Art and Design as AOB

An exploration into value in relation to the subject and

teachers of art and design in secondary education in England.

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

This dissertation aims to capture a picture of the current value of the visual arts within education, largely through the eyes of those who teach it, with a particular focus on Secondary schools in Thanet, Kent, England, between the years of 2014 – 2018.

A qualitative methodology has been used to inform findings, using autoethnographic and feminist approaches, involving a focus group, semi – structured interviews held with art teachers, case studies and an art exhibition held in a public gallery developed through a collaborative photo-voice challenge undertaken by art teachers working in secondary education. The work of Irwin (2004) has largely influenced the choice to use a visual and written research journal, a/r/tographical and arts – based approaches.

Findings have emerged through thematic and semiotic analysis of artefacts, photographs and the key topics discussed through focus groups and interviews, alongside recognition of insights that emerge in the spaces between identities of artist, researcher and teacher. My original contribution to knowledge lies in the research design and methodology of this study, creating opportunities for art teachers working within schools in Kent to collaborate in exploring, reflecting upon and exposing key issues in their professional lives, during this period of time.

I argue that several factors contribute to issues of undervalue. These include misinterpretation and understanding of the subject art and design, alongside those who teach it, from those who heavily influence teaching and learning in secondary schools, the effects of policy and the struggles between a seemingly widely accepted bias towards scientific rationalist knowledge. This is made apparent through the narratives and experiences of art teachers and key themes,

such as communication and connectedness, expression, experimentation and play, pride, celebration, loneliness, isolation and frustration, which have emerged from analysis, findings and discussion.

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Glossary

11 Plus - A selective entrance examination that can be taken by pupils of primary school age. It is used by those in areas with grammar schools and selective independent schools to identify academic ability and potential.

A– Level – Advanced level qualifications, usually taken after GCSE's.

Academy - Academies receive funding directly from the government and are run by an academy trust. They have more control over how they do things than community schools and do not charge fees to attend.

APPG - An All-Party Parliamentary Group. A grouping in the Parliament of the United Kingdom that is composed of members of parliament from all political parties.

Arts – Various application of human creative activity in a general sense

Art and Design – Subject name given to the study of the visual arts in the English curriculum from 2013 onwards. Departments who oversee teaching and learning and the visual arts curriculum in secondary schools in England may often be referred to as the Art and Design Department.

Art, Design and Craft – The name given to the study of visual arts in schools in England, from the Educational Reform Act of 1988 until 2013 curriculum where it is now named Art and Design. Exam boards, such as AQA, also offer a course named Art, Design and Craft.

ASCL – Association of School Leaders.

AQA - Assessment and Qualifications Alliance. An exam board in the UK.

BERA - British Educational Research Association.

BTEC - Business and Technology Education Council. These are specialist work-related qualifications, combining practical learning with subject and theory content.

CAD / CAM - Computer-aided design / Computer-aided manufacturing.
Comprehensive – A secondary modern school that does not select its intake on the basis of academic achievement or aptitude.

CPD – Continuing Professional Development.

DfE – Department For Education. A department of Her Majesty's Government responsible for child protection, education (compulsory, further and higher education), apprenticeships and wider skills in England.

EIF – Education Inspection Framework.

EBacc - The English Baccalaureate is a performance measure for any student who achieves good GCSE or accredited Certificate passes in English, mathematics, history or geography, two sciences and a language.

GCSE – General certificate of secondary education.

Grammar School - Grammar schools are state secondary **schools** that select their pupils based on passing an entrance test, the 11 Plus (in Kent known as the Kent Test).

HOD – Head of Department.

HOY – Head of Year (those responsible for a particular year group within the secondary school).

KS3 - The three years of schooling in maintained schools in England and Wales normally known as Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9, when pupils are aged between 11 and 14.

KS4 - The two years of school education which incorporate external examinations, in maintained schools in England, normally known as Year 10 and Year 11, when pupils are aged between 14 and 15. In some schools however KS4 work is started in Year 9.
KS5 - The two years of education for students aged 16-18, or at sixth form, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, aligning with previous Key Stages as labelled for the National Curriculum.

L2 – Level 2 (qualifications such as the GCSE or BTEC)

L3 - Level 3 (qualifications post – GCSE such as A - levels)

MRQ - Major Research Question

NSEAD – National Society for Education in Art and Design.

O Levels - A qualification in a specific subject formerly taken by school students aged 14–16, at a level below A level. It was replaced in 1988 by the GCSE

OECD - The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

OFSTED - The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills.

PGCE – Post Graduate Certificate in Education

PISA - The Program for International Student Assessment. An international assessment that measures 15-year-old students' reading, mathematics, and science literacy every three years.

PPA - Planning, Preparation and Assessment time.

QCA – Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

QCDA – Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency.

SATS – Standard Assessment Tests. These measure a child's attainment in maths, reading, and grammar, punctuation and spelling.

SLT – Senior Leadership Team.

SRQ – Subsequent Research Question

STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics.

STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Sure Start - A UK Government area-based initiative, announced in 1998. The initiative originated with the aim of "giving children the best possible start in life" through improvement of childcare, early education, health and family support, with an emphasis on outreach and community development.

TES – Time Educational Supplement. A weekly UK publication aimed at education professionals.

Year 4 - The fourth full year of compulsory education, with children being admitted who are aged 8 before 1 September in any given academic year.

Year 5 - The fifth full year of compulsory education, with children being admitted who are aged 9 before 1 September in any given academic year.

Year 7 - Children entering Year **7** are generally aged between 10½ and 12 in their first year of secondary schooling.

Year 9 - Year 9 pupils are usually aged 13 by August 31st and in their third year of secondary schooling.

List of Appendices

1. <u>Introduction</u>

Welcome to the Classroom

A welcome to the classroom is how a new school year starts for me every September; a greeting for new and familiar faces and also a return to a space that both myself and students will occupy after the summer break. The classroom space is an important one, first impressions may be made by students as they enter that space, classrooms can indicate what sort of activities will be engaged in; mine has paints and brushes by the sink, a printing press in the corner, drying racks stacked up and artwork adorning the walls. For others they will already have interacted with this space, some of the artwork displayed will be theirs, they will have already have negotiated the ways in which the space is used and have an understanding of the kinds of activities, learnings and communication that may take place. Students enter and exit through the worn door regularly and every morning that I enter it my routine as an art teacher begins. This Introduction aims to welcome you to this thesis as if it were the first visit to my art classroom, opening the door to the world of an art teacher and the space occupied. Below is a photograph taken by an art teacher participant (who will be called James for the purpose of this research) of their classroom space prior to students entering.

Fig. 1 Photograph taken by James of his classroom

This research study aims to answer questions surrounding the value of arts education in secondary schools through qualitative research methods, predominately auto-ethnography, interviews and focus groups to capture teacher narratives, alongside arts-based approaches such as a/r/tography. Questions of value are explored in relation to both art teachers and the subject art and design, with the overall aim to create a clear picture of this period of time for the arts in secondary schools, but also to generate and discuss ways in which art teachers and leadership can influence and transform how the visual arts are valued and understood.

Value is a term that is used frequently in this research and therefore clarity is required surrounding the concept of value within the context of art education within the secondary school. Wiggins (2002) makes links between the term value and concepts of need and truth. I argue that in relation to arts education both intrinsic and instrumental value lies in engagement with visual communication. Considerations relating to the term value are presented in greater depth in section 4.5 – Notions of Value.

As a teacher of art and design, ever since graduating from my PGCE I have questioned and observed art education within the secondary school. For over 10 years, radical ideas have been

debated (QCDA, 2005, Hickman, 2010) but little research surrounding art educations role and value has been undertaken. The arts, including more specifically the subject 'art and design,' and creativity are 'allied with pursuit of ideas that are the antithesis of orthodoxy … innovative, radical and sometimes heretical or revolutionary' (Steers, 2003:27). Through this research I intend to contribute to this debate, academic knowledge and literature, by providing a detailed account of where art education stands, in relation to the current educational climate through an in – depth exploration surrounding the following research questions:

- How can the value of art currently be seen in the context of the curriculum?

- How is the ethos of a school affected by the way(s) art and design is valued and how the importance of these can be seen?

- How are art teachers valued?

The importance and relevance of this research follows Addison and Burgess's claim that 'all art teachers … have very good reason to be more than usually concerned' (2013:8). As a teacher of art and design I too share this anxiety for the subject, find myself questioning its place within the overall curriculum in secondary education and ruminate about the overall experience that students encounter. This in turn leads to curiosity in relation to what these experiences mean for teachers, students and the wider school community; both short – term and in terms of future lifelong learning, appreciation, practice of, and attitude towards the arts. The above concern is accompanied by the arts being publicly devalued in the political arena over recent years. This is highlighted in an article by Hutchinson (2014: 2), in which he reports that the then Education Secretary during 2016, suggested that 'young people choosing to study arts subjects at school should be warned that this decision could " hold them back for the rest of their lives,'' alongside the claim that Maths is 'the subject that employers value the most' (Hutchinson, 2014). This contrasts with the economic value of the arts industry where government figures deem the 'creative industries' to be 'worth 8 million an hour to UK economy' (Miller, 2014: 1).

Ann Mroz, the current director and editor of the TES magazine, wrote in the December 2017 issue, that imagery from a film entitled 'Afterimage' by a Polish director named Andrej Waida (2016), can be used as a metaphor for the arts and the wider associated notion of creativity in schools. She makes reference to a scene where 'an enormous banner depicting Stalin is draped over avant – garde artist Wladyslaw Streminski's window, turning both the room and his canvas red' (2017:3) and argues that this can be understood as a visual metaphor to convey 'what authoritarian states have tried to do to art through the ages. They need to control it and darken its spirit, because creativity is edgy and dangerous; the human imagination, set free, runs wild and pushes boundaries' (ibid). This idea of creativity in relation to social control though the politics of knowledge and power, is something that Foucault (1972) was acutely aware of. Foucault (1965) makes links between the labelling of genius and creativity and creativity and perceived madness.

With global concerns such as the sustainability of resources and the effects of the kind of mass production required to maintain the wants and needs of a capitalist society, we may well be looking towards creative minds to answer complex questions and resolve ever - evolving issues as they arise. The artist Bob and Roberta Smith in an interview for the NSEAD claims that art and design in schools plays a very important role in constructing the future, arguing that 'art and visuality' should be understood 'in the same breath as engineering and maths and science' and educators should 'teach computer coding at the same time as….teaching somebody drawing' (Leach, 2015) and points out the fact that everything is designed, made and constructed and how teaching art in schools is actually a 'route to success' (ibid). In the 2017 December issue of the Times Educational Supplement magazine in an article entitled 'Chasing creativity' Ward exclaims how 'The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) oversees the world's most talked – about league tables of children's reading, maths and science skills – the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). It began

looking at an assessment for creativity in 2013; there are strong rumours that this may finally be released in 2021' due to the fact that 'education systems around the world are increasingly being asked to produce creative kids' (Ward, 2017: 36 – 37). This perhaps demonstrates an increasing understanding of the important impact in which the study of art and design may have for future generations. However, as proposed by Eisner 'not everything that matters can be measured, and not everything that is measured matters' (2006). Although it is important to note here that there is the need to avoid the assumption that creativity is something that ought to happen through arts subjects alone. This sentiment is also shared by Robinson (2015) when he states that it is a misconception that 'creativity is only about the arts' (2015: 118).

Alongside the social and economic value of the arts there is also the intrinsic importance of art as a human activity, something Findlay (2012) reminds us of when stating that

> 'art predates money. Thirty – two thousand years before the dawn of recorded history
> *Homo sapiens* painted the walls of caves in what is now southern France and northern
> Spain with sophisticated images involving techniques of drawing and colouring that are
> far from our current definition of "primitive'' (Findlay, 2012: 13, 14).

This is a reminder that visual and artistic communication serves a multitude of purposes and may well, alongside other factors, lie at the very heart of what it means to be human. A report published by the All – Party Parliamentary group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing released in July 2017 makes the clear link between the ways in which engagements in and with the arts can improve quality of life and overall wellbeing for all. In this report the 2016 Culture White Paper is referred to in that it 'pledged to put measures in place to increase arts participation. Schools are a prime potential site for this, via the national curriculum, extracurricular activities and counselling services. At the same time, arts activities in the community can provide a

welcoming non-school environment, which is particularly important for children and young people excluded from school' (APPG, 2017:8).

Within an educational context we may refer to Eisner's identification of 'What the Art's Teach and How it Shows' (Eisner, 2002, 70-92) to give an indication of the value that studying the arts can foster, from

> 'teaching children to make good judgements, celebrate multiple perspectives and that problems have more than one solution [to communicating] what cannot be said [and making] vivid the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can know [and that] the limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition' (Ibid).

At a time when art education appears to be under great threat, a research project that attempts to explore and celebrate its value feels both timely and necessary. Art teachers act as the link between the students' experience of the arts and policy and practice that can effect what happens in the classroom, they often have to negotiate between attempted restraints imposed by senior leadership in schools in response to government agenda and how and what the students experience when studying the arts in schools.

This research has been conducted with a focus on Kent, with many of the teachers whose stories have been explored in further depth are based in schools in East Kent, more specifically in the Thanet area. Considering the context Welsh and Parsons (2006) claim that 'Thanet is the most deprived district in the county of Kent' (2006:39) due to the way in which it has 'historically experienced severe economic and social problems' (2006: 41). These issues are also reflected in the schools which serve this area situated on the South East coast. The social and economic poverty faced in certain pockets of Thanet by young people is largely due to ex – hotels from

when towns such as Margate and Ramsgate were popular seaside destinations, being converted into institutional accommodation and a large number of looked after children being brought to the area from cities such as London, which amongst other factors, has led to a 'distinct cohort of disaffected young people' (2006: 42). Much like many other coastal towns there is an 'end of the line' feel to Thanet when alighting a train and geographically speaking, centuries ago, it was an island detached from the mainland. Perhaps there are still echoes of this in a sense of remoteness, particularly for those young people and families who represent 'a needy case of desperation within an otherwise relatively affluent county' (Welsh and Parsons, 2006: 42).

My research will cross philosophical borders in the sense that I will be arguing and conducting research surrounding the value of arts education from a viewpoint largely influenced by an Interpretive – hermeneutic (phenomenological) stance when it comes to art, aesthetics and art teachers' experiences, but with a recognition of the constraints of our understanding and interpretation of experiences by external and social factors.

This has led to an adoption of overall framework, which is situated within Post – Modernism and Post – Structuralism, with particular influence taken from Feminist theory in relation to the history of art education, school organisations, the foundations of educational policy and chosen research methodologies. This will be clarified further in Chapter 4 : Literature.

The ways in which my thinking has evolved throughout the research journey can be demonstrated through the revision of various attempts at diagrams intended to provide further clarity surrounding chosen research and paradigmatic frameworks in relation to methodology, data gathering instruments and approaches to analysis, alongside my own visual responses with the liminal and reflective spaces in-between acting as an important linchpin in terms of approach, to both the research design and findings. One of many attempts at a diagram resulted in the creation of a sketchbook, using both visual and written imagery where the pages could

be turned and revisited, this made it further tactile and meant that I could start to bridge and explore the liminal space between image and word and communicate the importance of ambiguity to the study (Appendix A). Savin – Baden and Major (2013) define the notion of liminal space as 'a threshold or a sense of being on a threshold in an in between space' (2013: 524). Many conceptual links have been made between the works of Deleuze and Guattari, (1988) Irwin, (2006) Springgay (2012) and inspiration from artists such as Josh Dorman (2008), Emily Ginsburg (2005) and Jane Lackey (2005) in relation to the mapping of ideas and insights and Tom Phillips (2005) in terms of the integration of text and image and ways of mapping information in which reflections have been visually recorded using a sketchbook.

Explorations into my own visual responses, alongside analysis of photographs created by participants have been integral to the research, both in terms of method and findings. The recognition of my own influence and interaction with this study is explored in greater depth in the next chapter, through the writing of a positionality statement.

2. <u>Positionality Statement</u>

A little about me, the teacher

When describing identities as artist and teacher Leavy (2012) explains how she cannot 'carve out parts' of herself 'and place them into different boxes,' she has always felt, as I have, that 'we teach who we are' (2012:6). With this in mind, as a teacher I attempt to openly share my own art work and practice with students, plus reflect upon learnings in my personal life which may positively impact and cause me to reevaluate my professional life and vice versa. This is an approach that I have also adopted as a researcher. The photographs below are of my daughter and I working and exhibiting together in a local gallery. Further details and context surrounding these images are offered in section 6.1.2 – My images.
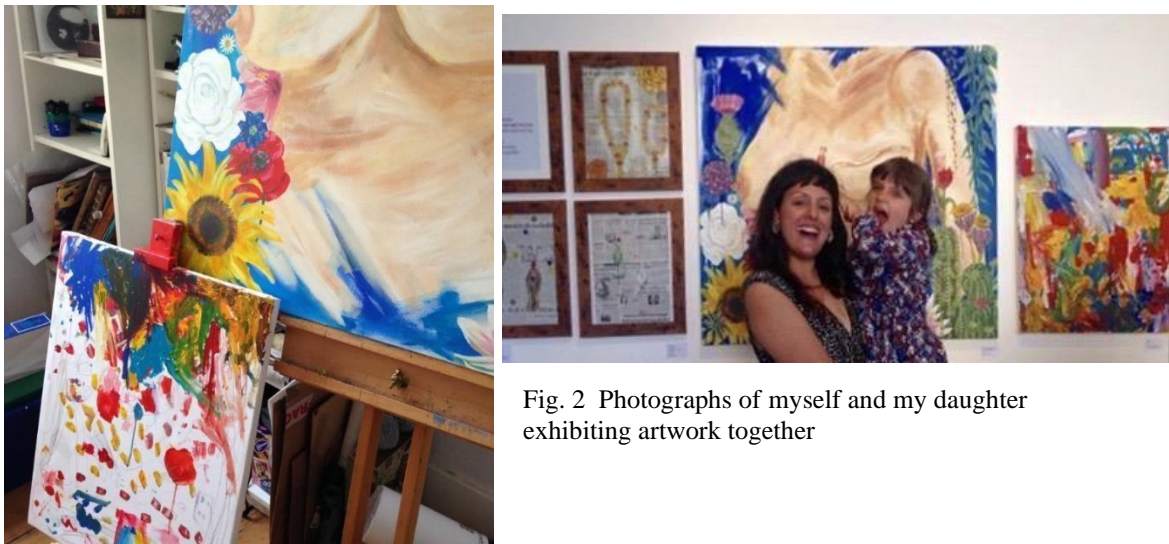
Fig. 2 Photographs of myself and my daughter exhibiting artwork together

My own biographical journey to date alongside my experiences as an art teacher will inevitably affect my interaction with the research, plus influence and shape the scoping process with regards to the literature. With a recognition of this I find myself questioning how my personal history has led to my current preoccupation with researching why the practice of the arts is so important in education and why I feel so strongly about 'defending' it. Here I

have already revealed much in the language used, the word 'defend' itself carries insight into my motivations for this research alone. This begs the following questions: What leads me to feel as though I need to defend the value of the arts? Defend the value of the contribution that art teachers can make? Am I starting this research from the subjective position of feeling as though the arts are somehow under attack within the realm of education? And how may this influence the way in which the research is both conducted and the findings engaged with?

As a researcher I think it is important to recognise my positionality and the potential pre-suppositions that I have developed as a result of my own lived experience. As highlighted by Etherington (2004) :

> 'To be reflexive we need to be aware of our personal responses and be able to make choices about how to use them. We also need to be aware of the personal, social and cultural contexts in which we live and work and to understand how these impact the ways we interpret our world' (2004 : 19).

According to McNamee and Bridges (2004) 'positionality has become something of a touchstone for good qualitative research writing in education' and one must ensure that they are 'critically reflexive' in how they introduce themselves 'less for the purpose of confession or to bring open the idiosyncrasies of personality and temperament than to acknowledge her autobiography as one marked by gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity and so on' (2004:63).

I will start with me, the researcher and my personal background and influences, then me, as teacher and my professional experiences and conclude with how these identities are intrinsically linked and how the social and cultural contexts in which I exist may influence both my interaction and interpretation in relation to this particular study. The reasoning as to my motivations behind this research and why I deem it important may also emerge.

In terms of my early childhood I was brought up in the late eighties / early nineties in a home environment that not only fostered creativity and freedom of expression, but one that when reflecting back, I believe allowed curiosity and independent thinking to flourish. My mother was a liberal feminist and an undeniably strong influence upon my outlook. She dedicated much of her life to learning through play, setting up a nursery for under 5's, assisting adults with learning difficulties in understanding how to approach play for both themselves and with their children, writing the first 'Play Strategy' for her local council and setting up her own company, which amongst other services provided the towns first adventure playground. She was also no stranger to public sector governmental currents, working for Sure Start, the local council and managing a community centre in a deprived area. As I grew up I watched her work hard maintaining these various roles and often accompanied her at work. In later chapters an explanation of the influence in which the thinking of Foucault (1961) has had in terms of a framework for research will emerge. With this is mind links may be drawn between my upbringing and the appeal of a Foucauldian understanding in relation to ontology, epistemology and influence in terms of an approach to research methodology. Namely ideas of the ways in which power works insidiously. These include, misguided notions of progress with regards to issues such as repression and that we are not neutral when it comes to the way that we organise or represent knowledge.

One of our favourite days out was to visit London for the day and walk around the National Gallery. There were two paintings that I always wanted to see as a child, these were Rousseau's 'Tiger in a Tropical Storm' (1891) and 'Van Gogh's Chair' (1888). I was also very interested in the large scale of many of the paintings, their decorative frames and the spacious rooms and hallways. I liked to watch the other people in the gallery and I would sit for periods of time with a small sketchbook of my own responding to the experience with the use of my, at the time very busy, imagination. As I became older and started to study art formally I would still meet with my mother and we would attend galleries together, often with a further focus on

those that represented and displayed works from modern and post – modern art movements and a favourite for us both was the Summer Show at the Royal Academy of Arts. This is something that I have now started to do with my own daughter as I think that it may well have been where my own recognition, understanding, passion and appreciation for the arts began.

My upbringing was very playful. I had little limitations on my self – expression and was always encouraged to take a creative risk and to question and harness the natural curiosity that I would argue is fundamental to any meaningful exploration through play or art. As Kaufman and Gregoire (2015) have established there are strong relationships between play, imagination and creativity. Creative people 'exhibit a great deal of imaginative playfulness' and for those with creative minds 'creating itself is an act of play' (2015:6). MacPherson (2015) claims that as a culture, we 'don't tend to view play in such a positive light' and I am inclined to agree, claiming that 'children's free time has been steadily declining since 1955' (2015:9) My own daughter (when aged 3) asked me an interesting question: 'mummy, do you work or do you play?' The fact that the two were already seen as two distinguishable entities suggests much in itself, reinforcing that, as always, we have much to learn when reflecting on the contributions made by the younger generation and their honest observations and insights. There is also perhaps a reflection to be made here about the ways in which children's insights are listened to and valued. When thinking back to my own childhood, the space and time offered to engage in creative activity, play and experience artworks first hand allowed acknowledgement of interests, self - expression and also developed this feeling of being listened to.

Alongside my innate passion for the arts as I matured into my later teens and early twenties I developed an equally strong interest in philosophy, following and interlinking with this, through my profession as a teacher, education has also become another subject area of endless intrigue.

When looking back on my own experience of secondary schooling I did not enjoy the later years outside of my art classes, and at times felt that I struggled to match my thinking to fit the mould of school life and routine. I do think that there are certain similarities that can be drawn between those learners who are inclined towards creative thinking and endeavours and who cognitively and playfully approach learning, who often struggle within the current secondary education system in England at large. Kaufman and Gregoire (2015) describe how:

'like so many creative people, Thom Yorke didn't fit into a conventional school system' and in an interview he has been noted to explain that 'the school system was set up in such a way that was very contrary to how I was built. I was constantly getting into trouble in small but annoying ways' (15: 2015).

Thom York is a successful musician, vocalist and songwriter in an English rock band called Radiohead and as an individual could be classed as a creative person. When looking as far back as attending primary school, I distinctly remember two teachers in retrospect. One was a teacher in year 4 who encouraged creativity in all its many forms: music, poetry, art, literature, dance, I would be so excited about what we had learned at school that I would actively continue projects at home and over school holidays, the learning was experiential and I was engrossed and involved. The next school year, in year 5, I had a new teacher whose teaching style was a complete juxtaposition. Suddenly learning was no longer fun, I was discouraged to present work creatively, but instead neatly, the serious endeavours of preparing for SATs tests had begun and the time for creative expression was limited. At secondary school, subjects were clearly separated and art lessons happened only once a week. I attended an art club afterschool and became heavily involved in art as an 'extra-curricular' activity whenever an opportunity presented itself. Although I was confident and able in other subjects, there was always something different about the art lessons that made them enjoyable. At the time I could not pinpoint what this quality was, but it may have been what the other lessons were lacking

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opposed to what the art lesson offered, perhaps the room for independence, creativity, imagination and autonomy. As a mixed-race female, attending a school in a deprived area of a seaside town in the South East of England, from a lower middle class bohemian background, with my mother having left formal education post her O Levels, but having observed her work hard to socially climb, I may have flourished in the art classroom because it allowed room for individuality and a way of learning that appeared further holistic. I also faced some adversity during my upbringing and time at school due to finding it difficult to fit within the perceived and widely represented 'norm' as there was limited ethnic diversity or representation of same-sex parenting, so being one of the only mixed-race students with a lesbian mother and what at the time would have been acknowledged by many as an unconventional family structure, I found that the arts seemed to allow the space and a further open – minded approach, where perhaps the overall school system and wider society at the time lacked.

This leads for a need for me to be honest and open about the subjective and personal opinions that I have developed over the years due to both my upbringing and own educational experiences detailed above, plus the influences developed from being a teacher of art and design.

It was during the second year of my undergraduate degree that I decided I wanted to train as a teacher, specifically an art teacher. I had pursued a degree in philosophy and enjoyed any opportunity to delve into aesthetics. I had also continued to engage in artistic activity alongside studying, which eventually led me to seek further formal education in the visual arts, deciding to study an arts foundation course at a local college alongside my degree. I have taught in five different schools throughout my teaching career to date and the experiences gained during this time is what has led to my pre-occupation with issues of value surrounding the arts in the secondary school. By acknowledging, recognised and openly sharing my own potential bias and opinions I am creating an opportunity for reflexive insight, with a greater connection with

others. The assumptions that I have made as a result of my own experiences of teaching art in the secondary school are as follows:

I think that the value of the arts, in particular the visual arts, within the current education system and political landscape is hugely misunderstood and undervalued by those within positions of power. It is not just the benefits of the arts for young people, but the value that learning the kind of skills that can be developed through practicing art activities and learnt from engaging with artworks, that are not fully appreciated. It appears that the difficulty comes from the issues that arise from being able to measure those skills labelled 'soft' or understood as holistic. It increasingly appears that the way that value is measured in the current educational climate is usually numerically and gathered through quantitative means, which in many respects can be limiting, from the way that a schools success is judged to the way that we measure students and their 'ability' or apparent 'progress.'

Due to the history of art education within England, art has been labelled 'practical' and 'vocational' and when it comes to visual communication it appears that concepts of creativity are seemingly not being held in very high esteem compared with other ways of knowing, such as written and spoken language and numerical means of understanding the world. Many of the great 'theories of knowing' which underpin the education system appear to be based solely on Western thought, philosophical traditions and 19th century educational practices and have, arguably, not moved with the times. This is not to say that there is no value in 19th century art, philosophy or traditions, however the question remains as to whether the education system reflects the changes that have occurred since.

This seems at odds with a number of things, such as the fact that historically, human kind has always expressed complex problems through imagery, used imagery as description. Art activities as communication across languages and cultures (and in many respects imagery) thus

universally defies language, in that it is a very basic human activity. Due to an element of art being intertwined with 'being human,' art as a subject, when taught and viewed in this manner, can be inclusive to all. The benefits of living a 'creative life' whether this be in terms of practical art, craftsmanship, music, dance, literature or poetry are multitudinous, but when these correspond to subjects in schools, these benefits appear at times to be blindsided by subjects in which are valued as greater currency for a school, such as English and mathematics. It appears that the reason as to why English and maths have become such high – stake subjects is because of the continuing, ever prevalent and increasing concern that 'standards are too low in literacy and mathematics' (Robinson, 2016: 10). According to the Organisation for Economic Co – Operation and Development (OECD) 'English teenagers aged 16 – 19 were judged to have the worst levels of literacy and the worst numeracy levels of 23 developed nations' (ITV report, Jan 2016).

When talking with both students and parents they appear to value arts activities relatively highly. The art and design classroom however is often viewed as a different kind of space where a different sort of activity is carried out to the rest of the school and parents are often still wary of the arts as a future career choice for their children. (Despite the fact that there are many employment opportunities within the creative arts industry). When conversing with both parents and teachers about the arts there is often talk about the 'arts' as if they are something that people are naturally and innately 'gifted' or 'talented' at and not relating to a skill or creative thinking as a way of approaching further generic problem - solving, that can be developed over time and learnt. The experiences that adults have had in terms of their own relationship and exposure to the arts seems to strongly inform their understanding.

Through my own personal observations and experiences I have been led to believe that something that teachers who specialise in the arts have to offer are the tools to develop creative and open - minded pedagogies. They are individuals who can demonstrate and model the

benefits of enjoying a creative and imaginative mindset. These benefits can be identified as being open to change and the ability to adapt, being able to see things from a variety of points of view and perspectives and consider problems from different angles, seeing things in often alternative and challenging ways, resilience, risk – taking and having the confidence to try things out and reflect on these experiences. Much of creative activity can be traced back to having a natural curiosity and desire towards inquiry, which links directly to what lies at the heart of a love of learning and experimentation; often experiential in approach. The question remains as to whether students are actually encouraged in this way and to develop this attitude to their learning and whether this can be the case when so much of their schooling is geared up to exams and tests, or the temptation that many teachers working in the profession refer to as 'spoon feeding' which is an all too easy strategy for teachers to deploy in order to ensure success. Maybe it is the case that the learning has become more about the 'progress' and 'success' and its measurement then it is about actually 'learning' and developing life – long learning habits and therefore has become commodified. This is where I think that art and design as a subject becomes interesting, students at KS4 and 5 in particular must create highly developed personal responses to confidently developed ideas in order to achieve a high grade which is an area where the skills listed above relating to being a 'creative individual' become paramount to their success. Judgement of creative outcomes and assessing formatively is very different to many other subjects at secondary level, the students' journey is taken into account and there has to be time given for making mistakes and reflecting upon these as this is an integral part of the creative process.

Subjectively speaking, I feel as an art teacher that when it comes to school culture and the value of the arts, art as a subject bridges a difficult gap and is sometimes referred to as a pleasant 'colourful' addition and 'relief' from the more 'serious' and 'important' subjects and art teachers are often seen as serving a similar function. The assumption often being made that art teachers deal best in pictures and offer a subject that has much intrinsic value, but essentially

has little function or purpose beyond this. It appears that art and design has to find a way of playing into the education system and bartering with the objects, notions and subjects that are considered valuable in order for its survival. Education has increasingly become a highly political arena and art can no longer sit outside of this or rely on art teachers having a romantic notion based on traditional stereotypes of the 'artist.'

Teaching is in many respects a profession whereby the values that it teaches must be in line with the values that it actually delivers, plus there is also the increasing 'consumer' element to consider as schools model themselves more and more on businesses, as if learning itself is some sort of commodity that 'consumers' can gain. The issue here may well lie in the dichotomy of understanding when it comes to notions of value. What is valuable to art as a subject may not be so to the current educational system; what is valuable to students may not be what is so to teachers, and what is valuable to teachers may not be so to learning itself. Conceptions of value does appear to be at the heart of the issue for the arts in secondary schools and the above concerns and sentiment may assist in answering questions as to why this research is of interest to me, but also why I deem it important for the arts, art teachers and students within the education system in England.

Collins (2001) claims that:

> 'Each researcher brings certain frames of reference, goals, biases, and abilities to the research. Each type of inquiry is guided by the researcher's own view of the world. These values and experiences will influence the questions chosen by the researcher, the language of the research, and what can be learned about the teaching and learning phenomenon' (2001: 182).

With the above in mind, I hope that the acknowledgement and transparency of my own positionality and potential bias will be recognised, plus the acceptance that as a researcher one must be mindful of issues surrounding context and empirical a posteriori knowledge.

When I first began this research journey I worked in a school situated in Thanet. I could therefore sympathise with the social and economic context and challenges which many of the fellow research participant teachers faced. In last year prior to finalising this piece of work I moved to a school in Medway, which although a unitary authority is geographically situated in the county of Kent. Having lived in both the towns of Ramsgate and Margate over the past 8 years I have built up a personal knowledge and experience of these areas, I have always felt that they are transient places, never quite feeling settled enough to whole – heartedly call them home, despite it being my daughter's birthplace. Following the decline of the traditional seaside holiday, these two towns remain amongst the 10 most deprived wards in Kent (Welsh and Parsons, 2006: 42) with both high levels of social and economic deprivation and a transient population. The Thanet school where I worked was a non - selective academy. The school in which I am currently employed is a selective co-educational grammar school. Both encompass different challenges, however have provided me with the opportunity to experience a first-hand contrast in terms of the educational landscape across not only selective and non – selective education, but also the differing areas of Kent.

The other influencing factor, which must be declared, before moving on to the literature, is the paradigmatic lens in which this research is situated, the selection of this has been largely influenced by both my lived experience detailed above, yet also composed and organsied with the use of Pearse's (1983) framework, with additional insights from the work of Efland (1979) which will be explored in the next chapter.

3. Pearse and the Development of a Theoretical Framework

Seating plan

Many teachers will introduce a seating plan in the classroom as a means of assisting students with behaviour and / or progress. This is something that I have experimented with before in the past with classes where the behaviour has become challenging. With other classes students will chose their own seating arrangements, often students will move around the classroom as they organise and collect equipment or work in groups to discuss ideas or work. When situating this research in terms of a theoretical framework there can be similarities drawn with the classroom seating plan. Where do the ontological and epistemological beliefs which lay at the foundation of this research sit in relation to others? Which theories or schools of thought sit on the same table? And who are my theoretical friends on the table? Who else sits nearby? Who would I not work well with if I were to be seated in a certain position within the room? Throughout this chapter I endeavour to construct a picture of where this research sits in the theoretical seating plan. Much like a teacher's seating plan, students may at times wander from one side of the classroom to the next, borrow equipment from areas of the room and then return to their table with these and borrow ideas from others in order to make further sense of their own work. Below is a blank photograph of a seating plan I have used in the past in the art and design classroom.
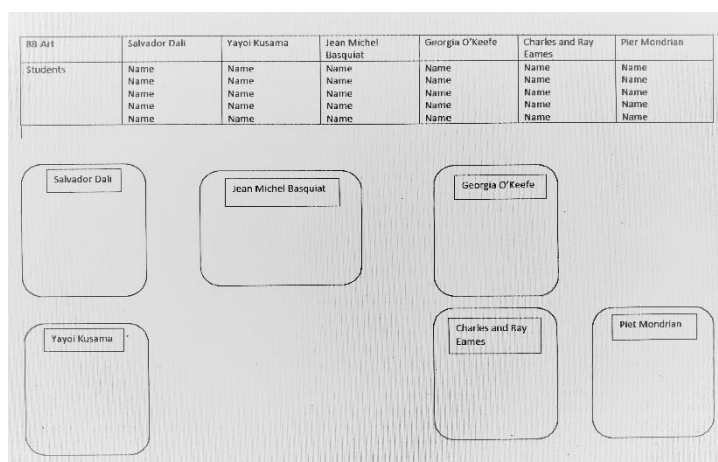
Fig. 3 Seating plan exemplar

I have used Pearse's (1983) framework involving the recognition of how traditionally there are three main paradigms that lend themselves to summarising the basic forms of knowing, to organise and structure how my thinking has evolved in terms of a theoretical framework, alongside navigating using three common stances taken by art educators specified by Efland (1979).

Three main paradigms, which are derivative of philosophy through to psychology, in which thought and action can typically be understood in relation to educational research within the arts, are cited in the work of Aoki and Gray (1978: cited in Pearse, 1983) the initial exponents of these frameworks, which can be noted as: 'The Empirical – Analytic Orientation, The Interpretive – Hermeneutic Orientation' and 'The Critical – Theoretic Orientation' (Pearse, 1983: 159).

In this chapter I will clarify how the analysis of the frameworks proposed by Pearse (1983) and Efland (1979) have enabled me to situate my own thinking in relation to ontology and epistemology within art education. I have included a couple of early attempts of diagrams to summarise the key concepts that underpin this study in relation to influential thinkers and the development of ideas.

The circular diagram below (Fig. 4) acted as a way to map the thinkers, theories and related concepts and how these overlap and touch at points, with the notions of 'becoming, lived – experience, hermeneutics and liminal space' linking the overall paradigmatic framework and associated thinkers. The overlapping areas indicate the influences and links between the philosophical and sociological theory, qualitative methodology and analysis. The first draft of this figure was in a linear format, however the most recent versions attempt to demonstrate the ebb and flow of the key ideas and how they interrelate as the initial versions were insufficient in capturing the structure of thought. I decided to redraft the layout of the diagram on an old

plan of an educational building (Fig. 5). Using a colour key combined with the different areas of the architecture, alongside the surrounding land and boundary lines enabled me to further effectively communicate how the theoretical framework amalgamated. I have decided to include these with the hope that they may assist in illustrating the ways that my thinking has evolved and as a means of highlighting the relationship between the concepts further explored throughout this section:

Fig. 4 Diagram to demonstrate the key concepts underpinning this study 1

The handwritten labels in the figure read:

- Wertheimer & Gestalt (1944)
- Existentialism (Satre, 1945)
- Phenomenology (Heidegger, 1927) Hermeneutics
  (Faucault, 1969/1979)
- Social constructivism (Dewey 'culture')
- Relativism
- Semiotics (manning, 1987)
- Feminism
- A/R/Tography (Irwin, 2006) & Arts-Based methods
- Eisner (2002/2005) Qualitative research methods
- Efland (1979) History of Art Education
- Artefact analysis
- Thematic analysis & E. feldman (1994) model
  of art criticism

- Becoming, Lived-experience
  & Limited space

Fig. 5 Diagram to demonstrate the key concepts underpinning this study 2

In the introduction to this study I referred to the work of Savin – Baden and Major (2013) who claimed that often in research one philosophical camp cannot be occupied alone and a 'philosophical mashup' is created, which is described as 'the integration of two different philosophies often within a single study' (2013: 31). Inspiration from a number of thinkers has been derived in order to establish my thinking, these main influences range from phenomenologists, post – structuralists and post-modernists to existentialists, with particular attention paid to Heidegger (1971) and Foucault (1972). Ideas and insights have also been greatly influenced by the work of educationalists such as Eisner (2002) and Efland (1979), plus the arts – based methodologies deployed by researchers such as Irwin (2006). The frameworks offered by Pearse (1983) and Efland (1979) have been used as tools, which have allowed me to navigate, by rejecting or adopting various elements from diverse orientations and discourse.

Phenomenology and the Interpretive – Hermeneutic Orientation

As a framework, this approach is based upon Phenomenology. Knowledge and understanding is formed upon situational and 'authentic intersubjective understanding' by which an individual aims to 'get under perceived phenomena in order to directly confront the phenomena in question' (Pearse, 1983:160). This is very much opposed to the generalisations made with the Empirical – Analytic Orientation, those researching through a Interpretative – Hermeneutic lens focus further upon 'repeatability, identity of meaning' and the essence of deep structures (ibid).

There are strong interrelations between traditional Phenomenology, espoused by thinkers such as Heidegger (1927) and Husserl (1913) and Existentialism. As highlighted by Warburton (2001), for Husserl 'an important part of philosophy is descriptive: we should describe our experiences, not simply reflect at an abstract level' (2001 : 219). Sartre, although often associated with existentialism was largely influenced by phenomenology, claiming that 'existence precedes essence' in that 'there is no pre – existing blueprint of humanity to which we must conform: human beings choose what they become' and 'we exist first and later make ourselves what we will' (2001: 218). There is much to be borrowed from both phenomenology and existentialism as schools of thought, however there is the consideration of social situation and environmental factors, political, social, economic, even biological that can act as limitations for an individual, the choices available to them, their interactions with the world and others and the questions surrounding whether this is escapable. When accepting Foucauldian notions of 'genealogy' (1969) and 'archaeology' (1966) we are reminded of the shifting discourses and ways in which dominant ideas during historical periods influence the development of knowledge claims (Foucault, 1969).

Can an individual accurately describe and unpack their experiences to reveal essence when consistently, inescapably and quite possibly unaware, influenced by so many other factors? Phenomenology and Existentialism both place paramount importance on the autonomy of the individual; ultimately a little too much for my comfort. However what does appeal at the same time, paradoxically, is the way in which when it comes to aesthetics and research methodology 'it is motivated by a desire to look at the world afresh from the perspective of the first – person, pre- reflective, "lived" experience' (Chaplin, 2005:159).

Much like the process of creating artwork(s) in itself, perhaps with the philosophical questions of epistemology and ontology there is a parallel to be drawn in the following notion that 'tension and dialectical contraction are inherent in art; not only must art derive from an intense experience of reality, it must also be constructed, it must gain form through objectivity' and from 'free play' develops 'mastery' (Fischer, 2010:18). Berger (1980) exclaims

> 'isn't it that one wants a thing to be as factual as possible, and yet at the same time as deeply suggestive or deeply unlocking of areas of sensation other than simple illustrating of the object that you set out to do? Is that not what art is all about?' (1980:119).

The need to express more than the simple formal qualities of an object, subject or theme through an artwork is certainly something that many artists aspire to, however there is also the ability to unlock an artwork by those who view it, as human beings we can bring our own sensations and interpretations of these to an artwork, which may otherwise be described as 'factual as possible' (ibid).

Caduri (2013) clearly explains how hermeneutic interpretations, often associated with a phenomenological approach, may arise in relation to research, plus influence chosen methodologies and analysis of data, when stating that:

> 'hermeneutic standards entail such criteria as plausibility, adequacy, and persuasion, which are aimed at convincing us that a researcher's interpretation of a teacher's life story makes sense. Justifying or validating these accounts can be conducted from a variety of interpretative tools: thematic analysis, structural analysis and the researcher's reflectivity about the prejudices that guide his understanding. These hermeneutic criterions enable us to appreciate the interpretation of the teachers' life stories offered by narrative researchers' (2013: 12).

This is an approach which appeals greatly due to the importance of the teachers' own experiences and the common themes that may be found though interpretation of the life stories of other professionals working within a similar realm.

It may be that the problems with both post-positivism and phenomenology originate in a simple distinction between theory and practice and description and prescription that cannot withstand criticism. It was American pragmatism, developed by Dewey (1896) in particular, that emphasized the incoherence of the theory-practice distinction. An opponent of what he called *false dualisms*, Dewey avoided a harsh dichotomy between the inner lives of human beings and a so-called 'objective' reality that exists outside of them. However, rather than expressing his views in the terms of German idealism, he chose what has sometimes been called a naïve naturalism. What exists, in Dewey's view, are not objects but events that like Heidegger's (1971) notion of 'Being' entail the interaction between organisms and their environments. Dewey called the amalgamation of these events 'experience' (Alexander, 2006 : 2 - 3). Perhaps inquiry generally speaking, whether this be in the natural or human sciences involves problems relating to making sense of experience. When it comes to research methodology 'as methods

of inquiry, hermeneutics and phenomenology are closely linked to ethnomethodology and ethnography' (Pearse, 1983: 161), which are also directly related to autoethnography, methods that I will deploy because of their clear suitability with regards to the subject matter and environment in which I am conducting research.

This orientation has heavily influenced my thinking in the sense that the phenomenological stance allows for the embracing of lived - experience and hermeneutic interpretations which are key to my chosen research paradigm and the key thinkers that have underpinned development of chosen research methods.

<u>Empirical – Analytic Orientation and empirical forms of knowing</u>

The 'Empirical – Analytic Orientation' refers to the epistemological belief that the way in which both knowledge is formed and the value of art activity itself lies within 'the root activity' and the 'intellectual and technical work' that enables mankind to relate to the natural world (Pearse, 1983: 159). This conception of understanding is based upon empirical forms of knowing; technical knowing. According to an article published during 1983 this was the dominant approach to educational research and had been historically, with over half of the articles written within the past two years of this date being experiential in their research approach. This begs the question as to whether this is still the case. Eisner (2003) claims that 'scholars have become attracted to the idea of getting close to practice, to getting a first - hand sense of what actually goes on in classrooms' and 'schools' and that gathering this kind of qualitative research and 'knowledge takes time' (2003:54). Eisner also notes how there has been a significant increase in the amount of books and articles on qualitative research methods in education and how it is 'a domain that is vibrant and growing' (2003: 55). With experiential research methods 'control, validity, and the ability to make accurate generalisations are

empathised' (Pearse, 1983:159). Pearse notes that one of the issues with working from an Empirical – Analytic Orientation is that 'education is a social process and children and educators are subjective, growing human beings' (1983:160). Clandinin and Connelly (1995) have termed teacher knowledge 'professional knowledge landscapes' to emphasise the social dimension and the influence of specific environments and contexts on the work of teachers (1995: 213). The description of teacher knowledge within the context of professional landscapes is one that appeals greatly to me due to the way in which insights and knowledge are both generated and grown within the social context of others, of schools; human places where there is flux.

Goldman (2012) claimed that

> 'towards the end of his long life, Dewey dropped the philosophical language of "experience" in favour of the anthropological language of "culture." "Culture," that is, liberates us from the philosopher's fruitless search for the essential givenness of experience; instead of seeking abstract, universal truths, it enables us to focus on concrete particularity (2012: 1)…the terrain of which is mapped best by novelists like Dickens and Orwell, "anti-theorists" whose narratives both allow insight into the human condition and open up possibilities for salutary re-description of our common experience' (2012: 20).

Dewey bases his empiricism on a 'biological model of humans as organisms functioning within and hence with their environment' (ibid). This concept is based upon anthropological ideas. I think this is certainly worth taking into account as the ways in which an individual in many respects cannot escape the impact in which their environment has upon them, the influences that evolve from gender, race, religion, socio – economic factors are all important. This is where Marxism and critical theory may take centre stage in recognising, examining and exploring the external impact of society on the individual.

An area I believe it important to explore is Marxism, due to the fact that this study is situated within the field of Education, which unlike many popular theories relating to aesthetics is heavily subjected to the outside influences of society, norms, values, cultural and political changes, historical events and implications. Marxism provides a solid foundation for critical theory in the social sciences, built upon Marxist ideas relating to struggles of class, social change and communism. The notion of art educators holding what Efland (1979) deemed the Critical – theoretic Orientation and the Critical Feminist approach' (1979: 45), later explained towards the end of this chapter, also relies upon notions initially derived from Marxism. Although profoundly influenced by Marxism, Foucault (1976) claimed that 'the price Marxists paid for their fidelity to the old positivism was a radical deafness to a whole series of questions posed by science' (1976: 110). Foucault's loyalty was to the acceptance of the ambiguous and contingent and moved away from a preoccupation with politics.

When it comes to the creation of art, Fischer (2010) claims that 'art' is in fact 'work' and for human beings these two concepts and activities are interchangeable, due to the making and producing of tools in relation to our historical understanding of the origin of art and creativity. Fischer notes that Marx identified with Franklin's (1778) idea that man is a 'tool – making animal', which, according to Marx, is 'characteristic of the human labour process' (Fischer, 2010: 25). MacGregor (2012) has worked as the director of the British Museum and reveals the histories and stories that are communicated through objects that are created by mankind. MacGregor (2012) claims that if you 'want to tell the history of the world, a history that does not unduly privilege one part of humanity, you cannot do it through texts alone' due to the fact that 'writing is one of humanity's later achievements' and 'even many literate societies recorded their concerns and aspirations not only in writing, but in things' (2012: xvi). Foucault notes the clear divide between words and image and argues that often 'when they have been both present in the same painting, one of these has tended to be subordinate to the other in artistic

importance,' but also 'painted images themselves tended to be subordinate to the actual objects they represented' (Wicks, 2005: 202). Perhaps this is an issue that can, arguably, be traced all the way back to the Platonic theory of forms.

Foucault (1976) uses Magritte's 'Ceci n'est pas une pipe' (1929) to demonstrate how an artwork can fight against this preconception and struggle of power between written and visual communication, because it 'is intrinsically ambiguous and resists any singular and exclusive interpretation' (Ibid). The way in which the analysis of Magritte's work can illuminate ideas central to a Foucauldian understanding of epistemology (1969) will be returned to in further depth later in the subchapter 4.4.

When it comes to social class and divides in historical terms Steers (2012) claims that art education in England 'can be traced back to the Great Exhibition' in 1851 in response to the 'French Industrial Exposition' in 1844 and from this event in history onwards we have developed and built a curriculum based upon the tensions between 'functional' art and design education and 'arts for art's sake' (2010: 24). Interlinked and tied into this is a 'social structure' initially designed to 'separate those with knowledge and taste from those with none,' which goes towards perpetuating 'class privileges' (2010: 10). For Foucault 'ideas are weapons which the bourgeoise has put to use in its exercise of power' (1972: 27). Yet this power is 'a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised' (1972: 156).

There is much that I struggle to align with in relation to the Empirical – Analytic orientation and empirical forms of knowing, such as that noted by Pearse (1983) referring to the fact that in an educational setting we must understand the way in which research is often a 'social process and children and educators are subjective, growing human beings' (1983: 160) however, there are some key features which I think bear relevance for this research, such as the

importance of empiricism when it comes to the generation of knowledge claims within education, but also the recognition of the influence of socio-economic status, gender and class. The artwork of Grayson Perry (2013) brings our attention to the ways in which our 'taste' and aesthetic appreciation is interwoven with class in England through a series of tapestries (Appendix B).

<u>The Critical – theoretic Orientation and the Critical Feminist approach</u>

According to Pearse (1983) 'The root activity in the Critical Orientation is reflection, or the relating of man to his self and his social world' (Pearse, 1983 :161) in this sense 'knowledge is a result of a process of critical thinking that combines reflection and action' combining 'meanings, the essences, and the understandings of multiple realities gained from the situation – interpretive orientation and adds the critical dimension (ibid). This approach includes the potential for 'initiating a process of transformation designed to liberate and, to use a favourite term of this paradigm, empower people' and 'rallies those who have been marginalised by virtue of gender, race, or class' (Pearse, 1983: 245).

Eisner (1988) claims that:

> 'feminists have taught us about the multiple ways in which the world can be experienced and have uncovered assumptions and values in our so – called value – neutral research practices that make them seem less neutral than we once believed they were. Put another way, the politics of method became invisible' (Eisner, 1988, in Addison, 2013: 54).

This explanation of the influence of a feminist lens on the ways in which the world may be experienced and these experiences framed has greatly influenced the methodology of this research. The understanding of the ways in which critical thinking may link reflection and

action in relation to knowledge claims that accept multiple realities appeals to me as both an artist and teacher. The acknowledgement of my preferred way of making sense of the world and experiences I encounter, plus my own potential influence on the research has led to a recognition of the importance of a critical feminist perspective. As clarified by Letherby (2003) 'some feminist writers have chosen to reveal themselves to their audiences in a way that provides the reader with a greater sense of connectedness between the researcher and those participating in the research study' and this may be because many feminist methodologies are ones 'which are respectful of respondents' whilst also acknowledging 'the subjective involvement of the researcher' (Letherby, 2003: 5). This is something that I fully intend on embracing within my own approach to research because I believe that essentially 'all research is ideological because no one can separate themselves from the world – from their values and opinion, from the books that they read, from the people they have spoken to and so on' (Ibid). According to Delamont (2003) 'reflexivity and first – person narratives lead directly to the possibilities of autoethnography' which can be 'based substantially or even exclusively on the writer's personal experiences, memories and actions.' Delamont claims that 'autoethnography and autobiography can be virtually indistinguishable' (2003: 152), arguing that:

> 'the celebration of voices can allow the author to find her or his voice in a way that differs
> from the canons of conventional academic writing: it provides permission for first –
> person narratives that insert the author in her or his texts, rather than suppressing the
> personal in the analytic, [often found] in the feminist mantra ''the personal is political,''
> auto ethnography fits very well into feminist sociology, whether or not its inscribers enjoy
> playing with postmodernism' (2003: 152).'

The positionality statement written previously in chapter 2 was constructed with the above in mind.

Delamont (2003) and Eisner's (1988) thinking in relation to feminism has greatly contributed to the desire and preference to use an arts – based research method, alongside autoethnography and narrative, as a methodology. One of the arts – based research methods that has been utilised in this research is a/r/tography. One of the main proponents and champions of a/r/tography is Irwin (2006), another key thinker central to this study. Much of Irwin's work has taken inspiration from poststructuralist thinkers, such as Deleuze (1988), which will be explored further in the methodology, chapter 5.

In philosophical terms postmodernism really signalled the end of the themes, thoughts and beliefs of the Enlightenment and although apparently first coined as an expression by artists, opposed to philosophers, the writings of French post – structuralists / deconstructionalists, such as Derrida (1966) Lyotard (1979) and Baudrillard (1968) are where postmodernism finds its foundation (Novitz, 2005:214). Delamont (2003) explains how:

> 'Post – modernists argue that we have reached the end of the Enlightenment project: the faith that we can find a neutral standpoint from which to gather objective facts and scientific truth about the world, [claiming that] it is no longer possible for a thinking person to believe in objectivity, truth or "science" because the epistemological basis for a belief in objectivity has been destroyed' (2003: 139).

One of the key factors of postmodernism is the claim that 'there is or could be an unconstructed human nature that is shared by all human beings and that affords them to be rational' due to the idea that rationality is itself a social construction. Furthermore when it comes to taking a Postmodern stance one must come to terms with the idea that 'there are no foundational truths, no set of privileged, rationally unassailable propositions, on which our insights and understandings are based,' (Delamont, 2003, 215) bringing with this the acceptance that 'there can be no neutral, culturally unmediated standpoint from which to view and understand the

nature of reality; nor can our natural faculties afford us that unbiased insight into the nature of things that modernism had promised' (ibid).

Emery (2002) writes prolifically about teaching art in a Post – modern world and claims that 'since the first rumblings of postmodernism' appearing 'in the wider art world, art educators are just beginning to feel the impact' (2002: 2). One must question whether another 18 years after this was written if this is still the case? One of the reasons identified for the slow uptake and acceptance of artists such as Damien Hirst and the Chapman Brothers is that 'postmodern art practices embrace diversity' and curriculum 'demands conformity' which can result in a 'difficult contradiction for teachers' (Emery, 2002:3). Deduced from both observations and my own experiences of delivering art and design education, I think that this struggle can be felt for art teachers and is in many respects emblematic of art as a subject within the overall formal schooling system across many institutions.

When considering postmodern thought, the relationship between art and aesthetics and the way that perceptions of art education have developed, the work of Duchamp (1961) is a significant contributor. Danto (2013) claims that a large part of Duchamp's intention was to 'constitute a body of art in connection with which aesthetics considerations did not arise' (2013:143). Duchamp (1961) claimed "choice was based on a reaction of visual indifference with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste….in fact a complete anaesthesia'' (Danto, 2013: 141).

MacDonald (1998) argues that 'post – modernism has a parallel with post – industrialisation, with 'the end of an age of innocence' and what Foucault has termed the 'post – modern condition' (1998: 228). MacDonald also references the idea of 'creative stocktaking' explaining how we can see the 'cut and paste' nature of post – modernism when considering an 'archival interest in the past' combined with a 'post – it culture' (228:1998). One whereby

'art galleries will become like reference libraries, where occasionally people go to see the patina of a rare original' (1998:229). MacDonald claims that there has been a 'paradigm shift…from mass production to mass consumption, with culture evermore becoming the site of contention, for political, social and other debates' and this is demonstrated with clarity in the context of art practice when 'the edges between artforms blur, for example, in performance and installation but also, it is suggested, where culture is used as a vehicle for social and economic renewal' (1998: 229).

In relation to the arts postmodernism can be understood in various different contexts, there is the 'postmodern' artwork itself, postmodernism in architecture and of course postmodernism in terms of aesthetics and theories of art. There is also a tension between the values of modernism and postmodernism, something that Novitz (2005) writes about with clarity, which has undoubtedly influenced the teaching of art and design and curriculum development within secondary schools.

Pearse (1983) claims that 'Post – modernity questions the modernist cult of creative originality as well as the notion of artistic progress and the possibility of perpetual newness. The central message of postmodern philosophers is the denial of the very idea of "origin.'' In their work, language consists of an open – ended play of "signifiers'' and "meaning" is deconstructed into an endless play of linguistic signs, each one of which relates to the other in a parodic circle' (1983: 248). The importance of language, be it written, spoken or visual, leads us to post – structuralism.

Olssen (2003) claims to get to the basis and foundation of post – structuralism and understanding of Structuralism 'one must go outside France, back to studies in the fields of linguistics, mythology and folklore' that was evident prior to the 1920s in Europe and the Soviet Union (2003: 189). Being 'essentially a doctrine about language which also applied to

other aspects of life and culture' starting with Saussure (1959) focusing on 'it's underlying structures as a part of a system; language formed a system because it belonged to individuals collectively and constituted a social institution' (Olssen, 2003:189 -190). Whereas 'in anthropology, Levi – Strauss saw it as a way of classifying and understanding the differences between cultures' (Olssen, 2003:190). The influence of post – structuralist thought is a concept that underpins this study in relation to the work of Foucault (1972), whose development of notions surrounding knowledge and power and the cultural basis of meaning has influenced the theoretical framework, however Foucault himself rejected the title of post – structuralist.

The main elements of the Critical – theoretic Orientation and the Critical Feminist approach which have influenced this research is the acknowledgement of the importance of reflection and meaning found through the embracing of multiple viewpoints, which has in turn, also largely influenced approaches to methodology.

Efland (1979) states that there are three main theoretical stances taken by art educators, which may underpin their practice and pedagogy, these are defined as 'Expressionist, Scientific Rationalist' and 'Reconstructivist' (1979: 45). Alongside the grouping of paradigmatic frameworks offered by Pearse (1983) I have also used these three descriptors offered by Efland in order to identify and explore my own stance within the context of this particular research.

The Expressionist approach is based upon the notion that art education is essentiality about individual growth with a means of facilitating creative and artistic expression, linking to both the concept of art for art's sake and art as a type of therapy, a necessity in order to live as a human in the world. The Scientific Rationalist approach implies that art education is in itself a distinct discipline with its own methods of enquiry and knowing, linking to the fundamental belief that cognition and visual phenomena is an 'important means of dealing with the organisation of thought' (1979: 45). Finally, Efland (1979) offers the Reconstructionist

standpoint, which surrounds the idea that 'art education and activity is a means to an end and is based in ideologies of social change and the promotion of visual culture' (Efland, 1979: 45-46). The ontological and epistemological stances offered by Efland can in many respects be tied in with the three main frameworks offered by Pearse (1983).

Referring back to the introduction of this chapter I noted Savin – Boden and Major's (2013) claim that 'philosophical mashups' may be created when one camp alone cannot be occupied (2013: 31). I will be drawing from different elements of the main theoretical frameworks within art education explored above and offered by both Pearse (1983) and Efland (1979). From the phenomenology of the Interpretive – Hermeneutic Orientation, the recognition of empirical experience offered by the Empirical – Analytic, to the acknowledgement of the political and social found in the Critical – Theoretic Orientation and Critical Feminist approach. The table below (Table 1) aims to clarify the main ways in which the Pearse and Efland frameworks may link and the ways in which these have in turn influenced the theoretical underpinnings of this research:

Table 1 : Table to clarify influence of theoretical underpinnings of research

Pearse frameworks	Influence on research
Phenomenology and the Interpretive -Hermeneutic stance **Efland frameworks** Expressionist	- Heidegger - Phenomenological Stance - Hermeneutics - A focus on the essence of deep structures and identity of meaning - Drawing upon first – person 'lived experience' - Thematic analysis - Art as an intrinsic human activity with value in itself
Empirical – Analytic Orientation and empirical **Efland frameworks** Scientific Rationalist	- Empiricism - Influence of class and social structures - The developments of the curriculum in Art and Design education in England - Art as a cognitive activity/ way of understanding and generating knowledge about the world - Teachers' experiences

The Critical – theoretic Orientation and the Critical Feminist **Efland frameworks** Reconstructivist	- Research methodologies based upon refection - Acknowledgement of researcher positionality and auto-ethnography - Acceptance of multiple viewpoints - A/r/tography, arts – based research and Irwin - Post – structuralism - Foucault - Postmodernism - Structural analysis

4. <u>Literature</u>

In this chapter I will explore the current policy and practice which influences the delivery and understandings of art education in England today. Many changes in policy and practice throughout the years have shaped the accepted pedagogies and curriculum prevalent within secondary schools in Thanet and Kent, alongside in wider terms, schools across the country. In education, policy and practice changes so frequently, however the impact of these changes is not always fully recognised until further into the future, making it an influential yet complicated subject. I will also be providing a picture of art education in relation to its history through the lens of Eisner (2002) and Efland (1990) as thinkers who have studied the intellectual, political and social currents of arts education within the western world. The history of art education is of course implicit in the present state and position of art and design in secondary schools, as its past and future inform the shape and form it occupies in the here and now.

One of the concepts which has emerged from the literature relating to the reasons as to why art and design is predominately associated with the 'practical' and / or 'emotional' elements of study came to the fore. This has been explored in greater depth in the subchapter 4.3: Reason and Emotion / Academic and Practical.

The influence of Foucault (1972) and Heidegger (1971) are apparent throughout this research and so as a result I will be dedicating a section of the Literature chapter solely to exploring some of the main concepts and ideas espoused by these thinkers which have highly influenced my own thinking and shaped the overall paradigmatic framework.

Lastly, notions of value will be explored. Value is at the heart of this research and features repeatedly in terms of the research questions and findings and therefore I deem it important to

discuss and clarify the ways in which value may be interpreted. One of the questions participants were asked was *what does the term value mean to you?* As when reviewing the literature surrounding notions of value numerous interpretations are expressed. This has evolved into the recognition that a need to understand individual participants' understanding of the term is a necessity when collecting data.

When undertaking the literature review I started off reading widely, across the areas of Educational theory, Sociology, Philosophy and Aesthetics using Pearse's (1983) framework which I came across relatively early on in the process. I narrowed and refined my search for literature, gravitating towards thinkers who sat amongst the stances which spoke to me as a researcher and as a teacher, in accordance with a Feminist lens; stances that spoke to me and my experience. At first my literature review involved philosophers such as Popper (1954), Marx (1844), Dewey (1896) and Kant (1970) With an undergraduate degree in Philosophy I found it difficult to make meaningful theoretical friendships, however as I started to narrow down the reading, I began to focus on those who corresponded to my experience as a teacher of art and design and as a researcher within this particular context. When I encountered a/r/tography this opened up a door to thinkers such as Deleuze (1988) Irwin (2004), Leavy (2012) and Spinggay (2005) which assisted in grounding my own thinking. Alongside physical books from the library, I used the Canterbury Christ Church digital LibrarySearch facility and JSTOR, using key words in my search, including 'autobiographical, arts – based research' and 'post – modernism in Art Education' which led to many thinkers that fell within the Feminist, or to use Pearse's terminology the 'critical -theoretic' camp. The use of a positionality statement, chapter 2, highlights the importance placed on using thinkers and literature which resonated with my fist – hand lived – experience, through a critical lens, whether this be in my role as artists, researcher or teacher. This resulted in the linking of positionality and the scoping process. One of the key aspects of this research and my interaction with and selection of the literature is the importance of reflexivity, as highlighted by Delamont (2002) this is 'a social

scientific variety of self – consciousness' (2002:8), claiming that 'it is essential to be as self – conscious about the construction of texts as one is about the process of interviewing or doing participant observation' including when critically engaging with the work of others, in that it is about reflexivity 'permeating…all aspects of the research process' (2002: 9). Another key concept which sits at the heart of my approach to research and the selection of literature is embracing the liminal, the idea of the spaces in – between, which meant that by initially reading broadly and widely I could start to pinpoint ideas to cut and paste to create my own conceptual collage , plus explore the element of contingency, relativity and shifting of understanding and knowledge leading to Foucault (1970) (and other post – structuralist and modern thinkers) becoming a theoretical friend whose voice enabled me to better find my own.

The literature has informed the methodology that I have decided to use, but also shaped my understanding of the wider themes surrounding the research questions explored. This chapter will begin with a focus on policy and practice within England, as this inevitably influences the ways in which art education and art teachers are valued in the context of secondary schools and ends with explorations into notions of value as a concept in itself.

4.1 Current Policy and Practice in England

Classroom rules and expectations

At the start of an academic year (and at times throughout) it is not uncommon to make explicit what are often termed, the classroom rules and expectations. In some classrooms these will be made very clear, in others they may be negotiated between learners and teachers. In my classroom I opt for a contract or agreement between myself and learners, which details basic expectations such as respecting the resources, materials and others' work, whilst also providing an opportunity for learners to note some expectations that they have of me as a teacher in addition. There are the Teaching Standards (DfE, 2011) which state expectations of teachers, plus wider school policy which again signposts the behaviour, attitudes and codes of practice expected of both students and staff alike. Similarly to the classroom rules and expectations in this subchapter, I hope to enable the reader to take a glimpse at the educational policy and practice which affects schools within England. Some may argue that policy and practice ought to be challenged, as aforementioned in the introduction, art and design is often 'allied with the pursuit of ideas that are the antithesis of orthodoxy…innovative, radical and sometimes heretical or revolutionary' (Steers, 2003:27). Perhaps this may act as an opportunity for further agency for art teachers and students. Research participants were given a framework, a list of rules, by which to work within, as many students push the boundaries of the rules and expectations implemented within schools, research participant Isla captured a photograph (Fig. 6) of a clear disregard for the rules and equipment within the school context by a student, which also caused debate when setting up work for an exhibition involving this photograph in a gallery space. There is perhaps sometimes a feeling that policy and practice is something that is done *to* students and art educators, opposed to something that is created and negotiated *with,* understandably leading to a sense of disillusionment or a desire to contend or obstruct against areas of policy and / or practice.

Fig. 6 Photograph of graffiti on a classroom sink captured by Isla

There is little doubt that policy and practice underpins the ways in which art and design education is both delivered and experienced by art teachers, students and the wider school community. There have been many changes to policy and practice within education in general, but also within art and design education historically, including in recent years. These changes ultimately impact the curriculum and what and how subjects are taught within schools.

Much of policy and practice in relation to art and design education is tied in with the history of the subject as taught and learnt within schools, the influence of this historical element is explored further in the next section, 4.2 - Art education; Approaches, Pedagogy and History in relation to the works of Eisner and Efland.

When considering policy and practice within education through a Foucauldian lens, by reflecting upon the relationship and struggle between power and knowledge, we are reminded of those who hold positions of power, those who make decisions that impact the frameworks informing classroom policy and practice. We may also question perceived notions of progress.

Do additional changes to policy and practice result in, or equate to progress, or are they merely a means of re-organisation, or opportunities for insidious methods of control? (Foucault, 1969).

Steers (2003) notes that throughout the history of policy and practice within art and design education there have been 'conflicting aims and values,' (2003: 21) however, argues that 'these debates are the lifeblood of art education' and should therefore be 'encouraged rather than supressed' (Ibid).

One of the main bodies that directly influence policy within education in England is the Department for Education. Since the National Curriculum first emerged in 1988 from the Educational Reform Act, it has changed shape and been continually revised, the most recent changes being made in 2013.

In 2007 the National Curriculum for Art and Design realised the wider benefits of the study of Art and Design within the context of the wider secondary school curriculum, claiming that 'undertaking activities in art and design' can contribute to 'successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve,' developing 'confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives' and also lead to 'responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society' (QCA, 2007: 17). This description suggests both value in participating in the subject art and design, both in itself but also within the context of benefitting others; society in a wider sense. This curriculum design also used the motif of multicoloured ribbons, denoting each of the subject areas within the National Curriculum, art and design being Orange. This perhaps visually expresses the desire to communicate the links between subjects, the cross – curricular potential and the wider benefits that the study of one may have on another, or on the whole child and their development educationally. Key concepts which underpinned the study of art and design were listed as 'Creativity, Competence, Cultural understanding,' and 'Critical understanding' (2007: 18 – 19) and the key processes which students were to learn

through in art and design through were listed as 'explore and create, understand and evaluate' plus 'range and content.' (2007: 20 – 21). There was also a recognition of the need for wider 'Curriculum opportunities' (2007: 22). This KS3 curriculum linked with the requirements for a Level 2 course, such as GCSE or BTEC, however the attainment descriptors listed from a level 4 to exceptional performance, although offering clarity to teachers, could be understood as a limiting and simplistic way of viewing and measuring progress. Evidence of the 2007 National Curriculum was rarely seen in the sample of schools and teachers pedagogy which informed findings throughout this research and teachers did not discuss nor identify it as a significant factor during interviews or the focus group discussion.

The DfE now claims that the purpose of the study of Art and Design is to:

> 'engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As pupils progress, they should be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design. They should also know how art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation' (DfE, 2013: 1).

The above statement claims that the art and design practice that students ought to be engaged in between the ages of 11 – 14 should focus on developing knowledge and skills, experimenting and also learning about the history of art and design, alongside developing their ability to both think creatively and critically. The aims of study are listed as being able to produce creative works, become proficient in drawing and using different media, materials, techniques and processes, such as painting and sculpture, evaluation and analytical skills and to possess a knowledge of artists and designers in relation to historical and cultural development (Ibid).

It could be argued that the above description and curriculum content for art and design is not in – depth enough nor ambitious enough. This feeling was expressed by the NSEAD (National Society of Art and Design Education) having re-drafted the document produced by the DfE, which attempts to overcome some of the criticisms that arose in response. In this version greater attention is paid to the global context and influence of the arts and concepts such as risk – taking, imagination, personal expression and confidence are noted (NSEAD, 2013). The other element acknowledged is the link to potential career paths and the economy, something that is barely mentioned beyond the 'wealth of our nation' (DfE, 2013) in the introductory statement referring to the aims of the study of art and design. This suggests a leaning towards an understanding of value which rests upon an economic / financial basis.

Another undeniable influence on schools and classroom practice is Ofsted. Spielman (2019) as HM Chief Inspector of Education responsible for Ofsted claims to be an advocate of arts education, recognising that there is 'the money pressure' and that she intends to assist in reducing workload, with the intention for schools should 'not create data for Ofsted' (2019). However, despite best intentions schools do seemingly feel the pressure of Ofsted, knowing that the judgment that is made of them will have implications for both staff and their students. When it comes to measuring progress and assessment within art and design education, and throughout the education system generally, Spielman (2019) acknowledges the part Ofsted has played in 'the growth of this industry' and claims that it has indeed 'got to an unsustainable level' (2019), however it is yet to be seen as to whether these words have any real impact in terms of the ways in which Ofsted inspections and assessments are carried out. This is perhaps due to the ways in which a school prepares for Ofsted inspections and whether the message relayed by Spielman (2019) is echoed by school leaders. A recognition and appreciation of the importance of the arts in education and a thorough comprehension of how best art and design practice, classroom pedagogy and assessment fit within a school's curriculum are very different understandings. When considering the impact of Spielman (2019) in relation to Thanet schools,

little of her words or sentiment resonates. This may be due to the myriad of complex societal pressures felt in Thanet schools due to the unique challenges of the area, such as those identified by Welsh and Parsons (2006) detailed further in the introduction, chapter 1.

In a report published by the New Schools Network (February, 2017) the recognition that 'arts and culture are part of the fabric of our society' is noted, alongside the identification that 'they are one of our most successful exports, support millions of UK jobs and play a crucial role in the happiness of the nation' (2017:1) by Nick Gibb, MP, Minster for Schools and Matt Hancock, the Minster of State for Digital, Media and Culture. In this report it is claimed that 'since the creation of the EBacc, the entry numbers to GCSE arts subjects and number of arts GCSE's being taken per pupil has risen. The proportion of pupils in state funded schools taking at least one arts subject has increased from 44.7% in 2012 (the first full academic year since the EBacc was announced) to 48.0% in 2016.' (2017:2). However, in September 2017 the Education Policy Institute, an independent, impartial and evidence – based research institute assemble a very different picture. Johnes (2017) finds that data in relation to the changes in accountability measures in recent years indicated that 'entries to arts subjects by key stage 4 cohorts have declined over the past couple of years, following several years of gradual increases. The 2016 entry rates are the lowest of the decade' (2017:7) and that 'provisional data relating to 2017 exam entries indicates that the decline observed in the most recent years is continuing' (2017: 8). In this report it is openly accepted that:

'the state of the arts subjects in England has been subject to heated debate in recent years. A number of organisations, including lobbyists from the arts sector and teaching unions, have warned that changes to schools accountability measures and funding have led to a decline in access to arts subjects in schools. Other organisations, however, including the

Department for Education, have contested these claims and have pointed to evidence that

this is not the case' (2017: 14).

In the conclusions and recommendations section of the New Schools Network report the claim

is made that

'schools have reduced funding for the arts and while there is no evidence that this has had

a negative impact on the study of the arts [and that] schools may have misunderstood the

new performance measures, mistakenly thinking that in order to boost their EBacc results,

as well as their Progress 8 and Attainment 8 scores, they need to steer resources away

from the arts and towards the EBacc subjects [but take into account that] the governments

must shoulder some of the blame for this misunderstanding and should do more to signal

its enthusiasm for arts education' (2017:22).

There is a clear disparity in the interpretation of the data, which could be for a variety of

reasons, such as chosen research methodology, but also the bias of those conducting the studies

referenced here, however what this research intends to study is the impact that this debate is

having on art teachers and how art and design is perceived within the secondary school. As

previously mentioned, it is these individuals, the teachers, who are those which on a daily basis

interact with young people, greatly influencing their experience of the arts, whilst navigating

political landscapes and attempting to ensure that the debate surrounding the arts, issues of

funding and the varying levels of support from leadership in schools, does not lead to a

diminishing of its value for the next generation, the students. As suggested by the report and

research carried out by Johnes (2017) on behalf of the Education Policy Institute, the way in

which initiatives impact the arts and how they are valued does depend on not just the school's

context, but also whether school leaders prioritise arts subjects (2017: 8).

Steers (2014) argues that due to neo-conservative ideology…being imposed without any attempt to seek consensus or proper dialogue with the teaching profession' (2014: 7) changes to policy and practice within education in England are not being thoughtfully applied. Many recent changes have taken place within the education system that have had a significant impact on the subject art and design and how it is taught in secondary schools as a result of the 2010 election and during the period when Michael Gove was the Education Secretary (2010 – 2014). As acknowledged by Steers 'the government identified its concerns principally with appreciation of the arts' (2014 : 8) opposed to full practical, creative and critical engagement with the arts.

