



**Responding to Disclosure: A Study to Explore the Preparation of  
Trainee Teachers to Operationalise Safeguarding Policy  
in the  
Context of Adolescent Sexting Behaviour**

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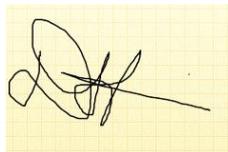
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This thesis is dedicated to all my grandchildren, particularly my current granddaughters Sally and Emma. I hope this thesis will help them and their peers in a small way.

## Abstract

This professional doctorate explores the content and efficacy of safeguarding training for secondary computer science trainee teachers, referred to as trainees or computing teachers. The research focuses on the preparation of trainees to operationalise safeguarding policy in the context of disclosures of online Aggressive Adolescent Sexting Behaviours (AASB) in secondary schools located in North-West England. The researcher studies key stakeholders and trainees, seeking to answer three research questions:

How **do** trainees define sexting behaviours?

How **should** trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?

How **do** trainees plan to respond to AASB?

This study uses Kincheloe and Berry's (2004) conceptualisation of Bricolage methodology and Quinlan and Cross's (2020) adaptation of Papert's (1993) Computational Thinking (CT) that informed the theoretical and conceptual framework to structure this research investigation. Lipsky's (1980) 'Street Level Bureaucracy' was applied to explore simulated trainee policy enactment. This research uses three methods to elicit data:

- Vignettes containing sexting incidents derived from Wolak and Finkelhor's (2011) study, 'Sexting a Typology', combine vignettes with trainee participant surveys.
- A trainee focus group.

- Semi-structured interviews with participant experts. Text-based thematic analysis identifies emergent themes using Braun and Clarke's (2022) thematic analysis.

Preliminary findings indicate a trainee knowledge gap regarding constructing comprehensive definitions of sexting behaviours and identifying the constituents of AASB. Trainees expressed apprehension concerning encountering AASB pupil disclosures in schools and discussed limited exposure to training and support. Practitioner experts and consultants state that trainees should know who school safeguarding officers are and should be able to use school safeguarding reporting systems confidently. Furthermore, practitioner and consultant experts expect trainees to possess skillsets that support and reassure AASB victims and specifically know how to help and direct pupils regarding removing imagery from the Internet.

The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED, 2021b) identifies the need to address sexually aggressive behaviour in schools. Therefore, the recommendations here stress the need for trainees to experience consistent AASB training. Further findings indicate that current training resources to address AASB and cyberbullying behaviours in schools are inadequate for novice teachers, and this study recommends updating these resources.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This research is situated within a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Northwest England. It explores the specific challenges of preparing secondary school computer science (referred to hereafter as 'computing') trainee teachers (referred to hereafter as 'trainees') to implement safeguarding policy concerning Adolescent Aggressive Sexting Behaviour (AASB) in schools. As part of the training programme to achieve a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), the HEI works in partnership with schools that offer placements to trainees. These placements provide work experience for trainees with children between eleven and eighteen years old, defined in this thesis as 'adolescents'. This specific PGCE training prepares trainees to deliver computing as part of the English National Curriculum (DfE 2014) and requires attending two professional practice placements in educational settings.

### Key Definitions

The following table outlines keywords and definitions used in this thesis.

**Table 1: Terminology used in this study.**

<b>Terminology</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Adolescent	An adolescent is a young person aged between eleven and 18 years old.
AASB	Aggressive Adolescent Sexting Behaviour, exchanging sexualised imagery or communications with sexual content with the intent to intimidate or cyberbully.
The Criminal Justice Act 1988 (CJA) and 2003	This law protects children by providing a framework for prosecuting perpetrators of online aggression.
Computational Thinking Theory (CT)	A theory that addresses ill-structured tasks based on algorithmic, systematic thinking. In computing, this theory has been devised to support complex problems. The theory supports reviewing and decomposing a problem. It then suggests looking for patterns, abstracting important details, removing redundant information, and using algorithmic thinking to develop a solution.

