a large staff team and how she and the other two teachers within the same age phase supported each other, commenting, 'we can fall back on each other' (interview 2). She suggested that a colleague who had just completed her first year of teaching was a particularly useful form of support, describing how she could ask her what she may perceive to be a 'silly question' knowing that she had experienced similar things only last year. Similarly, Ella discussed how she 'off-loads' to colleagues (interview 2), giving an example of how she often went to another teacher's classroom at the end of the school day to reflect on her day. This colleague was also newly employed in the school. Ella explained that this prevented her from off-loading at home about work, therefore highlighting the therapeutic benefits of this. As is apparent from the ECTs' discussions, within CoP, 'diversity is as important as homogeneity' (Wenger 1998: 75). Each member gains their unique place which is then further integrated within the CoP and is further defined through engagement in practice. This may be through the exchanging of information, sharing of opinions, or informal discussions, all influencing others' understandings.

Colleagues are equal relations in that we have responsibility for their moral growth as we do for friends though in a different form (Noddings 2005). However, given the pressures and constraints imposed in schools this can be hard to achieve. Considering the ECT recounts above, Clare and Ella feel more comfortable speaking to colleagues who are either new to the school or the profession, suggesting

that they feel the power dynamics are more equal than with more experienced colleagues. This highlights how some ECTs are less likely to ask experienced colleagues, with the most to offer, for support. Discussion will now turn to the role of ITE providers as a further form of support within ECT induction.

Bridging the 'support gap': The role of ITE Providers

Within the interviews, all ECTs drew upon knowledge gained from university sessions and the usefulness of this in their practice. Rebecca specifically talked about how she missed the ITE content and she felt that that she had, 'stagnated a little bit because I've just not had chance to read' (interview 2). It is likely that the ECF content would be beneficial for ECTs such as Rebecca who is eager to keep up to date with research.

However important the notion of learning as participation in practice is, it is likely that students' 'eventual destinations' will lie outside the academic community (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015). For ECTs, with their background in a professional degree and in a profession which encourages them to be 'lifelong learners', they are likely to maintain an academic community. However, it is perhaps unrealistic to expect them to see themselves as part of the university's CoP for very long once they have moved onto employment. Ella echoed this stating, 'because I've got so much support in school I don't really need to go back to uni … because if I've got a problem then I'll think about – you know talk to my staff about it because they are so supportive but I can imagine if I might have been in a less supportive school that I probably would rely more on university and the things that you've shared for us to use' (interview 1). Ella highlighted the possible differences between levels of support in schools and how even though she does not need additional support from the ITE provider, others may not be in the same position. This also emphasises that although the ECTs will be members of multiple CoP, their influence and role within these will vary as they make the transition from student teacher to ECT to a more established teacher.

All participants spoke about this layer of support as being a form of reassurance. As Adam summarised, 'I think it was nice to have that reassurance from university that they were still there if you needed them and just that they were still giving advice' (interview 1). Similarly, Clare stated, 'I've not had to fall back [to university support]' but she acknowledged that she liked to keep in touch with certain ITE staff members (interview 1).

Mutual relations are complex mixtures of power and dependence, expertise and helpfulness, alliance and competition and anger and tenderness (Wenger 1998). These aspects are likely to show in different situations with different colleagues, thus highlighting that this is a more complex area than

policy acknowledges, however the different roles of these colleagues within a CoP are pivotal for support within the ECT induction period. The next section will turn to look at a further aspect of a CoP – joint enterprise.

5.4.2 Accountability and implementation: A joint enterprise

Wenger (1998) outlines that the second characteristic of a CoP is that of joint enterprise. He states three points relating to enterprise that keep a CoP together. Firstly, that it is the result of a collective negotiation that reflects the full complexity of mutual engagement. Secondly, that the nature of the enterprise is defined by the participants themselves in their pursuit of it. Finally, that although it need not be a stated goal, it creates amongst the participants, relations of mutual accountability.

Although enterprises are complex and may not mean agreement in the simplest of senses, amongst all participants it is something that is mutually negotiated (Wenger 1998). Arguably within a school, the education of children is going to form a significant part of this joint enterprise, however, as Wenger (1998) states, individual situations and ways of approaching this will vary. Within discussions around teacher identity, all ECTs stated that their focus and purpose for teaching was the children. Despite acknowledging that the joint enterprise does not need to be explicitly articulated, the enterprise of educating children can be viewed as part of this joint enterprise in the broadest sense, with each school context and member of staff, including the ECTs, interpreting and negotiating this differently.

There are clear links here to national policy, as discussed in the previous chapter. CoP may be significantly shaped by conditions out of the control of its members. In the instance of teachers, government policy will certainly influence practice (Wenger 1998). However, the day-to-day reality of practice is produced by the participants themselves within the constraints of their own context and policy at this level. It is their response to the situation and therefore it is their enterprise (Wenger 1998). It is for this reason that the CoP which exists within each school varies so greatly and the reason why some ECTs seem to feel more 'comfortable' with their practice than others. For example, Clare saw her school as one which very much reflected her own beliefs in teaching and she showed very little disagreement with the policies and practices.

Practice will likely not transform any conditions in a dramatic way, but it can respond to conditions that are not determined by the 'institution' (Wenger 1998: 79). For example, one teacher's practice is unlikely to bring about significant change to the whole school, but teachers can have flexibility in their delivery of content provided it is still within the parameters of policy. It is helpful here to consider government policy as the 'institution' and relate back to ways in which schools may manipulate these policies to ways of working which are more in-line with their own ethos or values.

At school level, policy is likely to still allow for individual teacher's approach to practice or curriculum delivery. Wenger (1998: 80) describes 'inventive resourcefulness' which can apply equally to both what a company (school) wants or does not want. He discusses different ways of doing things – ways that are effective in meeting the prescribed policies on a local level; and also of finding ways to escape levels of control. Interviews with the participants, highlighted tensions and challenges about curricula and the impact of observation and feedback, therefore this next section will focus on these themes and how this is negotiated at school level and how this may impact on the joint enterprise of the school.

Curricula: Tensions that inadvertently aid a joint enterprise

There is a tension between the purpose of the introduction of government policy and how this translates into school; what may be perceived as simple transmission processes can be highly complex, involving translation and enactments (Ozga 2000; Ball, Braun and Maguire 2012). Although schools cannot move away from the performativity aspects of central policy in neoliberal contexts, the way in which they approach this will differ. The National Curriculum (DfE 2013) suggests that it gives schools freedom as to how they plan their curriculum, albeit within the restraints of the programmes of study outlined, giving little scope for local decision making, forms of judgement or creativity (Mockler and Groundwater Smith 2015). In practice, these limited variations will differ across school contexts, as highlighted within interview findings. Gemma and Rebecca, employed in small village schools, frequently mentioned that there was a lack of understanding around their contexts. Both talked about 'juggling' three different year groups within one class and the pressures of working across both the EYFS Framework (DfE 2017) and the National Curriculum (DfE 2013). The nature of these curricula is very different; Gemma described how she sometimes felt 'guilty' that Years 1 and 2 did not get the opportunity to play like the Reception children (interview 3) and Rebecca described how she worried that the Reception children 'get neglected' (interview 1). Having only six children in her class, Rebecca described how the absence of one child could change the dynamics in the class and encouraging independence within such a small group could be difficult (interview 1). Rebecca was clear that she did not align being an effective teacher with meeting National Curriculum objectives or age-related expectations but with the progress that children make from the start to the end of the lesson. She summarised, 'if they've hit a target that fits with the National Curriculum, happy days, but not to beat yourself up' (interview 2). This highlights how Rebecca did not regard the implementation of policy as necessarily best practice for the children and that there are other priorities, focusing on individual outcomes.

Standard three of the ECF (DfE 2019) suggests that ECTs discuss curriculum design with experienced colleagues but their autonomy over this is likely to be minimal, with their role likely to be compliance rather than active engagement (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2019). Ella (interview 1) discussed that she would like to focus on broadening the curriculum giving her reasons for this as being 'because Ofsted are now talking about the curriculum'. However, she went onto discuss the difficulties surrounding this with such a focus on literacy and mathematics. Here, Ella is showing the tension between what she is being told and the practicalities of implementation.

The expectations of the curricula are often at odds with the ECTs' focus on the child and an ethics of care. The curricula mean a demanding workload for teachers in order to ensure that all content is covered. Although these are contentious areas, it is these very demands that may form their joint enterprise; a way of working as a school team to ensure the most effective curriculum for their pupils, in-keeping with the school's ethos.

Observation and feedback

Although not in-keeping with a more relational view of support such as that of Wenger's (1998) CoP, the ECT participants discussed how mechanisms of observation and feedback often gave them reassurance that their practice was in-line with school expectations, as such contributing to a joint enterprise.

Clare described her experiences of moderation and an Ofsted inspection as, 'quite stressful but I'm really glad I had the experience of them' (interview 2). When discussed further she revealed how the Ofsted inspector was personable and how many of the questions she was asked were around ensuring that the school were supporting her effectively through induction. As such, she was bringing the ethics of care into her discussion of these processes. This is an example of an ECT feeling reassured by these processes and 'cared for', however, experiences of other ECTs may not be so positive. Koopman (2013) discusses the moral spectrum within Foucault's work with fascist morality (perfect discipline) and free spirit morality (escaping all control) at either end. Foucault (1979, cited in Koopman 2013:187) described 'the fascism in us all... the fascism that causes us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us'. Clare's account above is an example of this and of her desire of 'absolute mastery' within her profession (Koopman 2013:187).

In interview one, Ella discussed how her mentor's appraisals gave her confidence to believe in herself. She explained that she had not had any 'bad' feedback, just small areas for improvement. She described how this type of feedback is needed as an ECT as 'you're kind of left on your own for the majority of the time' and how 'you kind of doubt yourself a lot of the time and worry that you're doing

things wrong'. Similarly, Adam reflected upon positive feedback from the Head teacher, his mentor and his phase leader also seeing this as a form of reassurance. This leads to questions about how Ella and Adam would feel about feedback and the effectiveness of support if their lesson appraisals had included more significant areas for development. Returning to discussions about support being interpreted as offering advice, this advice may not always be what the ECTs want to hear or may not always be encouraging. From the mentor's perspective, they are likely to be advising on what they feel is the best course of action for the ECT. On the one hand, this may be within the ECT's best interests but not recognised as such by the ECT, at least at that given time. However, it may also be a case of the ECT being coerced into doing something that is not necessarily the best thing for them as their views or needs have not been fully appreciated or considered, thus in line with Nodding's (2005) alternative view of caring; the virtue of the carer. In this situation the ECT is likely to follow this advice due to the power dynamics within this relationship.

Gemma's example of how her Head teacher helped her to prepare for a Religious Education (RE) observation as part of a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMs) visit also serves as an example of how the role of caring can be seen as a virtue belonging to the carer (Noddings 2005). Gemma explained how she had been observed teaching RE because the Head teacher could not be, despite the Head teacher knowing that RE was not a strength of Gemma's. She stated that her Head teacher helped to get her 'head around the basics' by suggesting resources she could look at to strengthen her subject knowledge and by talking through ideas for the lesson with her. This was arguably a big ask for an ECT and Gemma's expressed needs around her lack of confidence in teaching RE were not addressed. However, from the Head teacher's perspective, the opportunity for feedback for Gemma would be useful for her professional development. It is significant that this example of support comes from Gemma – the ECT who stated in her first interview that she was unlikely to stay in the teaching profession long term and who, in her second interview, discussed being 'teary' in front of the children. She was perhaps the one most likely to 'fall' but here is a clear example of how the scaffolded support kept her going.

Forms of feedback can help ECTs to feel reassured within their practice. Power dynamics once again mean that they have little option but to follow advice given, however, through working within a CoP, the joint enterprise will serve in many ways to ensure that a whole school approach is followed. This is again highlighting the need for a bottom-up rather than top-down approach to policy enactment at school level.

5.4.3 Accommodation, communication and guidance: A shared repertoire

Wenger (1998) uses the term 'repertoire' to describe a community's set of shared resources in order to emphasise both the rehearsed character and the availability to further engage in practice. The repertoire of a community may include words, routines, tools, ways of doing things, gestures, actions or concepts that the community has adopted or produced which have become part of their practice (Wenger 1998). This section will address this aspect of Wenger's (1998) CoP through discussion of how ECTs' juggle existing school practices with their own ideas from ITE, the guidance they receive and the opportunities they have to learn from others in order to establish a shared repertoire. In turn, accommodation of school practices will be discussed, followed by opportunities to learn from others within the restraints of the school's implementation of national policy.