These changes in the curriculum across key stages in education inevitably impact the numbers and uptake of students who decide to study the subject from KS4 and beyond and so decisions such as to exclude the arts from the EBacc leads to a limit of choice for students.

The curriculum reforms of January 2011 aimed to 'reduce prescription' however reinforced the notion of 'core subject knowledge that every child and young person should gain at each stage of their education' (Steers, 2014 : 9). However arguably, in the desire to create more freedom the pressure for every child to have reached particular milestones of knowledge by the end of a particular key stage could actually prove restrictive. As highlighted by Steers (2014) and as an issue raised by the NSEAD, the art and design curriculum 'appears to be very limited with an overemphasis on " knowledge'' at the expense of skills and understanding' (2004: 12).

Henley (2012) wrote an independent review for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Education. In this he stated that 'sustained investment in providing young people with and excellent cultural education should form a key pillar of the governments long – term growth of our creative industries' (2012: 3).This means that investment and training

must be provided. Henley notes that 'schools remain the single most important place where children learn about cultural education'(2012 : 8). The case put forward for a strong cultural educational provision by Henley (2012) rests upon the following perceived benefits:

> 'educational benefits to children through the acquisition of knowledge and skills from cultural education subjects, the additional benefits to the creative and cultural industries and the wider economy of providing children with an excellent cultural education that in turn creates the workforce of the future, helping to drive forward the UKs growth agenda [and] the wider benefits to our society as a whole of developing and understanding of our common cultural heritage' (2012: 12)

Art and design and the visual arts, alongside subjects such as music and performing arts are most widely associated with cultural education, however surely all subjects have the potential to be 'cultural education subjects.' Henley's focus on culture is something that has recently been a focus in education for the Conservative party, with the introduction of the term 'cultural capital' (Gov, 2019). Henley (2012) made a strong case for the creative and cultural industries in terms of England's revenue in relation to other countries, but also the importance of art forms that are relevant to the present day, such access to digital technology, exposure to innovative new practices, but also the link between culture, heritage and a sense of belonging (2012: 19). It may be worth noting here that Henley's report was not mentioned by any of the art teacher participants which perhaps highlights the disparity between everyday classroom practice and the impact and communication of educational and independent research, policy and practice. Thanet is geographically in a position to access culture in terms of its proximity to London, however schools need both the funding and support in order for teachers to be able to organise and execute trips. Some schools develop links with local galleries and arts organisations, such as the Turner Contemporary, however there is a lack of consistency across schools in terms of engagement and these relationships depend upon the capacity and proactivity of the art teachers

in each individual setting. When it comes to a sense of heritage and belonging we must be aware of the communities that the schools in Thanet serve, taking into account areas of deprivation or the transient nature of seaside destinations which exists alongside the current trend of costal regeneration. Many households and schools do not have access to the kind of digital technologies mentioned by Henley (2012). In chapter 10, Postscript, there is a discussion surrounding the notion that the concept of cultural capital may perpetuate elitism, rather than assist in cultural education.

Most recently, Nick Gibb, who was the then Minster of State for School Standards, with the support of Michael Gove, who whilst in his position also made many changes, some of which have already been previously explored above, brought in the notion of both 'deep dives' and 'cultural capital' to the Ofsted framework for school inspections. The deep dives are intended to ensure that a judgement can be made about the quality of a school's curriculum without the need for specialist knowledge of subjects (Gov, 2019). The term cultural capital now appears in the EIF within the context of the following:

> 'construction of a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged and those with special educational needs / and or disabilities (SEND) or high needs, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life' (Gov, 2019 : 9)

The focus on cultural capital brings new questions for the arts, in the widest sense, in particular in relation to its place in the school curriculum. This is something that Riches (2020) has written about in an article for the TES (Jan, 2020) and made the link between Bourdieu's (1973, 1986) notion of the term and the recognition of class and possible inequalities, again linking back to the Foucauldian understanding of the relationship

between power and knowledge. Research has been undertaken by Durham university in relation to the arts and creativity in schools, with a report recently published by the Durham Commission on Creativity and Education, which is a collaboration with Arts Council England. These further recent changes and research have both been conducted after the dates in which my own research was undertaken, as a result these will be discussed further in chapter 10; Postscript, as I feel that they are important developments.

Much of the development of Policy and Practice in relation to art and design education in England can be traced back to the history and evolution of pedagogy, which is therefore the focus of the next section.

4.2- Art education; Approaches, Pedagogy and History in relation to the works of

Eisner and Efland

Art Timeline

When on a school trip to the Tate Modern Gallery situated in the Bankside area of London, I came across a large art timeline, making clear major and highly influential art movements and where artists are situated thematically and historically within these. Ever since this visit I have replicated a timeline on the wall of my classroom. On this particular school trip I was with a group of 15 and 16 year old's who had chosen to study art at KS4. Coming from a deprived area of Leeds in West Yorkshire, some had never visited London and many had also never set foot in any art gallery of this scale before. Their reactions to artworks in this setting, opposed to the experience of pictures either from books or on a computer screen in the school setting, reminded me of the importance of context. This particular school trip was an eye -opener for both the students and myself. In this section I will provide some context in relation to where this research sits within the approaches, dominant pedagogies and history of art education in England, with the assistance of the thinkers Efland (1990) and Eisner (2002). The photograph below is of the art timeline that I have displayed in the classroom in which I am currently working.

Fig. 7 Photograph of the art timeline that adorns the wall of my current classroom

In order to analyse the current value of art and design education in secondary schools and the associated challenges faced, a deeper glance into the history of art education in the UK and influencing factors must be taken into account. Much of Foucault's (1961) works were written as histories, making reference to the history of ideas. Efland (1990) develops an understanding of how art education has developed within varying western social contexts and how this has potentially impacted theory, practice and pedagogy. To understand the current issues and challenges faced by art teachers and in art education within the context of secondary schools at present, it seems paramount to first understand the influencing factors, history and development of pedagogy as the subject specialism has evolved in England. As aforementioned, this need is resonated by Efland (1990) when stating that 'the ways the visual arts are taught today were conditioned by the beliefs and values regarding art held by those who advocated its teaching in the past' (1990:1).

Although much of Eisner's work originates from research relating to the USA, there are many similarities between the influences and understandings of arts education across the UK and USA, which can still be witnessed today. Although both authors write from the perspective of American schooling and were predominately working within the 1990's I have found that their thinking summarises and highlights many of the issues within art and design education in English schools today. This may be because much of Eisner's work was in response to cuts in the arts within American education at the time, similar cuts are currently being made in England in relation to the visual arts. Perhaps the implications of the political ideology present within America and the UK during the 1990's has some correlation and similarities to the social and political landscape today. Eisner was a champion for arts education, arguably his contribution transcends time and place, much of his thinking has been built upon by academics since, in an international sense, he was a member of the Royal Society of Arts in the United Kingdom and his '10 Lessons The Arts Teach' (in Eisner, 2002) can be found as a reference used in art classrooms in England; a framework and recognition of how his thought has influenced our

understandings of art education, as relevant now as it was when first published. Efland provides us with a detailed history of art and design education, taking into account the aesthetic and cultural influences prevalent in the western world. The social influences Efland has used to inform findings is based on the wider western world, applicable to the context of both the USA and England, providing a detailed account of how art education has evolved. Schools in Thanet, and in the wider region of Kent, have been heavily influenced by the historical changes in, and notions of, arts education highlighted by Efland (1990). Although much has changed in relation to the arts and the curriculum, many features and issues have remained. The current national curriculum for art and design in England (DfE, 2013) is relatively brief in terms of a description of the knowledge and skills in which it is suggested that students develop and acquire. In this sense there is a freedom for teachers to interpret and include what they deem integral, many of these values correspond to those listed by Eisner (2002), however the lack of detail also results in the nuances of the value of art and design education detailed by Eisner (2002) and historical influences expressed by Efland (1990) being overlooked. Throughout this study I have sought to apply both Eisner and Efland's thinking to the scenarios described and encountered.

This section will be organised in a loosely chronological order, however this is not to imply that history is linear, but rather as Foucault understood it to be contingent, by understanding that the development of knowledge is tied in with the concept of *epistemes*, the prominent, yet often unconscious, fundamental assumptions and ideas of an era. Foucault offers us a way of viewing history which moves away from the traditional understanding, beginning as an 'archaeology' (1966) and moving towards 'genealogy' (1969). I would like to build on the Foucauldian notion of archaeology in this section in the acceptance that we must develop an understanding of the major ideas and concepts of the past in order to comprehend where we currently find ourselves. 'Genealogy' as a methodology takes the above into account within the context of emergent shifts of power, which impacts knowledge. Foucault (1970) exclaims that:

'order is, at one and the same time, that which is given in things as their inner law, the hidden network that determines the way that they confront one another, also that which has no existence except in the grid created by a glance, an examination, a language; and it is only in the blank spaces of this grid that order manifests itself in the depth as though already there, waiting in silence for the moment of its expression' (1970: xxi).

Foucault uses the term 'conditions of possibility' (1970: xxiv) and through the acknowledgement and uncovering of the central ideas and beliefs which have influenced art and design education, we develop the potential for the possibility of catching glimpses of understanding how power relations of an era relate to knowledge, then and now, in a non - linear sense.

Efland (1990) made the claim that essentially when the history of art education is analysed we can conclude that there have been three main factors that can be identified which are of major influence, these being: 'patronage, education and censorship' (1990: 2) which, according to Efland, have historically been controlled by the socially powerful at the time. Curriculum and exam board models throughout history have contributed to what is expressed in art education in terms of censorship, as have individual institutions in relationship to what is deemed appropriate, plus there is also the consideration of who has access to the arts in schools. When patronage is concerned we must look to the organisation of both human and material processes and resources.

Efland identifies the major social transformations that brought change to public education during the 19th century based on the industrial revolution and the affect that this shift had, when combined with the romantic movement, which 'gave rise to the belief that artistic expression contributes to the moral evolution of society' (1990: 6). This same understanding of the impact of the Romantic period on arts education is expressed by Addison (2010), where we are

reminded the repeatedly told myth in England which has its basis 'in the popular imagination around the figure of the outsider, frequently tragic, artist' (2010: 8). The impact of this myth and obsession with the suffering artist, is something that as a teacher I am reminded of when students arrive in year 7 and when asked what they already know and have experienced of art, they regale countless tales of Vincent Van Gogh (1853 – 1990) and the famous incident involving the loss of his ear.

Other main influences throughout history that Eisner (1990) pinpointed as being largely influential to the current education system were John Locke's publication 'some thoughts concerning education' (1693) where the view was expressed that 'the minds ideas could be communicated more precisely by images then by language' and 'thus he could justify the teaching of drawing on cognitive grounds' (1990: 40). Note the use of the term 'justify' used here by Efland, already a subject that needed justifying due to the way that art had been considered and artistic activity defined by the ancient Greeks, in Hellenistic times, the middle ages and during medieval times. Following this there was the Enlightenment where leaps were made in challenges to philosophical outlooks, Newton's 'Principia' (1687) was beginning to become further widely read and understood alongside William Paley's 'teleological argument' (1802) centered around God as the divine watchmaker, before the industrial revolution and eventually leading on to 19th century Positivism (Efland, 1990).

Efland claims that there are two main points in this very brief overview of history mentioned, these being: the Renaissance where 'a fundamentally new idea of the artist took hold as the notion of genius asserted itself' (1990: 47) and between 1835 – 1836 where schools for design for the training of British workers were established in response to the decline of production and craft for industry (such as the Wedgewood potteries in Stoke – on – Trent, 1910).

The National Curriculum for the arts during the Victorian Era was called 'The National Course of Instruction' devised in 1852. This programme of study involved working – class students, most often boys, 'to develop proficiency in mechanical drawing so that they could matriculate with the necessary skills for the schools of design' and for the middle classes, whom were majority girls, to engage in 'cultural enrichment' which enhanced the development of 'good taste' (Addison, 2010: 13). This link between art pathways, industry and the world of work is something that is mirrored in the education system currently, with the option of BTEC (Business, Technology and Education Council) qualifications initially introduced as a further technical pathway, which have since been changed many times in response to the concern that they may not be academic enough, alongside the option for students to take the GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education). There has also been considerable separation between the study of 'art' and 'design technology.' According to Steers (2010) it was during 1995 that Technology became a separate subject to Art, or what was previously named 'Craft and Design Technology' (CDT). It was from this point onwards for schools in the UK that Art (re-named yet again as, Art and Design, during 2000) and Design Technology focused on different elements of the skills sets previously taught in CDT. During the 1960's boys would be taught 'woodwork and metalwork' and girls 'needlework, cooking, childcare and home economics' (2010: 26 – 27).

During the Victorian Era in England the poor were:

> 'instructed in skills that they could apply to future employment' and also 'received moral guidance as a means to ensure disciplined and conformist behaviour' and middle – class students were 'instructed in subjects that would provide them with the signs of the necessary distinction for management, ownership and rule' (Addison, 2010, 13).

This is something that arguably we may still see to some extent in current curriculum models chosen by schools, certainly in the Kent area, as students still sit an 11+ test whereby they are deemed worthy of an academic standard high enough to warrant their attendance at a grammar school rather than a comprehensive. The opportunities and the selection of courses available within the arts differ from school to school, even more so between grammar and comprehensive. Students from a middle class upbringing may have further access to private tuition and the resources and training necessary in order to successfully pass the 11+ examination, creating a class divide not dissimilar to that evident in the Victorian Era. In my experience, the kind of courses available to those at a Grammar school will often be geared towards entrance requirements for certain universities, whereas the lower aspiration of those attending comprehensives, inherent in a system which still favours the middle – classes, may in many cases act as a deterrent towards applying to a university, or post – 18 formal education opportunities at all. Foucault (1969) made the distinct connection between knowledge and the way in which it is inextricably tied to systems of control, with the social control dictated to by those with the power. In Foucault's era this would have been the bourgeois, the links between power and knowledge arguably still stand today.

When reflecting upon art teaching prior to WW1, subjects taught within the visual arts could be listed as: appreciation of beauty, nature drawing, handicrafts, model and object drawing and colour and design (Efland: 1990, p174-177). However in contrast to this Emery (2002) explains how from WW2 onwards art was widely viewed 'as a means of self – expression inspired by the Avant Garde era' (2002: 13) which would have impacted modernist art teachers in their willingness to 'engage students in a search for a personal aesthetic freedom and sensibility' (2002: 21).

According to Addison (2010) during the first half of the twentieth century the 'utopian claim' that 'art and aesthetics can change the world' (2010: 9) was deeply engrained within the public

consciousness and thus also started to impact art education in schools. This was something that was echoed in the US and the rest of the western world also, deriving from movements in the art world such as Dada, Surrealism and Bauhaus (ibid). This later led into the second part of the twentieth century whereby 'the preferred strategy of modernist thinkers in Europe was to parallel urban and environmental change with programmes for education in an attempt to alter the beliefs of people for the good (ibid).' There are elements of both of these perspectives of the function and purpose of arts education evident in conceptions of arts place within education in the present day.

In order to understand the ways in which art and design as a subject has evolved within the context of a school system and in the realm of secondary education, we must surely also be aware of how different interpretations and understandings of art have emerged and been culturally constructed throughout the history of art in general. Berger (2008) claims that:

'the visual arts have always existed within a certain perspective; originally this preserve was magical or sacred. But it was also physical: it was the place, the cave, the building, in which, or for which, the work was made. The experience of art, which at first was the experience of ritual, was set apart from the rest of life – precisely in order to be able to exercise power over it. It entered the culture of the ruling class, whilst physically it was set apart and isolated in their palaces and houses. During all this history the authority of art was inseparable from the particular authority of the preserve……what the modern means of reproduction have done is to destroy the authority of art….removing preserve' (2008: 5).

This recognition of this loss of authority and preserve may have had interesting implications upon how art was taught and valued within educational contexts also.

Tomlinson (2005) suggests that 'the right – wing Thatcher governments during the 1980's turned education into a quasi – market in which choice and competition were intended to make consumers select schools and courses which would maximise qualifications and job prospects, and drive uneconomical schools out of business' (2005: 201). Despite many changes in government since, the links between education, employability, economics and learning have remained.

One of the ways in which art and design has been linked with industry in the past within England has been through its relationship with design technology. From 2000 onwards art continued to incorporate elements of design found also in the now separate subject of Technology, however there was a bias towards the fine arts. Now in many schools design technology (D & T) is being phased out, an example of this can be taken from my own personal first-hand experience during my time at one of the schools in which I worked as an art teacher for 7 years, situated in Thanet. When I first arrived at the school there were 2 hours of art on the KS3 timetable and 2 hours of what was named 'Creative Design' which involved exposure to product design, textiles, the use of CAD/CAM, photography (including learning basic Photoshop skills), ceramics and jewellery making. There was little to no woodwork due to a lack of subject teacher specialism, although the resources and equipment to teach this area of design technology were still available. Creative design was taught on a rotation which included food technology, which led to a potential KS4 pathway of a GCSE in Food and Nutrition. Hours were cut by half and one hour a week of both art and design and creative design were offered, resulting in two hours a week of what was named art and creative design. As there was no option for students to take Design Technology as a GCSE or qualification at KS4, the focus became linked to the curriculum options post-KS3, leading to predominately art, photography and the food technology remaining a part of the experience until examination course options were decided upon during the latter part of Y9. According to a blog article written by another

professional who has taught design technology for 23 years, published in the Times Educational Supplement (2016) we find support for the claim that design technology is in decline, Woodward (2016) argues that:

'There are some who would say it's not only in decline but already being lowered into a workbench shaped 6 foot hole in the ground while those teachers fortunate enough to work in forward thinking schools who still value and support the subject may well have a very different opinion. Sadly, on facts alone, some of the figures above combined with the impending effects of the EBacc and Progress/Attainment 8 measures signal real problems for the subject no matter where you work' (Woodward, 2016).

Just one year following this statement made by Woodward (2016) the Telegraph published an article entitled 'Design and Technology GCSE Axed from nearly half of schools' (Turner, 2017) which stated that:

'GCSE courses in design and technology have disappeared from nearly half of schools amid pressure to succeed in core compulsory subjects. Hundreds of schools across the country have axed the subject from the curriculum in the past year alone, according to a poll of teachers conducted by the Association of School and College Leaders (Turner, 2017).'

This implies Woodward (2016) was indeed right to acknowledge and voice his concerns for the subject of design and technology. There is also the issue of school budgets, which will be explored in further depth in future chapters, however with diminishing budgets school leadership are becoming increasingly sceptical of the ability to offer subjects with high rates of consumables and that can be costly to run, such as art and design technology, but also time (both student and teacher time) and resources are in greater demand in core subjects due to external pressures and accountability measures.

According to Efland (1990) it was during the 1880's that children's art began to be taken seriously, due to the way in which 'when artists began to discover that "primitive'' art had aesthetic qualities worthy of serious consideration, child art also began to be taken seriously' with 'intrinsic value' (1990: 195). Efland claims that it was during the 1920's and 30's that 'the language of creative self – expression had found its way into public schools' (Ibid, 210). Addison (2010) informs us that the further creative models of arts education to be found in schools during the 1900's to 1980's was delivered by women teachers and influenced highly by a woman named Marion Richardson (2010:16). A Teacher's Guild was set up which at the heart of its beliefs was the notion that 'in childhood, creativity is natural' and 'is the source of all positive change' with play and 'expression of an inner life' (2010: 17) integral to any arts activity.

The introduction of the GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) was introduced into the English education system during the mid – 1980's and this brought about further reforms. One of the main impacts that this had had on art and design education has been identified by Steers (2003) as a moving away from 'an optional formal art and design history element towards a general requirement for a critical and contextual studies component' (2003:24). This has occurred due to the issue of time, as 'old art history was very demanding of teaching time and was only suited to academic pupils' (ibid).

Eisner (2002) claims that there is 'no single sacrosanct version of the aims of arts education' (2002:25) which may be one of the reasons as to why arts education continuingly struggles to locate its position within the secondary school, however it seems further likely that the many versions that have evolved and mutated throughout history suffer an increasing inability to fit within the wider aims and environment of many curriculums and schools.

Despite art education in England evolving throughout pivotal and influential moments during the history of art, society and culture in the western world it is in many respects still not fit for purpose, perhaps because, as previously stated by Eisner (2002), there are multiple interpretations of what the purpose of the study of art in secondary schools ought to be, yet as Steers (2010) claims 'there should be a focus on what young people need to equip themselves for a future in the twenty – first century, not the nineteenth century' (2010: 15).

One of the issues that appears to be at the foundation of pedagogy and teaching and learning in relation to Art and Design as a subject when placed within the context of the secondary school is an inability to merge with the wider values of a school environment and culture. As stated by Eisner (2002):

'In schools we tend to empathize facticity, correctness, linearity, concreteness. We tend to underestimate and underplay those imaginative processes that are so characteristic of the cognitive life of preschool and even primary – school children. We often fail to nurture a human capacity that is absolutely central to our cultural development' (2002: 198).

One of the underlying reasons as to why the educational system and secondary schools in England appear to often demonstrate a clear preference towards certain ideals and pedagogies over others may be down to a unquestioned bias towards and acceptance of a scientific rationalist understanding of knowledge, which favours reason and the academic over what is often labelled the emotional and practical. This is something in which I will explore in the next subchapter: 4.3 Reason and Emotion and the Academic and Practical.

4.3 Reason and Emotion and the Academic and Practical

Realism meets Expressionism

Although the term Realism has been used in varying contexts in relation to art history, Chilver (2009) offers a definition which is constructive in order to communicate some of the main ideas shared within this section, claiming that it describes 'a desire to depict things accurately and objectively' (2009: 514). In contrast to this there is Expressionism, which can be understood as devoting:

'the use of distortion and exaggeration for emotional effect [which] raises subjective feeling above observation, reflecting the state of mind of the artist rather than images that conform to what we see in the external world' (Chilver, 2009: 210).

When referring to the main aims of Realism and Expressionism as described by Chilver (2009) it becomes apparent that tension could emerge between the two when viewed as separate movements, this is also the case when referring to reason and emotion, or the subjects or skills labelled academic or practical within the education system. As previously touched upon, when considering the history of art and design education within England, leanings towards the language of self – expression emerge at the beginning of the twentieth century, challenging the 'conservative principles of the nineteenth century academy' (Addison, Burgess, Steers and Trowel, 2010: 9). Below (Fig. 8) are two paintings created by my daughter at different stages of her development, it appears that many young children can become frustrated as they aspire to produce Realist work, wanting the outcome to look exactly like either the object in front of them or the imagined scene in their minds eye, this is something that I have observed over the years throughout KS3, however often as we become older it becomes increasingly difficult to embrace the principles of Expressionism,

something that as a child may be further freely accessed. The images below may assist in visually communicating the struggle between these two different notions.

Fig. 8 Painting on the left of flowers aged 2, painting to the right of flowers aged 7

In this subchapter I will be exploring some of the key thinkers and ideas which underpin western notions of aesthetics and how this has, arguably, affected understandings of the subject of art and design and its current place within the overall school curriculum

Firstly, it is important to delve into the influence that aesthetics has had on our understandings of art in education. According to Danto (2013) 'aesthetics' is a 'neglected topic in the treatment of art' (2013:135) noting that 'as long as there are visible differences in how things look, aesthetics is inescapable' (2013:137). Within the context of this study aesthetics is inescapable, in the sense that it is weaved throughout, from concepts and questions ranging from how the value of art can be seen within the context of the curriculum, to what art teachers value and how art teachers are themselves valued within the current system in England. An individual's understanding and standpoint on aesthetics can arguably affect the way in which they view the

purpose of art, whether indeed they deem art to have a purpose at all and the value upon which they associate with art activity. This indeed also ties in with a person's experience and quality of art and design education, as noted by Fowler (1996):

'The aesthetic awareness we learn through the study of the arts becomes a way we relate to the world. Our aesthetic view becomes a natural and important part of our encounter with life. It is the way we bring our sensual and rational beings together to come to terms with the world around us' (Fowler, 1996: 10).

When delving into notions of value in relation to the arts, aesthetic theory, in western thought in particular, appears to be as good a starting point as any. The earliest substantial contribution to aesthetics in western philosophy, which can arguably be the basis and very foundation of western thought, can be found in the writings of Plato. Throughout both The Republic and Poetics (Cooper, 1997) the two major works in which Plato references the arts, they are discussed in a context which suggests little value. As summarised by Janaway (2010), Plato argued from the standpoint that 'there is a metaphysical and ethical order in the world in which it is philosophy's task to discover by means of rational thought, the arts can have true worth only if they correctly represent this order or help in aligning us with it' (2010: 3). The reoccurring conclusion that Plato returns to throughout discussions surrounding the arts is that that they are merely representational and therefore 'a long way removed from truth' such as 'a painter' painting 'a portrait of a shoemaker or a carpenter or any other craftsman without understanding any of their crafts' (1987: 364). It is not just visual artists who are criticised for mimicking real 'forms' and 'truth' but also poets, being 'practitioners of mimesis' and attempting to 'subvert the rule of intellect and reason' (Janaway, 2010 : 5) through both affecting and moving us emotionally.

It is perhaps deep rooted in philosophical tradition that the arts are less meaningful because they cannot always be deduced to rational thought alone. Here at the very foundation of western thought we can see a divide beginning to appear already and the lines start to be drawn between 'arts' and 'reason' and the 'creative' and 'academic.' However Plato does look towards the role of arts within the context of education in the Republic 2 and 3 (Cooper, 1997: 998 – 1051) in order to find a starting point by which to associate arts value and worth within the context of society. In the Republic it is stated that Guardians ought to understand and study arts and crafts within the following framework:

'Guardians of Plato's ideal city should come to understand about 'what is fine and graceful in their work, so that our young people will live in a healthy place and be benefited on all sides, and so that something of those fine works will strike their eyes and ears like a breeze that brings health from a good place, leading them unwittingly, from childhood on, to resemble, friendship, and harmony with the beauty of reason.' (Plato, ed. by Cooper, 1997: 1037)

The above brings the value of arts and crafts back to being based upon a deeper appreciation of 'reason' rather than worth being seen in either engagement in the activity itself (in intrinsic terms) nor the outcome. In Ancient Greece more generally, a very different view was to prevail, it was typical belief that 'inspiration was thought to come from the Muses, goddesses who presided over the creation of literature and the arts by speaking directly with the artist' (Kaufman, 2015 : 23). Something that I find fascinating about the work of Plato is the very way in which the philosophical works themselves are written. The Socratic method itself,

although entirely serious as a means of debate and discussions of a philosophical nature, a method of deduction and questioning (in which I believe, educationally speaking, is invaluable,) could lend itself to be acted out as a play. The way in which discussions are

communicated often resemble a form that could be viewed as dramatic, or to be read as a script. The amount of visual metaphors that Plato uses in order to communicate and explore his thought and reasoning, such as the famous analogy of the Cave for example, are numerous. The works themselves, could arguably be described, as an object of literary beauty.

We see in the work of Aristotle a further accepting view of poetry and tragedy and unlike the negativity in which Plato speaks of Greek 'greats' such as Homer, Aristotle is less inclined to fear emotion as a force which drives out and confuses our ability to reason, but as a means of cathartically releasing, cleaning and clarifying. Pappas (2010) explains how throughout the writings of Plato the word 'catharsis' referred to 'the change from ignorance to knowledge' (2010:18) however Aristotle could be interpreted to use it 'to empathise that the tragedy Plato despises facilitates a learning process he ought to embrace.' (Ibid). Dalton (2001) explains that Foucault 'questioned the primacy of reason' which 'is so highly esteemed in western science and philosophy' and according to Dalton, Foucault's explanation of this, or rather 'reasoning' behind this thought process, is that the very concept of reason and / or act of reasoning 'had been established precariously as an ideal only with a consequent suppression of unreason, the body, the passions and emotions' (2001: 21).

In order to understand the limitations of the rationalism and idealism littered throughout pre – Enlightenment philosophy, it may be useful to look to Empiricism as offering some solutions. Hutchinson (2005) attempts to reconcile the tensions between these modes of thinking in integrating a place for the rational in his Empiricist aesthetic theory. Shelly (2005) recognises how Hutchinson:

'forces the acknowledgment of a new category of pleasures; to the (externally) sensible and the (internally) rational, we must add the internally sensible, a category consisting of those pleasures

that arise only with the involvement of some internal sense, which includes the pleasure of beauty' (2005 : 43).

A possible attempt to harmonise the crater that had previously divided what is deemed 'rational' and 'sensible' and the 'internal' and 'external.' Leading us also to the ultimate 'mind' and 'body' divide, embedded in the Cartesian tradition.

Cunliffe (2005) identifies an issue in art and design education in England in which he claims can be traced back to the Cartesian dualism of mind and body. This issue is that of the place and confusion of 'procedural knowledge (knowing how) and declarative knowledge' (knowing that) (2005 : 547). This misunderstanding is something that Cunliffe (2005) argues can be witnessed in the delivery, objectives and assessment of GCSE art and design and something that lays at the heart of the modernist approach; replacing procedural with declarative knowledge. Cunliffe claims that 'art educators in the UK illogically subsume the later under the former and by so doing misinterpret the weight of the argument that art education should engage with different, but complementary, forms of knowing' (2005 : 551). As a result of this process over the last 100 years 'various models of art education impaled as such dualistic thought resulting in "misunderstood'' and "misinterpreted'' (2005: 553) understandings of knowledge, intelligence and creativity in relation to the arts. It is due to this misconception that 'the disembodied mind is the locus of true knowledge, while the body deals with inferior practical skills' in education, which is 'signified in the division between 'academic' and 'practical' subjects (Cunliffe, 2005:551). This is not only something that affects students and the structure of the curriculum in schools, but also 'teachers are differentiated by their subject specialisms' in that 'academic subjects provide the teacher with a career structure characterised by better promotion prospects and pay than less academic subjects' (Bennet, 2005:121). As recognised by Eisner (2002) 'classroom life in the arts does not usually resemble life in academic classrooms. In the choral setting, students are collectively engaged in a common

enterprise. In the art room, students are given permission to direct their own activities' (2002:74). This can make the progress of students as a whole during a lesson further difficult to measure in a system which increasingly favours formal summative assessment regimes. It also requires allowing students the space to explore tangents, which may also require another shift in an important aspect of the school system, this being time.

Although in many respects appealing due to the way in which abstract and universal notions may be evidenced and discovered through observation of natural phenomena, Positivism, including Logical Positivism, places high value on objectivity, rationality and pre Enlightenment ideals of 'truth,' alongside meaning becoming dependent on some form of measurement. This standpoint, derived initially from Germany, Austria and the Vienna Circle of the 1920s, is exactly what I will endeavour to avoid throughout this research. The opposing Pragmatism has a focus on the subjective experience and ones interrelation with the social world, however places importance on practical application and consequences. According to Thornton (2013) 19th Century 'technical rationality' based on 'positivism and scientific method' has dominated the teaching profession and this has led to the 'detriment of good practice and the subtle process of reflection in action' (2013:6). The educationalist Dewey rejected 'most of the claims of traditional metaphysics' and worked towards 'a Pragmatic notion of truth' (Hickman, 2009 : xi). Danto (2013) highlights Dewey's astute criticism of the methods of classical philosophy in signposting us to acknowledge Dewey's claim that 'when it ceases to be a device for dealing with problems of philosophers and becomes a method, cultivated by philosophers, for dealing with the problems of men' (2013:141). This is yet another demonstration of his commitment to practicality and rejection of mere abstract theory. As a teacher I can sympathise with the need for a balance between theory and practice.

As Eisner and Powell (2002) point out, there is an assumption made when it comes to research that 'the pursuit of truth belongs to science, the pursuit of the good to morality and the creation of the beautiful to the arts' (2002:131). Holmes (2010) explores the place of emotionalisation of reflexivity in research and concludes that the 'dichotomization of reason and emotions' results from 'philosophical engagements with the Cartesian,' (2010: 140) which as a tradition is something that ought to be challenged and in which a researcher should no longer feel restricted by and concepts of agency must be reconsidered as a result. Holmes (2010) claims that 'uncertainty' is 'intrinsic to modernity and makes rational choices based on the probability of certain outcomes unfeasible' (2010:141).

Feyerabend (2010) argues that 'in a democracy ''reason'' has just as much right to be heard as '' unreason,'' especially in view of the fact that one man's '' reason'' is the other man's insanity' (2010:165) Foucault (1965) makes interesting links between rationality and 'unreason' and the reconciliation between the two concepts, when claiming

> 'there is no madness except as the final instant of the work of art – the work endlessly drives madness to its limits; where there is a work of art, there is no madness; and yet madness is contemporary with the work , since it inaugurates the time of its truth [and that] the frequency in the modern world of works of art that explode out of madness no doubt proves nothing about the reason of that world, about the meaning of such works, or even about the relations formed and broken between the real world and the artists who produced such works' (1965: 288 - 289).

Foucault (1965) essentially claims that unreason is actually no more than a basic rejection of rationality and the norms and values created by the bourgeois and their morality and expectations in terms of ideals in the social life of a rational society, without a place for those

who are demonstrating madness in following this path, they are excluded. This reminds me of cases involving students within the school system, they do not play by the rules nor conform to the institution and so are disciplined or, indeed, excluded. On a less extreme level, students are often encouraged to accept, with little question, the values of a school and educational system.

In summary, the hierarchical value placed upon reason and the academic, ingrained within the education system and western society as a whole, may be as a result of a historical bias towards rationality and positivism and a rejection of what may be deemed *unreason* (Foucault, 1965). However, as recognised by Holmes (2010) we are reminded of the ways in which the encouraging of rationalism alone renders problem solving increasingly difficult, or entirely 'unfeasible' (2010: 141).

Issues lie within the division of these concepts and the separation of the two, alongside the conceptual notion of practical verses the academic within education. Perhaps in reframing these false dualisms, forms of knowledge can be understood further holistically.

In the next section the ideas and influence of Foucault and Heidegger in relation this research will be further explored.

Image and Word

Much of my own artwork deals with playfully responding to the inter-relationship between image and word. Below (Fig. 9) is a piece of work that I exhibited during 2015 where I found a poem my mother had written and decided to use it as inspiration for work for an open exhibition celebrating the work of women artists. I used a combination of her words and my own, alongside found marks and purposeful mark – making and experimentations with layering using digital double exposure. This piece of work was multi-layered in terms of meaning, the physical layering in terms of depth in the choice of presentation, but also in terms of communication, using the combination of both written and visual language in order to describe a shared experience passing through generations.
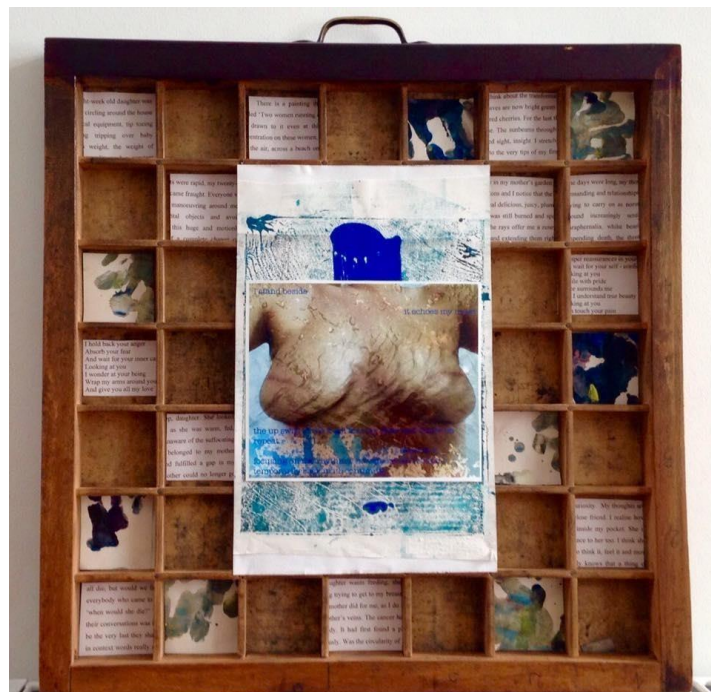
Fig. 9 My own artwork exploring the relationship between image and   word (2015)

When studying for an undergraduate degree in Philosophy whilst also completing a foundation course in art and design I became very interested in the relationship between image and word and this preoccupation has permeated my own artwork ever since. A lesson that I thoroughly enjoy teaching at KS3, 4 and 5 is one where we take a poem or a longer piece of literature and explore key themes and concepts, but also select stand out words, to visually communicate. Both key thinkers discussed in this section have used the work of artists to frame concepts which revolve around the interconnected nature of word and image. Foucault (1965 / 1972) deals with issues of subordination, intrinsic ambiguity, language and structuralism, whilst Heidegger (1971) uses an artwork to demonstrate the phenomenological notion of 'setting-into-work of truth' (1971:19). Throughout this section I hope to use the analysis of the ways in which these thinkers respond to the works of the artists Van Gogh (1887) and Magritte (1929), whilst also observing the relationship between image and word, to demonstrate both the importance and relevance of their thinking and the influence that this has had on my own paradigmatic outlook.

Both the works of Heidegger and Foucault have had a large influence on the thinking that has evolved in order to situate this research within both a phenomenological and postmodern framework. Throughout this subchapter I will explain how and which of the key ideas of these thinkers have impacted the development of my own thinking. Two works of art will be used to expand on these key thinkers with aesthetics as a frame of reference, building on the connections between Heidegger's (1971) understandings of the work of Van Gogh (an artist that both these thinkers found inspiring and worthy of analysis) and building upon Wicks' (2002) discussion of Foucault (1968) in relation to Rene Magritte (1929).

Fig. 10 Van Gogh 'A Pair of Shoes' (1887) and Rene Margitte 'Ceci nes't pas une pipe' (1929)

Heidegger

Heidegger has had notable influence on the ontological underpinnings of the theoretical framework in which this study resides. The main ideas drawn from the work of Heidegger which have influenced my own thinking can be identified as:

- The notion of the work of art 'setting – into – work of truth' (1971: 19).

- The embracing of a phenomenological approach, alongside interpretative hermeneutics

- The concept of 'Dasein' (Heidegger, 1978) and influences that this has had on philosophical and sociological thought.

Heidegger argues that works of art are in fact the 'setting – into –work of truth' (1971:19). When talking about 'truth' in philosophical terms we must of course always be very wary to define terms and to Heidegger there is a distinction that must be made between 'being' and 'beings,' ontologically speaking. Wartenberg (2010) can assist in expanding on this further when explaining that 'Heidegger argues that the fundamental sense of truth is unconcealedness or, more idiomatically, disclosure' (2010: 150). This idea of a work of art revealing its 'being' is something that I personally think is best illustrated with Heidegger's deconstruction of Van

Gogh's painting 'a pair of shoes.' Chaplin (2005) notes how Merleau – Ponty touches on a similar notion that resides in a phenomenological approach, claiming that it 'consists in re – learning to look at the world is not the reflection of a pre-existing truth, but, like art, the act of bringing truth into being' (2005: 159). This is a concept that is of interest in relation to this particular research in terms of a philosophical and conceptual underpinning for arts – based research methodologies and how through imagery and a focus on lived experiences a 'becoming' may emerge. I discount however the 'brining of truth into being' as when it comes to notions of truth the understanding offered to us by constructivism corresponds further to the understanding I intend to relate this study to in ontological terms. Constructivism was initially proposed by sociologists and is essentially antirealist, antirationalist and relativistic in approach, in that individuals construct their own knowledge based on experience. When it comes to social constructivism, individuals 'construct' social meaning, which informs their shared realities and knowledge which is developed through these human interconnections. When it comes to educational research and exploring the nature of 'value' in relation to this, constructivism is appealing due to the very nature of educational systems and establishments and the ways in which individuals function within these.

Schutz (1932) refers to this essence in relation to the social sciences as 'Verstehen,' also closely related to the work of German sociologist Weber, which roughly translates as empathetic understanding of human behaviour, however Pearse (1983) claims that the concept of empathy carries a confusing implication of the 'projection of one's own consciousness onto another being' (1983: 162) resulting in imagining how one would feel in a given situation, however Verstehen goes further than this and acknowledges opposed to simply conceptualising and understanding 'other ways of being and feeling' (ibid). Linking back to the very discipline of Hermeneutics; methods of interpretation. This concept will be returned to when the chosen research methodology is explored in later chapters. Chang (2008) argues that 'in addition to genuine encounters, a true understanding of others also requires empathetic understanding –

"Verstehen'' (2008: 27) when considering our relationships with others as researchers engaging in auto-ethnographic methods. Heidegger (1971) explains how in Van Gogh's painting 'A pair of Shoes' (1887) visually nothing is represented but a 'pair of peasant shoes, and nothing more' (1971: 17) However:

'Out of the dark opening of the worn out insides of the shoe stares the toil of laborious steps. In the sturdy solid heaviness of the shoe is stowed up the stubbornness of the trudge through the far – stretched and monotonous furrows of the field, over which a raw wind blows. On the leather lies the dampness and fullness of the soil. Under the soles slides the loneliness of the field path as evening falls. In the shoe vibrates the silent call of the earth, it's quiet bestowal of ripening corn and it's unexplained self – denial in the desolate fallow of the winter field. Extending through this tool are the uncomplaining fear as to the uncertainty of bread, the wordless joy once having withstood need, the trembling before the arrival of birth, and the shaking at the surrounding threat of death' (Heidegger, 1971: 17).

This 'opening up' that Van Gogh provides us with as a viewer of the painting the 'pair of peasant shoes,' is used to demonstrate beautifully what Heidegger means by the idea of 'a happening of truth at work' (1971: 19). I have indented to approach the way in which images produced through this research by both the participants and I are interpreted, taking inspiration from the Interpretive hermeneutic lens used by Heidegger.

For Heidegger 'fundamental ontology will be essentially reflexive, and the 'of' of the 'hermeneutic of Dasein' will have to be understood on two different dimensions. The hermeneutic of Dasein is also Dasein's hermeneutic: interpretation of Dasein, by Dasein, for Dasein' and with this realisation we are directed to the notion that 'fundamental ontology will

dissolve ontological foundations and reveal that our existence has no basis but itself (Ree in Monk and Raphael, 2001: 359). An increasingly existentialist viewpoint.

Foucault

The works of Foucault have influenced the development of the framework of this research and my thinking in diverse ways. These can be highlighted as the following:

- Structuralism as a means of understanding and analysing focus group discussions and dialogue during interviews, although Foucault actively described himself as an 'anti – structuralist' (1977: 114).

- The rejection of the Cartesian in relation to ontological and epistemological notions, such as those stated in The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language (1972).

- Notions of power struggles, the relationship between power and knowledge and insights into the conceptions of aesthetics, expressed through Madness and Civilization (1965).

In the case of structuralism 'rather than categories and concepts taking their origins and meaning from the nature of the world, they were determined by the nature of language, as well as the contingent historical factors that shaped language' and rather than there being any one – to – one correspondence between mind and world, the structures of the language determine the types of categorisations and distinctions made between objects and value systems' (Olssen, 2003:190). This rejects the Cartesian conception of the subject as an intrinsically rational being, as well as Kantian notions of a transcendental subject. Rather, 'thought is something empirically learned by the human subject through coming to understand the cultural basis of meaning' (2003:191). Foucault (1972) also based much of his work upon critiquing Cartesian

rationality. In The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language Foucault when referring to the history of ideas argues that:

'one can see at once how difficult it is to fix precise limits for it – the history of ideas is concerned with all that insidious thought, that whole interplay of representations that flow anonymously between men; in the interstices of the great discursive monuments, it reveals the crumbling soil on which they are based. It is the discipline of fluctuating languages, of shapeless works, of unrelated themes. The analysis of opinions rather than of knowledge, of errors rather than truth, of types of mentality rather than forms of thought' (1972:137).

Foucault's desire to re – interpret the boundaries that he associates with the history of ideas can be understood through his 'archaeological description' which is 'precisely such an abandonment' and 'systematic rejection of its postulates and procedures' (1972:138) however 'not a return to the inner most secret of origin; it is the systematic description of a discourse – object' (1972:140).

Tanke (2009) explains the Foucauldian understanding of art history within the context of wider epistemology, when stating that:

'In contrast to the customary strategy of recounting the facts of art in order to weave a tale of evolution and progress, genealogy sees art's history as a web of entangled events, whose chance combination has yielded a contingent configuration of production, display, reception and discourse' (2009: 6).'

When it comes to Foucault and aesthetics Wick's (2002) reminds us that the 'upshot of Foucault's discussion concerns his broader interest in drawing our attention to the limits of any given perspective' (Wicks in Gaut and Lopes, 2002:205) summing up that 'Foucault continually

celebrates writers who live on the edge, he considers how their experience–at–the–limit tends to be embodied linguistically' with 'Foucault's overall attitude' being 'open – minded and tolerant of transgressive attitudes in general, since he questions seriously whether absolute truth can ever be specified in a once-and-for-all fashion' (2002: 207). In Madness and Civilization Foucault (1965) claims that:

> 'The madness of Nietzsche, the madness of Van Gogh or Artaud, belongs to their work perhaps neither more or less profoundly, but in quite another way' and that 'let us make no mistake here; between madness and the work of art, there has been no accommodation, no more constant exchange, no communication of languages; their oppression is much more dangerous than formerly [as can be seen in] Nietzsche's last cry, proclaiming himself both Christ and Dionysos, is not on the border of reason and unreason, in the perspective of the work of art, their common dream, finally realised and immediately vanishing…..the hammer has just fallen from the philosophers hands. And Van Gogh, who did not want to ask for ''permission from doctors to paint pictures,'' knew quite well that his work and his madness were incompatible' (1965: 286 – 287).

Foucault 'empathises both the oppressive dimensions of power and its creative ones (Wick, 2002:209) and calls 'into account the constraints imposed by any given social organization' (Ibid: 210). In Madness and Civilization he concludes that it is 'Nietzsche's madness – that is Ceci n'est pas une pipe 'is structured in a manner that controverts both these assumptions. 'Ceci' is ambiguous and the painting is "intrinsically ambiguous'' and 'resists any singular interpretation' (ibid). It is clear that this surrealist work of art throws into question, through the use of paradox the ways in which the object corresponds to both image and word. This complex relationship and acceptance of ambiguity has informed the ways in which photographs and images have been responded to throughout this research.

Although I have used the painting by Magritte (1926) to demonstrate the ways in which we may greater comprehend Foucault's thinking, he wrote in depth about a sketch by Magritte interrelated to this piece of work (Appendix C). Foucault (1976) writes playfully about Magritte's work, whilst also describing the playfulness within the sketch itself, when stating that Magritte uses 'the kind of schoolboy script you might find on the first line of an exercise book or remaining on the blackboard after the teachers demonstration' (1976: 1). Foucault also writes about the uncertainty to be found in this surrealist artwork, he notes there is a 'mischief' that 'lies in an operation made invisible by the simplicity of the result but which explains the vague uneasiness it provokes' (1976: 9). When reflecting upon the use of language and image Foucault claims that there is a tautology used in the calligram, 'but the converse in rhetoric' (ibid).

Efland (1990) is another key thinker who offers knowledge through analysis of historical perspectives who has contributed much to the understanding of art education within the context of this study. The influence of Efland has been explored in further depth previously in Art Education; Approaches, Pedagogy and Histories. In the next subchapter I will explore notions of value which underpin our understandings of the subject art and design.

4.5 Notions of Value

Why art?

At parents evenings I am often faced with the question 'why should I study art?' by students and parents / carers alike. I am also often quizzed about what studying art could lead to in terms of a career or further education. This begs the question 'what is the value of art?' Despite many students enjoying their art and design lessons, which in itself arguably promotes the subjects intrinsic worth, there is sometimes a concern in the sense that a clear link between studying art and a career path cannot easily be identified. I often begin with a list of careers directly linked to the arts, such as: architecture, graphic design, arts and cultural event planning, fashion design and consultancy, advertising, animation, ceramics, photography or art therapy and then explain that studying art could indeed lend itself to many diverse careers due to the transferrable skills learnt through study, such as those identified by Steers (2003) as: 'a tolerance for ambiguity, an ability to concentrate and persist, confidence, self – belief, intellectual and intuitive risk – taking' (2003: 27). Eisner (2002) recognises the wider skills that study of the arts can offer, such as an ability to pay 'attention to relationships' (2003: 75), to 'shape form to create expressive content,' or to be imaginative and problem solve' (Eisner, 2003, 81). These conversations with students and parents / carers focus on value in a somewhat limited sense, although the answers to their concerns appear limitless. When working with a group of KS3 students I decided to use the artwork of Bob and Roberta Smith (2006), in particular his series of slogan artwork in order to promote discussion about what the value of studying the arts were for students. The image below (Fig. 11) is a photograph of the development of large scale placard style responses they created, which largely read sentiments surrounding freedom of expression, play and enjoyment.

Fig.11 Photograph of students responding to the question 'what do you value?' in relation to the study of art and design.

Questions of value, in relation to art education, alongside art itself lie at the heart of this research. How and why we value art and how this impacts what students and teachers experience in terms of visual arts education in schools, plus the very notion of value itself must therefore not be overlooked.

Wiggins (2002) makes links between notions of value, need and truth. In his 'essays on the philosophy of value' he argues that there is often a replacement of 'need' claims with derivatives of 'want, desire' or 'prefer' (2002: 5) and that there is a link between 'need' and what is 'necessary' (2002: 7) which is subject to 'relativeness in relation to need' (2002: 11). This will be returned to later in this subchapter.

According to Foucault (1969) power exists within and at every level of society, which is inextricably linked to knowledge in a complex way, which inevitably in turn influences concepts of what is valued, valuable and what it means to value a person or thing. Power can be repressive or indeed productive (Foucault, 1969), however when considering the notion of value in relation to art education, I would concur that there is no absolute definition or concept

to uncover, but rather the meaning of value changes and shifts as does history and context, therefore this value is entirely relative.

Educational value

When referring back to key thinkers who have enabled me to navigate through the research journey, Eisner plays a key role. In chapter four of Eisner's 'The Arts and Creation of Mind' (2002) the invaluable skills that the arts teach young people are listed as: making good judgements about qualitative relationships, that problems can have more than one solution, celebration of multiple perspectives, with complexity of problem solving flexibility follows, neither words nor numbers in literal form exhaust all that we can know, small changes and differences can equal large effects, the subtlety that comes with thinking through and within a material, to learn to say what cannot be said, to experience in an alternative way which allows for discovery of the wide range of feeling we are capable of and that where the arts stand within a curriculum symbolizes to children and young people what adults deem important (Eisner, 2002, 70 – 92).

Eisner claims that there is much that the education system can learn from the study of the arts, arguing that 'the arts can serve as a model for teaching the subjects we usually think of as academic' (2002: 196). Some of those things link to the kind of skills, which can be developed through engagement with the arts, listed above. Eisner notes that the arts teach 'the importance of imagination and…refining and using the sensibilities' (2002: 198) which may be of value not just in terms of appreciation of what experiences offer throughout life, but also a key skill needed by students for successful scholarship and employment for the future.

According to Roege and Kim (2013) when evaluating the value of the arts within education separating into categories of 'impact on academic achievement, arts for art's sake, therapy, impact on students at risk' and 'impact on creativity' (2013: 121 – 125) may prove useful. Roege and Kim claim that alongside many studies that conclude there is a positive link between the study of arts and greater academic performance there is also much research leading to the notion that 'the fluidity inherent in artistic expression encourages many abilities that would appear to benefit the creative economy, including abstract reasoning, active thinking, and decision making under uncertainty,' (2013: 122) linking the skills set associated with learning within arts education to those needed for successful entrepreneurship. They also argue that the value of arts education can be witnessed in increased general engagement with education as a whole, opportunities to view issues from multiple perspectives and collaborative experiences, offer opportunities for self – expression, promotes emotional wellbeing and balance, increase self – determination and physical and psychological wellbeing' and 'opportunities to foster creativity' as a means to 'think, process and communicate effectively' (2013: 124). Although this paper was written in relation to American schooling, it is highly relevant with regards to England also, as noted earlier.

Fowler (2001) argues the case and value for arts education in his publication 'Strong Arts: Strong Schools' and suggests five areas in which he claims 'the arts make natural and unique connections with the deeper purposes of education' (2001: 4). He labels these areas as 'thinking receptively, thinking aesthetically, thinking creatively, thinking communicatively' and 'thinking culturally' (2001: 4 – 8). Fowler states that 'perhaps the thing that the arts do best, at their best, is open the doors to learning. They open our eyes, our ears, our feelings, our minds. They make us more sensitive and aware' (2001: 4). When it comes to the aesthetic value Fowler notes that 'the aesthetic awareness we learn through study of the arts becomes a way we relate to the world. Our aesthetic view becomes a natural and important part of our encounter with life. It is the way we bring our sensual and rational beings together to come to terms with the

world around us' (2001: 5). The importance of this bringing together of the rational and sensual may be important to note following the previous subchapter 4.3 based on the rational and emotional in arts education. In relation to creative thinking, Fowler (2001) makes the link between learning in arts education, abstract reasoning and an ability to work with and embrace the ambiguous, noting that 'the arts require abstract reasoning. Among all the subjects in the curriculum, the arts are unique in that there are fewer absolutely right or wrong answers. It is precisely the ambiguities of these forms of symbolic expression that require us to exercise a higher order of thought processes' (2001: 5). When it comes to issues of inclusion and the impact on students at risk, recognised earlier by Roege and Kim (2013), Fowler (2001) understands that there is a certain appeal and enjoyment for students in relation to studying the arts in schools, with this in mind he states 'we cannot keep young people in school by giving them more drudgery. In fact, the action, delight, and personal challenge that the arts induce can help prevent students from leaving school.' (2001:6). Lastly there is the important purpose that art serves as a means of communication, and in many instances offering the chance:

> 'to share artistic creations across cultures is to share our deepest values. Recognizing our
>
> similarities and understanding our differences establish the base for cultural cohesiveness
>
> and respect, two vitally important values in a shrinking world in which technology seems
>
> to deny our humanness.' (Fowler, 2001:8).

When considering the educational value of the arts in the current climate in England an interesting perspective to take is that of an exam board, or schools perspective informed by this. Obviously, there will be a vast contrast in the ways in which the arts are valued across different schools and educational settings, however what value can students gaining an arts qualification offer to a school in relation to the measures by which they are judged valuable? This question is important to ask because it has a direct correlation to the ways in which the arts are valued within the current curriculums taught in secondary schools.

The criteria by which students are graded at the end of their KS4 and 5 studies by exam boards may also provide an insight into what sorts of skills within art are perceived as important. Importance may in some instances, but not always, precede value. According to the exam board AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance) the skills that must be evidenced throughout the study of the GCSE art and design course taught as of 2018 onwards can be listed as an ability to

> 'develop ideas through investigations informed by selecting and critically analysing sources, apply an understanding of relevant practices in the creative and cultural industries to work, refine ideas as work progresses through experimenting with media, materials, techniques and processes, record ideas, observations, insights and independent judgements, visually and through written annotation, using appropriate specialist vocabulary, as work progresses, use visual language critically as appropriate to own creative intentions and chosen area(s) of study through effective and safe use of: media, materials, techniques, processes and technologies, use drawing skills for different needs and purposes, appropriate to context' and 'realise personal intentions through sustained application of the creative process' (AQA:2018).

When reading this list of expectations I am led to question the assessment of these opposed to the aims of the course. This is because it is often the assessment which drives the course content that students will experience opposed to the course specification of skills which ought to become experiences, but rather the focus may lie in how these will be evidenced. This issue represents the delicate balance between learning and assessment of learning that it is increasingly difficult to negotiate as a teacher, especially in the educational climate in which we currently find ourselves, where results both highly inform and influence schools. There is the value of an art qualification in itself which much also be questioned, as highlighted by Robinson (2015) 'academic qualifications are a form of currency, and like all currencies their value varies with market conditions. A college degree used to be so valuable because relatively

few people had one. In a world bristling with graduates, a college degree is no longer the distinction it once was' (2015: 15).

Commercial / Economic value

Findlay (2012) collates his experiences as an art collector, lover and art / auction – house dealer in order to attempt to define the value of art, in itself. Findlay explains that there is a primary and secondary market, both of which are 'governed by supply, demand and marketing' (2012: 21). When considering the market value of a piece of art Findlay claims that there are five attributes in which we must be aware of, these being: 'provenance, condition, authenticity, exposure' and 'quality' (2012: 39). These attributes dictate the commercial value of art. Another way of viewing the value of art offered to us by Findlay however is that of its social value.

Fischer (2010) states that in the age of capitalism 'art…became a commodity and the artist a commodity producer. Personal patronage was superseded by a free market' driven by 'a conglomerate of nameless consumers' (2010: 60). Perhaps elements of the educational system today echo these changes that occurred as a result of capitalism, when students entire secondary education is represented in its finality as a series of numbers and letters on a piece of paper, a fee for every exam entered and on that paper nothing more than an examination number to reveal an individual's identity. Berger (2002) claims that 'capitalism survives by forcing the majority, whom it exploits, to define their own interests as narrowly as possible. This was once achieved by extensive deprivation…today…it is being achieved by imposing a false standard of what is and what is not desirable' (2002: 148). It could be argued that what is desirable is in many cases what is valued, linking back to the work of Wiggins (2002) at the start of this

chapter. Fischer (2010) also argues that following the 1950's onwards 'art became an occupation that was half – romantic, half – commercial…where the 'many – sided human personality' was forced 'into narrow specialisation' (2010: 63). The changes of arts place within society and its function within the political and economic realm will have no doubt influenced the ways in which it is both approached and valued within schools.

Intrinsic / Instrumental value

Kieran (2005) provides us with an opportunity to consider the difference between instrumental and intrinsic value, in that

> 'if we value a work instrumentally, it is merely a contingent means to a particular end [by which we could achieve by a different, or similar means, however] intrinsic value in a work is to appreciate the imaginative experience it properly affords, which may be beautiful, moving, pleasurable, insightful or profound. But it is the particular nature of the work that guides our mental engagement and responses to it' (2005: 293).

It could be argued that the latter is a natural human response and therefore as Fischer (2010) states 'not until humanity itself dies will art die' (2010: 250).

Bohm (1996) links the importance of the engagement with art to self – knowledge, the 'need to assimilate all his experience, both of the external environment and of his internal psychological process' (1996: 33) and re-connecting with 'what it means to be original and creative' which Bohm claims this childlike 'quality of fresh, wholehearted interest is not entirely dead in any of us' (1996: 27).

Returning to Eisner (2002) we are reminded of the intrinsic value of art in the simplest sense that it can bring us great joy, in his words 'the arts, when experienced in the fullness of our emotional life, are about becoming alive' (2002: 84 – 85).

It may be worth linking back to the frameworks offered by Efland (1979), referenced in chapter 3, Pearse and the development of a theoretical framework, as the art educators philosophical stand point will of course influence the ways in which the value of art is understood within the context of the classroom in the secondary school, but also how (alongside parental and societal understandings and input) students grow to perceive arts importance, purpose, place and associated value. As Eisner states 'the arts position in the school curriculum represents what adults believe is important' (2002).

When only briefly reviewing the aesthetic, intrinsic, social, economic and educational value of the arts it is easy to find oneself with a confusing and conflicting view of what and where the value of art and arts education lies. When looking back to the origins of art in the western world, as we know it today, where in the early sixteenth century humankind explored the 'primary effect of bipedalism' (Spivey, 2005: 8) which is the 'freeing up of the hands for activities other than getting around. Those activities include the making and carrying of tools and weapons' and also the 'creation of art' (ibid) to make purposeful marks onto the walls of caves, we are reminded that much of arts value lies in visual language as a highly effective means of communication. As explained by Berger (2008):

> 'no other relic or text from the past can offer such a direct testimony about the world in which surrounded other people at other times. In this respect images are more precise and richer than literature. To say this is not to deny the expressiveness or imaginary quality of art, treating it as mere documentary evidence; the more imaginative the work, the more profoundly it allows us to share the artist's experience' (2008: 3).

If this alone is the only reason in which we could claim that art was valuable than I think it would stand as a very powerful argument. When referring back to Wiggins (2002) who was concerned with the notions of 'need, want, desire' and 'prefer' (2002: 5) in relation to what is valued by human beings, I would argue that the value of visual communication through the production of art ties all of these concepts together. When stripped down to the very basics, being human and the use of language (visual, or other) and the communication and sharing of ideas, thoughts and emotions with others are intertwined, thus the value of art lies at the very essence of what it means to be human.

Is this represented in the ways in which art is valued and understood in schools however? In the next chapter, methodology, I will explain the research design selected to explore elements of this question.

4.7 **Summary of Literature**

Throughout the literature chapter I have built upon the foundations laid by the research questions noted in the introduction, chapter 1, my positionality, stated in chapter 2, and developed and navigated my theoretical framework, explored in chapter 3.

The focus on current policy and practice, alongside the history of art education, approaches and pedagogy has set the scene for a greater understanding of the subject art and design and its teachers within the context of the present day. It has also enabled an insight into issues that arise from the segregation of reason and emotion and the academic and practical as ideologies within school curriculums.

During section 4.4 the influences of Foucault's (1968) analysis of Magritte's 'This is not a Pipe' and Heidegger's (1971) understanding of the work of Van Gogh (1887) have been clarified. With the aid of the analysis the above artists / artworks the ways in which these thinkers have informed methodology may be greater understood.

The ways in which notions and understandings of value in relation to aesthetics and arts education within the context of this research point largely towards the essence of what it means to be human, aligns with the interpretive hermeneutics of Heidegger, plus the acceptance of intrinsic ambiguity and rejection of singular interpretation which is supported by the relativism offered by Foucault.

This overview of the literature naturally leads us to the methodology, in which the main ideas and frameworks have impacted and assisted in shaping.

5. Methodology

Chosen research methodologies are in – keeping with a qualitative approach to data collection and research. During this chapter I will be defining my research design, clarifying ethical considerations in relation to both the research and participants involved and explaining the decisions to use arts – based research methods, auto – ethnography and biography, a research journal in the form of an artist's sketchbook and creative document, case studies and interviews, both one-to-one and a focus group. These approaches have allowed me to view the research from multiple angles, whilst using artefact, curatorial, semiotic and thematic analysis.

Using an arts – based methodology with art teacher participants, plus to reflect upon my own practice and pedagogy, has enabled an approach to enquiry which holistically combines 'theory and practice' and the relationship between 'knowing, doing and making' (Leavy, 2012: 8). This is explored further in section 5.3.2 Arts-based Research Methods, A/r/tography, Photovoice and Liminality in relation to the work of Irwin. Artifacts from art teachers' classrooms and learning spaces were photographed by participants in response to a brief created with the intention of exploring research questions, but also gathered with the purpose to exhibit.

As a means of supplementing these photographs, acting as participant teacher voice, whilst also as a means of gathering new findings and insights, a focus group and one-to-one interviews also underpinned the chosen methodological approach. Re-occurring themes and language used to describe experiences allowed for new leads to emerge, which have been explored in greater depth through a trio of case studies.

Hatch (2002) claims that 'qualitative research seeks to understand the world from the perspectives of those living in it' (2002: 7) and 'researchers are a part of the world they study; the knower and the known are taken to be inseparable' (2002: 10). This was something that I was aware of being an artist, teacher and researcher working with artist teacher participants, who in undertaking the photovoice brief were also stepping in and out of the role of researcher within their educational setting. This was where autoethnography, biography and the keeping of a research journal and sketchbook allowed an integral space in which to reflect upon findings and engage in reflexivity.

I will begin this chapter with a focus on the research design, moving onto acknowledgement of important ethical considerations and then working through an introduction, description and explanation for each research tool or method utilised.

5.1 <u>Research design</u>

Equipment list

At the start of a new term, often during the beginning of an academic year in September, or when returning after a school holiday in January, many students will return to school with pencil cases that are bursting with new equipment, others will repeatedly ask for a pen or pencil as do not arrive so physically well equipped. Depending on the location of the school and influencing contextual factors such as the social or economic deprivation of that area, the above will vary between students and schools. Before making artwork, or setting up for a practical lesson thought is given to the resources and equipment needed. Again, depending on the school, some art teachers may have a technician to assist in the preparation of resources and equipment, others will have to plan this into the day amongst and between lessons. Sometimes KS4 and 5 students will be given an equipment list, suggesting the kinds of tools that will be required during the course of study. Research design is not dissimilar to the equipment list in art, in this subchapter I intend to make clear the equipment or tools to be used (and how they will be used) in order to collate data which will promote insightful and compelling findings. Below (Fig. 12) is a photograph of a classroom with equipment laid out and prepared ready for use.

Fig. 12 Equipment set up ready for use with in the art classroom
taken by Alex in response to Q12

As aforementioned, throughout this section I intend to clarify the research design that underpins the research methodology and subsequent analysis and findings, starting with the acknowledgement that a qualitative approach will be used and explaining the data collection tools and how these will be triangulated.

Within the context of this research both ontological and epistemological questions have arisen from the areas of educational theory and pedagogy, aesthetics and notions of value in relation to the arts, with a particular focus on the visual arts, which have inevitably informed and influenced the chosen theoretical framework and research methodology. When embarking on the search for an appropriate and coherent research lens amongst such diverse areas, it appears that one standpoint alone will not sufficiently encompass the complexity, or resolve the plethora of issues that appear to arise from fundamentally adhering to just one recognised school of thought in which to construct a theoretical framework. Marshall (2011) claims that as researchers we can find ourselves working from 'post – paradigmatic definitions of arts practice' and creating 'conceptual collages' by way of taking ideas from diverse and 'seemingly incompatible concepts' (2011:12). I think that when researching within the context of the social sciences and when observing, analysing and reflecting upon environments as messy and fluid as schools, a 'conceptual collage' (Marshall, 2011:12) is a wise consideration.

Referring to the literature, in chapter 3, where the conceptual collage is described in further depth, the table below builds on Table 1, with additional columns for methodology and the strengths and weaknesses of the model. This is in order to clarify the links between theoretical framework, literature and methodology with regards to the research. Much of the chosen methodology rests upon notions of research being a process which is non– linear, with this in mind, this table is intended to be understood in a holistic sense, with the consideration that influence from literature on method may ebb and flow.

Table 2: To clarify links between theoretical underpinnings and methodology

Pearse (1983) framework and links to Efland (1979)	Influence on research	Influence of Methodology / data gathering tools and instruments	Strengths	Weaknesses
Phenomenology and the Interpretive Hermeneutic stance **Efland frameworks** Expressionist	-Heidegger Phenomenological Stance -Hermeneutics -A focus on the essence of deep structures and identity of meaning -Drawing upon first – person 'lived experience' -Thematic analysis -Art as an intrinsic human activity with value in itself	-Image and thematic analysis of photographs using Heidegger's (1927) phenomenological stance -Observations recorded in research journal / sketchbook (drawing upon lived – experiences and hermeneutics)	Images are data rich and observations put experiences of teachers into context. Research journal provides an opportunity to note in the moment, whilst also providing opportunities to return to ideas and insights in a reflective manner at a later date.	Interpretation issues may arise, many different ways to interpret an image. Looking for an essence of an experience (phenomenology) implies that there is a singular interpretation, when there may be multiple layers, however the narrative assists in telling that particular teachers story.
Empirical – Analytic Orientation and empirical **Efland frameworks** Scientific Rationalist	- Empiricism - Influence of class and social structures - The developments of the curriculum in Art and Design education in England - Art as a cognitive activity/ way of understanding and generating knowledge about the world - Teachers' experiences	- Use of the Feldman (1994) Model of image analysis Questions used to inform the brief for photographs based on findings from Eisner (2002 / 2005) and Efland (1979) Questions surrounding understanding of the term *value* in the minds of participants	An effective way to analyse an image in order to draw out meaning, a structure created so that they may be assessed from the same starting point Working from previous thinkers who have contributed to pedagogy and practice within the history of art and design education Ensuring that when the term *value* is used there is an understanding. This is taking into account the theoretical framework or stance in which the participant is working from and within – allows for a greater understanding of these individuals	Limiting in the sense that when you read an image using the same format messages may be missed The potential for new insights or ways of forming questions to be overlooked Understanding of the term differ so much that a conclusive and agreed concept may be increasingly difficult to comprehend We only learn about a small number of teachers' experience and cannot move from the particular to the general

The Critical – theoretic Orientation and the Critical Feminist **Efland frameworks** Reconstructivist	-Research methodologies based upon refection Acknowledgement of researcher positionality and auto- ethnography - Acceptance of multiple viewpoints -A/r/tography, arts – based research and Irwin -Post – structuralism	- A/r/tographical and arts – based methods - Positionality statement (acknowledgement of own influence and autoethnographical input, plus the act of reflexivity) -Use of own sketchbook and journal to record ideas and insights as they emerged and use of	Being an insider allowed for an understanding and greater rapport. My identity as teacher enabled use of a shared and common language, acronyms did not have to be explained.	Assumptions made, different schools and individuals may use phrases and acronyms which mean different things and so language and key terms ought to be checked regularly.
	-Foucault Postmodernism Structural analysis	own photographs in response to brief - Analysis of Interview data and transcripts through a Post – Modernist / Structuralist lens -Use of triangulated data to allow for multiple viewpoints, but also encourage validity and reliability. -Semi – structured interviews used to encourage teacher narrative to come to the fore	Triangulating data for greater reliability and validity, also allowing for further rich and in – depth data. Allows for the interviews to remain focused on the topic discussed.	A lot of data to analyse and diverse types of data to interact with. The potential for new insights or ways of forming questions to be overlooked, we may miss important insights when it comes to the participants own unique experiences.
		-Focus group discussion -Analysis of interview and focus group transcripts informed by semiotics (Manning 1987) and post – structuralism (Foucault 1969 / 1979)	Useful for understanding a group consensus, unpicking ideas and interpretations of the visual data / photographs.	Certain individuals may dominate the conversation and some will inevitably not talk as much as others and so important to ensure that everybody is heard. Individual's views not as easily accessed.

All of the above is to be understood within the context of: relativism, contingency, liminality and with fluidity (referring also to Gestalt) Although these can be roughly categorised, there will be areas where data gathering tools and instruments and methodology, literature and theoretical underpinnings overlap.

The above table further unpicks the philosophical mashup, highlights the links between theoretical underpinnings and the methodology, but also captures the associated strengths and weaknesses. With these identified and established a further critical and reflective approach may be taken, one which acknowledges the challenges of interpretation issues, assumptions and a diverse data set, whilst ultimately recognising the strengths of working as an insider and triangulating data in ways which provides rich and in – depth insights to emerge. It is in both the reflective nature and reflective interaction with these methods which gives this bricolage its vigour and allowed space for themes to be identified.

Throughout this chapter I will explain my chosen research design, taking into account the 'conceptual collages' created through using a range of methodologies in an attempt to triangulate and provide a holistic view of art education in Thanet and wider Kent, in response to research questions. All research methods are qualitative.

The reason for this is because as Gray and Malins (2004) highlight 'qualitative analysis is " intellectual craftsmanship'' – playful but methodical and intellectually competent. The parallels with our own discipline's processes and values are encouraging and inspiring' (2004: 132). When referring to 'our own' Gray and Malins are referring to visual art as research within art and design. They claim that integrating visual data with 'critical thinking and response – essential intellectual elements of the creative process – we have a sound basis for analysis' (ibid). The research tools used suit the subject area, environment and individuals as participants involved

Eisner (2003) makes interesting connections between the visual arts and qualitative research methods. This is work in which I intend to draw upon as an example of how qualitative research methods lend themselves to research in the field of education, in particular arts education, and how building on these identified parallels will provide a solid basis for my own study. Eisner claims that a feature of the visual arts 'is that they are used to communicate the way something feels, that is, it's emotional character' and uses Picasso's 'Guernica' (1937) as an example of the way in which an artwork can tell us more than mere factual interpretation of an event, but encourages a deeper empathy. In the case of 'Guernica' Picasso describes to us (or 'moves' in us) an understanding of 'what destruction feels like' as in 'literature Hemingway does this with his novels, Tennyson with his poems' in the way in which they 'create and organise qualities that make…situations palpable' (2003: 53) opposed to simply describing them at base level.

Imagery is used as a research tool and arts – based method in the forms of both photo – voice and reflections visually communicated in my research journals and sketchbooks. The research design is based upon a mixture of responses to photographs and artwork, both thematic and semiotic analysis used, with frameworks derived from Feldman (1994) , Eisner (2002) and Manning (1987), alongside one – to – one interviews, a focus group discussion and three case studies.

A pilot study was also held in an attempt to iron out and identity potential issues. When first starting out on the research journey I had intended interviewing head teachers of the participating schools. This had proven very difficult, as many were far too busy to respond to requests for their time, which did indicate something in terms of how this type of research and more specifically, research in the arts and education is valued and where this may lie in terms of priorities. This reinforced a view that quite a few art teachers expressed in terms of senior leadership being very keen to walk guests around the school, showing off the art department and work produced and displayed on walls, brightening up the corridors and classrooms, however many were left asking if this is where the interest in the subject stopped. After interviewing a head teacher as a part of the pilot study I added an extra question to any interviews conducted thereafter, relating to the participant's own experience of art education (Appendix D) I realised that this could potentially have a large impact on their own beliefs in relation to the arts, which would in turn influence practice and pedagogy, plus their own educational philosophy and ideals. The art teacher participant who first completed the photography brief claimed that there was the odd question in which they struggled to respond visually, however this was actually positive because it made them really question their everyday teaching environment and think carefully about what they photographed and the potential message that this would convey (Appendix E).

Responding to feedback and amendments from the pilot study the following methods were used and triangulated:

- Art - based research in the form of photo-voice

- Focus group

- Interviews

- Case studies

- Own journal and reflections

According to Rhineberger, Hartmann and Valey (2005) the term and act of 'triangulation' in relation to research may be used 'to advocate the use of multiple methods in a single study' (2005 : 56). There is also the advantage and intention to 'improve the qualitative proxies for validity and reliability, but only if several different methods yield similar and consistent results (congruency)'(2005: 59). This use of various methods links to an understanding of triangulation in the social sciences relating to 'multiple – methods used to produce new and alternative information rather than to validate or affirm existing information' (2005: 60).

Flick, Kardoff and Steinke (2004) claim that there are 'three modes of application for triangulation: as a validation strategy, as an approach to the generalization of discoveries, and as a route to additional knowledge' (2004: 183). Although elements of all three modes are relevant to my decision to use multiple qualitative methods, the route to additional knowledge will hold the most weight, as with methods such as case studies the focus is not on generalization, but an in – depth study of an individual case.