Cyberbullying	The repeated process, over time, of using technology with the intent to harm a person and can include text, pictures, or both.
Dealing with	Is defined as receiving, recording, addressing and processing a disclosure using a referral or administrative system.
Designated Safeguarding Officer or Lead (DSO)	Is the person on the Senior Leadership Team tasked with managing processes and procedures concerning pupil safety and well-being in educational settings.
Device	Portable electronic communications equipment containing applications can access the Internet and capture photographic images or video footage. Examples of devices include smartphones, tablets and smartwatches.
Digital Curation	How adolescents collect and store imagery to document their lives using internet technologies, cameras and storage devices.
Disclosures	Transactions where incident information is exchanged or revealed between two or more parties. Disclosures in this research concern a revelation of adolescent involvement in sexting behaviours, usually to a teacher, in the hope of action to support a pupil.
Dynamic imageries	Film clips or animations containing movement.
GB	Great Britain: England, Scotland and Wales
Higher Education Institute (HEI)	An institution that offers post-graduate training and qualifications for teachers to practice professionally in English secondary schools.
Imagery	Pictures depicting sexting activity, including static or dynamic images in film clips, animations or photographs.
Initial Teacher Training (ITT)	A programme of study conducted in a higher education institution that facilitates a person's acquiring Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
International Bureau for Education	An organisation that belongs to UNESCO that aims to produce curricula that fulfil the requirements of trainees and society.
Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)	An annually published government policy document that provides directives to schools regarding educational safeguarding policy and practice.
Music Television (MTV)	A terrestrial broadcasting channel where music videos are broadcast to the general public.
Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT)	A person who has completed their teaching qualification and is in their early career stage, having been employed as a teacher in school for less than two years. This is an essential phase because teachers may be subjected to heightened scrutiny during this period. They may make mistakes during probationary periods in important areas such as safeguarding procedures.
Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)	A government body responsible for inspecting schools and publishing reports and research regarding educational standards in schools.

The Protection of Children Act (PCA, 1978)	This law legislates to keep children safe and contains legislation concerning the engagement of children in harmful activities, including sexual activity and photographic or filming activity which involves pornography.
Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)	A higher education qualification delivered in conjunction with universities and schools that qualifies teachers to work towards obtaining qualified teacher status (QTS) in England.
Positively Perceived Sexting Behaviours (PPSB)	Sexting behaviour is not generally perceived as being positive. However, there are aspects of sexting behaviours that are experimental in nature and may involve sending nude photographs that can be used for formulating close personal relationships without the risk of pregnancy. Similarly, such behaviours are conducted to explore sexualised behaviours consensually.
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	A government recognised qualification that demonstrates a person has met conditions which enable them to practise as a teacher in an English state school.
Revenge pornography	Transmitting sexualised imagery obtained consensually during a relationship. The imagery is then disseminated, without the consent of the subject (person) of the image. The intention is to hurt or humiliate the subject of the image and generally occurs as the result of a relationship.
Safeguarding	Refers to the protection of an adolescent from physical and mental harm. Often, it involves adhering to an institutional policy-led processes and procedures.
Sexting behaviour	The creation and transmission of electronic messages or images, including nude, semi-nude, provocative, or sexually suggestive imagery.
Transitional Safeguarding Theory (TST)	A theory concerning behaviours relating to specific developmental stages of adolescents suggests behaviours, emotions, and physical developmental issues and risks.
UK	United Kingdom: Generally referring to England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales combined.
UKCCIS	The United Kingdom Council for Child Internet Safety is a professional body that researches, creates policies, and lobbies the government to protect children from potential online harm.
UNESCO	A specialised agency of the United Nations for education, sciences and culture that produces data to improve the human condition.
Upskirting and Downblousing	Voyeuristic behaviour that involves using smartphone technology to capture imagery of underwear, breasts, or genitalia surreptitiously. The purpose of this behaviour is to create an image repository that may be used for personal reasons or redistribution. The intention behind dissemination is often for bullying, coercion, or humiliation.

Sexting behaviour is currently defined by the United Kingdom Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS, 2017, p.6) as ‘the production or sharing of sexual photos and videos.’ Sexting involves sending or receiving imagery or text messages that reference sexual behaviour generally using personal devices. Aggravated sexting behaviour was identified by Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) as a type of sexting behaviour ‘which involves additional criminal or abusive elements beyond the creation, sending or possession of youth-produced sexual images’. This research has expanded upon Wolak and Finkelhor’s (2011) ‘aggravated definition’ and adopted a new categorisation of sexting behaviour entitled ‘Aggressive Adolescent Sexting Behaviour (AASB)’. This new category encompasses the intentions behind the sexting transactional exchange, which may be generally to intimidate, humiliate, coerce or bully persons who are aged between eleven and eighteen years old (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019). The acronym AASB also references the transaction content that may include imagery depicting sexual activity, that could be obtained, retained and used as a personal collection for displaying, sending or receiving purposes. Collating sexual imagery of adolescents has legal connotations, which are further discussed within this thesis.