Accommodating school practices

There are likely to be elements of difficulty for ECTs who do not share some of the values or practices of the school (Aspfors and Bondas 2013). Part of the role of a Head teacher and leadership team is to join disparate policies into an institutional narrative to outline how the school works; part of this narration will be the school's vision (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012). Clare (interview 3) stated that she 'chose' the school she was employed in based around its 'policy and vision'. She stated that her own values and beliefs around teaching had not changed because they were reflected in the school's ethos (interview 1). Rebecca's awareness of needing to fit the school's ethos and practices were clear when she discussed applying for a new job at the end of her first year of teaching. She talked about *not* applying for certain jobs because of feedback she had heard about, the way Heads run things or the atmosphere in the school' (interview 2).

There is a real struggle for ECTs between the need to fit into the prevailing culture (Newman 2010) without merely becoming 'naive actors' of the school's vision (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012: 68). Simultaneously there will be a desire to develop as an individual and bring new ideas from training into the school. Rebecca (interview 2) referred to how assignments and content in university influenced her daily practice and how it had been interesting for her to share this with more experienced colleagues. She said that although she felt there was nothing wrong with how things were currently done at the school, she had found it frustrating that she has not met anyone who had the interest in, or time to keep up, with current research. This relates to Harris and Shelwell's (2005) discussion of how Wenger overlooked issues of exclusion and conflict, as discussed in chapter two. Rebecca can be seen questioning the legitimacy of her contributions as more experienced colleagues do not see the relevance of some of the new ideas she is sharing. Although Rebecca did not spend a second year in her school, if this had have been the case, it was likely that her frustrations

would have continued to grow. She described, in interview two, how the teaching was 'hard' and 'chaotic' and how, 'you have to be flexible and roll with the punches'. It should also be acknowledged, and is made clear by Rebecca herself, that her years within varied employment, before training to become a teacher had given her a more rounded outlook than perhaps those who had attended university straight from Further Education. Many ECTs will bring fresh ideas straight from their training. For some more experienced staff this may be very disconcerting and ECTs may find themselves facing resistance such as Rebecca's example of wanting to share up-to-date research. New ideas may be introduced gradually through 'core members' rather than to the community as a whole (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder 2002). Shared beliefs are not what shared practice is about and that mismatched interpretations or understandings need only to be addressed directly if this impacts negatively on mutual engagement (Wenger 1998). Even then, these can be viewed as opportunities to produce new meanings, however, during the early stages of their careers, ECTs may not have the confidence to challenge others' beliefs or to put forward their own. This relates to earlier discussions of ECTs often being situated as non-agents and are more likely to follow the rules needed for success.

Rebecca found herself frustrated in a CoP that did not seem open to her ideas from reading and research, as such demonstrating what can be seen as an assimilative CoP where she had to fit in with the school's routines. However, the level of autonomy that she had working in such a small school meant that she was still able to exercise new ideas in her own practice but not further influence others or the wider school community. Adam described how he initiated the idea of a Phonics Lead role in school; he spoke to teachers about this and then asked the Head teacher who agreed to this role being created (interview 3). This suggests a more accommodatory CoP where Adam's new ideas were embraced. However, Adam's narrative also suggested that his attitudes towards practice changed significantly over his first two years of teaching, therefore he is the one accommodating to his employing environment by changing himself to cope with the demands (Sutherland 1992). His ambitions to move into a leadership role are a contributing factor here. This will be discussed further within the next chapter.

Opportunities to learn from others: Expansive or restrictive?

In order to understand and implement the practices of the school, opportunities to learn from others need to be given. ECTs found school-based CoP the most relevant to their immediate needs (McDonald and Mercieca 2021). For those working in isolation, problems can often be heightened rather than solved (Loughran and Berry 2005). Smaller schools may lack the same forms of support as larger schools and be restricted in releasing staff to attend CPD opportunities (Ovenden-Hope and

Passy 2019). Working in such contexts, Gemma and Rebecca had few opportunities to observe others' practice; they worked in isolation within their year groups and there were few other staff in their school. Classrooms can often feel like isolated places (Breen 2015) and teachers can often see themselves as 'lone rangers who hold the myth that they are supposed to know it all' (Samaras and Gismondi 1998: 716). This is a very different experience to Adam and Clare working in large schools; they had opportunities to observe colleagues in parallel classes and worked with other colleagues who had recently qualified as teachers. Clare emphasised this in interview two, saying, 'there's three Year 1/ 2 teachers, they're there and we all support each other... we all teach each other's children- we carousel'. She then pointed out that events such as moderation are not just her responsibility, it falls to all three of them. Priestley, Biesta and Robinson's (2015) study highlighted that even for teachers with strong work aspirations, this may be hindered when opportunities for collaborative work are limited. This demonstrates that ECTs such as Gemma and Rebecca may be at a disadvantage from the outset of their induction. Foucault's concept of self-transformation through the lens of the four axes of ethical self-formation will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, however it must be acknowledged here that a similar reflexive ethics may be deployed at group level (Koopman 2013) suggesting that interactions with others may help us to gain a view of ourselves in such a way that we can then modify ourselves. Gemma and Rebecca's reflexivity towards their practice may therefore be hindered working in such settings.

Even when ECTs are provided with opportunities to learn from others, the usefulness of this may be questionable. Gemma expressed on many occasions that she felt she would have benefitted from learning from others employed in a similar context to her own, meaning that often courses that she attended were limited in their benefits. She explained that because of this her Head teacher put her in touch with another small school to gain additional ideas and resources (interview 1). It could be argued that this was an opportunity to gain fresh ideas and address some concerns Gemma had, particularly around how to navigate three year groups in one class. However, as this was orchestrated by her Head teacher, it may be that there was already some pre-empted acceptance of the new practices observed, as such not allowing Gemma autonomy within practice. Gemma's experience is an example of how teachers are enclosed in a 'web of policy discourses' through which they learn to be the 'good teacher' and undertake certain practices of the 'good school' and other versions of the 'good school' become unfeasible (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012). If all power lies with the school, the ECT is in danger of simply learning to become a teacher who belongs within that particular school (Haggarty and Postlethwaite 2012). In the pilot run of the ECF (DfE 2019), it was noted that in some schools mentoring took place in a closed way, exclusively between mentor and mentee, and it was recognised that this needed to be challenged so that the ECT has opportunities to learn from the wider

school (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022). Gemma's example demonstrates the regulation of behaviour in certain ways whilst creating a climate of consultation and curricular control (Ozga 2000). Gemma's consultation with the other school is controlled and therefore the results of this experience are disempowering, demonstrating the power that her Head teacher had to influence the learning opportunities offered (Haggarty et al 2011). Although Gemma's Head teacher is being described as the one exercising power, this is productive as Gemma is still being given opportunities to learn; the power is dependent upon Gemma acting on the advice given (Rouse 1994). This is an example of how CoP can manifest themselves in two ways; either demonstrating their ability to give rise to an experience of meaningfulness or to hold us as hostages to that experience (Wenger 1998). Noddings (2005) emphasises that we must not push colleagues into behaviours that they will later disapprove of. This is a risk within ECT induction whereby colleagues within the school may consciously or subconsciously follow certain practices which the ECT is coerced into adopting.

In contrast to Gemma's experiences, Rebecca discussed her independence within a small school as almost having too much freedom and how she would have liked further guidance (interview 2). She described the freedom that she had to organise the school day as she wished and how she could make decisions based on children's needs (interview 1). She talked about doing things 'sort of experimentally' such as trialling a mixed age Phonics lesson. This demonstrates how, for ECTs such as Rebecca, addressing parts of Standard seven (DfE 2019: 22), notably, 'creating and explicitly teaching routines in line with the school ethos that maximise time for learning' is something that is not addressed. Here, cautions around the simplified notion of reflection (Brookfield 2011) need to be considered as this may simply be a 'self-confirming cycle' for both Gemma and Rebecca but for different reasons. Rebecca admitted that she had freedom to 'make mistakes' (interview 1) but she did not have guidance, through observations of colleagues or consistent mentoring, to support her in how to learn from these mistakes. On the other hand, Gemma was given opportunity to learn from others but in a controlled way with her Head teacher choosing the practice she wanted Gemma to observe. Moore (2004: 143) describes the most effective support as 'navigation' as opposed to 'control'. Gemma's situation could be seen as being 'controlled' whereas Rebecca was lacking any navigation within her practice.

This leads to discussions of the difference between what can be viewed as either an expansive or restrictive learning environment (Haggarty et al 2011). An expansive learning environment can be defined as a 'one that presents wide ranging and diverse opportunities to learn in a culture that values and supports learning' (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2005: 123). This continuum includes reference to whether working involves close collaboration or isolated individualist working. It also includes the

distinction between whether there are 'supported opportunities for personal development that go beyond school or government priorities', or whether teacher learning is mostly linked to 'strategic compliance with government or school agendas' (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2005: 124). Ella's school appears to sit somewhere in the centre of this continuum. She expressed her frustrations in terms of lack of time for curriculum coverage, particularly with the foundation subjects, with the dominance of the core subjects[17] leaving no time for creativity. She went onto explain that the organisation of this is down to individual teachers and that provided it is taught, nobody checks when you are teaching it (interview 2). This demonstrates that there is some control within what Ella is teaching but she also has some freedom in the way that it is taught. It also highlights her frustrations with policy, with the core subjects taking up much of her timetable. Again, this shows how schools focus on the subjects where statutory assessments take place and therefore where there is a great level of accountability. Ella articulated how central policies and accountability measures are fed into school practice when she discussed how Ofsted feedback has informed the school development plan and this is discussed within staff meetings (interview 2). Curriculum priorities were also identified by subject leaders within these meetings, and this often informed her daily practice as she stated that 'you've got to impact that in your teaching'. She gave the example of embedding certain vocabulary into practice and how this needed to be progressive across the year groups. She described how this can be positive as it makes you reflect on your practice and ensure that you are implementing school policy, but she also described it as restrictive sometimes as it is something that must be put in place and may take time away from other areas of the curriculum. Here it can be seen that Ella's level of autonomy over her own practice is varied.

Exploring the notion of a shared repertoire further, processes like communication and co-ordination are inherently ambiguous, making this often difficult and unpredictable. However, the ambiguity also means that these processes are open-ended and can generate new meanings (Wenger 1998). When outlining the disagreement with his Head teacher over the way the school approaches EYFS data, Adam discussed how he had his 'arguments ready' and he described how he felt he needed to 'fight for the children' because the evidence was not necessarily written down (interview 1). Adam described how the way that data was presented did not always show the progress the children had made because of the broad developmental bands used. He summarised that his Head teacher had told him that the data showed his 'teaching had gone backwards' and the children were not making

[17] The core subjects within the English Primary National Curriculum are English, mathematics and science. The Foundation subjects cover all other curriculum subjects: history, geography, art and design, computing, design and technology, languages, music, physical education. RE and PSHE are also likely to be included within the foundation subjects although are not named specifically as this within the National Curriculum The national curriculum in England - Framework document (publishing.service.gov.uk) [Accessed 19.05.22].

progress. In interview two, Adam described how the EYFS team had come to an agreement with the Head teacher about the way that data was collected and reported, a solution that he seemed much happier with. This is an example of how the need for co-ordinating perspectives cannot only be an obstacle but can also become a source of new meaning (Wenger 1998). Effective communication is not best understood as the literal transmission of information as it is not possible, or even desirable, to remove all ambiguity in an effective communication system (Piantadosi, Tily and Gibson 2012). However, it is important to situate the ambiguity in the context of a history of mutual engagement which is strong enough to yield negotiation (Wenger 1998). Despite Adam being a new member of this CoP, the EYFS team were able to negotiate this situation to find a common outcome.

Most ECTs exhibit 'policy dependency' and high levels of compliance, looking for guidance and direction rather than creativity (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012: 63). They understand that there are aspects of policy that they must adhere to; they describe the 'ideal' or conversely things they know they are not required to do but helps with their practice. There is a distinct difference in levels of guidance across employing schools but in all cases ECTs rely on opportunities to learn from others.