When it came to the analysis of data I used NVivo as a tool to initially code the wide range and variety of responses from participants, both visual and auditory in their form. I found that this

enabled me to start to compose appropriate categories, however it was through the simple allocating of a large space, highlighters and post-it notes that I began to unpick the key themes as they began to emerge.

The initial codes constructed were in response to the focus group interview data and transcript, highlighting key words and then generating a code to encapsulate the emotion or thought, for example 'frustration' as a code and potential theme when coming across words such as 'demotivated, pointless' or phrases such as 'materials wasted' which is language, when used in a negative sense, which may denote frustration in terms of the teacher. I could also find repeated words such as 'time' or 'creativity.' It was not long before I realised that beyond the initial transcription and pinpointing of words which could be catagorised, the volume and diversity of data felt overwhelming when organized digitally and so I decided to return to the classroom itself, a space I felt further connected to, but also allowed me to view this body of data in an environment which felt authentic and in which I felt further comfortable and confident. I timed this when my classroom would not be used for consecutive days so that I could spread the photographs out and interact with them without the rush to clear away. These initial codes that were explored using NVivo still seemed relevant, but they were mainly used as a starting point to then physically add to using post – it notes and highlighters. I firstly looked at the data as a whole set and after spreading out all of the photographs included in the exhibition across the classroom, regardless of category, I began to group them using the Feldman (1994) model, working from the description phase onwards and elements of Manning (1987) as to whether they were hinting at conventional signs that were socially agreed upon within the profession, or representational or abstracted in their form (see subchapter 5.3.3 Artefact, Curatorial, Semiotic and Thematic analysis). After organizing in this manner I used one set of post – it notes to catagorise, then a variety of colour codes to describe and begin to suggest themes across the set, such as 'loneliness, 'joy' or 'communication.' (Appendix F, which demonstrates the very early stages of this process). From this I constructed a table, which I then used as a common format (Table 7) where I noted down the findings from the data each time it was organised. I then jumbled up the data set and organised it by the questions asked of participants in the brief, as it was exhibited, then used highlighters to match up images, key

words and themes in the transcripts to the post – it notes used to explore the photographs. The physical cutting and pasting across the different types of data, whether this be visual or written, again explored the relationship between image and word and using colour coding to group common themes together as they emerged. Conducting the 1 - 2 - 1 interviews with participants allowed me to marry the perception of the themes and ideas communicated through the photographs with the intention when the image was captured. The further holistic and reflective interaction with the data came in the form of writing three case studies, using the previous data analysis and the same formatted table to draw out themes from both the visual data and transcripts, listening back to the audio recordings, revisiting my notes and observations in my journal and getting a general feel for that teachers individual experience. Below is a figure intended to simplify the order in which the data collection and anaylsis took place:

| Pilot of Photo-voice brief and semi – structured 1-2-1 interview questions | Own response to photo- voice captured | Photovoice images gathered via email and printed off | Exhibition and focus group held. Focus group recorded and transcribed | Trial with NVivo to generate initial codes from focus group interview | Decision to use some of the initial codes generated and to spread out all data, photographs and transcriptions across classroom and start to holistically draw out key themes |

Start of data collection

| Research Journal and Notes taken and recorded throughout | Observations made when visiting other teachers / schools to share brief and gain consent | Photographs initially organized by question and curated for exhibition | Photographs analysed using Feldman (1994) framework for image analysis and key words / themes developed in response. | 1 – 2- 1 interviews conducted, recorded and transcribed | The writing of 3 x case studies |

Fig. 13 Data collection and analysis timeline

Using key thinkers and influential ideas from the literature I began to see patterns across the images as a data set, whether these be in terms of the aesthetic make up of an image in relation to use of the formal elements or composition, or the subject matter, metaphors and meanings that were conveyed. The images were analysed as a full set, regardless of question asked or individual response, as individual sets in relation to case studies and one- to-one interviews

with selected participants and also in groups responding to the questions asked and given brief. This allowed me to look at the same set of images from different angles; as images themselves (out of context of question responded to), as visual answers to specific questions and later with the knowledge of intended meaning after meeting with participants.

When analysing interviews (both focus group and one-to-one) and responding to transcripts I used different coloured highlighters to code, pick out and isolate key words and phrases, some of these were related to the imagery and others independent of it. Common themes and further questions have arisen from the combination of the analysis of images and words.

Whilst compiling the photographic responses and curating the exhibition I went through an early stage of analysis, ensuring that the images exhibited fairly represented the voice of the participants. For example, one of the questions asked was 'photograph an object in your classroom that you value highly' to which many participants had responded with the image of a camera. This meant that when choosing images for exhibition a camera was represented more than once, to demonstrate how many times it had appeared across the full data set. Not all of the photographs could be exhibited. The reasons for this were space available at the gallery and as to not overwhelm visually for those attending the exhibition, as messages and meanings could be lost in the plethora of information offered by the photographs. Images were selected for exhibition using the following criteria:

- Are they visually impacting? Are they well composed? Will they provoke further questions for the viewer?

- How many times has this image been repeated? Is it too similar to another image?

- What potential messages are communicated by this image? Do they fairly represent the participant's answers to the brief?

- Are the images colour or Black and White? Is there a balance of the two? Are they digital or using non-digital photographic techniques? Is there a fair balance between these?

- Are the participants who took the photographs likely to attend the focus group discussion? (Knowing the intended meanings behind the images and being able to discuss these could bring a greater level of depth to the conversations held amongst this group of art teachers).

Participants were chosen for case study based on the full set of images offered and their availability to meet on multiple occasions in order for their educational setting to be visited and contributions to the research unpicked. One of the participants had taken a full set of images in Black and White, another had taken images that provoked many questions and caused minor controversy, and the third was a teacher whom was a colleague at the time the research was conducted and therefore allowed me to explore my own educational context through an alternative lens. The chosen participants were also from different backgrounds and at different stages in their teaching careers, two were female and one male and all working in schools situated in the Thanet area of Kent.

Two sets of questions were asked. One set was in the form of a brief in which art teachers were to use to visually answer questions (Appendix G). The table below links these questions to both the literature and research questions:

Table 3: Questions / brief for art teachers and the links to literature and research questions.

Question / brief posed to art teacher	Links to literature, theory and theoretical framework	Link to Research Questions
1) Photograph an object in your classroom that you value highly	Artifact analysis opportunity provided. Given claims that 'Artifacts become data through the questions posed about them and the meanings assigned to them by the researcher' (2012: xvii). These objects may be used as prompts for further questions as well as highlighting stories of art teachers and the kind of objects that surround them and are meaningful.	MRQ and SRQ How is the ethos of a school affected by the way(s) art and design is valued?
2) Capture an image that demonstrates to you the value of art education for students	4.5 Notions of Value. Berger (2008) claims that 'images are more precise and richer than literature' (2008: 3) and Wiggins (2002) argues that at the heart of what is valued links to ideas of human 'need, want, desire' and preference (2002:5).	MRQ and SRQ How can the importance of these be seen?
3) Compose an image that you think effectively communicates art and design's place as a subject within your current school curriculum	Eisner claims that 'the arts' position in the school curriculum symbolises to the young what adults believe is important' (Eisner, E, 2002, The Arts and the Creation of Mind. What the Arts Teach and How It Shows, Yale University Press, pp.70 – 92). The intention of this photograph is to find out where art and design in perceived to stand in the current school curriculum and that individual school setting to answer questions surrounding its perceived importance and value to students and the wider school community.	MRQ and SRQ How is the ethos of a school affected by the way(s) art and design is valued? And How can the importance of these be seen?
4) Create an image that captures how you believe art as a subject taught in school relates to art practice outside of an educational environment / establishment.	Roege and Kim (2013) skills developed in the study of art and design link to overall engagement in learning and entrepreneurship. But how does the art and purpose differ?	SRQ How can the importance of these be seen?

5) Take an image that sums up what you enjoy most about teaching art and design.	'joy is not a term used much in the context of education, but if the arts are about anything, they are about how they make you feel in their presence' (Eisner, 2002: 84 – 85).	MRQ and SRQ How do art teachers feel they are, or are not, valued?
6) Capture and image that portrays how you think others (in general) view art and design as a subject in secondary school (how it may often be stereotyped).	Wicks inspired by Foucauldian theory, claims that it is possible to 'reveal the historically – viable social assumptions that mold people into various lifestyles, both as these forces tend to determine the basic attitudes of a social organization, as they tend to prescribe people an assortment of general self – conceptions' (2002: 199). It is interesting to attempt to gather a greater understanding of what these forces and attitudes may be in the social organization of the secondary school.	MRQ and all three SRQ's
7) An image that captures what you believe **is** at the heart (essence) of art education.	Efland (1979) states that there are three main theoretical stances taken by art educators, these are: 'Expressionist, Scientific Rationalist' and 'Reconstructivist' (1979: 45) The stance that a teacher takes in terms of what 'is' may be different to the following element of the brief concerning what 'should' be and the contrast between these will provide an interest comparison and / or contrast.	MRQ and SRQ's How is the ethos of a school affected by the way(s) art and design is valued? And How can the importance of these be seen?
8) An image that captures what you believe **should** be at the heart (the essence) of art education.	Eisner claims that there is 'no single sacrosanct version of the aims of art education' (2002:25). Finding out what art teachers believe *should* be at the heart of art education offers an insight into current interpretations of these versions.	MRQ and SRQ's How is the ethos of a school affected by the way(s) art and design is valued? And How can the importance of these be seen?
9) Photograph an object in your classroom that you think students value highly.	4.5 Notions of Value (how an object or artifact may indicate what is valued) Judgements made on value for students.	MRQ and SRQ How can the importance of these be seen?
10) Take an image that you think visually sums up any frustrations that you experience as an art teacher.	Addison and Burgess (2013) claimed that 'all art teachers…have very good reason to be more than usually concerned' (2013: 8). What are the current frustrations and	MRQ and how do art teachers feel they are, or are not, valued?
	concerns? Is there any basis to this claim?	

| 11) A *before* the classroom has been used shot. | Questions 11 and 12 have been included as a means of including visual representations of how an art classroom as a space is used and interacted with by students and teachers; learners, but also to indicate the pedagogical and philosophical ideals that may influence art teachers. The way that teachers chose to display their classrooms before and after use and their reasoning for this may offer insights into whether they fall into Efland's Expressionist, Scientific Rationalist or Reconstructivist framework. | MRQ |
| 12) An *after* the classroom has been used shot. | | MRQ |

The second set of questions were used loosely as a means of interviewing art teacher participants one-to-one, which involved asking about their own backgrounds and histories as art teachers, their visual responses to the brief and further general questions surrounding arts education. These questions were explored through semi-structured interview, allowing and ensuring that participants and interviewees had the room to explore other areas of conversation that they deemed important (Appendix H).

The focus group discussion was also based on a series of initial questions (Appendix I) and these were used as a prompt in order to lead the focus group, but also to encourage free dialogue and discussion amongst the participants. Most of these questions stemmed around analysis of the exhibition, the photographs taken and the potential impact and meanings that could be drawn from these. This would offer an opportunity to discuss shared experiences and narratives. In the following chapter the ethics of the research will be clarified, including how BERA guidelines (2018) have been adhered to, the samples have been chosen, participant consent and issues surrounding confidentiality will be considered, plus the use of others' images and narratives towards the answering of research questions.

Behaviour policy

In schools a behaviour policy is shared with students, often it is detailed on the school website, promoting expected behaviour for learning and implemented within the classroom in order to ensure that the classroom and learning environment remains a positive and safe space. This behaviour policy usually ties in with a whole school reward and sanctions system. Research ethics is in many respects setting out a behaviour policy, code and conduct for myself as researcher and also for the research participants. MacGrath (1998) argues that 'relationships are the core of teaching (1998: v) and that any successful behaviour policy should centre around the reduction of conflict, claiming that students will feel at ease in the classroom if they 'know what to expect, feel valued and encouraged' and 'have support from and feel accepted by peers' (1998: 2). MacGrath highlights the need for a recognition of limits, with an understanding that these may change, yet always maintaining clear ground rules (Ibid). This focus on the development of relationships and what could essentially be described as trust, between teacher and student is something that may be replicated between researcher and research participants. This section deals with how an understanding and adherence to research ethics, alongside the communication of important issues such as confidentiality with participants, will underpin research. Below (Fig. 14) is a photograph captured by Alice, a participant who decided to share an image of her whiteboard. This displays her own attempt at classroom management as a means of promoting behaviour for learning, using a popular culture themed framework, stating 'don't be Darth, Be a Jedi,' whereby a list of warnings (sanctions) and expected behaviours are listed. Underneath each of these posters some student names have been written, with the addition of a very clear happy or sad face. The photograph was taken with the colour wheel stating 'stay in the lines' as the focal point, however the other elements of the board captured in the frame prove equally as interesting.
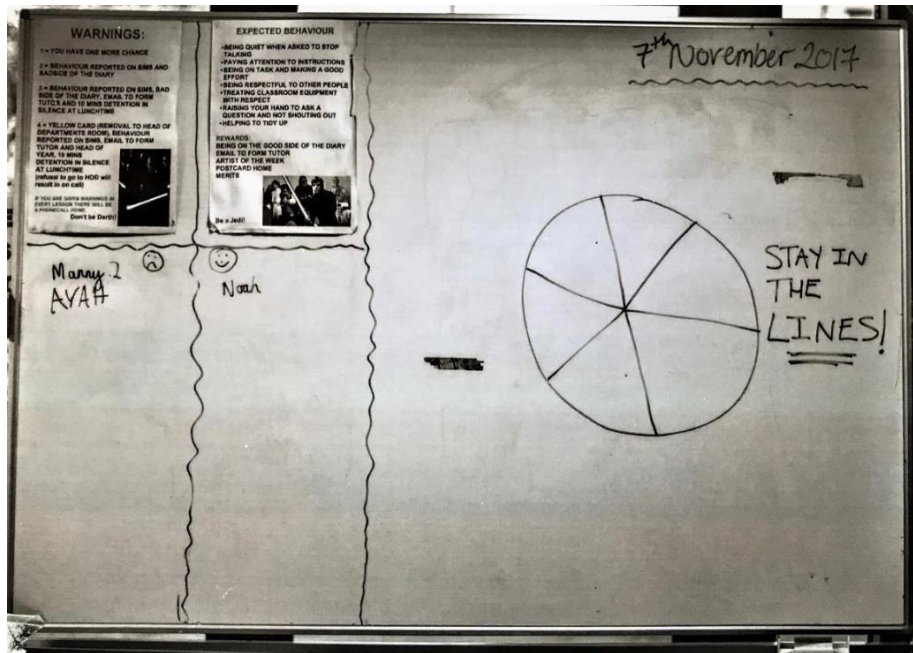
Fig. 14 Photograph submitted by research participant Alice

As with any research there are ethical implications, which have had to be considered, alongside certain guidelines applied when carrying out this study. This has been important when working with participants in schools so that both anonymity and confidentiality are not compromised.

Ethical issues involved with this particular study are identified as:

- Confidentiality / autonomy of individuals and schools

- Ownership of images / artwork(s)

- Sensitivity in the context of interviews / focus group discussions

- Using other people's narratives as data and insights towards the answering of research questions

Below I will explain the main ethical considerations involved in relation to this particular study and provide details as to how the above-identified ethical issues have been dealt with.

Secondary art teachers in Kent were invited to act as participants, capturing photographs in response to a particular brief. These images were exhibited and used for discussion amongst the teachers as a research focus group. Participants were given all relevant information and asked for written consent alongside contact details for any queries. Any information gathered through interviews or focus groups has been treated confidentially, remained anonymous and no staff or schools have been identified or named. Participants were given a consent form for the use of their images (Appendix J), information shared in the focus groups and individual semi – structured interviews and reminded that they may leave the research project at any time, without explanation. Participants were also provided with an information sheet, which stated the proposed dissemination of results (Appendix K).

The sample size was dependent upon how many chose to participate, however I anticipated working with around ten secondary schools across the Kent area. I also trialed my instruments through a pilot study, which was not included in the research study, however later the images provided in response to the photo-voice trial were, post receiving permission from the art teacher involved.

Participants were recruited through an invitation, initially to all schools that provided a secondary art provision in the Thanet area, but with a wider invitation to other schools in Kent that may be interested in becoming involved in the project. These schools were notified of the opportunity to participate via invitation to the head teacher in the form of an introductory letter, or through contact with the HOD or art teacher who would then gain permission from the head teacher of that particular school (Appendix L). Participants once informed were self – selecting.

In terms of steps taken to allow participants to retain control over audio-visual records and over their creative products and items of a personal nature, any audio recordings have only been conducted once ensuring that the participant has consented and read the participant information sheet provided and signed consent forms. They were reminded that all information and recordings were used only by the researcher for data analysis in relation to this particular research project and have been stored securely, safely and confidentially. Any artworks or photographs that were created in response to the given brief were used for the purpose of a collaborative exhibition, or to illuminate further depth in terms of individual case studies. Participants were made fully aware of the structure of the project and how the work was to be curated before production and the work was used only with their consent.

I ensured that each participant who submitted photographs for exhibition would have at least one photograph exhibited as a part of the overall set used for exhibition. Any de – selection of photographs was due to there being a high proportion of images of a similar type, no participant was de – selected from attending the focus group. Only a selection of participants were invited for a 1 – 2 – 1 interview, based on availability, school locality and setting, but mainly on the photographs which would benefit me as researcher gaining a deeper understanding and insight with regards to intended meaning.

As researcher I have submitted a review of ethics to the Ethics Committee associated with the relevant university (Appendix M) and received permission to carry out the research (Appendix N).

I signed a researchers declaration, ensuring that I am aware of my responsibility to comply with the requirements of the law, including the appropriate university guidelines relating to both the security and confidentiality of participant and other personal data.

According to the BERA guidelines for educational research, a researcher working within this field should ensure that there is consideration and ethic respect of 'The person, Knowledge, Democratic Values, The Quality of Educational Research' and 'Academic Freedom.' (BERA, 2018:4).

In terms of the participant in this particular research they will be active subjects (opposed to passive) where they will be treated 'fairly, sensitively, with dignity, and within an ethic of respect and freedom from prejudice regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, nationality, cultural identity, partnership status, faith, disability, political belief or any other significant difference' (BERA, 2018: 5) as stated by the guidelines in relation to responsibility to research participants.

Steps have been taken to ensure that participants are self – selecting and have voluntary informed consent, they will have fully understood the 'process in which they are to be engaged' and as researcher I have carefully considered the extent to which my own 'reflective research impinges on others, for example in the case of the dual role of teacher and researcher' (ibid). This has been even more prominent a consideration when reflecting upon my own professional context at the time and interviewing for a case study within this.

As per the BERA guidelines voluntary informed consent in relation the issues of openness and disclosure has been secured 'before research gets underway' (2018: 6) by visiting the participant teachers in their schools and both discussing and sharing letters of information and consent, plus the brief for the photovoice challenge. They were also notified of the 'right of any participant to withdraw from the research for any or no reason' (ibid).

In terms of privacy the data provided by participants will be securely stored in a way in which is compliant with the Data protection Act and remain both confidential and anonymous 'unless specifically and willingly waivered' (BERA, 2018: 7).

In relation to educational research there is an expectation and responsibility to the overall community of educational researchers. These are listed by BERA (2018: 12) as: ensuring there is protection of 'integrity and reputation' and not bringing the 'research into disrepute' by 'falsifying evidence or findings, sensationalising, exploiting, criticising…in a defamatory or unprofessional manner,' and recognising where there is a 'conflict of interest' (2018: 10).

The final consideration listed by BERA that is of relevance to this particular research links to the 'responsibility to seek to make public…results of…research' (ibid) which could potentially benefit other educational professionals in terms of knowledge within the field.

Kvale and Brinkman (2009) claim that there are many ethical considerations to be taken into account in the process of interviewing. These are identified as 'informed consent, confidentiality, consequences, and the researcher's role' (2009: 61). There are also the issues and responsibilities that arise from 'the value of the knowledge produced' in terms of 'social contributions' of a given research study, in that any new knowledge generated ought to be 'utilised…for the promotion of human welfare' (2009: 62). It is through seven research stages

that Kvale and Brinkman claim ethical issues may arise and should be considered carefully by the researcher. These stages are listed as: 'thematising, designing, interview situation, transcription, analysis, verification' and 'reporting' (2009: 63). I have used these stages to create the table below to explore these ethical issues in relation to this particular research

Table 4 - Table created from the work of Kvale and Brinkman (2009: 63) to explore ethical issues in relation to this research.

Research stages (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009)	Possible ethical issues,(Kvale and Brinkman, 2009)	Responses in research to identified ethical considerations
Thematising	Purpose of interview extending beyond that of scientific value in terms of improvements of human situation investigated	Photo voice brief and questions used by participants have been designed to allow them to explore the research questions as teachers, artists and researchers in their own right, they have collaborated to create work for a public exhibition and created new relationships as art teachers working in the local area; building contacts and support networks, and also offering value to the general public in terms of the artwork displayed and exhibition attended. The interviews have offered a safe space for art teachers to voice and share concerns and their narratives.
Designing	Design must include obtaining subjects' consent to participate, ensuring confidentiality and any possible consequences of the study	Consent gained and confidentiality upheld, with the right to withdraw from the study at any time clarified at all stages of involvement in the research.
Interview situation	Personal consequences of interaction in an interview (such as changes in understanding or recounting of stressful events)	Focus group discussion took place in a neutral gallery space following a private view of the participants work and I acted as the mediator and led the discussion, in any one-to-one interview situations these took place in the participants own school environment and familiar space and any potential for misunderstanding was always checked over with further questions or statements reiterated back to the participant. Participants could offer as little or as much information as they felt comfortable.
Transcription	Confidentiality and loyalty in transcription to interviewees oral account	Both confidentiality and loyalty to interviewees oral (and in this case, visual) accounts has been assured in transcriptions from recordings, but also with no editing or cropping having taken place in terms of photographs used as data.

Analysis	How the interview information is analysed and whether or not those interviewed have a say in terms of how their statements are interpreted	Participants have been interviewed with regards to photographs that they have taken and will explain the meanings behind these (thus having a direct say as to how this visual information is interpreted). Much of the analysis has been constructed and engaged in with the participants (such as meaning making constructed through focus group discussions) The conversations that are engaged with throughout any of the interview or research process have been recorded in either a research journal or transcribed and any statements that are referenced or used to inform the thesis participants are able to have access to and read upon request.
Verification	How critically an interviewee is questioned	Questions based on literature and informed by critical analysis of photographs taken by interviewee. Examples encouraged to be provided so knowledge and insights link to experience…Rolling claims that 'Art – based research' may be referred to as a 'king of validity' (2010:110).
Reporting	Confidentiality reporting private interviews in public and any consequences of a published report on individual participants or institutions fully considered.	When the focus group, one-to-one and case studies have been written up and transcribed I have been careful to ensure that names and identities of individuals and schools have remained anonymous and not been disclosed. Participants fully aware of the purpose of interviews and photographs gathered and any recordings have been securely kept on the researchers Dictaphone.

Another element of ethical concern were those issues that arose during the research, such as the management of emotion during an interview or the decompression process post interview. The emotional wellbeing of the participants, and also my own mental wellbeing, was under review at times throughout. There were points in the research process where participants became emotional in response to relaying anger and frustration they felt as a teacher of art and design, however the potential for this to be a therapeutic conversation with another professional who understood and the benefits of this largely outweighed any concern. The way in which post – focus group participants communicated that they would like to remain in touch with one another to continue to offer support, whether this be with practical tasks such as the moderation and standardisation of work or the sharing of resources, or just to be able to take some time to discuss their everyday experiences as teachers with others, suggested that

the sharing of thoughts and feelings was of benefit to them, even if at times further difficult emotions came to the fore. There were times in the research process where I personally struggled, getting caught up in the negative experiences art teachers were sharing with me as researcher, or hearing upsetting stories of undervalue. However this whole process enabled me to empathise with participants, and also acted as a reminder to take a step back and look further objectively at the data before me, balancing this with the positive elements of teaching art and design such as celebrating the students work and achievements and the resilience that art teachers were demonstrating. An example of a time in which I was led to question the implications of the research on participants was when I was told during a 1 – 2 – 1 interview that the participant was wishing to leave the profession for a new challenge due to the difficulties that they were facing in their current school. Taking part in the project may have amplified her dissatisfaction, encouraging further reflection upon difficulties faced, however issues such as these were overcome with active listening, without judgement. Offering support to one another and being heard became of paramount importance. This in turn led to questions surrounding whether acting as a participant overrode my identity as researcher and vice – versa. In the BERA (2018) guidelines it is stated that there should be a recognition of ways in which when conducting auto / ethnographic research we 'may be collaborators or colleagues in the research process' which may be in either a passive or active sense (2018: 12) and that there ought to be 'an important consideration [to the] extent to which a researchers reflective research into their own practice infringes upon others' (2018: 19). A careful balance to remain mindful of and negotiate.

The following subchapters will focus upon the chosen research methodologies (already highlighted previously in 5.1: Research design) in further depth, with considerations of the ethical guidelines and implications stated in this chapter as the foundation for conducting, analysing, transcribing and documenting the research and findings.

5.3 Auto – ethnography and Biography as Research

My own creative practice

In my role as teacher I try and ensure that I share my own practice with students whenever possible. Often this may just be through the production of an exemplar during a lesson, however in the past I have also experimented with keeping a piece of artwork that is a work in progress that I will work on over a longer period of time in the corner of the classroom, adding to this throughout free periods, or before / after the school teaching day. If I have exhibited work I have shared this with students where appropriate. Most recently I have been exploring developing my printmaking and used the outcomes of this with Y9 students who embark on a short printmaking module as part of a wider rotation within their art and design lessons. One of the research participants who informs one of the case studies referenced later in this thesis, Simon, has been named 'The Artist Teacher' due to the way in which he uses a corner of his classroom as his studio space, integrating his identities of artist and art teacher physically in a singular space. This section will explore the ways in which an auto-ethnographic and biographical approach permeates this research and chosen methodologies, I am present throughout, whether this be as an artist, a researcher, a teacher or a mother. The lino-print below (Fig. 15) was one of the pieces of work created as an exemplar for a Y9 lesson, but also one in which allowed me to explore and experiment with mixed – methods in printmaking, linking another of my hobbies in my personal life with my lived – experience as a classroom teacher. These kinds of artworks are often a conversation starter with students, they appeal to the curious in that they hint at a biography which extends beyond the borders of the classroom.

Fig. 15 My mixed media printmaking used as an exemplar for Y9 (2020)

As already mentioned, during this section I will be highlighting the reasons as to why auto-ethnography and biography is indispensable to the overall methodology of this research. Savin – Baden and Major (2013) explain how working from an auto-ethnographical and biographical approach enables a researcher to explore on an 'in-depth level, personal and social views and values' and it is often 'personal stories that connect them to the research they are undertaking' (2013: 234). There is no doubt that the reason for studying the research questions that I have developed is based in my own connection and interest in the subject matter, which in turn has also heavily influenced the scoping process in terms of the literature. As an art teacher working in a secondary school I cannot separate myself from research questions such as: How are art teachers valued? I have also clearly stated previously in chapter 2: Positionality Statement, as to how my own biography and experiences, both through my professional life as a teacher and my personal life further generally, tethers the elements underpinning this research together, whilst also tethering me as researcher to it.

Merill and West (2009) claim that:

> 'biography enables us to discern patterns but also distinctiveness in lives. The relationship
>
> between the particular and general, uniqueness and commonality, is in fact a central issue
>
> in biographical research' (2009: 2).

When working within the profession being researched and being driven by a desire to understand more about this context, the element of biography is an inherent foundation upon which this research is built, however in acting as researcher, alongside fellow artist and teacher when collating the data, whether it be in the form of images, information or stories and narratives shared by the participants, there is also the need to be reflexive of the relationships between the particular and general and uniqueness and commonality, in respect of both my own potential influence, but also when drawing out themes and issues as they arise from the research participants. The 'term "auto / biography'' was coined to draw attention to the, inter – relationship between the constructions of one's own life through autobiography and the construction of the life of another through biography' (Merill and West, 2009 : 42). The relationship between self, other and the telling of stories is highlighted by Riessman (1993) when explaining how 'individuals become the autobiographical narratives by which they tell about their lives' and 'these private constructions typically mesh with a community of life stories, deep structures about the nature of life itself' (1993: 2).

When analysing and interpreting the photographs offered in response to the photovoice brief undertaken by participants, beyond the initial phases of description, I will be using my autobiography to date in order to draw out meanings, however intended meanings will not be confirmed until they are further negotiated during a focus group discussion, or confirmed through one-to-one interviews. One of the interesting elements of digital photography is that it is relatively instant, some of the participants' photographs will have been captured

instantaneously when the appropriate or relevant moment arises and others will have constructed a frame and composition with careful consideration in an attempt to visually communicate the meaning or message intended to be conveyed. Taking part in the photovoice brief myself is a visual autobiography in the making, a series of photographs which visually represent the ways in which I was thinking and feeling about the subject matter at that point in time, with an acceptance that things change with time, is a snapshot of our professional and inner lives, for both myself and the participants, which may be viewed later though a different lens and with a varying perspective. Some of the one-to-one interviews occurred months post the exhibition of photographic responses which meant that new ideas and reflections could be added to the visual prompts of these moments captured. Merill and West (2009) highlight that 'feminist researchers sought to build equal relationships between interviewer and interviewee' (2009 : 40) which may have been successfully achieved through the way in which I too could share my own lived experiences as an artist and teacher of art and design, plus my involvement and contribution to the photographic exhibition. There is the need here to be aware of bias however, as identified by Merill and West (2009) there is the danger of 'only seeing what we want to see or only hearing material that speaks to our present needs' (2009: 110). In an attempt to ensure that this does not become an issue which may disrupt the reliability and validity of the findings I will be recording using a Dictaphone, with informed participant consent, as this will allow me to concentrate on active listening and allow time to construct considered responses and questions based on semi – structured questions, but also following the direction and tangents that the interviewee deems important to discuss. The use of a Dictaphone also allows for the interview to be returned to multiple times and transcribed accurately, this enables time and space for self – reflection and awareness in terms of my own potential bias to what has been shared.

There are many potential issues that can arise as a result of switching roles in this manner, moving from a researcher analsying data for example, or recording observations to

acknowledging oneself as a participant. When interpreting data Savin – Baden and Major (2013: 453) claim that there must be an 'acknowledgement of subjectivity' and in this particular case as a researcher I cannot remain indifferent to the subject matter, as a participant I also will not be working from an objective angle. Rather I will be working from a feminist perspective and embracing subjectivity, as summarised by Formenti and West (2018) 'the human condition is about learning to use and trust our perspectives, even if we will never be able to grasp reality itself, or to fully trust our knowledge of it' (2018: 231). Accepting the relativity and 'tentative nature of research' (Savin – Baden and Major, 2013: 483) is another common issue when interpreting data; whose story is being told? Is it my experience and what I bring to the analysing and interpretation of the data, or is it a representation of the participants? Perhaps the answer lies in a negotiating between the two, in that in – between space. This is where the importance of reflexivity and the keeping of a research journal enables moments for self – consciousness and offering space for deeper understanding of the interrelationship between not only researcher and participant, but in this case also the connection and overlap between my role as researcher and a participant in my own research. Findings through analysis are not renegotiated, but mutually constructed and due to the multifaceted nature of the data gathered itself, but also my own movement from researcher to participant acceptance of viewpoints shifting and changing and dwelling in the messiness of the process remains key. When analysing data from the perspective of an insider or as a participant myself there is the danger of oversimplifying themes and meaning, creating codes and applying catagories which fit with my own understanding of the subject area researched, opposed to letting the data speak for itself. This is where the use of thinkers such as Feldman (1994) and the use and construction of frameworks by which to analyse will provide enough structure to comfortably allow for the less easily understood elements of the data to emerge for further exploration. Ultimately, whether acting in the role of researcher or participant art teacher, this research and the chosen methods of data analysis are not about passive observation or neutral objectivity, but rather relies upon the acceptance of lived – experiences, the embracing of meaning generated from

subjective autobiographical accounts and acknowledging positionality through a reflexive lens. One of the learnings from working through a/r/tographical means is to be able to accept multiple roles, the shifting between or merging of that of artist, researcher and teacher and the ability to dwell in the liminal spaces in – between these identities and roles. The open acknowledgement of this strengthens my study. With regards to influence on findings and how this approach may inform future practice there are three main elements to consider, the first is that understandings are mutually constructed, due partially to the space created through flexibility in terms of roles assumed, the acceptance of viewpoints shifting and changing and a willingness to dwell in the messiness of the process means to approach findings with an open – mind but also to accept the relative nature which accompanies change. The third consideration is the act of acknowledging lived – experience opposed to passive observation, something which, as a teacher of art and design is arguably inescapable, but also heavily influences both findings and future practice within the context of this research in an overwhelmingly positive sense.

The images and photographs used throughout this research project, alongside the glimpses into both my own and interviewee's lives, both professional and personal all generate stories and reveal experiences that begin to create a narrative. Merill and West (2009) explain how when a researcher is reading transcripts they may look for 'shared experiences and patterns which connect across the transcripts so that the individual stories become collective ones' (2009: 144). Despite my role as researcher I feel that there is space and opportunity in this research for collaboratively generating meaning with participants as ideas, feelings and issues are clarified, mapped and negotiated through discussion, using both image and word.

Riessman (2008) claims that 'individuals and groups construct identities through storytelling' (2008: 8) In certain respects I am moving from my own personal narrative and experiences as

an artist, researcher and teacher through to observing, listening and reflecting upon others' and through the use of methods such as the exhibition and focus groups where images are discussed and interpreted, identities and stories are constructed collaboratively. As expressed by Merill and West (2009) it is perhaps often the case that as researchers 'we are seeking answers inside ourselves and experience can be a source of data and a means to understand and empathise better with the other but also ourselves' (2009: 110). Reissman (2008) also clarifies how in the case of visual communication 'reading an image closely and responding to details is essential to visual narrative analysis' (2008: 114), arguing that 'visual analysis pushes the boundaries of narrative and narrative analysis,' however recognises that 'stories can be found in moments' (2009: 145). Riessman uses the example of a photographer named Jo Spence, who captured her experience of Breast Cancer treatment in England during the 1980's. This photography project represents an approach that I have found great comfort in also, which reaffirmed the decision to use photovoice as a research methodology, but also illustrates the ways in which our own biography and experiences cannot be easily separated from our research if exploring subject matter which is a part of our everyday lives, as teaching, arts education and identifying as an artist is to me.

The way in which I have used a research journal and sketchbook and included my own photographic responses to the brief is also an auto-ethnographic and biographic method, by which to reflect. Savin-Baden and Major (2013) explain how auto-ethnographers 'draw upon their experiences, stories and self – narratives to examine and connect with the social context' and it uses the 'researchers' own experiences to consider and examine interactions between their self and others' (2013: 206). I am intentionally accepting my own contribution to the research and also building on Merill and West's (2009) argument for 'bringing the researcher, and processes of relationships, into the research frame' opposed to 'pretending, as many researchers do, that our interests and ways of making sense of others is, or should be, divorced from the people and experiences we are' (2009: 5).

Custer (2014) claims that autoethnography is 'a transformative research method because it changes time, requires vulnerability, fosters empathy, embodies creativity and innovation, eliminates boundaries, honours subjectivity, and provides therapeutic benefits' (2014: 1). This list of features or benefits of this method are not dissimilar to concepts that we may associate with experiences of engaging in the arts. In fact Custer also claims that autoethnography is 'a creative process. It is an artistic tool of deep inquiry' (2014: 6).

In terms of validity and reliability I will be triangulating methods which will enable data to be analysed from a variety of perspectives, using instruments and tools which create opportunities to analyse the narratives of others, whilst also being reflexive and accepting where and how my biography has shaped the research and findings. As identified by Grey and Malins (2004):

'the advantages of the practitioner – researcher role are compelling: your "insider'' knowledge, experience and status usually lends your research credibility and trustworthiness in the eyes of your peers [in that you are not working from the viewpoint of an] external researcher [and also in seeking the views of others within the profession] 'which will invariably be subjective, we can develop inter-subjective views, which are less likely to be one-sided' (2004: 23).

Eisner (2002) reminds us that 'form influences meaning and much of what needs to be understood and conveyed needs a narrative more than it needs a number (2002: 210). The other qualitative methods used, alongside auto-ethnography and recognition of biography will be explored throughout the following chapters, starting with the use of a research journal and sketchbook. Ortlipp (2008) writes about the benefits of using a reflective research journal and this will be returned to further in the next section, however in relation to autoethnography there is the recognition expressed that recording in this way can enable the recognition of 'baggage

as a researcher'(2008: 702) and a means by which to enact 'research as an individual with particular personal experiences, desires, and ways of looking at the world' (ibid, 700).

5.3.1Research Journal and Notes

Sketchbooks

The keeping of a sketchbook is integral to many art students and artists' experiences and the keeping of a research journal as a creative document has been equally as fundamental for the recording and analysis of findings within the context of this research. It has been a space where I can note down ideas as they emerge, whether this be through word or image, or most commonly a combination of both. Some insights and responses have been disposable and others deeply personal, however all have been useful. This has been a place to reflect alongside record, much like the sketchbook is to students when developing ideas as a part of a project. The photograph below (Fig. 16) was captured by Alex, an artist teacher research participant, in response to questions surrounding an object in which he felt that students value highly within the art and design classroom.

Fig. 16 Photograph of students sketchbooks captured by Alex in response to Q2

Grey and Malins (2004) detail how important reflection is and how 'reflection – in – action is a particular professional activity of professional practitioners and involves thinking about what we are doing and reshaping action whilst we are doing it' (2004: 22). Because so much of this type of reflection identified by Grey et al takes place as a teacher, artist and researcher I have felt the need to document it in order to critically reflect back. This has led to the keeping of a research journal, or 'reflective journal' and sketchbook. Grey et al claim that 'reflective journaling can provide a purposeful process and framework for…developments' due to the way in which 'knowing about professional practice is dynamic and demands a complementary method of capturing that dynamism which is flexible, responsive, improvisational, reflexive' (2004: 59). The other reason for recording and reflecting in this manner is highlighted by Ortlipp (2008) when claiming that 'reflective journals' can be 'used in engaging with the notion of creating transparency in the research process' (2008: 696). Using the methodology and within the theoretical framework of this research, transparency is a important factor. Ortlipp also argues that the keeping of a reflective journal is a 'way of making…history, values and assumptions open to scrutiny' (2008: 698) and in her own work this is not as a means of attempting to control bias, but rather as a means of being honest with the reader. Other benefits of keeping a reflective journal throughout the research process have been identified by Ortlipp (2008) as the following:

- Clarification of research aims, in the sense that 'ontological, epistemological and methodological' questions are explored and asked (2008: 699 – 700).

- A means of working through own personal experiences, desires, ways of looking at the world and 'implications of the chosen framework' (ibid, 700).

- Using critical reflection as 'a way of considering the ethics of the power – knowledge relationship with participants; (ibid, 702).

- A means of 'bringing the unconscious into consciousness and thus open up for inspection' (ibid, 703).

I have listed these findings by Ortlipp (2008) as I think that they are all relevant to the reasoning behind my own decision to keep a reflective research journal, notes and sketchbook. Another element of documenting thoughts, ideas, findings and reflections in this format that is highly appealing to me derives from elements of a/r/tographic research methods, explained further in the next Chapter 5.3.2 Arts – based research methods, A/r/tography, Photovoice and Liminality in relation to the work of Irwin. The keeping of a research journal, notes and sketchbook throughout the research journey has been a way for me to explore the identities of artist, researcher and teacher and the liminal spaces that may be occupied in – between these. Providing a means for reflection through a creative process and exploration of both image and word.

One of the many benefits of keeping a research journal is that they are always readily available to document findings and ideas as the research progresses and they also provide an interesting source upon which to reflect, both in the moment of interaction and at a later date. This is in many respects similar to an artist's sketchbook, in that it is an ongoing document where ideas, insights, reflections and rough / fluid sketches occur, notes that are to be returned to at a later date to explore further and refine.

Delacruz and Bales (2010) explain how 'artists' sketchbooks, drawings, writing, and other material tend to be assembled in chronological order of their making and / or finding, rather than reassembled page-by-page for specific purposes, as scrapbooks or professional portfolios' (2010: 36) may be. This is the case for the sketchbooks and research journals used to record ideas, insights, observation and findings throughout the research process. Delacruz and Bale also describe sketchbooks as 'artful repositories of images, curiosities, quests, journeys, and life narratives' (ibid).

Gray and Malins (2017) note the advantages, functions and disadvantages of keeping a reflective / research journal and sketchbook. In terms of the former the definition of the act of 'reflecting journaling' is provided as that 'which goes beyond the use of the sketchbook in that it is a much more structured and deliberate research method' concerned with extending 'professionalism' and a way in which to have 'effective conversations with ourselves' (2007: 113). The advantages are listed as: 'a comprehensive store of…thought and action, with evidence and example' forming an 'important part of a portfolio of research' and 'evidence' (2007: 114) which can be interacted with and reflected upon frequently. Disadvantages are acknowledged as the potential for this document to be idiosyncratic in nature, with main value as merely a reflective tool (ibid). In terms of the sketchbook the suggested advantages are 'availability / accessibility' and a 'non-preciousness – a space for experimental thought,' the 'capacity for tracking developments over time' and a space for 'reflective / analytical' thought (2017: 111).

In Paul Klee's Pedagogical Sketchbook (Klee, 1953) we may witness a course planned out with a series of sketches, symbols and text inspired by his observations of life. An introduction and translation is provided by Maholy-Nagy (1953) and in the concluding comments it is stated that 'guiding Klee through his adventures in seeing, is the line in action. The dot, extended into a graphic curve, cannot come to rest on the last page of the Sketchbook. It urges on to further explorations, both in space and spirit' (1972: 32). The notion of 'adventures in seeing' (ibid) invokes inspiration in terms of a way of approaching research, learning and visual recording. The way in which Tom Phillips (2005) creates works that combine both image and text has inspired the way in which I have interacted with both a sketchbook and research journal and the literature and articles engaged with. Alongside texts, the backgrounds for pages in the sketchbook and journal that I have been using throughout the research process have been created using the discarded paper that students have worked on, evidencing the left over marks and development stage of the creative journey. This was a way for me to link my thinking back

to the context of the art classroom, but I also find the starting point of anything but a blank page inspiring. As stated by Grey and Malins (2004) 'if the journal is truly reflective then it is not a precious, self – conscious object, but an interactive device' (2004: 59). This document acts as a means of providing a space where reflections in the form of notes, annotations, drawings, collage, photographs and collections of longer pieces of narrative and biographic writing can intuitively and playfully be recorded, then returned to at any point during the research process and further systematically analysed. Some of these insights and reflections would not necessarily imply the same meaning as when they were recorded, in many instances notes and sketches that at the time were seemingly inconsequential resolved to mean more in retrospect than initially anticipated.

To return to the work and findings of Ortlipp (2008) we are made aware of the ways in which the keeping of a research journal / sketchbook when used as a reflective document, can 'make the messiness of the research process visible to the researcher who can then make it visible to those who read the research' (2008:704) which goes against the notion of the linear research process, but also creates an honest and transparent perspective. The ways that creative documents have been kept in order to record, organise, critically analyse and make findings transparent, leads to the importance of arts- based research methods to this research, such as a/r/tography and photo – voice, which in the next section will be further clarified.

5. 3. 2 - Arts-based Research Methods , A/r/tography, Photo-voice and Liminality in relation to the work of Irwin

Taking a line for a walk

During my own arts education I was offered the experience of 'taking a line for a walk' and remember it being a great way of pushing us, the students, out of our comfort zone. This is since something that I deliver now to students. I ask them to select an implement in which to mark – make and then walk the line across a large sheet of paper spread out across multiple tables, or the floor. When their line meets another line it can dance or converse and communicate. I find that students often verbally talk to each other whilst their lines converse and they tend to start off with a small and deliberate line and end with free and loose movements as they begin to open up and enjoy what at first feels perhaps a little uneasy. One of the arts – based methods discussed in this section that has been highly influential in the creation of a research methodology is a/r/tography. The notion of walking is often used as 'both a mode of inquiry and a metaphor for a/r/tography' (Lee, Morimoto, Mosavarzadeh and Irwin, 2019: 682). One of the reasons that walking is used as a means of engaging with and understanding the principles of a/r/tography is that it 'resonates with the processes and methodological concepts [because] it produces knowledge that is not already categorised' (ibid). When facilitating the 'taking a line for a walk' lesson with students the learning is ambiguous, but the change in their approach to the classroom space and the ways in which they challenge their own limitations and venture out of their comfort zones, both through the type of lines and marks made on the paper, but also in their interactions with peers in this process, is clear. Throughout this section the arts- based research methods used, alongside a/r/tography will be clarified and explored. The image below (Fig. 17) captures the aftermath of a 'taking a line for a walk lesson.'
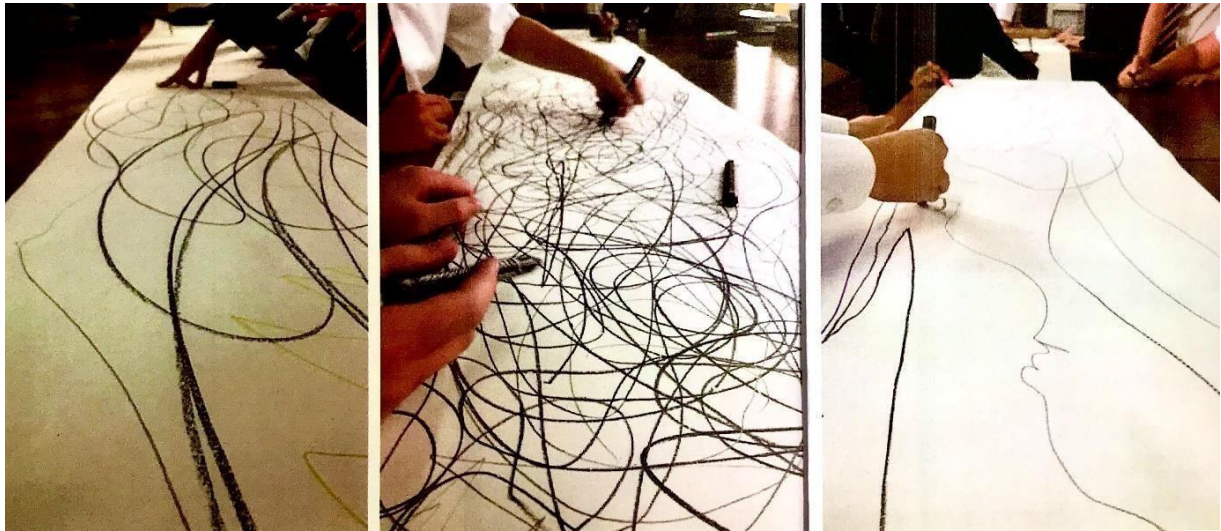
Fig. 17 Photograph of a 'taking a line for a walk' lesson in action

Arts-based research methods, with a particular focus on a/r/tography, have informed a large body of the insights in which both this study and chosen research methodologies are based. A/r/tography has been conceptualised by LeBlanc, Davidson, Ryn and Irwin (2015) as 'an intellectual formation that operates on multiple registers of sensation in combination with a continuity of movement that is not measurable or easily defined' (2015: 370). On a conceptual level it may be difficult to define due to the way in which when it comes to a/r/tographical approaches 'theory is no longer an abstract concept but rather an embodied living inquiry, an interstitial relational space for creating, teaching, learning, and researching in a constant state of becoming' (Irwin, 2006: 71). A/r/tography has both informed and become an integral part of this research, whilst also enabling myself to explore the relationship between the identities of artist, researcher and teacher. LaJevic and Springgay (2008) explain how 'A/r/tography is an arts – based research methodology that enquires into educational phenomenon through artistic and aesthetic means' (2008:7), they also go on to break down the acronym and given name 'a/r/tography' to 'A' meaning art – making, 'R' referring to researching and the 'T' as teaching (2008 : 71).

I will be using photo-voice as a data-gathering instrument with art teachers in a way that encourages them to draw insights from the in-between spaces of artist, researcher and teacher. Photo-voice has been described by Berg (2004) as a research method which

> 'allows participants to define themselves, their families, their work, and anything else that can be focused through the viewfinder of a camera. Because these photographs are then discussed with others, they provide a means by which others can share the meanings participants attach to the people, scenes, objects, and situations captured in the photographs' (2004 : 206).

Photographs will be taken in response to a series of research questions designed to aid in the contribution towards a greater understanding of the wider research questions related to how art teachers are valued, how the value of art can currently be seen in the context of the curriculum, who in the school community appears and claims to value art and how a schools ethos may be affected by the way(s) art is valued.

Working with art teachers as participants, alongside my own critical reflections as an artist, researcher and teacher, has meant that to a certain degree an arts-based approach to the collection and organisation of data has leant itself to ways of working that rest upon the familiar, allowing those involved to work with a means of communication that played to all of our strengths. With this underpinning confidence in relation to the visual, complex and challenging issues and questions could be raised through entailing discussion and discourse. The arts – based activities and approaches used to collate findings can be listed as the following:

- The use of a visual and written research journal, with sketches and notes to record constantly evolving ideas, feelings and insights as the research progresses.

- Visual mind mapping including in the form of sketchbook and film footage to both demonstrate and explore the key concepts and ideas that underpin the research.

- Photo – voice exercise. Art teachers and I recording responses to a series of 12 research questions through imagery; photographs.

- Photographs taken by art teachers exhibited in a local art gallery (The Turner Contemporary in Margate, Thanet) in an exhibition entitled 'A/r/tographic Photo-voices and Artefacts.' The works created by art teachers and curated by researcher.

A large part of my research findings are based upon an exhibition whereby art teachers have collaborated to create work in response to themes that may allude to a picture of art education presently. Providing teachers with the opportunity to act as a/r/tographers in their own school settings, reflecting and uncovering ideas that have the potential to develop into seeds of change. In this instance the camera has become voice and the outcomes a series of statements. A focus group discussion scheduled during the private view meant that the images also acted as a means of prompting further conversation and relevant questions and insights into the lives and narratives of a select group of art teachers. As a researcher I was also a part of this group, an insider, completing the task alongside colleagues in both my own school setting and a diverse range of surrounding schools within the geographical location of Kent. Irwin (2006) describes the process whereby 'relational aesthetics' can be used to 'erode marginalization as the role of artist is shifted to become facilitator, mediator and / or creative contributor within a community' (2006: 72).

The questions posed to art teachers for them to answer using the camera as voice were open. The schools involved I visited and talked informally to art teachers, answering any questions that they had but being careful not to influence their responses. The twelve questions that acted as a loose brief for photographs ranged from 'photograph an object in your classroom that you value highly' to 'an image that captures what you believe *should* be at the heart (the essence)

of art education' to a simple before and after shot of their classrooms (Appendix F). Because art teachers were aware that the ultimate destination of the photographs was an art gallery there was a pressure felt for the images to be 'artistic' enough. When meeting with teachers this was a theme that came up several times when teachers were asking questions about the project, the concern that the photographs were not simply to be used to inform research, but they also had a function and purpose as 'art' in their own right. This in itself has prompted many questions surrounding the purpose and function of engagement in artistic activity.

Although in many respects providing a host of complications, the arts-based approach may provide resolutions to some of the issues that often arise when subjectivity and reflexivity act as the core of a qualitative research methodology (such as the one proposed throughout this study). Mruck and Breuer (2003) identify that we ought to take into account the inter-subjective influences on research outcomes and claim that

> 'even in many empirical studies, by explicitly taking constructionist perspectives,
>
> the researcher – inter-acting, choosing, pre-supposing, sympathetic – become
>
> invisible in favour of mirroring 'the other,' the object, the phenomenon...research
>
> results resemble photographs that apparently need neither camera nor
>
> photographer to exist' (2003 : 193).

In this study a number of photographers, artists, professionals, teachers, have existed capturing photographs that alongside discussion and interpretation attempt to answer research questions. The range of phenomenon highlighted through the production of images by art teachers has illuminated many desire lines and openings. Springgay (2012) clarifies that by engaging in living inquiry the researcher must dwell 'in a space of inquiry that resists formal naming' with a 'willingness to allow for discomfort, frayed edges, and holes' (2012:901) which can be presented and explored by the a/r/tographer; 'their questions, practices, emergent

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understandings, and creative analytic texts as they integrate knowing, doing, and making through artistic experiences that convey meaning rather than facts' (2012:903).

Rolling (2010) situates arts-based research models as 'post-positivist and epistemically anti-foundational in an era still dominated by traditional scientific research' and argues that as a result 'they provide a framework for reconceptualising curriculum and related educational research' (2010:110). Although stated several years ago, Rolling establishes that this scientific rationalism is still a preferred research methodology, which may well be down to the way in which validity and reliability can be further easily distinguished when research methodologies fall into this category, however it is also suggested that with arts-based research a 'king of interpretative validity' (ibid) may be deployed. Taylor and Siegesmund (2018) explain how arts - based research is often subject to 'critical voices that attend to concerns that' it 'may not be ''scholarly'' enough, on the one hand, or ''artistic'' enough, on another' (2018: 5).

Savin – Baden and Major (2013) make the link between arts – based research and one of the proposed purposes of art practice, explaining how

'just as art is designed to challenge and prompt questions in the viewer or audience, so too does the arts - based researcher use the media to not only create artifacts, but also to use these artifacts as a means of understanding and examining the experiences of the participants and researcher involved in the arts – based approach' (2013: 289).

There is much comparison to be made between recognized qualitative research methods and the process of working through and realising ideas and outcomes as an artist. This is something that is similarly recognized by Bresler (2006), who explains how 'artistic experiences, as well as the experiences of researchers engaging in research, include ways of doing (which are

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inevitably about becoming)' and these 'ways of doing and becoming…are characterized by dialogical processes that occur during aesthetic encounter' (2006: 54). The concept of 'becoming' is something that is of great interest to me. Here I find myself reminded of the subtle links between previously examined philosophical notions found in the work of many phenomenologist thinkers, such as Heidegger's (1971) concept of Dasein and Shutz and Weber's (1932) notion of Verstehen. The philosophy and thinking of Maurice Merleau – Ponty appears to have had a considerable influence on the development of a/r/tography and its founders, the hermeneutics of bringing truth into being which proceeded existentialist thought, such as Satre and the idea of existence proceeding essence. Deleuze's work on 'becoming' and Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) concept of 'Rhizome' is something that Irwin et al (2006) refer to as a means of situating thinking in an a/r/tographic research project carried out in 2006 entitled 'The City of Richgate' (2006:70-88) where rhizomatic relations to a/r/tography as a methodology are explored and where 'together the arts and education compliment, resist, and echo one another through rhizomatic relations of living enquiry' (2006:70). In 'A thousand Plateaus : Capitalism and Schizophrenia' Deleuze and Guattari (1988) claim that 'there are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree or root' (1988:8) but rather 'a rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles' (1988:7). An example of puppet strings is provided which aids in our understanding of the multiplicity of rhizome when Deleuze and Guattari (1988) explain how 'puppet strings, as a rhizome or multiplicity, are not tied to the supposed will of an artist or puppeteer but to a multiplicity of nerve fibres, which form another puppet in other dimensions connected to the first' (1988:8). Many of the ideas espoused by Deleuze and Guattari (1988) can clearly be associated with the work of Foucault (1972) and have been inspired by his Archaeology of Knowledge and his break away from Cartesian rationality, as stated by Deleuze and Guttari 'we are no more familiar with scientificity then we are with ideology; all we know are assemblages' and 'there is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of

representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author). Rather an assemblage establishes connections between certain multiplicities' (1988:23). This concern and accounting for multiplicity and the myriad of influences, representations, interpretations, understandings, narratives and meanings is something which is central to my main selected arts – based research methodology of a/r/tography.

Spencer (2011) claims that in art – based research methods there are often 'narrative themes structure and sequence' which are 'visual as well as language – based texts' working from and with 'an ideological or ethnocentric perspective' (2011: 52). Spencer refers to the visual research work of Philo (1989) who used a 'series of 12 still photographs depicting scenes from the 1984 – 85 miners' strike' whereby the visual images were used as a prompt to analyse people's perceptions in response. Spencer argues that studies such as these encourage 'creative use of visual materials' in which have the potential to 'explore the process of attributing meaning to visual cues' (Spencer, 2011: 53).

Like Philo, I will be using photographs as a means of representing a select group of people, in this case art teachers, but also to provoke discussion and debate about the issues surrounding the current difficulties and challenges faced within secondary school art education. With photographs being exhibited in a local world – class art gallery space members of the public will also interact with the images produced by art teachers. This may arguably influence the responses provided, as teachers will be aware that their images are to be witnessed by an audience, which may indirectly influence chosen visual communication when answering the series of questions posed. There is also the issue of curation and how and why images are selected for exhibition, this consideration has been explored previously in 5.1 Research design. These are of course multi-layered questions of intention and interpretation. Treadaway (2009) claims that the 'physical act of collecting imagery through photography, making sketches or

gathering material objects requires a selective process in which an assessment is made of the appropriateness or value of the item or image' (2009: 235).

In relation to photography Brown (2011) analyses the role of photography as documentary and discourse, where the work of Szarkowski, a curator at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, has been used to identify the relationship between curatorial decisions and discourse. Brown identifies that Szarkowski's understanding of the approach to the process of constructing a photograph can be summarised as the following: 'The thing itself (the subject), the detail (the small but significant and meaningful elements of the picture), the frame (the boundaries of the picture that determine what is included), Time (shutter speed, selection of movement or freezing motion)' and 'vantage (where to stand in relation to the subject, how close, how far, how low and how high, to one side or another)' (Brown, 2011: 209). Brown (2011) claims that

'unlike working with formal or informal interviewing techniques, with listening and participating in conversations and the ebb and flow of the dialogue, or with observations and research that are going to be transcribed into spoken, and above all written language in monographs and journal articles, photographing means looking for the visual. You are using a different part of the brain and a quite different mind-set' (2011: 209 – 2010).

As lead researcher I will be reading into the images taken by art teachers, but the art teachers themselves, as researchers, will also be using this mindset noted by Brown (2011) to make key decisions on what to photograph.

Decisions will not only be surrounding what to photograph, but the participants, artists and teachers will also 'need to identify which of the photographs they believe most accurately reflect their concerns and issues or which photographs best depict their views' whilst also

sharing 'stories about their photographs' offering 'accounts about the photographs, why they were taken, what the image means to the individuals, and what they intended the photographs to depict. This element really adds the "voice''(Berg, 2004:206).

It has been stated that 'to live the life of an artist who is also a researcher and teacher is to love a life of awareness, a life that permits openness to the complexity around us, a life that intentionally sets out to perceive things differently (Irwin, 2004:33). I am anticipating that through both my own engagement with arts-based research and that of fellow teachers we will collaboratively 'permit' this 'openness' and start, as a result, to question and 'perceive things differently,' (ibid) establishing and exploring the existing challenges and potential solutions to these within arts education. A website entitled artisticintellect.com has presented informative definitions of 'a/r/tography – as – method' (2013). This online site is aimed at artist / teacher / researchers whom wish to share their arts – based research projects. Here a/r/tographers are described as those who are 'willing to work outside of the conventional methodological boundaries in order to present research that is able to extend our ideas of education' (2013: accessed 27/0 9/17). According to numerous suggestions from those engaging in a/r/tographic activity, research and art making we can understand this method as: practice – based, using multiplicity as method, 'fluid and constantly evolving,' with a 'lack of concreteness,' based upon an equality between the three identities of artist, researcher and teacher, maintaining a delicate balance between image and word / narrative and art (hence the 'graphy'), recognition of in – between spaces which have the potential to open up new spaces and directions and is based in living inquiry' (ibid).

The participants and myself, in our answering of research questions through the use of photography and visual means, will explore the in – between and liminal spaces that can be found between the identities of artist, researcher and teacher. LeBlanc, Davidson, Ryan and

Irwin (2015) state that 'a/r/tography is a practice of living enquiry that combines life – writing with life – creating. It promotes artistic enquiry as an aesthetic awareness, one that is open to wonder while trusting uncertainty' (2015: 355). In an uncertain time for the arts in the curriculum in England, working alongside art teachers on a research project intended as a means of living enquiry into their everyday lives and the spaces occupied as a teacher and artist, may be viewed as a means of empowering in order to 'engage in their own becoming while being in communities of enquiry where stories are perpetually in motion,' offering ways of 'weaving through one another to enlarge, disrupt and enrich our understandings' (LeBlanc et al. 2015: 356).

Identification of a/r/tography can be drawn from the work of Grosz (2001), who explores the notion of space when considering architecture in relation to philosophy. One can clearly see as to why some of the concepts that Grosz introduces may appeal to the a/r/tographer. Grotsz exclaims that:

> 'What is interesting about architecture is that it has always been unsure as to where to position itself and its own identity as a discipline: it is itself internally divided about whether it is a science, a technology discipline, or a mode of art or aesthetic production. This uncertainty regarding its own identity has lead it to be quite open to philosophical and critical theory in a way that is unimaginable for other disciplines' (2001: 3 - 4).

Grosz understands the significance of themes such as a particular subject's assumed identity and how uncertainty and confusion can lead to an openness that is rich in both questions and the attempted answers to these, which can offer interesting pathways to areas of thought that may otherwise not have been delved into.

Leavy (2012) claims that 'A/r/tography merges images and text, without privileging either, in order to open up and create new meanings and imaginings' (2012: 7) and is holistic in approach in the sense that it is an approach to inquiry that allows for the 'bridging' of 'theory and practice' but also the relationship between 'knowing, doing, and making' (2012: 8). This is another way in which as a researcher a/r/tography has inspired my own approach and enabled me to deepen and enrich my understanding. During the initial stages of the research I attempted to organise my thinking when grappling with the overall theoretical framework for the study through the creation of a Venn Diagram, with the realms of the conceptual, private and public spheres and various elements of my thought and theoretical framework, seemingly neatly compiled as a 2D document. However this did not feel like it captured what my research was about, it was not working with the key concepts that underpinned it, such as a/r/tography as method, instead it was restricting and static. I went back to basics and created a sketchbook, with both found and purposeful mark – making, often using the paper left over in the classroom, used as backing or discarded by students, layering and using word and image in harmony to create a tactile object as a diagram, alongside capturing moving images that I felt enabled me to visually explore the key themes that act as the core of my own research, but also the major concepts that are explored through a/r/tographic methods (Appendix A). Each page visually represented a different concept, with transparency and an overlapping of the multiple layers, the turning of pages, the revisiting of previous ones, the tactile interaction and the physical spaces in-between the pages. This was an idea inspired by reading my 4 year old daughter a bedtime story, although the book had no words, she was fully engaged in the narrative of imagery. Much like in the bizarre organisation of time in schools, where bells designate the beginning and end of lessons I had tried to segregate the individual elements of my research, which broke down the important essence of inter-subjectivity. This moment where my ideas started to formulate as she flicked through the pages of the book was a perfect example of the way in which identities may merge and from this the flow and synthesis of ideas emerged.

Springgay, Irwin and Kind (2005) explain how

> 'a/r/tography is a coming together of art and graphy, or image and word [which] includes an understanding of intersubjectivity. Through doubling, hegemonic categorizations of knowledge production are troubled, infusing both the art and the graphy with intention and attentiveness. This doubling is not a static rendering of two elements positioned as separate and distinct; but it is in the contiguous interaction and the movement between art and graphy that research becomes a lived endeavour' (Springgay et al. 2005: 900).

Springgay et al. make use of six 'renderings' (2005:900) of a/r/togrpahy in order to explain how it is a 'research method that breathes. Research that listens' (2005:899). These are listed as: Contiguity we are provided with a way of conceptualising the notion of becoming and the in - between spaces occupied, or as empathised by Springgay et al the 'interrelatedness' between roles of artists / researcher / teacher and art-making / researching / teaching with 'their shifting, transitory nature,' with a respect for contiguity making 'visible the spaces in between the roles and the activity inherent in practicing these roles' (2005:900). This is something that Leavy (2012) reveals much about when describing her feelings and difficulties when establishing and morphing her identities as artist, art teacher and researcher, something in which I too empathise with. She claims that 'the polarization of my artist – researcher – teacher identities never worked for me; I could not carve out parts of myself and place them into different boxes. Like many educators I have always felt that we teach who we are' (2012: 6).

Liminal space is an important concept in relation to a/r/tographic approaches, Savin – Baden and Major (2013) define the word 'liminal' as 'a threshold or a sense of being on a threshold in an in between space' (2013: 524). Leggo (2011) explains how an a/r/tographer must engage

in the act of 'lingering in liminal spaces' (2011: 242). Throughout a project entitled 'lingering in liminal spaces: a/r/tography as living inquiry in a language art class' it is observed by researchers that' Leggo's poetry began to emerge within the project as an expression of living aesthetically as a researcher in the field, and as a response to the liminality of being inbetween an ethnographic approach and a/r/tography' (2011:244). In this particular research liminal space and the lingering within it as described by Leggo is of great importance to both the research participants and me. The participants will be taking pictures within an environment that they function predominately as teachers, in taking photographs I am asking them to think aesthetically, tapping into their identities as artists and by answering research questions for them to become researchers, the spaces in – between these identities are where our discussions, creative intentions and ideas are often drawn, rather than fixed they develop and are becoming. Many participants took images that involved their own children, this has blurred the lines between professional and personal identities when reflecting upon what is meaningful to them in relation to teaching and learning. As a researcher, artist and teacher I have collected found and discarded paper from my classroom over a long period of time with a purpose in mind, I have never know what this will be until deciding to use it as a basis for research journal pages or visual and written diagrams in order to aid the organisation of my thinking as it evolves. It could be argued that living an aesthetic life involves always looking into the ambiguous and lingering in the liminal. Irwin (2005) describes how

'loss, shift, and rupture are foundational concepts or metonyms for a/r/tography. They create openings, they displace meaning, and they allow for slippages. Loss, shift, and rupture create presence through absence, they become tactile, felt, and seen' (2005: 2)… There are partial, opaque representations [which not only reveal] meanings, events, and objects [but also obscure] them in this very act. Thus, meaning is anticipated, it is alluded to, provocative, and suggestive. Metonymical meaning is not intended to close spaces

with singular interpretations but instead, allow for the ambiguity of meaning to shift in space and time' (2005:8)…A/r/tography dislocates complacency, location, perspective, and knowledge. A/r/tography becomes a passage to somewhere else' (2005:13)

Another concept which assists in recognising the importance of liminality within the context of arts-based research is that of 'currere' explored in depth by Springgay and Irwin (2006), but initially proposed by educationalist Pinar (1975) in relation to an understanding of curriculum based on the word being a noun rather than a verb. Rather than using the concept of currere as Pinar did, Irwin, Springgay and Kind describe currere as an 'active pedagogy of self' where 'freedom, transformation' and 'flow' are considered integral to encourage teachers to 'become attentive to their personal, spiritual and aesthetic learning needs whilst imagining a walking curriculum, a curriculum that notices those liminal moments and spaces in between' (2006:75). From my own experience the embracing of liminal space and the spaces in between identities has influenced the way in which I reflect and capture these moments through aesthetic and art-based means.

Living inquiry is another important element of the a/r/tographic approach, by engaging in living inquiry the researcher dwells 'in a space of inquiry that resists formal naming' with 'a willingness to allow for discomfort, frayed edges, and holes' (Springgay, 2012, 901). When it comes to inquiry and deep learning, the process is rarely linear and moments of clarity often present themselves at times when we least expect them to. There are numerous times where it is in these in-between spaces, with the addition of an open and inquiring mind-set that exciting ideas form, that issues are identified and that a momentary glimpse of passing realisation reveals itself. When it comes to a physical manifestation of living inquiry Springgay (2012) claims that it may take the form of

'a life writing, life creating experience into the personal, political, and professional aspects of one's life. Through attention to memory, identity, autobiography, reflection, meditation, storytelling, interpretation, and/or representation, artists/researchers/teachers expose their living practices in evocative ways. A/r/tographers represent their questions, practices, emergent understandings, and creative analytic texts as they integrate knowing, doing, and making through aesthetic experiences that convey meaning rather than facts' (2012: 903)

The thing that drives artists and designers to create is something that Rodin argues is derived from the need to 're – live and potentially re – examine or re- evaluate that particular part of experience' and 'pluck something finite from the continuous flow' of conscious experience (Rodin, 2008: 65). I may be biased in my willingness to accept this theory of art, however this is because I can relate to it as an artist and creative individual in terms of my own lived experience and from observing many others in their creation of artworks(s). Rodin uses the analogy of a cinema experience in order to further clarify the feeling and need to step outside of yourself and view something in more detail:

'Consciousness is like taking part in a movie you are trying to watch: one's consciousness cannot separate and distance itself from the action around it. It can never take the objective perspective enjoyed from a seat in the cinema. By delimitating something from our conscious experience with the option of replaying it to one – self art affords us the illusion of being a spectator to our conscious experience' essentially allowing us to 'separate ourselves form our consciousness,' this being 'impossible in the strict sense, but art is the next best option' (2008: 65).

Metaphor and metonymy are another important feature of a/r/tograpahic research as 'between metaphor and metonymy there exists an intertwined relationship in which meaning un/does itself. There is both a loss of meaning and simultaneously a realization of it, invoking the presence of what it is not, and also what it might become. Distinct in appearance and application, both help us to see and reveal attributes in new ways, to cross boundaries, and to shape intersubjective relationships' (Springgay et al., 2012: 905). Often it is in the subtitles that metaphors bring to the fore which enable meaning can be grasped. I have often found that personally, as an artist when creating visual or written work, when dealing with concepts and ideas that are difficult to communicate to others that the information can be exchanged, or more so, the feeling can be described or empathy sought, through the creation and production of a singular image or object. Alternatively when writing, the simple sharing of a wider concept through a figure of speech opposed to a long-winded explanation. Although, with any art form there are the difficulties of interpretation from the audience, what is meant or intended by the creator(s) and what is understood by the viewer, reader or audience, which rarely simply correlates. Irwin (2006) explains a key concept often relied upon in a/r/tographic research methodologies of 'rhizomatic relationality' through the use of the metaphor of a map, used because of the way in which 'maps have only middles, with no beginnings and endings – they are always becoming' (2006:71) and this is because 'maps and tracings work together to make connections that may not have been noticed through the phenomenon itself and / or the theoretical targets' (ibid).

The last two renderings developed and explained by Springgay et al. (2012) are those of openings and reverberations. The rendering of openings is described as an 'engagement that is between' which

'is open and porous, whereas knowing is situated within the midst and on the edges. As such, a/r/tography is active and responsive: It requires attentiveness to what is seen and known and to what lies beneath the surface. A/r/tographic knowing un/folds, stretches out, and is exposed. It is raw, like the frayed edges of a piece of fabric—threadbare like lace. However, openings are not passive holes through which one passes easily or that allow one to see through with distinct clarity. These openings are cuts, cracks, slits, and tears…' (2012: 905).

The simile of fabric provides a telling mental image of the fluidity and unpredictability of this methodology. Kintsugi is the ancient ceramic art of repairing broken pottery, most famously with liquid gold and when the item has undergone this restoration the small cracks and chips are still visible to the eye, maybe exploring these openings requires sharing the fluidity of liquid, like the gold, silver or platinum used in this traditional Japanese ceramic technique.

The final rendering is noted by Springgay et al. (2012) as reverberations, which links to concepts of excess. According to Springgay et al. there is the opportunity to become through writing and art – making that has the power to reveal

'…fears, inhibitions, desires, and pleasures: To write from within and through the body is a writing of excess. Excess is an ongoing practice concerned not with inserting facts and figures and images and representations into language but with creating an opening where control and regulation disappears. Excess is a way to re-image ourselves into being; reassembling the mundane of our experiences. Excess is the flesh of being, the spacebetween interiority and exteriority, where touching touches and touches back in continual reverberations' (2012: 907).

Through 're – assembling the mundane' of the teacher experience of the everyday classroom, objects or established routines many new ideas and questions have evolved from the in – between spaces and identities of artist, teacher and researcher for both myself and the research participants.

During the next subchapter 5.3.3 Artifact, Curatorial, Semiotic and Thematic Analysis, I will be further clarifying the methods used in order to analyse the data collated through the qualitative arts -based methods specified above.

5.3.3 Artefact, curatorial, semiotic and thematic analysis

The formal elements

When looking to the basics and fundamentals of art and design teaching in terms of subject content, one of the further structured elements of learning is developing an understanding of the formal elements. These may be listed as line, shape, tone, form, pattern, texture and colour. Artefact, curatorial, semiotic and thematic analysis take into account the formal elements and their place within the overall composition, but also act as the further structured concepts that underpin the analysis of data.
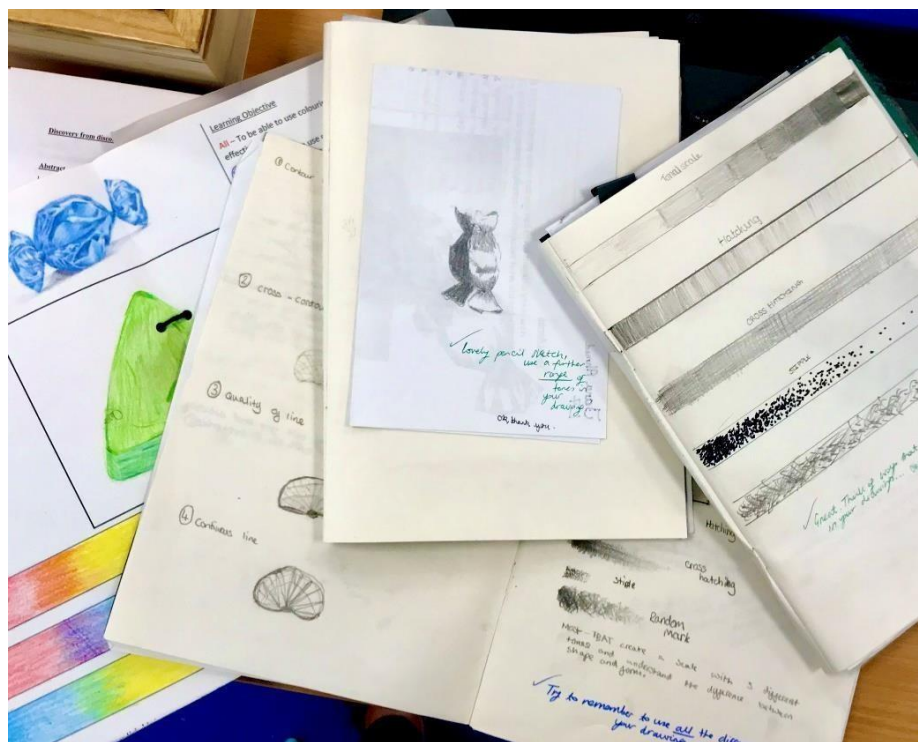
Fig. 18 Photograph of formal elements work in sketchbooks produced by students

The exploration and critical analysis of data to inform findings throughout this research has been disseminated through both thematic and semiotic methods. Artefacts, photographs and artworks have been organised though the curatorial process, but also by the emerging themes.