### **Positional Statement**

As a course leader and safeguarding lead, employed by several institutions throughout my teaching career and prior to conducting this research, I am concerned about the impact adolescent sexting behaviour has on teachers. Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED, 2021a) report that the transition of sexting behaviours from an entertainment activity to a form of bullying and aggression has significantly impacted the workload of teachers who are pastoral leaders in schools. As a safeguarding lead in a school, I recall encountering AASB for the first time and have observed over many years the devastating consequences of this

behaviour on young people. When commencing this research, my position provided me with opportunities to influence the training and preparation of new entrants to the teaching profession. As a safeguarding professional, I have been in a privileged position with access to colleagues who have shared their insights and understanding of AASB. In my findings, I hope to explore the current experience of trainees and the professional expectations held by selected safeguarding experts concerning regarding safeguarding policy implementation when addressing disclosures of AASB from pupils in school.

The Government's Department for Education [DfE] explicitly require newly qualified computing teachers (NQTs) to deliver both the 'Digital Literacy' (DfE, 2014) and 'Relationships' curricula (DfE, 2019) as part of their teaching remit in schools. They are legally required to educate adolescents concerning online behaviours and 'should know how to report concerns' (DfE 2019, p.93; 2021a, p.2).

## **1: Aims and Rationale for this Study.**

### **1.1.1: Aims**

This research has three overarching aims:

- To capture how trainees currently understand and define sexting behaviours.
- To capture how trainees currently plan to respond to AASB behaviours.
- Establish professional expectations for trainees regarding implementing safeguarding policy and how they should respond when they receive information (disclosures) regarding AASB as part of their professional role in schools.

### **1.1.2: Rationale**

This research provides an opportunity to support safeguarding colleagues, by reviewing the preparation and guidance offered to Initial Teacher Training (ITT) trainees, exploring if changes are required to current safeguarding training regimes. My research specifically examines the preparedness of trainee computing teachers to fulfil their professional obligations (DfE, 2014) to respond to received reports (disclosures) regarding pupil online behaviours. Disclosure reports may include communications that could contain sexual images of a child, which could have been used for aggressive purposes, including bullying or humiliating a pupil. These transactions are referred to hereafter as AASB disclosures. AASB disclosures are categorised in schools as technology misuse (Ahern and Mechling, 2013; Chalfen, 2009), and may include photographic evidence of sexual behaviours created by pupils, which is illegal and classified by *The Protection of Children Act (PCA, 1978)* as child pornography (Imagery may be created using a combination of smartphone camera technology and peripherals such as selfie sticks. Imagery may be transmitted by accessing the internet and using social media to share images. Smartphone technology has created opportunities for pupils to film many aspects of their own and others' lives, including sexual experiences (Campbell and Choudhury., 2012; Stoilova et al., 2020;). My tacit experience has shown that disclosure events can include reports, mainly from victims, and less frequently from perpetrators. AASB activity and the legal implications are discussed further in the literature review.

A wealth of literature discusses generalised adolescent classroom behaviour issues that trainees may encounter in school environments. Bennett (2020), Cowley (2014) and Rogers (2015) discuss how to respond to generalised classroom behaviours, sharing theoretical

underpinnings and providing practical directives for trainees. However, I am explicitly exploring trainee preparedness for receiving and actioning disclosures of online AASB. AASB may impact classroom behaviours, but addressing such behaviour may differ significantly from general classroom behaviour management, and is discussed in fewer research publications (Chalfon, 2009; Hollis and Belton, 2017; UKCCIS, 2017; Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011).

### **1.1.3: Context**

Computing is a relatively new subject area compared to other core curriculum subjects. It was first introduced in 1982 and then reframed as 'Computer Science' in the school curriculum as a core subject in 2014 (DfE, 2014). The DfE requires computing trainees to 'address technology misuse' as part of the 'Digital Literacy' curriculum delivery requirements from the National Curriculum (DfE 2014, p.232). Digital literacy lessons may lead to pupils seeking help from the computing teacher as a potential consequence of classroom AASB presentations and subsequent discussions, as part of the computing curriculum.