5.5 Conclusion

Participation in a CoP can bring about an engaged sense of belonging, career persistence and feeling of sustainability within the teacher role (McDonald and Mercieca 2021). It has also been found that ECTs nurtured within a CoP will have greater confidence in developing teacher agency and to move beyond their 'comfort zone' (McDonald and Mercieca 2021: 35). There are clear links here to SDT (Deci and Ryan 1985) which outlines three innate psychological needs when addressing motivation: relatedness, competence and autonomy. Intrinsic motivation is enhanced when these psychological needs are met. All three of these needs have been addressed within this chapter: relatedness through the ECTs' need to feel cared for and understood by their colleagues; competence has been addressed within discussions around the need for approval of their practice and knowing that they are effective within their role; and feeling in control of their own behaviours when possibilities and limitations around autonomy of practice have been discussed. It is apparent how these three needs may be contentious for ECTs and therefore may impact not only on their motivation but on their well-being, health and performance. These areas are therefore crucial when considering ECT induction.

The ECF (DfE 2019) focusses on five key areas for teacher development: behaviour management, pedagogy, curriculum, assessment and professional behaviour. These areas all arise within interviews with the participants, particularly when discussing authority sources (further discussed in the next chapter). However, it is not the 'learn about' or 'learn how to' statements as outlined in the ECF (DfE

2019) that are the focus of these discussions but more the intricacies of how the employing context translates these areas into practice and the support and guidance that the participants are offered from colleagues and fellow ECTs in implementing this. It is therefore evident that a relational approach to support benefits ECTs in ways that a technocratic view, such as that of policy, cannot.

The notion of feeling 'cared for' and understood by colleagues, Head teachers and mentors may impact on the ECTs' formation of the ethical ideal and ultimately how they care for themselves. The self is a relational entity and that we cannot care for ourselves in a meaningful way without caring for others (Noddings 2005). As an ECT, it can be seen as crucial that caring for others is modelled towards the ECT for them to then extend this into caring for self. This will be considered further in the next chapter when the self-formation of three of the ECTs will be explored in depth.

Chapter 6: Analysis - Micro Level

6.1 Introduction

Building on previous discussions, this chapter will explore individual ECTs' understanding, and enactment, of policy and how this has impacted on their professional identity. Indeed, Foucault asserted that the transformation of our polities, communities and societies should always begin with the transformation of ourselves as these elements are inseparable (Koopman 2013). This chapter will begin by looking at Foucault's four axes of ethical self-formation, a framework which will then be used to explore the practices and self-formation of three ECTs: Adam, Gemma and Clare. It should be noted that, 'the self is not an isolated entity. It is relational - developed continuously in relation with others' (Noddings 2005: 117). Therefore, the focus on self will be used as a starting point to discuss the development of identity and ways in which ECTs 'care' for themselves. However, throughout this chapter, links to previous chapters will be made including the impact of others, support, and power dynamics.

6.2 Foucault's four axes of ethical self-formation

ECTs often find it challenging to develop their own identities as they are under the greatest pressure to conform with competency measures (Day 2002) and professional demands (Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop 2004) including both national and school level policy. As outlined in previous chapters, the ECT participants often spoke of the restraints of policy and how this conflicted with their own values and vision of teaching. Induction into a new profession involves creating a new identity (Henderson and Noble 2014). This new identity can be viewed as a 'transformation of ourselves', an area around which Foucault sought to create an alternative ethics which addressed the 'reciprocal incompatibility of discipline and liberation', framing this dilemma as a task or problem to be addressed (Koopman 2013 :183). As ECTs are understood to undertake this journey or transformation in the early stages of their careers, Foucault's work will be key within this chapter. It will be used to capture the ECTs' identity journey and to further explore the problematisation of freedom and power within schools, an on-going theme throughout my findings.

As briefly outlined in chapter four, Foucault's work on the four axes of ethical self-formation relates to matters of conduct and practices and self-formation (May 2006). Modern moral values tend to consider what one does to achieve moral goals rather than of whom one becomes through the practices and conduct they demonstrate (May 2006). Foucault's work shifted away from these constraints to consider greater freedom around this. He argued that we must move away from the idea that a 'total programme' is needed to bring about transformations within our social reality and

that it will come more naturally through our experiences (O'Leary 2002). Foucault's axes can be characterised as an 'art of freedom – giving form to one's liberty, of moulding and giving a style to one's life and relations with others' (O'Leary 2002: 170). Foucault's view of ethics centred upon transforming oneself based on the problematisation (Koopman 2013) and questioning how we respond to such situations. Foucault sees ethics as synonymous with freedom, not an adherence to moral values but with a process of self-formation. He argues that freedom in the form of liberation from oppression is not always the problem or subsequently, the answer. Instead, the effective response to discipline, may be self-transformation (Koopman 2013). In the context of the findings, this chapter will consider the ECTs' self-transformations in response to oppressive and often restrictive forms of policy and competency measures.

In the first axis, Foucault draws upon Greek ethics, suggesting that ethical practice was primarily a matter of giving a form to one's life using certain techniques (O'Leary 2002). Clarke's (2009) 'Diagram for Doing 'Identity Work'' translates Foucault's axes into a framework for exploring teacher identity. Shifting this to focus on teacher identity involves the ECTs considering what part of themselves pertains to teaching. May (2006) describes the second axis as the 'why'? This axis is about establishing relations to the rules that we feel obliged to put into practice. For the participants, this was about considering why they cultivate certain beliefs, attitudes and behaviours around teaching and which authority sources they recognise within this (Clarke 2009). Axis three focuses on the tools and practices that enable oneself to carry out axes one (the substance) and two (the authority sources) (May 2006). It is within these practices that our ethical commitments are demonstrated, developed and come to have value (Koopman 2013). Within the final axis (the telos), ethical vision is involved. The conduct demonstrated or the expression of certain relations will be directed towards this goal (May 2006). Relating to earlier discussion of Foucault's axes as a form of freedom, he expresses the telos as everything being possible (O'Leary 2002). Using this framework as a back-drop to the research allowed the participants to deliberate the moral 'norms' within their school context and to begin to consider the development of their own identity. As a caution to considering these norms, Mahmood (n.d. cited in Koopman 2013) highlights that affirming or negating norms can be a hindrance; it would be beneficial to explore and analyse these. However, Koopman (2013: 200) argues that a 'normative grip on contemporary practices' is needed to avoid the loss of understanding why such practices are used.

6.3 Individual Case Studies

The next section of this chapter will look in detail at the three ECTs – Adam, Gemma and Clare - who were interviewed over the first two years of their teaching career. Using the structure of Foucault's

(1983) four axes of ethical self-formation, and Clarke's (2009) translation of this to focus on teacher identity, each of the ECTs will be considered in turn, before drawing together some broader conclusions around each of the axes.

6.3.1 Adam

Ethical substance/ the substance of teacher identity

Initially Adam seemed to counterpose the child and the system. He believed that being an effective teacher involved, 'doing everything from the child, so not having an umbrella view that one size fits all so trying to tailor everything to each individual child' (interview 2) and that everything should be considered from the child's perspective and through their voice. This view is emblematic of his early stance as a teacher. Adam advocated having a secure understanding of the EYFS Framework (DfE 2017) in order to ensure that the children 'are getting what's best for them' (interview 2). He suggested that there are flaws in the framework but that the underlying principles will ultimately aid the children in making progress. This demonstrates that although he had some faith in the documentation, he also had doubts. Tensions for Adam are evident here, as he is simultaneously feeling pressure to meet the individual needs of children but also meet the demands of the wider education system (Henderson and Noble 2015).

Although the focus here was on Adam's self-formation, his own focus on the ethics of care is evident. Adam identified a part of his nature that related to teaching. Noddings (2005) describes the relationship between teachers and their pupils as an 'unequal relation' within which, by necessity, one party must be the main carer. It is apparent that relationships between teacher and pupil are not usually as close as between the child and their parent but ideally it should still be a close relationship. It must also be recognised that for some children, their relationship with their teacher is more important than with their parent. From the experiences Adam outlined, many children needed pastoral care due to lack of love/ care at home; this is perhaps something that Adam could relate to.

'Because identity is relational, a crucial aspect of the substance of any teacher's identity is being recognised as a teacher by students' (Clarke 2009: 192). Adam does not question whether the children see him as their teacher, however, he questions his own insecurities around this because of his age. He states, 'I still feel like I'm too young to be a teacher' (interview 1). He expands saying that he finds it particularly difficult when parents ask for advice, reflecting, 'I'm 21 years old and I'm giving parents advice on how to parent when I'm not even a parent myself'. It is of interest that Adam raises this despite it being his paternal nature that he identifies when discussing his teaching self.

When considering caring for self, Noddings (2005) acknowledges the role of emotions; Adam asserted that emotional empathy was the most significant element he brought to teaching and he felt that teaching would be 'tricky' without it as, 'your feelings are such a huge part of it'. He placed subject knowledge as lesser to this (interview 3), again bringing into question the focus of the ECF (DfE 2019) and the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a). Adam's emotional empathy is evident throughout his interviews; he described some of the safeguarding concerns he had to deal with as 'heart breaking' (interview 1) and how he often struggled to switch off from school. He discussed his 'duty of care' and how he had to give some children 'lots of love and nurturing' due to them 'not having the best lives at home' (interview 2). Helping children to learn how to be the recipients of care, if this is not reflective of their understanding of care from their home lives, is one of the biggest undertakings teachers face (Noddings 2005). Adam is demonstrating the burden that has been placed on him. Linking back to discussions within the previous chapter, what Adam needed here was the emotional support in how to deal with these situations and to consider his own well-being; questions that are not answered within induction guidance or through policy documentation.

The authority sources of ethics/ teacher identity

Adam began by identifying having a good understanding of Early Years practice as vital in his role, but his discussion then turned to using the EYFS Framework (DfE 2017) flexibly, not as a one-size fits all approach. Reflecting earlier discussions, Adam (interview 2) emphasised how important it is that children get 'what's best for them' and how he sometimes looked outside of school for ideas of practice that enabled this. He talked about not necessarily agreeing with some formalities around practice and how children need to be assessed using a 'best fit' judgement. Again, his answer here, reflected his role as the carer and his focus on the children. Adam's response shows the tensions within his practice; he stated that the framework and perceived good practice in early years is an authority source but then stated that he does not agree with this entirely. The focus on testing and attainment levels can sit uneasily alongside the notion of child-centred learning (Braun and Maguire 2020); a concern that Adam echoes.

Links to practices resulting from policy were a continuous theme throughout Adam's interviews; of all the participants, Adam was the most vocal about his opinions on policy. He initially argued against the way that EYFS data was collected and analysed. He talked about the 'goal post' moving and how this had led to a disagreement with his Head teacher about whether the children had made progress (interview 1). This suggests a culture of low trust in Adam's school (Priestley, Biesta and Robinson 2015). Adam went onto describe how, as a result of this discussion, two sets of data were then created, one for the EYFS team and one for the governors. He said, 'we're [the EYFS team] kind of

having to fight it back and we're not going to win. So, we're kind of having to fix our data to make it look like there is a steady incline' (interview 1). This is an example of Adam's conflicted position around data; one which Hardy and Lewis (2017: 682) describe as the 'doublethink of data' whereby teachers see data as 'worthless yet important, unnecessary yet indispensable, distracting but beneficial'. It also demonstrates how Early Years teachers are 'caught up in the assessment game' (Basford and Bath 2014: 122) whereby they must juggle the incompatible demands of assessment practices and their own professional values and beliefs (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012; Basford and Bath 2014). Again, a clear signal that policy which dictates data collection is not in-keeping with his vision of 'doing everything from the child' (interview 2). Furthering this, he expressed his frustrations that the recording of data often took him away from time with the children (interview 2). These are examples of how ECTs very often find themselves jostling between what they view as 'meaningless and meaningful...discomfort and pragmatism' (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012: 68). When discussing the EYFS Framework (DfE 2017), Adam described how he made everything more personable and 'real' for the child (interview 2), therefore suggesting that he felt the need to translate government documentation to make this more accessible to the children. The ECTs' experiences of, and feelings towards, assessment practices are echoed in Ball, Maguire and Braun's (2012: 56) findings that, 'far too often, the lower down the totem pole you are, your time and your workload are increased because other people have boxes to tick'. This is again an example of where ECTs have very little power over what data is collected and how it is used. As teachers, they should be using all assessment to inform teaching and learning but the autonomy to do this has been taken from them with assessment serving a performative rather than formative purpose. Ultimately this is narrowing their concept of what assessment is and its function.