These themes have emerged through the organisaton of photographs and artefacts, the words or feelings expressed through interview transcripts, audio recordings of conversations and the analysis of these, using reflective spaces where common issues and the varying layers of key ideas could come to the fore, such as through thorough recording in a reflective journal and engagement with a/r/tographic methods.

Focus group discussions, interviews and the signs and symbols communicated through visual responses and artworks created have been interpreted through recognition of semiotics. Throughout this section I intend to further clarify how artefact, curatorial, thematic and semiotic analysis has played an integral part in relation to both the analysis and findings of this research.

I will discuss the use of the E. Feldman (1994) model of art criticism, alongside insights from the work of Eisner (2002) in order to propose a method for the analysis of photographs taken by art teachers in response to questions. There were two stages of analysis of the photo – voice responses, the first was the curatorial organisation of the work for the purpose of exhibition and the second involved an analysis of the photographs themselves in order to draw out the key themes and narratives they were communicating. For the second stage of analysis I have used the E. Feldman model of art criticism, involving the stages of moving from description, interpretation and analysis to making judgements. The reasoning for this choice rests upon what Prater (2002) highlights through the comparison of the E. Feldman approach to 'a carpenters favourite hammer: comfortable to use and effective in what it does' (2002:12). Before examining the E. Feldman model in further depth, alongside the influence of Eisner, I will firstly discuss the first stage of analysis through curatorial organisation of the photo voice responses.

<u>Artefact and curatorial analysis</u>

As with any curatorial decisions the space itself and the setting imposed certain limitations on the way(s) in which the work could be exhibited. In relation to this particular research the exhibition was to be held as a 'pop up' in a local art gallery and so convenience of erecting and taking down became an important consideration. The communication in terms of both the intentions and meanings behind the work and research project also was to be conveyed to a diverse audience; members of the public. Due to these considerations the work was ordered by questions asked and answered to, and by art teachers through the use of a camera / photo – voice. With limited space and a considerable number of photographs to collate and organise the initial analysis took the simple form of two main approaches, one based on aesthetics and the second on ensuring that there was a diverse range of imagery that fairly represented the range of answers offered through the photographs.

Bresler (2006) notes that communication to an audience 'whether it occurs between two people, a person and artwork, or a person and data, a dialogue has an intimacy and privacy' (2006: 62). The 'awareness of the audience is present at various stages of research,' and 'the process of research involves a discovery and shaping of meaning for oneself as well as for others' (Ibid). When making decisions about what to include in the exhibition and how it was to be organised I became acutely aware of the audience, as this is an implicitly important element of exhibiting. There were three main audiences to consider, the art teacher and participants themselves, some of whom would be attending a private view of the work, the general public and the exhibitions team at the gallery. Although I avoided influencing what art teachers took pictures of when responding to the research questions and how they chose to edit them, the images that I selected to include needed to be chosen carefully in order to accurately represent the views of the participants.

According to Given (2008) 'a wide range of disciplines informs the analysis of artefacts, including anthropology, archaeology, art history, history, human geography, ethnography, and sociology' (2008: 23). Macgregor (2012) has made an inference suggesting that even the very earliest objects and artefacts of our ancestors that were used and created implied that human kind were deeply situated and preoccupied within the decorative and aesthetic appreciation, alongside function. MacGregor (2012) claims that

'if you want to tell a story of the whole world, a history that does not unduly privilege one part of humanity, you cannot do it through texts alone, because only some of the world has ever had texts, while most of the world, for most of the time, has not…writing is one of humanity's later achievements' (2012: xvii).

Given (2008) claims that 'Artefacts become data through the questions posed about them and the meanings assigned to them by the researcher' Given, 2008: 23) This has impacted my decision, alongside other factors, to explore and analyse images and artefacts, alongside words.

Throughout this research there will be two main types of artefacts responded to in which I hope to collaboratively construct and establish meaning(s). The first are the objects found in classrooms and used by teachers and students within the context of a learning environment, the second are the photographs taken by teachers, which in a sense become artefacts themselves, as do the objects that feature in these images, which may be used as metaphor in answering questions posed to teachers through the photo-voice exercise engaged in.

Stevenson and White (2002) claim that there is a 'tension between academic and curatorial research' which has the issue of the 'balance between theory and practice' underpinning it

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(2002:141) and identify 'the complex role of curating exhibitions' and reference Murphy (1998) a director of a museum and art gallery in Sydney as empathising and reinforcing the role of 'caring for things, relationships and ideas…revealing the contest of ideas that circulate around objects' (2002:143). In this particular research the theory has underpinned the questions posed and the ways in which the practice has been analysed and responded to, a/r/tography, for example, explained further in the previous subchapter 5.3.2, is inherent as an approach within the act of teachers taking photographs and exploring their own identities as teachers, artists and researchers and the relationships and knowledge that can emerge from the transitional spaces in-between these identities. In this sense I have attempted to work towards resolving some of the issues that surround the balance between theory and practice, which threatens to undermine the role of the curatorial in arts-based research.

The E. Feldman model of art criticism

As a framework by which to analyse the photographs contributed by participant art teachers the E. Feldman (1994) model, although formalist in approach, has lent itself as a means to draw out themes and intended meanings from the photographs. Unlike a series of images where the immediate motivations for creating the works are various, in this case the work was all in response to the same series of questions and so the interest lies in an analysis of the contents of the photographs themselves, alongside the ways in which the questions and answers may be interpreted. E. Feldman (1994) claims that to critically respond to an image one 'must deal with the feelings, ideas, and events represented or symbolised in drawings, paintings, and sculpture. In a sense, critics are intermediaries between works of art and the values or interests that artworks designate' (1994: 1).

E. Feldman (1994) suggests the use of a model comprised of working through four stages, these being Description, Analysis, Interpretation and Judgement. The primary descriptive phase involves 'naming what an observer sees' as a 'list or inventory of the principle things that are *there'* avoiding characterising, but simply naming (1994: 25). For E.Feldman, language such as 'line (straight, curved, jags, and so on), shape (square, triangular, and circular), colour (red, blue, green, and so on), and texture (smooth, coarse, and grainy)' (Ibid) are the kinds of descriptive terms to be used, which have two main objectives, to 'encounter the surface of an artwork honestly and without preconceptions, and the second is to know the work as immediately and directly as we can' (1994: 26). This will provide an initial stage in order to start to analyse the surface of the photographs, breaking down images to the basic formal elements and recognition of the visual representation of objects through mere description.

The second stage of analysis provides an opportunity to engage with and consider 'the facts – dealing with visual evidence' rather like 'describing the relations among the words in a sentence' (1994: 28) which may also involve taking into account the further complex relationships between visual forms and potential meanings. In regards to participants' photographs, this will involve looking carefully at the entire composition, asking the appropriate questions, such as if the image is abstract and if so what the relationship may be between the forms and shapes, or the negotiation chosen between foreground and background, what the view-point is and how your eye is lead around the image to take the viewer on a journey and tell a story.

Interpretation is the next stage proposed by E.Feldman where it is claimed that the 'search for meaning reaches a climax…[and a]…creative leap' must be made 'from the accumulation of visual evidence to the construction of an interpretation' (1994: 30). At the interpretative stage E. Feldman suggests the use of a 'critical hypothesis,' which is 'an educated guess about the meaning of the work under scrutiny' (1994: 32). This may involve the following questions

'What is the work trying to sell me? What does it want me to admire? Whom does it tell me to emulate? What does it ask me to do? What does it want me to think? How does it want me to feel? How does it want me to act? What does it expect me to know or believe?' (E. Feldman, 1994: 33).

I will use the above questions, alongside the 'looks like, sounds like' and 'reminds me of' reactions linking to 'half – formed impressions, memories, and associations' (1994: 34) to draw ideas, themes and meanings from the images encountered and analysed. With the case studies and through the focus group discussions I will move from this interpretative stage to asking similar questions to the artist, teacher participants who have created the images. The layers of interpretations become highly interesting in terms of yielding meaning from the photographs; there is my interpretation – the researchers, others' interpretations – the viewers and the intended meaning – communicated by the artist / photographer themselves. These multilayers bring new questions and potential meanings to the photographs analysed, as whatever the engagement and on whatever level or stage of the E. Feldman (1994) model, the response 'I hadn't thought of it like that, seen it that way, considered it from that angle before' that are derived from conversations surrounding the artworks inevitably brings new meanings and interpretations.

When it comes to the interpretative stage Gray and Malins (2004) explain that within the visual arts 'the process of interpretation necessitates going beyond the data to develop ideas that might be valuable and applicable in wider contexts' (2004: 135). They use the metaphor of interpreting a map in relation to interpreting research, whereby post data collection:

'…you should now be in a new position on the map, probably on higher ground so that you can look back and over the landscape. In reflecting on this view you should be able to see where you have been and what kind of terrain you have crossed. You should be able to say if your vehicles were trustworthy and have enabled you to cross the terrain effectively' (2004: 136).

The final stage of criticism when using the E. Feldman (1994) model is that of judgement. E. Feldman implies that a 'similarity of purpose' must be established 'before we can engage in comparative judgement' (1994: 37) however in this particular case the purpose of the photographs is already apparent and understood. Due to this consideration the grounds of judgement that will be used is that of 'non – formalist expressionism' because by using this specific ground of judgment 'an artwork should be judged by its capability to communicate feelings and ideas honestly, vividly, and forcefully' as if wearing the hat of an expressive critic the greatest priority is not that of 'pure form or abstract visual relationships', but how valid and persuasive the 'message conveyed through visual form' is (1994: 39). The embracing of the role of expressive critic will also allow me to steer clear of the danger of not delving under the surface of the merely representational, as clarified by Eisner (2002) 'mimesis is not the only way of representing images and conveying meaning. The arts can depict not only what is seen or heard, they can also depict what is felt' (2002: 16).

Prater (2002) claims that there are weaknesses to the E. Feldman (1994) approach, namely that it is essentially a formalist approach, which is identified by Prater (2002) as a method being only 'concerned with the intrinsic or visible aspects of artworks. It does not require any external information, or facts about the artwork that cannot be viewed in the artwork itself. In this manner the method can be described as a formalist approach, in that understanding the visual

elements of an artwork will provide the viewer with an understanding of the artwork's meaning'
(2002: 13). The reason that I have selected the E. Feldman approach is purely because of these
limitations described by Prater (2002), due to the way in which the photographs were a response
from a series of questions posed by me as researcher. I have also attempted to overcome the
issues of external information and that which cannot be seen directly in the artwork through
school visits, interviews and a focus group at the early stage of image analysis. When analysing
the photographs using a predominately formalist approach, in particular the E. Feldman model,
an opportunity will be provided to temporarily separate and distance myself from my
assumptions and prior knowledge in order to allow the data to reveal key themes. However this
does mean that at later stages, or past the initial viewing of photographs this distance will
remain, nor a formative method overall, but rather I hope to authentically make links and find
shared narratives, including my own lived – experiences as an artist, researcher and teacher.

Thematic analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) explain how 'thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analysing
and reporting patterns in the data' and is often alternatively referred to as 'narrative analysis or
discourse analysis' (2013: 439). They suggest that the researcher needs to familiarise oneself
with the data, generating 'initial codes, search for themes, review themes and name themes'
and that 'what is unique about thematic analysis is that it acknowledges that analysis happens
at an intuitive level' and it 'is through the process of immersion in data and considering
connections and interconnections between codes, concepts and themes that an ''aha'' moment
happens' (Brown and Clarke, 2013 : 440).

Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that there is not 'one ideal theoretical framework for conducting qualitative research' however 'what is important is that the theoretical framework and methods match what the researcher wants to know, and that they acknowledge these decisions, and recognise them as decisions (2006: 8). Braun and Clarke claim that a theme may be described as that which 'captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set' (2006: 11), however 'ideally there will be a number of instances of the theme across the data set, but more instances do not necessarily mean the theme itself is more crucial. As this is qualitative analysis, there is no hard-and-fast answer to the question of what proportion of your data set needs to display evidence of the theme for it to be considered a theme' (ibid).

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that thematic analysis may fall into different camps, these are noted as 'Inductive or theoretical, Semantic or latent themes, essentialist/realist or constructionist' (2006). For this particular research the thematic analysis will be data –driven, using an inductive approach, both semantic and latent and constructivist. It is suggested by Braun and Clarke that:

> 'when all data have been initially coded & collated, and you have a long list of the different codes you have identified across your data set. This phase, which re-focuses the analysis at the broader level of themes, rather than codes, involves sorting the different codes into potential themes, and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes. Essentially, you are starting to analyse your codes, and consider how different codes may combine to form an overarching theme' (2006: 20).

From engaging in image analysis through use of the E. Feldman (1994) method, described earlier in this section, I will be creating codes to establish the key themes that emerge through engaging with the photographs as data and as 'art critic' in a phenomenological sense, through recognition of semiotics and structuralism, which as E. Feldman (2002) claims is a 'linguistic theory that endeavours to explain what makes art meaningful' which 'constitutes a method of analysing ideologies, cultures and systems rather than specific artworks' (2002: 17). Although the specific individual images will be analysed, the full set of data will be engaged with in order to answer research questions related to the value of art within the social context and culture of the secondary school and curriculum.

Semiotic analysis

In terms of art criticism E. Feldman (1994) explains how semiotics as a theory of art allows us to classify works as 'pragmatic (useful), syntactic (formal)' or 'semantic (meaningful),' belonging to a sign situation. This allows the critic to focus on 'the codes and conventions that govern the inherent meanings and cultural interpretations of artworks' (E. Feldman, 1994: 17).

M. Feldman (1995) elucidates how semiotics is 'the study of signs or systems of signs concerning signification,' (1995: 21) which is based in the belief that 'surface signs are related to an underlying structure' which is 'fundamentally cultural in its approach' (1995: 22). M. Feldman claims that 'semioticians often use metaphor, metonymy and opposition' as a means of 'identifying signs and understanding the process by which they come to have meaning' (ibid). These three categories can be broken down as the following:

'Metonymy involves a relationship between the sign and the signified' In the case of 'metaphor, the sign and the signified are not in the same domain. Opposition is a different

kind of relationship to sign and signified. The sign has meaning because of what it is not'

(M. Feldman, 1994: 22).

Eisner (2002) claims that 'conventional signs are socially agreed – upon symbols that refer to ideas, objects, or events and the like' (2002: 18). In the world of education there are many of these, through the many number of acronyms used in the language of schools and the objects and systems that have become every day and common place.

Manning (1987) claims that 'semiotics is primarily a mode of analysis that seeks to understand how signs perform or convey meaning in context' (1987: 25). The context in this sense is one in which there is a common language, due to the context of the secondary school, however there is the language of the teaching profession, language in particular school contexts and the language of the arts. Manning explains how 'semiotics is a formal mode of analysis that seeks principles and rules that account for a known pattern. It is also a form of cultural analysis. All human behaviour, once interpreted, is conduct. Semiotics looks at rules that govern conduct' (1987: 29).

An integral part of semiotic analysis is recognised as Manning (1987) to be 'interpretation' due to the way in which 'any system of rules, or forms, will have gaps, indeterminacies, and interpretive aspects' (1987: 31). Having already established the integral part that interpretation will take in the analysis of this particular research, the combination of interviews and visual data has the potential to draw about insights from these 'gaps.' As reaffirmed by Savin – Baden and Major (2013) 'in the telling of the participants' story, involving the analysis of interpretation of social events and their meanings to participants' (2013: 442) we may find common themes.

Manning (1987) explains how 'social codes are integrated systems of signs…social signs, since they communicate group relations, have differing capacities to represent social power, coercion, and shared meaning to groups' (1987: 27). These may be understood as the 'sign vehicle, sense and referent' (ibid).

The table below describes how the photographs will be analysed and how this links to the overall theoretical framework of the research:

Table 5 – Image analysis method and links to overall theoretical framework

E. Feldman model – Description	Heuristic and phenomenological
E. Feldman model – Analysis	Gestalt approach
E. Feldman model – Interpretation	Thematic and semiotic analysis
E.Feldman model – Judgement	Expressionist non – formalist, socially Constructed
Manning - sign vehicle	Semiotic analysis
Manning – sense	Semiotic analysis
Manning - referent (the things signified)	Semiotic analysis
M. Feldman - metonymy, metaphor and Opposition	A/r/tography, semiotic and thematic Analysis

Prater (2002) exclaims that 'Feldman's sequentially ordered critical method endeavours to provide a systematic way of exploring, constructing, and even restructuring complex pictorial representations of the world' (2002 : 82). I have used this systematic and critical method, espoused by E. Feldman (1994) as a way of analysing images, alongside semiotic analysis offered by Manning (1987) and M. Feldman (1995).

In the next subchapter I will explore the contributions that interviews, focus groups and case studies have made to the research and findings and how the approaches in this chapter have been extended to the way that data gathered through these tools has been investigated using artefact, thematic and semiotic analysis.

5.4 Interviews

Stretching a canvas

Planning on carrying out interviews may be compared with the act of stretching a canvas. The content of interview is not known, past the semi – structured questions and when preparing a canvas on which to paint, draw or make marks the composition does not fully emerge until the later stages of creation. When the canvas is blank there is a sense of possibility, similar to that felt when meeting a participant to find out more about their thoughts, feelings, ideas and issues. In this section I will discuss the types of interview used to collect data. Below (Fig. 19) is an image of the possibility, although unlike artworks people are not blank canvases, however the unknown lies in their responses to questions and what they chose to offer in terms of wisdom, knowledge and understanding. This enables the participant and researcher to collaboratively construct a picture.

Fig 19. Photograph of a canvas being stretched

I will predominately be using two different types of interviews in order to gather insights and data for this research. The first is focus group as interview and the second is one -to – one interviews.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) claim that the qualitative interview may cover both factual information alongside meaningful insights, which requires both the ability to 'listen to the explicit descriptions and to the meanings expressed, as well as to what is said ''between the lines'' (2009: 30) whereby as an interviewer these can be stated back to the interviewee in order for them to confirm the possible meanings inferred. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggest eleven considerations when engaging in an interview, these can listed as: 'qualitative, descriptive, specificity, deliberate naiveté, focused, ambiguity, change, sensitivity, interpersonal situation' and 'positive experience' (2009: 30 -32). I will be using these identified features as a means of navigation when conducting interviews with teachers. Kvale and Brinkmann provide two metaphors for qualitative interviewers, the first surrounding the idea of a miner in relation to knowledge collection and the second of a traveller in relation to knowledge construction. In the case of the miner the knowledge is unearthed, the objective facts are uncovered through data – mining, in the case of the traveller there is a process of 'wandering together' open to interpretation of narratives, the traveller may change alongside the participant with analysis and interviewing further entwined (2009: 47 – 49). The metaphor of the traveller with the notion of 'a postmodern constructive understanding that involves a conversational approach to social research' (2009: 49) is the closest to the model to what I intend to use.

Delamont (2002) claims that when conducting an interview the interviewer must consider the nature of the questions asked and whether they are leading or not, claiming that a way of reducing influence on the interviewee is 'by phrasing them carefully' and 'handling topics tactfully' whilst 'writing everything down as soon as possible: what you asked (in exact words)

where, when, how and who was listening, as well as what the answers were' (2002: 127). In order to promote active listening and to read the situation with care so as to derive the most from each interview I will be recording them with a Dictaphone with the participants' consent (see 5.2: Ethics). As the one – to – one interviews will be semi -structured the questions have already been formulated, however there will of course be room for the participant to diverge from these. In the research journal / sketchbook used I will be taking note of the environment, the atmosphere, body language and all of the other important elements of an interview which cannot be captured in an audio recording.

Although the focus group interview will also be semi – structured in design, this will be far more open for interpretation, naturally participants will start to organically lead the conversation and take the interview into new and unexpected directions, with the open questions being a point in which we may return to, as and when the appropriate opportunity arises.

Durrant and Holden (2002) claim that 'your job as an interviewer is to try and get interviewees to talk freely and openly. Your own behaviour has a major influence on their willingness to do this' (2002: 274). This is where a pilot study in terms of the research design will have been of benefit, as issues may be ironed out and further self – awareness gained in terms of the impact of my own behaviour, body language and choice of wording in interview situations.

Place is another important contributor to the success of an interview. Apart from the case study of a teacher who worked within the school in which I was based during the research and interviews were taking place, all other applicants were visited at their schools, their domain and classrooms. This created further ease, but it also allowed me to grasp a fuller picture of their identity as a teacher. The focus group will take place in an art gallery, out of public hours, at a private view of the participants work, which potentially creates a sense of exclusivity.

These teachers will be amongst fellow practitioners and will already have viewed each other's visual responses to the research questions and brief, this may bring an element of trust and a sense of being 'in it together' which allows for honest and open dialogue. Ortlipp (2008) claims that the interviewer may use 'self – disclosure' carefully 'in interviews and an active, subjective role' (2008: 701) whereby 'the interviewers thoughts, feelings, fears, and desires impact on the interview' however are often 'not visible in the data and transcription' (2008: 703). This is something that I am mindful with of particularly when considering my own involvement in terms of my identities as an artist and teacher, alongside researcher.

1-2-1 Interviews

A series of semi – structured interviews will inform a large body of the findings of this research. I will proceed to explain the reasoning behind this decision and also reference relevant thinkers' notions of the benefits and challenges of this type of interview.

According to Ryan, Coughlan and Cronin (2009) semi – structured interviews 'offer a more flexible approach to the interview process' (2009:310) which is one of the reasons that I have chosen this method opposed to structured or unstructured. A semi – structured interview will still allow 'unanticipated responses and issues to emerge through use of open-ended questioning' (2009:310). The way in which these unanticipated responses still have room to come to the fore offers the benefit of participants to explore issues, as and when they arise, with spontaneity for both the interviewer and interviewee to discuss and investigate further. Ryan et al. (2009) argue that when the focus permits 'the interviewee to tell his / her story rather than answer a series of structured questions' (ibid) further valuable responses can emerge during a semi – structured interview. This is something that I have purposefully designed space and time for in the second part of the one-to-one interview questions posed, many of these are

open in nature and allow for the interviewee to share their individual stories. Ryan et al. (2009) claim that 'issues explored from an individualistic perspective' provide 'richer data' whilst still maintaining an 'overriding framework' (2009:310) linking back to the feminist theoretical underpinnings of this research, West, Anderson and Merill (2007) explain how 'feminists developed the principle that research and interviewing should not exploit the interviewee but seek to empower her' (2007: 30). In order to empower there first needs to be an environment of trust, which I am hoping by the sharing of my own photographic responses and engaging in the photo – voice brief myself, plus the openness of my own experiences as an art teacher, I will be able to compose this safe space in which to share openly, to be listened to and to be heard.

When considering the overall framework, construction and organisation of questions for interview Ryan et al. (2009) reminds us of the reason as to why 'the sequencing of questions should allow the interviewee to be aware of what specific areas he or she is being asked about' and 'more sensitive questions should be kept for when rapport and trust has been established' (2009: 211). In the case of the teachers who I am interviewing one-to-one I will have met them prior to the interview in different circumstances, such as visiting them in their school and classroom context and at the exhibition of their work and shared interactions during the focus group discussion. A couple of the teachers interviewed were colleagues that I worked closely with at the school in which I was employed as a teacher at the time the interviews were undertaken, this meant that rapport had already been worked on prior to the one – to – one interview process. I also created interview questions that initially focused upon participants' visual responses in the form of photographs, a subject matter that was familiar to them and offered a reminder as to what they may have been reflecting upon, or wishing to communicate at the time, before moving onto more personal questions regarding the school in which they were teaching in and issues of value.

Savin – Boden and Major (2013) argue that 'interviews are the mainstay of qualitative research' and that 'when possible, the goal is to replicate in a research setting the elements of a natural conversation' (2013: 357). With the shared interest of art and design, teaching and education the natural conversation is something that may well be enhanced between myself as researcher / interviewer and the participant / interviewee. As also noted by Ryan, Coughlan and Cronin (2009) because a one – to – one interview is a social interaction 'the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is of paramount importance' (2009: 311). This social interaction will also be enhanced if 'a relaxed, confident and attentive approach' is 'demonstrated by the interviewer' as this will 'help a good interview relationship develop' (Ibid). This is something that I became very aware of when conducting a pilot study and earlier interviews, as depending on the interviewee, I became aware of my own body language and non-verbal cues as an interviewer. Depending on who it was I was interviewing I noticed that the level to which I relaxed fluctuated. A reflection that I attempted to approach with consideration in response.

According to Savin – Boden and Major (2013) 'a weakness of semi – structured interviews is that they do not always provide the interviewee with the opportunity to offer his or her own perspective' (2013: 359). However I endeavour to overcome this with allowing 'space to talk, uninterrupting, interrupting at the right time and echoing back what has been said to demonstrate careful listening and understanding' whilst also remaining 'non – judgmental' (Ryan et al. 2009: 311).

According to Riessman (1993) in interviews the researcher's 'purpose is to see how respondents in interviews impose order on the flow of experience to make sense of events and actions in their lives' (1993: 2) This will be a consideration worthy of noting when it comes to the second part of the one-to-one interviews whereby participants will be asked about their

experiences as teachers further generally, opposed to the initial interview based upon their photographic responses.

In the next two sections I will be exploring the types of interviews chosen for research and data gathering in greater depth, starting with focus groups and ending with the decision to include three case studies.

Peer assessment / feedback and group critique

The focus group is an opportunity for art teacher participants to come together and meet to discuss and debate ideas, visual responses and interpretations of these. Within a classroom context multiple opportunities are provided for students to engage in peer assessment and feedback. Addison and Burgess (2003) claim that in the art and design classroom 'assessment should be considered the starting point for further reflection' (2003: 141). This may be understood as a student – centred approach. The focus group may act as a pocket of time for focused reflection surrounding the photographs of participants. As the act of engaging in peer assessment and feedback 'should allow greater efficiency in disseminating and developing artistic ideas' (Ibid) in the classroom, participants sharing work and offering feedback through a focus group discussion may equally allow space for ideas to be discussed, debated and disseminated. Below (Fig. 20) is a photograph of chairs situated in an intimate semi -circle, as they were for the focus group discussion that teacher participants attended, although later this became a full circle. In the classroom a similar scene may be witnessed in art and design lessons where students will lay out work on a desk and gather around in order to offer peer feedback and critique.

Fig. 20 Photograph of chairs in formation in readiness for focus group discussion

A focus group was conducted as a part of the exhibition private view. This enabled the teachers involved to meet one another, see each other's photographs and visual outcomes and discuss the works. The focus group is also designed to allow participants a space in which key issues may be voiced, with photographs as a visual prompt, with the intention as researcher to gain further insight into the meanings behind the artworks and the experiences of art teachers working in secondary schools in Thanet and wider Kent.

Morgan (1997) claims that focus groups can enable a researcher to access certain forms of data that are no so easily obtained by either an interview with an individual and / or participant observation (1997: 7-8). Morgan uses the comparison between these common forms of qualitative research methods to highlight the benefit and uses of a focus group. When comparing a focus group to participant observation Morgan (1997) notes that there is the 'opportunity to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic in a limited period of time based on the researchers ability to assemble and direct the focus group' (Ibid). When compared

to individual interviews Morgan (1997) recognises the strength of focus groups in terms of the discussions providing 'direct evidence about similarities and differences in the participants' opinions and experiences as opposed to reaching conclusions from post hoc analyses of separate statements from each interviewee (1997: 10). Other advantages of focus groups can be summarised as: 'ability to give the group control over the direction of the interview, an advantage for topics that are either habit – ridden or not thought out in detail' and the data that can be generated in a short space of time (1997: 11-13). Morgan claims that when interpreting focus group data it is important to attempt to distinguish between that in which the participants find interesting and that in which they deem important. It is 'when participants discuss a topic at length' where there is 'an indication that they find it interesting, but that is not the same as saying that they think it is important' (1997: 62).

With any interpretive or hermeneutic approach to the analysis of data there are limitations in terms of no findings being absolute and the context – bound nature of the researcher and participants because as recognised by Ferrara (1995) 'researchers as interpreters are rooted in their historical time and place' (1995:14) and that there is also 'the cultural and social nature of language' (1995:15) to take into account. The teaching profession itself has its own unique list of acronyms and language, which as a teacher I speak fluently. This has acted as a benefit when conducting discussions with teachers and those who work within education, whether this be through interviews or in a focus group setting, however where it may have become a limitation was in terms of my self – awareness of how my own understanding of a term may be different to another individuals and therefore at certain key points it was important to check and review that when I used a subject specific term, form my own teaching experience and background, it had the same meaning in another school for a different teacher. From visiting different schools and teachers in these various settings it became apparent that there was also a language spoken by that particular staff team, an example of this may be the acronym used

for the assessment of a student in terms of a summative grade, or unique names for certain strategies that have been developed and used within schools.

Robson (2002) explains how the person running and leading the focus group may be referred to as the 'moderator' or 'facilitator' whose job it is to 'moderate in the directionary sense of regulating, or keeping within measure or bounds' (2002: 284 – 287). As a artist, teacher and researcher who also took part in this project I will be mindful of creating a careful balance between the role identified here by Robson and the input that I offer in order to be considered a member of the focus group itself. Issues in which teachers feel passionate and at times angry and frustrated about will be addressed which will leave many wanting to speak out and debate current topics, this is where the role of moderator and facilitator will perhaps be required to step into play, to ensure that all of the semi – structured interview questions, no matter how loose, are covered and one talking point of interest does not dominate the situation. It may not just be topics that evolve to dominate, but certain individuals will naturally be further talkative and open in this forum than others, it will be important to ensure that the discussion is devised and directed in a way which enables all participants to offer valuable contributions.

Morgan (1997) makes the observation that a smaller group may make for further fruitful results in the focus group when considering sampling concerns (1997: 35). The numbers that attended the focus group in this research depended solely on the number of participants who chose to attend the exhibition of photovoice images, this meant that some had submitted work but were not able to attend the focus group discussion. The number who took part in the focus group were 10 participants, including myself. This is the maximum number suggested by Morgan (1997: 34) as there is a compromise to be made between 'smaller groups producing more detailed data from each participant' and 'larger groups producing a wider range of ideas' (Ibid).

Savin – Baden and Major (2013) distinguish between five different types of focus group; Explanatory focus group, Phenomenological focus groups, Clinical focus groups, Storyline focus groups and Issue development focus groups' (2013: 376). In this case it will be a Phenomenological focus group that will be held, this is defined by Savin – Baden and Major as a means by which to 'explore the respondent group's views and experiences' whereby the researcher 'seeks to understand…the essence of someone's experience' (2013: 377).

The other element of the focus group which has been carefully considered and links back to the ethics of the research is the establishment of ground rules. At the beginning of the interview the importance of confidentiality will be made explicit. With the participants being professional adults no other ground rules will be made, as the dialogue should, with the moderators occasional guidance, lead itself with minimal need for a framework other than the images to be used as a prompt for conversation, alongside the semi – structured questions pre-planned.

The environment itself in which the focus group took place was in the learning area of the local gallery. Chairs were provided in a circle format so that participants faced one another in an informal and relaxed sense. The focus group followed the private view of photographs with food and drinks provided in celebration of participants contribution, with the desire for them to feel at ease to talk and discuss their ideas, insights, thoughts and feelings with both myself and one another.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of some of the individual's experiences a selection of the participants will also be invited to engage in a one-to-one interview. This will be based on which participants are available in terms of willingness, practicality and logistics, but also taking into account which groups of photographs could have been unpicked further and required far more interpretation in order to uncover meaning. Also taking into account participants who had interesting points of view expressed throughout the focus group, as only

a snippet of this could be explored due to time restrictions, but also down to sensitivity in relation to how in – depth it was appropriate to go with an individual in a group setting.

Stewart and Shamdasani (2015) argue that one of the reasons as to why it is useful to conduct a group interview is to 'allow observations of how and why individuals accept or reject others' ideas,' also leading to a greater generating of ideas and 'information than individual interviews would' (2015: 10). Having a group of specialist teachers and also an educational representative from a gallery would in theory create an interesting forum in which to debate and discuss key ideas. When viewing and analysing photographs there is also the opportunity for participants to interpret them in ways which speak to them and their experiences, but also in doing so to generate new ideas and ways of perceiving intended meanings, whether this is in line with what the participant who captured the photograph initially wanted to communicate or otherwise. Stewart and Shamdasani (2015) also highlight what they have established as the three key elements in the effective design of a focus group interview, these being; 'group composition, interpersonal skills' and 'research environment factors' (Ibid). These have all been carefully considered, the group composition will be self – selecting art and design teachers of a variety of ages and with varying experiences in terms of the types of schools worked in, because of the nature of the profession that they work their interpersonal skills should, in theory, be refined. The final factor of the research environment, although in a formal gallery and exhibition space, should be relatively relaxed due to the way in which the focus group coincides with a private view and celebration of work from a research project of which the participants have been a part.

Savin – Baden and Major (2013) define two different types of focus groups and in the case of this research elements of both will be used, the first is described as a 'phenomenological focus group' whereby the researcher 'seeks to understand, through group interaction, the essence of someone's experience of a particular phenomenon' or a 'story line focus group' which enables

the 'researchers' understanding of what issues and concerns people find most important in a given situation' (2013: 377). There are elements of both of these evident in the focus group I will hold, as there will be a need for a phenomenological focus alongside fresh issues and concerns being brought to the fore in the discussion. Inevitably some of the photographic responses, discussions and individual contributions will provoke further questions to explore, this leads to the use of case study in order to delve deeper into some of the participants experiences and lives as art teachers, which will be the focus of the next section.

5.5 Case Study

Use of a viewfinder

A viewfinder is described by Hickman (2005) as 'a piece of card with a small rectangular shape cut in the centre, used to isolate parts of a scene or picture' (2005: 105). The viewfinder need not be a rectangle, although this is the traditional shape, it could in fact be a square, circle or irregular in shape. The use to focus in on one particular area of an image in order to examine it in greater depth, often linking this small section back to the whole, may be compared to my reasoning to use case study. The use of case studies provides a window to view the individual narratives of teacher participants in – depth. Below (Fig. 21) is a painting I created as an exemplar introducing acrylic paint with Y10 students. The viewfinder is used here to select a smaller window in which to study an area of the overall painting. Viewing this one section alone alters the perspective and focal point, whilst still maintaining a relationship with the whole.
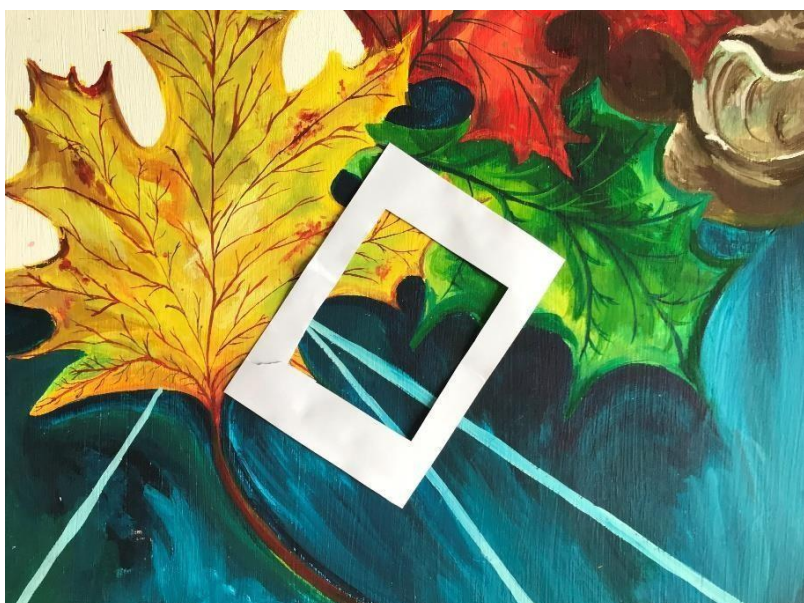
Fig. 21 Use of a viewfinder

Case study has been chosen as a research method due to my desire to understand the intent and reasoning behind participants photographic responses to the questions and brief outlined, alongside gain further insight into their experiences as art teachers. As specified by Stake (1995) 'a case study is expected to catch the complexity of a single case' which is chosen 'when it is itself of very special interest' (1995:1). In relation to this research the case studies chosen were identified from an analysis of participants' photographs and contributions born out of a desire to dig deeper and find out further information about the images captured and the lives of these teachers. Stake (1995) argues that when it comes to case study 'we are interested in them for both their uniqueness and commonality' (1995: 1) claiming that 'the real business of case study is particularisation, not generalisation' and 'there is emphasis on uniqueness' (1995: 8). According to Stake 'in qualitative case study we seek greater understanding of the case. We want to appreciate the uniqueness and complexity of its embeddedness and interaction with its contexts' (1995: 16).

Jaques, Dufour and Fortin (1991) claim that 'the case study is an in-depth investigation. It accordingly uses different methods to collect various kinds of information and to make observations' which is 'based on a great wealth of empirical methods' (1991: 45). However they also acknowledge that case study as a research method has been criticised for a 'lack of rigour in the collection, construction and analysis of the empirical materials, often associated with issues of bias, such as the subjectivity of the researcher' (1993:23). I discount these perceived issues with the case study as method with in this research due to the way in which the case studies have been chosen to deepen the knowledge gained, supporting images and focus group discussions (mixed – methods approach) to give way to greater insights. I have acknowledged the impact of the researcher bias and interviewing participants one-to-one regarding data gathered in the form of imagery, arguably assists in avoiding subjectivity that arises from reading into artwork, opposed to insights that emerge from asking the artist the meanings intended. I have chosen to present three case studies and have done so because I

wanted a small enough sample of teachers to study their experiences in depth, but also because there were three sets of photographs that I found stood out amongst the rest, either because they created much dialogue and conversation during the focus group, or because they involved images in which I thought needed unpicking further in order to fully apprehend their intended meaning.

Woodside (2010) identifies four principle objectives of case study. The first of these is sensemaking, relating to how the participant makes sense of stimuli, focusing this on 'what they perceive,' framing this and 'what they have done' (2010: 6). Woodside also acknowledges that mixed method research methodologies lend themselves to effective case study due to the way in which the participant may be observed and interacted with in a variety of different settings and contexts (Ibid). In two of the case studies of teachers undertaken, the research participants were visited at their schools and in the third case, the teacher worked alongside myself as a colleague in the same department, which enabled me an even greater insight into their professional life and experiences.

Stake (1995) lists the different roles of the case study researcher and explores the ways in which these roles may be played in order to draw out meaning from the research. These multiple roles can be understood as; teacher, advocate, evaluator, biographer' and 'interpreter' (1995: 91 – 99). From the teacher perspective the role adopted is based on conceptions of liberation in relation to the increase in knowledge and understanding, but also hinges on the notion that part of the researchers role is to 'inform' (1995: 93). As the participants are themselves teachers there is a collaborative approach to enhancing overall knowledge and understanding mutually as key issues and themes arise through discussions, both group and one-to-one. There is also the element of communication to the reader when presenting a case study in which those who are less knowledgeable about the lives of art teachers become further informed. Stake (1995) argues that this is the case for 'researchers trying to teach their readers' where one must

question 'how familiar are the words, how similar are the experiences, how attractive are the vignettes and assertions that populate the report?' (Ibid). The answers to these questions are what the case researcher will inevitably become an advocate for, hence the 'advocate' role that may be adopted. Stake also makes the claim that in constructing a case study there is the role assumed as an evaluator (1995: 96). Evaluation will be a key part of the methods I am to use in respect to this research, whether it be evaluating my own thoughts, values and practice in a reflexive sense or the contribution of other artist teachers. Earlier in section 5.3: Auto-ethnography and Biography as Research, I identified the importance of recognition and inclusion of a biographical perspective, something that Stake also recognises as a role that can be taken by the case study researcher, as they understand that 'life occurs against changing times, that it is beset with problems, that it has patterns and phrases, that it has uniqueness, yet holds much in common with the lives around it (1995: 97). Although as already stated, the case study is further concerned with particularisation, there are generalisations that can be made based upon comparisons across cases. The final role that Stake claims the case study researcher may take on is that of interpreter (1995: 5). Of course interpretation is integral to the analysis of research and not only will I be interpreting the work, ideas and viewpoint of others, but also being continually reflexive of my own, plus open to the interpretation of others in relation to this. Cases will be identified based upon the photographic submissions offered and whether these require a greater understanding of context in order for their meaning to be uncovered and also with respect to participants self – selecting for further in – depth research, alongside factors as simple as geography and location, which participants I can regularly visit in their educational settings.

The case studies will be explored from a variety of different perspectives and triangulated research methods, analysing visual photo – voice responses, one – to one interviews, contributions to focus group discussions and insights gathered from notes and insights, recorded in my own reflexive journal / sketchbook. This may beg the question as to how these

multiple methods may be assimilated in order to create a detailed picture, which will be discussed in the next section 5.6, Wertheimer and Gestalt approach.

5.6 Wertheimer and Gestalt Approach

Composition

Composition within the context of art and design may be understood as:

> '…something which is put together – an arrangement of different elements. In art the visual elements are combined by paying attention to things such as balance, harmony, rhythm and contrast to give a unified whole. Sometimes, composition is used to refer to one piece of artwork, such as a painting' (Hickman, 2005: 96).

With the above definition in mind King and Wertheimer (2005) explains how when setting research and findings within a Gestalt framework 'everything must be viewed in terms of its place, role, within the whole which it is a part' (2005: 2). The individual parts of this research are the formal elements which together make the whole composition. The focus on the whole, beyond the sum of the individual parts, whilst still fully recognising them, is an element of Gestalt theory which has influenced my approach to this research.

The photograph below (Fig. 22) taken by James, a research participant, is a good example of a carefully considered composition. I analysed some of the images which were received in the answering of the brief offered to teachers, that were further difficult to extract an intended meaning from. This image has been carefully constructed in terms of the composition created through the focus of the lens, but also in relation to how the individual parts create an interesting three dimensional installation. It provides a clear example of the ways in which individual parts work together in order to compose the whole, yet the installation would be incomplete without these separate parts.
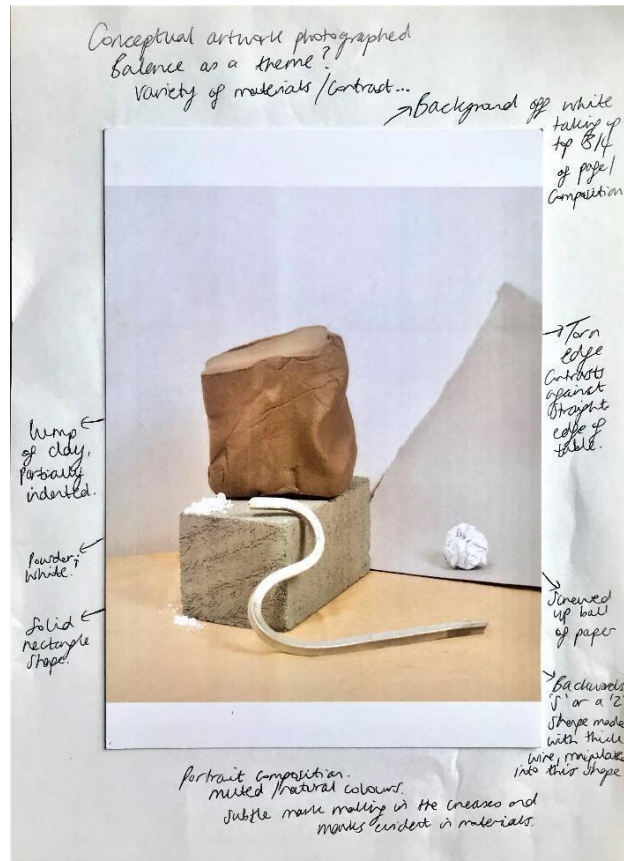
Fig. 22 Photograph taken by James, a research participant, after being initially analysed

One of the typical approaches used in qualitative research is that of Grounded Theory. Strauss (1997) claims that Grounded Theory is a popular method when 'generating theory is the researchers principle aims' (1997:vii) which applies to a certain degree within the context of this research, but not in entirety. Martin and Gynnild (2011) explain that one of the key features of Grounded Theory, drawing largely upon a Glaserian approach, can be understood as taking as approach to qualitative research that 'demonstrates the interwoven complexity of developmental processes of research in the digital age,' (2011:12) Flick (2014) argues that this is achieved by 'increasing complexity by including context' (2014:138) which includes considerations such as careful use of 'theoretical sampling,' (ibid) and by analysing empirical material to inform theoretical theories as they emerge. There is also the suggestion made by Flick, when building on Strauss that a researcher should 'suspend whatever a priori theoretical knowledge they bring to the field' (2014: 138). However, this is arguably very difficult to do

as it is not always so easy to clearly differentiate between knowledge that is a priori or a posteriori within the profession you are studying. To be able to engage in the process of research there must ultimately be some a priori knowledge before a posteriori knowledge can be gained or provide a basis for further knowledge to be constructed, and a priori knowledge surely must in many respects be virtually impossible to fully suspend. Flick (2014) also acknowledges however that qualitative research is that the process is not a linear one and opposed to being strictly theory – driven and theories being 'applied to the subjects being studied,' they are instead 'discovered' (Flick, 2014:137).

Wertheimer (1944) offers a Gestalt approach, which deals with many of the issues that arise from Grounded theory. Wertheimer explains the basic notion that underpins Gestalt as:

> 'there are contexts in which what is happening in the whole cannot be deduced from the characteristics of the separate pieces, but conversely; what happens to a part of the whole is, in clear – cut cases, determined by the laws of the inner structure of its whole' (1944: 84).

There is a recognition from Wertheimer (1944) that when it comes to research methods Gestalt theory 'did not only emerge from research work; it became a vehicle for research' (Ibid) in an attempt to resolve problems that arose from 'the attempted separation of the method of natural sciences from the humanistic disciplines' (1944:82).

Wertheimer and Riezler (1944) sum up the essence of the Gestalt approach adopted, when claiming that it developed form a 'reluctance to believe or acknowledge beforehand any split between organic and inorganic nature, nature and man, body and soul, science and history' (1944:80).

An analogy of a melody is provided as a means of explaining the Gestalt method, which captures the relationship between the parts and the whole highlighted by Wertheimer (1944), the perfect melody

'…cannot be explained by starting from the elements and building up the form as a sum of relations between these elements…..the single tone is what is in the whole – as part, not as piece; and the whole breathes in every part. The melody is remembered, recognised; we can transpose a melody, change all its elements, even some relations between them, but we still recognise it' (1944:78).

King and Wertheimer (2005) claim that 'everything must be viewed in terms of its place, role, within the whole which it is a part' (2005: 2). Although at points throughout the research process individual parts of the data will be analysed independently, they will always ultimately be viewed within the whole, but also with recognition of 'learning / creating / inquiring in, from, though, and with situations' whereby in the 'in-between spaces' may provide an opportunity to 'make connections that are often unanticipated' (Irwin et al, 2006 : 72).

The appeal of the Wertheimer (1944) approach, in relation to this research and the theoretical framework and methodologies which underpin it, are the ways in which there is a recognition of 'artificial boundaries between different phase of a human life, rigid barriers between work and play or between one intellectual field or discipline and another' which according to King and Wertheimer (2005) 'serve only to interfere with the human striving to meet each situation, each problem, directly' (2005: 2) This links to the different identities and spaces in-between these communicated in relation to the a/r/tographical method, but also corresponds to the ways in which subjects are often taught exclusively from one another in schools in England, rather than further acknowledging their interdisciplinary nature and how this may link to learning, in the life – long sense, opposed to in preparation for a standardised test.

As highlighted by West, Anderson and Merill (2007) 'the parts of a story or life history are best understood in the light of the whole, and the researcher needs to immerse herself, consciously and unconsciously, in the entire experience, in the search of the form of gestalt of a life or story' (2007: 16 – 17).

5.7 <u>Summary of Methodology</u>

Throughout the methodology chapter research methods, instruments and tools have been explored and the overall research design clarified. Much like with using Gestalt, these individual components will be holistically analysed and triangulated in order to collate a diverse data set which offers an intrinsically human narrative and accounts for the liminal and ambiguous.

With research ethics remaining central to the gathering of data, with qualitative mixed arts - based methods offering the possibility for diverse findings, the next chapter, Analysis, will provide the first window to these insights and corresponding findings, using the analogy provided by Wertheimer (1944) of the of essence of a composition of a piece of music, we may begin to hear, or view, the parts which create the melody.

6. Analysis

The analysis of diverse data in relation to this research has taken several forms. The justification and reasoning behind the decisions made to analyse using these means have been explained previously in the Methodology, chapter 5. To summarise, the photographs provided by artist teacher participants in response to a brief have been analysed as a set independently of question or request using key aspects of the models of E. Feldman (1994), Manning (1987) and M. Feldman (1995), creating codes to draw upon emerging themes. These themes were identified and emerged through the analysis explored in this section, using signs, symbols and the metaphors described and shared by participants in the photographs, alongside the words communicated through interviews. The same set of photographs and participant responses have been analysed using the categories and brief as a means of organisation, this is with the hope of walking a reader through the experience of the exhibition itself, but also brings another perspective and alternative meanings with regards to the images explored when grouped together.

My own responses to the brief as an artist, researcher and teacher will be revealed which will help to place and critically balance my own potential bias and assumptions surrounding art education in secondary schools. I will also use insights recorded and personal reflections gathered in the form of a sketchbook and research journal to piece together areas for further inquiry.

The results of analysis of discussions held in the form of semi – structured and focus group interviews will also be explored through both semiotic and thematic methods detailed further in 5.3.3 Artefact, Curatorial, Semiotic and Thematic Analysis. The findings of the above will correlate (alongside points of interest revealed through case studies) to provide areas of discussion, presented in the form of the key themes that have emerged through this holistic approach to analysis.

This section will begin with an analysis of images; the photographs submitted for exhibition by participants, viewed as a data set independent of the question responded to, or context in which they were captured.

In order to clarify which participants took part in which areas of the research, Table 6 indicates who contributed to which activity, and also the number of time each participant and their individual setting was visited. Some participants who took part in the photo – voice activity did not attend the focus group and exhibition, others who did attend the focus group were not interviewed 1 – 2 – 1 as a follow up. The selection of participants and reasoning for these decisions have already been discussed in the previous ethics and research design chapters.

Table 6 – table to detail which participants took part in the differing parts of the research and how many times visited

Participant	Visit (number of these and type)	Photo - voice	Exhibition and Focus group	1 – 2- 1	Follow up visit / email
Gatecrasher	0	0	Yes	No	No
Eva	1 (Introductory visit in order to introduce project and give a copy of the brief and consent)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes (email)
Elaine	3 (1 x Introductory visit in order to introduce project and give a copy of the brief and consent) 1 x prior to the photographs being	Yes	Yes	Yes (2 weeks post focus group)	Yes (email) and visit

	taken to visit teacher in surroundings) 1 x for interview post focus group				
Helen	Multiple as I worked alongside this teacher as a colleague	Yes	Yes	Yes (1 week post focus group)	Yes (email) and I worked alongside
Julian	0 (brief and consent was shared via email)	Yes	No	No	Yes (email)
Isla	3 (1 x Introductory visit in order to introduce project and give a copy of the brief and consent) 1 x prior to the photographs being taken to visit teacher in surroundings) 1 x for interview post focus group	Yes	Yes	Yes (6 weeks after the focus group)	Yes (email) and visit
Alice	Multiple as I worked alongside this teacher as a colleague	Yes	Yes	Yes (8 weeks after focus group)	Yes (email) and I worked alongside
David	Multiple as I worked alongside this teacher as a colleague	Yes	No	Yes (4 weeks after focus group)	Yes (email) and I worked alongside
Alex	1 x Introductory visit in order to introduce project and give a copy of the brief and consent	Yes	Yes	No	Yes (email)
James	1 x Introductory visit in order to introduce project and give a copy of the brief and consent	Yes	No	No	Yes (email)
Imogen	Yes (5 x setting up and organising the exhibition, discussing the project and using the gallery space)	No	Yes	No	Yes (email) and visit
Interloper	No	No	Yes	No	No
Jodie	2 (1 x to introduce and offer brief for photographs as a pilot) 1 x to interview and discuss photovoice brief	Yes	No	Yes (1 x month after photographs had been taken)	Yes (to share some of the work exhibited and to thank)

6.1 Image – based Analysis

When analysing the photographs captured by participants in response to the photo voice challenge I decided to only include those that were selected for exhibition. This decision was based upon the fact that there were several layers to the analysis of data and this particular set informed following discussions in the focus group. The selection process of images to analyse was based upon:

1) The number of times that an object appeared in response to a question.

2) The aesthetic qualities – creating a balance of those answers that were literal and those that were abstract.

3) Quality of the images

4) A representation of each individuals contribution across the data set

For this particular analysis I have not included the images taken by participants of their classrooms and learning spaces before and after use, as this was to give an insight into individual teacher narratives and to ensure that members of the public who attended the exhibition could view the works within the context of a classroom. These images told me something of the way in which teachers worked and used their spaces, but did not contribute directly towards the key themes and codes generated.

Using key aspects of the E. Feldman (1994), Manning (1987) and M. Feldman (1995) approach I have created five key categories, regardless and independently of the question or brief posed, in order to attempt to view the data set as a whole. Observing the set of images in this way has

allowed me to draw out themes independently of those already inherent within the brief for photographs given to the participants.

Within each of these categories I started to create codes and from these draw out key themes:
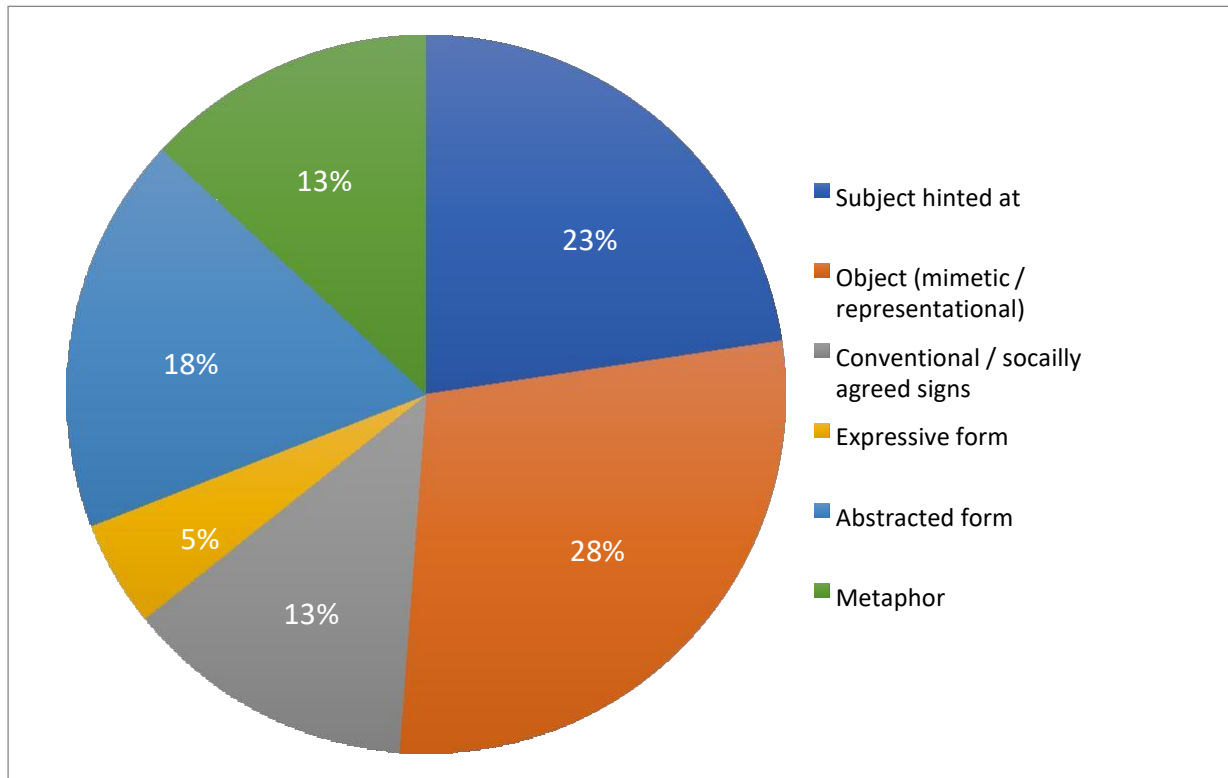
Fig. 23 Pie chart detailing number of photographs by category.

Table 7 - Table detailing categories and key themes from photographs

Category	Number and Type	Themes
Subject hinted at	B&W – 9	Communication
	Colour – 10	Connectedness and relationships to other humans and artworks
	Composition (person key focal point) – 8	Expression
	Composition (artwork key) – 11	Thoughtfulness and introspection

		Joy
		Pride
Object (mimetic / representational)	B&W – 3 Colour – 21 Composition (object main focal point) – 16 Composition (Object surrounding by a further detailed layout, not direct focal point) – 9	Function and utility Celebration Narrative hinted at – through human interaction with an object
Conventional signs (socially agreed upon within the culture of the teaching profession)	B&W – 1 Colour – 10 Composition abstracted – 4 Object clearly identified, further representational – 7 With the addition of text and / or numbers as key to communication of message – 8 (remaining 3 without)	Quantitative data Stereotypes of what art and design *is* in a secondary school context and what sort of activities are engaged in Presentation boards and displays Assessment
Expressive form – what is felt (trying to appeal to emotion in the viewer)	Black and White – 4 Colour – 6 Metaphor or abstracted – 2	Anger Frustration Loneliness Joy Play Pride
Abstracted form (close up)	B&W - 2 Colour – 9 Composition (inclusion of an object) – 10 Materials only – 1	Frustration Anger
Metaphor	B&W – 2 Colour – 12 Composition (pattern and lines) – 7 Colour and organic shapes – 8	Experimentation Play Expression Building on curiosity and inquiry

The number of photographs that fell within each category created a series of interesting

questions. The vast majority of the images involved an object as the main focal point and were

mimetic / representational. This may have in some respects been influenced by the photography brief posed to participants as two of the questions involved taking pictures of 'an object' valued by teachers and students, however there were many other questions on the brief which did not require an object to be photographed, however despite this they were chosen as a means of communication. Many of these images hinted at utility and function of materials used within the art department of a secondary school. Some were of artworks created by students and therefore in many respects communicated a celebration of the outcomes produced by learners. The remaining photographs alluded to a narrative in the sense that they commented on the human interaction with an object, be it teacher or student, the object becoming a bridge between input and output, process and outcome and metaphor and meaning.

When considering the E. Feldman model of image analysis and art criticism referred to in chapter 5.3.3 Artifact, Curatorial, Semiotic and Thematic Analysis, the first of the four stages of decoding an image is the descriptive. When naming the objects photographed we are left with a wide variety, from tool to ornament.

Many of the photographs in which did not involve an object instead used a subject as the main focal point. This was something which I had expected, despite there being instructions to avoid any images in which a student could be identified due to research ethics (see chapter 5.2 Ethics). This fundamental human element certainly permeated the photographs taken. These images projected meanings that could be identified as comments on communication and connectedness (between people or towards artworks). Other photographs relayed human emotions and the expression of these, such as joy, pride, thoughtfulness, self – awareness and the act of introspection. These images were on the surface about making meaning from either interactions with others or through the experience of engaging in the creation of, or alternatively an experience with, artworks.

Another category in which 18% of the photographs fell were those which communicated through use of abstracted form and, or, taking close – up images. The highly abstracted images were reduced down to mere textures, colours and shapes, others were clearly close – up images of recognisable materials or objects, such as zoomed - in areas of paint on a palette or sections of paintings. There seemed to be a link across the abstracted form category and photographs that used metaphor. Until the photographs and their meanings were discussed with the participants and when taken out of context the understanding of metaphor was limited, however many of the images that initially appeared to fall into the abstracted form category were in fact captured with metaphor in mind. When answering a question or following a brief where an answer must be provided visually, metaphor as a tool for communication will to some extent always be present. Images of objects that at first sight appeared to be nothing more than a simple statement were often in fact intended as metaphors for deeper meaning which was not expressed until further information was provided by the participants in terms of explanation and reasoning. An example of this is an image of spilt ink cascading across a table, which on later inquiry provided a statement about the lack of respect that students had for the limited equipment, materials and resources that the department offered. This was an image that would have been difficult to de-code based on composition and subject matter alone, without making inferences driven entirely by guesswork. The opportunity to answer questions with a single image opened up alternative ways of looking, but also interesting discussions due to multiple interpretations of what a photograph could be communicating. The photographs that fell in the abstract form category perhaps achieved this ambiguity more than most, as it was not just the reasoning and layers of meaning behind the images that posed further questions, but in many cases the actual subject matter of the photograph itself.

The use of metaphorical imagery was a clear choice that participants had made in order to visually communicate responses to the series of questions and brief provided. This in many

respects indicated thoughtful engagement with the research task provided, as artist teachers often composed and placed objects to affect, or used the arrangement of objects to create an analogy for a situation or feeling that they had experienced. Some of these were self – explanatory and others needed unpicking further through discussions with the artist teacher research participant. Some of the metaphors relied upon conventional / socially agreed signs and 13% of the images captured required an understanding of these in order to draw out the underlying meanings and intentions. Within the world of education there are numerous abbreviations, acronyms, and phrases commonly used. This becomes a language spoken amongst teachers, the similar issues and nuisances occur across schools of various types and these are negotiated and commonly understood amongst those who are familiar with the teaching profession. When it came to the selection of photographs for exhibition I was mindful of the fact that the work would be exhibited in a public gallery and therefore for those who are not in the teaching profession there may be a risk of loss of meaning due to not being confidently versed in this language, however visually the photographs were free to interpret and viewers would ultimately take away their own understandings from the images read.

There were certain images from this set of visual works and data that stood out as affectively highlighting reoccurring issues that art teachers frequently discussed with both one another and myself. They also clearly communicated some of the themes that have emerged from the photographs; these have been used as starting points for further analysis and discussion in chapter 7, Discussions and Findings.

The next section 6.1.1 Images from the Exhibition, is written with the intention of taking a tour of the exhibition of photographs captured by the artist participant teachers, and is organised by the brief and questions that they were asked to follow and answer.

6.1.1 Images from exhibition

When analysing the photo voice responses as data there were three main angles in which I wanted to explore the imagery. These were as both a curator and viewer of the exhibition with photographs organised by question and then afterwards analysing these same photographs through theme and use of semiotics, regardless of the question or brief they answered. This has allowed me to view the photographs from a variety of different angles. Previously, in 6.1 – Image – based analysis I have examined the same set of images as I will explore further in this section, however outside any organisation of the question in which they correspond, having used a means of extracting themes and semiotics using a E.Feldman (1994) model of art criticism, combined with Manning's (1987) understanding of semiotics and signs. Below I will explore the images selected for exhibition in relation to the key themes that evolved in relation to the question that they intended to answer, free from any overriding framework other than the questions posed.

The 'A/R/Tographic Photo-voices and Artifacts' exhibition was held in November 2017 at the Turner Contemporary Gallery, Margate, in the Clore Learning Studio space. It was advertised as 'an exploration into the value of visual arts education in secondary schools today through photographic arts – based research methods.' A private view of the work, alongside a focus group discussion was held and then following this it was open to the general public.

The following artists statement was presented alongside the photographs exhibited, which read: 'A/r/tographic, Photo-voices and Artefacts is an arts–based research project culminating in a photography exhibition, the images and artworks created by art teachers across Kent, with numerous schools represented.

Themes surrounding the current value of art and design education are explored, providing insights into the narratives of art teachers and drawing both interpretations and emergent understandings from the liminal and ambiguous spaces in - between the identities of artist, teacher and researcher.

Through living inquiry, art - making and aesthetic encounter art teachers' photographs act as visual communication and voice. This is combined with the analysis of artefacts, everyday classroom objects and tools, whereby meaning is collaboratively and mutually constructed and critical discourse instigated.

Elliot Eisner claims that 'the arts' position in the school curriculum symbolises to the young what adults believe is important' (Eisner, E, 2002, The Arts and the Creation of Mind. What the Arts Teach and How It Shows, Yale University Press, pp.70 – 92).

Using thematic analysis and through the curatorial process, Emma Sutton, an art teacher and post – graduate researcher will be using the images and artworks produced throughout this project to explore current issues that influence art education in local secondary schools, also considering ways that art teachers may act as agents for change, becoming activists and promoters for the arts, through the arts.' (Appendix O)

Lackey (2008) proposes that 'an art exhibition should grow out of carefully considered intentions that include attempts to communicate as well as to create conditions in which others may respond to and learn from the display' (2008:34). In this respect it is important to be transparent about intentions in order for viewers to respond and interact with the work(s).

The work itself was exhibited on twelve individual A1 sized boards, presented on easels and each showed a selection of photographs taken by art teachers, with the corresponding question that was posed displayed above. In order to analyse and select the images I used common themes that became apparent as the data was received, I also looked for similarities and differences between photographs and the objects and concepts explored. The discussions with art teachers, both individually in person and via email and the results from these conversations were further disseminated during a focus group discussion. In a certain sense the curation of the work had already been decided by the space offered by the gallery and the organisation of photographs in response to research questions. What was not as apparent was which images should be included and how these would provide a story and picture of art education as seen through the eyes of art teachers. As stated by Brown (2011) through photographs a distinction is made between 'merely seeing and incisive looking' and in what is captured by the lens, a 'framework that mediates, shapes and constrains our capacity to experience, interpret, understand and communicate intelligibly to others' is created that may also 'reciprocally mediate their language' (2011:203).

The exhibition itself started with a range of images teachers had taken before their classroom and learning space had been used and ended with a series of photographs of the same space after it had been occupied. There were also a series of artefacts taken directly from the classroom as representative objects found across schools and art departments.

Some of the easels had been loaned from the art department in the school in which I myself worked as an art teacher, these had the paint stains and marks visible from previous use. This was a subtle reference and reminder of the context of the narratives shared in what was now a very different space to those in which they would ordinarily occupy.

The clean white walls of the gallery allowed the viewer to take note of the photographs on display, the space surrounding them and the plinth in which objects from the classroom now lay gave these artefacts a presence, paintbrushes otherwise discarded in sinks or paint pallets stored in cupboards. Delacruz and Bales (2010) discuss the power of portfolios, scrapbooks and sketchbooks to create history and tell stories in an article reviewing a study conducted in East Central Illinois with trainee teachers evaluating their learning journeys. They claim that 'personal, unique, and everyday encounters and ideas from the content of artists' sketchbooks, document artists' surroundings, and provide cryptic clues about their thoughts and feelings' (2010:36). This was something that I had hoped to achieve through the photo-voice task assigned to teachers and the way in which the work had been curated, yet through the use of a camera and photography opposed to in the format of a sketchbook. One sketchbook was exhibited however and this was a visual journal which enabled me to grapple with key underlying concepts that supported the theoretical framework of the research through exploration of the relationship between word and image, but also a physical place for allowing for reflections, themes and ideas to emerge through liminal and ambiguous space (subchapter 5.3.2 Arts – based Research Methods, A/r/tography, Photo-voice and Liminality in relation to the work of Irwin and also Appendix A).

In order to analyse the photographs and explain any curatorial decisions I have structured each analysis by the question answered through imagery and photo-voice. This is to replicate the way in which the work was organised for exhibition and would have been viewed by the audience, so that you may visit as a reader.

Q1. Photograph an object in your classroom that you value highly
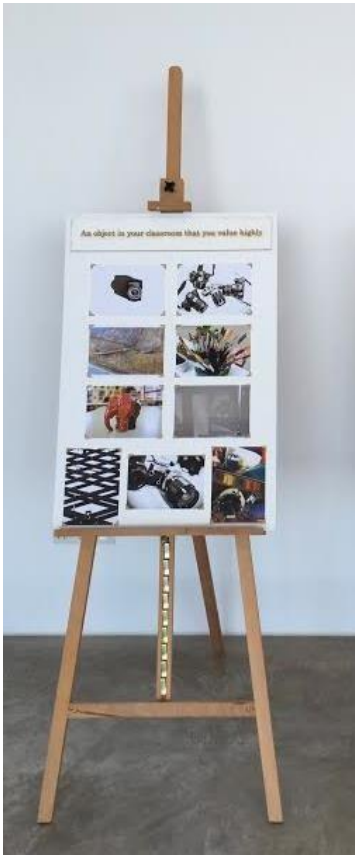
Fig. 24 Full board of photographs from exhibition

Fig. 24 Full board of photographs from exhibition

When receiving responses to this particular question a camera was captured more than any other object, so when selecting images to exhibit from the photographs received I felt it was also important that this was communicated in the number of times that a camera was visually represented. Two of the images presented were of a camera (top right and centre bottom) and one of a light meter (Fig. 25). Photography itself was something that many art departments that informed this study offered as a course to students, but also it was the means by which teachers were capturing everyday objects, their experiences: the 'data', the camera was their voice.

Fig. 25 Light meter photo-voice response taken by Alice

Light was something that reoccurred as a theme when art teachers were asked as to what they valued highly. The light meter (Fig. 25) represented the importance of light in the classroom but also a battle that this specific teacher had in terms of securing the equipment in order to teach a studio lighting unit with a group of students. The light meter represented to this art teacher the success they had in ensuring that students had the sufficient tools they needed in order to create the developmental work and outcomes required.

Another teacher dealt with the theme of light in an alternative way, using an image which created extreme contrasts by using shadow to represent the importance of light in their learning space, this same concept was explored by another artist, art teacher and researcher in a similar way. This image captured the subtle and delicate shadows on the walls. These images were all submitted in black and white or overwhelmingly monotone, which added further to the meaning and message that they were communicating. To these teachers and artists light was very important.

Fig. 26 Ceramic elephant photo – voice response taken by Elaine

The image of a ceramic elephant (Fig. 26) was something that as an observer was ambiguous in terms of meaning, one could interpret several reasons as to why the participant may have taken an image of this object.

On initially receiving this picture I thought that it may be an image representing the value in working with ceramics, the outcomes that students create or the value of objects in general to

an arts specialist. It was only when receiving an explanatory email from the participant who submitted this image, Elaine, that its personal meaning was revealed and this was reiterated and discussed at further length in a one – to – one interview. The elephant was an object that Elaine had created during her PGCE teacher training and it was a reminder of the journey to becoming a teacher and the pleasure, enjoyment and challenge of the course. This object and image had brought a different kind of narrative to the set of photographs, it was a further personal contribution, which had been brought to the classroom setting by the teacher, opposed to found amongst interactions with everyday items or representative of a certain phenomena, such as light.

The remainder of images were all depicting objects, although the objects themselves were different, ranging from palette knives to printing inks. The message behind these all seems to be the similar concept that what was valuable to a teacher was an implement by which to make a mark. When thinking back to the very origins of art and visual communication it is perhaps no surprise that tools and objects by which to visually express ones ideas, emotions and insights are of high value. The image depicting a palette knife was taken by an art teacher and artist who engages in their own painting practice, David, so this object was valuable to both themselves and the students alike. The background of this photograph is a table heavily indented, layered and stained with a series of marks, clearly made throughout several years of art practice. This photograph will be returned to and analysed in further depth in 7.3, The Artist Teacher and the Palette Knife.

When selecting particular objects as artefacts to exhibit alongside the photographs a camera and the reoccurring mark-making tools that are to be found in an art classroom became a clear choice in response to this particular question posed.

This first request on the brief for artist teachers clearly lent itself to analysis using the very first stage of the E. Feldman (1994) model of Description with the visual communication being delivered through the capturing of objects, it also meant that interpretation tended to be derived through representation.

Q.2Photograph an object in your classroom that you think your students value highly

The objects photographed in response to this question nearly all hinted at practical engagement with either a material or process and implied some sort of hands-on activity.

This suggested that it was the practical engagement with the art that teachers felt students valued the most, or the very materials and resources needed to create physical outcomes. This easel was placed next to the visual response to the teachers' object in which they valued most highly so that a direct parallel, or indeed contrast, could be made between the two.

Fig. 27 Q2 Full board of photographs from exhibition

Both had a clear value for technology, whether this be in the form of a camera, light meter or mobile phone. There was also the similarity in terms of the value for practical equipment which aids in the creative process and experience. However the teachers' responses appeared to surround practical issues found in the learning space, such as lighting or a personal object acting as a reminder and providing ways which drive them forward in terms of professional identity and ideals, linking perhaps to their own practice as a artist. There was also a greater emphasis on tools to record learning that had taken place, whereas their notions of what their students valued were based more upon tools in which to make the art, explore the media and materials and visually communicate through the creation of outcome(s).

The chosen composition of the photograph also remained similar, in terms of the object being central to the frame and there being little else in the background. This was partially dictated by the brief, however nowhere did it state how to compose the photograph.

Fig. 28 Rollers and craft knife photo-voice responses taken by Julian (left) and David (right).

The rollers perhaps communicated another way of applying paint or ink to a surface or the anticipation and excitement of learning a new technique and process. The craft knife hinted at risk – taking, trust in students to use a potentially dangerous piece of equipment and again implied that it would be used as an object to interact and adapt something else in order to create something new, a work of art, a development piece, an experiment.

A photograph of a pile of sketchbooks suggested to me that students valued their work and the work that they produced during their art lessons, evidencing their progress and personal journeys but also as objects in themselves, they may contain certain pieces of work that are important to them, that they spent both time and effort on, something that they now care deeply about.

The light box image was something that I felt communicated the need for students to develop confidence, often for students to feel that they can approach the work they may feel they need to use a light box to make a start, it implied a nurturing of confidence, whilst at the same time a message about how dependent students may have become and an unwillingness to make mistakes. Often students like to 'get it right' in order to have the confidence to 'get it wrong' further down the line.

Technology also featured as something that student's valued, mobile phones and computers as means of communication and a medium in which young people feel very comfortable using. There was a repetition of the theme of comfort in a familiar material with the light box, mentioned above, but also the image of a mobile phone. However, many of the images captured by teachers that described the objects that they believed their students most highly valued in the classroom also indicated the exact opposite of comfort in the familiar and suggested a want to take risks, using materials that they had not explored before, or objects which they may not use so frequently in other areas of the school curriculum. This may indirectly link however to either the teachers preference in terms of whether they encourage risk – taking in their learning spaces and classrooms and in their pedagogical approach or not, yet also the settings in which the teachers are working and the age groups in which they are teaching. Either way, these objects were all tools in which to 'do' and to 'make' or record the results of these practical endeavours. If not, the objects were useful in terms of their contribution in this process, such as the pile of paper towels, in this case they were heavily used, always being repeatedly topped

up, which suggested that students had created mess which needed clearing away, or had dirty hands which needed washing and drying, they are representational of the 'doing' and 'making' and therefore also in many respects fall into a similar category.