Recently, OFSTED (2021) released statistical data suggesting that previously reported statistical data concerning prevalence rates for sexting behaviour are inaccurate, and that this behaviour is more prolific in schools than previously thought. Reports of AASB frequently appear in the tabloid media, where this behaviour's prevalence and prolific nature are reported. Recent media attention from the 'Me Too' (Burke, 2021) and 'Everyone's Invited' (Sara, 2021) campaigns correspond with supporting evidence presented by OFSTED that suggests AASB may be prolific and problematic in schools (OFSTED, 2021). Ofsted (2021) believe this adolescent aggression culture could be symptomatic of a prevalent rape culture

in schools. These publications provide evidence of the prolific nature of sexual aggression in schools and support my personal belief that changes are necessary to the current ITT provision.

It has been difficult to locate literature that explicitly addresses or guides trainee teachers regarding their responsibilities concerning the practicalities or legalities of responding to sexting behaviours in school. Bowkowski et al. (2016) attribute this oversight to a suggestion that schools believe adolescent sexting incidents occur outside school premises and involve smartphones, social media and internet technologies provided by parents or carers. However, a recent report (OFSTED, 2021) conducted in 2020 in thirty-two schools, interviewed 900 adolescents, presented evidence advising behaviours are happening in schools and suggested that prevalence statistics are underestimated in academic literature. OFSTED (2021) also suggest that prevalence rates for the creation and dissemination of sexual images of adolescent girls are as high as 73% for girls, and the creation of imagery occurs without consent and on school premises. These statistics align with my safeguarding experience and information obtained from discussions with school safeguarding colleagues before undertaking this research. These reports suggest that there are potential risks for teachers receiving AASB disclosures to become exposed to digitally curated child pornography, which they could inadvertently transmit, as evidence of imagery being used as a digital weapon via school systems (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017; Calvert, 2009).

This risk exposure poses a significant and sensitive problem to schools. If mishandled or addressed without strict adherence to school policy, such imagery can have legal repercussions for teachers. Teachers who fail to heed legal and policy guidance, and share imagery carelessly amongst staff may lose their jobs, be barred from teaching and be

imprisoned for the criminal offence of distributing child pornography which is contained in the *PCA (1978)*. Therefore, trainee teachers may be required to know how to respond correctly to protect themselves and adolescents in their pastoral care from engagement in criminal activity.

Bullying and intimidating AASB technology misuse can adversely impact computing classroom behaviours (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019; Lokkeberg et al., 2021; Powell et al., 2019). Pupil victims may become withdrawn, reluctant to participate in lessons (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019; Beer et al., 2019; Hu, Clancy et al., 2023) and may experience severe mental health episodes (Ahern & Mechling, 2013).

Pupil power manifestations, dynamics and peer punishment mechanisms have Foucauldian theoretical foundations (Foucault, 1977). Foucault (1977) references the teacher as representing a cleric, and the oppressed victim (the adolescent) being mentally tortured by their peer, seeking the sanctuary of the teacher to help them. It may be the pupils' expectation that teachers can direct them towards help, refuge, and possibly resolve online behaviour issues, including AASB, in school. However, trainees may find discussing pupils' online sexual activity uncomfortable and challenging due to embarrassment or uncertainty surrounding managing such behaviours. Equally, pupils may find it difficult to disclose online sexualised behaviours to teachers as they may be embarrassed (Buren and Lunde., 2018).

Trainees are contractually obliged to accept disclosures (OFSTED, 2021) and should be prepared to address disclosures appropriately and professionally. Therefore, it is essential to examine their training for receiving and actioning AASB disclosures, to identify if changes in ITT preparation are required to equip trainees for future professional engagement in safeguarding incidents.

Currently, university safeguarding training addresses the issues of physical harm, health and safety, bullying, abnormal behaviours, and policy implementation regarding health and safety in school. However, training does not address online behaviours, including AASB. This research explores trainee understanding of safeguarding policy related to AASB disclosures.