Adam demonstrated resistance to policy in the above account. However, this resistance cannot be seen in isolation; it is connected to power as power can only be exercised to the extent to which others remain aligned with this action (Rouse 1994). Actions of the dominant agent may be challenged by subordinate agents by seeking ways of evading this alignment (Rouse 1994). Here we see the Head teacher's actions being challenged and Adam's actions, constrained by the need to sustain the alignment. In interview two, Adam described how an 'agreement' had been made between the Head teacher and the EYFS team about how data would be collected and presented. Adam, as the subordinate agent (Rouse 1994) in this scenario, is not totally disempowered, as he is in a position to challenge and, in his eyes, reaches a compromise. There are links here to Foucault's work on ethical parrhesia, a practice of truth telling with the objective to 'incite each person to occupy himself with himself' (Davidson 1994: 133). In other words, parrhesia demands a commitment to authenticity on the part of the subject. Adam is keen for his interpretation of the data to be accepted; it is his 'truth'.

Here we see Adam as the parrhesiast, he is being sincere to himself, not a rhetorician who may speak the truth but simultaneously not believe it (Rabinow 1994). There is some risk here for Adam, another element needed for the situation to be one of parrhesia (Rabinow 1994), as he is challenging the data systems the school have in place and he is speaking his truth to someone (the head teacher and the governors) more powerful than he is, but he feels an ethical duty to do so. The tensions that Adam alluded to suggest that he was torn between the following of government policy and an ethics of care; indeed Noddings (2005) suggests that a school cannot achieve its academic goals without providing care and continuity for children. Adam is acknowledging that the same form of schooling is not appropriate for all and how he needs to change parts of the documentation to make this accessible for the children in his care. As previously discussed, Adam demonstrated his willingness to challenge government policy on several occasions, most notably when he was asked to present data to the school's governors and Headteacher and he described how he would have his 'arguments ready' (interview 1). It is here where he also exclaimed that he would 'fight for the children' as the evidence of their progress was not necessarily written down. This resonates with Foucault's view of power in terms of a war or struggle and the role of strategies and tactics within this (Rouse 1994) and supports Ball, Maguire and Braun's (2012: 64) description of a language of 'assault'; a sense of ECTs being 'battered' by policy and policy expectations. Power is embedded within policy in several ways, however, the commonality is that ECTs are often those within school with the least power or autonomy. They can often be seen as 'copers' or 'defenders' of policy, seeing what has to be done, even if it is not understood (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012: 63). As highlighted above, Adam not fit this mould of being a coper or defender, he was willing to challenge the systems in place.

Self practices/ techniques

Adam shared his frustrations around the emphasis that the EYFS Framework (DfE 2017) places on children being 'Year 1 ready' (interview 3), explaining that he had focused more on research around child-led learning and following children's own interests, but then had tried to link this back to the framework. Adam therefore could be seen employing a technique to manage the many tensions he was experiencing, distancing himself from his own personal vision of teaching in order to 'play the game' (Priestley, Biesta and Robinson 2015: 111). A further example of this comes from the earlier discussion of the two sets of data created in order to show children's progress.

Adam talked about the importance of reflection as a tool and a journal he used to evidence what he had put into practice from a CPD course he had attended (interview 2). Returning to discussions in chapter two about the effectiveness of reflection, it seems that many of the examples given by the ECTs echo that of the over-simplified definition of reflection within the ECF (DfE 2019). Here ECTs are

encouraged to reflect on progress and identify strengths, weaknesses and points for improvement. There is little evidence of a critical stance or of the 'how or 'why' questions as advocated by Moore (2004) or a move towards reflexivity, a process synonymous with Foucault's self-transformation (Koopman 2013). Adam's discussion of reflection suggested more of a log of his practice and ideas for the future. Adam also described how his university programme was pivotal in encouraging reflection in a natural way and how, as a result, reflection happened automatically. Adam described how this prompted him to think about his next steps, thereby suggesting that a form of reflexion is present but not perhaps in the written form of the reflection journal he described (interview 2). This suggests that deeper forms of reflection are present within Adam's practice but not in a visible form. Adam's understanding of forms of reflection may be inherent from his ITE programme whereby this often came in a specific written format.

The telos/ ultimate goal

Adam talked about how he always knew he wanted a job that involved helping people and he felt he was achieving this in his role. His response went on to focus on his future ambitions. He stated that he would like to become a phase leader and mapped out his plan to achieve this as he understood he would need to move into KS1 first to ensure that he had a 'good understanding' of that age phase (interview 3). Until ECTs have survived the initial shock of transition, they are unable to focus on the complexities of planning their future careers or consider individualised pedagogies (Henderson and Noble 2015). The following discussion will address some of the complexities of this statement as Adam found that in order to achieve his future ambitions, an adherence to pedagogies practised in the school was the need rather than an individualised approach.

Foucault advocates that power is dispersed across complicated and heterogenous social networks and this is marked by on-going struggles (Rouse 1994). Throughout the first two years of his career, Adam's alignment with different social networks highlights how different forms of power are dispersed and how his involvement within these alignments impacts upon his attitudes towards different forms of policy. Drawing upon Foucault's work, O'Leary (2002: 161) describes how the task of transforming ourselves has two phases: firstly, the analysis of our historically imposed limits and secondly, 'the imaginative, creative attempt to surpass those limits which we no longer judge to be necessary'. Adam began his career aligned tightly with the Early Years team within his school and often discussed how their unique position, working from the EYFS Framework (DfE 2017), rather than the National Curriculum (DfE 2013), often made them at odds with the rest of the school. He often described practices higher up in the school as inferior to practices in Early Years, for example, how personalised progress becomes lost in the later years (interview 2). However, in his third interview,

Adam stated that although he still saw tensions between the two curricula, he now felt that the Year 1 teachers were correct in their views about the EYFS Framework (DfE 2017) being rather dated in terms of what constitutes children being 'Year 1 ready'. He said that this is something that he had struggled with initially because he felt the National Curriculum (DfE 2013) was incorrect. Adam's claim is unsubstantiated as the current National Curriculum outdates the most revised version of the EYFS Framework[18] by several years leading to questions as to why he would come to this conclusion or have this change of heart. Later in this interview, he discussed ambitions to become a phase leader in school but stated that in order to do this he would need to teach in KS1 first. The following interview revealed that Adam would move into Year 1 the following year thereby suggesting that his change of attitude was linked to his move of year groups and his future ambitions. He also spoke about how his teaching would change to suit the practices of KS1 rather than the changes he planned to impose on this phase in earlier interviews. Foucault reconceptualised ethics, describing them, 'not as a compendium of commitments but rather as an orientation of modification, experimentation and transformation of the self and through the self' (Koopman 2013: 192). This is pertinent to Adam's journey and how his views and attitudes shift over the first two years of his career.

6.3.2 Gemma

Ethical substance/ the substance of teacher identity

Gemma drew predominantly on the emotional parts of her being when identifying her teaching self. She discussed allowing time for the children to express their opinion and ensuring that she valued this. In line with the other axes discussed below, there is a clear focus on the care of the children and building their confidence and well-being levels. On several occasions when Gemma discussed aspects of children's well-being, she also mirrored a discussion of her own well-being, demonstrating the inter-connected nature of both; it is evident that Gemma is taking on a dual perspective: her own and that of her students in order to move them on (Noddings 2005). She suggested that sharing her own emotions with the children may in some way support them in being open too:

> I mean sometimes if I come in and I look a bit teary I just be honest with them and say, cos otherwise they just say, 'why's your face patchy?', I just – I just say 'I felt a little bit wobbly this morning but I feel better because I've had a chat with Mrs C or Mrs D and I

[18] The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) first became a phase of education in England in 2008. Since this time there have been several revisions to the EYFS Framework with the most recent of these in 2021. At the time of the participant interviews, the ECTs would have been working from the 2017 version of the framework.

> feel like I'm supported now so just to let you all know I'm happier now but I did have a little bit of a wobble. (Gemma, interview 2).

This raises questions of her understanding of professionalism; the undertones suggest that she felt what she was doing was for the good of the children as she thought the children needed to understand that adults worry too. It also highlights how she believed in honesty; sometimes understood to be a key term when discussing professional values (Moore and Clarke 2016). Gemma also echoed the need to demonstrate her 'human side' and relatability when discussing conflicts with parents, saying 'we're only human, we all make mistakes' (interview 2). She added how she felt other schools may 'sugar coat things' and how what they state they do may not be realistic. This highlights how school level policy is likely to dictate the course of action a teacher takes, as, 'the implications of truth telling and confessing are very different in each school' (Besley 2005: 77). There may therefore be a conflict between what a teacher sees as inherently right or wrong, and what is professionally right or wrong. Returning to Gemma's discussion of her moderation experiences (section 4.6), Gemma spoke to her Head teacher about her experience, and was assured that she would not be asked to attend the same moderation event again as the school had had previous negative experiences of them. This again emphasises the reliance on school level practices and how such practices will shape a teacher's understanding of their own self (Besley 2005). Moral education from a care perspective has four components: modelling, dialogue, practice and confirmation (Noddings 1998). Gemma can be seen modelling in her behaviours what she believes is useful for the children to observe/ know – that everyone gets upset at times and that it helps to talk. She then has a dialogue with the children around this and opportunities for her pupils to put this into practice themselves. The confirmation manifests in her act of what she believes is encouraging the best in others, with a focus on the children's well-being. Unarguably, children need to feel safe within their relationship with their teacher, but they also need to take responsibility for sharing their own needs with them (Noddings 2005). Gemma can be seen exercising techniques that would allow even very young children to do this; her intentions are clear but perhaps her way of doing this is questionable.

The authority sources of ethics/ teacher identity

Gemma discussed how data collection against curricula expectations was 'disheartening' (interview 2). She stated, 'I've got real children in my class that have made an unbelievable amount of progress and they're still not at the expectation for their year'. Her use of the word 'real' to describe the children suggests that the expectations set by the government are not realistic or not modelled on real-life scenarios.

Gemma felt that the sharing of ideas from other teachers was particularly influential on her practice. However, she felt this needed to be done in an informal way for the ideas to be 'realistic' (interview 2). She explained that when she went to watch other teachers deliver lessons it was a 'big performance' and that moderation events were unfair as those with larger class sizes would select the 'best books' to take. Gemma's narrative revealed levels of self-doubt and again the power dynamics that she felt were at play between different sized schools.

Discussions indirectly revealed that the school context within which Gemma worked was an authority source within her practice. Gemma alluded to many perceived differences between the wider teaching profession and her own context which she described as 'unique' due to the school's small size. She discussed how she struggled to find people who really understand and also talked about tensions because of the context within which she worked and how she felt that large schools 'look down' on smaller schools and how 'they' are just trying to get rid of them' (interview 2). She perceived herself as having a broader outlook, not conforming with the narrower view that she felt others have of small schools. A person's prototypicality is the extent to which he or she is perceived as being representative of the stereotypical attributes of the group (Dashtipour 2012). There are times when Gemma's responses suggested that she was more prototypical than she believed she was as her behaviour is somewhat 'moulded' to be seen as normative to the context, for example, going into school at weekends to work (interview 1). Throughout the interviews there are times such as this when Gemma's dominant narrative slips and aspects of herself that she is likely to be seeking to repress or constrain become evident.

Self practices/ techniques

Gemma talked about the importance of reflection as a tool, with this usually taking the form of discussions with colleagues. In a similar vein to Adam, she spoke about reflection being less formal than during her training. However, the examples given were more about 'off-loading' or gaining reassurance. This can often lead to practice simply being 'reaffirmed' (Brookfield 2011). The element of criticality as identified within the literature review as crucial within reflexivity needs to also be present in the support offered by others. This highlights the need for both ECTs and their mentors to have an in-depth understanding of reflection and reflexivity; not only the tools to reflect but also to have adequate knowledge of educational research and theory in order to answer their questions and thus, make improvements to their future practice, otherwise the same practice may simply be repeated. This is where the generic nature of the ECF (DfE 2019) will be advantageous as although contextualising practice is encouraged, it is likely to encourage networking and CPD on a larger scale whereby ECTs such as Gemma will benefit from working with ECTs from different schools thus creating

a new CoP. The scale of the ECF (DfE 2019) meant that the design process had to be centralised with one expert designing a session which may be taught by 300 different teachers across England, thereby ensuring that the same content is delivered and that taken for granted practices within a specific context are not the only practices explored or advocated (Craster and Moore 2022).