When analysing these photographs within the context of the full set the majority fell into the category 'object (mimetic / representational)' which is unsurprising considering the brief was to 'photograph an object' and in terms of key themes they hinted largely at function and utility, however some, like the teachers' most valued objects explored previously, did correspond to a narrative in terms of human interaction with particular objects, or the stories created by and with them.

Q.3

Capture one image that you think helps to demonstrate the value of art education for your students

Fig. 29 Q3 Full board of photographs from exhibition

The image captured of muddled letters, amongst which individual words have been composed to create the sentence 'making sense of the world' verbally signals the meaning intended by this teacher in terms of what they thought the value of art education was for their students, a vehicle to be used in order to assist in making sense of the world around them. The image itself very cleverly visually communicated how confusing the world can be, with muddled letters strewn around and overlapped in a random and disorganised fashion, with the piecing together of individual letters in an attempt to create a sense of a moment of organisation and

Fig. 30 Making sense of the world photovoice response taken by Eva

reason amongst the chaos. Other words which can be identified are 'what' and 'why,' hinting at the searching and questioning which takes place when engaging in the activity of 'making sense' of the world, the critical thinking

involved. As stated by Eisner (2002) 'students acquire tools in the courses taken for making sense of the world' (2002: 85). When looking at this image the viewer is immersed in the experience of searching and questioning in order to make sense of the image presented.

Many teachers responded to questions of value for students with images that celebrated their work and achievements, most commonly in the form of the work being displayed or exhibited. This may have denoted the satisfaction that often accompanies finished outcomes, but also the feeling of pride that compliments work being exhibited. Something that the teacher themselves were on some level engaging with in the production of images responding to a brief in which they knew would ultimately be exhibited at the local art gallery. This also brought about questions surrounding links between school art and the art world outside of education and how it is not only the process which is important, but reaching a final outcome or aim and seeing something to fruition.

One image (Fig. 31) was of a group of students intended to capture the way in which this group had a close bond and learning community amongst themselves as 'art students.' They had just completed a successful lesson which the teacher, Alice, had felt was outstanding in terms of both their engagement and outcomes and their attitude towards the subject matter, taking risks and learning had been exemplary and this enjoyment in their learning and togetherness was a moment in which this teacher chose to capture in order to answer this question in the brief. The way in which this photograph had been captured also implied the memories that these students would take away with them from their experiences of working together, as the photograph had a quality which hinted at history, perhaps due to the colour and use of an old technique, that of the pinhole.

Fig. 31 Art students photovoice response taken by Alice

Another image that hinted at the value of art education for students lying in a connection and interaction beyond themselves was the image of hands constructing three-dimensional clay and plasterwork, where a student was interacting with a material and process by being immersed in making. The opportunity for students to explore, experiment and create was something that this teacher communicated thorough the work.

Many of the key themes hinted at visually through these particular photographs involved the subject being hinted at and linked to pride and celebration such as the high volume of images that depicted displays of students work, but also to communication and connectedness, either towards humanity or artworks. The latter theme emerged through photographs such as the groups of students stood together, alongside the experiential interaction between student and material expressed through the photograph that captured an individual working with clay.

Q4. Compose an image that you think effectively communicates art and design's place as a subject within your current school curriculum

Responses to this particular brief were extremely varied in terms of the ways in which teachers chose to approach visual communication of a complex issue. Sadly the vast majority of responses detonated negative imagery, conveying messages that hinted at undervalue and fragility.

Fig. 33 Fragility photovoice response taken by Alex

Fig. 32 Q4 Full board of photographs from exhibition

The image that profoundly captured the fragility of art and designs position within the secondary school curriculum was that of a pile of eggshells (Fig. 33), some cracked, hollow and broken and one lying amongst these still intact. Reflecting back to E. Feldman's (1994) series of questions in which a viewer may ask in order to interpret an image as a part of the wider critical process, the work is trying to me sell me the concept of fragility and a delicate balance and both think and feel in reaction to this, the balance of light and dark and contrast in the photograph emulates the current instability of the subject in schools. Or perhaps the curriculum is shattered, but if this is the case which subject or areas are still intact?

Fig. 34 Classroom photovoice response taken by Alice

An image that was of particular interest was that of a teacher's classroom taken using a pinhole camera (Fig. 34). When questioned further about this photograph the teacher, Alice, illuminated that they had used a technique to effect in order to describe visually the isolation, loneliness and overwhelming feeling that 'she may as well not exist' as far as her position within the wider school and in the eyes of the senior leadership team. The photograph had been taken using a very long exposure time and pinhole lens with the teacher sat at her desk during the entire exposure time, the outcome of this was that when the photograph was developed she appeared as a mere shadow, perfectly communicating the presence she felt that she had. During the exposure time she had been sat at her desk preforming administration tasks that she felt compelled to complete, yet felt would have little impact on students or learning in the classroom. Knowing this information brought new meaning to the image. On the surface level the black and white and compositional elements of this picture create a mood of isolation and desolation, yet beyond description and interpretation lies another layer of meaning in the very tools and materials used to create the picture, including the teacher themselves acting as an invisible subject matter. Being present in their own artwork, but at the same time unseen, mirrors the place of art and design in the school curriculum for this teacher. When first

interpreting this image I felt that there was an overall ethereal feel to this photograph, in both the sense of the ghostly and unearthly, as if we are looking at a classroom, being in it whilst also removed. In this sense it was a powerful visual depiction offering a glimpse of what it may feel like to be an art and design teacher in a secondary school environment that favours certain subjects over others.

Fig. 35 Bottom of the pile photovoice response taken by Helen

This subject of undervalue was reinforced with images such as a red arrow clearly pointing to the bottom of a pile of books, a sign used to denote that art and design finds itself 'at the bottom of the pile' of subjects represented within the secondary school curriculum (Fig. 35). As a viewer our eye is led from the bottom left of the image, with the addition of a blurred background, to the focal point of a pile of sketchbooks. The teacher who took this photograph, Helen, spoke passionately about how she felt that certain subjects were underrepresented and undervalued within her current school curriculum.

An image that had a significant impact on me as a researcher, but also generated much discussion amongst teacher participants was the image of a skull. The initial reaction to this was that art is dead in schools, or is a subject that is perhaps dying out, but when interviewing the teacher who took the photograph, Isla, there was a rich and moving story encapsulated in

this image. This is something that will be returned to in the case study chapter 7.2 The Skeleton of Art and Design.

Q5. Take an image that sums up what you enjoy the most about teaching art and design

There was a definite theme of celebration communicated through the images shared in response to the brief to capture what art teachers enjoyed about teaching their subject. Whether this be through the close-up of students work where they had excelled, or through the expression of the experience of the student. What was apparent when initially viewing the responses offered in response to this particular brief was that the enjoyment for teachers was found in the enjoyment and achievement of their students.

Fig. 36 Q5 Full board of photographs from exhibition

These photographs all required a high level of interpretation and the narratives behind them were personal to the participants. This meant that some of these images fell into the category of metaphor, it also ensued, in terms of the research participants, artists and teachers, bringing with them interpretations based on personal experience. The image at the top middle of the display of selected photographs in response to this brief was of a student who was immersed in the art to the point where they were physically wearing it. This was a student who otherwise

would ordinarily have been difficult to encourage to become fully involved in their learning, The teacher, Elaine, was extremely pleased that on this day, with this particular activity, she experienced a change in their attitude to learning. This is an image that will be returned to later in the case study 7.1 The Master of Cardboard.

The image of students taking part in a printmaking lesson allowed the teacher to observe and share their enjoyment of a process with the students in which they teach (Figure 37). The printmaking process itself could for many act as an analogy for the enjoyment found in engaging in creative activity. When printmaking considerable time and planning may go into the preparation of the plate or block from which you are printing from and you cannot always predict exactly how the print will look, you may also need to repeat a process several times and it requires both an element of patience and persistence in the creating of the printing plate or block and an openness to the unknown. This was one of the photovoice responses where we were also invited to consider the subject alongside the objects, human interaction is hinted at as we see a small area of a school uniform and the students hands interacting with the tools in order to produce the artwork(s).

Fig. 37 Printmaking photovoice response taken by Jodie

The photographs of finished items of work were also prevalent within the answers to this particular section of the brief. These may represent a sense of accomplishment, the patience with a process to see something through until the final and finished stages. When talking to participants about these images, many have stories behind them which resemble resilience and hard work which students have applied, or obstacles overcome in order to complete the work(s). Addison and Burgess (2003) claim that 'creative individuals' must demonstrate characteristics such as a 'tolerance for ambiguity,' an ability to persist, take – risks and confidence and self – belief (2003:27).

Q6.. Create an image that captures how you believe art as a subject taught in school relates to art practice outside of an educational environment / establishment

The responses to this request suggested messages about the importance of community. This linked back to art's value within a social context touched upon previously in chapter 4.5 Notions of Value. Photographs that powerfully portrayed the relationship between art as taught and experienced within secondary education and the outside art world were the images that can be seen top left and middle right. The top left image was taken by a photography teacher, Helen, who explained how she took every available opportunity to take students out of the school to capture photographs, this was an important element of the course, as otherwise images were limited to the

Fig. 38 Q6 Full board of photographs from exhibition

school site and setting, as many students did not have a camera or access to opportunities to photograph places beyond their immediate surroundings at home.

This photograph also linked the school to the local community as the tower block that lies central to the composition, as subject matter, is a listed property and classic piece of design, noteworthy within the town, Margate (in Thanet). The act of taking students to photograph in an area local to the school created an opportunity for students to observe the everyday with an artistic eye and appreciate the aesthetic of their local town and community, they were learning to look again, but also there is the reminder that photography can be engaged in throughout day to day life and is not an activity exclusive to the timetabled lessons in school. The teacher, Helen, had recently negotiated to work part-time so that she could pursue her own photography business, she therefore believed in photography as a career in its own right, which when observing her interactions with their students this passion for the subject was clearly communicated and relayed.

Another photograph, which visually communicated the importance of community, was the image of hands crafting a ceramic pot. This was a photograph taken during a school trip to a local potter. The ceramist was creating work with the student, allowing them to experience the use of a potter's wheel, which the educational setting did not have, and also offering the student a view into what artists and crafts people may do as a living. This image showed the viability of art and design as the basis for a career and also the sharing of a skill and enjoyment of a material between an artist and a student, the teacher in this instance having stepped away and photographed the interaction and engagement between the two.

A photograph of the close-up of a chair indicated the important link that the study and appreciation of art and design has in relation to the everyday, to objects that are designed and encompass our lives (Fig. 39). This image reminds us of the utility of art and design, beyond the aesthetic, the usefulness of the subject, as eluded to by the artist Rob and Roberta Smith and referenced in the Introduction of this thesis, everything is designed, made and constructed and therefore we can view the teaching and learning of art, and the associated skills in schools as a 'route to success' (Leach, 2015).

Fig. 39 Chair photovoice response taken by James

The photograph in the middle of this set of images is of a display, which demonstrates the type of skills required for success in a qualification in art and design at L2 and 3 studies. When questioning the teacher, David, who captured this photograph about their intentions they claimed that the kind of skills developed during study in school are transferable and useful within the wider world of work and / or the creative industries.

One of the images within this set was my own and of my daughter, aged under 5 at the time, sitting in front of a large – scale artwork by Anna Roy (2007) entitled 'Margate Knot' that

featured as a part of the exhibition 'Entangled: Threads and Making' (2017) held at the same gallery in which the a/r/tographic project was being exhibited, the Turner Contemporary in Margate. On a weekend day out my daughter and I went to the gallery for the afternoon and stumbled upon the 'Margate Knot' and my daughter sat herself down in front of it, enthralled and fascinated by the work. As is typical of a child under the age of five, sitting still for long periods of time was not an activity in which my daughter engaged in often, but somehow this huge multi-coloured, textured artwork had grabbed her undivided attention. She exclaimed 'I want to make that!' When reflecting back upon this afternoon her response reminded me of many that I had witnessed with students over the years when taking them to a gallery and on schools trips to new places and to see new things. This led me to re-evaluate the importance of the exposure for students to, not just art galleries, but also interesting places, ones that offered something different to the school environment. My daughter's reaction to seeing the work first – hand, given space and room to interact with it was certainly unlike how she would have responded to a 2D picture of the work. Often in schools, particularly with diminishing levels of funding, artwork is primarily experienced through printed or digital images and the experience therefore does not resemble real interactions with art, or jobs within the creative industries, outside of the classroom. In the next subchapter I will further discuss my own responses to the brief as an artist, teacher and researcher and identify what I chose to photograph and why.

Q.7

Take an image that you think visually sums up any frustrations that you experience as an art teacher

Fig. 40 Q7 Full board of photographs from exhibition

When it came to interpreting the meanings and themes that evolved from the photographs received in response to this question, there were very clear frustrations being visually communicated. These issues and frustrations were discussed during the focus group and were something that teachers actively wanted to explore through dialogue, alongside imagery. The issues that were visually represented can be labelled as:

- Data and how it is used within art education

- Time (for teachers and students)

- Equipment and attitudes in relation to student aspiration

When it came to my initial response to the images provided this was the set of photographs that were most transparent in terms of the interpretation of meaning. As a teacher myself, when I received them I immediately empathised and questioned as to whether somebody who was not a teacher would understand as implicitly as I did as to what these photographs were conveying. Three of the nine images that were exhibited here were referring to the use of data in education and following the focus group discussion it became apparent that the top right image of a pair of legs, implying a person pointing the camera up to focus from sat underneath a table, was an image taken by a teacher during a meeting in which data was discussed. Therefore four images

were in fact making a statement about the use of summative data, however this participant explained that one of the things that they found further frustrating than the way in which data was used, was to be sat in a meeting where it was being discussed. Eisner (2005) offers the view that a 'curriculum theory which views educational objectives as standards by which to measure educational achievement overlooks these modes of achievement incapable of measurement' (2005:21) and that 'not all, perhaps not even most – outcomes of curriculum and instruction are amenable to measurement' (2005:20). Much of creative activity can be traced back to having a natural curiosity and inquiry which links directly to what lies at the heart of a love of learning and experimentation, often experiential in approach. The question remains as to whether students are actually encouraged to develop this attitude to their learning and if it is possible so long as a large part of their formal schooling is geared up to exams and tests. Maybe it is the case that the learning has become more about idealising concepts of 'progress' and 'success' and the measurement of these than it is about providing opportunities for deep learning and developing life – long learning habits. This is where art and design as a subject may offer potential solutions, students at KS4 and 5 in particular must create highly developed personal responses to confidently developed ideas in order to achieve a high grade and to do this with authenticity often means to freely experiment, explore, take time to reflect, take – risks and make – mistakes with independence. One of the reasons that schooling revolves further around standardised and increasingly less 'creative' means of testing can be understood as a direct result of the governmental need to control, or as Robinson (2016) so helpfully explains 'yanking firmly on the reins of public education, telling schools what to teach, imposing systems of testing to hold them accountable, and levying penalties if they don't make the grade' (2016: 9). Teachers were demonstrating the ways in which they felt that data and the apparent need for summative assessment at intervals throughout the academic year were imposing them and their students learning experiences within the arts. In order to assess work sufficiently it, arguably, often assists to have uniformity, Eisner (2005) claims that:

'In a class in mathematics or spelling, uniformity in response is desirable, at least in so far as it indicates that students are able to perform a particular operation adequately, this is, in accordance with accepted procedures' however 'in the arts and subject matters where, for example, novel or creative responses are desired, the particular behaviours to be developed cannot easily be identified. Here curriculum and instruction should yield behaviours and products, which are unpredictable. The end achieved ought to be something of a surprise to both teacher and pupil' (Eisner, 2005: 19).

Much of what the teachers were communicating through these images were that they felt that creativity, creative outcomes and their time as teachers was spent engaging in the production of data which they did not feel was either fairly representative nor relevant to their students' ability in art and design. This was clarified through both one-to-one discussion with art teachers and the focus group discussion that took place alongside the exhibition. The responses from teachers and the following discussion that ensued with regards to quantitative data and how it was currently used as a, seemingly inadequate, attempt to measure progress within arts education, was something that built confidence in terms of the validity and reliability of the chosen research methodology for meaningful insights into the picture of art education and the narratives of art teachers to emerge.

The photographs of the data were dull in colour and often images of flickering laptop screens, with a two – dimensional feel, lack of depth of field or consideration in terms of the composition were captured. The numbers and letters in boxes and on spread sheets filled the entire frame as if they were overwhelming and overshadowing, the content of the sheets themselves becoming further important than the aesthetic of the image. It was as if the frustration that teachers felt in relation to data had been communicated by the carelessness that they had taken the images with in comparison to other subject matter or objects photographed in response to the remaining questions. Was this an intentional metaphor? For an exhibition

that was intended to provide viewers with a window into art education within secondary schools, these images if viewed out of context, or singularly, would not have hinted at the visual arts at all.
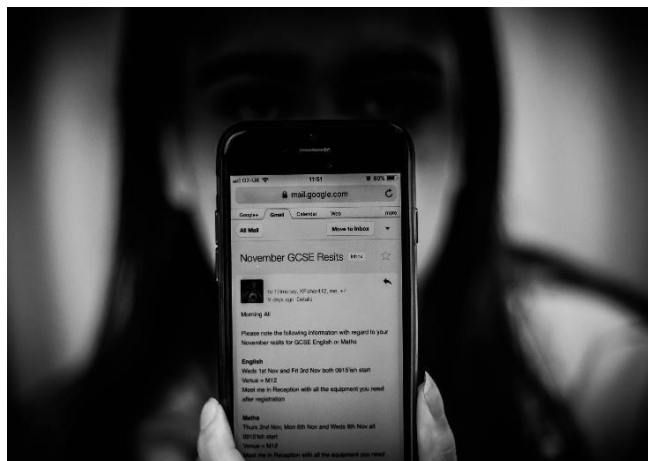
Fig. 41 Exam reminder email photovoice response taken by Helen

The image with a phone screen (Fig. 41) held up in front of a student's face was representative of a student who had received an email about re-taking a GCSE for a core subject, she had taken this same test for a number of times and had apparently subsequently missed several hours of her photography lesson in order attend extra sessions, revision or the exams themselves. The day that this was photographed this student had relayed their frustration with the situation to the art teacher who photographed the image. Again this image is black and white and the subject matter is a phone screen showing an email with the student, the human element of the image, in the background, almost lost or fading behind. This particular image relayed both a teacher and students mutual frustration.

Fig. 42 Clock photovoice response taken by Alice

The image of a wall clock (Fig. 42) was a very clear comment about time, in this case the lack of time. When discussing and unpicking the intentions behind this image further with Alice, the art teacher who captured it, the issues of time were diverse, there was the time spent engaging in tasks such as the entry of data as listed above, which was felt to have little direct impact on students learning in and through the visual arts, there was the lack of time on the timetable in terms of curriculum dedicated to art and design lessons meaning that the types of ambitious works that Alice and her students shared the aspiration to create became increasingly unrealistic. There were many issues that derived from the division of time, Alice felt that the class sizes at both KS3 and KS4 meant that she was unable to offer the individual support and attention that would have been ideal for students during the lesson and then there was the issue of the teachers time and the way in which she felt that there was never enough of it for general teaching activities, such as marking and planning, but also for her to engage in her own practice, reflect and feel inspired to create her own work as an artist.

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Fig. 43 Ink photovoice response taken Eva

Fig. 6 Photograph of graffiti on classroom sink captured by Isla

The final theme that evolved from questions of frustrations felt as an art teacher was that of equipment and resources and how they were undervalued. The little care for the equipment or the purposeful vandalising of the classroom and objects within it may communicate several things, that some students do not value the tools and space within the art classroom or feel uninspired by what is on offer, or may feel disengaged in their education and associated environment generally. We can refer back to the socio-economic issues identified in the introduction when considering the context of Thanet schools here. The teachers who captured these photographed specified that it was always a small number of students within the school community that treated equipment and resources so carelessly, however they felt that this behaviour impacted greatly on both themselves as teachers and the other students. One teacher sympathised with these students claiming that the laptops that she had available to use were old and very slow and therefore students become impatient and frustrations easily ran high when there was a time pressure for work to be completed. They stated how there was not the budget available to them to purchase computers to replace the out-dated or broken ones, this was represented by the image of a laptop with missing keys (Fig. 40). The image of spilt ink, taken by Eva (Fig. 43), represented the carelessness and wasteful attitude that this teacher felt some of her students displayed towards materials and equipment in the art classroom. The image that was censored (Fig. 6) was depicting graffiti of a penis and anus found on an art

classroom sink. Due to the way in which this exhibition was open to the public and was in the area of the gallery that was used for educational purposes, such as workshops with school groups, it was decided by gallery staff that the content needed to be censored. This was interesting to me as it created questions about what is deemed art, what is deemed graffiti and of course when it is appropriate and when it is not, leading to the overall discussion 'what is art and what is its purpose?' When I first analysed this image I thought that perhaps it was a visual representation or metaphor for how this art teacher felt that the arts were valued in the curriculum, however this was very clearly my own subjective and emotional response being projected upon the image, as when talking to the teacher about the reasoning and meaning behind it, it fell into the final category of equipment and attitudes in relation to student aspiration.

Fig. 44 Q8 Full board of photographs from exhibition

Three of the responses offered by art teachers in relation to this particular brief alluded to the act of colouring in. The photographs that I chose for exhibition were one that read 'Pop' (Fig. 45) and pencils laid across a pattern intended for colouring in (Fig. 44). As an art teacher there were conventional signs that are socially agreed upon amongst those in the profession. I will not be the first, nor the last, art and design teacher to hear the phrase 'art? Well that's just colouring in isn't it?' When reflecting upon the subject matter explored through one of the photographs that brought to the fore 'colouring in,' Pop Art as an art movement also has a reputation amongst art and design specialists as an easily accessible and undemanding topic of study.

Perhaps there is also a comment here about the popular and commercial culture such as advertising and the media which links to the way art is viewed in terms of content and purpose by others. The 'colouring in' sheet captured (Fig. 44) is in many respects simplistic in design and hints at arts place in schools as 'light relief' or 'therapeutic.' As stated by Eisner (2002) often there is the typical view held that 'the arts are basically sources of relief, ornamental activities intended to play second fiddle to the core educational subjects' (2002: 196).

Fig. 45 Pop Art photovoice response taken by Julian

Another photograph referred to the formal elements and the further objective areas of learning, which may be easy to comprehend by those situated in alternative subjects because these are the 'facts' of art teaching, the areas of the study of art and design in which there are clear cut answers, which fits neatly with an education system which favours measurement and what Eisner (2002) noted as 'the aim…to get everyone to the same destination and, in our culture, at the same point in time' (2002: 196). There may also be the notion that these are the things that teachers may remember when reflecting back to their own art education, perhaps these concrete facts are further memorable or easier to pinpoint than the further holistic, harder to define, skills that may have been learnt.

The photograph of pencils is an image returned to in further depth in the case study 7.2 The Skeleton of Art and Design. The framing of these pencils as centre to the image is a reference to the simplification by others of the notion of drawing in art and design. When interviewed about this photograph the participant, Isla, claimed that many view art as just drawing things, which to those who fully understand the subject know is far from the case. There is also the

notion and common misconception that drawing always happens with a pencil, again specialists will know otherwise. These ideas about drawing in art are both limited and limiting.

Many of the photographs captured were of displays. This may be because in schools this is the visual nature of the subject, corridors and reception areas of educational settings often rely on artwork from students to line their walls, but also the outcome in many cases is often perceived the most important element of the work, opposed to the process, particularly by those who appreciate art, however perhaps do not actively engage in creative activity.

The photograph of the close up of a paint palette may have represented the concept of art and design centring around playful creation through exploration and experimentation, leading to mastery of materials, techniques and processes, but also the idea that what goes on in art education is a large amount of painting, in the traditional sense.

It is worth referring to Eisner (2002) here and the claim that:

> '…if the public misconceives the educational functions of the arts, if it believes they are a diversion from what is really important, arts educators will have a hard time securing the resources they need to provide really substantive arts programmes to students' (2002: 175).

Here we are reminded of the limitations and negative impact that a misunderstanding or perception of the arts can result in for both art teachers and learners.

The last two parts of the brief were interrelated and for this reason I have decided to analyse them in unison and compare and contrast the two. The brief required participants to capture: Q9 *An image that captures what you believe **is** at the heart (the essence) of art education* and Q10 *An image that captures what you believe **should** be at the heart (the essence) of art education.*

These images were the hardest to interpret due to the way in which the responses were based in personal experience and linked further to personal and subjective beliefs, opposed to a visual representation of objects or experiences that linked directly to either the classroom, or school / learning environments.

The majority of photographs offered in response to this particular area of the brief, when looking at what 'is' at the heart, were captured through artwork and outcomes that students had created. However, when responding to the idea of what 'should' be, the majority of photographs were of situations external to the classroom or school environment itself. This was interesting as it either suggested that what should be at the heart of education from the perspective of art teachers are things that cannot be easily provided in a school environment, or that when considering core values participants reverted to their wider lives, experiences and identities beyond that of teacher.

When observing the photographs offered in response to the notion of what should be the essence of art education, participants captured images which hinted at human interaction and communication, often involving their own family or children. One of the images that would not initially appear to link to art education, however equally represented a message which was

replicated by many through various imagery was a photograph by Alice of her daughter observing her own reflection in a spoon (Fig. 46).

Fig. 46 – reflection photovoice response taken by Alice

The joy of learning to look, observe and explore the qualities of the materials to be found in the world around us, and how we can manipulate and interact with them, is expressed through this image. Alice, who captured this moment when her daughter realised that she could see her own reflection distorted in a spoon, explained that she felt at the very heart and essence of art education was the importance of learning to look and appreciate the world around us. This is something that we all appear to have increasingly less time available for us to do. It also links directly to the embracing of curiosity. This photograph reminds us of the naturally curious nature of children, also in many respects integral to both engagement with the arts and learning. Judkins (2015) claims that 'the future belongs to the curious. Curiosity makes us come alive; it fills us with wonder and the urge to search' (2015: 202). The notion that the arts encourage children and young people to pay close attention, but also to savour, taking the time 'to relish the experience that one seeks' (2002: 207) is something that Eisner (2002) also recognised as an important function of arts education. Alice also understood this element of engagement with the arts, by expression that at the essence lies a inherent want to take the time to explore through

a natural sense of curiosity. Kaufman and Gregoire (2015) found that when delving into common traits found in people who are considered highly creative thinkers they have a

'tendency to explore and engage with novel ideas, objects, and scenarios' and demonstrate 'characteristics like openness to experience, high energy, and drive for exploration; (2015: XXV). These are arguably common straits also found in children, particularly those under five, in which this participants daughter was when this photograph was taken. Robinson (2006) in a TED talk entitled 'Do schools kill creativity' made the claim that we are 'educating people out of their creative capacities' (Robinson, 2006).

Fig. 47 Hand holding photovoice response taken by
Elaine

Another of the photographs that linked to the theme of connection through art was of one of the participants standing holding the hand of an Anthony Gormley (2005) figure (Fig. 47). This was in response to the 'should' element of the brief and linked to the way in which engagement with the arts *should* be an immersive experience and connects to both the outside world and

each other, beyond that of the school or immediate classroom environment. When considering the Feldman (1994) model of analysis, the descriptive phase allows us to witness two figures, one artwork, the other human, looking out toward the landscape, with their backs turned to the viewer. There is an aura of quiet contemplation, of introspection and the way in which artwork(s) have the potential to connect us to and enable us to see ourselves, others and the world differently, perhaps enjoying the time and space to do so clearly also. It reminds us that what lies at the essence of art and design is not necessarily what is taught or learnt in schools, but what is experienced, felt and better understood through connection with that which is external to these spaces and the delicate balance that lies between them.

At least two of the images that were submitted in response to the idea of what is at the essence of art education were of paint palettes. This indicated a traditional view of art education, grounded in the use of drawing and painting. Something that perhaps art teachers spent a large amount of their time, developing techniques using paint with students in order to meet requirements, or assumed expectations of established exam boards and / or the students desire to become further accomplished in these areas.
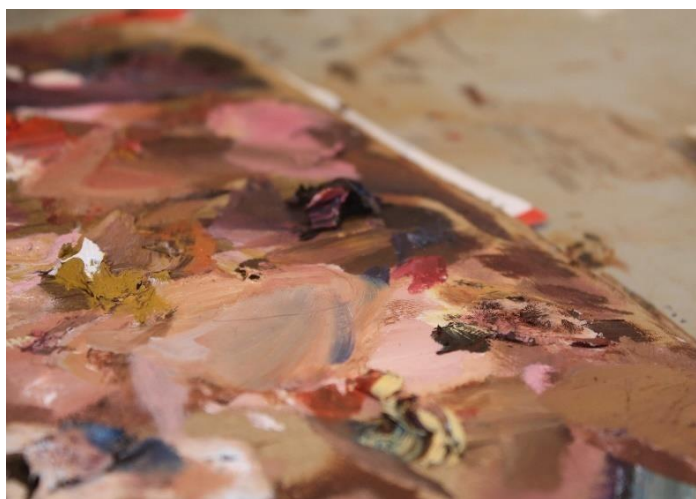
Fig. 48 Paint photovoice response taken by James

Many of the participants claimed that this was a difficult part of the brief to answer, the two main reasons offered for this was that it was difficult to know what to photograph as the images needed to speak so many words and communicate numerous concepts and ideals. The second reason given was that there was a great disparity between the *is* and *should* which left difficult questions to answer in order to decide what to photograph.

6.1.2 My images

I have decided to explore the photographs that I have taken in response to the brief as I chose for some of these to feature in the exhibition also. This was a decision based upon the fact that from the start of the research I wanted to play an integral part, excepting my own position as an artist and teacher of art and design, alongside a researcher. I also felt that in order to develop further meaningful relationships with the other artist and teacher participants involved completing the brief myself was an important element of the research. This allowed for further meaningful conversations and mutual understandings, but also enhanced in my ability to be critically reflexive of my own work and others'. This approach was informed by a/r/tographic research methods, see chapter 5.3.2 Arts-based research methods, A/r/tography, Photovoice and Liminality in relation to the work of Irwin. Reverting back to the positionality statement made at the start of this thesis, I will be writing this subchapter from the first person, as stated by Delamont (2013) this allows

> 'the author to find her or his voice in a way that differs from the canons of conventional
> academic writing; it provides permission for first-person narratives that insert the author
> into her or his texts' (2003: 152).

The recognition of a feminist methodology and the associated challenges are clarified by Morley and Walsh (1995) in their claim that 'feminist theory and practice are strong challenges to academic disciples and 'feminist analogy and postmodernism have problematized subjectivity and objectivity in relation to power and knowledge production' (1995: 4).

With the above in mind I have explained and reflected upon the reasoning and meaning behind each of my own photographic responses to the brief and questions that I shared with participants. I have amended the brief so that the questions and actions required are in the first

– person accordingly, yet remain in the same order as analysed in section 6.1.1 Images from exhibition.

Q1 An object in my classroom I value highly:

Fig. 49 My photograph Q1

I photographed the left over marks from where a student had been working (Fig. 49). This was an object that I valued highly because for me it is the visible link between the students work and my own. I use the accidental and left over marks from classrooms for my own backgrounds in sketchbooks and journals. What students deem as 'rubbish' I use as inspiration and a starting point. It also represents all the things that students learn that are not directly 'taught.'

In relation to other participants, many attempted to photograph concepts and less tangible 'objects' of importance to them in their classroom setting, such as light. Many also captured objects that linked to their own identities and practice as artists opposed to teachers.

Q2 An object in my classroom that I think my students value highly:

Fig. 50 My photograph Q2

I found this difficult to visually communicate because there are such a wide variety of objects that different students value for varying reasons, however I decided upon a pot of paintbrushes (Fig. 50). Painting or mark – making using a paintbrush is something that the vast majority of all year groups that I have taught and currently teach enjoy. The paintbrush is a specialist tool that is commonly associated with the study of art and design, an object that you would perhaps expect to see in a creative classroom environment. Many students also enjoy the ritual of the use of a paintbrush, including the washing up, they will carefully and thoughtfully select the brush and time and care will go into the tactile process of using one. Many other participants chose objects in which students actively engaged in an art-making activity, many involved an element of risk - taking, something that my response did not, and also hinted at personal importance of the object to the student, such as a sketchbook.

Q3 An image that I think helps to demonstrate the value of art education for my students:

Fig. 51 My photograph Q3

In response to this I photographed a pile of books (Fig. 51), both art history books and sketchbooks as I felt that this communicated both the sentiment of the importance of appreciating and taking an interest in art and also the personal engagement with the act of creating work(s). This vaguely linked to some of the other responses offered by research participants in the sense that students work (often in a further finished format) were the subject matter of many of the photographs, which linked to themes of pride and celebration. I thought that the process, appreciation and ability to access artworks and all of the interwoven and connected skills linked to this was where I believed the value of art education for my students lay. The communication of this was literal in comparison to some of the other responses for this category of the brief where abstract and conceptual, or narrative photographs, were also captured.

Q4 An image that I think effectively communicates art and design's place as a subject within my current school curriculum:

Fig. 52 My photograph Q4

At the time when I captured this photograph I was not feeling very positive about art and design's place within the overall curriculum within the school that I was working and so photographed a paintbrush amongst the rubbish. This was to represent the way in which art had, over the years, slowly been devalued to the point where what was previously labelled an arts specialist school had barely enough budget to offer the students the supplies and equipment that they needed to complete artwork. I felt that Art, amongst other subjects which were labelled as 'unacademic,' were overlooked and undervalued. This linked to some of the other participants responses, such as the piles of sketchbooks with an arrow to indicate art sitting at the 'bottom of the pile,' in terms of subjects offered as a part of the overall curriculum. The paint brush happened to be a No.10 and was broken which was also intended to express the ways in which art and design is often misunderstood, there is a broken understanding and little support for the arts in terms of the current government agenda.

Q5 An image that captures how I believe art and design as a subject taught in schools relates to art practice outside of an educational environment / establishment:

Fig. 53 My photograph Q5

I included my own photograph in the ones selected for the exhibition relating to this particular brief because it was a photograph of my daughter sat observing the work of another artist who had previously exhibited at the Turner Contemporary in Margate, the same gallery that the exhibition was held. Her reaction to this image had been extremely interesting for me to observe, she walked into the room where the large colourful textiles work was hanging and sat herself down in front of it and after a while sat staring at it exclaimed 'mummy, I could make this. I want to make this. Let's go and make one!' She had clearly been inspired by the work and I wondered if I had alternatively shown her a photograph of it if she would have responded with the same sense of awe. It reminded me of the famous and well-used Picasso quote 'everybody is an artist' as she did not impose any barriers on herself in terms of whether she could or could not create, or whether she was the artist whose work was displayed or a child. With this photograph I was evidencing a moment where I was forced to consider how the kind of art, aesthetics and history of art taught in schools corresponds to the artworld external to

educational institutions, how certain art schools or galleries are deemed more prestigious than others and how limiting this could potentially be for students and whether the kind of references made to artists is inspiring for young people, especially if it is in the form of a printed image on a computer screen or whiteboard, opposed to exposure to the work(s) in real life. It made me question how much opportunity we offer students to experience artwork in its intended context, opposed to within the context of the classroom or school environment. I showed my daughter a book of Bridget Riley work and she flicked through the pages with minimal interest, after seeing Riley's (1970) paintings in an exhibition and experiencing them full size she returned home and selected the book from the shelf and could now appreciate the content from another perspective, one from experience. Her encounter with this same book had completely transformed.

Q6 An image that sums up what I enjoy most about teaching art and design:
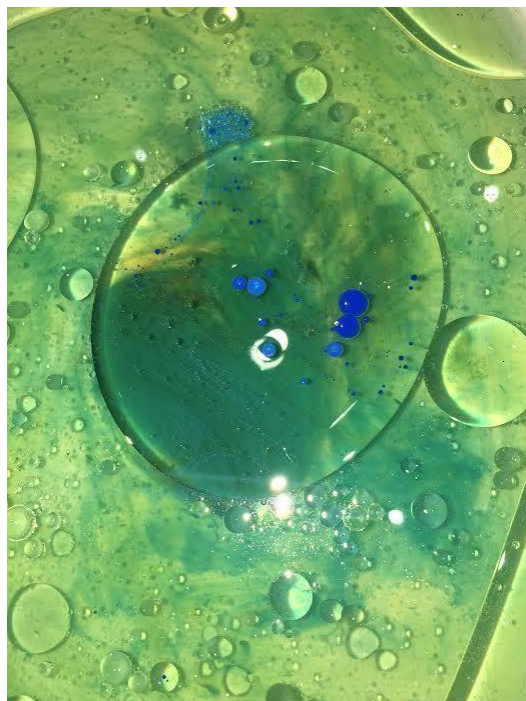
Fig. 54 My photograph Q6

The above photograph (Fig. 54) was another that I chose to include as a part of the exhibition. It was intended to communicate the experimental and playful side of teaching and learning in art and design, which is the element of the subject that I enjoy the most. This photograph was taken whilst playing with oil, inks and water and attempting to capture interesting abstract compositions using a camera, we also dipped paper into the trays, as you would do in the process of marbling. I enjoy witnessing students step outside of their comfort zones and working through the process of trial and error, plus the moments when unexpected outcomes or happy mistakes emerge. It is often when students learn to embrace the ambiguous and challenge themselves to think in alternative ways that insights erupt and float to the surface, much like the ink on water in this image. It is not so much the final work(s) and outcomes that I enjoy watching evolve into fruition, but rather the development and journey that students take to arrive at these points. I have usually had an enjoyable day teaching when I end the day covered in paint and ink stains, it is the practical and hands on element of the work which I personally enjoy, alongside the opportunity to experiment alongside the students, usually learning as much from them as they do from me and each other.

Many of the other participants photographed final works and scenes that hinted at celebration and final outcome(s) of the journey of the student. An image that I think had much in common with my own response was that of student's printmaking, this also involved an element of experimentation and the unknown in terms of how the printing plate would look when transferred and printed onto a surface.

Q7 An image that I think visually sums up the frustrations that I experience as an art teacher:
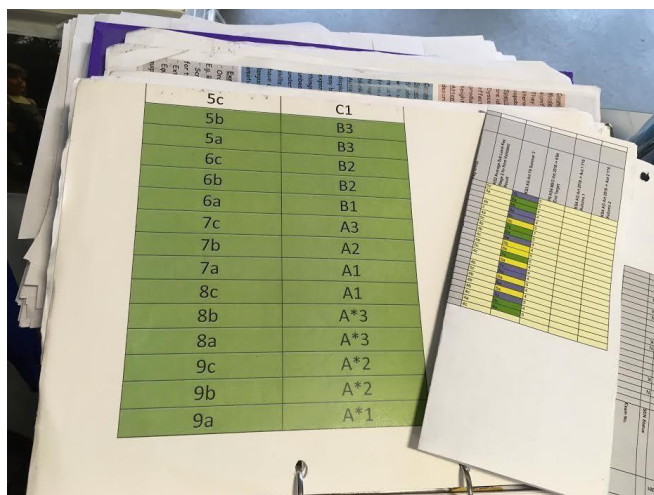
Fig. 55 My photograph Q7

This was a category of the brief in which my response was not dissimilar to the majority in which I received. The subject matter which I chose to capture was sheets of data, the names of students removed to ensure confidentiality, however the sheet on the right was a list of names and levels, colour-coded in relation to progress towards their perceived target level (Fig. 55). The other sheet was a list of an estimation of how the 'old' GCSE grading of A* - F would translate to the 'new' GCSE grading of 9 -1. There were many frustrations underlying my decision to photograph the above image, these can be identified as; a frustration with the way in which data is used in the school in which I was currently working and the frequency that it was required to be input, what the students targets were based upon in this particular setting and how this information was generated, plus an overall statement about the changes to GCSE and the grading from letters to numbers and how expectations and qualifications change so frequently, usually this coincides with a change in government or Education Secretary, yet the teachers and students on the receiving end are often offered little extra time, training or resources to implement the, sometimes seemingly tokenistic , changes fully.

Q8 An image that portrays how I think others (in general) view art and design as a subject in secondary school (how it may often be stereotyped)
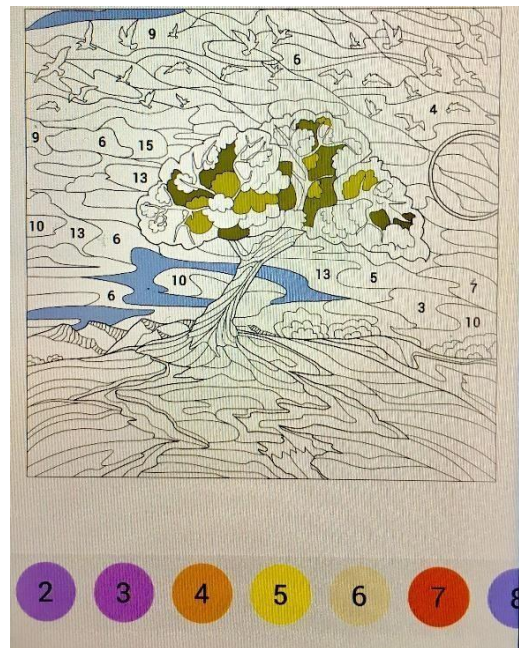
Fig. 56 My photograph Q8

In response to how art and design as a subject is perceived by others I photographed an image of a colour by numbers phone app (Fig. 56). When I have been in all staff training and spoken to non – specialist teachers and adults that do not work within the arts education realm there have been endless comments made with reference to colouring in. There is the perception that in art and design students learn to colour in and that it is an opportunity for relaxation in contrast to the more serious academic subjects taught in the secondary school. There is also, sadly, sometimes the perception from other teachers that art teachers themselves are in some way less important in terms of the students undergoing 'real' learning because of the idea that we are essentially colouring – in specialists. Although these comments are often made in jest, the frequency in which they are used suggests a genuine misconception of what actually takes place within the art and design classroom and learning space. This is also a view reflected by parents, as many have discouraged their child to select a qualification in art and design due to the perception that there may not be a clear career path to follow. This view has been, unhelpfully,

supported by key figures in the media, such as the statement made by the then Education Secretary during 2016 making claims such as that the study of Art and Design could 'hold students back' (Hutchinson, 2014) referenced earlier during the Introduction. If at the end of a course of study in art and design it is understood that what students have learnt is to become professionals at colouring-in than of course it may appear that there are indeed a lack of options available to them. Although an art and design teacher or student will protest that this is the type of skills or thinking developed. When discussing the difficulty of a GCSE, A Level or BTEC course at KS4 level with a student they tend to relay the challenges of undertaking an art and design course that is externally assessed and examined. The subject that I chose to capture (Fig. 56) was again not dissimilar to other participants responses, they also relayed similar experiences which informed their approach to this part of the brief. It was reassuring to find that others had decided to photograph and communicate similar meanings and issues to myself, but also I did reflect upon the wording of this question / request as it implied that there was a stereotype in the first instance, which perhaps, on reflection, may have influenced the way in which participants responded.

*Q9 and Q10 What I believe **is** at the heart (the essence) of art education* and *an image that captures what I believe **should** be at the heart (the essence) of art education.*
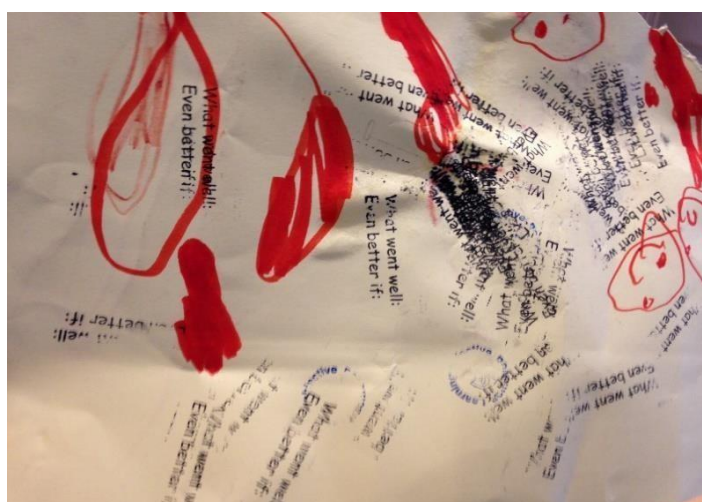
Fig. 57 My photograph Q9

I found these concepts difficult to respond to, as did the other research participants, however it was an interesting question to pose and one that enabled me to further understand with clarity the ideals and philosophical thinking that underpinned teachers' practice, plus caused me to critically analyse and evaluate my own. In response to the question of what is at the heart of art education I composed an image of a repeat of assessment stamps that I used when marking students sketchbooks and development work (Fig. 57), I left this out on a desk in my home and then when I returned to it, it had been graffitied on by my daughter. I left the graffiti as it was and continued to photograph the initial frame that I had intended to. The graffiti happened to be in Red pen, which I felt aided in the communication of my message.

The image involved a twofold meaning, one of these was a reference to the value in meaningful reflection and the genuine opportunity provided by the arts to engage in this invaluable way of thinking. One of the stamps chosen read 'what went well: Even better if,' as this prompted the students to reflect upon their work, however the other message communicated referred to the perceived importance given to data and marking in schools, some feedback which is indeed helpful to learning and some which appears to be focused more upon the need to prove progress for external measures, rather than for the benefit of the student. This photograph was essentially about measurement and the frustration felt in relation to the constant need for assessment and measurement to take place, referring to what is perhaps the essence, of the education system itself, not just with regards to art and design, opposed to what should be.

In contrast to this, I photographed another image involving my daughter as subject matter in response to the idea of what should be at the heart (the essence) of art education, however this image was intended to capture the joy and pride found in the study of art and design (Fig. 58). I found on reflection that I had unintentionally used my daughter as subject matter for many of

my photographic responses. The relationship between mother, teacher, artist and researcher underpins my outlook and perspective and has undeniably influenced my world view. This photograph was taken at an art exhibition entitled 'Mother and Daughter' where both myself and my daughter exhibited work together, we shared a palette throughout the process and painted alongside one another. She decided when the painting was finished and made all of the decisions in terms of composition, the only negotiation was the colour, as we were sharing the palette this was an element where a compromise needed to be made. Eisner (2002) notes that 'perhaps one of the most ubiquitous features of the image making of preschool children is their ability to decide when they are finished (2002: 117). This is the same of course for young people and adults. The outcomes were entirely different despite this and she was incredibly proud to have her work exhibited alongside mine and other artists in an art gallery setting, she announced that she was now an 'artist.' This photograph and the narrative behind it represents what I believe art education should be; it should be about children, young people and adults experiencing the joy, confidence and pride that creating, collaborating and sharing this with others, promoting the experience and associated emotions that can clearly be observed in this photograph. Visual communication is as important a type of communication as any other. As stated by Eisner (2002) 'maps, globes, charts, histograms, scatter grams, pie charts, photographs and drawings convey information that is not easily translatable into either the language of words or the language of numbers' (2002: 205).

The subject matter that we were exploring through this work were not easily defined through the language of neither words nor numbers, rather it was an intuitive exploration of materials, learning and expression of emotions over a week period.

Fig. 58 My photograph Q10

6.2 Interviews

Throughout the process of conducting interviews, both one-to-one and focus group based, the opportunity to discuss some of the key themes and issues that had arisen and been brought to the fore during the collection of visual data emerged.

In order to fully understand the reasoning behind the photographs presented interpretations could be underpinned by explanation provided by the participants, much of this explanation occurred during the one -to one interviews in which findings are detailed further in selected case studies, but also through general interactions and the focus group discussion.

The focus group interview created the opportunity for both participants and myself to discuss the visual data in a way that enabled new ideas, concepts and interpretations to arise. The one-to-one interviews in many cases confirmed initial responses and interpretations and also challenged them. Discourse had begun with a number of the participants months before either interviews had taken place, which allowed me to build on insights and observations made and documented in a research journal when visiting schools, settings and teachers.

Berger (1980) explains how 'because the photographs carry no certain meaning in themselves, because they are like images in the memory of a total stranger they lend themselves to any use' (1980: 57). This is precisely the reason as to why interviews were so paramount to the overall data gathering process, unless you are the individual taking the photograph it is difficult to determine the reasoning and meaning intended, using the E. Feldman model (1994) of description and analysis we can come to limited conclusions, however an in-depth interpretation and an overall judgement proves problematic without an interview to determine these details.

I have made the decision not to use the data gathered from one-to-one interviews to inform key themes in a further general sense, but have instead selected individual participants interview data to construct three case studies. This was due to similarities in many art teachers' responses, but also some interviews naturally providing richer data than others. Although conducting one – to – one interviews provided me with a clear picture and understanding of issues that arts teachers faced and ideas shared in response to their experiences and also enabled me to understand intended meanings communicated through the photographs submitted.

The interview transcriptions were analsyed through the use of colour coding, based on the same codes used for the visual photographic data. The focus group data was initially transcribed and codes generated using NVivo, previously explained in the Research Design and Paradigm, (subchapter 5.1). Shortly after starting this process I decided to return to a physical data analysis, in the classroom itself, using post – it notes and colour coding with highlighters. This was mainly due to the variety of data analysed, images alongside text and also my own notes in both image and visual form expressed through the research journal. An example of a section of one of the interview transcripts highlighted, alongside a key, is provided in Fig. 59 (full transcriptions can be found in Appendix P)
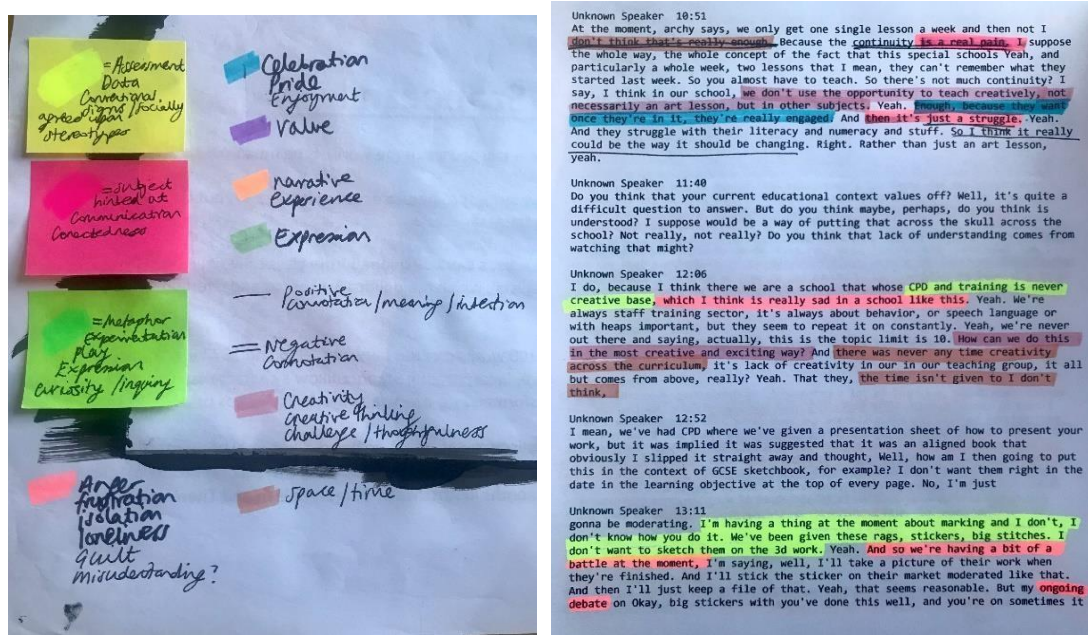
Fig.59 Example of interview transcription highlighted alongside colour

The one – to – one interviews were held after the focus group discussion, which meant that art teacher participants also talked about the process and experience of taking the photographs, but those who attended the private view and focus group had also discussed their photographic outcomes and entries with others. Although in some respects this may have caused them to reflect upon their own responses differently due to multiple interpretations of the work shared, it also allowed time for self – reflection. Many talked of the experience as a therapeutic one, meeting and conversing with other art teachers, but also sharing common issues and challenges that they faced with somebody who was willing to listen and understand, when so many talked of a senior leadership team in schools who did not offer support or take the time to hear the voice or opinion of the art teacher. This is explored later in further depth through the Findings and Discussion (Chapter 7).

The methods and key thinkers who have underpinned the semi – structured interviews have been discussed in section 5.4 Interviews and the findings and analysis of these are discussed in forthcoming subchapters, firstly drawing attention to the focus group interview that took place alongside the private view of the exhibition.

6.2.1 - Focus Group Analysis

This particular focus group discussion comprised of one gallery schools officer, seven art teachers and one art technician. Six schools were represented, with five of those taking part as participants who had captured photographs for exhibition. Other schools had contributed to the images exhibited, however not all were present for the focus group discussion. The discussion itself took place in a gallery setting on a Friday during early evening. Participants were invited to a private view of their work and chairs situated in a circle to allow ease of communication. The discussion was led by me as researcher and moderator, however tangents were actively encouraged and the questions remained open in their format. A Dictaphone was used to record the discussion, post permission and consent being gained from participants.

Prior to the focus group discussion the participants had spent an hour viewing the images and engaged in a relaxed introduction and opportunity to share ideas and contributions with regards to the project and the work(s). Unless from the same school, this is the first time that participants had met one another, however I had visited them all individually in their school settings and communicated with them via phone and email in the run up to the exhibition. There was also a rationale for the work exhibited alongside the images in the gallery space, which will have reminded participants of the overall purpose and intentions of the work and exhibition. This may of course have influenced their answers to the questions posed throughout the focus group discussion.

Because the exhibition was taking place in a galley setting and was open to members of the general public over the following weeks it had been advertised on their website and the evening's private view event was advertised as a 'focus group and private view for art teachers.' An art teacher whom had not participated in the project itself but who was from a school in Kent asked whether they could stay and take part in the focus group discussion as they would

be keen to be involved. After assessing their interactions with others in the group I decided that their involvement would be beneficial, as it would be interesting to have a voice from somebody who was relatively objective to the visual work, having not taken part in this element of the project, however was still an art teacher as thus shared certain homogeneous elements to others in terms of identity, they were also a male, which meant that the numbers of males and females represented in the group was further balanced. In the introductions they referred to themselves as the 'gate crasher' which was received warmly. This did illuminate the self – awareness that they had, but also the clear identification and recognition of this meant that the group were further trusting due to the gate crashers openness. An art technician whom had accompanied an art teacher referred to themselves in their introduction as an 'interloper,' again pertaining to the fact that they felt like an outsider for not being an 'art teacher.' There was also the perspective of a gallery schools officer who brought an interesting dynamic to the group as they did not come with assumptions about the experiences of art teachers, but rather at several points in the discussion appeared outwardly alarmed and surprised to hear some of the feedback being shared in relation to current experiences in schools in relation to the arts.

The first question asked to the group following introductions pertained to the overall experience of photographing in response to the questions provided. My wording involved both a suggestion as to whether it was enjoyable and as to whether there were any particular issues or difficulties that arose, being careful to not phrase or suggest a focus on either the positive or negative, but attempting to remain neutral. When analysing the focus group contributions I have used the same thematic and semiotic – based table as previously constructed to analyse visual information, however re-focusing attention on the statements made, key terminology and phrases used by participants and the main themes that have emerged from these (Table 7 and Appendix R). The two left hand columns, categories and breakdown within the category have undergone minor changes in order to make them applicable for the spoken word as the main communication, opposed to the visual.

There are certain points in the discussion in which I have explored in further depth issues and key areas for exploration that were illuminated by participants, or that lead to further questions being asked and posed in response. When analysing the statements and key terminology that participants made and used throughout the focus group several stood out or were repeated numerous times. The following terms, ideas and concepts came to the fore:

- Frustration / frustrating

- Creativity / creative thinking

- Technology

- Engagement / engaging

- Expressive / expression

- Value / valuable / undervalued Reduced

- Hierarchy

- Space

- Time

- Enjoyment

- Data

- Enjoyed / enjoyment

These terms were used multiple times, by different participants, other words were used frequently, but by the same participants when discussing different subject matter, such as:

- Appreciate

- Reduced

- Pointless

Many words and phrases stood out which communicated strong emotions, often in relation to the negative aspects or struggles involved in the experience of art and design teachers (Fig. 60) these were: pain, risk of being damaged, immense guilt, not what I get paid for, fight the tide, absorbed by data, pointless, meaningless, demotivated, monstrous, angry, don't want it, not right, why can't, should get, screws up, ridiculous, it's crazy, materials wasted, prescriptive, disrespectful, hate that, really upsets me, awful equipment, frustrates me, really hard, terrible in the classroom, we are not important enough, have to go, lazy, more help, undervalued, help, horrified, invisible, slight shadow of me, busy, disrespected, slagging off arts, missing, may as well not exist, irrelevant, don't understand, frustrating, narrow – mindedness, don't get that, art isn't valued, can't do anything with it, art is so low, divide, reduced, out of touch, shut down, broken, I have no money and on my own for years.
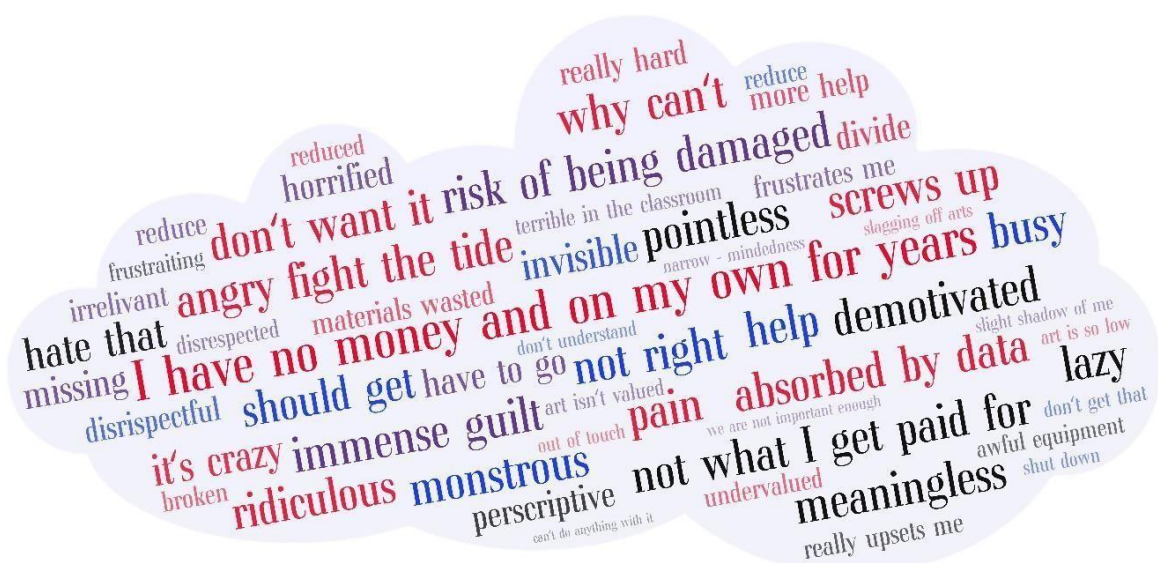
Fig. 60 Focus group word cloud

Some of these words and communication of feelings are highly charged and paint a gloomy picture of both the arts in schools and the experiences of art teachers, however there were also many positive phrases and language used, such as: express herself, exploration, inclusive, incorporated, creativity, research and engage in critical thinking, loads of things, creative

industry growth, important skills, what we do already, positive, appreciate, heritage of the arts, valuable in any job and for a person, sell ourselves through the arts, recognise, struck gold, championing the arts, embrace the arts, creative curriculum, importance, outlet, passionate, leaps in technology, investing, want, lucky, enjoyment, accessible, advantage, getting away, links to wider world, creative, collaborative, potential, interdisciplinary, benefits, amazing, share practice, get in their zone, want to come and do art, a source of escapism, therapeutic, art is deep thinking, feeds your soul, experiment and everything that learning should be.

There was a stark contrast between the further negative and positive aspects of the language used throughout the focus group discussion, the words which had adverse connotations or were used in a negative context were generally those which related to other teachers, parents or senior leaders' view and understandings of the arts, students interaction with equipment and the classroom or their own issues as teachers, such as time, space and widely accepted assessment regimes. The positive statements linked further to what actually occurred when students were engaged in arts activity, either within the classroom or external to the school environment, their own arts practice and the opportunities and skills that they felt the visual arts offered.

There were three sentiments that could not be easily categorised into either of the above groupings, they were based in a call for action in response to the challenges faced by art teachers, these were: shift and reaction against. Another participant also recognised the need to 'address' one's own practice, again hinting at a need for action.

Alex started off the discussion with the statement 'I think that it was a nice challenge. In one sense you were spoilt for the number of things that you could do, but what I think was most interesting was asking the students about one or two as well and asking for their feedback. If

the department was burning down what would you take? What would be your most precious object' was asked by Alex to his students in order to answer a question surrounding what was perceived as their most valued object, 'I was thinking that they would choose to take something like the human skull that we have or something, but no, it was their journals, of course, which is personal to them…and their phone.' The fact that he had asked students to contribute to answering some of the questions posed for photographs was really interesting to hear. This of course meant that the visual responses from this particular school setting would reveal not just a picture of what Alex had seen as relevant and important, but also offered a representation of the students themselves, thus an integration of both student and teacher voice. The comment about students' phones was received by the group as a joke and was followed by an empathetic laughter. The sketchbook or journal had indeed been the initial answer to the question posed, however the importance of mobile phones to young people was something that reminds us of the prevalence of technology in the classroom and how mobile phones have become equally as personal objects as the sketchbook or journal and to students certainly as, if not in a certain sense, more valuable. There was also the recognition that this group of people, despite having never met shared the commonality of all working as or with art teachers in schools, facing overwhelmingly similar issues and experiences. These sorts of comments enabled the group to very quickly form a bond and feel conformable to discuss and debate within each other's company. I too was one of them; an art teacher. I was very aware of externally maintaining this identity over researcher for the flow of conversation to evolve in the direction that would most effectively illuminate the participants' thoughts, feelings and experiences. As suggested by Savin – Baden and Major (2013) 'when choosing to employ focus group interviews, researchers must consider what role they will assume' and 'the researcher may take an active role in the discussions or choose to assume a more removed position from the group' (2013:379). I had decided to take an active part in the discussion, using my own experiences to demonstrate ideas and build further rapport with participants, whilst also ensuring that I did not dominate or actively influence the natural evolution of the discussion.

Isla claimed that she 'really enjoyed it, but did feel an immense guilt, and always do if I do anything which isn't to do with my job or teaching, and just kind of being like, okay I am going to do this now, and so I was really excited about doing it, but you kind of think, okay, well I have got this or other things that I have to get done today and I've got to get that in and do that and so it was a mixture of enjoyment but then also finding the time and making the time, because you've also got loads of other things to do and get on with as well and so I think it's about space and time personally, it's about managing that and I think that probably comes in time, but having your own practice, it does go to one side doesn't it, because that's not necessarily what I get paid for.' This openness about a feeling and sense of guilt for engaging in something not directly work related was of great interest to me. There was a clear segregation been made here between roles of teacher and artist and an emotional struggle between the two. This was something that I thought would be great to unpick in a follow up interview one-to-one with Isla, but felt that to probe any deeper was not appropriate in this particular environment. This was clearly one of the limitations of interviewing and discussing in a group setting.

Alex claimed in response 'I would wholly agree with that, I mean I had this plan that I would take one photograph every now and again, and no, I ended up taking them all in a space of two weeks during a data drop and I really feel as though it was my getting away from the data job thing, I'd think I've had enough of putting data on a computer or looking at a lot of sketchbooks, I'm going to just take some photographs now as a way of getting away from that, which was quite nice and very creative at the same time, because I think that the questions were really interesting and quite challenging and made you think about your practice and your space that you use and how you use that space and so on… ' This space to think and create and step away from the everyday teacher activities and reflect upon them was something that I had intended and hoped for the research activity. There was an indication here as well however that there

was a sense of being pulled between identities and roles and that the time for reflection and creation was a luxury, an unnecessary, but enjoyable addition.

Helen commented that she 'really enjoyed answering some of the questions and particularly the one that was about visually summarising any frustrations that you experience as an art teacher, I think as a collaborative we have all pretty much focused on one thing and it is time, data, numbers and I think it's really interesting how that has come up.' There was a clear indication that the responses to this particular question were of interest to some members of the focus group and so I replied with 'yes, from all of the responses the ones for this particular question were very clear, there was a very clear message. Does anybody want to talk about how they feel that data is an issue for them or a frustration? The way in which the work had been analysed was through the use of thematic analysis and the focus group also clearly identified this as an effective way to draw conclusions from the images viewed. There were of course the themes already situated within the individual questions in which the photographs responded to, but also the emergent themes that were drawn out within these, initially in many respects through semiotic analysis, but also through a further hermeneutical analysis with a layer of narrative and stories unfolding in response through discussions and dialogue. I too was interpreting not just the images, but also the key themes and issues that the art teachers appeared to want to bring to the fore of the focus group.

This was the point where the 'gate crasher' became involved in the discussion and claimed that 'I think what is important with the last question and this one is to remember what is really important and keep it in perspective and I think the idea of the dual role and your own practice, yeah you run out of time and it is a real pressure and easy to put it to one side but if you manage to fight not to put it to one side then the benefits of that are huge. The students see that you are practicing yourself and I think when it comes to data, yeah, it we listen to our SLT too much and we get too absorbed by it then the negatives of that outweigh the positives.' It was

interesting to hear the perspective from an individual's views who had not been a part of the project but however clearly felt strongly about ensuring that art teachers make time to engage in their own practice and reflective enquiry.

In response to this Alex claimed that 'I think one of the issues with that is that you have to listen to it because they are telling you, you have to get this data on for, I don't know, for example six year groups all at once and you are thinking actually this is pointless, the data is meaningless to the students, it's meaningless to us as art teachers, it actually can demotivate the students, or a large number of them, so why keep ramming things down their throats, so you've got all of these things going on in your head and as curriculum leader I actually also have to check other people's data as well, which I think, they are professionals, I am quite happy with what they are going to put on, but no, I have to physically go through and check their data and it's that kind of monstrous thing that schools are running that you kind of feel quite, well I do feel angry about it quite frankly. I am constantly telling my SLT team that this is detrimental to learning, why are you doing it, because Ofsted want it, Ofsted don't want it, it's rubbish, they want it because they think that they can micro manage the school that way and I don't think it's right at all.' This statement that recognised the emotion of anger felt and the words and language used such as 'monstrous' was very telling of the way in which Alex felt about the use of data in schools. During this passionate relaying of their experience and associated feelings there was much empathetic nodding from the group in terms of body language.

When discussing the reasoning and intentions behind the photographs and possible interpretations of the imagery in relation to the question regarding any current frustrations that art teachers felt, Isla shared a very interesting comment after hearing the reasoning behind someone's creative intentions and attempted visual communication pertaining to the wasting of art materials in the classroom and claimed 'I was very similar actually, because my first

instinct was data and I was going to take a photo and I thought, okay, try and think of something else because I thought, oh it's too obvious, that was definitely my number one that I went for, but my second thing was students being disrespectful and I'd had a really awful day, and there were cover lessons in the other room and going in there and seeing how bad the students had left the room in and I hate that, that really upsets me.' Isla also took a picture of a laptop computer with missing keys to communicate the poorly looked after equipment that either hasn't been looked after or is old and needs updating, stating that ' we have to use to try and get amazing work' so for me the top three frustrations are 'data, awful equipment and the minority of students that sometimes are just really terrible in the classroom.' Eva had begun this discussion by sharing her struggles with students not respecting resources and equipment and her frustration with this reoccurring situation. She had captured an image of spilt drawing ink (Fig. 43).

Technology was something that was particularly interesting to me as researcher due to the fact that many of the responses to the questions had involved depictions of technology, technology had been used to create the images themselves and it had already been raised in the very first comment offered by a participant during the focus group discussion. I introduced the question 'one of the objects that came up quite a lot in relation to the first question, an object that you value, was a camera, but maybe that was because we have got a lot of photography specialists amongst us, I don't know, would anyone that took an image of a camera like to explain?'

Helen responded with 'I think that is says a lot about the times, the relevant time, everything is pretty much recorded now, through photographs, phones, so I think that it's a massive generation thing where people ten, twenty years ago when we were at school it wouldn't have been that important.' She went on to make a link to her own practice claiming that 'from doing my own practice, as soon as you say that you are a photographer they find a job for you to do, oh can you take a picture of this? Can you take a picture of that? It's massively trendy at the

moment I would say.' There were many parts of this comment that raised further questions, such as the link between the value of art / photography and societal fashion and trends, the link itself to how young people see the world and how historically many current teachers may have been taught using differing materials, techniques, processes, technology and pedagogies within the arts as a result, plus the making sense of an experience and understanding through the reflections upon multiple identities, in this case: teacher of photography and professional photographer.

To the same question above Elaine answered with 'I think I am always taking pictures as well just as evidence, because often our children will want to take their work home immediately, or it will go somewhere else and it's at risk of being damaged.' This reminds us of the accountability that teachers may feel pressured by the weight of, the student still created the work and experienced the learning wherever the final outcome, the artwork itself, was located. However the teacher felt that they needed 'evidence' of the work produced, either for their own later reference, or as proof for another. There is also the value that has been placed on the artwork indicated here in the way in which the students clearly would like to immediately take the work home, which may provide us with an insight into how highly the work, or the experience of creating the work, is valued by the student.

Helen identified that 'often when you ask students to take notes down or write in their planners they will often ask, can I just take a picture of it? It's how accessible it is, how easy it is for them to use a phone and it is, it is convenient, we all do it, take pictures of our children, I know that now I screen shot everything and think I am not going to write that in my notes, I will just take a picture instead. It's the way that the times and technology have moved on and I think that we can use that as an advantage, more so in our subject.'

I was keen to find out if participants were going to add questions to the brief provided to them what they would add. I asked 'were there things that you would have liked to express but weren't able to with the questions that you were given?'

The response from Helen was that 'it would have been nice to have a bit more of an input from students and their perspectives, like I know from having conversations with the sixth form and the upper school that they feel the way we feel, and trying to explain certain things to them, well how can you? Well basically it's because you are not important enough, that's how it feels to us and they get that as well, it's because were not important enough isn't it? And what are you meant to say? No you are important?'

Alice claimed that 'afterschool catch up sessions that are compulsory, so English, Maths, Science and History, they all had to go to these sessions after school and its compulsory for them for an hour and so I emailed everybody and said I want to have a compulsory one for Photography because some of my students have got real potential but they are lazy and I need them to come for an hour after school so that they can get one – to – one, more help, and nobody even replied. I sent the email out three times to Heads of Year, everybody else and it made me feel like our subject is so undervalued that they didn't even bother replying to me about it.' I raised the link here between this particular participants comment and one of their photographic responses, as I had previously had a conversation about this image and its meaning and felt it was relevant here. Alice went on to explain the image I was referring to (Figure 34), claiming that 'I did a pinhole image of my classroom and I was actually in the classroom, it was a ten minute exposure, I was walking around the classroom clearing up when I had a PPA and then I would sit at my desk for a bit and so you can just see a slight shadow of me sitting at my desk and I felt like that summed it up, because you are there, your busy, your running around doing everything, but your completely invisible, apart from a small shadow doing data at your computer. So that summed it up. The image summed it up for me.' The flow of conversation

had digressed from the initial question posed, however I thought as mediator that this was something that was clearly an important issue for the focus group to explore and so I decided to allow it to unfold.

Sarah claimed that 'I have been in other staffrooms and heard them slagging off the arts and how irrelevant it is and gone in and argued with people, so other teachers have that attitude to arts subjects as well, in that they don't understand it'

I asked as to whether 'you ever think art specialists misunderstand or may have misunderstood other subjects in that way?'

Alice responded with a clear 'No' and went on to explain how 'we tend to use other subjects to our advantage' and another said that 'we tend to integrate it into our own…..we are more interdisciplinary.'

An example was offered by Alex when he explained how 'our head of science seemed to have that sort of, I don't know if they were baiting me once, but we had a conversation about the importance of art and science and it was quite an interesting conversation, but we had been working on a STEM project that has now become a proper STEAM project, looking at colour and light and I think perhaps we will get some more respect out of that'

I used one of the images to relay an on-going experience that I have had as an art teacher in relation to the above, when explaining how 'one of the images, which was by somebody, who unfortunately is not here with us today, was an image of a colouring in sheet, a paint by numbers type exercise and for me personally I have often encountered the joke 'oh, it's just colouring in what you do isn't it, and although you understand that it is just a joke, it is very telling when you look at the meaning behind that joke a little more'

Science departments or teachers came up quite frequently as people who had shown little understanding for the arts. This was of real interest to me and I wondered whether it has something to do with the scientific tradition in western thought and whether art was viewed for some reason outside of that. Leading us back to questions of rationality verses emotion explored previously in section 4.3. Alex stated that 'there is room for speculation and creativity in subjects like science and maths and so I don't understand why it's like that?!' Helen claimed that 'It's just narrow mindedness, it's that sort of mindset isn't it, science is important, maths is important and I think science, because it's always maths and English that have always been important and I think science claim to be as important and yet they don't get the glory that maths and English get' another said 'they are hanging onto the coat tails of maths and English, whereas art just don't bother.' This conversation denotes that there is a clear sense of subject hierarchy felt in schools by teachers and by those in education.

A comment was made about enjoyment in art and how being in the art department was 'their enjoyment, their therapy' and was a safe space for students to occupy where they could be themselves. Alice, in response to this, stated that 'I think it's also really important to understand that art is really deep thinking, I mean the students, they will research something and take this all the way through to their final concept, explore it, experiment, everything that learning should be and I think that sometimes when other subjects ask about your subject and you're having that argument that's what I often ask, do you do that in your subject and the answer is usually, no, unless it's a core arts subject, like performing arts or visual arts, they don't get that opportunity.' Even amongst this small sample of art teachers there was a disparity about what art and design's primary purpose should be in schools. Some were clearly linking art to therapy, enjoyment and enhanced mental health and others recognising this, but seemingly wanting to defend the further academic skills that the arts may support. As highlighted by Stewart and Shamdasani (2015) 'the compelling logic for conducting research in a group rather than an

individual setting is to allow observations of how and why individuals accept or reject others' ideas' (2015:10).

I shared that 'much of our CPD recently has been focused around skills such as enhancement of memory recall and I have sat there and thought that this is rather irrelevant to our subject, instead we need students to do what on the traditional Blooms Taxonomy (1956) would be understood as higher order thinking skills, such as creativity, critical thinking, reflection and evaluation in order to enhance student learning and outcomes.' I decided at this point to try and move the discussion back to the question regarding technology and the links with equipment that had been touched upon by teachers through both the photographic outcomes, but also the discussion.