## **1.2: What is Known about Aggressive Sexting Behaviours?**

### **1.2.1: Sexting Historical Context**

Sexting refers to the concatenation of the words 'sex' and 'texting,' which describes mobile phone activity before 2004. After this time in 2010, technological advances integrated camera functions into mobile phone capabilities, enabling the creation, storage, and transmission of photographic imagery. Some references to the term 'Sexting' emerged from the Australian media in 2005 (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017; Gasso et al., 2019; Walker et al., 2013). Court proceedings referenced mobile phone text message exchanges referencing sexual behaviour. However, Rosenberg (2012) disputes these origins and claims that sexting terminology originated in Canada, where telephone correspondence between an English footballer and his assistant contained sexual references.

AASB has many facets and differs from other sexting behaviours that are explained further in the literature review. However, generally, AASB may be conducted without the consent of the subject (person or pupil) of the imagery, often with the intent to humiliate and bully the victim, which are generally, but not exclusively, directed towards girls. (Jandric, et al., 2023). AASB can be highly distressing to the victim as this type of bullying often involves many peers within the victim's peer group, which may amplify the emotional distress experienced by the victim (DfE, 2021). AASB perpetrators may become powerful oppressors in the classroom,

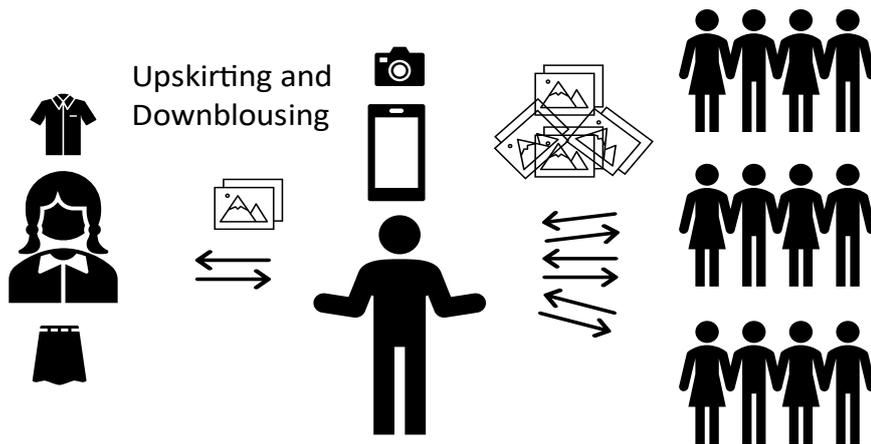
displaying dominant and coercive personality traits to manifest power, effectively torturing their victims (Beer et al., 2019; Foucault, 1977).

Teachers use policy-driven classroom behaviour management techniques to manage pupil power manifestations in the classroom. Behaviour policies can direct teachers to use tools that include seating plans, controlled classroom entry, classroom behaviour agreements and teacher-controlled discussions. However, power manifestations from AASB activity may include pupils breaking classroom rules by directing humiliating comments towards a victim that generate fear (Beer et al., 2019). Therefore, AASB may impact classroom behaviour and dynamics by creating a stifled and oppressive classroom culture, which teachers must manage. School behaviour recording systems and observation of classroom behaviours may also identify behaviour patterns from oppressors, which can support teachers in helping pupil victims who experience intimidation. These behaviour recording systems provide data on classroom interactions, facilitating an investigation that may lead to pupil disclosure.

### **1.2.2: Sexting and Voyeurism**

The DfE (2020) updated the national safeguarding policy in response to voyeuristic sexting behaviour referred to as 'Upskirting' or 'Downblousing' (DfE, 2020, p.10). Voyeuristic behaviour, a form of AASB, primarily targets females (OFSTED, 2021). Upskirting and Downblousing imagery can be surreptitiously created or acquired without the knowledge of the person or subject of the image (Naezer and Van Oosterhoote, 2020; Powell, 2010). Evidence suggests that 'Upskirting and Downblousing' illustrated in Figure 1 can occur on school premises as imagery backgrounds show corridors and classrooms (DfE, 2020) that demonstrate AASB happening during school lessons. Schools are in loco parentis and cannot

deflect their safeguarding responsibilities to pupil AASB victims.