Gemma also discussed how she had reflected on what has worked well this year and what had a positive impact on children's learning. She talked about using this as evidence to support her teaching the following year, summarising, 'So... obviously next year when we get moderated, it's not just a piece of work, it has a bit of information that backs it up' (interview 2). It is evident that Gemma's practices here are for reasons of accountability; she was already beginning to collect evidence and prepare herself for moderation and to be accountable for the children's progress. This is an example of Gemma's creative and intellectual endeavour being lost (Taubman 2009) as the intention to repeat or continue what has made a difference this year is not foremost due to the children valuing or enjoying this learning, as outlined in axes one and four, but for accountability measures. This highlights the extent to which political agendas are placing increasing pressure on teacher accountability (Clarke and Phelan 2017) and are often in conflict with the ECT's values. The accountability measures here are forming part of Gemma's self-transformation in that she is learning how the system works and is already preparing for the following year.

The telos/ ultimate goal

Gemma stated that she went into the teaching profession to 'make a difference to help children enjoy education, enjoy who they are, that's part of our well-being' (interview 2). When considering the definition of 'care', Chatzidakis et al (2020: 5) discuss that this not only refers to 'hands on' care but also as a social capacity involving 'the nurturing of all that is necessary for the welfare and flourishing of life' which is what Gemma is describing here.

Gemma went onto discuss how challenging her first year of teaching had been and how keeping the end goal of making a difference kept her focussed. She outlined how she had transformed the classroom and despite having 'load of different things thrown at [her]' (interview 2), she felt she had risen to the challenge and never taken the easier way out. She felt that these challenges had helped shape her as a teacher. Gemma referred again to the size of the school and how she could have let things pass her by but explained that 'being in a small school, you don't, you can't... I took the job knowing that because I wanted to part of this team' (interview 2). Koopman (2013) explains that in the midst of trying to liberate ourselves, a notion which Gemma described here whereby she is keeping her end goal in sight, we can lose a sense of ourselves and fall right back into the powers from which we are being freed. Gemma set out her own telos but then described how she had done

everything that had been asked of her, despite the challenges, in order to fit in as a part of the school team. Her self-practices and telos were being challenged within her employing context and this impacted her well-being and passion for the job. She imitated many of the school's practices, wanting approval and recognition for this. Once again, this is an example of how ECTs have the least power over making changes to practice and are expected to mould into the practices and routines of the school. As a member of the school team, Gemma is acting to preserve and improve but she is also constrained and is affected by school policies in ways in which she is unaware.

In order to be competent and gain a true sense of identity, teachers need to find a balance between what they believe to be the 'ideal' teacher, other people's views of what this entails and the realities of teaching itself (Clarke, Michell and Ellis 2017). It is within interview two, that Gemma's understanding of the differences between her ideal vision of teaching and the realities of the role begin to emerge. Gemma stated that she may not stay in the profession long-term and was showing signs of stress, burnout and isolation. These factors can be decreased through effective collaborative working (Henderson and Noble 2015) something which Gemma often alluded to finding challenging working in a small school. By interview four, Gemma had moved schools. The tone of this interview was very different to the previous ones; she was much more positive both within herself and about her role. She stated, 'I feel like I've got my love back for teaching now' and explained how she had a greater appreciation of why she was in the role and reflected that she had been putting too much pressure on herself. In her previous job Gemma seemed to lack confidence in her abilities, therefore likely impacting her levels of identification and commitment to the career (Richardson and Watt 2018). Gemma discussed remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic (interview 4); her reflection of any difficulties at this time was focussed on how hard this situation must have been for the children and their parents, not for her. This is a real shift for Gemma and a return to her focus on the telos of making a difference and focussing on well-being. She gave an example of talking to each member of her class on the phone and how fulfilling this had been. 'One point of emphasising an ethical orientation of self-transformation is to suggest that ethics is an ongoing project we must take up with and for ourselves amidst the present within which we find ourselves' (Koopman 2013: 200). Gemma initially found herself in a position where the self-transformation she found herself going through was at odds with her ethical orientation as outlined in the four axes. But this changed considerably when she moved schools.

6.3.3 Clare

Ethical substance/ the substance of teacher identity

Gu's (2011) study around the ethical formation of teacher identity discussed different forms of subjectivity that student teachers used to constitute their teaching selves. This included character, knowledge, passion towards the profession, communication skills and a rational mind. Clare's interviews reveal a range of subjectivity.

In interview two Clare discussed the way that her past experiences in a range of education settings enabled her to form a 'bigger picture' of education and particularly on inclusion. Here, she referred to her broader knowledge of the profession and how this translated into to her current role. She described how her classroom was child-led and how this could be seen in the classroom layout and displays; she stated that she felt her classroom was more 'child-led' than any other classroom in the same age phase, suggesting that this knowledge and understanding of pedagogy had given her an advantage.

Clare also explained the importance of her communication skills for the role. She stated that she listens to people, particularly the children so that she can tailor learning to their needs (interview 3). She expanded on this by saying that she was not simply repeating content from previous years but was looking at how her class within her second year of teaching were very different to the previous class.

The authority sources of ethics/ teacher identity

Clare discussed the dominance of policy (interview 2) at school level. She talked about her frustrations around assessment, particularly SATs, stating, 'it's such a snapshot of the child... it doesn't show the child's personality or what they're really good at' alluding to the fact that the foundation subjects are not addressed. She also spoke about how assessment took up much of her time and was the part of her role that she least enjoyed. She gave an example, 'we've just been doing some reading papers, maths papers, so 38 maths papers to ... write has taken quite a long time and then the reading papers to mark, they take quite a long time because that's something I would mark, I wouldn't necessarily give that job to anybody else' (interview 1). She then went onto discuss how time is also needed to input data and how this deflects time away from her preparing for the next day. This opposes her vision of tailoring learning to meet the needs of the children thus echoing Ball, Maguire and Braun's (2012) findings that teacher accountability often diverts time and effort away from pupils and from planning a broad and balanced curriculum (Forrester and Garratt 2016). Ozga (2000) outlines a long-term tension between teachers and the government whereby teachers look at ways to equalise

opportunities and enrich experiences. Although the government may aim to promote equality of opportunity, arguably the focus on economic terms does the opposite and legitimises differences in opportunity. This furthers discussion in section 4.4 where it was highlighted that the National Curriculum (DfE 2013) sets out to offer equality for all but treating all children the same does not offer equal opportunities for all to succeed. This is an example of how policy is reductive, focussing on children as numbers rather than seeing the complexities of the practices associated with it. Within contemporary schools in England, there is a 'low trust policy environment', whereby accountability and reporting work associated with a given policy often diverts time and effort away from the intricacies of putting the policy into practice (Ball, Maguire and Braun 2012: 56). ECTs are particularly susceptible to this as they have little say over policy implementation. Furthermore, many of the processes will be new to them therefore taking additional time as can be seen within Clare's recounts above.

Self practices/ techniques

Clare discussed a specific tool (interview 2) – the use of what she called a 'time tracker' to note what CPD experiences she had to help her evidence the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a). Her discussion of this demonstrated how she used this as a reflective tool to identify any gaps and what she needed to focus on next. ECTs are encouraged to reflect on progress and identify strengths, weaknesses and points for improvement. However, as was the case with Adam, there is little evidence of a critical stance or of the 'how or 'why' questions as advocated by Moore (2004). Clare's discussion of reflection suggests more of a log of her CPD.

Clare made clear that the purpose of this tool was to evidence the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a). She explained, 'it's definitely good to see maybe some areas that I've missed out, like with the Teacher Standards, I might not have much in one…area so I can go and get some more experience' (interview 2). This again highlights the lack of depth of reflection as she is relying on ensuring that she has evidence for each, thus more of a tick box exercise, rather than focussing on where her own areas of development may lie. Clare explained that the purpose of her time tracker was for her to spend her time more wisely. The tools she had developed can be seen as forms of self-surveillance. Foucault views the action of modern surveillance as a step towards self-discipline. Clare is modelling this in her accountability towards the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) and perhaps using this as justification of her fulfilling her new role. Moore and Clarke (2016) discuss the concept of being a 'professional' and how such lists of professional standards may ease this adjustment into the profession. The assessment of the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) is separate to the ECF (DfE 2019) however, the standards were a 'main driver' in identifying areas within which ECTs were struggling (Daly, Hardman and Taylor 2022:

98). In the same way that Clare is attempting to give equal weighting to evidencing all the standards, the ECF (DfE 2019) requires that all ECTs work through the same modules and core areas. Returning to discussions in the previous chapter, the mentor will be pivotal here in balancing the demands and focusing the ECT on their own developmental areas.

The telos/ ultimate goal

Clare stated that she wanted to, 'make a change in children's lives and inspire them and encourage them to have a love of learning' and how everything she does is 'about the children'. She described the feeling when the children achieve something for the first time, such as writing their name, 'you can't explain, you can just really feel it' (interview 2). She summarised, 'it is just about having that feeling at the end of the day that you've made a difference'. Events that motivate teachers daily are usually rooted in their reasons for becoming teachers, for example, the desire to make a difference (Aspfors and Bondas 2013). Clare (interview 3) stated 'I still feel like teaching is the right job. I definitely love it, I *care* a lot for it'. What is not clear here is whether Clare is referring to the care that she gives to the children as part of her job or a form of self-care through her job. Noddings (2005: 88) discusses occupational life as being, 'imperative in coming to understand and appreciate the self'.

Both Clare (interview 2) and Adam (interview 1) compared their roles as teachers to that of parents. Clare stated, 'You're such a big part in every child's life... you're a bit like their second mum'. The nurturing aspect that comes through in their recounts reflects Noddings' (1998) description of how the ethics of care dismisses the distinction between 'is' and 'ought to' and how the motive to care arises naturally, it does not have to summoned. Kant (n.d. cited in Noddings 1998) distinguished between spontaneous acts and those acts we do out of duty or to build an ideal picture of ourselves. The nurturing attitudes of Clare and Adam are a common thread running through all interviews, with these two ECTs speaking about establishing trusting relationships with parents significantly too. Despite the high-stakes nature of induction and with this a desire to make a positive impression within the school, there is little to suggest that there are links to self-interest in building an ideal picture. The only exception to this comes from Adam (interview 1) who discussed how he when a child did something 'amazing' he would 'parade them around school'. He stated that this was for the child's benefit but followed this by acknowledging how pleasing it was that he had made the difference for those children.

6.4 Conclusion

All ECTs discussed the significant influence of policy upon their identity, particularly policy associated with data collection and accountability. This echoes Holloway and Brass's (2018) findings of how performative accountability and the use of data have become constitutive of professional identity. However, when discussing the work of Kant, Noddings (1998: 143) states that to be an ethical agent, when making ethical decisions, you are choosing to do, 'the right thing because it is right' not because of 'obedience to authority'. There are examples of this within the ECTs' recounts too, particularly in Adam's discussion of data collection (see section 6.3.1).

In their responses to their ultimate goal as a teacher, the ECTs focused on the children and making a difference. Claeys (2011, cited in Salifu and Agbenyega 2013: 62) identifies an additional form of motivation alongside intrinsic and extrinsic; this third factor is described as 'altruistic', 'a love for and desire to work with children/ young people, and an inclination to serve society'. Foucault's ethics focuses on someone working on themselves – the self-formation – whereas modern moral values tend to emphasise the conduct over self-formation by thinking of ethical work in terms of what someone does to achieve their moral goal rather than in terms of who they become through that conduct (May 2006). There is clearly a tension here between the practices that are imposed upon the ECTs and their moral goal; the ECTs' focus is either on their practice or their moral goal rather than an over-arching focus on self-formation. Buchmann (1986, 1987, 1993, cited in Conway and Clark 2003) argues for an emphasis on role over person when considering the teaching profession, stating that dispositions and expectations should form the main focus of training, over a personalised concerns-based approach. The role of the teacher brings expectations that the primary target of ECTs' ethical work will be directed to the children who are in their care. It is for this reason that Koopman (2013) raises questions about whether Foucault's ethics provides sufficient normative resources for the ethical present. It should be questioned whether transformation is always a positive thing and if it is 'mere change' this could be in the form 'degradation and decline' (Koopman 2013: 210). Indeed, if all ECTs were to transform to simply fit and never challenge perceived 'norms' within their employing contexts, how would new ideas ever enter the teaching profession or policy ever be challenged?