The gallery schools officer, Imogen, claimed that 'technology is changing so quickly, in about twenty years' time lots of those function of rote learning and data, there will be a robot and there is a website where you can type in and say will I be replaced by a robot? And it looks at different subjects and jobs and its all the creative jobs that are the ones that are actually safe and that's actually where all the money is, and other subjects where leaders may say, oh well the arts is a soft subject and you are not going to make money from being an artist are you? But there are so many professions that really need people who can draw, who can think creatively and it's a massive, massive industry in the UK that will be dying out if it carries on with the hierarchy of school subjects and pressure for things like league table results for schools.'

In response to this Alex referred back to a pervious point in the discussion, linking with an earlier question asked 'about what else could you have included in the questions that you didn't...that would have been the students that have gone to college, that have gone out to work, how have they used art? That would be quite interesting.' The value of the arts at this point appeared to have been shifted to the career prospects and outcomes after leaving school for the students.

Isla claimed 'I think that's sometimes why art isn't valued, because there is this idea that you can't do anything with it and that's why it's not as important as other subjects, that's what people say to me, yeah, but what am I going to do with it? And I'm like, well there are loads of things that you can do with it.' Alice recognised that, 'also even just the process of taking a course like that where you do have to do the research and engage with that kind of thinking and looking at so many different areas and bringing it all together, that would be valuable in any job'

The gate – crasher argued that 'just like the education system is a little bit out of touch with the changes in creative industries, the fact that it is the only industry that has continued to grow over the last recessions, I think many parents don't understand that either, I think many parents still work on the basis that to get a good job, you've got to be a lawyer, you know, you have to get your maths and English' however 'we had a guest speaker in today at our school, a schools improvement advisor and she put creativity, analysing and evaluating at the top of the pyramid when it comes to the most important skills, which is quite good….it's what we are doing as a department already and so the school turns to us and says, okay you are already steps ahead….do an inset on this to the rest of the school.' He felt that this was very positive for the arts at their school and that the key decision makers had an invested interest in what the arts could offer the whole school. I enquired as to whether any of these key decision makers were from an arts background themselves, one was a music teacher, but the others were apparently not specialists in the arts.

Alex talked about the physical location of their school being difficult to find, plus being 'surrounded by grammar schools' they apparently 'sell ourselves through the arts very much, arts and performing arts are a big part of the schools attraction and I think that the SLT team do recognise that' Alice said in response 'if you can find a school that embraces the arts it's

like, the feeling that you get, like when you go for an interview for a job or something you can tell immediately if they just need an art teacher, or when it is a school that actually embraces the arts you've struck gold and I feel like they're more rare. Imogen claimed that she had 'seen quite a trend of that happening, where schools, to make themselves stand out and get students they actually say we are a creative school and we champion the arts and it is happening in secondary, but also primary schools' with 'creative curriculums.'

Alice commented on the way in which she felt there was a divide between primary and secondary schools and the importance and valuing of 'creativity.' The notion of the arts and creativity seem to be inseparable, although creativity itself could maybe do with defining, as a clear issue here is that what is meant by the term 'creativity' by one person, does not necessarily correspond to another's understanding. She claimed that when attending an open evening at her daughter's primary school, creativity was regarded as highly as numeracy and literacy, however she felt that this was not echoed in the secondary curriculum or ethos in the school in which she worked. Helen used an example of her own child claiming that at primary school 'her world is visual and incorporates written language and when they get to secondary that is missing? Isn't it?' I was intrigued by the way in which again participants were looking to their own lives and experiences, as parents alongside teachers to establish the key issues that they felt the arts face. This was something that was countered with the statement that in other areas of Kent, this was not the case and Alex noted that 'there are about two schools out of thirteen that actually have art as a subject on their curriculum, and often it is just one day in the whole year.'

I acknowledged and questioned the time that art is offered on school timetables at secondary school level: 'I suppose time on the school timetable is one of the things to sort of discuss there, you know, I don't know how many hours a week are dedicated to art and design, I know in my school there is one hour a week of art and then another hour dedicated to what would have

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previously been design technology, but is now labelled creative design. It's usually around one hour is it at KS3 a week?'

Alex explained 'we have two, we used to have a lot more than that, but it has been reduced, reduced and reduced. It used to be art and DT, but now our school has basically shut down DT'

Imogen noted how 'it's interesting looking at some of those photographs of the broken equipment, when obviously there's massive leaps in technology and a lot of those creative industries are linked to that, and yet what sort of aspiration does that give to pupils in schools, I know that there is a budget that means that you can't have those things, but I just wondered what kind of a difference it would make if you had all of that sort of technology and cutting edge technology and schools were investing in that. Because at the moment it seems as though, it is sort of making the arts seem old fashioned or irrelevant because it's not keeping up with this.'

Alex responded with the recognition that 'they want students to draw stuff' is the feedback from colleges and universities 'and they would rather they didn't just have that technology, because their concept is that by the time they reach us that technology may have moved on anyway, and they would rather they were creative. But there is a real frustration for students when they go to use the laptop or the mac or whatever to do things like photography editing and it's not functioning quick enough because something is broken or the system is down, or whatever it is and that could put them off going to college to do it because they could think that's the norm, and it's not.'

Helen stated 'I think that we are quite lucky in our school, we have a Mac suite which a lot of schools don't have and they have invested in cameras, however our budget this year is two thirds less than it was last year.'

Elaine said that 'last year I had £300 to spend for the whole department, hence my photograph of cardboard boxes, because that is what I have got to work with. This year was slightly better, it was £500. But once I have brought in equipment I have no money left for trips and things and I can't really ask parents, because a lot of parents they just really can't afford to send money in for trips and things like that.' This gives an interesting insight into the sorts of challenges that certain schools and art departments face due to the distribution of funding within school budgets themselves, but also the socio-economic factors that affect students in terms of their access to the arts.

Something that was concluded was that teachers would like to remain in contact, meet and potentially find ways to work further closely with the local gallery and external institutions, share resources and strategies. Participants said that they would like to make further time for their own artistic practice and reflecting on their teaching practice. Also many said that they felt quite isolated and enjoyed the experience of talking and discussing challenges amongst the group. Isla said that 'I think it is about being isolated sometimes, and with things like grading, god you want to get it correct don't you, because when that moderator comes in you don't want it to be wrong, and not having anybody to have that discussion with, it is hard to be objective when you have been working with that class for so long.' Imogen identified that 'from some of those photographs it can seem quite, lonely and isolating and frustrating.' It was interesting to hear a view point in relation to the images and discussion that was arguably further objective, in the sense that it was not offered by an art teacher or participant who had contributed to the photographs exhibited.

Alice exclaimed that they have found that since teaching she needed to 'change the way that' she 'addresses' her 'practice' and added that 'I might just be thinking about something for two months and then I get home and spend an hour making it, but it changes the way that you

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address your practice, but I think that if you still try to engage with it, even if it is a thought process or something that you write down, that feeds your soul and that helps you to help your students.' The recognition here of the impact of engagement in own artistic practice and the creative thought process on teaching and learning and the art teachers' sense of fulfilment was very clear.

This focus group discussion has both illuminated answers and further questions in response to the initial research questions 'how can the value of art currently be seen in the context of the curriculum? Who in the school community appears and / or claims to value art? How is the ethos of a school affected by the way(s) art is valued?' and 'how are art teachers valued?' The art teachers made strong claims surrounding how they felt that both the subject of art and design in a secondary school context was perceived and valued, alongside how they themselves feel valued, or indeed undervalued as teachers. Through the narrative tales offered by individuals, insights into experiences as teachers, artists and researchers and the general consensus of the group surrounding themes, interpretations and meanings derived and inferred from the photographs, much hermeneutical analysis 'in the telling of participant's story, involving the analysis and interpretation of social events' (Savin – Baden and Major, 2013: 442) can be derived. With the outcomes of this focus group enquiry, alongside individual interviews and case studies new understandings begin to emerge. The links between image analysis, the semiotics of the signs and symbols that reoccurred though the visual imagery in response to the photo – voice participant research, and the issues and challenges raised in this focus group, start to piece together a fuller picture, the threads weaving and corresponding to create an interesting pattern.

6.3 Personal Reflections

Alongside taking part in the photovoice challenge with participants I also recorded insights and observations through the keeping of a research journal and sketchbook, this involved a mixture of written and visual language to express ideas as they evolved.

The opportunity to reflect and record in this manner assisted in my ability to join the dots between findings and also provided me with a space for reflection thought the research process.

Throughout this subchapter I will explore and analyse pages from this sketchbook that enabled me to develop and refine ideas and clarify my thinking. The background pages for the majority of the sketchbook were found marks that have been left over from the artwork that students have created during art lessons over the past six years. These are items that would have otherwise been discarded, such as the paper underneath drawings, paintings or prints. This linked to both my own practice and interest in the combination of text and image, but also to the continued exploration between my own identities of artist, teacher and researcher, writing research notes on this paper allowed me to always keep the setting of the classroom practice, pedagogy and learning in mind.

When referring back to chapter 5.3.2 Arts-based Research Methods, A/r/tography, Photovoice and Liminality we are reminded of the work of Leavy (2012) who claimed that 'a/r/tography merges images and text, without privileging either, in order to open up and create new meanings and imaginings' which 'bridges…theory and practice' (2012: 7). Something that working and recording in this way has allowed me to do.

Throughout the research journey I used several different sized and shaped sketchbook journals to record my thinking, findings and reflections combining word and image (Appendix A) These sketchbook journals could easily be taken with me to work, interviews and put inside a bag or folder so that they were readily accessible at all times. This became habitual, to the point where having a journal with me for the majority of time has become the norm.

The first image created in my original sketchbook journal (Fig. 61) was following a meeting attended in which the main focus was pupil progress, this was in conjunction with reading the work of Eisner (2002) in response to his suggestion that not everything important is measurable, and not everything measurable is important. After coming away from the meeting I found myself preoccupied with the thought that the focus on pupil progress was based around concepts of measurement opposed to learning. The meeting I had attended was geared around how teachers were to evidence learning and progress, through the reaching of student attainment targets. Throughout the meeting Eisner's words were resonating in that I was concerned that the important learnings within the classroom were not being measured, but perhaps this was because they are indeed not measurable.

Fig. 61 Progress image from journal

These doodles in my sketchbook journal acted as ways of bridging the gap between the literature I had been reading and the experiences that I underwent on a daily basis as a teacher

of art and design. Many of the early entries in this sketchbook were in response to personal experiences or the literature encountered, visually interacting with the concepts and ideas further enabled me to situate them within the overall research, develop a paradigmatic framework and methodology and reflect upon these elements in a deeper way than reading and writing alone. The images below (Fig. 62) are examples of the ways in which these initial pages explored the literature:
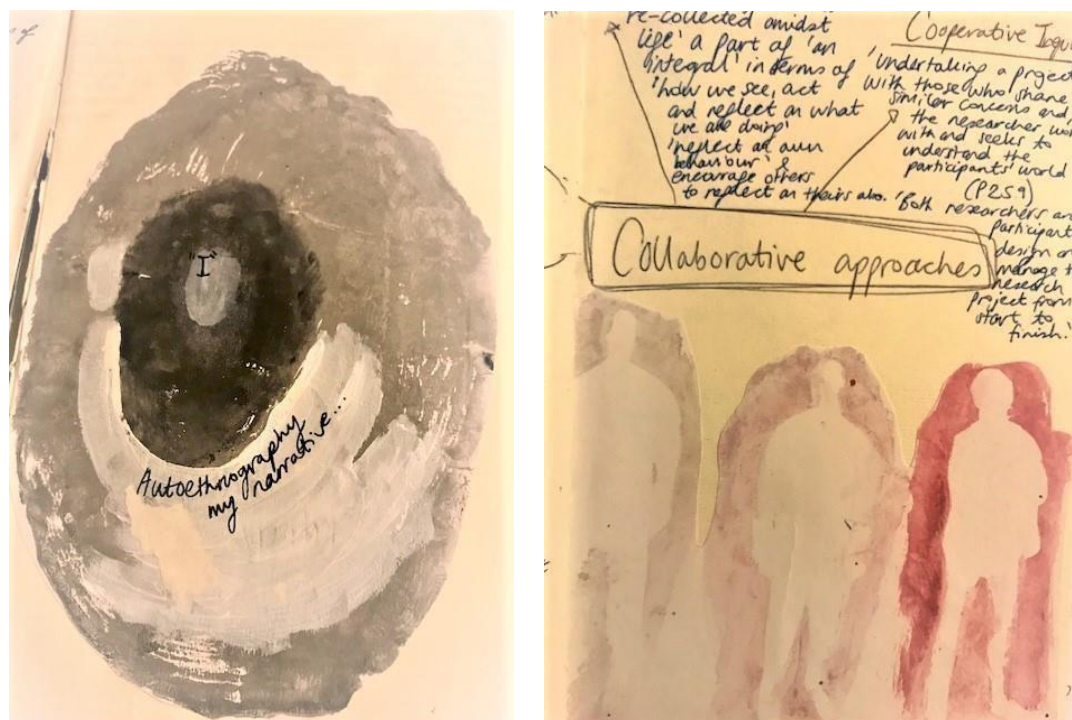
Fig. 62 Reflections from literature images in journal

Alongside acting as a means of exploring and organising thought and the literature encountered alongside my own experiences I also started to use one research sketchbook journal as a far more conceptual visual aid and exploration, taking found marks and left over work from students in the classroom and using them to construct a visual mind – map of the theory, ideas and concepts that were emerging as integral to my research approach, findings and analysis. Examples can be seen below (Fig. 63), one of these was the concept of empathetic understanding 'Verstehen' (Schutz and Weber, 1932) where visually we can see drawing ink mirrored. The second example from this sketchbook was a used photographic polaroid lift that

had been torn and discarded by a student, however the process and visual impact of the discarded work reminded me of some of the key concepts behind a/r/tography. The work of Sullivan (2006) is referenced at the bottom of the page, reading 'oftentimes what is known can limit possibility of what is not and this requires a creative act to see things from a new point of view' (2006: 20).
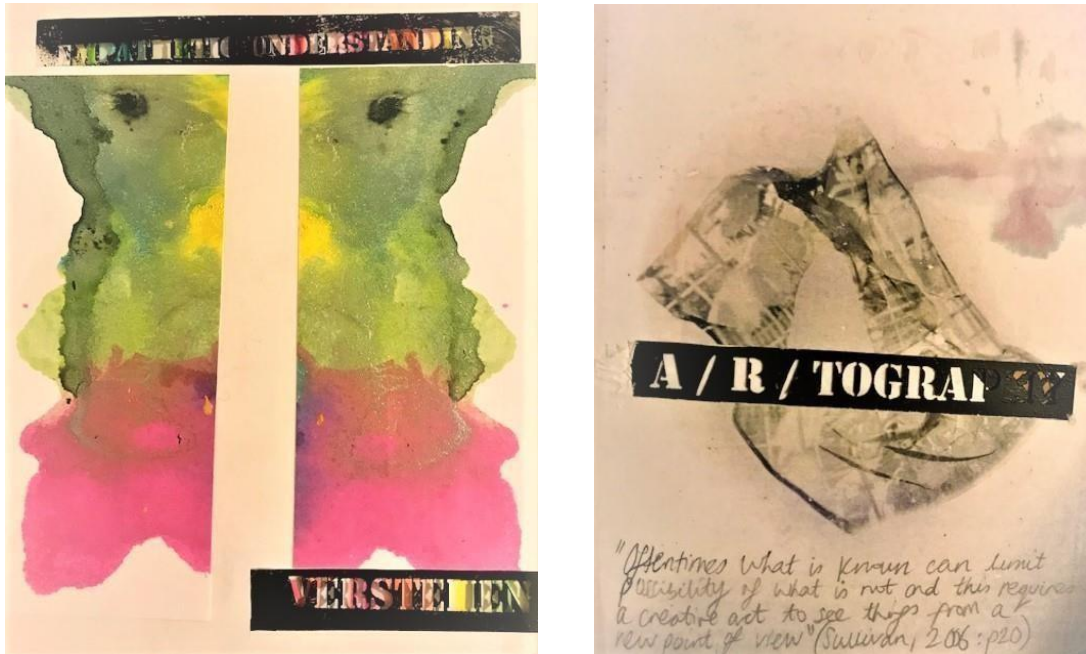
Fig. 63 Exploration of concepts images from my journal

The cover of the sketchbook was laser-cut into (Fig. 64), with some letters fully removed and others lightly scored into the material. This way the eyes are forced to search and look carefully in order to find meaning:
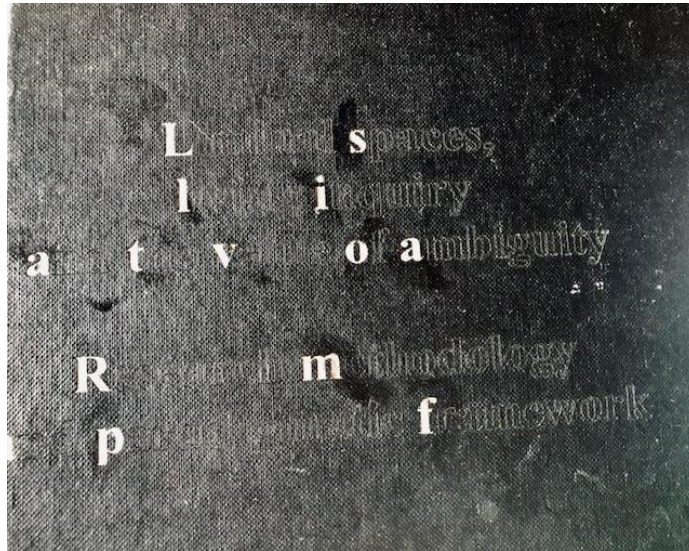
Fig. 64 Sketchbook / journal cover

Other entries were documenting the experiences and insights that emerged from visiting

teacher participants in their school settings (Fig. 65) to use as a means of reinforcing

reflections, alongside as an aid when analysing data and findings:
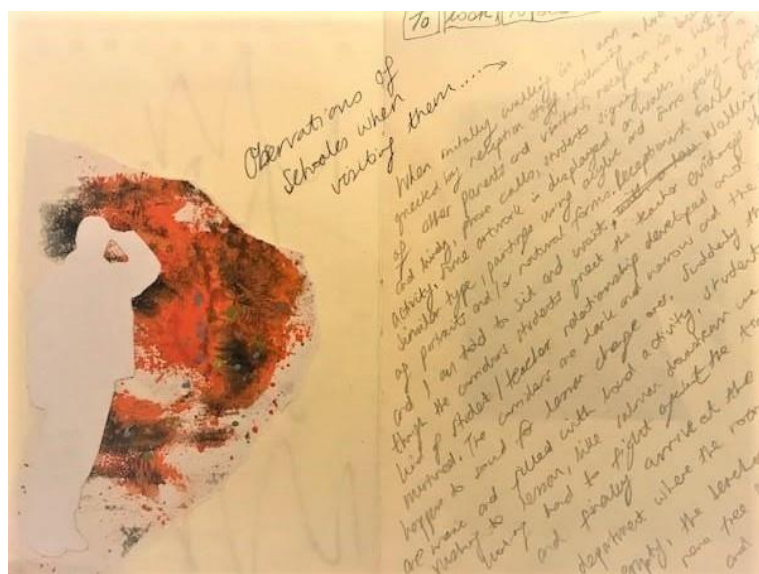
Fig. 65 Notes from observations when visiting schools from journal

I also used a later sketchbook journal to select certain photographs that had been either captured

by myself or research participants that enabled further clarity of thought, or brought about

interesting questions. An example of one of these was an image that I took myself that I chose

to leave out. I was not the only teacher amongst participants that took this approach to

answering the brief for photovoice, in that quite a few took a couple of different responses to answer and visually communicate elements of the brief and then selected afterwards as to which they would submit. These decisions were discussed in one – to – one interviews, or the approach was detailed in emails with photographs attached. The image below (Figure 66) is one that I myself decided to leave out. It was an image in response to the brief relating to how art and design education taught in schools related to art practice outside of an educational environment / establishment. It was also a response to the idea that I, like many of the teachers who participated in this study, could not separate my multiple identities and that of being a teacher, here as mother and a teacher of art I witnessed my daughter take an interest in an artist's work in a gallery whilst walking the streets of Jaisalmer in the Rajasthan region of Northern India. Although the artist spoke little English, my daughter walked in confidently and communicated her interest without the need for the two to speak a common language. He allowed her to explore the materials to hand in his shop and she created a painting of which she was very proud. I think my comment here was about how engagement in art transcends both verbal communication and language and the international nature of the wider art world beyond the traditional classroom. My reason for leaving it out was simply that I felt it did not express or communicate my chosen response to this part of the brief as much as another photograph did.

Fig. 66 Photograph left out

Another image which brought about further reflection, in particular when it came to the importance of autobiography in relation to research, was a photograph captured by a colleague at the time (Fig. 67). The artist Jo Spence (1986) created a political, personal and photographic autobiography entitled 'putting myself in the picture,' published in 1986 which documented her lived experiences in relation to illness. In 2013 I found out that I carried the BRCA2 gene fault, which with a familial history of Breast Cancer increased my risk of developing the disease, as a result I underwent a bilateral risk – reducing mastectomy. Prior to this procedure I visited the works of Jo Spence, this was a difficult journey for me having lost my mother to breast cancer just a couple of years previously, as Spence's photographs reminded me of watching the gradual deterioration in my mother's health. A work colleague had just started their own photography business and was keen to develop her portfolio, I decided to ask her to take a series of photographs both prior and post-surgery, as a means of visually recording and narrating my own story. This was an important means to my coming to terms with the decision that I had made. Later when she accepted an invitation to participate in this research project to my surprise one of the images in which she submitted in response to the area of the brief which required participants to photograph what they believe *should* be at the heart (the essence) of art education, was one of the photographs she had taken of me prior to my surgery. It was not uncommon for teachers to submit a photograph for this category that had been taken outside of an educational institution, but I knew directly from recognition of this image the meaning behind it, after consulting with the participant and colleague they reaffirmed my initial interpretations. This brought with it much to reflect upon. The process of taking photographs to communicate moments and parts of our histories bring with them opportunities to develop and tell stories, but also because it encompasses the way in which my autobiography and identity is bound within the research and methods chosen. Merill and West (2009) identify that the 'lifeworld and life history of the teacher, away from school, have a direct impact on teaching and what they seek to achieve' (2009: 44). The photograph submitted by this participant in this particular circumstance affirmed the way in which both of our lives, external to the classroom,

influenced our values and beliefs in terms of what is deemed important in relation to our ideologies of arts education. In the case of Jo Spence, as highlighted by Riessman (2008) each 'photograph is treated as narrative, and the sequence forms a visual narrative' (2008: 159). This is in many respects how elements of both my own and others' biographies and stories will emerge, but in this case linked to experiences of teaching and arts education. In the case of the example above, there is also a clear element of autoethnographic and influence from my own biography in relation to the interpretation of photographs as an artist, researcher and teacher myself, but also due to the interpersonal and deeper collaboration of meaning that can emerge from the analysis of colleagues' photographs.

Fig. 67 Research participant and links to autoethnography

Other images which informed my thinking but were perhaps not actively analysed in as much depth as the other responses from the brief offered to participants were those of the before and after the classroom / learning space had been used. There were multiple shots of the full classroom, but also often the choice to capture either just the desks or the sinks. These images also allowed me to gain an insight into teachers' space and hint at their pedagogy, on some occasions in locations that I had been unable to visit in person, and on others, on occasions where they acted as a visual reminder of the school environments that I had previously met these teachers in. An example of these can be seen below in Fig. 68:

Fig. 68 Before and after the classroom used shots taken by James and Isla

The photographs that I chose to capture and use in response to this same part of the brief were of my classroom sinks. Another approach that I was not alone in following. Other participants decided to choose an element of their classroom, a sink, a small section, or used tools and materials to express the before and after element of the photovoice brief. I have developed an interest in the sinks of art and design classrooms, as often they can offer an insight into the use of the room and space and what sort of activities students have been engaging in, they may also hint at individual teacher pedagogy and other elements of teaching practice. I have been to some schools where the teachers have ensured that students clean and tidy after themselves, which although eats into limited and valuable lesson time, is a lesson about looking after equipment and valuing the space in itself, and been in other classrooms where, admittedly like my own, the sinks may show a rushed end to a lesson, that I will return to deal with and tidy at a later date. On this particular day I had a full teaching day with a lot of practical lessons planned and a stage set to complete for the annual school show, which had eaten into both break and lunch time; the picture of the sink at the end of the day very much reflected this (Fig. 69).
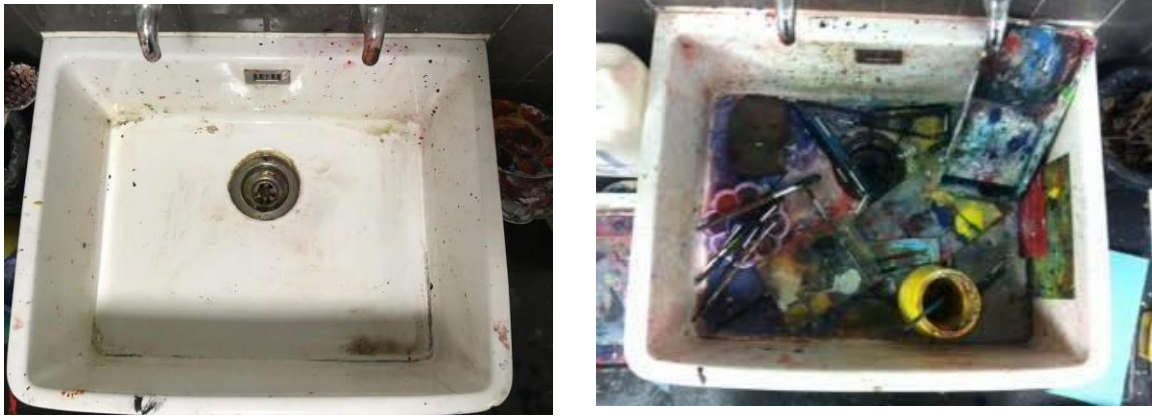
Fig. 69 My own before and after the classroom used sink shots

These sketchbook research journals kept throughout the research journey provided a highly useful space and means of reflection and also documented the development of my thinking, whether this was in the form of notes jotted down, responses to images and accidental marks gathered from classrooms and students, or photographs. When looking back upon entries alongside the data analysis, themes have begun to emerge and arise to the fore. In the next section these themes will be identified and grouped in order to explore and discuss them further within the context of this research.

6.4 Emerging Themes

Reflecting upon the common issues that emerged and were signalled to throughout the collection of data, key themes may be identified. Many of these themes evolved from discussions surrounding images, or were visually communicated through photographs, some were key words or feeling repeatedly expressed in interviews or the focus group discussion carried out following the exhibition at the gallery. Clear issues and themes kept reappearing to the surface and these can be listed as; Isolation, frustration, play, communication, pride, celebration, experimentation, connectedness, expression and loneliness. As a fellow teacher some of these themes were not surprising as these were issues that I too had experienced and am familiar with, I was however intrigued as a researcher as to the reoccurrence of commonalities across different schools in Kent. In order to approach unpicking these themes further I have grouped them accordingly:

- Communication and connectedness

- Expression, experimentation and play

- Pride and celebration

- Loneliness, isolation and frustration

The reasoning behind these groupings were that they tended to be themes that were found together through the analysis process, whether this be in terms of the participants visual responses to questions from the brief, or when reviewing topics of conversion and the ebb and flow of the issues and ideas as they arose during the focus group discussions and interviews. These categories have been created by grouping the language, words and thoughts expressed by participants verbally, whilst also using the key themes, signs, symbols and metaphors that emerged and formed through the photographs submitted. Through the data analysis process of physically highlighting and colour coding the data and then composing each set into a table

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(Appendix R) alongside notes taken in reflective journals throughout (Appendix A), patterns started to develop (Appendix F).

The grouping evolved when analysing the data in terms of the subject matter and associated meanings re-emerging multiple times, some signaled to negative emotions and experiences, such as isolation and frustration, and others were often witnessed hand in hand, such as the concepts of communication and connectedness.

In the next chapter: 7, discussion and findings will be explored and communicated though three case studies of particular research participants and 4 photographs which act as a springboard for these key themes to be unpicked and explored.

6.5 Summary of Analysis

The analysis brought to the fore unexpected findings, alongside certain themes which although were in many respects relatively predictable, due to the nature of the questions and expectations of the brief, but also my own experiences as a teacher of art and design, allowed these to be viewed from multiple perspectives. On a personal level I was comforted, as were other research participants, by the issues that were voiced and discussed through imagery and interviews, as problems and challenges faced could be shared.

The photographs had been diverse in subject matter and composition, however less so in terms of use of materials, techniques and processes, which suggested that the lens had been used as voice, over aesthetic intention. This may also have derived from a lack of time, as an issue that teachers commented on, including a lack of opportunity to continue or engage with their own practice as a result.

Analysing through a range of data, visual, verbal and non – verbal (such as body language, visits to participants at their places of work and individual school settings, and / or in a gallery space) has allowed for a fuller picture to emerge, moving from the early stages of the E.Feldman (1994) model to the fully subjective person reflections detailed in section 6.3.

Themes have emerged from a continuous flow of potential findings, much like the flotsam and jetsam that is revealed amongst the movement of a river, journeying from its headwaters through river channels and tributaries to the delta whereby it meets a larger body of water.

7. Discussion and Findings

The themes listed in the previous section will be further unpicked, explored and discussed throughout this chapter; starting with three case studies of teacher participants and also photograph as voice acting as a springboard. Referring back to chapter 4.4 The influence of Heidegger (1971) and Foucault (1972), I would like to draw attention to the work of Heidegger, with a particular focus on the description of the Van Gogh painting 'A pair of shoes' (1887, Figure 10) where in the Origin of the Work of Art (1971) Heidegger uses the painting to bring about ' a happening of truth at work' (1971: 19) through an interpretive hermeneutic lens. Taking inspiration from this and the work of E. Feldman (1993) in relation to art criticism, previously touched upon in chapter 5.3.3 Artefact, Curatorial, Semiotic and Thematic Analysis, alongside codes and themes that have emerged through image – analysis, interviews, focus groups and the case studies.

I have used selected photographs taken by the artist teacher participants in order to draw out and clarify these themes, starting with the themes communication and connectedness and how these particular threads emerged time and again in relation to the subject of secondary school art and design education and art teacher experiences. This chapter ends with a deeper exploration into the themes of loneliness, isolation and frustration, leading onto possible ways in which these themes may answer the research questions surrounding value that have underpinned the research. The first case study 'The Master of Cardboard' has been named so due to this particular art teachers 'mastery' of a material in times of adversity.

7.1 Case study One: The Master of Cardboard

Fig. 70 Photograph of cardboard taken by Elaine.

This case study focuses on an art teacher called Elaine, who I have named 'The Master of Cardboard' due to her ingenious ability to use cardboard as a diverse medium. One of her photo responses to the photo-voice challenge was an image of a pile of cardboard, of different sizes and thicknesses, demonstrating the type of resources that she is are often using with students due to a lack of budget (Fig. 70). The image itself communicates a certain loneliness and desperation, with its dull colours and the way in which the cardboard sits as rubbish, opposed to in neatly organised piles, however there is also an excitement and optimism for the material expressed. One could respond to this image with a sense of possibility, the desire to get stuck in, explore the material and create something from that in which has otherwise been discarded. When interviewed Elaine expressed that she was 'always scavenging for stuff' because she 'never has any money to buy anything' and argued that if the school was not going to finance her that 'this is how we are going to have to do it to get some work from the kids.' This image was taken in response to questions surrounding art educations place within the participant's current

school curriculum. It conveyed issues surrounding the value that art as a subject currently holds within the school curriculum as a result of the current political and educational landscape in England.

Whilst visiting Elaine in her school setting, walking through to the art classroom, existing in a separate block, through a series of corridors and doors with security measures, there is the feeling that we are physically walking to a part of the school that is separate to the rest. This same feeling was created in a photo-voice response captured by the Mater of Cardboard when visually representing a frustration that she encountered as a teacher of art and design. The photograph was taken in a meeting, from below a table, sat on the floor, involving the subjects feet, but also looking across at a sea of legs (Appendix S). This was an image that communicated a clash of viewpoints, multiple viewpoints, where there was perhaps misunderstanding. This initial response to the photograph was confirmed in a discussion with Elaine through her expression that 'all the meetings are about data and things that aren't actually anything to do with creative subjects… things that are irrelevant to me' and when time is given to converse about issues in art and design education in the school it is always 'pushed aside' and demoted to 'any other business.' This image essentially summed up art education's place as AOB.

Elaine had worked within education for the past 14 years, with a break to raise her own children, working both as a supply teacher, teaching children in care, as a citizenship teacher and art teacher. She felt that one of the major issues in the arts were support and funding, but having not experienced teaching outside of Kent was unsure as to whether this was an issue faced nationally or locally. Another issue identified was time, both in terms of engaging in creative activity as an artist, but also time directed towards art within the school curriculum.

Elaine stated that she enjoyed 'brief outbursts' of engaging in her own practice but sometimes working alongside students was 'as good as it gets.' On her school timetable KS3 were allocated one single lesson a week, which she felt resulted in a 'lack of continuity' and a source of frustration for the students because 'once they are in it they are fully engaged.' This sentiment was also expressed through one of the photographs presented of a student wearing their artwork where they were literally 'in the art.' This image was in response to the question of the value of art for the student and here Elaine described a learner 'having fun' and 'playing and experimenting.' This particular student was one in which 'doesn't usually engage a lot of the time' but he became 'involved' in the art to the point where he was 'wearing it' (Appendix Q).

Applying the categories used to analyse the whole data set of photograph responses, post-exhibition curatorial selection, Elaine's images display the majority of photographs having the subject hinted at, with others either falling into the categories of object (mimetic representational) and expressive form, with one abstracted and the other based upon conventional signs. One must remain aware however that two of the questions required images to be taken of objects. These images were therefore to a certain extent predetermined. When applying the description phase of E Feldman's (1994) model of art criticism all images were in black and white, this was an aesthetic choice by the participant, with the knowledge that the images would become a part of an exhibition, alongside their primary function as research.

I created a chart to combine and further analyse both the images offered and information and key words and phrases expressed in dialogue with the Master of Cardboard, in line with the thematic and semiotic methods used to analyse data (Appendix P) From this process I found that the majority of Elaine's images involved the subject being hinted at, which was usually through either a series of hands engaging in creative activity or connecting with another, or the body and feet of the participant themselves or her students. Many of Elaine's comments

throughout the interview process hinted at themes of communication and connectedness with others, but also to the wider world, statements such as the following reinforced this:

- Out and about

- Art can be all around you

- They're out there in the real world

- It happens to real people; to them

- Recognised outside of school

- Worked with an artist

Another theme that re-emerged throughout conversation with Elaine was that of pride and recognition of what the students achieved and celebration of this. The words and phrases that she used are demonstrated below (Fig. 71):

Fig.71 Word cloud (in discussion with The Master of Cardboard/ Elaine)

The images offered by Elaine in response to the brief to capture an image both before and after the classroom had been used were interesting. They had taken an image at eye level to the chairs and tables that would be sat at, a classroom appearing from this particular angle tidy and organised as an image to capture before the classroom had been used by students. Elaine later

exclaimed how for once her floor was clean in the classroom and this is one of the reasons that it had been taken from above, to show off her clean floor. The after shot was taken from a different angle, from above. It was as if the focus had shifted from the person to the artwork, from the student to the creative outcome. The left over mess and chaos that had been created through exploratory work alluded to the themes of play and experimentation. These images were interesting as they had the potential to communicate something about that particular teachers way of working, hinting at their pedagogical ideals, which also came about through the language used and discussions engaged in with the participant. Elaine talked about her photographs submitted for the exhibition in relation to the themes of play, expression, experimentation and a building on curiosity and inquiry, using terms such as: 'playing with things, finding out what would happen if, play, experimenting' and referring to questions such as 'how can we do this in the most creative way.' In many respects these statements were also visually communicated through the mess left over in the photograph captured of the classroom after use.

Elaine clearly held a strongly student centered approach to teaching and learning. Not only did the majority of her photographs involve the subject being hinted, however when the remainder of the images, those that did not involve subject, but object, were discussed in further depth during an interview, she communicated meaning that related to student experiences and the visual arts being a way of enhancing the positive impact of these for the individual. An example of this can be evidenced through the visual response to the question 'photograph an object in your classroom that you think students value highly' in combination with the reasoning provided as to why a camera had been photographed. Elaine claimed that students wanted to take their work home as soon as they had finished it, demonstrating the pride that they felt.

Elaine expressed that she witnessed the benefit of the arts for her students, however felt that across the curriculum there was not enough opportunity to 'teach creatively' and that this could be a way to 'open up opportunities across the curriculum rather than just in an art lesson.' When

asked if she felt valued as an art teacher she answered with a resounding 'no,' however admitted, self – reflectively, that she was 'not in a very good place at the moment' due to feeling 'frustrated' by the way in which she enables the students to work towards successful completion of qualifications and 'engages with difficult kids' on a day to day basis, but 'had to drag the head in the other day' just to say 'look at what these kids have done.' She felt that SLT did not truly understand the subject, but rather happy to use artwork for displays or when bringing visitors around the school as a sales point, opposed to because there was a genuine value in the subject. Elaine used the term 'divide' a considerable number of times and this was also something she found an issue when completing the photo-voice challenge, as the image that she deemed the most difficult to capture was 'an image that captures what you believe *should* be at the heart (the essence) of art education?' due to the challenge that came about as a result of dealing with a disparity between how things are and 'when you know things are not quite how they should be.'

When discussing the meaning of 'value' with Elaine she explained that within the context of art education it meant to her:

- The pupils are engaged

- Learning together

- It comes from 'them' and we go with their interests and should be able to do this

- Building relationships

- Building communication skills and confidence

Working on her own as the only art teacher in her particular school setting she found that the similarity between the images at the exhibition and the themes that arose from the focus group discussion enabled her to view what she had in common with other schools and as an artist and art teacher. One of the things that she felt that the whole process allowed her to do, something

that she claimed that her students also found hugely beneficial about the study of art and design, was arts enabling ability to assist in helping people in 'saying what they can't say.' This statement automatically resonated with Eisner's claim that the arts provide a means for which to learn to say what cannot be said (2002: 88). This visual means of communication was an element of the project which Elaine claimed that she found enabled her to express and reflect upon issues within art and design education and her experiences as a teacher, but also acknowledged the ways in which her students used visual expression as a tool to explore and play.

Throughout conversations between Elaine and I the reoccurring themes of communication and connectedness and the sense of pride and joy that can be derived through the freedom of expression, experimentation and play were continually revisited. Despite the many frustrations and issues of isolation voiced though both word and imagery, the optimism and joy of working with students and witnessing both their artistic outcomes and personal journeys remained at the core. This may also be evidenced though the way in which when Elaine's images and statements were analysed using the same thematic and semiotic means alongside the overall data collection, the majority of images and comments fell into the first category where themes of pride, joy, thoughtfulness and introspection, expression, connectedness and communication permeated through the human subject being hinted at.

Eisner argues that

> 'Joy is not a term that is used much in the context of education, but if the arts are about anything, they are about how they make you feel in their presence…The arts, when experienced in the fullness of our emotional life, are about becoming alive' (2002: 85).

Elaine demonstrated how through the use of the simplest materials, often discarded rubbish, in a climate full of challenges, the joy and associated themes that can be derived from both teaching and engaging in the visual arts may be valued. Stake (1995) claimed that with case

study research 'seldom is an entirely new understanding reached but refinement of understanding is' (1995: 7). Elaine has refined the suggestion of the power of joy in art education as suggested previously by Eisner, something I too, as an artist, teacher of art and design and researcher can also empathise with.

In the next case study the themes of loneliness, isolation and frustration will be further built upon, with the intention of developing a deeper understanding of how these individual cases may provide reasoning as to the intentions behind the sets of photographs exhibited, but also an insight into the struggles faced by art teachers in their specific educational settings; secondary schools in Kent.

7.2 Case Study Two: The Skeleton of Art and Design

Fig. 72 Photograph of skeleton taken by Isla in response to the photovoice brief.

This Case study starts with the image above, which in many respects sums up the current picture with regards to Art Education, from this teacher participant's perspective, whilst also hinting at the wider political and social picture. It ends; sadly, with the death of this particular Art teachers' job within the school where they worked whilst participating in the research with reasoning underpinning this decision broken down to issues surrounding frustration and a lack of value, for both the subject and their own input as an art specialist.

The skeleton image (Fig. 72) stood out from the full set of photographs when initially analysing the visual data. It was archaeological in nature and the earthy colours and homo sapien skull clearly communicated and indicated something human. This photograph was taken in response to the question 'compose an image that you think effectively communicates art and design's place as a subject within your current school curriculum.' As a researcher and fellow teacher my initial response to this photograph was that art and design was dead as a subject within the wider school curriculum. When discussing this image with Isla, who captured it, I came to

understand a further complex narrative. A skeleton was found 15 years ago underneath one of the school buildings when an area of the school was being renovated, the art department made a mould from it and this was displayed in the schools reception. The object was representative of how the schools attitude towards the visual arts had changed throughout the years to the present day, which Isla claimed was 'actually quite frightening when you compare.' Once learning this information and looking once again at the photograph there was a history hinted at and a precarious balance between uncovering and preserving that now emerged. Isla claimed that art in their school setting 'is dying a death, no one cares and it is really hard to accept that and persevere through it, it is pretty awful.' She claimed that she wanted to photograph this because it was 'something to do with the school and that object had a story in itself.' She also argued that 'it is political, the EBacc thing, not important, it is not a buzz word at the moment and I think that the situation that the school is in reflects that, sadly.' In the past, Isla recalled how the school had been involved in many projects with outside agencies and had a good uptake of art throughout the key stages, but felt that it had recently 'shrunk so much, whether this be staffing, students, budget. 'After looking at the skeleton image I was forced to question whether art and design as a subject in secondary schools really was dying and gradually becoming skeletal.

Isla said that she had recorded the exhibition and their own photographic responses using Instagram. This sharing on social media may have suggested that there was a certain pride about being a part of the project and a willingness to share the struggles and celebrations of the job and life as a teacher of art and design with others, outside of the immediate focus group. It also reiterated the importance of technology to both teacher and students alike, as many of the images featured interactions with cameras, mobile phones and iPads. When selecting visual responses to the questions posed Isla admitted that there was 'so much I kept out as well' and they found themselves asking 'what would photograph well?' and 'looking around the room' for objects and scenes that would fulfil the brief. Isla had been very honest and open about the

selection process and how and what influenced her decisions in terms of what messages she wanted to portray, but also what influenced her in terms of an aesthetic response. She claimed that 'perhaps I didn't answer the question very well, but it caused me to identify and think about some of the issues that were perhaps there for me' which was extremely interesting to hear as for Isla the research had clearly had a greater impact in terms of both the exploration of the questions posed and responses offered, plus also identities between artist, researcher and teacher.

I had made three visits to this school, during the final visit made to this particular setting the bell sounded and in this particular school it was incredibly loud and imposing. It appeared destructive to the conversation held between myself and Isla and the sudden movement and noise around the school was very apparent, it felt like an imposition on time itself, as if whatever activity, learning or interaction that was happening in the run up to this signal for all to change, was to be abandoned there and then, it hinted at the systemic nature of secondary schooling and acted as a reminder of the way that subjects and time are often segregated and students are to drift in and out of different learning spaces regimentally, with little to no time to question nor reflect. The timing of this bell sounding was directly as the participant was actually answering a question and we were forced to temporarily sit in silence as to not compete with the loud interfering buzz. The participant then naturally went to round up a topic of conversation as a response to the bell sounding. I was curious as to whether the impact that I had observed in this instance, where the bell and structure of time in school had influenced the ebb and flow of conversation, was perhaps reflected in the student's interactions and learnings also. There is a connection that can be made here in relation to Foucauldian thinking when considering the nature of factories, prisons and schools. In Discipline and Punish; The Birth of the Prison (1977), Foucault describes the routine of prisons, including the set times and breaking down of autonomy of the individual, as Foucault states is his rhetorical question 'Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble

prisons?' (1977: 228). Feeling and recognising my own exasperation during this moment lead to me asking about frustrations that Isla experienced and how these were visually communicated though her photo-voice responses.

Isla's visual response to the question ' take an image that you think visually sums up any frustrations that you experience as an art teacher' caused some contention, mainly amongst the gallery exhibitions team as to whether the subject matter was appropriate to display in the art gallery open to the general public, including children. This image was of a penis and anus scrawled on the side of a sink. It was decided by the team that it was acceptable content for the focus group and private view, however would need to be censored for exhibition when open to the general public. Isla referred to her image as visually expressing her on-going frustration with 'school boy cocks all over the place' and in this particular incidence she had captured 'fresh ink on the sink.' She felt that from the students there was 'a lack of care for the things that are around them' which is 'a frustration.' On this day Isla had remembered feeling as though she was 'on my own and fighting a losing battle.' This battle often derived from an 'attitude' to the arts, negative in approach, which she thought stemmed from the students' surroundings, where they 'don't understand why the arts are important' and that there was a lack of support within the school community itself with 'management dumbing down your subject.' The graffiti and lack of care for both the equipment and the arts was something that Isla then went on to identify only emerged from 'a minority' of pupils. She deemed the root cause of this to be linked with pride and argued that although 'many still having pride,' it is a small handful and links to the wider issue of both the immediate school community and wider society not supporting the arts. Isla felt that incidents like this which highlight poor attitudes to both the school equipment and / or the arts 'adds to the stress of it all' leaving her feeling 'exasperated' and 'alone and insular,' and finding herself asking the rhetorical question 'am I the only one who really cares here?'

Isla claimed that when attending the focus group and the exhibition she was relieved when seeing others' responses to the question surrounding current frustrations, as many were about data. She claimed that she was 'going to take a data' photo, however 'thought it was a boring image' and 'creatively it did not have much impact' which is why she 'didn't put it in' claiming that this was 'not an image I want to look at.' This avoidance reiterates the impact of aesthetic decisions made on the data received in this context. She felt that there was 'a lack of trust' from management, which was 'irritating' and that 'data and paperwork is excessive' and 'evidence' is required which she found left her begging the question 'what is the purpose of this? The students don't value this, parents don't understand it, so who is this for?' There was a very apparent frustration and anger that Isla was struggling with and she was certainly not alone in this.

There are two more photographs that I would like to utilise from Isla's set in order to highlight and extract key issues that arose through the imagery and discussions that it provoked, both in one – to –one scenarios with the Isla and other art teachers whom communicated common themes.

The first image is of an object in which Isla felt the students valued highly; a roller, used predominately for printmaking. The rollers expressed the way in which she thought that students learnt, through doing, experiential and through engagement with practical activity. Isla claimed that the students 'gravitate' towards this tool, and that for 'a simple piece of equipment, it creates a lot of intrigue' because they are 'fascinated' by them due to the potential that they have to create. This curiosity, and essentially a drive to play was something that echoed throughout many of the images taken amongst the photographic data sets. Isla claimed that the students 'love' anything that 'you can pick up and play with.' This interaction with an object in order to create, explore and experiment was communicated through the photograph

offered in response to the question of value for students across many of the images and was a clear theme that re-emerged consistently. The rollers were carelessly thrown in a pile, no single one was the clear focal point, but they were clearly well used and the unorganised mound made through the random placement of them suggested an interaction with the object, both prior and post use.

The second individual image from the data set provided by Isla was an image of a block of pencils, taken from above. This image attracted much attention from others during the exhibition. It was an interesting composition and there were many meanings and interpretations that could be read and extracted. The pencil block itself was half – full thus with holes exposed missing pencils, the pencils themselves were of varying lengths, had been well used with some sharpened and others not. One pencil was upside down, the others stood with their lead facing upwards. This photograph was in response to the brief 'capture an image that portrays how you think others (in general) view art and design as a subject in secondary school (how it may often be stereotyped).' When interviewed one-to-one about this image Isla stated that the pencils were a visual communication for the assumption that many make about the subject based around the notion that both art teacher and students 'just draw stuff, don't you?!' Hence 'a load of pencils, that's what people say to me. Can you draw? Draw me something!' In this instance her background is in fashion design and she felt that there is the assumption that all art teachers come from a fine art background. This was a belief also shared by other staff and colleagues, as stated by Isla when they claimed that 'if you are in whole staff or faculty training and you have to do a little activity where you have to draw stuff then you are expected to draw it. That is the basic really, you just draw stuff.' This was something that I too had eperienced on more than one occasion, whilst in tables amongst other subject specialists, if anything is to be drawn as a part of a training activity, they all look to the 'art teacher' making the assumption that they must be the most qualified for this particular job, regardless of what area of the art and design industry they may qualify and / or derive from.

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As with the previous case study a table (Appendix R) was devised in order to assist with the analysis of data following interview and identical categories were used. With this case study there were far less photographs that fell within the category of the subject hinted at, unlike Elaine, the Master of Carboard, but the majority of images involved mimetic representation and the object itself acting as the main focal point of compositions, many of these objects involved metaphor and some complex narratives underpinning them when intended meanings were discussed with the participant. The Skeleton of Art and Design, Isla, used further emotive words when reviewing language and statements made such as 'love, trust, going a bit mental, so sick, frightening, sadly, bored, relaxed' and 'freedom' and also used 'really' commonly as a prefix. The use of the prefix may have been in response to the situation in terms of further self – awareness knowing the interview was being recorded and / or a habit of speech, or it could have been a means by which to express the extent of feeling. Having visited this school three times, met at the exhibition and focus group and exchanged emails with Isla in the months beforehand, the conversation during the interview appeared natural and the relationship developed prior to it leads to an inclination that in this particular case the reason for the use of the prefix was highly likely to be the latter.

The narrative that emerged from Isla's experience was one in which encapsulated the anger, frustrations and loneliness that many other participants had hinted at. With Isla having handed in her resignation to the school just weeks before our final interview, she talked with an openness and honesty that was perhaps driven by a relief with a major decision made to (at least temporarily) leave the teaching profession.

She had always worked in Thanet in the same school throughout her teaching career and claimed that she 'really enjoyed working with young people' but had found herself feeling 'unhappy' and as if she never 'had enough time' to do all that was required and found the educational system 'too rigid.' From the project, exhibition and focus group she had reflected

upon her own pedagogy and practice and considered that she was perhaps 'too negative' and ought to be 'more appreciative' of the resources and materials that she had and realised that she had many strengths as a teacher and what she has 'available' to her, however had admittedly 'got in a bit of a rut' and found great comfort and reassurance in having 'people say I feel the same way.' This reinforced the theme of isolation for The Skeleton of Art and Design. Something that also resonated in her story of her own personal experience of art in school, Isla reminisced identifying that 'my art teacher was one of those teachers who saw me for the first time, I was shy and felt like she saw me and my potential and boosted my confidence... she was very much into contemporary art, the wacky hair, the weird clothes, somebody interesting.' This leads back to the notion, quoted earlier in the introductory chapter, that 'art and design' and creativity are 'allied with the pursuit of ideas that are the antithesis of orthodoxy...innovative, radical and sometimes heretical or revolutionary' (Steers, 2003:27). The art teacher of which she remembers may well have struggled the same battles of misunderstanding, frustration and isolation that this teacher had found herself facing. Her interactions with this individual were somehow different from the ones that she engaged in elsewhere whilst at school and she was 'seen.' The photographs and statements offered by Isla were in a sense rebellious, bold and fueled with passion for both the arts and the experience of the arts and education for the young people she taught. The themes of isolation, frustration and anger came to the fore throughout this case and there was an honesty and rawness of emotion in both the verbal and visual interactions encountered and expressions made which resonated with me as an artist, researcher and teacher. The final case study, The Artist Teacher and the Palette Knife, explores the experiences of a teacher whose balance between identities informs and underpins much of their practice and pedagogy.

7.3 Case Study Three: The Artist Teacher and the Palette Knife

Fig. 73 Photograph submitted for exhibition / in response to brief by The artist teacher, David.

The final case study follows a teacher whom I have referred to as 'The Artist Teacher' due to the way in which he views himself as an artist alongside teacher and still engages with his own practice. The photograph above is an image of the artist teacher, David's, palette knife, captured centre of the frame, resting on a well-used wooden school desk; marked, painted and gauged. The clean blue crisp lines were purposefully applied as a background for his latest work, contrasting against the messy layers of marks created by years of use in the art classroom. The way in which he chose to answer the request to 'photograph an object that you highly value' within his classroom and the context of a school environment as a tool that he uses as a painter, with the background consisting of a work in progress demonstrates the value of engagement with his own artistic practice. Having exhibited work in highly esteemed galleries, selling works and receiving commissions, the importance of David's own practice is integral to his life history both in and out of the classroom. In an interview with David he proudly exclaimed that the photograph was of 'my' palette knife, which he then went on to explain that he has owned since eighteen years of age, which 'follows me everywhere, and I think there's a blurred line between my own practice and my teaching practice and so they become intrinsic to each other.' This object was captured to visually represent how for David art education and personal experience as an artist are not separate entities to one another, which is why he wanted to

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capture 'an object of my own in my classroom.' The way in which David worked reminded me of some of the key principles underlying the a/r/tographical approach, in particular the way in which Leavy (2012) exclaims the struggle between identities as artist and teacher and how she could not 'carve out parts' or herself 'and place them into different boxes' (2012:6). David had developed a pedagogy that was founded in mutual respect for both these identities, seemingly neither could comfortably exist without the other.

David benefited from a range of varied experiences in different types of school settings, many of these in the Kent area. He had worked as a supply teacher, as a temporary teacher of art in schools, but also as an art and design technology teacher and a Head of Department. This gave him an interesting insight into how different schools compared to one another. There was also the clear recognition from David that many of the issues that art teachers and departments faced were drip-fed down from government, this was something that he talked openly about during a one-to-one interview when claiming that much of the struggle and challenges that art education is currently faced with is filtered down from a 'governmental level.' David had become frustrated with the educational landscape in terms of how art and design as a subject was to function within it, but also understood the clear need for it to forge a way so as to not be sidelined, this was demonstrated in decisions made as a Head of Department, but also through the photographs submitted, with many focusing on the career choices available from study in the arts and / or displays, giving art a physical presence within the school, alongside observations made from multiple visits to his classroom.

In a space in the corner of the classroom is a studio where one or more paintings are worked upon in snippets of time during or following the school day and an area of the room acts as storage and a gallery for his own works. He believed that this raised aspiration amongst students, reminding them that being an artist is a career. There was also however a clear struggle and tension between the two spaces and David admitted that he regretted not having

further time to spend in the studio space due to pressures in the classroom space. It was as if the strained relationship between artist and teacher identities was apparent in the very space and environment occupied.

It is important to note here that David was a close colleague at the time. Working alongside each other I was very well accustomed to the space and way in which he worked, however I made the decision to include his input as a case study because I found his photographs to be a set that required further discussion. He also did not attend the focus group discussion and although was shown photographs of the exhibition, he did not attend in person. The one-to-one interview and photographs have been analysed as a case separate to the daily observations made, however my understanding of David's views and opinions expressed required less unpicking because of the relationship developed throughout the time spend working alongside one another in the same department and school setting. David was unable to comment on his images within the overall set, which in many respects meant he was not influenced by other people's responses. I have had to be aware and reflexive of the ways in which my understanding of the school environment in which we were working did not interfere with my analysis of the ways in which he interpreted the setting.

David had a degree in fine art and also worked as a successful sign-writer for a number of years prior to teaching, speaking fondly of the experiences university offered and often relaying interesting facts and stories learnt about artists and their lives to students. He had worked as an art teacher and supply teacher in a number of different schools and as a Head of Department in two different schools and so was very experienced. In terms of his own education, he found art an escape from the further formal teaching of other subjects, however moved around schools, often in different countries due to the nature of his parents work and professional lives. Art was the subject in which he felt interested in, but also found very easy to access and as a result decided to take this forward when it came to decisions about further study at a younger age.

David was keen to study for a Masters degree in fine art, however due to work and family commitments this desire had been put temporarily on hold for a couple of years.

When analysing David's visual responses to the brief the majority of images were of either students outcomes and / or displays, the remainder were of objects and therefore none of the images involved the subject and nor were any abstracted. In the case of the objects captured they carried stories that linked to the act of making or creating artworks. This created a stark contrast between the Master of Cardboard (Elaine) where the subject was hinted at regularly in her photographic responses. The artist teacher and the palette knife, David, appeared a little further removed from the students themselves and further interested and reliant upon the works created, alongside his own artworks, as a means of communicating his educational standpoint and ideas in relation to arts education and his experiences as a teacher. This reflection has enabled me to visually comprehend the diversity within the data in itself, but also how art teachers had chosen to express their ideas and viewpoints.

When asked to capture an image that demonstrates the value of art education for students David took a photograph of a poster listing the various different art careers available to students. When asked to elaborate on the meaning behind this image he claimed that he 'feels as though we have to constantly validate our subject within the curriculum and so rather than others seeing art as a therapy and a fun subject, it's not, it's an academic subject that leads to some serious careers.' The recognition made that in many schools art and design is often viewed as a less serious endeavour than other subjects and the clear need acknowledged to reinforce the career paths that studying art could potentially lead to suggests a defensive response. The answer offered by David demonstrates the value of the arts for students by tackling the relationship that the arts have to life outside and beyond school, but also highlights another issue, which is perhaps based upon a misunderstanding of the subject in itself, or the suggestion that it is advertised and promoted within secondary schools as fun and therapeutic which

indirectly negates the seriousness and importance of the skills and experiences provided through studying the arts. This relates back to the claim made by Eisner (2002) that there is often the belief held in schools that 'the arts are basically sources of relief, ornamental activities intended to play second fiddle to the core educational subjects' (2002: 196).

Another poster / wall display was photographed by David in response to the brief to compose an image that effectively communicates art and design's place as a subject within your current school curriculum. This time the poster was exchanging information about where a student should be at the end of key stage three in terms of skills and ability within art and design. Unlike many of the other entries for the exhibition David's images were rather difficult to read and interpret. The meanings were ambiguous until interviewed where the deeper intentions were clarified. He claimed that students are 'constantly expected to reach a certain standard, by the end of a certain timescale, so we are limited by timescales all the time and there's an expectation, toolbox of skills, that is quite inflexible really when you look at the mark schemes and things like that. Some kids develop quicker than others and some don't get it until they're sixteen' we are 'constantly trying to tick boxes to say that they are at a certain place' with a 'one standard size fits all' approach, which he argued 'we have to, we have no choice about that.' There was a clear frustration communicated here through body language and facial expression and also a sense of acceptance that this was and could quite possibly always be the case, due to issues of accountability and measurability within schools. The final statement was spoken in a way that echoed tones of abandoned hope in relation to the situation, a surrender to the recognition of 'no choice.' This indicates a loss of agency and a powerlessness against the larger education system in which we must play a part as classroom teachers. Reverberations of Foucault's understanding of bodies becoming utilitarian means of normalising and conforming in response to insidious control may be felt when considering David's description of the secondary school (Foucault, 1977).

The inflexibility and the need to adhere to outcomes and certain frameworks was communicated further in other images captured by David. When asked to photograph how others (in general) view art and design as a subject in secondary school he yet again captured a display, this time of the student's work on the walls. He claimed that in secondary schools there is a 'hierarchy of subjects' which he believed to be 'government led' with 'English, Maths and Science at the top of the Christmas tree' and art and design 'right down at the bottom, if not we are seen as the mud.' He claimed that one of the main purposes for art and design in a secondary school for others was being there 'just to fill wall space with pretty pictures and fill the kids time up and it's this blurred, horrible distinction that lots of people, especially in senior management, see art as occupational therapy and that is really frustrating.' He believed that this attitude could also lead to the art department becoming the 'dumping ground for other kids, the place where students with a few issues will get sent because they can play with paint' this or 'filling frames to make the school look pretty.' David was not the only participant to note the way in which art and design was valued as something to show off, on the walls, or as a further holistic subject offered in a school, suggesting both a surface level of understanding and value. This was a reoccurring issue for art teachers. Flooding schools with artwork in a celebration of the subject and the students' achievements could have been an alternative way of interpreting this, however those working in the schools seemed acutely aware that the purpose and meaning of artworks displayed in the corridors and offices of schools represented a superficial value of the subject, something which may not be apparent to the untrained eye.

The final photograph of a display taken by David had the GCSE assessment objectives mounted as posters on the classroom wall as the subject matter. This picture was in response to the request to take an image that captures what *is* at the heart (the essence) of art education. It is ultimately about meeting assessment objectives, to pass examinations and achieve the required grades. This was in contrast to what *should* be the essence of art education, which for David, was the students actual work, demonstrating both the process and physical engagement with

the creating of art, opposed to the notion of evidencing certain skills and techniques to tick the required boxes.

Value in relation to art education for David meant students having had a positive experience of the visual arts, whilst also gaining the requisite skills to move forward with the next stage of their educational life, there was the recognition that often art is deemed as a subject which is therapeutic by SLT and there is a fine line to be trodden between this and the understanding that it is in fact an academic subject with the expectation of quality outcomes. He claimed that he does not feel 'it is pushed enough nationally' and that education in the visual arts can lead to the development of 'a mindset' that revolves around 'how to self – analyse, promotes own work ethic' and can 'instil independence' which can lead to a rounded and 'creative and inquisitive person.'

The main themes that were discussed through the interview and communicated visually with imagery in the form of photographs were: frustration, experimentation, pride and celebration. David had the experience and confidence to situate his experiences in a state of resigned anger and frustration with a understanding of the larger political picture and pressures on schools, but also his part in terms of the celebration and joy that may be immersed in as a classroom teacher, always linking back to his own active practice as an artist for inspiration and nourishment. In the next section the themes that have emerged from both the case studies aforementioned and insights from analysis of the photographs and images created and submitted, alongside focus group and interview findings will be both identified and explored in further depth.

7.4 Communication and Connectedness

Fig. 74 Photograph submitted for exhibition
in response to brief captured by Elaine

The water – soaked earth has splashed and saturated the human hands, which although busy sit

with ease, the layers of dry clay further up the arms imply that it is not the first time this person

has encountered this versatile material, they are the expert, with no need for precautions in an

attempt to keep their clothes or skin clean, with the marks of clay reappearing everywhere. The

hands of the student remain relatively clean, this is the moment where it is their turn to explore

and experiment with the material, a towel lays upon their lap, perhaps to avoid a neat school

uniform from becoming the next victim to the mess. A finished article, hinting at the history of

the craft itself stands proud at the bottom left of the frame. Your eye is first drawn to the activity

and is then lead by the line of the patterned fabric to the exemplar pot, a suggestion as to what

the student may be working towards. The subject matter here is the material and technique

itself, followed by the human interaction with it. Here we see a connectedness between a

material and process and human manipulation of this, we see the connection between student

and teacher or mentor and a craft and it's cultural and contextual histories. There are multiple

layers of communication taking place, the visual communication itself, the communication between teacher and / or mentor and student and the communication involved when manipulating a material through a creative process. When talking to the artist teacher who captured this photograph they were responding to Q6: Create an image that captures how you believe art as a subject taught in school relates to art practice outside of an educational environment / establishment, they were also making a statement about the type of experiences that students enjoy out of the classroom environment, when working with those situated in the local community and in life beyond the school environment and gates; learning from artists and craftspeople in their own settings and studio spaces. When considering the image of a ceramic pot being made, I am reminded of the words of Given (2012) and how 'Artefacts become data through the questions posed about them and the meanings assigned to them by the researcher' (2002: xvii). The ceramic work that appears in the bottom left of the frame, the previously made, perhaps an exemplar piece, hints at the history that mankind has in creating three – dimensional objects, for function or mere aesthetic satisfaction, there is the communication of humankind's interaction with materials and processes and the histories to be found in these.

Many of the photographs in which had the subject hinted, opposed to those that were further mimetic and representational, such as those in which the object was the key focal point, either suggested, or were hinting at, themes relating to communication and connectedness. The brief offered to teachers when taking the photographs as voice meant that they were unable to take photographs of people or students due to ethical issues, such as that of consent, however they still managed to visually communicate the importance of human interaction through either the use of hands, arms and silhouettes, or through photographs that involved the artwork or material as the focal point of the image, however signalled to the underlying human activity that lay the foundations for its form and existence.

The images that did link to the themes of communication and connectedness that did fall in the memetic / representational category were those of objects in which we use as humans for communication. These were mainly digital, such as cameras, mobile phones, computers and tablets and hinted at the capacity to photograph, email or relay communication. Some of the other objects were tools or means to create artwork, which would ultimately in some cases provide a means of communication, but the link was not direct, as it was with the items of technology. There was a theme of communication here that was removed from the human conversation or interaction and was based mainly upon function, almost removing the element of connectedness.

It is not surprising that communication has evolved as one of the key themes that has re-emerged throughout this particular research due to the methods and tools that have been used to collate data and analyse findings. The photography brief in which teachers were involved in demanded communication through the use of a lens to capture snap shots of everyday teacher experiences. The questions created an opportunity for teachers to think in a way which encouraged communication of certain issues and ideas and the focus group and interviews following the exhibition of works allowed a space for artists and teachers to debate and discuss meanings behind the works and common issues confronted in their professional and personal lives. This lead to connectedness amongst the artist teachers, but also made links between the connections in themselves, between the identities of artist, teacher and researcher. This links back to a/r/tographcal methods explored in depth in the Methodology chapter 5, Arts – based research methods, A/r/tography, Photovoice and liminality in relation to the work of Irwin, also providing the opportunity to reflect upon Rodin's (2008) notion that one of the driving forces for an artist to create works is the need to 're-live and potentially re-examine or evaluate that particular part of experience' (2008: 65) in 'plucking something finite from the continuous flow' (Ibid). The continuous flow of lessons and learning that takes place within a classroom and school environment is the area of experience in which I was asking teachers to

re-look at with a critical eye and in a reflective light, however due to the shifting nature of identities; artist, mother, father, teacher, far more of the overall narrative of teachers' life stories started to impact decisions in relation to what to photograph, beyond that of their professional identities alone.

Communication was a theme which ran throughout the research from the outset, from the communication in the form of visual responses provided by the participants to the communication between myself as researcher and audience of the exhibition of these images, as stated by Bresler (2006) communication in a research or exhibition setting happens 'whether it occurs between two people, a person and an artwork, or a person and data, a dialogue…' (2006: 62) emerges. The communication that followed between the above parties listed brought about the eternal cycle of communication and connectedness which has remained at the core of this research. As noted by Lackey (2008) an exhibition of artwork(s) should 'grow out of carefully considered intentions that include attempts to communicate as well as to create conditions in which others may respond to and learn from the display' (2008: 34). The art teacher participants photographed as voice, these were then exhibited and they then both communicated and connected with one other in the act of viewing the display of these photographs. There was an endless process of communicating and connecting, which as a concept has underpinned many of the recommendations suggested in chapter 10 in response to this particular research.

When revisiting the literature the Critical – theoretic Orientation and the Critical Feminist approach towards educational research in the arts, based on Pearse's (1992) identification of the main stances often adopted in relation to theoretical frameworks, highlight the importance of the relationship of 'man to his self and his social world' (Pearse, 2000: 161). This concept underpinned the photography brief in the sense that participant teachers were asked to communicate their relationship to the objects, space and interactions which take place within

the classroom, but also the relationship that they have developed towards ideals, philosophies and pedagogies in relation to arts education.

Folwer (2001) notes that the study of the arts enable an individual to 'think communicatively' (2001: 4 - 8). I was asking teachers to think in this way when asking for them to participate in the research and to visually express ideas and issues in response to a written brief, using image as the reply voice to a series of questions and requests. As exclaimed by Berger (2008) as previously touched upon in the literature section 4.5 Notions of Value, images can in many respects be 'more previse and richer than literature' and is often based in the artists 'experience' (2008: 3) although in the case of this research based in the art teachers' experiences. Elaine (who informed the case study 7.1: The Master of Cardboard) claimed that when it came to the term 'value' in relation to art and design education, for them it meant 'learning together, building relationships' and 'building communication skills' amongst other attributes.

Communication and connectedness is also, arguably, one of the cornerstones of art education in itself. As stated by Fowler (1996) 'the aesthetic awareness we learn through the study of the arts becomes a way we relate to the world' and enables us to 'come to terms with the world around us' (1996: 10), whilst also claiming that 'the arts make natural and unique connections with the deeper purposes of education (2001: 4). Similar statements have been made by the art teacher participants through the choice of objects and subject matter photographed and later discussed. When capturing images in response to Q3 on the brief, which related to visually communicating the value of art for students, art teachers repeatedly relayed meanings through their photographs that linked to the notions of communication and connectedness enjoyed by students with regards to both each other and the wider world through the study of art and design. Examples of this may been seen through the photograph previously explored in section 6.1.1 Images from exhibition, where jumbled letters spell out 'making sense of the world' (Fig. 30) or groups of students stand having developed close bonds and relationships as a learning

community. Other photographs included a series of fists in a circular formation, representing the team work and support that students provided toward one another and hands manipulating materials in various ways, exploring the media and or producing outcomes. These images all hinted at either a sense of connectedness between a group of students or a connectedness to the material or tool being used to create artwork(s).

When analysing the language, both visual and spoken, used by the teacher participants there is an instant connection between this social group in terms of the acronyms used within the realm of education, but also between terms and phrases used by art teachers in which mutual understandings were evident. Many of the photographs that fell into the conventionally / socially agreed signs category were those that also relied upon this element of communication in order to be understood by the viewer. Olssen (2003) argues that 'language formed a system because it belonged to individuals collectively and constituted a social institution' (2003: 190), the collective construct in which is highlighted here by Olssen was clearly demonstrated in the communication and connectedness between art teachers.

Within the focus group discussion words and phrases such as 'incorporated, heritage of the arts, links to the wider world, collaborative, interdisciplinary' and 'share practice' all hinted at communication and connectedness, in many cases between the arts and other subjects commonly found in school curriculums, but also between the arts and the wider world. There was a strong sense of connection between the art teacher participants shared that could be observed throughout the private view of the exhibition and focus group discussion, in comments made but also the body language used, many concurrent nods and knowing smiles were shared.

A connection that was recognised and in which the vast majority of the participants vocalised was the desire for art and design teachers to be further connected to their own practice. This

was an element of the identity of art teacher David (who lay behind the case study 7.3: The Artist Teacher and the Palette Knife) was aware of by stating that 'there's a blurred line between my own practice and my teaching practice and so they become intrinsic to each other.' Some teachers found it more difficult than others to harness the balance between artist and art teacher which was an issue discussed through both the focus group and one-to-one interviews. There was also a desire expressed in response to the issues of loneliness, isolation and frustration (explored further in section 7.7) to remain in contact and find ways to further support one another and continue the conversation, this suggested that the connectedness and openness of communication between the teacher participants was genuine and as specified by Isla (whom inspired the case study 7.2: The Skeleton of Art and Design) there was great comfort and reassurance in having 'people say I feel the same way.'

7.5 Expression, experimentation and play
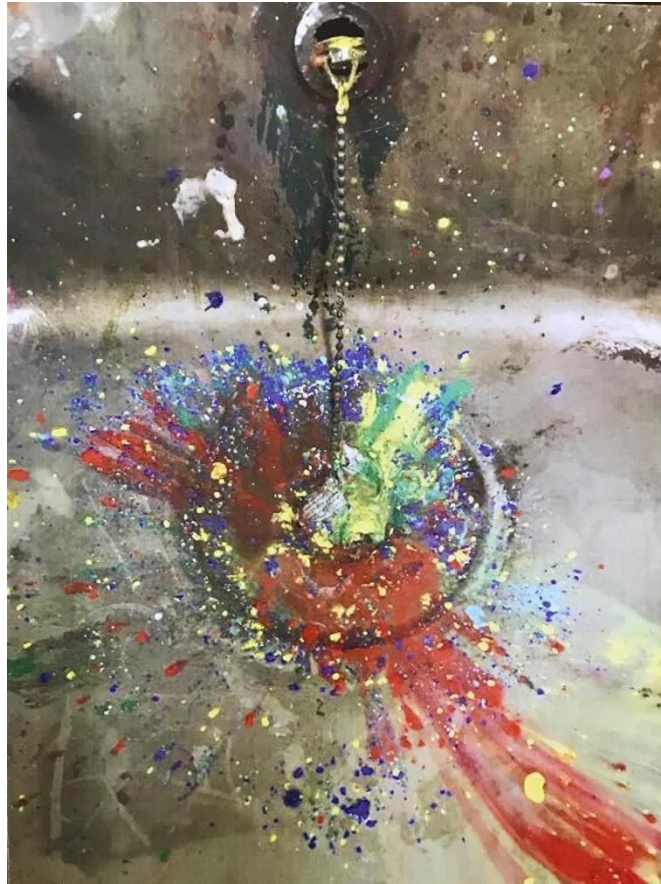
Fig. 75 Photograph captured by Sarah in response to brief for exhibition

Primary and Secondary colour paint splashes circle the pug hole of the sink, splattered in all directions with fresh paint layering upon older stains on every surface visible (Fig. 75). This is a photograph of the left over, excess, unused material, we do not know what was painted, all that we may glimpse is an indication that red, blue, green, yellow and white has been applied to another surface elsewhere. Although the marks here are unintentional waste product they carry an aesthetic quality in their own right, something that the artist teacher who captured this photograph deemed as worthwhile subject matter to compose centre frame. This photograph hints at expression, experimentation and the activity of engaging in play in their aftermath, yet is also both expressive and playful with regards to content in itself. As a teacher I have often witnessed students taking interest in watching the paint, ink or material wash down the sink, or

observe the way that it pools and creates an accidental pattern and texture. Arguably, a large part of play is experimentation, or vice versa, a part of experimentation is engaging in the act of play. Sutton – Smith (2001) claims that there is much ambiguity in relation to the concept and meaning of play, noting that educators and sociologists 'tend to focus on how play is adaptive or contributes to growth, development and socialisation' (2001: 7). Whereas when framed within the context of art and literature there is a 'major focus on play as a spur to creativity' (ibid). Sutton – Smith argues that the ambiguity surrounding a definition of what play actually is and involves results from the many differing play forms, from subjective play (metaphors and daydreams) to deep play (risk – taking and extreme activity), but also a consequence of the diversity of players, from children to adults (2001: 1 – 5). A comparison may be drawn between the ambiguity of play and the ambiguity found in creative activity and art-making (as noted previously in section 5.4). There may also be a link between engaging in play and art-making in the sense that due to their ambiguous nature they risk being taken less seriously or misunderstood. When referring back to section 4.3, the relationship between what has been commonly labelled academic and practical and reason and emotion is explored and Cunniffe (2005) notes that art education is 'misunderstood' and 'misinterpreted' (2005: 553) due to the ways in which learning in arts education is not easily placed in any single way of knowing, procedural nor declarative. This struggle when defining arts position may also be partially based in this difficulty to define and the western tradition of Cartesian duality and ontology and associated notions of reason.