**Figure 1: Distributing Upskirting and Downblousing Imagery**

Peripherals, such as selfie sticks, provide smartphone operators with opportunities to extend voyeuristic behaviours, which include taking advantage of shorter skirts and open-neck blouses to photograph genitalia and breasts underneath school uniforms. These fashion trends create opportunities for perpetrators to capture voyeuristic imagery that could perpetuate ‘the rape culture issue’ that OFSTED (2021a, p.6) state are prevalent in schools, and may create engendered blame cultures (Sara, 2021).

Effectively, uniform policies, documents produced by the governing body, that stipulate expected dress codes for pupils attending school. Uniform policies include information such as the type of uniform, length of skirts, and how to wear a blouse or polo shirt. Where relaxed approaches to enforcing uniform policy exist, pupils may follow fashion trends to wear shorter skirts or not button blouses up to the top. Adopting a relaxed approach to uniform can lead to female pupils exposing cleavage and, in certain circumstances, revealing underwear. Relaxed uniform policies should not be utilised to deflect from the issues surrounding AASB. Reinforcing the dress code and attributing blame to the pupil victim could be an attempt by

the school to absolve themselves from their legal responsibilities towards protecting pupils. Some schools have suggested that adherence to the uniform policy could prevent an incident, thus creating a blame culture.

Blame culture can be a widely adopted approach, whereby persons reporting incidents, instead of being supported as victims, are seen as contributing to the incident by aspects of their actions and accountable (scapegoating) for perpetrator voyeuristic behaviour. Scapegoating has biblical origins in Leviticus (16:10), where the blame for behaviours is wrongly placed to expedite addressing an issue. Anecdotally, apparel has been widely used to perpetuate blame culture; for example, if a woman dresses provocatively, she may attract unwanted attention and consequences, which may be viewed as unsympathetic. School uniform policies may perpetuate scapegoating and blame cultures by implying that female victims of AASB, Upskirting and Downblousing activities are accountable for their victimisation (Angelides., 2013) because of their apparel. Some schools use blame culture to attempt to absolve themselves from their responsibilities to keep children safe, using uniform policy to provide a defence mechanism, which victimises a young person twice. Effectively, perpetrators would be unable to acquire such imagery if a young person conformed to school policy and wore a longer skirt or buttoned up her blouse.

Legally, both the *PCA (1978)* and the *Criminal Justice Act (CJA, 2004)* classify pupil voyeuristic behaviours as sexualised activity, which now includes AASB, as criminal behaviour. Additionally, the *Voyeurism Act (2019)* clearly outlines the law regarding perpetrators who surreptitiously acquire voyeuristic sexualised imagery of adolescents by defining voyeurism as a criminal offence. Furthermore, it is also a criminal offence to operate equipment, which includes enabling, securing, or activating equipment, to capture sexualised imagery of

another person without that person's knowledge or consent. For example, using a motion-activated camera and can result in perpetrators being placed on the Sexual Offenders Register (Conroy and Tipping, 2021). Consequently, teachers may be required to seriously consider consequences when receiving reports of pupil voyeuristic behaviour (AASB) to prevent pupils from acquiring a criminal record.

Recent OFSTED publications (OFSTED, 2021a; 2021b) reiterated school responsibilities for appropriately actioning safeguarding disclosures regarding AASB and assumed that sexting behaviours occur in schools regardless of whether or not reports are received. This responsibility further justifies this crucial research to examine trainees' preparedness to respond to AASB disclosures, and professional practitioner expectations.

### **1.3: Current Knowledge Expectations of Professional Practitioners**

Taught sessions delivered in schools contain information and advice regarding online behaviours and staying safe online, including adolescent AASB. Digital literacy lessons should involve pupil discussion, which may lead to AASB disclosures, and trainees must define sexting behaviour to deliver such lessons. Therefore, trainees must understand the constituents of sexting behaviours from the perspectives of both online behaviours and coercive relationships (DfE, 2019). The omission of AASB from ITT curricular training may leave trainees unable to effectively identify AASB or manage sexting disclosures in their subsequent professional teaching practices and future careers. My research, therefore, explores the extent of their current knowledge and preparation to receive and action AASB as they prepare to embark on professional careers as newly qualified teachers (NQT).