Within their discussions around teacher identity, there is clear focus on the role that the pupils play in the ECTs' practices and the role of the ethics of care within this. Everything that teachers do has moral overtones (Noddings 2003). Connections between the one caring as teacher and the 'ethical ideal' should be made; it is not possible to identify the 'ethical ideal' without thinking about oneself both as the carer and the cared for (Noddings 2003). Within conversations around the four axes, the ECTs

focused predominantly on their role as the carer. We can only see ourselves as the 'ethical ideal' when we see in ourselves what we want others to be towards us when we are the ones being cared for (Noddings 2003). It is when we care for others and are cared for by them, that we become able to care for ourselves. The complexity here is that, as already stated, the relationship between a teacher and pupil is an 'unequal relation', therefore the ECT is not going to recognise themselves as the one 'cared for' as they may when considering their relationship with their mentor or other staff. As discussed in section 5.4.1, feeling 'cared for' and understood by colleagues may impact on ECTs' formation of the ethical ideal and ultimately how they care for themselves. This support from colleagues may sometimes be compromised because of pressures from the school or lack of resources. This is very different from a relationship in which only two parties are involved and in which both are mutually giving and receiving care to/from each other.

Conway and Clark (2003) re-examined Fuller's (1969) stage model of teacher development and described how novice teachers follow an 'outward journey' from focus on self, to task, to impact on students. The fact that the ECTs all showed a significant focus on pupils is in-line with normative expectations of what should be the teacher's ultimate concern (Conway and Clark 2003). It is also argued that there is an inward pattern in terms of heightened reflexivity and self-regulation. When asked about the techniques and practices that the ECTs used to shape their teaching selves, all answers focused either directly or indirectly on reflection, however examples of this seemed a little piecemeal. The outward focus may seem at odds with the focus on being a reflective practitioner but this itself suggests that teachers remain aware of self and their own development, a process which is both 'necessary' and 'valuable' (Conway and Clark 2003: 475). The ECTs suggested that their understanding of, and competence in, reflecting on their practice, came from their ITE programme. Adam suggested that he no longer has to write his reflections down as, 'you automatically think of your own next steps subconsciously' (interview 2). Although Adam is stating this now comes naturally to him, instead, this suggests that thorough, meaningful reflection, is not something that he is truly taking time for or seeing the true importance of. As discussed in section 2.6.4, reflection is a key tool for ECTs. The findings of this research reveal that ECTs have a rigid view of reflection, perhaps as a log or a tracker, to serve a purpose such as indicating the meeting of the Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013a) whereas a more in-depth and fluid understanding of reflection is needed for this to be purposeful. A model of critical reflection can complement more formal induction processes (Henderson and Noble 2015) such as those of the ECF (DfE 2019).

There is an apparent underlying tension between the focus on care for the child and certain aspects of policy. This raises questions as to whether the two are possible simultaneously and whether the

ECTs' beliefs and values towards these aspects may help or hinder them in their early career. Returning to Braun and Maguire's (2020: 440) discussion of teachers 'doing without believing'; they discuss how there is a sense amongst Primary teachers of the 'selling out of professional values and child-centred practices' understood as 'integral' to their understanding of themselves as a teacher. As can be seen from findings outlined in this chapter, identity formation is not a one-time journey, it is on-going and ever-changing. It is self-transformative. Partaking in identity work through a framework such as that of Clarke's (2009) adaptation of Foucault's (1983) four axes, allows ECTs to understand how their professional identity has been shaped in certain ways and for re-thinking possibilities, as such paving the way for addressing the dilemma between a focus on the child and the directives of policy. This will be challenging as it involves high levels of critical awareness and may be daunting for ECTs as it means letting go of the known, but it can also mean moving away from the unobtainable perfection that teachers so often strive for (Clarke 2009) and understanding that for the sake of their well-being, sometimes 'good is good enough' (Ovenden-Hope and Brimacombe 2018). Clare (interview 2) discussed how she wanted, 'everything to be perfect' but reflected that 'it's definitely not – it just isn't and it's all about keeping that healthy balance and not worrying too much about everything'.

Similarly, the role of CoP (Wenger 1998) is ever evolving, it is not static or a one-off induction into a new community. On starting employment, each ECT will enter a new CoP, however the dynamic and complex nature of this Community needs to be considered as the CoP will change as new members join them (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder 2002). In some cases, it may be the ECT themselves that changes the dynamics. Clare (interview 3) outlined how the dynamics of her team had changed in her second year of teaching as another ECT had joined. She said she had 'more authority' and that she felt the phase leader asked for her opinion more. She described a shift in her role as she was no longer the new member of staff, 'so because we've got the NQT in the team, I think I'm definitely expected to know more'. There are undercurrents within Clare's final two interviews that she is unhappy with this change in position she stated, 'I think I'm still the youngest though... I like being the youngest' (interview 4) suggesting that she found reassurance as the one being cared for (Noddings 1998) by others in her team.

The final chapter of this study will bring together the main conclusions and overarching messages. It will outline a conceptual model that will lead to discussion of new knowledge within the field and the subsequent implications for ITE providers, schools employing ECTs and the ECTs themselves. Possible limitations of the study and opportunities for future research will also be discussed.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Thesis review

This research study has explored the challenges that ECTs face when navigating their individual journeys through induction and in developing their own professional identity. Framed within a constructionist epistemology, the analysis identified three different levels of policy trajectory: macro level (national policy), meso level (school level policy enactment) and micro (individual ECTs' understanding and enactment of policy). The concluding chapter will begin by summarising the main conclusions and overarching messages from this study. It will then outline a conceptual model that brings together the main findings of the study. This will be discussed in relation to literature, and these ideas will then be extended to contribute new knowledge to the field. Implications of the study at different levels (ITE providers, employing schools and ECTs) will be discussed with reference to the findings. Possible limitations of the research will then be explored alongside potential future research opportunities. The chapter and study will close with a personal reflection.

7.2 Main conclusions

To begin, the main conclusions from the study will be outlined. The thesis began by discussing the current neoliberal back-drop of education. Chapter two addressed policy at different levels and the impact of this on ECTs. Discussion of national policy explored how elements of education policy are often technocratic and used Noddings' (2003) ethics of care as an alternative, relational approach. The complexities of the implementation of policy at school level were then addressed. The main areas addressed were the limitations of national policy's one size fits all approach and the lack of consideration or understanding of the vital element of support within ECT induction. Attention then turned to ECTs' understanding and enactment of policy and the implications of this on identity development. Chapter three described the research design of the study, centred around a constructionist epistemology, taking a case study approach with semi-structured interviews being used as the main form of data. The main conclusions from the analysis chapters will be discussed in the next sections.

7.2.1 Top-down policy: A lack of voice from those at the 'chalk face'

Chapter four addressed some of the main policies derived at national level and discussed ways in which these policies govern teachers' practice. Focussing on the themes of curricula, accountability mechanisms and assessment, findings highlighted how ECTs feel greater forms of accountability within the induction period and have the least autonomy within their role. Although ECTs often have an

awareness of the accountability mechanisms in place, their lack of autonomy and a high-stakes induction process result in 'reluctant compliance' (Moore and Clarke 2016) with such processes.

The study concludes that ECT voice is paramount when considering future policy in order to bridge the divide between policy generation and enactment. In the current system, there is little evidence of influence upwards (Mayer 2021). For policy to be successful in practice, the people who implement them must have significant ownership of them (Bates, Lewis and Pickard 2011). Findings highlight how, for ECTs, many aspects of policy are puzzling or challenging, lacking in understanding of the specific needs and challenges of different contexts. Indeed, the DfE's (2023: 6) evaluation of the ECF cites ECTs' 'frustrations with the content and flow of their training'. Furthermore, the neoliberal nature of such policies are often at odds with an ethics of care (Noddings 2003), the roots of which are often the very reasons that ECTs have chosen the profession.

In their work on student voice, Mockler and Groundwater-Smith (2015: 156) assert that for research to be liberating and transformational, we must move away from the neoliberal focus on human capital and look at what it means to be human rather than an 'economic cog'. Their desire to share decision making and agency also needs to be reflected and actioned to consider teacher voice in the creation and implementation of policy. The voice of the teacher within the policy making process may subsequently have a positive impact on teacher retention. Not only would this allow a greater understanding of the role of the teacher, workload and expectations but it would enable the reframing of policy to see the caring of pupils as something beyond their academic achievement.

7.2.2 The gap between the generation of policy and its enactment

Chapter five highlighted the need for policy makers to acknowledge the risks to fidelity of a one-size fits all approach to induction guidance. Although such policy strives to ensure that all ECTs experience the same induction entitlement, this is an impossibility. Differences in ECTs will span back to pre-course experience, their ITE route and provider, and the contexts within which they have had experience teaching. These factors coupled with many variations within employing context, including size, location and school enactment of national policy, further emphasise how one framework cannot 'fit' all ECTs. This finding is also reflected in the DfE's (2023) evaluation of the ECF which highlights frustrations around the inflexibility of the framework and the lack of tailoring of the content to ECTs' individual needs and school contexts. The study also emphasised different interpretations of 'support' and how these may be enacted within different contexts.

7.2.3 A move towards a Community of Practice approach to induction

The findings advocate a CoP (Wenger 1998) approach to ECT induction. Chapter five highlighted how ECTs value support from a range of colleagues with them seeking different forms of support from staff within different roles. This links to calls highlighted within the study for greater autonomy for ECTs. Support is currently directed through the ECF (DfE 2019) and although the need for increased levels of support for ECTs is not disputed, ECTs should be given greater autonomy to identify where this support is best-sourced. The role of the mentor within the current induction guidance brings with it considerable workload and an increase in expectations and training requirements. This is acknowledged as one of the key findings in the DfE's (2023) evaluation of the ECF. The delegation of parts of this role to other staff members, under the guidance of the mentor, would begin the move to towards a view of induction as a whole school approach and responsibility. Henderson and Noble (2015) highlight the benefits to experienced teachers in working with ECTs and the impact of this on their own CPD and career optimism.

Working within a CoP would also allow ECTs to feel a greater sense of ownership over the school's implementation of national policy such as curricula requirements, as a sense of joint enterprise would be felt. This is further advocating a bottom-up approach to policy enactment at school level, linking to the previous section. Chapter five also highlighted the need for ECTs to 'fit' the prevailing culture of their employing school, further questioning their autonomy. There is opportunity here for the narrative of induction to be framed from the ECT perspective and for schools to ensure that their CoP is both assimilative in some respects but also accommodatory of what the ECT will bring to the school, in-keeping with Wenger's (1998: 80) 'inventive resourcefulness'. To balance this move, ITE providers will also need to ensure that ECTs are equipped to ask the right questions when seeking employment and to be aware of potential difference in employing contexts. This will be discussed further in section 7.3.1.

7.2.4 Greater ECT autonomy to allow for professional identity formation

Chapter six highlighted that ECTs need to have greater autonomy within their roles and be able to develop their own identities without fearing measurement against a performative neoliberal backdrop. 'A nuanced understanding of individual teacher characteristics and values does not translate into policies that acknowledge these characteristics and values' (Harford and Gray 2017: 28).

The introduction of the ECF (DfE 2019) strives to further support ECTs within the induction period but in many ways, this builds a further narrative about their vulnerability with them being 'novices' in the profession, in need of support and CPD. This narrative does not consider how well-placed ECTs are to

bring new ideas to the profession and for schools to view induction as a whole school approach that could bring about benefits for the whole team. ECT voice in developing policy is crucial, both in terms of bridging the gap between ITE and induction and in gaining a greater understanding of the challenges they face. ECT voice in policy making may help to address the tension between the focus on care for the child and aspects of policy; a movement away from 'doing without believing' (Braun and Maguire 2020: 440) towards policy which is underpinned by values upheld by ECTs. This is likely to allow for a much smoother induction into the teaching profession whereby they are not constantly considering the difference between 'the right things because it is right' and 'obedience to authority' (Noddings 1998: 143). There would also be a greater sense of satisfaction that ECTs are fulfilling their reasons for becoming teachers.

Engaging in identity work allows ECTs to understand how their professional identity is shaped and to then re-think possibilities. It will also allow for a greater understanding of identity formation as a self-transformative journey. Chapter six explored the use of Clarke's (2009) adaptation of Foucault's (1983) four axes. This study proposes combining this understanding of identity formation with a greater emphasis on reflection and collaboration as outlined further in the next section.