However, when reflecting back upon the history of art and design education in the UK and Addison's (2010) claim that from the 1980's onwards further creative models of arts education could be found, largely as a result of the Teacher's Guild inspired by the work of Marion Richardson (1945), where the belief that 'creativity…play and expression of inner life' (2010:

17) was integral to the study of art. This change in viewpoint was also noted by Efland (1990) who claimed that it was during the 1980's that children's art began to be taken further seriously (1990: 195). This historical ongoing difficulty in defining the seriousness of the subject of art and design is not dissimilar to the issue of defining the seriousness of play, both perhaps partially resulting from play and arts ambiguous nature, as Eisner (2002) claims there 'is no single sacrosanct version of the aims of art education' (2002:25) and it appears that there is a similar case when searching for a clear or singular definition of play. I would like to return to the work of Fowler (2001) here, where we are reminded that due to the nature of symbolic expression and ambiguity in relation to the arts 'abstract reasoning [and] higher order thought processes' (2001: 5) are required, linking to the skills which are often deemed further academic that the study of art and design both requires and promotes.

Experimentation with materials, resources and ideas occurred through the photographs taken by participants; some were experimental in method. An example of this can be witnessed in Alice's response to the brief with their pinhole camera image (Fig. 34) where they experimented with using their mouth as the camera lens, where they were present in the photograph, yet invisible in the outcome.

Alongside experimental responses from teacher participants many photographs dealt with the theme of experimentation with materials, techniques and resources in terms of the way that teachers used them with students, but also capturing the aftermath of student creative activity. The Master of Cardboard case study (section 7.1) provided an example of the ways in which Elaine had risen to the challenge of budget cuts by becoming experimental and playful with materials, in this case cardboard, mastering the potential of this resource in order to provide opportunities for their learners. Many of the photographs offered as a response to the request for a photograph before and after the classroom had been used revealed creative spaces which invited experimentation (Figs 12 and 68). Classrooms which at a glance either looked

disorganised, but were ripe with opportunity to explore, create and use materials in a new or unconventional manner, or learning spaces that were perfectly orchestrated for students to pick up tactile objects to experiment and play using a range of materials and resources to record ideas, findings and insights.

The themes of experimentation and play were often found hand in hand, however another theme that re-occurred in relation to these and / or independently in similar images or through conversation was that of expression.

One of the current issues that art teachers repeatedly discussed was that of not having the time to engage in their own practice, or having the time to experiment themselves with materials and processes, not having the time to play or express their own creative ideas. This arose when conducting one-to-one interviews, but also in the focus group when discussing the photographs captured and exhibited. Isla confessed that she felt 'guilty' when engaging in her own practice, which she felt other people may deem a separate activity to teaching in art and design, however in response to this the gate crasher, commented on the importance of the 'dual role' of teaching and making time to engage in one's own practice. The tension between the roles of artist and art teacher came to the fore and with this did the frustration, guilt and / or embracing of precious time to regain the identity of artist alongside teacher, something that a couple of the participants had negotiated successfully. The artist teacher and the palette knife, David, provided the opportunity to explore this element of an art teachers experience in further depth, another participant, Helen, had set up her own photography business alongside working part - time as a teacher which had offered them a route to reconnect with their own creative practice in a professional capacity. In taking part in the research teachers had been asked to act as photographers, artists, researchers and teachers, as specified by Alex during the focus group discussion, taking images for the research brief was a 'nice' and 'creative' way of 'getting away from' the monotony of elements of the job such as numerical data input, analysis and collection.

He commented on how if offered them an opportunity to reflect upon their 'practice' and 'space.' Alice had claimed that becoming a teacher resulted in her having to readdress the way that she approached her own practice, taking into account time restrictions such as time, but felt that it 'feeds your soul' and 'helps you help your students.' Something worth noting here is the relationship between time and space and also the recognition that space may not always be physical, but the mental space to be able to commit to a creative project or endeavour. A reflection and concern that these conversations highlighted was that of art teachers feeling sufficiently nourished in terms of expression, experimentation and play opportunities within the arts in order to continue to provide these for their students.

The way in which the theme of expression, with a particular focus on self – expression, re-occurred within the photographic responses and verbal comments made by the teacher participants has led to a question regarding their pedagogical ideals. When reflecting back upon Efland's (1979) claim that art teachers tend to fall within the categories of either 'Expressionist, Scientific Rationalist' or 'Reconstructivist' (1979: 45) it appears that many of the art teachers and specialists who took part in this research were aligned with the Expressionist theoretical stance, as many were concerned with one of the main purposes of art being strongly associated with individual growth and / or a means of creative and artistic expression. This may have been because they felt that the art department was somewhere where students could perhaps indulge in this kind of activity where perhaps other areas of their school life and experience are lacking, this was hinted at by Helen during the focus group discussion when she exclaimed that they come to the art department because it is their 'enjoyment, their therapy' and a safe space where they can be themselves. When reviewing Emery's (2002) recognition that from WW2 onwards art has been widely viewed as 'a means of self – expression' (2002: 21) stated previously in section 4.2: Art education; approaches, pedagogy and history in relation to the works of Eisner and Efland, alongside Efland's (1990) claim that through the arts the 'language of self –

expression had found its way into public schools' (1990: 210) between the 1920's and 30's, it is unsurprising that the link between art and design and self – expression remains.

The other two viewpoints were demonstrated at points throughout, yet they did not carry the same weight as the expressionist framework. Participants appeared to believe the importance of art as a means of organising thought and integral to inquiry and knowledge but also perpetuated the idea that these were contributing factors to the perceived hierarchy of subjects within the secondary school. Participants also recognised the power of art in terms of the reconstructionist approach and when interviewing them many often referenced to successful projects where social change, even if on a small scale, was noted as an outcome, however this was often talked about as something historical, projects that used to happen, change that used to feel possible, however in the current climate the message of resignation to these same outcomes being successfully replicated into the future resonated.

Roege and Kim (2013) claim that the arts offer an opportunity for students to immerse in activities which promote self – expression, which results in an increased general engagement in education as a whole. When evaluating the concept of value in relation to art and design Berger (2008) argued that 'the more imaginative the work, the more profoundly it allows us to share the artist's experiences' (2008: 3) in a direct manner. This opportunity to express one's inner life and explore, experiment and play with ideas, tools, materials and processes is something that the participant teachers thought the students valued in relation to the study of art and design, but was also recognised as an element of their own lives as artist teachers which they deeply valued. Eisner (2002) claims that 'the arts help students learn to pay attention to qualities and their expressive content' (2002: 85) linking back to empathy, but also acting as a means to enjoy the 'freedom…to liberate their emotions' (2002:89), ideas supported and communicated by the participant artist teachers also.

The vast majority of photographs that participants captured in relation to expression, experimentation and play were communicated though use of metaphor, this is in itself a playful way of communicating information and ideas, others were commonly found to involve the subject being hinted at or through the composition of materials having been used in expressive, experimental or playful ways. In the following section the themes of pride and celebration are discussed, which communicated another highly positive aspect of art teachers experiences.

7.6 Pride and celebration

Fig. 76 Photograph taken by James in response to the brief

Although a seemingly sparse space, work hangs on the walls with pride, carefully placed and mounted with care. Both natural and artificial light flood the room and the segregated composition, with interior walls acting as partitions, are brought together by the colourful works on display. The photograph (Fig. 76) leads the viewers eye as if taken on a tour of this exhibition on foot, approaching the brightly coloured textured large – scale paintings sat side by side upon the white walls. The works have clearly been thoughtfully selected and curated. Having questioned James, who captured this photograph, for further background information and reasoning surrounding intentions, they explained how this was a snapshot of the final exhibition that students had curated as a team, choosing and negotiating the space and works. This space was ordinarily a working classroom, but was cleared entirely for the purpose of a celebratory exhibition at the end of the academic year for students to collaborate in exhibiting their artwork. The knowledge that students had self – selected the work which they wanted to exhibit, alongside making curatorial decisions in terms of how and where in the space they planned to display these brought another level of meaning to this photograph.

Many participants submitted photographs of either individual pieces of work created by students and / or images of final outcomes and exhibitions of artworks in response to the brief. The majority of these were in response to questions 2: Capture one image that you think helps to demonstrate the value of art education for your students, 5: Take an image that sums up what you enjoy the most out teaching art and design, 6: Capture an image that portrays how you think others (in general) view art and design as a subject in secondary school (how it may often be stereotyped) , 7: An image that captures what you believe **is** at the heart (the essence) of art education and / or 9: Photograph an object in your classroom that you think students value highly. The ways in which the photographs of this subject matter flooded the overall data set across such diverse areas of the brief suggested the importance that students work and outcomes was to teachers, including their perceptions of what is valuable to their students within an art and design education context. This was unsurprising in the sense that the artwork created by students is one of the fundamental elements of an art teacher's professional role and the learning activities that take place in the classroom, the visual outcomes are also one of the physical and tangible outcomes of learnings in the subject.

There is a relationship to be explored between the theme of pride and the notion of value within the context of this research. It could be argued that we place value in the things in which we are proud, or indeed that what we are proud of are things that we perceive as either valuable, or that others will deem of value. This begs the question: what do students value in relation to the work in which they are proud of and who applies the value? Do teachers have influence on works which students will see as valuable and be proud of or can the time, effort and thus intrinsic value of the work to the student scaffold feelings of pride? There is the pride in the work itself and then also the pride associated with the gaining of a qualification at a certain level, however from the teachers perspective the former appeared to be further important than the later, although the later was of great concern to their daily professional lives due to the ways

in which schools and teachers' performance are measured. The only time in which data, such as student performance levels and grades, were discussed was in a negative sense, however the achievements of students, in terms of artwork produced or projects engaged with, were talked about in a largely positive respect. Themes of pride were visually communicated through photographs where both the subject was hinted at and through images of displays and final works captured, whereas celebration was mainly discussed and communicated in relation to the latter, which perhaps reinforces the human relationships which underpin feelings of pride for both teachers and learners.

The exhibition of participants work acted as a celebration in itself in certain respects, as artist teachers had dedicated time to complete the given brief and were meeting in a gallery space where their photographs were exhibited and their contributions to the project and research celebrated. There was a certain pride associated with having photographs displayed at a local gallery, one participant, Isla (The Skeleton of Art and Design) had claimed during a one-to-one interview that they had captured their own work on their Instagram page.

There was a pride that students took in their own work and finished outcomes that was expressed during the focus group, as exclaimed by Elaine, when they explained how they had captured a camera as an object that they thought students valued highly because they are so keen to take work home when completed. Alex stated that he had asked the students which object in the classroom they most highly valued and they had answered with their creative journals, which reinforced the importance, pride and value that students place in their own artwork(s). These journals may have been artefacts in which they had invested much time and effort, but also if they were KS4 or 5 students they would also be integral to their overall grade and mark in terms of coursework and so in this sense the value of the sketchbook / journal is twofold.

There was an underlying scepticism expressed by some of the participant art and design teachers in terms of the ways in which celebration and pride can be used as a means of decorating the school walls, as opposed to a general interest in the work produced by students within the subject art and design, hints at the belief that SLT and other professionals can at times demonstrate a tokenistic interest in artwork in relation to the purpose of engaging in the activity of art making being a means to an end in terms of the outcome produced, opposed to a wider understanding and appreciation of the journey or learnings in the process of creating the final works, often used as a means of brightening the walls of school corridors. This was a viewpoint reinforced through interviews with David (the artist teacher and the palette knife) when he stated that much of secondary art and design education's purpose was perceived to be 'just to fill wall space with pretty pictures.' This was also an understanding shared when interviewing Elaine (The Master of Cardboard) when she explained how she felt that SLT did not truly understand the subject, but rather happy to use artwork for displays or when bringing visitors around the school as a sales point, opposed to because there was a genuine value in the subject. It is worthwhile noting here that these two participants did not meet one other during the research process and were based in different schools and so were not influenced by each other's ideas or interpretations and so came to these conclusions entirely separately. The term 'championing the arts' was used in the focus group and is a phrase which is commonly encountered within the realm of education, however the ways in which a school champions the arts is an area which may need cautious analysis, as actually investing in the arts opposed to being seen to do so, was something of which art teachers were acutely aware. This leads to some of the frustrations, issues of loneliness and isolation voiced and visually communicated by art teachers which will be unpicked and considered further in the following section.

7.7 Loneliness, Isolation and Frustration
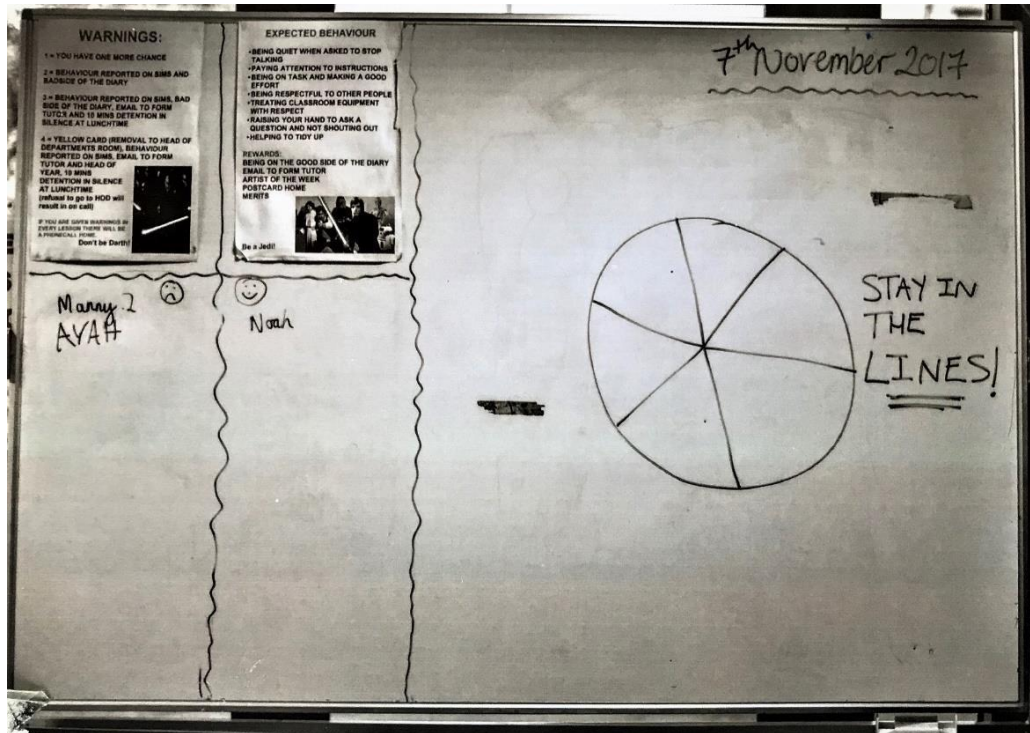
Fig. 14 Photograph submitted by research participant Alice

A black and white image of a whiteboard, dated 7th November 2017, with a behaviour for learning system listed on the left – hand side of the frame reinforcing expected behaviour and listing the warnings for if this behaviour is not displayed and a couple of names occupying the space below, has clearly been interacted with during the lessons proceedings. A rough diagram of the outline of a colour wheel takes up the remaining space on the whiteboard with 'stay in the lines!' written in block capital letters with an exclamation mark and two underscores. Although the image itself does not seem particularly visually impacting, there are a number of messages being relayed. The focus of the lesson itself is one in which the teacher is relaying factual information, in this case facts about colour theory. This is a comment on what prevails as the seemingly preferred pedagogical approach and in many respects links back to some of the ideas shared in chapter 4.3: Reason and Emotion / Academic and Practical. This underlying bias within the education system is reinforced by Eisner's (2002) recognition that in schools 'we tend to empathize facticity, correctness, linearly' and 'concreteness' (2002: 198). The

colour wheel and colour theory is one of a very few factual learnings within the study of art and design, this photograph highlights this bias towards ideas and answers which are easier to measure; those which are facts and have a simple right or wrong answer. The behaviour for learning system was representative of the kind of issues that teachers may need to deal with on a day-to-day basis, many of these were brought to the fore in the setting of the focus group discussion when teachers talked about the ways in which students were disrespectful, often with equipment, and that this was something that they found both upsetting and difficult to deal with, (e.g. Images of damaged computers with missing keys, ink carelessly spilt and graffiti of a penis and anus drawn on the side of a sink). Equipment and attitudes in relation to student aspiration, alongside a focus on data and a lack of time and resources were themes that constantly re-emerged in relation to frustrations and teacher's dissatisfaction. In this photograph we see a classroom teachers effort to deal with these issues and difficult behaviours.

When analysing the general set of photographs, in 6.1 Image – based analysis, much of the images captured by art teacher participants through the photovoice challenge where emotions such as anger and frustration were expressed tended to be communicated through the use of abstract form in terms of chosen subject matter and composition. This may have been because often strong emotions can be visually expressed through the use of colour, shape, line and other formal elements used in an abstract sense, the rise of abstract expressionism in the 1940s as an art movement is testament to this. The other category in which the themes of loneliness, isolation and frustration were frequently communicated was with socially agreed upon, conventional signs. Many of the responses to the issues in the teaching profession that participants wished to discuss or captured through the use of a camera lens were statements about the amount of data and measurement methods used in schools or comments about the teaching profession itself and the subject of art and design's place within this. Many of these photographs required some sort of experience as a teacher in a school environment in order fully interpret and understand the intended meanings and messages conveyed.

When analysing the data and exploring the findings from this research one ought to remain mindful of the fact that teacher participants were asked specifically to capture images of something that they found frustrating and to capture the way in which art and design is viewed; the stereotype, which meant that themes relating to this were destined to be brought to the fore. What could not so easily be predicted or anticipated however was what these issues would be or how frequently whey would emerge. Not only did the themes of anger, frustration and isolation arise from the images captured by the participants, but they were also openly discussed during focus groups and interviews. During the focus group which took place at the gallery during the private view of the photographs captured by the teacher participants they spoke of their frustrations which were drawn out from various responses and questions which initially were not directly linked to the idea of frustration. Teacher participants repeatedly described feelings of 'frustration,' anger and some even used terms such as 'pointless' (chapter 6.2.1 – Focus group analysis, pgs. 268 – 269). There were other emotions such as 'guilt' expressed by Isla during the focus group discussion, where she stated that she felt an 'immense guilt' when participating in a task which was not her job, such as engaging in her own artistic practice or taking the time to capture photographs for the research. The difficulty that they felt with managing time in order to anything beyond the job, plus the struggles between identities as artist and teacher was an issue that other teachers empathised with. They recognised the importance of enjoying the space to step back, reflect and create, but felt that it brought difficult emotions to the fore, such as guilt. One of the participants, Helen, stated that they thought that as a collaborative teachers had focused on the same issues when answering the element of the brief which required teachers to reflect and visually communicate any frustrations that they encounter (chapter 6.2.1 – Focus group analysis, p278). When analysing the photographs submitted this was something that I too, as researcher, had noted. Whether it be though the use of conventionally agreed upon signs or use of abstract form teachers had all made clear comments relating to time, data, misuse of materials and resources, lack of budget and feeling

undervalued and misunderstood as a teacher and or subject. Alice had claimed that she felt 'invisible' and had captured an image where she had been in the classroom the whole time, using her mouth as a pinhole camera, yet was not in the photograph in order to describe the isolation that she frequently felt. This loneliness and isolation was expressed by the same participant during the focus group discussion when they shared a story whereby they asked for support with a student and for them to attend additional revision sessions as a means of completing coursework and were ignored, they summed their response up as 'it made me feel like our subject is so undervalued that they didn't even both replying' (chapter 6.2.1 – Focus group analysis, p.280). Whether or not the reasoning behind the lack of response was down to the reason that this teacher had understood and presumed it to be or not, the way in which this was the conclusion drawn suggested a general feeling of undervalue.

One of the many themes that emerged alongside feelings of isolation and loneliness in particular was that art and design as a subject is undervalued due to a long established school hierarchy. The term 'hierarchy' was used on several occasions throughout the focus group discussion when talking about the ways in which art is perceived by others, both teachers and parents and how limiting this was for both art teachers and students. Some participants noted the hierarchy down to a simple misunderstanding about what goes on in the art and design classroom, gallery or experience, others believed that it was further political and intentionally government driven. David, Alex and Isla had all claimed that the subject had evolved to become lower down in the hierarchy due to a lack of understanding surrounding career choices and opportunities available when studying the arts. Despite the differences in opinion that were expressed in terms of why and how art and design had reached the low ranking on the hierarchy of subjects in secondary school, all participants unanimously claimed that it's place was currently at the bottom of the pile, as so aptly photographed by Helen when constructing an image where a large red arrow had been drawn under a pile of sketchbooks to denote the position and place where they felt art currently sat within their school curriculum.

Loneliness and isolation was a theme that re-occurred in the images, when using the E. Feldman (1994) model of art criticism as a tool to analyse at the interpretation stage we are asked to question 'What is the work trying to sell me? What does it want me to admire? Whom does it want me to emulate? What does it ask me to do? What does it want me to think? How does it want me to feel? How does it want me to act' and 'What does it expect me to know or believe?' (1994: 32). Some of these questions are relevant to ask in relation to the photographs submitted by the teacher participants and others prove less useful due to the way in which the images were responses to a specific brief and artist were limited to use of photography only as the medium, whether this be using digital or traditional techniques. The first three questions are less relevant than the last five. One that I would like to highlight here is the question 'what does it want me to feel?' as this question was important when analysing the photographs, especially those which linked to the themes of frustration, isolation and loneliness. Many of the images created a feeling of despair and isolation, the subject matter, colours and compositions were sparse, dull and lacked the overall sense of life that was felt when observing the photographs that celebrated the further positive emotions and concepts felt and believed in by the teachers. These images were also the photographs that least involved depiction of, or reference to, humanity.

Humankind were replaced by computers, sheets of data and numbers or objects, mainly used for function opposed to tools that may be used creatively. The purposeful choice to leave out reference to any interaction with other humans, opposed to an interaction with a spreadsheet created a weighty feeling of loneliness, isolation and disconnection. The only image which involved a reference to connection with other people in response to frustrations felt was that of the feet under a table at a meeting about data (Appendix S) This image communicates isolation in the sense of feeling misunderstood and depicts a negative interaction with other professionals, opposed to the enjoyment of a mutually supportive environment.

The language used both in one-to-one interviews with participants and during the focus group interview supported the interpretation of photographs and visual data. The words frustrating were used multiple times when participants attempted to describe their feelings in relation to the education system and structures at large and their perceived place within this, but also their day-to-day frustrations encountered in the classroom or whilst teaching. Anger was another emotion expressed which often sits comfortably alongside the sensation of frustration. Notions of not being 'important enough' (focus group discussion, p.280) in many respects appeared to feed into the loneliness and isolation felt by art teachers, as the hierarchical nature of subjects was associated with a misunderstanding, either from SLT, parents or colleagues in other subject specialisms, as stated by Alex, 'in that they don't understand it.'

A bleak and highly concerning picture of and art and design education was composed by the participants in terms of visual responses to certain areas of the brief and also through the comments, language used and feelings expressed during interviews, however there was a recognition, as offered by the gate crasher during the focus group discussion that if as artists and teachers we become too absorbed by it then the negatives outweigh the positives (see pg. 276). When one of the positive elements of art teachers' experiences appeared to be based in communication and connectedness, the issue of loneliness, isolation and frustration could potentially have extremely damaging effects.

In the next section research questions surrounding value will be revisited with these key themes and findings underpinning and informing conclusions and recommendations.

7.8 Summary of Findings and Discussion

Throughout this chapter the key themes which emerged from the Analysis, chapter 6, have been discussed in order to draw conclusions relating to initial research questions and further build on the key themes that have emerged.

Case studies allowed a detailed picture to evolve surrounding art teachers personal and professional experiences of teaching art and design within Thanet, Kent. Using Heidegger's (1971) description of the work of Van Gogh (1887) as inspiration key themes have been explored with a photograph captured by research participants acting as a foundation.

In the next chapter these themes and corresponding findings and the issues and challenges brought to the discussion by participant teachers, will be viewed within the context of research questions surrounding the notion of value, informing conclusions and future recommendations.

8. Conclusion

When reflecting back to the very start of this research journey the research questions in which I intended to explore were surrounding value in relation to arts education within the secondary school in England, with a particular focus on the Kent area. The main research question focused on how the value of art can currently be seen in the context of the curriculum, with subsequent research questions encompassing the issues of how the ethos of a school is affected by the way(s) art and design is valued and how the importance of these can be seen, alongside how art teachers are valued. This desire to uncover more in relation to the research questions listed was admittedly driven by my own experiences as a teacher of art and design. In order to address each research question with clarity I have decided to explore each individually, although in many respects they naturally interlink.

How can the value of art currently be seen in the context of the curriculum?

When referring back to the literature there are two sections in which it is perhaps worth revisiting here, firstly 4.1 Policy and Practice in England, as the curriculum in schools is fundamentally affected by this and secondly, 4.5 Notions of Value . An understanding of the term value within the context of this particular research question must first be clarified in order to successfully attempt to answer it. One of the interview questions posed during one-to-one interviews with participants revolved around their personal understanding of the term value. Although responses varied, the interviews were held in schools and were also in relation to the photovoice project in which participants had taken part and so the similarity in their responses was that of arts educational value. Many of the ways in which participants believed that the arts were valuable to their students and within an educational realm were in- line with Eisner's (2002) identification of 'what the arts teach and how it shows' (2002: 70 –

92) ranging from learning what is needed to make good judgements to important communication skills. There was also a communication that the value in which they perceived the arts to possess, such as those listed by Eisner (2002) within the context of the curriculum did not correspond to the perceived value in which either SLT in schools, or changes to policy and practice on a governmental level, which hints at which subjects are deemed a priority. These thoughts and feelings were communicated not only verbally by participants, but quite clearly in their photographic responses to the brief.

Johnes (2017) claims that entries to KS4 cohorts for art and design courses has steadily declined since 2016 onwards (EPI, 2017: 8), which could suggest that the value of the subject within the overall curriculum has also been reduced, however as recognised by art teachers and voiced through interviews, much of this may be linked back to changes at a governmental level, such as the introduction of Progress 8 as a performance measure for schools and the EBacc. The photograph of the skull analysed in the Skeleton of Art and Design case study (Fig. 72) reverberates the sense of the arts dying out within secondary school curriculums in England.

When considering questions answered by participants which linked to the ways in which art can currently be seen in the context of the curriculum, when requested to capture an image that could demonstrate the value of art for their students one of the most memorable photographs (Fig. 30) was one that read 'making sense of the world' in jumbled letters, linking back to Eisner's (2002) recognition that 'students acquire tools in the courses taken for making sense of the world' (2002: 85). No doubt a general outcome which education on the whole aspires to, however do subjects across the curriculum allow the time and the space required for students to do this? Many images shared within this particular part of the brief were linked to celebration of students achievements within the visual arts and captured work being displayed or exhibited. This was a physical manifestation of the value and pride that students and their teachers felt in

relation to their work and the process of seeing an idea through to fruition, but also a means by which others can actually see art within the school curriculum.

One of the most concerning photographs captured by participants, but also visually impacting, taken in response to arts current place within the school curriculum was that of a pile of broken egg shells (Fig. 33) , this poetically summed up arts currently fragile state. Regrettably, the vast majority of the photographs and responses shared by art teacher participants, in response to this research question were negative. They described the instability and fragility that the subject faced within the wider school curriculum, with metaphors offered such as being at the bottom of the pile or the Christmas tree. To be at the bottom implies that there is a hierarchy in the first place, and art was consistently viewed to be situated at the lower end of this.

<u>How is the ethos of a school affected by the way(s) art and design in valued? And how can the importance of these be seen?</u>

Much of the ethos of a school appears to lie in the place in which the subject art and design resides within the curriculum and school community, which has been discussed in greater depth above, but also in the ways in which a school celebrates achievements within the arts. In the research journal / sketchbook that I kept I noted down my experiences of visiting participants in their school settings and became much more aware of the different ways in which schools use student artwork to adorn walls and what this could perhaps communicate about the ways in which the importance of art can be seen. What I also noted was the ways in which art classrooms were cared for, either well – stocked or as in the case of the Master of Cardboard, the case study in which findings were communicated previously in 7.1, the same material was used multiple times due to a lack of resources and funding.

When answering this research question, we may quite simply look to the photovoice imagery and entries from participants in order to make an informed judgement regarding how the value of art may be seen. As Treadaway (2009) claims the 'physical act of collecting imagery through photography…requires a selective process in which an assessment is made of the appropriateness or value of the… image' (2009: 235). Not only did the participants respond to questions directly concerning value, but the choices to fill the viewfinder and compose a photograph in the way that they did, plus select the photographs in which they felt most effectively answered questions relating to value, meant that before they even arrived with me as researcher many decisions surrounding the value of items, concepts and interactions in the school, art classroom or educational environment had already been made by those who occupy these spaces daily.

Many art teachers communicated that they felt that their fellow colleagues misunderstood the subject in which they taught. This was voiced in the focus group discussion, but also demonstrated through photovoice responses to the question surrounding how art is perceived, or indeed, stereotyped, with statements of how the subject was perceived as a light relief from more serious endeavours or understood as merely therapeutic. There were also both limiting and limited understandings of the subject of art being about drawing, or deduced to simply learning to draw. A juxtaposition emerged in terms of artwork being displayed as a celebration in schools, in corridors, reception spaces and offices, with some art teachers believing that this increased the ornamental value of art and design in schools and the belief that management focus more on the utility of the subject for providing artwork to adorn the walls of the school, opposed to an understanding of the value of studying the subject in itself. In the Master of Cardboard case study we were told a story of how a teacher practically had to drag a member of the leadership into her classroom in order to show them what her students had created, however if art was to be used as a sales point there was never any hesitation for a tour of the department. This links both education and the arts back to economic worth and market value.

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During the focus group it was noted that schools may use the arts as a USP, however the question remains as to whether investment in art subjects goes beyond this marketing stunt.

Reissman (2008) claims that 'individuals and groups construct identities through storytelling' (2008 :8) The story told about the ways in which the ethos of a school is effected by the way(s) art and design is valued and how the importance of these can be seen was evident in the spaces that were occupied by teachers and students engaging in the arts and how these spaces were interacted with. When asked to capture an object that participants valued highly in their classroom, light reoccurred as a theme. The school buildings themselves, the amount of natural light in classrooms and the fight to secure light for their students, be it natural or artificial, communicated the importance of the classroom space itself. The way in which when it came to objects that they felt students valued highly, teachers mainly captured tools by which to record the learning that had taken place, such as a camera, or the work itself, for example sketchbooks, indicated towards the ways that many students valued their art education, or the ethos that had been created in their art classrooms, even if this did not always echo that of the overall school. One participant commented on the way in which the art classroom was many students' safe place, where they are welcomed and feel comfortable and supported making the assumption that they perhaps do not elsewhere. Many photographs of cameras had been taken in response to an object that the students valued and one of the reasons behind this was because students wished to take work home or photograph it, which suggests that the ethos of aspiration and engagement in learning is nurtured within the art classroom.

<u>How are art teachers valued?</u>

This research question has been the area and focus of this research which has undoubtedly revealed the richest insights. When initially setting out on this research journey I was both open and actively aware of my own personal stance and experiences form the outset, this

transparency can be seen in chapter 2 in my positionality statement, but also in the research methodology, choosing feminist methods such as autoethnography and the keeping of a research journal / sketchbook where I reflexively questioned findings as they emerged.

I was both equally alarmed and comforted by the responses of other art teacher participants with regards to how they consider themselves to be valued. When Bennet (2005) argued that 'teachers are differentiated by their subject specialism's' in that 'academic subjects provide teachers with a career structure characterised by better promotions prospects and pay than less academic subjects' (2005: 121) I did not want to believe this. However over the years this has sadly rung to be an increasingly accurate description of the landscape within schools. This attitude filters down from the leadership to the staff and eventually potentially even the students and parents and carers themselves. In terms of feeling understood and listened to by other professionals in their schools and by leadership one participants claimed that they 'may as well not exist' (6.2.1: Focus Group) shed light on the way that she felt when it came to being valued. Many of the frustrations that teachers felt contributed to their judgement in terms of how they themselves felt valued, these ranged from issues of data and how it is used in education, time and misuse of equipment or underfunding of resources. The issues of data, performance measures and lack of time are perhaps not specific to art teachers alone, these are issues faced by teachers across the curriculum, however because of the very nature of art courses in education and their place within the curriculum these challenges are amplified. When it comes to data, it may be useful to return to the words of Eisner (2005) in that 'not all, perhaps not even most – outcomes of curriculum and instruction are amendable to measurement' (2005: 20) which makes this task difficult for educators of the arts, but also when it comes to public examinations, from KS4 onwards, the hierarchy and perceived importance of subjects in schools may dictate as to how students are expected to spend their time. An example of this was seen when a participant shared a photograph of an email to a student requesting them to re-take a GCSE for a core subject which meant that they were required to attend extra revision

sessions when they would have ordinarily been studying for an arts based subject (Fig. 41). With regards to time, arts subjects were being reduced across many of the participants schools, which meant that time on the timetable itself indicated the value that the subject held with respect to their school curriculums.

The misuse of equipment, in contrast to the celebration of work on the walls of a school, was a physical sign of the ways in which the value of art can currently be seen in the context of the curriculum. Although it was a handful of students who misused the equipment it signaled to how they felt the visual arts were not as important as perhaps other subjects within their school curriculum, however more so the underfunding of the arts so that new equipment could not be invested in meant that often teachers were left using tired and old resources, which again signaled to issues of undervalue.

Addison, Burgess, Steers and Trowell (2010) explain how there are often 'myths about artists and their temperaments' (2010: 8) which if perpetuated effect the ways that art teachers and the subject of art and design is perceived. Reflecting back to chapter 4.3 Reason and Emotion / Academic and Practical we are reminded of the possible ways in which the education system is biased towards knowledge considered rational and academic, over the emotional or practical. Cunliffe (2005) notes this down to a confusion derivative from Cartesian Dualism, whereby the education system confuses 'procedural knowledge' with 'declarative knowledge' (2005: 547) and I am inclined to agree. I also think that the clear divide between skills and knowledge has proved unhelpful, particularly for subjects such as the visual arts. Foucault (1965) makes links between the labelling of genius and the creative mind, or creative acts and how these may be perceived as madness by the ruling classes and essentially this leads to social exclusion. Has the subject art and design been excluded by the curriculum? Has the art teacher been excluded by those teachers in other, core subject, specialisms? The art teacher is perhaps often perceived by school leadership as further difficult or eccentric to those working in other subject

specialisms. Art teachers certainly communicated regularly feeling misunderstood by leadership teams in their school settings. Perhaps art teachers themselves either purposefully or unknowingly perpetuate these myths as a means of engaging and coming to terms with the ambiguous nature of their subject, as with the researcher who chooses to use living inquiry often occupies a 'space of inquiry that resists forming naming' and allows for 'discomfort, fayed edges, and holes' (Springgay, 2012, 901). However the notion that because something has ambiguity and is therefore further difficult to define and measure it is unequal in value to that which is easy to grasp and clarify is nonsensical. As we age in life and tackle greater complex challenges this does not correspond to lesser competence, quite the opposite. Much like a/r/tography as an arts-based research method, the 'fluid and constantly evolving' and 'lack of concreteness' that is so often associated with the arts does not easily fit with a school system which in many respects is, arguably, still built on 19th century industrial values, as stated by Steers (2010)'there should be a focus on what young people need to equip themselves for a future in the twenty first century, not the nineteenth century' (2010: 15). With introductions of courses such as the EBacc, it begs the question as to whether leaving the arts (or subjects labelled as further practical and less traditionally academic) out, we are witnessing the control of those with power in relation to knowledge, perpetuating the notion that knowledge in certain subject specialisms is more valuable, useful or important than knowledge in others, as indeed Foucault (1969) paved the way for similar ideas.

This was a research project, much like any, which has ultimately created further questions and despite an insight into the lives and challenges of art teachers within secondary schools in the Thanet area, Kent, between the years of 2014 – 2018, inevitably generated far more questions than it did provide answers. It would certainly be beneficial to explore these same research questions from the viewpoint of the students. Making comparisons between their perspectives and the art teachers viewpoints and experiences, as this could prove interesting and illuminating. One of the participants hinted during the focus group discussion that at sixth form

level students in their school had picked up on the undervalue of the subject of art and design within their school setting (see 6.2.1: Focus Group).

The overall narrative that has prevailed throughout this research is one of resilience. The resilience of art teachers in the face of budget cuts, changes to policy and practice which have in many respects proven to be detrimental and their own personal and professional issues of loneliness, isolation and frustration, which was detailed in 7.7. But also the resilience of art and design as a subject within the secondary school curriculum, as despite the many changes and adaptions made throughout the history of this subject as taught and learnt in schools in England, in the majority of school curriculums it stubbornly remains. The question is, for how long can and will both the arts and teachers of art and design remain resilient?

Could this resilience perhaps lie in the way in which 'creative individuals may display a range of characteristics that extend beyond some assumed general capacity for divergent thinking' or indeed in 'a tolerance for ambiguity and a certain playfulness' and the ability 'to persist' (Steers, 2003, 27). According to Wicks (2002) we can read Foucault's work as empathising 'both the oppressive dimensions of power and its creative ones' (2002: 209) Perhaps art teachers response to the oppression that they face within the school environment and the place their subject resides in the curriculum is to channel creative solutions, ensuring that students may still enjoy positive experiences of the arts. It is not uncommon that in times of adversity novel ideas emerge and creative individuals will often respond by thinking critically and imaginatively about ways to use the difficulties faced to an advantage. However when students experiences of the arts is at stake, this is not something that teachers on the whole will be comfortable doing for a prolonged period of time. As in the case of the Master of Cardboard, there are only so many cardboard constructions that can be made before enthusiasm for the material wanes and spirits dampen.

As noted by Irwin (2005) engagement with a/r/tography 'dislocates complacency, location, perspective, and knowledge' (2005: 8) which if this research has done nothing else, but this, would be an achievement. Many art teachers exclaimed that the process had allowed them to take time out of their busy schedules and consider their practice and pedagogy, becoming further reflective and questioning their everyday lives as teachers. This has been valuable for the participants, but also for myself. Irwin claims that 'living an aesthetic life involves always looking into the ambiguous and lingering in the liminal' (2005: 2) and this is perhaps also the life of a qualitative researcher, as wherever there is a new opening, a curiosity itched or a question answered, there are endless more discoveries to me made, questions that emerge and avenues to be explored. Foucault (1965) claims that 'a work of art opens a void, a moment of silence, a question without an answer, provokes a breach without reconciliation where the world is forced to question itself' (1965: 288).

When setting out to begin this research, reading and reflecting back upon my positionality statement, I was sincerely hoping that I would come across art teachers who would dissuade my view point and although I have been offered fresh and different ways to view the current situation for art education within secondary schools in England, I have been both comforted and saddened by the narratives and findings that have emerged. Some art teachers have experienced great difficulties in their settings, deep loneliness and isolation and not benefited from the financial or professional support required in order to effectively fulfil their job roles to the extent to which they are content, eventually leading to them abandoning the profession entirely. Others have provided me with a deep comfort and a renewed sense of the importance of this research in their communication of similar problems that I too face in my own identities as artist, researcher and teacher. With this in mind the final chapters of this thesis will focus on making recommendations in response to key findings and noting changes that have occurred since this research was carried out.

9.Recommendations

In response to the main issues and key themes that emerged through the conducting of this research surrounding the value of art and design and its teachers within secondary education a number of recommendations may be considered. The first of these is the value in sharing experiences and connecting with others within challenging times.

Making connections and creating support networks

Art teacher participants commented on the ways in which they felt further supported as a result of taking part in the research project because they could expand their network and share space and time with others who are dealing with similar concerns or shared experiences. As a group of art teachers some participants still meet as a network in Thanet, supporting one another since the exhibition of photographs at the Turner Contemporary Gallery in 2017. This network is built from not just art teachers who work in traditional secondary school setting, but those who work in the wider arts community, such as primary school arts advocates, the gallery schools officer and alternative education provisions. As a result of finding that many teachers did not feel listened to by their individual schools and leadership teams, the very act of meeting together and feeling heard was important, even more so for teachers whom had suffered as a result of redundancies and therefore came from diminishing art departments, often working alone or alongside only one other colleague. In order to reach out and support one another further art and design teachers can collaborate to create or join existing local and national arts networks as a means of connecting with other art and design teachers, educators and practitioners. Rather than looking to government or senior leaders in schools we may start with looking towards each other and reaching out to support and collaborate where possible. Although this action alone does not resolve the larger barriers to art and design teaching and for its teachers, it can break down the day – to – day issues that affect practice and pedagogy

and ultimately the students experiences of the arts in secondary school, plus lead to an improvement in art teachers' professional lives and associated wellbeing.

Time and space for critical, creative, meaningful reflection and engagement in reflective practice

Another finding which calls for action in response to this research is the recognition of the need for teachers to enjoy the time and space for reflective practice, which if provided and encouraged by schools could result in positive outcomes, not just for teachers, but also for students. Due to the education system seemingly favouring quantitative modes of assessment and measurement based upon performance data, opposed to a further holistic understanding of learning which takes into account growth, experience and the journey opposed to the outcome alone. A/r/tography and arts – based methods have proven to be an exceptionally effective means of engaging in reflective practice, alongside acknowledgement of the multiple identities teachers assume and the liminal spaces in – between practice and pedagogy, learning and teaching and artist, researcher and teacher.

Developing a greater understanding of art and design and associated teaching pedagogies

and practice by senior leadership teams, teachers from a diversity of specialisms and the

wider school community

In some cases art teachers voiced that there was a misunderstanding of the subject art and design in schools, by senior leadership teams, other teachers from different specialisms and often also by parents and carers of students. There was also a recognition of a clear hierarchy of subjects within secondary schools which impacted the ways in which art and design and its teachers were perceived and in turn valued. The results of this were also evident in teachers' explaining feelings of loneliness and isolation. If time could be taken by influential parties in schools to

properly understand arts subjects and recognise their value within the curriculum, beyond that of the surface level of creating displays or linking concepts such as creativity as a USP, opposed to an appreciation of the deeper value of the study of art and design as listed by thinkers such as Eisner (2002), than much of this issue may be significantly alleviated. Perhaps engagement in arts activities, alongside time to reflect upon the impact and value of these, or whole school staff CPD which focuses on the arts and the value of the wider associated skills and attributes that they promote, such as creativity, critical thinking and resilience would aid in moving forward.

Reconsideration of the skills / knowledge divide in education and the reason / emotion

segregation perpetuated by false dualisms

In order to make progress in the above this may also require the reconsideration of the skills and knowledge and academic and practical segregation and divide of subjects within the education system, in order to generate a further holistic curriculum which authentically accepts diverse approaches to teaching and learning, empowering teachers and learners, opposed to willingly or unconsciously embracing bias towards that which favours scientific rationalism or reason as explored in section 4.3 Reason and Emotion and the Academic and Practical.

10.Postscript

Since the main period of time (2014 – 2018) in which this research has been carried out changes have occurred in terms of the Ofsted framework used to judge a school's performance, but also in terms of research carried out within the realm of arts education. A/r/tography has been deployed in diverse ways as a means of researching within the field of arts education, however little of this has been focused within the area of Thanet, Kent, England. The Ofsted framework revised in 2019 recognises the importance of what is termed 'Cultural Capital' (DfE, 2019). As culture and the arts are often considered intertwined it may appear that this addition implies a greater understanding of the importance of the arts in schools, however when considered in greater depth the terms 'cultural' and 'capital' may be used in this context to refer to the social and economic networks, opposed to a recognition of the intrinsic value of studying the arts. Cultural awareness may be developed through study of art and design or the arts in general, however when viewed within the context of a currency that may be built upon and then capitalised within the world of work, value shifts towards the commercial, economic and instrumental in education, opposed to an understanding of the benefits of engagement with the arts on an intrinsic or human level. When cultural capital was added to the framework there was the suggestion that disadvantaged students may not be exposed to the cultural experiences that those from better – off backgrounds may take for granted (Mansell, 2019). However, there is an implication and assumption made here that exposure to certain cultural activities and experiences is of higher value than others, linked to social mobility, which again if viewed though a Foucauldian lens, is decided and dictated by the bourgeois, returning to issues of knowledge and power. It may be that the education system exasperates inequality and the very notion of cultural capital, or indeed an understanding and knowledge of how to use culture *as* capital, actually perpetuates elitism.

A collaboration between the Arts Council England and Durham University (Durham Commission) has been developed and a report released in 2019 with the intention to identify how creativity, with a particular focus on critical thinking, exists within and can affect the lives of young people, both in and outside of formal education. There is the recognition that creativity and critical thinking can positively contribute to a society in a social, economic and entrepreneurial sense. The commission questioned as to whether creative and critical thinking is sufficiently supported within the current education system, what works well and what could be developed further. Recognising the issue that the arts are being undervalued and as a result reduced within the current school curriculum in England, stating that:

> 'The commission believes that the arts make an invaluable contribution to the development of creativity in young people. We are therefore deeply concerned about the reduction of status of arts subjects including art and design, dance, drama and music within schools that has followed the introduction of the EBacc in secondary education' (2019: 6).

Creativity need not be seen as a concept which can only be found within the arts, however the arts tend to be effective at promoting a creative approach within schools, which is perhaps linked to why historically, alongside many other reasons as previously outlined in section 4.2, the two are associated. As stated by the Durham Commission 'creativity is present in all areas of life' (2019: 72). The Durham Commission found that 'integration of teaching for creativity in our education system' can lead to 'creative confidence' which can result 'not just in employment and economic success, but also in their relationships with others in their own community and in their own identity, health and wellbeing' (2019: 74).

As a result of findings the Durham Commission made the recommendations that schools should consider 'nominating a champion for creativity' and that this individual ought to 'have a voice

at the level of senior leadership and exposure at the level of school governance.' They also argue that schools should avoid merely teaching 'to the mark' (Ibid) for exam- passing, improve access to digital technology increasing digital literacy, amongst other initiatives such as ensuring arts are not experienced as an add – on throughout KS3, the Artsmark scheme should be reviewed to promote engagement with the arts and culture. Some of the suggestion here would assist in dealing with issues of value surrounding the arts in secondary schools within England which have been highlighted by the research and findings throughout this thesis.

As previously touched upon in the Introduction and linking to the research carried out by the Durham Commission, PISA has begun work on an assessment of creativity with suggestions that this may be released in 2021 (OECD, 2017). This reinforces that there is a global recognition of the need for skills, such as creative and critical thinking, that are often associated with engagement of the arts. The report published by the APPG on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, released in July 2017 also makes clear links between the improvement of quality of life and wellbeing through engagement with the arts (APPG, 2017).

One of the main takeaways on reflection derived from conducting this research has been the strength of assuming multiple roles, switching between artist, researcher and teacher and connecting with both my own and others' lived – experience as participant(s). I would champion this, alongside the use of arts – based methods to unpack the experiences of art teachers, as despite its challenges it is something I would certainly consider and recommend employing in relation to future practice.

The final stages of this thesis have been completed during unprecedented times due to the Covid - 19 global pandemic. This was the first countrywide school shutdown in modern British history and as a result the ways in which both students and teachers have worked, interacted and approached learning during isolation has changed dramatically. In many respects there has

been an increase in interest and engagement in arts – based activities, in chapter 3 the work of Grayson Perry (Appendix B) was touched upon in relation to class and corresponding notions of value and tastes in England, this same artist constructed an art club, entitled Grayson's Art Club (2020) which was televised on Channel 4 and open to the general public to respond to themes and produce artwork. For many, who could work from home, including teachers and those working in education, time and routines changed. Although many teachers were required to attend schools to care for the children of key workers, or to conduct lessons using digital means, the school day was no longer timetabled in the traditional regimented way.

This has inevitably impacted the way in which I have interacted with the final stages of the writing of this research, it has allowed time and space to reflect on art education and the voices of fellow art teachers whilst being physically distanced from the classroom or the school environment and also reinforced my belief in the value of the study of art and design in response to the shift in perspective that the lockdown afforded.

As my daughter has played such an integral role throughout this research journey it appears fitting to end with an image of her artwork from the lockdown period (Fig.77). She painted the composition below when looking out of the window whilst self – isolating and stated that the painting was of her 'looking outside and imagining what I see.'

Fig. 77 The place and space in my head; looking out of the window
by Beatrix (2020)

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12.Appendices

Appendix A

My sketchbook from exhibition exploring liminal space and concepts of image and word

Appendix B

Examples of Grayson Perry's Tapestry work (2013)
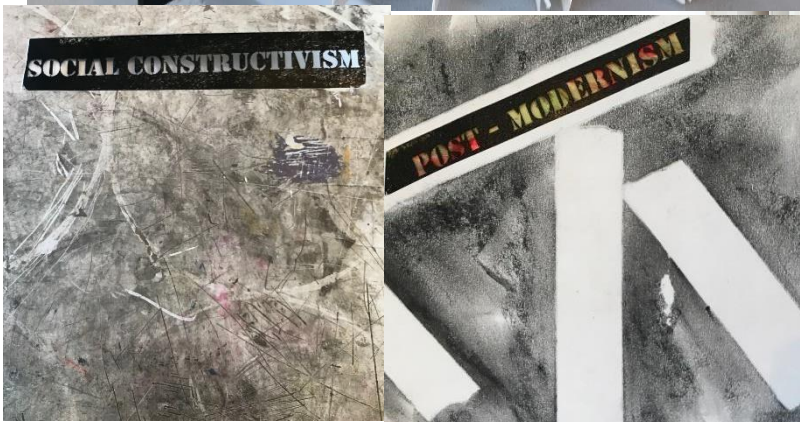
Grayson Perry (2012) The Upper Class at Bay

Grayson Perry (2012) The Annunciation of the Virgin Dea

Grayson Perry (2012) Expulsion from Number 8 Eden Close

Appendix C

Rene Magritte (1929) Ceci n'est pas une pipe, preparatory sketch for
painting

Appendix D

Pilot study teacher photovoice challenge feedback

6. Capture an image that portrays how you think others (in general) view art and design as a subject in secondary school (how it may often be stereotyped)

An image that captures what you believe **is** at the heart (the essence) of art education

Taken to express others' view point as simply 'colouring in'

difficulties with certain Q's — it/should, also value reflect defining further...

Enjoyable and created an opportunity to reflect upon our practice and classroom space.

Interview taking place whilst open classroom being used, a noisy environment and interruptions from students, nice to observe them in the space.

students taking pride in work!

10. Take an image that you think visually sums up any frustration that you experience as an art teacher

11. A **before** the classroom has been used shot

12. An **after** the classroom / learning environment has been used shot.

Colour Contrast here!

comparison of Q will up interesting.

• May need to clarify about quality of images for purpose of exhibition, however dark colours may also represent the frustration and emotion here. Was this the case? No — not intentional, but does add to message or reflection..

Headteacher (7)

Appendix E

Pilot study write up and reflections in my journal

Pilot school – Headteacher – Interview

Most interesting point / information offered as I was leaving (holding onto door handle, open door as if to represent visually the open nature of the dialogue) French Literature and how this lead to an interest in modern art.

Need to add: Question surrounding own art education experience and how that may impact understanding of it in a school context !!!

1. French, English and Spanish

2. Follow modern art, visit art exhibitions regularly (Tate / Tate modern)

3. No. No option due to EBacc however.

4. Develops a young person in any capacity

5. Conceptual skills, visualisation and expression. Do not need to be 'gifted' or 'talented' but should allow students to express themselves and "get feelings out"

6. Not alone. Within a suite of qualifications.

7. Khalo, Dali and Hockney (just 'love them')

8. Mastery – trial practice, becoming 'endle', something. Not a linear, progression sure "genius doesn't exist"

9. Adds to the extra-curricular life art. School, promotion (art exhibition) 'Pride academy – raising the profile. Has potential Contribute in terms of results.

10. Only collabor...

11. Rais... at work or not, school...

Reflect...

Own a... Concept... possible... explored... In th... offered... When... formed?... taught /... Does th... leadershi... Do lead... Similar... meaning...

11. Raising profile (bringing people in to look at work created, whether they understand 'context or not, may not be so keen to come into the school for anything else)

Reflections and questions raised.

Own aesthetic understanding influences concept of art education. There is a possible link here in which could be explored further.

In this sense the links between answers offered for Q2, Q7 and Q's 5+8.

When are how are these interests and opinions formed? How do they impact how art is taught / learnt / valued in school?

Does the type of work created reflect the leadership?

Do leadership and art departments have a similar understanding? Of purpose + value + meaning? Are they speaking the same language? Does this matter + why ???

Appendix F

Early stages of image analysis from exhibition

Photo – voice brief / list of questions for participants

The following photovoice images will be used to inform research and exhibited, with your permission, in an exhibition of work in which you and your colleagues will be invited. These images may be colour or black and white, using either digital or traditional photography and may be edited in order to aid in the communication of your answer to the following brief. *Please ensure that any students are not made identifiable and that images do not include any reference to your schools logo's or uniforms that may compromise the anonymity of either individuals or your school setting.*

1. Photograph an object in your classroom that you value highly

2. Capture one image that you think helps to demonstrate the value of art education for your students

3. Compose an image that you think effectively communicates art and design's place as a subject within your current school curriculum

4. Create an image that captures how you believe art as a subject taught in school relates to art practice outside of an educational environment / establishment

5. Take an image that sums up what you enjoy the most about teaching art and design

6. Capture an image that portrays how you think others (in general) view art and design as a subject in secondary school (how it may often be stereotyped)

7. An image that captures what you believe **<u>is</u>** at the heart (the essence) of art education

8. An image that captures what you believe **<u>should</u>** be at the heart (the essence) of art education

9. Photograph an object in your classroom that you think students value highly

10. Take an image that you think visually sums up any frustrations that you experience as an art teacher

11. A *before* the classroom has been used shot

12. An *after* the classroom / learning environment has been used

shot.

Semi – structured one – to – one interview questions

Questions for Interview - Art Teachers – Group A

Discuss each image and the intended meaning behind them relating to each question / area of the brief.

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. How long in Thanet?
3. What is your own background prior to teaching art?
4. Do you still engage in your own creative practice outside of the classroom?
5. Do you think ,in your professional opinion, there is enough time given to art in your school curriculum / timetable?
6. Do you think that your current educational context values art?
7. How would you define the term 'value' – what does it mean to you?
8. Do you feel valued as an art teacher? As an artist?
9. Do you think that your SLT understand your subject?
10. What skills do you think that students gain from studying art?
11. Do you think an art qualification can sufficiently prepare students for further education / employment?
12. Who are the visual artists that you find most inspiring and why? Top three?
13. What do you feel students benefit from in terms of lifelong and transferable skills and learning in the arts?
14. What do you find are the biggest challenges faced when teaching the arts within a secondary school context?
15. What is your own memory of being a student of art at secondary school like?

Semi – structured focus group questions

Focus group discussion guide, proposed questions and order of events

Welcome and sign in sheet (to establish attendees to the private view event)

Introduction
- Myself as researcher
- A general reminder about the project; aims, what has been done, what is exhibited and what the research is about (key research questions and methodology)
- Thank you for your work and attendance to the private view and event
- A reminder about refreshments
- Housekeeping (H&S)

Focus group ground rules

- A reminder that participants may leave the research or discussion at any time without any reason
- Confidentiality – what is said during the focus group must stay within the focus group (creating a safe environment for the sharing of experiences / information)
- A reminder that the focus group discussion will be recorded (for the purpose of data analysis by the researcher only) Remind about consent and ensure it is granted (forms will have been signed before the evening, but double check all participants are consenting to being recorded)
- Start recording and review what has just been discussed above (briefly – listing)
- Introductions around the circle, names and one thing that they have found interesting about their involvement in the project.

Questions

Below is a rough guide / framework for questions that will be asked during the focus group discussion, however as my research methodology is one that surrounds narrative, ethnography and elements of auto-ethnography, as a result I will be adopting a collaborative and cooperative inquiry technique, meaning that the research design will be developed collaboratively in certain respects, for example participants will in part manage the images created and exhibited, thus the questions posed will be organised as themes for discussion and only semi – structured with a chance for participants to lead the direction of the discussion at appropriate times.

1) What was the experience like of taking photographs to a specified brief? Which questions posed the greatest difficulties or opportunities to express thinking / feeling?
2) What questions would you have liked to add? In relation to the value of art education / how it is valued in your opinion (school / local community / politically / personal experience)
3) Similar themes that may have been brought about through the images and results of the photo – voice exercise?
4) Shared meanings behind the photographs? (Linking to narrative analysis / Symbolic convergence theory).
5) Any questions to each other and / or the researcher surrounding the artwork(s), photograph(s), exhibition?

Appendix J

Consent form for Participants

Canterbury Christ Church University

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: The value of visual arts education within secondary schools in Thanet, Kent.

Name of Researcher: Emma Sutton

Contact details:

Address:

Faculty of Education
North Holmes Road,
Canterbury,
Kent,
CT1 1QU

Tel: █████████████

Email: █████████████

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3. I understand that any personal information that I provide to the researchers will be kept strictly confidential.

4. I agree to audio – recording of interviews / focus group discussions.

5. I agree to my photographic and visual artwork(s) to be used as a part of a collaborative exhibition of art teachers' work and to be used for the purpose of research.

Information sheet for participants / invitation

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

A research study is being conducted at Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) by Emma Sutton.

Background

This research will explore questions surrounding the value of the visual arts education throughout the secondary schools in Kent.

What will you be required to do?

As a participant in this study, you will be required to be a part of a research focus group, engage in creating a series of photographs for an exhibition and possibly be asked to participate in an interview. You will be selected for interview based upon the numbers of self - selecting participants, post – invitation, from each school.

To participate in this research you must:

Be an art teacher in a Secondary school in Kent which offers a visual art provision

Procedures

You will be invited to create images for an exhibition over a period of six weeks, using photo voice and attend the exhibition of work. You may also be asked to engage in a focus group discussion, questionnaire and short semi – structured interview (lasting no more than 30 minutes) You will also be required to sign a consent form after reviewing the relevant information.

Feedback

Do not hesitate to ask further questions surrounding this study, either directed to Emma Sutton (███████████████████████ or my supervisor, Peter Gregory ███████████████████████

Confidentiality

All data and personal information will be stored securely within CCCU premises in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University's own data protection requirements. Data can only be accessed by Emma Sutton. After completion of the study, all

data will be made anonymous (i.e. all personal information associated with the data will be removed).

Dissemination of results

Data and research will be disseminated through local events for art teachers, national conferences, journal article / PhD paper.

Deciding whether to participate

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature, procedures or requirements for participation do not hesitate to contact me. Should you decide to participate, you will be free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason.

Any questions?

Please contact Emma Sutton on and email ███████████████████████ ████████████████████

Appendix L

Letters of invitation for HOD's and headteachers

Dear (Headteacher)

I am a post – graduate doctoral research student at CCCU and am currently undertaking a study, which investigates the value of visual art education in secondary schools. In order to answer my research questions I anticipate working with 9 schools that offer secondary visual arts provisions in the Kent area.

With your permission I would like to invite Art teachers in your school to act as participants in this research, creating a photographic exhibition in response to a specified brief. You are warmly invited to a private view of this exhibition and I would also like to ask you and your senior leadership team to participate in the research by completing a questionnaire in response to the exhibition.

The results of the research and recording from impressions of the exhibition will inform a study within the Graduate Education faculty at Canterbury Christ Church University for a PhD using qualitative means; through the use of photographs, teacher narrative, informal interviews and ethnographic methodologies.

As you will appreciate, by involving senior leaders, the further richer the study will become, especially in terms of reliability and the outcomes obtained. Please note that in all aspects of data collection no individual or school will be named or identified.

It would be greatly appreciated and beneficial to the research if you would participate in a short informal interview (lasting no more than 30 minutes, at a time and place that is convenient for you) surrounding the art education provisions that you currently offer within your school / academy.

Please find attached a participant information sheet where you may read more details regarding this particular research and if you are interested in your school taking part please pass on the invitation letters to art teachers and senior leaders in your school. There is also a consent form to sign. If you have any further questions or inquiries please do not hesitate to contact either myself, or my supervisor, through the contact details below:

- Emma Sutton (Principal Investigator)

Peter Gregory (1st Supervisor)
Please RSVP to the above contact if you are happy for your school to participate in this unique research opportunity.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Emma Sutton
(Post - graduate doctoral research student at CCCU)

Dear (HOD / ART TEACHER)

I am a post – graduate research student at CCCU and alongside this an art and design teacher myself. I am looking for volunteers who are prepared to give their professional experience of delivering the visual arts in secondary school, with the aim of producing a series of photographs for an exhibition to which you and your colleagues will be invited. I also envisage that the study will be a great opportunity to make connections and share common experiences with other teachers and subject specialists in the local area.

You have been selected to contribute towards this study because you are an art teacher and / or head of department in a secondary school in the Kent area. Contributing to this research project would involve taking some photographs in your educational setting to a given brief over the time period of six weeks and exhibiting these in an gallery space and engaging in a brief focus group discussion whilst attending a private view of the work on the 24th November at the Turner Contemporary. I may also invite you to complete a short interview (no longer than 30 minutes) and selection for this will be based on capturing a broad spectrum of specialists in schools within the local area.

Head teachers / senior leadership teams in your school will need to agree to you taking part.

The research questions that I am studying are: How can the value of art be seen in the context of the curriculum? Who in the school community values art? Is a school's ethos affected by valuing art? And how are art teachers valued? The results of the research, recording and images captured for exhibition will inform a study within the Graduate Education faculty at Canterbury Christ Church University for a PhD using qualitative

means; through the use of photographs, teacher narrative, informal interviews and ethnographic methodologies.

This study is intended to celebrate and reveal an honest picture of art education within increasingly challenging times in the hope that suggestions can be made as to how we can both improve and raise awareness and understanding of the value of arts for teachers and students in school communities in Kent.

It would be helpful if you could email a photograph of yourself within your department and / or classroom environment. A good quality JPEG file (1200x1800 pixels) in either colour or B&W.

Please RSVP by to the following email address so that I can gauge numbers of those interested and please do email / contact me (or my supervisor) if you have any further questions.

Emma Sutton (Principal Investigator)

Peter Gregory (1st Supervisor) I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

Emma Sutton

(Post– graduate doctoral research student at CCCU)

Appendix M

Ethics form submitted

For Research Office Use
Checklist No:
Date Received:

PROPORTIONATE ETHICAL REVIEW

ETHICS REVIEW CHECKLIST

*Your application **must** comprise the following documents (please tick the boxes below to indicate that they are attached):*

Ethics Review Checklist	*x*
Risk Assessment Form	*x*

Copies of any documents to be used in the study:

Questionnaire	*x*
Introductory letter(s)	*x*
Participant Information Sheet(s)	*x*
Consent Form(s)	*x*
Data Collection Instruments	*x*
Interview Questions	*x*
Focus Group Guidelines	*x*

Other (please give details)

ETHICS REVIEW CHECKLIST

Sections A and B of this checklist must be completed for <u>every</u> research or knowledge transfer project that involves human or animal[1] participants. These sections serve as a toolkit that will identify whether a full application for ethics approval needs to be submitted.

If the toolkit shows that there is **no need for a full ethical review**, Sections D, E and F should be completed and the checklist emailed to red.resgov@canterbury.ac.uk s described in Section C.

If the toolkit shows that **a full application is required**, this checklist should be set aside and an *Application for Faculty Research Ethics Committee Approval Form* - or an appropriate external application form - should be completed and submitted. **There is no need to complete both documents.**

> **Before completing this checklist, please refer to *Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants* in the University Research Governance Handbook.**

The principal researcher/project leader (or, where the principal researcher/project leader is a student, their supervisor) is responsible for exercising appropriate professional judgement in this review.

N.B. This checklist must be completed – and any resulting follow-up action taken - before potential participants are approached to take part in any study.

Type of Project - please mark (x) as appropriate			
Research	x	**Knowledge Exchange**	

Section A: Applicant Details

A1. Name of applicant:	Emma Sutton
A2. Status (please underline):	Postgraduate Student
A3. Email address:	e.l.sutton283@canterbury.ac.uk
A4. Contact address:	52 Cannonbury Road, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 9NL
A5. Telephone number	

---

1 Sentient animals, generally all vertebrates and certain invertebrates such as cephal Section B: Ethics Checklist

Please answer each question by marking (X) in the appropriate box:

		Yes	No
1.	Does the study involve participants who are particularly <u>vulnerable</u> or unable to give informed consent (e.g. children, people with learning disabilities), or in unequal relationships (e.g. people in prison, your own staff or students)?		
2.	Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to any <u>vulnerable</u> groups or individuals to be recruited (e.g. students at school, members of self-help groups, residents of nursing home)?		
3.	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without usual informed consent procedures having been implemented in advance (e.g. covert observation, certain ethnographic studies)?		
4.	Will the study use deliberate deception (this does ***not*** include randomly assigning participants to groups in an experimental design)?		
5.	Will the study involve discussion of, or collection of information on, topics of a sensitive nature (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) <u>personal to the participants</u>?		
6.	Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to human or animal participants?		
7.	Does the study involve invasive or intrusive procedures such as blood taking or muscle biopsy from human or animal participants?		
8.	Is physiological stress, pain, or more than mild discomfort to humans or animals likely to result from the study?		
9.	Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences in humans (including the researcher) or animals beyond the risks encountered in normal life?		
10.	Will the study involve **interaction** with animals? (If you are simply observing them - e.g. in a zoo or in their natural habitat - without having any contact at all, you can answer "No")		
11.	Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?		
12.	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?		
13.	Is the study a survey that involves University-wide recruitment of students from Canterbury Christ Church University?		
14.	Will the study involve recruitment of adult participants (aged 16 and over) who are unable to make decisions for themselves, i.e. lack capacity, and come under the jurisdiction of the Mental Capacity Act (2005)?		

Section C: How to Proceed

C1. If you have answered '**NO**' to *all* the questions in Section B, you should complete Sections D–F as appropriate and email the completed checklist to red.resgov@canterbury.ac.uk**. That is all you need to do. You will receive a letter confirming compliance with University Research Governance procedures.**

[*Master's students should retain copies of the form and letter; the letter should be bound into their research report or dissertation. Work that is submitted without this document will be returned un-assessed.*]

C2. If you have answered '**YES**' to *any* of the questions in Section B, you will need to describe more fully how you plan to deal with the ethical issues raised by your project. This does not mean that you cannot do the study, only that your proposal will need to be approved by a Research Ethics Committee**. Depending upon which questions you answered 'YES' to, you should proceed as follows**

(a) If you answered '**YES**' to any of *questions 1 – 12 ONLY* (i.e. not questions 13,14, 15 or 16), you will have to submit an application to your Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) using your Faculty's version of the *Application for Faculty Research Ethics Committee Approval Form*. This should be submitted as directed on the form. The *Application for Faculty Research Ethics Committee Approval Form* can be obtained from the Governance and Ethics pages of the Research and Enterprise Development Centre on the University web site.

(b) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 13* you have two options:

(i) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 13 ONLY* you must send copies of this checklist to the Student Survey Unit. Subject to their approval you may then proceed as at C1 above.

(ii) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 13 PLUS any other of questions 1 – 12*, you must proceed as at C2(b)(i) above and then submit an application to your Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) as at C2(a).

(c) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 14* you do <u>not</u> need to submit an application to your Faculty Research Ethics Committee. *INSTEAD*, you **must** submit an application to the appropriate external NHS or Social Care Research Ethics Committee [see C2(d) below].

(d) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 15* you do <u>not</u> need to submit an application to your Faculty Research Ethics Committee. *INSTEAD*, you must submit an application to the appropriate external NHS or Social Care Research Ethics Committee (REC), *after* your proposal has received a satisfactory Peer Review (see *Research Governance Handbook*). Applications to an NHS or Social Care REC <u>must</u> be signed by the appropriate Faculty Director of Research or other authorised Faculty signatory before they are submitted.

IMPORTANT

Please note that it is your responsibility in the conduct of your study to follow the policies and procedures set out in the University's Research Governance Handbook, and any relevant academic or professional guidelines. This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data. Any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the study should be notified to the **Faculty and/or other Research Ethics Committee** that received your original proposal. Depending on the nature of the changes, a new application for ethics approval may be required.

Section D: Project Details

D1. Project title:	The value of arts education within secondary schools in Thanet
D2. Start date of fieldwork	March 20th 2017
D3. End date of fieldwork	December 10th 2017
D4. Lay summary (max 300 words *which **must** include a brief description of the methodology to be used for gathering your data*)	Research methodology will be qualitative and involve photo voice[1], semi - structured interviews with a self – selecting group of art teachers, senior leaders and head teachers, questionnaires and audio recordings of focus group discussions, teacher narrative and ethnography. I will also be archiving observations and artworks through my keeping of a research journal that will inform reflections, reflexive analysis and considerations surrounding contextualisation. The results will inform a PhD study to answer the following questions: - How can the value of art be seen in the context of the school curriculum? - Who in the school community values art? - Is a school's ethos affected by valuing art? - How are art teachers valued? Data gathered will be analysed through a paradigmatic lens that is both situated within social constructivism and post-modernism. Drawing upon a diagram provided by Savin-Baden and Major entitled the 'researcher's wheel of choices' (2013: 45), making links between: - Social constructivism, thematic analysis, interviews, artefacts and narrative - Post – modernism / structuralism, action research and Photo voice - Critical social theory, observations and ethnography Secondary art teachers in Thanet will be invited to act as participants, capturing photographs in response to a particular brief. These images will be exhibited and used for discussion amongst the teachers as a research focus group. Senior leaders from the schools will also be invited to the exhibition. Participants will be given all relevant information and asked for written consent alongside contact details for any queries. Any information gathered through interviews or focus groups will be treated confidentially, remain anonymous and no staff or schools will be identifiable or named. The sample size will be dependent upon how many choose to participate, however I anticipate working with eight secondary schools across the Thanet area. I will also trial my instruments through a pilot study, which will not be included in the research study. Savin – Baden, Maggi and Major, Claire Howell (2013) *Qualitative research: The essential guide to theory and practice.* Routledge, Taylor and Francis, Oxon, USA.

	[1] A method by which according to one of its founders Caroline C. Wang people may 'identify, represent and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique' used as a 'participatory action research strategy' (Caroline C.Wang (1999) *Journal of Women's health*, Volume 8, N0.2, Mary Ann Liebert Inc, p185).

Section E1: For Students Only

E1. Module name and number or course and Department:	Mphil / PhD in Education
E2. Name of Supervisor or module leader	Peter Gregory
E3. Email address of Supervisor or Module leader	peter.gregory@canterbury.ac.uk
E4. Contact address:	Faculty of Education North Holmes Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1QU

Section E2: For Supervisors

Please tick the appropriate boxes. The study should not begin until all boxes are ticked:

x

The student has read the relevant documenta
Governance, available on the University web

https://cccu.canterbury.ac.uk/research-and-enter
and-ethics/research-governance-and-ethics.aspx

x

The topic merits further investigation

x

The student has the skills to carry out the stu

x

The participant information sheet or leaflet is

x

The procedures for recruitment and obtainin

x

If a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check i

Comments from supervisor:

Section F: Declaration

- I certify that the information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.

- I certify that a risk assessment for this study has been carried out in compliance with the University's Health and Safety policy.

- I certify that any required Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check has been carried out.

- I undertake to carry out this project under the terms specified in the Canterbury Christ Church University Research Governance Handbook.

- I undertake to inform the relevant Faculty Research Ethics Committee of any significant change in the question, design or conduct of the study over the course of the study. I understand that such changes may require a new application for ethics approval.

- I undertake to inform the RKE Co-ordinator at red.resgov@canterbury.ac.uk in the Research and Enterprise Development Centre when the proposed study has been completed.

- I am aware of my responsibility to comply with the requirements of the law and appropriate University guidelines relating to the security and confidentiality of participant or other personal data.

- I understand that project records/data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in future and that project records should be kept securely for five years or other specified period.

- I understand that the personal data about me contained in this application will be held by the Research and Enterprise Development Centre and that this will be managed according to the principles established in the Data Protection Act.

As the Principal Investigator for this study, I confirm that this application has been shared with all other members of the study team	(please tick)

Principal Investigator	Supervisor or module leader (as appropriate)
Name: Emma Sutton	Name: Peter Gregory
Date: 13 / 03 / 17	Date: 13 / 03 / 17

Section G: Submission

This form should be sent as an attachment to a covering email, to red.resgov@canterbury.ac.uk

N.B. YOU MUST include copies of the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form that you will be using in your study (Model versions on which to base these are appended below for your convenience). Also copies of any data gathering tools such as questionnaires, and a COMPLETED RISK ASSESSMENT FORM.

Appendix N

Ethics approval from CCCU Ethics Committee

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

9th March 2017   Ref:
16/Edu/CL114

Emma Sutton
c/o School of Teacher Education and Development
Faculty of Education

Dear Emma

Confirmation of ethics compliance for your study *"The value of arts education within secondary schools in Thanet"*

I have received your Ethics Review Checklist and appropriate supporting documentation for proportionate review of the above project. Your application complies fully with the requirements for proportionate ethical review as set out in this University's Research Ethics and Governance Procedures.

In confirming compliance for your study, I must remind you that it is your responsibility to follow, as appropriate, the policies and procedures set out in the *Research Governance Framework* (http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/research-and-consultancy/governance-and-ethics/governance-and-ethics.aspx) and any relevant academic or professional guidelines. This includes providing, if appropriate, information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data. Any significant change in the question, design or conduct of the study over its course should be notified via email to red.resgov@canterbury.ac.uk and may require a new application for ethics approval. It is a condition of compliance that you must inform me once your research has been completed.