To support understanding of disclosures, trainees need to identify when disclosures may occur within the school day. Schools structure days into segmented time allocations similar

to the monastic structures discussed by Foucault (1977). Generally, school commences with pastoral processes, including registration to capture attendance and other pupil data. Time may then be allocated for communications between the form tutor and the pupils for school announcements or directives. During pastoral periods, teachers must address concerns with pupils by receiving information from pupils or addressing issues regarding pupil behaviour, which may arise from various sources. Often, time allocated to pastoral duties can be insufficient; teachers may be required to schedule time to listen to pupil disclosures. This can be through a meeting during break or after classes have concluded.

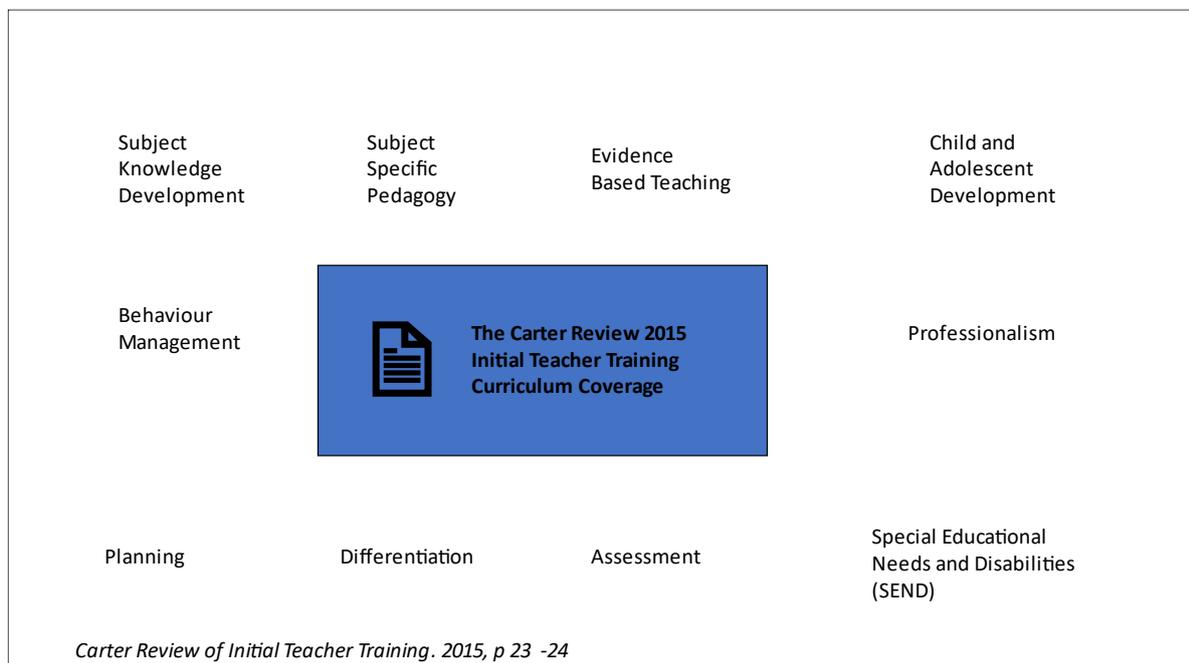
From personal tacit experience, disclosure events generally occur at the beginning of a lesson or more frequently after a lesson has concluded when pupils stay behind specifically to disclose information to the teacher. However, in computing lessons, pupils engage in peer discussions during lesson activities, and teachers can overhear conversations that disclose safeguarding concerns. Digital literacy safeguarding topics can also be discussed in lessons, which may reveal online AASB activity. These conversations require follow-up events and documentation, which add to the teacher's workload. Therefore, examining the ability of trainees to define sexting behaviours (AASB) and exploring trainee plans to address and follow up on AASB disclosures may expose training deficits which result in the need for amendments to the current PGCE ITT training regime, to ensure trainees can correctly identify and accurately report pupil activity.

#### **1.4: PGCE Teacher Training Curriculum and the Carter Review (2015)**

The university training schedule for postgraduate secondary school trainee teachers spans eleven months. The training period includes school experience, training events, and university-delivered curriculum content. The course concludes in July and awards a

Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The trainee school experiences are organised into two placements called 'Professional Practice'. Placement one involves observing classroom practice, and placement two involves intense exposure to larger teaching quotients devised to emulate qualified teacher workloads.