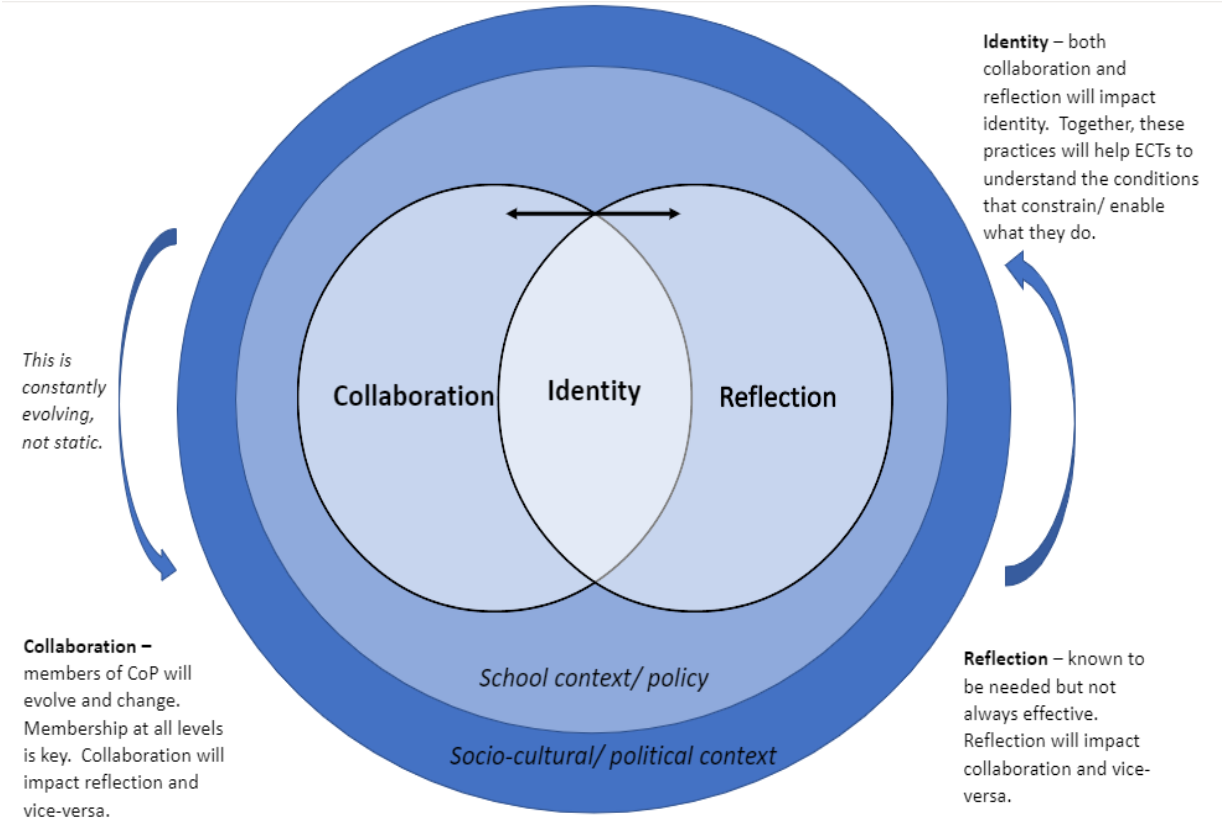
7.2.5 Conceptual model

A conceptual model of ECT identity development (figure 1) is proposed to view ECT induction and identity development in a new way, forming an original contribution to knowledge. The model sits identity, the personal element, at the centre showing how this will be influenced by both reflection and collaboration. The two elements of reflection and collaboration are connected and will impact upon each other. These elements should be seen as processes, however the model acknowledges that these processes also need constraints and limits. Bronfenbrenner's 1979 ecological model (Hayes, O'Toole and Halpenny 2017) was used to shape the conceptual model; the concentric circles around the edge show the different layers of influence: the school context and school-level implementation of policy and the wider socio-cultural and political context. These layers themselves are constantly changing.

As outlined in chapter six, ECTs' understanding of reflection and collaboration as on-going, evolving mechanisms and forms of development within their practice and the connections between these is crucial. Foucault (1982) discusses a form of power which makes individuals subjects. Policy dictates curricula to be taught, pedagogies that must be adopted and assessments that must be completed. ECTs cannot ignore such policies and need to understand these as the constraints and limits within

which they can operate, thus echoing Foucault's (1983) second axis, the mode of subjection. However, it would be useful for ECTs to take a step back and gain an understanding of where autonomy is possible within these confines. This understanding of de-subjectivisation is a useful starting point for reflection and would be further enabled through collaboration with others within this process. Teachers need to collaborate with others to reflect on their practice, however, they need guidance in how to do this effectively (Henderson and Noble 2015) and to ensure that that forms of reflection are not merely seen as an accountability tools. Different staff with different roles, expertise and levels of experience would enable a broader and more critical approach to reflection, ensuring that reflection does not simply become a 'self-confirming cycle' (Brookfield 2011) and begins to transform reflection into forms of reflexivity.

Figure 1 – Conceptual model of ECT identity development



CoP (Wenger 1998) can serve to enable these forms of collaborative reflection, a process which is likely to be useful for both experienced and novice teachers alike. This would also see a greater move towards a whole school approach to ECT induction. Such a move would allow for professional expertise gained through induction to feed into future induction and thus develop professional

learning throughout the school. This would serve schools in developing an induction programme in-keeping with the school's ethos and values and a move away from a one-size-fits-all approach.

A 'culture of growth' is evident in schools where staff work collaboratively through CoP to improve school outcomes suggesting that a relational approach can sometimes serve accountability demands (McDonald and Mercieca 2021: 39). Effective collaborative reflection is also likely to form a pivotal role in the ECT's understanding of the professional identity and how this is continually renegotiated. Adam (interview 2) gave an example of this when he discussed how his EYFS team reflected on each other's practice. He stated, 'we're very good as a team that we will bounce ideas off each other and if something goes well, we will quickly tell the other person that its gone well and then if something doesn't quite well, we'll just say 'oh no, that hasn't quite worked' and we try and get into each other's practice as much as we can and just – we know that we're not criticising, we're just trying to build next steps for each other and that'. This suggests a mutual regime where each other's practice is respected but that the team are not averse to helpful critique. He did, however, acknowledge that this can be 'quite tricky with certain people'. Such a process of collaborative reflection which welcomes constructive feedback will enable a critical understanding of the limits that condition us and the ways in which they constrain and enable what we can do (Butler 2005). Identity formation is not a one-time journey, it is on-going and ever-changing. Similarly, the role of CoP (Wenger 1998) is ever evolving, it is not static or a one-off induction into a new community.

The conceptual model (figure 1) would allow ECTs to take begin to gain an understanding of the complexities of identity formation by taking a step back and seeing 'another part of the same picture' (Moore 2004: 147). One which can be illuminated from different angles, with the support of a CoP, to gain a deeper understanding of their own identity development within the constraints of the employing school context and the wider socio-cultural and political context.

7.3 Implications: Moving professional discussion along

The next section will discuss the implications of the findings for future practice on three levels: ITE providers, schools employing ECTs, and the ECTs themselves.

7.3.1 Implications for ITE Providers

It is likely that an ECT's first understandings of the challenges of induction will come from their ITE provider. As such, ITE providers should look to balance an ECT's understanding of teaching as a relational profession and forms of compliance that come about as a result of policy implementation.

Findings within this study highlight that ECTs' need for intellectual support is lesser to that of emotional forms of support. Despite this, the ECF (DfE 2019) places a greater focus on areas such as pedagogy and curriculum, with little mention of the emotional challenges of teaching. There is also a need for ITE providers to look at the bigger picture of aspects of the profession, for example, as discussed in section 6.3.1, assessment within education policy is often given more a performative than a formative function but this does not mean that ECTs' understanding of this concept should be narrowed.

Teaching is not a tick box exercise but due to the focus on curriculum coverage, assessments and inspection criteria, there is a danger it could be enacted in this way. Top-down policy strives for fidelity in school-level interpretation, but this could be considered a work of aspirational fiction rather than use of policy as a tool for compliance. Again, this is something that can be discussed within ITE programmes, not to undermine national policy, but for ECTs to begin to exercise their autonomy and understanding of some of the constraints within the profession from an early stage. The micro-political aspects in the school reality should be brought up and focussed on explicitly within ITE (Kelchtermans and Ballet 2002) to look at the nuances of school context against a policy back-drop that strives for fidelity of approach/ interpretation. This would in turn address some of the concerns around praxis shock on entry into the profession.

7.3.2 Implications for employing schools

Although Noddings' work discussed within this study focuses predominantly on the child-teacher perspective, as outlined in section 5.4.1, this can also be related to the mentor- ECT relationship. Moving toward a whole school approach to induction would not mean that the role of the mentor is redundant but that there would be scope for this role to shift further towards emotional and personal support. The meeting of induction criteria would be spread across different roles within the school allowing for staff to give guidance in areas where they can offer expertise, for example, curriculum subjects or specialist pedagogy. The use of CoP (Wenger 1998) would see staff working together to offer different perspectives and opinions. This would allow meetings with mentors to focus on the expressed concerns or wishes of the ECTs rather than purely using the ECF (DfE 2019) as a driving force.

In the longer term, schools would become self-sustaining communities of professional practice with reciprocal relationships being formed and ECT voice being heard within on-going evaluation processes, thus feeding into future ECT development. Involvement of all members of staff would allow for implementation of national policy to be specific to that school, ensuring an induction period that is context-specific. The requirements of the ECF (DfE 2019) would form a basis to ensure coverage of all

standards whilst giving schools greater autonomy to tailor this to meet the specific context requirements.

7.3.3 Implications for ECTs

Both government policy and practice in schools for the most part engenders, expects and, indeed, is fundamentally grounded in (albeit unwittingly) subservient and subsistence forms of agency. Subliminal and sublime agency are not nurtured as they are considered disruptive within a neoliberal back-drop (Bunn, Langer and Fellows 2022). Those demonstrating these forms of agency are looking for resistance or change and can be motivated by their own desires. They may recognise that some rules are necessary for success but may also be cynical, yet hopeful, of alternatives. In the same way that Bunn, Langer and Fellows (2022) conclude that subliminal and sublime agency are marginalised within Higher Education, this study proposes the same for ECTs. Yet it is these forms of agency that 'have expansive potential' (Bunn, Langer and Fellows 2022: 8) and can create change which is motivated by desires and may address contradictions. This study highlights that the motivation of ECTs is often centred around an ethics of care for the children whom they teach, an aspect not considered within central policy. An understanding of the significance of sublime and subliminal forms of agency may be the first step in ECT voice being heard, a recognition that there needs to be 'reflexive questioning of the power dynamics present' (Bunn, Langer and Fellows 2022: 8).

Foucault (1984a) outlined a need to work on the self, including developing objectivity and a sense of self-governance over one's practices. To do so, one needs to make sense of power relations at play. For ECTs, this means an understanding of the 'politically-determined' and in some ways even going a step beyond this to challenge or resist. This will not be without its problems as many aspects of policy implementation encourage the very opposite – the limiting of individual autonomy.

Dean (2010: 14) summarises Foucault's thoughts on the need for self-awareness and a critical ontology of ourselves:

> By becoming clear about the limits, we open up the possibility of an action to accept or reject them, to show their contingent nature, or to add up the costs of transgressing them. Above all, the point of a critical ontology of ourselves and our present is to make us clear on these risks and dangers, these benefits and opportunities, so that we might take or decline to take action.

Returning to the conceptual model (figure 1), both collaboration and reflection are key here.

7.4 Limitations of the study

Despite the clear findings outlined above, the study inevitably brings with it certain limitations. Although the research was conducted over two years and included up to four interviews per participant, the number of participants was small. Although the small sample size allowed for rich data and 'thick description' (Geertz 1973, cited in Savin-Baden and Howell Major 2013) to be collected around each participant, it also meant that the participants were not fully representative of the profession, for example, with only one male participant (although this was proportionate to the cohort). The ECTs were all employed in North Yorkshire, either in rural locations or within a small city, very different contexts to those employed in London for example. Furthermore, the participants had all completed the same three-year undergraduate ITE programme within the same HEI. Research across other programmes, for example, postgraduate routes, and with other providers, may not have led to the same results.

7.5 Recommendations for future studies

The purpose of the study was to look at how ECTs manage their professional identity and gain an understanding of how this is impacted by the employing context and the government's educational agenda. Given that the current induction framework for ECTs was still at the draft stages when the participants were interviewed, further studies into the impact of the ECF (DfE 2019: 4) would give a greater insight into what extent this policy development has fulfilled its remit to provide ECTs with, 'high quality, structured support' and to ensure that they 'have dedicated time set aside to focus on their development'. The DfE's (2023) one year evaluation of the ECF highlights many of the findings of this study, as discussed within section 7.2. As outlined in this study, the development of professional identity will be inevitably impacted by levels and type of support within the induction phase.