Wishing you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Carol Clewlow

Research Office
Research and Enterprise Development Centre

Canterbury Christ Church University
North Holmes Campus, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1QU
Tel +44 (0)1227 767700   Fax +44 (0)1227 470442
www.canterbury.ac.uk

Professor Rama Thirunamachandran, Vice Chancellor and Principal

Registered Company No: 4793659
A Company limited by guarantee
Registered Charity No: 1098136

Appendix O

Exhibition flyer and photos of the exhibition contents
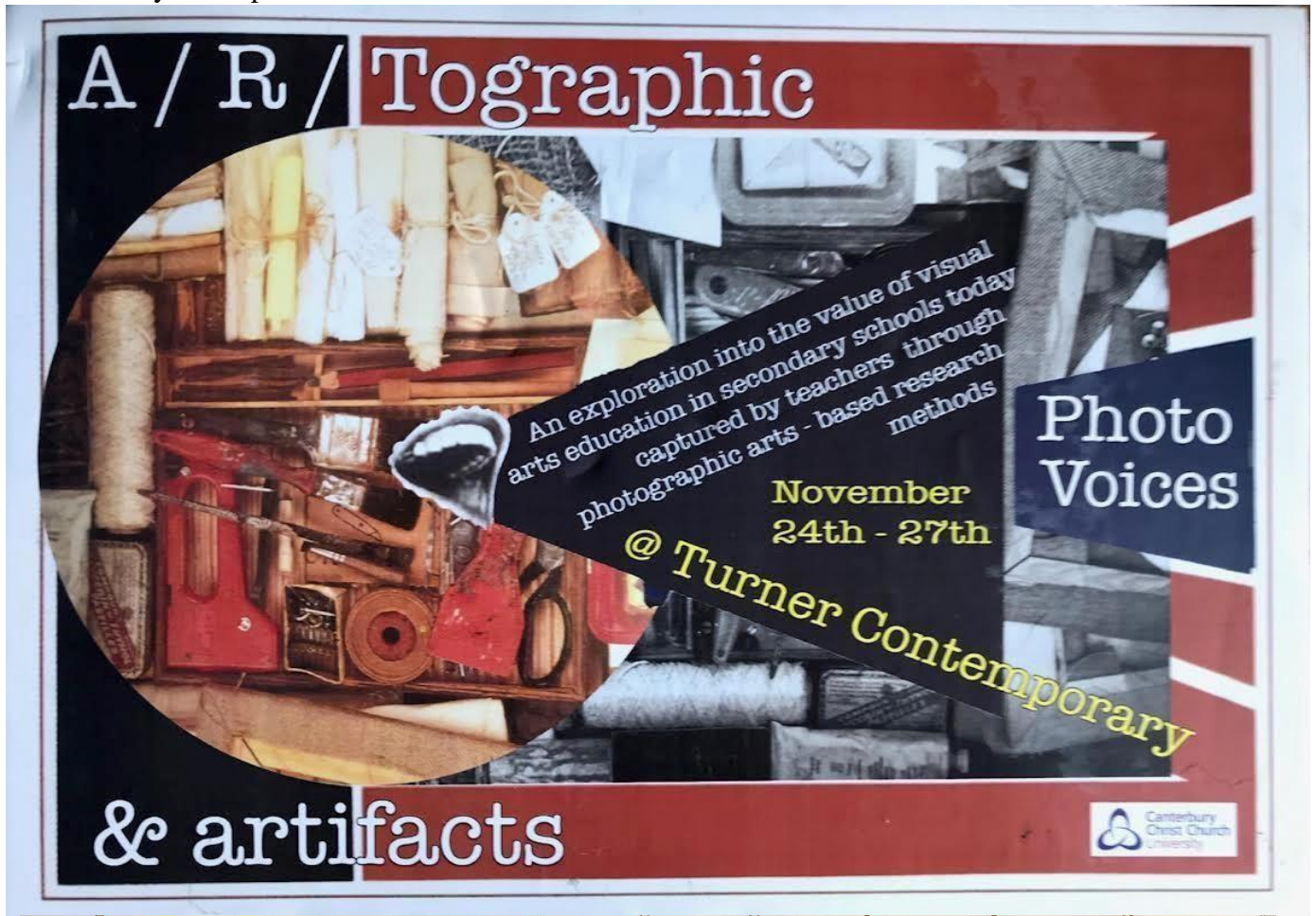
Full transcripts for focus group interview and one of the $1 - 2 - 1$ interviews with coloured post –
it notes and codes used. Please note that transcriptions were accompanied by audio recording
and although read 'unknown speaker' each speaker was known to me as researcher. This data
was revisited multiple times and as researcher I became well acquainted with the audio
recordings, individual participants and colour codes.
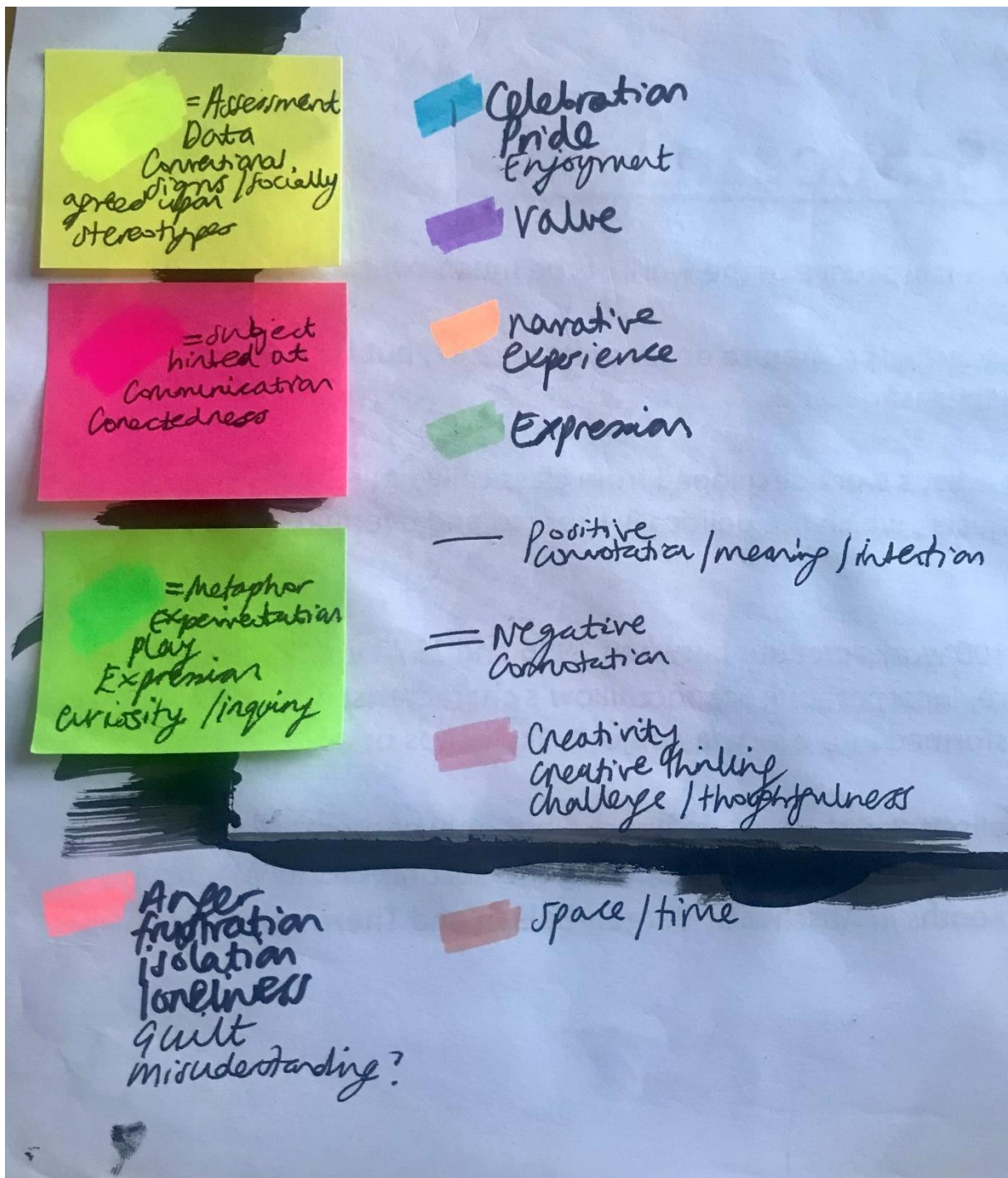
Unknown Speaker 0:00

Okay, it's recording. Okay, so the photographs that you took for the exhibition.

Unknown Speaker 0:09

The first question was photographing objects in your classroom that you highly value and you photograph a camera. Why did you want to communicate camera?

Unknown Speaker 0:21

Just because the children take their work home quite quick, And they, they really possessive of it, they won't let me and so I always think my camera is really handy because sometimes it's fleeting, they finished it, they want to take it home. So I take a picture of whatever they've done, and record it, and then I can go back if I need to moderate their work or mark their work.

Unknown Speaker 0:42

That's all I really,

Unknown Speaker 0:43

okay, great. So for recording work, and also just the value that they take employed, they're taking their own work. The second question was capture an image that demonstrates to you the value of art education for your students. We've got really nice hands on image here. Is it past cost?

Unknown Speaker 1:00

Yeah, they're casting leaves and twigs and seeds and things. Just because I thought it was about playing with playing with things and finding out what would happen if and it was one of those lessons that they really got into. And they were quite excited by how easy it was to get results from pouring plaster over clay and

Unknown Speaker 1:23

that experimental and play element. Yeah. Great. The third one was an opposing image that you think effectively communicates our designs places is subjective in your current school curriculum. And you have got a pile of cardboard boxes.

Unknown Speaker 1:39

Pile a couple boxes, where because I'm always scavenging stuff, because I've never got any money to buy anything. So if anyone's got anything, deliveries, I take their cardboard, they're polystyrene from the modelmaking. So I think the pile of cardboard boxes was pretty much in if you're not going to finance this, this is how we're going to have to do it to get some work from the kids. Okay,

Unknown Speaker 2:03

the fourth was create an image that captures how you believe art and design taught in school relates to practice, outside of an educational environment or establishment.

Unknown Speaker 2:11

I, we went on, we took a group of children to clay space in Margate And they were lovely and we worked with ████ there. And she say they, these are children that sometimes have sensory issues. A lot of them were really scared of touching clay

and stuff. And then by the end of it, they were all on a potter's wheel making their pots and stuff. And I just thought it was I thought that the picture showed that they were out there, there are artists working in the real world and not just not just these mythical creatures that kids don't, you know, believe actually exists. You work as an artist. So they actually met, met and work with an artist out in the real world. And I thought that was a nice link.

Unknown Speaker 2:54
Taking image, it sums up what you enjoy most about teaching art and design this the fifth image.

Unknown Speaker 3:00
I thought though this was a bit of a, I don't know, I'll pick that one. Because they were just having fun yet. They were making stuff with the cups. And then I just took the picture as a pupil that doesn't really engage a lot of the time. Yeah. But because he was wearing it. And I just thought it just showed that, you know, they can get involved. They were very scared of I can't draw, so I can't do. And then he they were playing again, it's coming back to play an experiment in and there's a child that doesn't normally engage and he was in the art

Unknown Speaker 3:34
room, literally in the in the sixth question was capturing images portrays how you think others in general may perceive on design in secondary school, or in your scenario in a school setting. So you've got a lovely image there of a pop art, coloring a name yet I think a lot of the time, people think that's what we do. Yeah, we colour them in. Number seven was an image that captures how you believe that sorry, what you believe is at the heart or the essence of sort of our education. That an image from the

Unknown Speaker 4:12
last year was last year's portfolio because yeah, one of our children won the special schools prize. Yay. And it was just really nice to have what they were doing in school recognized outside school in a gallery context. Yes. And it happens to real people you know, them is

Unknown Speaker 4:37
an image that captures what you believe should be at the heart or the essence of what education

Unknown Speaker 4:42
is a bit of a stranger on this because we were out and about down in folkston and I thought I took a picture of me holding the Anthony Gomley and I just thought it was a it was a case of bringing maybe bringing real world art into the classroom. And it being not something that is always in a gallery, it can be all around you. So my sort of thoughts were, yeah, it was me bring in real world art to kids that don't necessarily get to go out and go out and yeah.

Unknown Speaker 5:18
Brilliant. Number nine was photographing a bit in your caution that you think students value highly that a light bulb? Yeah, they love the light box because they

==feel confident.== Yeah. Tracing those initial lines down. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 5:30
Yeah, it just improves their confidence so much. Although you all sometimes say, do you really have to use what's but sometimes it will get kids that really are opposed to doing anything? Yeah. A bit of confidence in their drawing, and then they can and they use it a lot of time to then develop work on. Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 5:47
my GCC Hawk last term was taking the widget you think visually sums up any frustrations that you experienced as an art teacher? I think we discussed this one, as the focus group didn't wait with the being on the table in a meeting about data.

Unknown Speaker 6:01
==Yeah, it was very much all the meetings are about data,== and things that actually aren't anything to do with any creative subjects that always and I think I just kept. ==Do you know what any other business at the end when everybody's just had enough and wants to go home?== Yeah. So if you want to talk about anything, like the competitions that they're doing, or the trips we've done, you know, it just becomes ==brushed aside.== So I think ==that was my frustration that here we are, again, sitting here to ~~track~~ things that seem to nothing irrelevant to me.==

Unknown Speaker 6:33
Yeah. And 11 was a before. Obviously, that's just speaks for itself. Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 6:37
for

Unknown Speaker 6:39
that you've taken it from quite an interesting angle, actually, that

Unknown Speaker 6:42
you've almost taken it from, I think ==I took in quite low, I think because my floor was clean for one night, super proud.==

Unknown Speaker 6:51
███████, after the classroom learning environments being shot, you've got a nice messy desk that it's clearly been used. Which is always for above, which is quite interesting how you've changed the focus point. So off the back of that, to ask you some questions just generally really about your teacher and your practice and you as a new teacher narrative, really. So how long have you been teaching?

Unknown Speaker 7:21
I taught for about seven years, then I had a big gap of having children. So and I've been here about seven years, but I've been teaching art here will be about four years, sort of, when I came back from maternity leave, I sort of done a bit of supply and then a bit of citizenship, I think they wanted to teach. And then gradually, I managed to get subjects I wanted to teach not previously, yes. Previously in another special school was worked in special education, okay? And how long we've been in Thanet. Teaching in Thanet. My second batch release is about

seven years. Okay. And whereas before that, I was working for a foster care agency, and they had education therapy and foster care. Right, that was a considerable right. Okay.

Unknown Speaker 8:09
And do you think there's any particular issues? The reason I asked about funding is if there's any particular issues educationally that affect people, you'll be infinite, or teach them about it more so than the other sort of districts advice that you've experienced?

Unknown Speaker 8:25
Well, I went from teaching basically, private sector, even though it was kids in care to work in then fuckin, unlike, I mean, the major difference was the funding. I used to be able to auto I wanted, and now I'm thinking how am I going to make that last? give kids the best experiences with what we've got? So I'd say but I think that possibly is everywhere, you know? I don't know other than that, like I say, I haven't been in other places in town to prepare.

Unknown Speaker 9:01
You said already what your own background is teaching art, but obviously, do you mean do you have an arts degree or what? What sort of experience previous to

Unknown Speaker 9:11
I start? What did I do as I my a levels, up subjects in a levels at any college? And then I thought, went to university, I was gonna train as primary school teacher, okay. But I'd only a year and I thought, No, I don't really want to I want to do all the time. I really don't want to do anything else. So then fit sort of dropped out of that course, and then just took on arts subjects to finish my degree, so microbreweries and art and design, and then I went on PGCE and secondary afterwards. Yeah. So I sort of laughed about bit But yeah, I do wish that I had originally just gone and gone to operations and an art degree and then sort of had the confidence to do that, but I didn't really at the time, so Okay.

Unknown Speaker 10:00
Where was pace? Was it like league? Canterbury? HCA? Yeah. Union Winchester. Do you still engage with your own creative practice outside of the classroom? I

Unknown Speaker 10:10
really try. I really try. But it's obviously time family. Yeah. I have brief bursts of activity. But yeah, it's

Unknown Speaker 10:19
something sometimes most managers do exemplars for a lesson. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 10:24
Sometimes it is almost like the GCSE. Right when I'm, I work alongside them sometimes. Because obviously, I don't want to touch their work. Yeah. But I want to show them what I want them to try. Yeah. So then that is sometimes that's as good as it gets other times.

Unknown Speaker 10:41

Do you think sort of, in your professional opinion that there's enough time given to art in your school curriculum, or your, your school to your students timetable?

Unknown Speaker 10:51

At the moment, archy says, we only get one single lesson a week and then not I don't think that's really enough. Because the continuity is a real pain, I suppose the whole way, the whole concept of the fact that this special schools Yeah, and particularly a whole week, two lessons that I mean, they can't remember what they started last week. So you almost have to teach. So there's not much continuity? I say, I think in our school, we don't use the opportunity to teach creatively, not necessarily an art lesson, but in other subjects. Yeah. Enough, because they want once they're in it, they're really engaged. And then it's just a struggle. Yeah. And they struggle with their literacy and numeracy and stuff. So I think it really could be the way it should be changing. Right. Rather than just an art lesson, yeah.

Unknown Speaker 11:40

Do you think that your current educational context values off? Well, it's quite a difficult question to answer. But do you think maybe, perhaps, do you think is understood? I suppose would be a way of putting that across the skull across the school? Not really, not really? Do you think that lack of understanding comes from watching that might?

Unknown Speaker 12:06

I do, because I think there we are a school that whose CPD and training is never creative base, which I think is really sad in a school like this. Yeah. We're always staff training sector, it's always about behavior, or speech language or with heaps important, but they seem to repeat it on constantly. Yeah, we're never out there and saying, actually, this is the topic limit is 10. How can we do this in the most creative and exciting way? And there was never any time creativity across the curriculum, it's lack of creativity in our in our teaching group, it all but comes from above, really? Yeah. That they, the time isn't given to I don't think,

Unknown Speaker 12:52

I mean, we've had CPD where we've given a presentation sheet of how to present your work, but it was implied it was suggested that it was an aligned book that obviously I slipped it straight away and thought, Well, how am I then going to put this in the context of GCSE sketchbook, for example? I don't want them right in the date in the learning objective at the top of every page. No, I'm just

Unknown Speaker 13:11

gonna be moderating. I'm having a thing at the moment about marking and I don't, I don't know how you do it. We've been given these rags, stickers, big stitches. I don't want to sketch them on the 3d work. Yeah. And so we're having a bit of a battle at the moment, I'm saying, well, I'll take a picture of their work when they're finished. And I'll stick the sticker on their market moderated like that. And then I'll just keep a file of that. Yeah, that seems reasonable. But my ongoing debate on Okay, big stickers with you've done this well, and you're on sometimes it

is such a battle to get them to do the work, then you're gonna say, actually, you could have done this better, I

Unknown Speaker 13:49
suppose, like you say, as well, we have such limited time with those groups, it's a shame to then, you know, take a lot of that time doing those activities, when you could actually be engaged with the art can actually just be making them. How would you say, we're talking about value? A lot. So how would you define the term value? What is value mean to you?

Unknown Speaker 14:11
What I like no, because what I think is the value of it for me in this school is if we have lessons where the pupils are engaged in what they're doing, they're talking to you we're learning together almost, and it's a and, and it's come from them a lot of the time, you know, if they've come in with an idea, I think in a school with a pupils in the class, that you should be able to go with that. Yeah, they should be able to lead their learning Yes. And that and that would be the value. Yeah, that would be the lesson. You know, that's the ideal for me, which doesn't necessarily fit in with what it's meant to look like on paper for the expectation and the expectations or But there's real value. And that's how we build relationships with the kids. We've got kids that really just don't read don't write, and a really a really quite clever at making things and they are very smart. Like I say to them, you're smart. Yeah. You know, make he made something. Can I just say that's massive self esteem as well? Yeah. And I see like that there's real value in that, that they've come in and wanted to do something and been able to do that. But sometimes the justification as part of the curriculum, yeah. There's a real battle going on

Unknown Speaker 15:30
Yeah. And this is quite personal question. But do you? Do you feel valued as an art teacher or as a not as an artist? No,

Unknown Speaker 15:39
I'm not in a very good place at the moment, a lot of thinking, Oh, I need another job. Not another artist, moment because I I'm quite frustrated. Yeah. In that I think I've taken kids that never done any accreditation and started getting them GCSE not. And I you know, I do engage in some quite with some quite difficult kids that do find value in what they do in art. And then I don't know, I think we're, we're kind of ignored. Yeah. And I think we're not ignored. If somebody if you're showing a guest around, they'll come to the art room because it looks pretty or they do some nice work. You don't see anybody I had to actually drag the head in the other day and say, Look at what some of these kids have done to celebrate. Yeah, they're because nobody would know otherwise. Yeah. So yeah, um,

Unknown Speaker 16:32
yeah. I don't want to

Unknown Speaker 16:34
be negative because I, I would say I love working with the kids. Yeah. I love doing art with the kids. Yeah. But the whole education thing at the moment. Yeah. And

it's a different job. That is absolutely. I don't like at all.

Unknown Speaker 16:48
Like, in fact, if there were so many teachers that I've spoken to with said similar things. People are saying things in that they love our education in itself, and what they do in the classroom, however, you know, due to being misunderstood, or for other reasons, budget wise, you know, they they feel like they can't, you know, there's a cap on what they can do, or that they're not valued what they are doing, because excited misunderstood or that it's not,

Unknown Speaker 17:12
because it can't be put in a certain spreadsheet box. Yeah, exactly. Yeah. Then, then people aren't interested. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 17:22
Do you feel that your SRT understands the subject? though? This is a confidential, I won't share it with any of them. Unless they I think been to read my dissertation? Not really, not really. I think they'd like to think they did. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 17:44
I think on a scale or delegate level on a deeper, getting your hands dirty kind of level. Yeah, not really, quite like the displays, but they're quite likely to make something pretty to put in. What skills do you think that students gain from studying art?

Unknown Speaker 18:01
Without kids, I'd

Unknown Speaker 18:02
say communication skills and just saying, what they can't say. Yeah. Great.

Unknown Speaker 18:12
Yeah. And showing actually what they can do. You know, they might not be able to read the instructions on something. But they can actually make something make scratch really scratch easily. Oh, yeah.

Unknown Speaker 18:23
And really sort of, and want to learn, yeah, they can really want to learn how to do something, just simply as like when we were sewing. They know, they've been sewing on buttons, you know, they really want to be able to do it.

Unknown Speaker 18:37
And they can,

Unknown Speaker 18:38
yeah. And do you think that an art qualification consistently pair students for further educational employment?

Unknown Speaker 18:47
I think it can definitely help show that they can show commitment to something.

Yeah. Follow something through. Yeah. That resilience. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker   18:55
Yeah, definitely. And who are visual artists that you find the most inspiring if you had to say three?

Unknown Speaker   19:03
It's a hard question. Isn't there any

Unknown Speaker   19:07
famous three songs? It's hard. To hold this, they have to be favorite. Like just you know, in this moment right now.

Unknown Speaker   19:18
I would say if I am as a student, I really like to Christian Boltanski. Okay, those installations and stuff in various boxes and lights and about memory and stuff. really lovely. As a student, I was just, I loved that. Like Howard

Unknown Speaker   19:41
Hawkins as well. I just I used him for an interview once as a reference. I loved him. Yeah.

Unknown Speaker   19:46
I went to see his exhibition was his I think it was on the South Bank and then we were walking back across the bridge and I walked past them and I was a little bit like people get about pop stars and I was a bit long.

Unknown Speaker   19:58
So I really loved And

Unknown Speaker   20:02
I can't get along really love Dave taught me I really love. I used to live Do you know they probably bought a mill in place called Salter. And I used to live in the village, right? And so yes, go and seek the Hockney is quite a lot. And I saw him once but didn't actually speak to him. I saw him across a room. That's like, that's David Hockney. And I was like, I can't actually go and say, Hello. He had a couple of people running late, like security or something. Yeah. And what do you feel students benefit from in terms of lifelong learning skills? I think you kind of said that about the communication skills really, for your students are ready, that thing they can take away from it? Is that ability to be able to communicate visually? Yeah, what perhaps they can't communicate. And actually confidence they can be successful at something. Yeah. And I, and they practice a skill. Yeah. So button on Yeah. What do you find the biggest challenges faced for teaching sort of the arts? Really, at the moment, if you have sort of your biggest challenges, I think budgets probably one of them.

Unknown Speaker   21:02
Yeah, budget is one of them. Although I think I mean, you can get around it a lot. And you can still have, as you probably got support around, etc. But I think it's just the divide between.

Unknown Speaker 21:16
Again,

Unknown Speaker 21:18
I don't know, I just find the education and our education into two separate things at the moment. And that sort of divide with people, the people that are running the schools, people are actually trying to

Unknown Speaker 21:34
teach, I mean, even with the new linear GCSEs, it's impossible to employ, you know, to then compare it because you still have this huge amount of coursework you have to do, you know, as I was saying to my antennas the other day, it's not like your other subjects, you don't do lots of revision and sit an exam for three hours. And then that's your result. You just got keep going, let's keep going. Because everything you do from your 10 onwards, you go towards your grade, they're looking at me, like, Oh, you have a teacher telling me that, you know, it's important what I do those hours exam, and I'm trying to find much, you know, not the course where it's,

Unknown Speaker 22:03
like, my battle is always like, don't throw anything away. Why not? Why just cuz it's not right. Because we want the journey documented. We don't justify No,

Unknown Speaker 22:12
suppose it's so hard, but most of it when, like every other subjects the same, the opposite actually, is actually the journey. You can, you know, put courses out on your book and whatever else and forget about it, because actually, it's what you do in that, you know, summative exam is important. So I suppose it is even that respect is the opposite. I found that we have

Unknown Speaker 22:32
now a new deputy come in, and he has come from ██████████ And he's very much getting them accreditation. And because they've changed, we used to have art as an option in years, 10 and 11, which worked well, you didn't get big groups, but they were quite successful. And then all of a sudden, everybody has to do art in years. 10 and 11. And then you've got a group of kids that have come not done it in year 10. But they've come in near 11. Right? And I said, Well, there's not enough time to do GCSE. The thing about your GCSE, like your size and we collect work over the two years you need that two years. But he has now given me a B tech for them to get done in that year. I'm just slightly given the year. It's only a like, three levels. But even like a level one, it's a really good it's a really different way of working to the GCSE. Yeah, it's given me sleepless nights because we do quite a lot of ~~beats~~ If you want some support with brief writing and stuff like that, then that's like, I'm happy to do we've done it for years at level two and three, level three now through to the GCC instead. Because there's external exam units now as part of the Yeah, well, I'm saying like these kids who didn't choose are now expected to do suddenly produce units of work which are very artists find it's quite scripted. Yeah, switch for accuracy is the worst thing you can do. Because all he can say is we want points. Yeah, credits, whatever they are, get them a

qualification. That next question, next year is GCSE offering. Yeah. It's like, I don't know the B tech at all. Yeah, sometimes, like, if you've done a GCSE yourself, you kind of know where you can research I've never done so. That's given me nightmares for the

Unknown Speaker   24:22
most part is that would be a nightmare. Where we were sort of in terms of questions in the brief. Were there any that you found particularly difficult to answer? Or that you felt challenged to answer or that you kind of stumbled across when you sort of fought for initial response?

Unknown Speaker   24:43
The respond to me I think it was capturing light. What is It should be at the heart of Chalmers is it should be Yeah.

Unknown Speaker   25:08
Yeah, they're the ones I think. Not necessarily. I kind of knew the answer but the image to give you Yeah, to try and find the classroom

Unknown Speaker   25:19
trying. So, yeah, I think those are the ones that's quite challenging. Yeah. Yeah. Because especially should when you know that things aren't quite how they should be.

Unknown Speaker   25:30
And what did you find interesting about sort of other teachers responses when we had the exhibition was how did you feel about looking around the exhibition? And

Unknown Speaker   25:38
I was surprised how many similarities they were even. Even though you're come from quite different educational backgrounds, you know, like, quite a few people, like valued the cameras and things as they're zero objects or object? And yeah. Yeah, I think there's similarities. That's what struck me the most. Yeah. And especially when you work alone, like, I can I feel, I don't know, do other people are strict, you know, struggling with doing defect. There's

Unknown Speaker   26:16
quite a lot of common similarities. Yeah. Which gives them just photographs did you think was the most sort of powerful communicative, and it's quite difficult to remember them all now, but sort of images, the perception, or I think, certainly found particularly powerful. He thought I can I can sort of, you know, emphasize with that, or

Unknown Speaker   26:37
I think there was one where I think one of the kids that might draw on something silly. Because I feel, I think, does that sort of stuff only happen when we've got the behavior kids that we have, you know, happens everywhere, that sort of? Yeah, yeah. Again, that slight link in what's common. Yeah. Between the schools and teaching experiences really.

Anything else you would like to say / share or add?
Thankyou and end of recording...

Unknown Speaker 0:00
To speak into it so I plan to play it back to you record instead of playback. That'd be really embarrassing area. Okay. So if wanted to do an introduction first, so I'm ▒▒▒▒ will know already. ~~You can see thing What do~~

Unknown Speaker 0:14
~~you always need to go through policies? That's fine.~~

Unknown Speaker 0:17
Yeah, my name is ▒▒▒▒ and I'm a

Unknown Speaker 0:20
teacher also attended ▒▒▒▒

Unknown Speaker 0:23
▒▒▒▒ I work with him at ▒▒▒▒ and off. Hello, ▒▒▒▒ I also work with ▒▒▒▒ at picking up about some art and photography as well. I'm currently on maternity leave at the moment. ▒▒▒▒ and I work at ▒▒▒▒

Unknown Speaker 0:39
▒▒▒▒ I work at a ▒▒▒▒ teaching art and photography. On capam. I might help you in Tonbridge. I'm ▒▒▒▒ I'm an interloper. I'm the art technician at ▒▒▒▒

Unknown Speaker 0:53
I'm ▒▒▒▒ I'm the art teacher at ▒▒▒▒

Unknown Speaker 0:57
▒▒▒▒ and not an art teacher

Unknown Speaker 1:01
I did one

Unknown Speaker 1:03
year helping out in an art department. I have never went back

Unknown Speaker 1:09
and changed my career.

Unknown Speaker 1:12
But I work as the school's officer, ▒▒▒▒, so I work a lot with our teachers and feel your

Unknown Speaker 1:22
~~enjoyment.~~

Unknown Speaker 1:23
So firstly, thank you so much for your contributions. There are also people that couldn't make it today for various reasons. But it's really good that we got this

Many because it means that we can have a really in depth discussion, hopefully. So the first question that I'd like to put out there really is what the experience of taking the photographs to the brief was like, were there any difficulties or issues that you came across? Or any questions in particular that you enjoy taking photographs or that you struggled to communicate visually?

Unknown Speaker 1:50
I think it was nice challenge.

Unknown Speaker 1:52
I think in one sense, he was spoiled for the number of things that you could do. But what

Unknown Speaker 2:02
was the

Unknown Speaker 2:03
I think most interesting was asking the students they thought someone who took them as one, I'm getting that feedback. Okay. Yeah. You know, particularly asked them what if, you know, if the department is burning down? What would you take? What would be the precious object? And they actually said to me, Well, I was thinking, they might say something like the human skull, we've got something like that. But notice, it was their German, of course, which was passed on to them. *Sketchbook*

Unknown Speaker 2:33
I mean, one of the objects that came up quite a lot for the first question, and one of the new values was a camera, but maybe that's because we've got a lot of photography specialists amongst us. I don't know, anyone that took a carbon motive don't explain. Alright. I think it says a lot about the time like relevant target, everything's pretty much recorded. Now. Photograph size. So I think it's a massive, like generated thing where so think like, maybe 1020 years ago, when we're at school, it wouldn't have been that important *expression?*

Unknown Speaker 3:04
I don't know from doing my own practice, whilst being from work that people you as soon as you say you're a photographer, they find a job for you to do Oh, can you take pictures of this? Can you take it sure that like it's massively trendy at the moment, I'd say.

Unknown Speaker 3:18
I think I'm always taking pictures, though, as well, just as evidence. But I'm evidence because a lot of the time our children will say their work home immediately, or they go somewhere else. And it's at risk of being damaged or so that's always evidence. That's what interests me in terms of value, that you say that because obviously, you know, you're saying how they want to take it home, which implies to me that they value the work enough to want to go and show it. So that's interesting. That's interesting, because our students would photograph their worker, if it's allowable, and take the photograph home or put it on their

Unknown Speaker 3:50

blog or whatever. But they won't usually take the picture home, they want to keep that secret from their parents not know, the exhibition is quite interesting, I find my teacher a lot of the children that when you say to write it down on their ~~planet~~ _Planner_ is not Oh, can I just take a picture of it?

Unknown Speaker 4:06
Except how accessible is how easy it is for them to use a fine. And it is quickly the we'll do it we will take bits of our children are like, I know like now I screenshot everything because I think I'm not gonna write down my notes. I just yeah. So it's the way we like time and technology has moved on. And I think we can use that as an advantage like more so even our subject. So what was was there anything with anything you enjoyed about the task of taking photographs, for anything that you found difficult. I mean, a lot of people that can't be here today, to the reason they couldn't be part of projecting the end was things like time not having time to engage in their own practice, and ~~off~~ ed or having to come up stuff that was sick or the fact that maybe in the timetables have changed because the curriculum, you know, has changed as a result of arts may have been devalued in their school. So for example, they have to cover more lessons than they did before or they've lost ~~limbs~~ and stuff due to redundancy, and all these sort of issues. were things that _time_

Unknown Speaker 5:00
Come up throughout me asking ~~versican~~ schools if they want to be involved in project.

Unknown Speaker 5:05
So just wondered if there was any restraints view or any difficulties that you came across. Or if you quite enjoyed the fact that you had to engage in, in practice, sort of sort of how you felt about that, really. I really enjoy it. But I did feel immense guilt. And I was do if I do anything, which isn't to do with my job and teaching, right, and just kind of being like, Okay, well, I'm going to do this now. And, you know, so I was really excited about doing that kind of thing. Okay, oh, God, but I've got big long list of things I need to get done today. And I've got to do that. So it was a mixture of like, enjoying it, but then kind of finding the time. Yeah, making the time because we've also got loads of other things kind of, you know, get on with as well. So I think it's, it's about space and time. A lot of Yeah, I personally.

Unknown Speaker 5:48
I mean, it's about managing that. And I think that probably comes in time, but having your own practice, that does go to one side, doesn't it? Because that's not why necessarily that people I wholly agree with ███ I had this plan, I'd take one photograph every now and again. No, I ended up taking them all within like a space of two weeks during a data drop. And I would say it's my kind of getting away from the data dropping thing. I've had enough of putting data on the computer or doing a lot of sketchbooks, I'm gonna just take some photographs. And it was just a way of getting away from that, which was quite nice, but very creative at the same time. Because I think the questions were really interesting and quite challenging made you think about your practice and, and your space that you use and how the students you first.

Unknown Speaker 6:32
Okay, I really enjoyed answering some of the questions, and particularly about an image that you think visualize visually something in frustration to experience as an art teacher. I think as a collaborative, we've all pretty much focused on one thing, and it is time data numbers. And I think that's really interesting how it's come up. Yeah. When I got the photographs back for that particular question, that was one one that was just very clear, straight away, what the issues were. And data, just, you know, there's a bit of all the images there that were sent to me, but the data was one that just popped up constantly.

Unknown Speaker 7:08
If anyone does anyone want to talk a little bit about how they feel like data is an issue for them. It was a frustration.

Unknown Speaker 7:15
I think.

Unknown Speaker 7:21
Like, right in the two things like the last question, these questions are put together, I think I think that, you know, it's important to keep it in perspective. Yeah. I remember what is what is really important. I think that the the idea of sort of the dual role in your own practice, you do run out of time, and it is a real question that is easy to put it to one side, but I think if you've managed to find the time not to put it to one side, the benefits of that sort of

Unknown Speaker 7:45
repeat themselves to your D students will

Unknown Speaker 7:48
be able to sort of see students been able to see that you're practicing yourself. Yeah. So I think when it comes to data, yeah, if we listen to our SLT too much, and we get too absorbed by it, then then the negatives of that.

Unknown Speaker 8:01
I think the problem with that is that you have to listen to it because they're telling you, you have to get this date wrong. I know six year groups all at once. And you're thinking actually this is pointless. The data is meaningless to the students is meaningless to us that passes on teachers, it actually can demotivate the students are in a large number of them. So why keep ramming things down the throat? So you've got all these things on the head. And as curriculum leader, I actually also have to check other people's data as well, which I think they're professionals, we've discussed the kind of how we're going to level it, you know, I'm quite happy with what they get to the time. But no, I have to physically go through and check their data on screen. And, you know, it's that kind of monstrous thing that schools are running that

Unknown Speaker 8:46
you kind of feel quite, I mean, I do feel angry about it, quite frankly, you know, and I'm constantly telling my SL t team, this is detrimental to learning, why you're

doing it. Because Ofsted one ~~sat~~ Ofsted don't want to it's rubbish.

They don't say they want it because they think that they can kind of micromanage in school that way. And I don't think it was right at all. It's not about learning.

It's just measurement is ~~not~~ for the sake of it.

And it's not even based on your subject. There are things like minimum grades, for example, taken from English and Maths data. Yeah. Which doesn't always tell you I mean, we get an ~~expensive~~ group, certainly in our school, and it doesn't actually tell you anything about our ability in all subjects at all. Because the data is just as you say, based on when you have to find a child that can't read and write very well is an amazing artists. They can sit there and draw and that's their outlet. But yeah, they're put in the bottom ~~setve~~ because of the maths and their English but they're great because they can exceed their data.

When you get it the other way around. Yeah, but this one's a high achiever in science and maths in English. Why can't they draw

To

set up great except based on data and other subjects,

or subjects,

which they get, they get them back, don't they in year six, from satisfied or things like that, and then is taken forward into secondary school. So I've got students who are doing GCSE, and their medic is that they should get a six. And some of them are like on a seven or an eight, whereas others are on like a two or three. And your job is to get them up to their MEG. Otherwise, it screws up all the data. And that mess is based on something they did in ~~Yew~~ six. That's what I find. So it's actually really limited, isn't it for them. And for you, it's worth

I can't remember now to probably about about because it was a bit of a blurb to cover but the top right photograph whose was that was anyone that's here?

That's mine. I took a sneaky picture under

a meeting about ~~data~~.

Unknown Speaker 11:11
You have to do it.

Unknown Speaker 11:13
Because I was trying to work out what the meaning was behind that it was really yeah. And that's what it was. So that is again data such as me talking about data here.

Unknown Speaker 11:23
On the wall, but the materials wasted across them. Yeah, yeah, someone's gone off made a mistake. Let's try it out.

Unknown Speaker 11:33
Are you

Unknown Speaker 11:35
similar, actually, because my first instinct was data, and I was going to take a photo And I thought, Okay, try and think of something else. Because I thought that I thought, Oh, it's too obvious. I was, oh, I'll try and do something else. That was definitely my number one. Why went.

Unknown Speaker 11:48
But my second thing was students being disrespectful, And I've had a really awful day of just cover lessons in the other room of going in there and seeing how badly they treated the room. And, and I hate that it really upsets me.

Unknown Speaker 12:01
And I've got another image there as well, the laptop, just awful kind of equipment, we have to Yes, and try and get amazing work. I think that my three top things,

Unknown Speaker 12:13
probably data, or for equipment, the minority of students who sometimes have really terrible in the classroom,

Unknown Speaker 12:22
the computer producing keys and one vehicle actually, I think I've been and I've seen where the school have been, there's always a computer with missing keys, or in our school at one point, they swapped the keys in the wrong keys required.

Unknown Speaker 12:35
And

Unknown Speaker 12:37
if you were going to add some questions, it's what sort of questions would you add? Is there anything that you feel like you'd like to express but weren't able to deal with the questions that you would give them

Unknown Speaker 12:47
in order to have an input possibly from like, like students perspective, but also

actually go to a student and asking their perspective or like art and designing the curriculum, and then opening up conversations we've had from sixth formers, and especially, particularly the opera school, they feel the way we feel now always like like when the studio when like our sixth film studio was turned into more classrooms. And that was the studio girl trying to explain that to them. How can you what basically is wrong? Because you're not important enough? That's how it feels to us. And they get that as well. It's because we're not important enough, isn't it? And what you meant to say no, no, you are in

Unknown Speaker 13:26
a tiny little corner.

Unknown Speaker 13:32
Corner.

Unknown Speaker 13:35
Corner.

Unknown Speaker 13:37
At the moment, at our school, a lot of the core subjects are having after school GCSE, catch up sessions that are compulsory. So English, math, science, and history, I that was the one that I use.

Unknown Speaker 13:54
They all have to go to the sessions after school and it's compulsory for them to go to only for an hour. So I'm not talking about getting to trouble but I emailed everybody head of everybody and said I want to have a compulsory one for photography, because some of my students have got really good potential, but they're lazy and I need them to come for an hour after school so that they can get one to one more help. And nobody even replied, I sent the email out three times to like, their head of you, the their mentors, everybody else and and it made me feel like our subject is so undervalued that they didn't even bother replying to me about that introduction. She said to me, You did the photograph with the really interesting image using your mouth as a pinhole camera. But you say how the image came out with you almost seem sort of invisible because shadow is kind of represents the subject? Well, no, it was that one over there like the pinhole image of my classroom. And I'm actually in the classroom. It was a 10 minute exposure. So I was walking around the classroom cleaning up when I had

Unknown Speaker 15:00
PPO and then I sit at my desk for a bit, and you can just see a slight shadow of me sitting at my desk. And I felt like that summed it up, because you're there, you're busy, you're running around doing everything, but you're completely invisible on the small shadow doing days where a computer

Unknown Speaker 15:19
by default, really disrespected by the rest of the school and, and also, I've been in other staff rooms and heard them slagging off the arts and saying how relevant it is, and have gone in and night argued with people. So yeah, isn't other subjects, other teachers have the same have that attitude towards art subjects as

well with they don't understand it? Do you ever think because our teachers, we may have missed some undecided or misunderstood on subjects in that way. Or

Unknown Speaker 15:48
~~Alright~~ tend to use the objects to other subjects to our advantage. So you know, students

Unknown Speaker 15:55
say something we integrate by science and other subjects into I'm looking at the history of photography and looking at history in general in with one of my groups, and then I'm looking at

Unknown Speaker 16:07
microscopic images and trying to reproduce those with another group through photographic means. So I think we're maybe a mindset thing who were more interdisciplinary and interdisciplinary. And those other subjects kind of close,

Unknown Speaker 16:23
I was gonna say, Sorry, I'll head of science seem to have that sort of, I don't know whether she was baiting me once had a conversation about the importance of art versus the importance of science. And it was quite an interesting conversation. But we've been working with ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ on this stem project, which has now become a proper steam project. And we, we've sort of brought science into this work, we're doing color in light. And

Unknown Speaker 16:52
I think, perhaps we'll get some more kind of respect out of interest. How did you turn that into a steam process, then?

Unknown Speaker 17:01
It was, it didn't really start assembling away started more as just art and performing arts, through lights. And then we then they asked us, they said, to get funding, we've got to turn this into a proper substantial state project. So we thought, well, we don't want to be left out of it. So

Unknown Speaker 17:19
I just started talking science and say, you know, what's in this for you. And so we had a nice conversation about kind of how they could use color lines and how the tutors that rose Bruford can actually sort of bridge the gap between our faculties as well, in delivering it. So that's that's kind of where it's come from. It's quite interesting. I think it's nice that we will agree that we sort of understand the intersubjectivity know, of the different sort of various subjects in the school. It is interesting to sort of question as to whether, you know, specialists and other departments, how they view our I mean, one person to photograph.

Unknown Speaker 17:59
And when it was how is sort of your hidden curriculum that was coloring exercise, paint by numbers or coloring in there is that sort of jokey thing that someone didn't mention? Was this something that science department,

Unknown Speaker 18:12
but they were draping the corridor, or just that, oh, it's just kind of an in there, isn't that what you do? And you often get that joke and you understand the joke, but that's the basis behind that is a little bit more when I want to have a staff room and they were talking about how the irrelevance of R equals the science stuff.

Unknown Speaker 18:32
And maybe that's interesting, though, in terms of sort of the decision of thinking really in terms of rational thinking and the idea that the arts is something opposed to that or creativity you know, expression is what the arts job is naturally there are those sort of rushing irrational thinking in art as well as in there like thinking through ideas and the way that you move from you know, looking at another looking at something in the world making a deduction but

Unknown Speaker 18:56
speculation Yeah, there's really

Unknown Speaker 18:59
understand why they Yeah, then we think it's narrow mindedness on a seatbelt literally like that, is that sort of mindset, isn't it? It's a matter of your mindset of like, no, science is important. Maths is important. And I think science because it's always maths and English that are always important and I think science claimed to be as important but

Unknown Speaker 19:20
they don't get the sort of glory that maths and English get so they always undo your review report.

Unknown Speaker 19:28
to the to the sciences.

Unknown Speaker 19:31
We don't really care.

Unknown Speaker 19:34
At the same time you ask any student that they want to do they always want to come and do their art or photography, where do they want to go and do their maths GCSE coursework?

Unknown Speaker 19:44
as well as what you say and saying you know about our being the more popular mentors you know, a rocky subject but it's also the hierarchies just saw that they anyways, I think other departments know that and they know that kids enjoy it and they want to go and sit there and put the headphones on. I'm getting those threats when I did that when I

Unknown Speaker 20:00
Tonight, your city, I love having that escapism. And that's what it is for a lot of children is their therapy. And a lot of other subjects don't get that. They really

don't get that. And that's their importance. You talk to cite some science teachers, I know, for example, not going to no no particular science teacher that I know had a particular themed wedding. And she told me that she'd made a lot of things for her wedding. And she's like, yeah, it's very therapeutic. It's like you're answering your own question, then I

Unknown Speaker 20:34
think it's also good to understand that part is really deep thinking, I mean, students, they will sort of research something, they'll definitely filter it all the way through to their final concept, explore, experiment, everything that learning should be. And I think sometimes those subjects kind of, you know, when you're having an argument with them about the value of the subject, that's what I say to them and say, do you do that in your subjects? And the answer is usually no, unless it's a core art subjects when performing arts or visual arts, they don't get that opportunity, isn't it? And that, that linking with sort of life in your sort of personal endeavor as well, if you look at sort of the traditional Bloom's taxonomy, for example, those higher order thinking, all the things that we do naturally in our subject, and it's the other things at the moment seem to be quite popular in the curriculum, like, for example, rote learning, or the ability to remember data. And the only reason I suppose it's important is because of the shifting exams in a lot respects, in that there isn't the coursework, and there isn't the need to remember huge amounts of knowledge to regurgitate in exam in order to do well for results, and so on. But the fact that we I mean, we can't do that it is relevant to us, really, and a lot of our CPD has been surrounded around ways of enhancing knowledge and memory. And, you know, I'm saying innovation watch or critical and creative thinking. And those higher order thinking skills actually are what are more valuable to us. And especially as technology is changing so quickly. So in about 20 years time, lots of those functions, like just rote learning and data were relevant will be available. And there is a website, you can type in and say, will I be replacing a robot.

Unknown Speaker 22:14
And it looks at different sort of subjects and jobs. And it's all the creative jobs, they're the ones that are actually safe. And that's actually where all the money is a math and subjects that other subject leaders who might say, oh, we'll be soft subject, you're not going to get money from being an artist, are you? But there's so many

Unknown Speaker 22:37
professions that really need people who can draw in people who can think creatively.

Unknown Speaker 22:44
And it's a massive risk by industry for the UK, but it will be dying out if it sort of carries on with this hierarchy and school to get lead table results. That senior

Unknown Speaker 22:57
stuff was nearly a question you're asking about what else would you like? Okay, yeah, question. That would have been the students who've gone to college, the students around that work, what how are we? Yeah, you know, so some aspect of that

would be quite interesting thing to, again,

I think that's why art sometimes isn't valued, because people have this really sort of this idea, but you can't do anything with it. And that's why it's not as important as other subjects, which you need. I do feel like, that's what people say to me. Oh, yeah. But what they're gonna do that? And I'm like, well, there's loads of things I can do. Even just the process of taking the whole site. Yeah. When you do have to do the kind of research and, and engage with that kind of

thinking and looking into so many different areas and bringing it all together that can be valuable in any job. Yeah, I know, person growing not getting out at the end of year level,

which I think is quite an issue. And I think that's why are so low. You know, in terms of Do you think that parents share this a similar view?

Sometimes, well, it's mixed.

I think

it depends what their parent if their parents are creatives or creatively minded I mean, not obviously, I don't share that view with my daughter. But my parents said to me when I say uniform,

just like the education systems a little bit older, sort of touch with, with, with current changes, you know, the creative industries, the fastest growing industry in the UK, cod cod industry that continued to grow over the last two recessions. And I think many parents don't understand that either. I think many parents still work on the basis. You got to get a good job. There'll be a lawyer, you got to get you know, you don't get your masters.

Yeah, I think you know, we've had a guest speaker in today, a school improvement advisor for the government training day in my my school and, and she stood up in front of the whole school. There were sort of three primary schools there as well as put creativity analyzing and evaluating at the top of the pyramid when it comes to sort of, you know, the most important skills to teach

Which is quite good when remembering to the bottom and yeah.

That kind of thing, you know, falls into what we already do in ~~this that~~ Art and design you know,

what our school is kind of pushing for everybody to do. They've sort of devised these five pillars of, you know, of education at the moment where, you know, which sort of practice and,

Unknown Speaker 25:23
and, and really pushing growth mindset and what we're what we're doing with the department is that already, and so the school sort of turns to us and said, okay, you're already about three steps ahead of everybody else. That's great.

Unknown Speaker 25:39
So that being said, on this to the rest of the school, so you said, you know, how is it that we know, in

Unknown Speaker 25:46
terms of the arts in our school, I think I think I hope cross my fingers that, you know, the decision makers within the school actually appreciate and understand that what we're doing is some, I've interested in any of those key decision makers are from an arts background themselves. One is music teacher and the

Unknown Speaker 26:09
head is she's come from a product design background.

Unknown Speaker 26:14
Another one of the key teachers is performing arts and our schools always had a heritage of the arts. So it's, we're in an interesting position in ▮▮▮▮▮ because no one knows where we are.

Unknown Speaker 26:29
takes you to the wrong. Yeah, come to a gate. So back at school, no, that is the entrance.

Unknown Speaker 26:37
And

Unknown Speaker 26:38
we've got we've kind of had this heritage, and we're surrounded by grammar schools. And we sell ourselves through the arts very much, you know, we are a big part along with Performing Arts at the schools attraction. And I think the SLT team do recognize that.

Unknown Speaker 26:56
So that's really, when if you can find that embraces a lot, it's like the the feeling that you get, and like when you go for an interview for a job, or something, you can tell immediately, that is, yeah, we just need a teacher. But when it's a school that actually embraces the opposite, you've struck gold. And I feel like that's quite rare. I'm seeing more of a trend of that happening now, where schools to make themselves stand out. And again, students, they're actually saying, we're a creative School, which in the arts, and that's, that happens in secondary, but it's also ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ which is no model to load the

Unknown Speaker   27:36
arts primary school, and it's so much around partnership, like partnership is gallery and other cultural organizations and having a creative curriculum. So I think there will, I mean, I think it will be a slow thing, I can start to sort of see more of a trend shift in it because it has a reaction against how much it's been sort of suited our

Unknown Speaker   28:01
schools. I think that having like, because my daughter's just started primary school as well. And when I went in with her curriculum evening, and they talk about the importance of subjects and we I know as teachers or I've sat through, you know, million, one of these things, and when they sort of listed numeracy, literacy and creativity, I just sort of like, like SAT forms, like, Oh, my God, creativity is one of your most important aspects within the school. And I think there's a massive divide between primary and secondary and massive divide, creativity in primary is so important. I, my daughter comes home every day with about five to seven images, mommy's I've drawn this, so Mommy, I've colored this in, and she's expressing herself through obviously, creativity. And she was one person, I think I've said this to me before, she really massively frustrated me because whereas daughter will sit and draw my daughter, it's never been like that she, it really, really has frustrated me at times, she's sort of expressing herself, with roleplay. And now every day, it's like drawing, writing. And that's how she started to learn and express herself. And it is through that creativity that that outlet, and which is really nice to see, actually, but it's exactly why because we all three of us have got children minds, two years older than us. And now she was the same, didn't want to sit in a nap. She has like a journal. And she wrote a little story and then illustrated, but her and then she goes diagrams if this happened, and then that happened. And then it goes on to this story. But it's all illustrated. And her world is visual and incorporates written language and when they get to secondary that is missing, isn't

Unknown Speaker   29:44
it? I was one of the things sort of discuss those. You know, I don't know how often you're concise. We have a we have one hour but we have an hour of what we will call creative design that essentially could be the second hour of art or creative subject. I think most English laws is usually one hour. If you

Unknown Speaker   30:00
statuary awake, we've got to go to

Unknown Speaker   30:04
a lot more than that. Yeah, but this is reduced, reduced and reduced. And I was down to two and it was an hour of our lives and our dt. But our schools, basically just shut down. I mean, that's, as well as dt, just being one of the things that is now being shunted out of the curriculum. I think I was talking to a parent actually open even recently about dt, and they were actually carpenter. And I was saying, We don't pretend to do you know, I stupidly, then it was just very tired. It was late at night. And I'd already been at work all day, and it was six o'clock, and I was just traveling smiley parents being like parent number 60, or whatever I was going

Unknown Speaker 30:38
to get the arts. And I said, I said it would be dope to do sort of old fashioned
Good work. But ▮▮▮▮▮old fashioned, his face just dropped. And I was like, Oh,
she said that she said that she

Unknown Speaker 30:50
was saying, how why'd you take the whole fashion job, I make a career out of this.
And I thought I didn't really mean that I was just trying to put it in front of
would work. But yeah, that was quite interesting, because it was an example of, you
know, parents actually worried about the fact that that side of dt, or that side of
the creative subjects

Unknown Speaker 31:07
didn't really exist anymore in schools. But it's interesting by looking at some of
those photographs of the broken equipments, when, obviously, there's massive leaps
in

Unknown Speaker 31:19
technology.

Unknown Speaker 31:21
A lot of these creative industries are linked to that. And yet, what kind of
aspiration does that give pupils in schools when and then there's budget that you
can't have those things. But I just wonder how much of a difference you think it
would make. If you had all that sort of technology and cutting edge technology in
schools were invested in that and saw it as important? Because at the moment, it
seems like you're trying to, it's sort of making the art scene kind of old
fashioned or irrelevant, because that's what we have to work with. If he's

Unknown Speaker 31:55
not keeping up

Unknown Speaker 31:57
with the feedback that I've had from people at colleges that they want the students
to draw still, they'd rather they didn't just have that technology. Because I think
their concept is by the time they reach us that technology has moved on anyway. And
they rather they were creative. And I can I can go with that. But there is a
frustration, and it's a real frustration for students, when they go to use the
laptop or the computer or Mac or whatever to do there photography, editing. And
it's it's not functioning quick enough or it's broken, or it's the you know, the
system's down or whatever it is. And

Unknown Speaker 32:34
you know, that that could put them off going to college? Because they might think
that's, that's no, it's not.

Unknown Speaker 32:41
I think we're quite lucky at our school. We have a Mac suite, which a lot of
schools don't have. And I know when I started off building the photography

department,

Unknown Speaker 32:53
and they did invest in cameras. We weren't I was quite lucky in that respect. You took all the budget

Unknown Speaker 33:06
44 is two thirds less than it was last year on budget. Is that the same as all other subjects?

Unknown Speaker 33:15
I think budget and arts was an interesting one anyway, because you have a lot of consumables and we probably do spend a lot more money than lots of other subjects in that it can be textbooks or that would be reused or is just, you know, books, pens, pencils, it's not the same sort of cost as it

Unknown Speaker 33:30
but I was quite horrified when I found out the English budget several years ago was 13,000 pounds.

Unknown Speaker 33:36
Oh my gosh, well, they ended up spending some money on us because they had some left overnight.

Unknown Speaker 33:47
Last year I had 300 pounds 300 for the half year that was logically the whole school primary and secondary, which

Unknown Speaker 33:57
hence my photo of cardboard boxes because that's that's what you've got. I work with cardboard boxes if someone's got one. I take it

Unknown Speaker 34:05
this year, slightly better. 500 pounds, but still it's one order my first my order is better. And then I flied 50 pounds left for the rest of the year. Yeah, but they want me to run trips and things and I'm not gonna have no money. My budget we company ask our parents because I work in a ███████████ where,

Unknown Speaker 34:25
you know, a lot of the parents they just really can't afford to send money in for trips and things like that. So I know you've got a point, there's two things I just want to sort of touch upon because I know we've been that time. One of the things is on the basis of that round back of back is to remember, I don't know if it was ██████ or somewhere I spoke to and we were talking they were talking about an event at the turn or bringing students to the turn or something. But then there's always this thing of cost and money. In fact, that is a massive issue for us because obviously you don't really have the budget necessarily all resources or funding to be able to, you know, have everything for free. But at the same time our departments are so stuck with budgets and also for us as well as of course

Unknown Speaker 35:00
To cover so, but then if the same for you, but even if you've managed to run a free trip, your, you know, your upline manager might turn around, so we can't go because it's going to cost this amount of money to have a supply teacher come in and we can't afford to cover you for the day. So it really minibus coach with anything, there's always these sort of costs, hidden costs. And when you've got a budget, like you say, you know, 500 pounds a year, realistically, how then can we ensure that we do give students opportunity to go outside because I think it is so important, they do get opportunities to go to galleries and come outside of school, especially for us? Because, you know, I mean, as teacher, I struggle sometimes when I'm sat with the same four walls for inspiration, and I'm just sat there thinking, I can't give you any more ideas for GCSE work, because I'm completely out of ideas I need to go for do something exciting myself to get some ideas because because can't get ideas from nothing. And, you know, and I think they probably need that as well, do you agree? And the second thing I want to pick up on was the thing about primary and secondary. And I'm just wondering if there's something in the sort of understanding of all that maybe people see it as a playful, fun,

Unknown Speaker 36:01
childlike endeavor, I suppose, which maybe is why there was more of a primary school, post secondary, which is another thing I wanted to pick up on, which just has taken over my mind as you were talking, I don't know if either of those things.

Unknown Speaker 36:13
They teach it as an inclusive day, they have the same class for the whole day. And so everything they do is linked. So they'll do what

Unknown Speaker 36:25
they do a bit of maths or English, and then it's incorporated into drawings and mening, they're looking at mathematics. And then all of a sudden, they're building a pirate ship using say, there are Swedish models and Finnish ones and not they're the based around that that quite popular in secondary, but we'll see whether

Unknown Speaker 36:40
it's all segregated. Although I suppose there is a danger. If the primary school teacher doesn't feel confident in that, then it just doesn't really feature so much. We found in our area that children coming in to our school aren't doing so much of primary

Unknown Speaker 36:58
school, they're they're about two schools out of about 13 that seemed to actually have art subject with the curriculum at some point. And often, it's just one day and the whole year. And you're thinking, Okay, so did you do any drawing for any of your other students pick up that from that point, that's really difficult, because it's practices and coming in. That's what we've done to compensate as we get the students to play now. And then because we think plays very much part of

Unknown Speaker 37:28
they be a seven project is about expressive use of color, and Mark, and all of those sorts of things and exploring the school environment through kind of journey.

And

Unknown Speaker 37:40
yet, just that kind of exploration thing. And the work trying to sort of compensate for that lack of effort, I think

Unknown Speaker 37:47
we've only got about five more minutes that have to round us up, because we will have to go together at six o'clock, then we

Unknown Speaker 37:53
have, what 545 10 minutes or so probably got like 10

Unknown Speaker 38:01
to five minutes.

Unknown Speaker 38:03
We got locked in Tate Modern,

Unknown Speaker 38:08
brilliant.

Unknown Speaker 38:13
This was a real experience with the Chris ofili exhibition, and the lights suddenly went out and the shutters went down. And we just realized we just locked the place up and godness forgotten about. And then suddenly, all the kind of Christofi paintings, the kind of text is good.

Unknown Speaker 38:38
And we did get

Unknown Speaker 38:42
10 minutes, but it's

Unknown Speaker 38:46
suddenly realized, Oh,

Unknown Speaker 38:50
I mean, I think it's great that you're here, actually, because obviously, you have got a really strong network analogy about teachers. I'm wondering if there's any sort of wisdom or advice that you could share, but hasn't done it, because we were so close to each other, just here likely, you'll know you'll get burned out and tend to do. But I'm wondering, you know, something that we got to do is work together more even if something's on moderation, and, you know, using resources we were saying about killing us like we have, you don't have killing day, we've got a habit. It's part of the department and, and your head of department actually came and helped with my marketing because I've been aware for two years. And I thought, Oh, my God, I don't know what I'm doing with marketing help me Sorry, came and saved the day. Yeah. And it's having that.

Unknown Speaker ,39:33
That's

Unknown Speaker 39:37
trying to, you know, help each other through this sort of politically challenging
time with the arts really in, you know, maybe find some more ways of starting the
revolution. That really hit that point you were saying about how you felt guilty?
Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 39:51
Because it was for the students.

Unknown Speaker 39:55
Probably by doing your own practice, that will over

Unknown Speaker 40:00
Time gives you so much to know, you'll be generating ideas of me being passionate
about your subject, you'll kind of reconnect with why you got into it, again,
things like that.

mins transcribed seperately (only 50 mins at a time?!) Land up + thorles (last 10
upload.

Focus group discussion – transcription corrections

I think it's important to do an introduction first....so I am Emma, as you know...

Gatecrasher – art teacher, not involved in the school
Participant A – ▮▮ Helen
Participant B - ▮▮ Alice
Participant C ▮▮▮▮ Elaine
Participant D -▮▮▮ Eva
Participant E – ▮▮ Alex
Technician ▮▮▮
Participant F –▮▮▮ Isla
Gallery schools officer– Imogen

Apologies from those who could not make it, reiteration that it is a good number to have as a focus group as it will enable us to have a 'really in depth discussion...hopefully!'

Questioned what the experience of taking photographs to the brief was like, where there any issues or difficulties that you came across or questions that you enjoyed taking the photographs for or struggled to visually communicate?

'I think that it was a nice challenge. In one sense you were spoilt for the number of things that you could do, but what I think what was most interesting was asking the students about one or two of them as well and asking for their feedback.' (Participant E) 'If the department was burning down what would you take? What would be your most precious object' was asked to the students to answer the question surrounding what was perceived as their most valued object 'I was thinking that they would choose to take something like the human skull that we have or something, but no, it was their journals, of course, which is personal to them....and their phone'

Researcher – 'One of the objects that came up quite a lot in relation to the first question, an object hat you value, was a camera, but maybe that was because we have got a lot of photography specialists amongst us, I don't know, can anyone that took an image of a camera want to explain?'

'I think that is says a lot about the times, the relevant time, everything is pretty much recorded now, through photographs, phones, so I think that it's a massive generation thing where people ten, twenty years ago when we were at school it wouldn't have been that important.' 'From doing my own practice, as soon as you say that you are a photographer they find a job for you to do, oh can you take a picture of this? Can you take a picture of that? It's massively trendy at the moment I would say' (Participant B)

'I think I am always taking pictures as well just as evidence, because often our children will want to take their work home immediately, or it will go somewhere else and it's at risk of being damaged.' (Participant C) –▮▮▮

'Often when you ask students to take notes down or write in their planners they will often as, can I just take a picture of it? It's how accessible it is, how easy it is for them to use a phone and it is, it is convenient, we all do it, take pictures of our children, I know that now screen shot everything and think I am not going to write that in my notes, I will just take a picture instead. It's the way that the times and technology have moved on and I think that we can use that as an advantage, more so in our subject.' (Participant B)

Researcher – 'Is there anything in which you enjoyed about the task of taking photographs, or anything that you found difficult? I mean a lot of people who said that they couldn't be here today or the reasons that some said that they could no longer be a part of the project in the end was time, they didn't have time to engage in their own practice, OFSTED or having to cover other members of staff that were off sick or the fact that maybe their timetable had changed due to a change in curriculum offer or loss of staff due to issues such as redundancy. All these sorts of issues were things that came up throughout me asking various schools if they wanted to be involved in the project. So I was wondering if there were any restraints for you or difficulties that you came across, or if you quite enjoyed the fact that you had to engage in your own practice and how you felt about that really....'

'I really enjoyed it, but I did feel an immense guilt, and I always do if I do anything which isn't to do with my job or teaching, and just kind of being like, okay I am going to do this now, and so I was really excited about doing it, but you kind of think, okay, well I have got this or other things that I have to get done today and I've got to get that in and do that and so it was a mixture of enjoyment but then also finding the time and making the time, because you've also got loads of other things to do and get on with as well and so I think it's about space and time personally, it's about managing that and I think that probably comes in time, but having your own practice, it does go to one side doesn't it, because that's not necessarily what I get paid for' (Participant F)

'I would wholly agree with that, I mean I had this plan that I would take one photograph every now and again, and no, I ended up taking them all in a space of two weeks during a data drop and I really feel as though it was my getting away from the data job thing, I'd think I've had enough of putting data on a computer or looking at a lot of sketchbooks, I'm going to just take some photographs now as a way of getting away from that, which was quite nice and very creative at the same time, because I think that the questions were really interesting and quite challenging and made you think about your practice and your space that you use and how you use that space and so on... ' (Participant E)

'I really enjoyed answering some of the questions and particularly the one that was about visually summarising any frustrations that you experience as an art teacher, I think as a collaborative we have all pretty much focused on one thing and it is time, data, numbers and I think that's really interesting how that has come up' (Participant B)

Researcher – Yes, from all of the responses the ones for this particular question were very clear, there was a very clear message. Does anybody want to talk about how they feel that data is an issue for them or a frustration?

'I think it is important with the last question and this one is to remember what is really important and keep it in perspective and I think the idea of the dual role and your own practice, yeah you done run out of time and it is a real pressure and easy to out it to one side but if you manage to fight not to put it to one side then the benefits of that are huge. The students see that you are practicing yourself and I think when it comes to data, yeah, it we listen to our SLT too much and we get too absorbed by it then the negatives of that outweigh the positives' (Gatecrasher)

'I think one of the issues with that is that you have to listen to it because they are telling you, you have to get this data on for, I don't know, for example six year groups all at once and you are thinking actually this is pointless, the data is meaningless to the students, it's meaningless to us as art teachers, it actually can demotivate the students, or a large number of them, so why keep ramming things down their throats, so you've got all of these things going on in your head and as curriculum leader I actually also have to check other peoples data as well, which I think, they are professionals, I am quite happy with what they are going to put on, but no, I have to physically go through and check their data and it's tat kind of monstrous thing that schools are running that you kind of feel quite, well I do feel angry about it quite frankly. I am constantly telling my SLT team that this is detrimental to learning, why are you doing it, because OFSTED want it, OFSTED don't want it, it's rubbish, they want it because they think that they can micro manage the school that way and I don't think it's right at all' (Participant E)

'It's just measurement for the sake of it really' (Me)

'And it's not even based on your subject' and 'your job is to get them up to their MEG otherwise it screws up all the data'

...and so it's actually limiting for them and for you? (Me)

'You often find that a child that can't read or write very well is an amazing artist because they can sit there and draw and that's there outlet, but yet they are put in a bottom set because of there Maths and English minimum expected grades'

'But they are great because they are going to exceed their data, so that's great for us'

'But then sometimes it is the other way around where you get, well this ones a high achiever in science and maths and English, why can't they draw, why can't they do this?'

When discussing the reasoning and intentions behind the photographs and possible interpretations of the imagery in relation to a question regarding any current frustrations that art teachers felt, one of the participants said a very interesting comment after hearing the reasoning behind someone's creative intentions and attempted visual communication pertaining to the wasting of art materials in the classroom and claimed 'I was very similar actually, because my first instinct was data and I was going to take a photo and I thought, okay, try and think of something else because I though, oh it's too obvious, that was definitely my number one that I went for, but my second thing was students being disrespectful and I'd had a really awful day, and there were cover lessons in the other room and going in there and seeing how bad the students had left the room in and I hate that, that really upsets me.' This participant also took a picture of a laptop computer with missing keys to communicate the awful equipment that either hasn't been looked after or is old and needs updating that ' we have to use to try and get amazing work' so for me the top three frustrations are 'data, awful equipment and the minority of students that sometimes are just really terrible in the classroom.'

Researcher - If you were going to add questions to this, what would you add? Were there things that you would have liked to express but weren't able to with the questions that you were given?

'It would have been nice to have a bit more of an input from students and their perspectives, like I know from having conversations with the sixth form and the upper school that they feel the way we feel, and trying to explain certain things to them, well how can you? Well basically it's because you are not important enough, that's how it feels to us and they get that as well, it's because were not important enough isn't it? And what are you meant to say? No you are important?'

'Afterschool catch up sessions that are compulsory, so English, Maths, Science and History, they all had to go to these sessions after school and its compulsory for them for an hour and so I emailed everybody and said I want to have a compulsory one for Photography because some of my students have got real potential but they are lazy and I need them to come for an hour after school so that they can get one – to – one, more help, and nobody even replied. I sent the email out three times to Heads of Year, everybody else and it made me feel like our subject is so undervalued that they didn't even bother replying to me about it.' ...... (ME) I raised the link here between this particular participants comment and one of their photographic responses, as I had previously had a conversation about this image and it's meaning and felt it was relevant here. The participant went on to explain the image I was referring to, claiming that 'I did a pinhole image of my classroom and I was actually in the classroom, it was a ten minute exposure, son I was walking around the classroom clearing up when I had a PPA and then I would sit at my desk for a bit and so you can just see a slight shadow of me sitting at my desk and I felt like that summed it up, because you are there, your busy, your running around doing everything, but your completely invisible, apart from a small shadow doing data at your computer. So that summed it up. The image summed it up for me.'

'I have been in other staffrooms and heard them slagging off the arts and how irrelevant it is and gone in and argued with people, so other teachers have that attitude to arts subjects as well, in that they don't understand it'

ME – 'Do you ever think art specialists misunderstand or may have misunderstood other subjects in that way?'

'No, we tend to use other subjects to out advantage' and another said that 'we tend to integrate it into our own......we are more interdisciplinary.'

An example was offered by one of the participants 'our head of science seemed to have that sort of, I don't know it they were baiting me once, but we had a conversation about the importance of art and science and it was quite an interesting conversation, but we had been working on a STEM project that has now become a proper STEAM project, looking at colour and light and I think perhaps we will get some more respect out of that'

ME – one of the images, which was by somebody who unfortunately is not here with us today, was an image of a colouring in sheet, a paint by numbers type exercise and for me personally I have often encountered the joke 'oh, it's just colouring in what you do isn't it, and although you understand that it is just a joke, it is very telling when you look at the meaning behind that joke a little more'

Science departments or teachers came up quite frequently as people who had shown little understanding for the arts. This was of real interest to me and I wondered whether it has something to do with the scientific tradition in western thought and whether art was viewed for some reason outside of that. One participant stated that 'there is room to speculation and creativity in subjects like science and maths and so I don't understand why it's like that?!' another participant claimed that 'It's just narrow mindedness, it's that sort of mindset isn't it, science is important, maths is important and I think science, because its always maths and English that have always been important and I think science claim to be as important and yet they don't get the glory that maths and English get' another said 'they are hanging onto the coat tails of maths and English, whereas art just don't bother'
This conversation denotes that there is a clear sense of subject hierarchy felt in schools by teachers and by those in education.

A comment was made about enjoyment in art and how being in the art department was 'their enjoyment, their therapy' and was a safe space to occupy where they could be themselves. Another said in response to this that 'I think it's also really important to understand that art is really deep thinking, I mean the students, they will research something and take this all the way through to their final concept, explore it, experiment, everything that learning should be and I think that sometimes when other subjects ask about your subject and your having that argument that's what I often ask, do you do that in your subject and

the answer is usually, no, unless it's a core arts subject, like performing arts or visual arts, they don't get that opportunity.

ME- much of our CPD recently has been focused around skills such as enhancement of memory recall and I have sat there and thought that this is rather irrelevant to our subject, instead we need students to do what on the traditional Blooms Taxonomy would be understood as higher order thinking skills, such as creativity, critical thinking, reflection and evaluation in order to enhance student learning and outcomes.

'especially as technology is changing to quickly, in about twenty years time lots of those function of rote learning and data, there will be a robot and there is a website where you can type in and say will I be replaced by a robot? And it looks at different subjects and jobs and its all the creative jobs that are the ones that are actually safe and that's actually where all the money is, and other subjects where leaders may say, oh well the arts is a soft subject and you are not going to make money from being an artist are you? But there are so many professions that really need people who can draw, who can think creatively and it's a massive, massive industry in the UK that will be dying out if it carries on with the hierarchy of school subjects and pressure for things like league table results for schools'

'An earlier question that you asked about what else could you have included in the questions that you didn't....that would have been the students that have gone to college, that have gone out to work, how have they used art? That would be quite interesting.'

'I think that's sometimes why art isn't valued, because there is this idea that you can't do anything with it and that's why its not as important as other subjects, that's what people say to me, yeah, but what am I going to do with it? And I'm like, well there are loads of things that you can do with it'
Another said,
'also even just the process of taking a course like that where you do have to do the research and engage with that kind of thinking and looking at so many different areas and bringing it all together, that would be valuable in any job'

'I think that just like the education system is a little bit out of touch with the changes in creative industries, the fact that it is the only industry that has continued to grow over the last recessions, I think many parents don't understand that either, I think many parents still work on the basis that to get a good job, you've got to be a lawyer, you know, you have to get your maths and English' however 'we had a guest speaker in today at our school, a schools improvement advisor and she put creativity, analysing and evaluating at the top of the pyramid when it comes to the most important skills, which is quite good....it's what we are doing as a department already and so the school turns to us and says, okay you are already steps ahead....do an inset on this to the rest of the school.' This participant felt that this was very positive for the arts at their school and that the key decisions makers had an invested interest in what the arts could offer the whole school. I enquired as to whether any of these key

Student wearing the work, photograph by Elaine / Master of Cardboard

Appendix R

Chart used to analyse one-to-one interviews

Subject hinted at (6)	Composition (person key focal point) – 5 Composition (artwork key) - 1	Communication Connectedness and relationships to other humans and artworks Expression Thoughtfulness and introspection Joy Pride
Object (mimetic / representational) (2)	Composition (object main focal point) – 2 Composition (Object surrounding by a further detailed layout, not direct focal point) – 0	Function and utility Celebration Narrative hinted at – through human interaction with an object
Conventional signs (socially agreed upon within the culture of the teaching profession) (1)	Composition abstracted – 0 Object clearly identified, further representational – 0 With the addition of text and / or numbers as key to communication of message – 1	Quantitative data Stereotypes of what art and design *is* in a secondary school context and what sort of activities are engaged in Presentation boards and displays Assessment
Expressive form – what is felt (trying to appeal to emotion in the viewer) (2)	2	Loneliness and isolation
Abstracted form (close up) (1)	Composition (inclusion of an object) – 1	Frustration Anger

	Materials only - 0	

Metaphor (0)	N/A	Experimentation Play Expression Building on curiosity and inquiry

Sea of legs under the table in a meeting photovoice response captured by Elaine