The school context has been identified as a key factor which influences professional identity development, therefore further studies looking at similar contexts or indeed a wider geographical range would create a greater understanding of the nuances of these differences and the impact on ECT identity development. Gemma identified the context of her first employing school as one of the greatest challenges she faced as there was a lack of understanding around the small nature of her school; she doubted her future in teaching but regained her passion for the job when she moved to a different school. This example, and others like Gemma who move schools mid-induction, could potentially give a greater insight into the factors which make a difference to their outlook on teaching.

As outlined above, all participants completed a three-year Primary Education degree programme. As this is just one of several different routes into teaching, a comparable route of ECTs who have

completed a one-year postgraduate programme would be interesting to conduct. These ECTs will have spent a greater proportion of their training programme within a school environment and perhaps have a greater insight into seeking a school whose ethos and values 'fits' that of their own. It is also likely that a greater number of these ECTs will have a background working within schools before completing their ITE programme. On the other hand, the three-year undergraduate programme gives greater time for trainees to reflect on their practice and to begin to build the foundations of their teacher identity. Consequently, differences are likely to be apparent.

The implications of these findings have outlined that reflection is a key in building teacher identity but that this is not always effective and that ECTs will need support to develop this. As a result of these findings, further research focusing on ECT reflection as a form of data collection would give a greater insight into this and develop further understanding of how reflection can be achieved through collaboration.

7.6 Personal reflection

The undertaking of this study has helped me to gain a greater understanding of the many complexities of ECT induction and how this is personal to each ECT entering the teaching profession. Government policy is striving to put into play a one size fits all model that in reality is never going to be a complete 'fit' for everyone, if anyone. Within a profession that is likened to medicine and law within the ECF (DfE 2019), a greater level of professional autonomy is needed. This would allow schools to mould policy into something which is realistic and 'fits' within their own context, a context that the staff employed there know best.

We cannot always influence policy directive but need to consider ways in which micro levels influence meso and macro levels of policy trajectory (Mayer 2021). ITE providers can ensure that ECTs are prepared for some of the challenges they may face within specific employing contexts. Ensuring that ECTs seek support from a range of staff members within the school and form CoP both internal and external to their employing context is crucial. Their understanding of reflection and how this, alongside collaboration, will help them to understand the conditions which enable or constrain what they do are also further ways that they can feel prepared.

This study has provided a challenge unlike any other that I have undertaken in my professional career. As a colleague recently summarised, writing a thesis is a 'test of resilience'. My determination can only be likened to the determination I had for becoming a teacher and completing my own NQT induction under very challenging circumstances as outlined in the introduction to this study. I have learnt from the challenges faced and recognise that they can be managed within an anticipated,

resourced parameter. However, some of the challenges that ECTs face are as a result of lack of support or planning and this difference must be recognised. To hear the insights into the ECTs' journeys and to have the privilege of working with the next generation of teachers has only served to motivate me further in ensuring that the transition from ITE into induction is as seamless as possible. That is not to say it will be without its challenges but that these challenges are understood and effectively managed and addressed.

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Appendix 1 – Indicative Interview Questions

Interview 1 – February 2019 (mid-point of NQT year)

Overarching discussion of experience so far, including:

- What would you say have been the main highs/ lows of your NQT year so far?
- What has made it a positive/ negative experience?
- Anything you would like to revisit from the reflective journal? (This may be interviewer led)

Then follow the participant's lead…

Possible themes:

- Challenges/ issues versus support
- What does support look like for you? Does it come from within school/ across schools/ other NQTs? Who are the pivotal/ key people?
- Professional identity – how do you see yourself? How has this developed?
- Describe your journey from ITE to employment so far. How do you see your journey/ frame it?
- How do you see the relationship between school and university? Are there any assumptions within school about the role of university?
- What forms of university support have you accessed so far?
- How would you describe your work/ life balance? What strategies do you have for this?
- What would you say are the main forms of accountability within your role?

Final question: How did completing journal/ interview make you feel?

Interview 2 – July 2019 (end of NQT year)

Part 1 - General

- What have been the most significant factors/ events since my last visit?
- Tell me about your ideal personal vision of a teacher vs the reality of school. What do you think are the main barriers in achieving your own personal vision?
- Discuss the Teachers' Standards in context of the school. Do you feel these have formed the main targets/ pressure points in your NQT year or has it been other personal/ emotional factors e.g. the need for support?

- What do you feel may be the factors that contribute to your long-term career intentions? Do you see yourself staying in teaching long-term? If so, what would be the factors that aid this. If not, why not?
- End of year accountability/ data. How has this impacted on you/ your views?
- Will there be any changes to your role next year?

Part 2 - Questions focussing on the four axes of ethical self-formation

- How would you describe your teaching self? What would you say constitutes being a good/ effective teacher and what experiences have influenced this? What is the most important aspect of yourself that makes you suitable for teaching? Have your views on this changed over the course of your NQT year?
- What would you describe as the sources of authority within your teaching? What shapes what you do? In terms of your professional behaviours/ attitudes, would you say that university or school has had the largest influence here? What about Government policy? Is that a driving factor?
- What are the practices/ techniques that you use to shape your teaching self? Do you see reflection as an important tool? Are there any 'tools' used within university that you continue to use or may consider using in the future?
- What is your desired goal/ purpose in teaching? Why did you choose this profession? How far away do you think you are from that goal? Do you think your goal has changed since leaving university? If so, in what way?

Part 3- Picking up on any significant responses from individuals in the last visit (each will be tailored to the NQT)

Final question- Are you happy to continue with my research next year?

<u>Interview 3</u> – February 2020 (mid-point of second year of teaching)

- How would you say your second year of teaching is going so far? Has anything changed since last year? *(Revisit themes raised in previous interviews)*
- How would you define support?
- Do you identify with the following types of support needed: emotional/ intellectual/ institutional approval?
- In terms of authority sources, do you look to sources of support to tell you what to do? If not, what would your expectations be of them?
- What might more bespoke/ tailored support look like?
- Which forms of support do you relate most to? Intra/ inter-personal, institutional, systemic

- What part(s) of yourself do you bring into teaching? Think about how you see yourself in the role e.g. is it your subject knowledge or emotional empathy that are the biggest parts you bring?
- What guides your practice? e.g. school policy/ National Curriculum *(revisit discussions of this in previous interview)*
- In what ways is support/ responsibility different in the RQT year?
- Are you a form of support to others this year? In what ways?

Revisit answers around the four axes in interview 2 as necessary.

<u>Interview 4</u> – July 2020 (end of second year of teaching) *completed during the national lockdown for COVID-19.*

- Can you briefly outline how your school has adapted to the current situation as a result of COVID-19 i.e. remote teaching etc.
- What have been the main challenges? What about any benefits?
- Do you feel that expectations on you as a teacher have changed during this time? (Consider different viewpoints i.e. from within the school/ from parents)
- Have your perceptions on your role as a teacher changed at all?
- The pandemic has perhaps allowed you to see teaching through a different lens. Have your views on the profession changed at all?
- Have your views on assessment changed given that many summative tests have not taken place this year?
- Are there any policies/ guidance that have been relaxed during the pandemic and do if so, do you feel this has had a positive or negative impact? What might be the implications for the future?
- Reflecting on the last two years, how would you summarise the NQT/ RQT journey/ process?
- If you could rewind two years, what advice would you give yourself entering the profession?
- Are you aware of the DfE's Early Career Framework, being trialled over the next year and then fully introduced in 2021, as a two year induction entitlement for teachers? If so, what are your views on this?
- Moving into your third year of teaching, will you have any new roles/ responsibilities? Do you expect next year to be different to the previous two years and if so, in what ways?

Appendix 2 – An example of the process of the initial analysis of interviews – Adam

Initial analysis of interview 1

1.1 Child focussed – sometimes feels he takes on parental role

1.2 Child protection issues 'taken home' – emotions

1.3 Large focus on parents

1.4 CPD/ courses offered

1.5 Main support from parallel teacher but observations from Head teacher and mentor – positive feedback

1.6 Meets with other NQTs from cluster schools

1.7 Feels he has responsibility across the school – confidence has grown

1.8 Feels 'too young to be a teacher'/ difficulty in giving parents advice

1.9 Good work/ life balance

1.10 PPA/ NQT time – will go back into class if needed

1.11 'nice to have reassurance from university that they are still there'

1.12 Moderation coming up – concerns about this

1.13 Discussions with Head teacher over progress data (two sets of data produced). Head teacher accountability to Governors. Adam sees data as one of biggest pressures

Key/ themes

Yellow = child/ pastoral focus (Adam's focus)

Green = support (sometimes interviewer-driven)

Blue = perceptions/ ambitions of the role (sometimes interviewer-driven)

Pink = data/ policy (Adam's

Initial analysis of interview 2

2.1 Main significant event since last visit = moderation. Feels good about outcome and has given confidence in speaking to Y1 teachers about judgements

2.2 Data is a focus area for Adam – speaks about tensions etc. Feels that is what gets him down. Feels blame is on him if children don't achieve. Evidence of progress is important

2.3 Personal vision of a teacher = spending as much time as possible getting to know the children, their next steps etc. Data gets in the way of this

2.4 Curriculum tensions – too much of a jump between Reception and Y1

2.5 Targets around practice (things like working walls) not directly related to Teachers' Standards. Some tension here around EYFS fitting in with what the rest of the school does

2.6 Feels that mentor does not always understand EYFS practice and some targets have had to be changed

2.7 Will be in teaching long-term – knew it would be hard but didn't realise he'd enjoy it so much. Feels school is a good fit for him. Enjoys seeing children make progress. Would look at middle leadership in future (conflicts with wanting to spend as much time as possible with children)

2.8 Effective teacher = seeing every child as individual, not one size fits all. Phase leader very influential here

2.9 Authority sources/ influence on practice = having a good understanding of EY

2.10 Uni enforced the importance of reflection – now it comes 'naturally'

2.11 Teaching Assistant's influence on practice – source of good practice

2.12 Uses social media for ideas and contributes this to group chat of phase team

2.13 Ultimate goal – always wanted a job that involved helping people/ seeing children make progress

Initial analysis of interview 3

3.1 Feeling more confident in RQT year – not being new to it/ knowing the routines

3.2 Feels like he is left more to his own devices this year and sees that as a positive – less observations etc.

3.3 Has taken on subject leadership role which he sees as scary due to Ofsted deep dives. Feels like leadership skills have developed

3.4 Balance in terms of losing NQT time but being able to re-use resources from last year

3.5 Support = someone to reflect practice on, ask questions to and provide a listening ear

3.6 Support this year is less forced but still there when you need it

3.7 Relies mostly on phase team for support, including TA, or sometimes the wider school

3.8 Is offering informal support to a current NQT and this makes him feel good

3.9 Emotional support deemed most important but can relate to all types

3.10 Would not look to authority sources to give the answers as you need to stand on your own two feet and build confidence but would look to them to give advice

3.11 Feels he has developed his sense of self this year but difficult to pinpoint as the whole EYFS team share the same values

3.12 Brings emotional empathy into teaching – would be difficult not to when working with children. Struggles switching off emotions still but has improved

3.13 EYFS framework guides practice but more aware of bigger impact this year as children move into Y1. EYFS and the National Curriculum do not translate neatly

3.14 Ultimate goal has shifted to wanting leadership responsibilities.

Initial analysis of interview 4

4.1 Concerned about vulnerable children during lockdown

4.2 Focus on the child during lockdown – saw benefits as children spending more time with their families

4.3 Felt expectations on him during lockdown were fair, well-being was well considered.

4.4 Lockdown has made him appreciate the job more as he missed it and made him more flexible as a teacher. The focus shifted to more pastoral care

4.5 Believes lockdown proved that statutory assessments are not needed – children are much happier & well-rounded without them

4.6 The government like numbers but Adam feels the data they collect is an inaccurate representation

4.7 Enjoys having lunch with children due to conversations

4.8 RQT - left more to own devices – good for developing own teacher pedagogy

4.9 Realisation that every school is different

4.10 Believes you can become moulded in a certain way as you have your own perception of what teaching looks like – why he is moving year groups next year

4.11 Taking further leadership responsibilities next year – excited for that

4.12 From what he knows of ECF, thinks it is a good thing as will decrease the difference between NQT and RQT when you are left to your own devices. However, he thinks it should not be too structured