The university-based ITT curriculum consists of academic input influenced by the Carter Review (2015), as illustrated in Figure 2 below. Carter (2015) identified ten critical areas for inclusion in the ITT curriculum content, which university management consider to be a high priority in training regimes. However, it can be seen in Figure 2 that safeguarding and pupil technology use are not featured in Carter's (2015) ITT curriculum content and, therefore, are may not be considered a current ITT priority.



**Figure 2: The Carter Review and the ITT Curriculum Content**

The emphasis on Carter's (2015) ten curriculum areas limits the amount of curriculum time available to address the issues concerning safeguarding and adolescent sexting. However, sexting impacts many areas of the Carter Review (2015), such as behaviour management,

child and adolescent development and professionalism. Furthermore, the review omits references to critical issues regarding pupil technology misuse, the impact on classroom behaviour, and the subsequent pupil safeguarding implications. Carter's (2015) review also ignores Byron's (2008) recommendations for addressing online safety, and this omission is concerning. The Byron Review (2008) placed pupil behaviours, safeguarding and technology misuse as a significant priority for teachers.

The failure of the Carter Review (2015) to acknowledge the impact of AASB and other technology-related pupil online behaviours has significantly contributed to gaps in the current ITT safeguarding curriculum provision in England. The current safeguarding curriculum focuses on teachers' legal responsibilities to children to ensure trainees understand their legal obligations towards protecting adolescents from physical harm, neglect, and abuse and be vigilant in noticing manifestations of harm in the classroom. The Carter Review's (2015) oversight and failure to address the impact of pupil online behaviour in the classroom has resulted in missed opportunities to contribute to current preparations for future teachers' understanding of the more comprehensive safeguarding curriculum. Carter's oversight of online behaviours, particularly AASB, has been one of the catalysts for this research.

The current ITT safeguarding curriculum content prepares trainees to create safe classroom environments, including behaviour management and raises awareness of the law and professional duties of care. Safeguarding curriculums should be 'continually reviewed.' (Littler, 2020) To reflect societal changes and prepare teachers for policy engagement. There are synergies with other professional training regimes regarding safeguarding curriculum frameworks, as Littler (2020) and Cocker (2020) that reference a requirement for standards in safeguarding curriculum development in nurse and social work training, respectively. Littler

(2020) devised a framework (Figure 3) that outlines a curriculum which could be adapted as a framework for transdisciplinary use, including ITT. There are references in this framework to educational safeguarding expectations, which include documentation and policy processes. However, the Littler (2020) safeguarding recommendations, if adopted as a transdisciplinary framework, would require further adaptations to address online behaviours that align with UKCCIS (2017) and OFSTED (2021) educational expectations, particularly for pupil online behaviours and AASB.

Adolescent Safeguarding Curriculum Framework → Safeguarding Children and Young People Intercollegiate Document (RCN 2019). ↓	What (Biological, Psychological and Social)	How (ALS, SBL, PBL, Reflection)	Why (Knowledge, Skills, Values and Attitudes, NMC Code of Conduct (2015).
<b>Knowledge/Education &amp; Training:</b>			
Understanding Child Development/Perinatal MH/Public Health.	X	X	X
Awareness of abuse and neglect and factors associated with maltreatment.	X	X	X
Legal/ethical and professional responsibility/record keeping/Caldicott Principles.		X	X
Child Death Review/Children and Young People's Best Interests.		X	X
Needs of Children on Child Protection Plans, Care Leavers, Youth Offending, Looked after children.	X	X	X
Risk Factors associated with trafficking, Sexual Exploitation, FGM, Grooming and Terrorism/Radicalisation.	X	X	X
<b>Skills:</b>			
Document safeguarding concerns and share relevant information between teams.	X	X	X
Able to identify further support is needed and escalate concerns appropriately.	X	X	X
Able to document and code when a child is not brought to a health appointment and identify repeated patterns.		X	X
<b>Values/Attitudes:</b>			
Recognise how own beliefs, experience and attitudes might influence professional involvement in safeguarding work.	X	X	X

**Figure 3: Safeguarding Curriculum for Royal College of Nursing (Littler, 2020)**

Currently, university safeguarding training sessions consist of materials delivered from a social worker and a legal expert perspectives. The sessions are devised to alert trainees to physical extremes of cruelty and pupil neglect. Follow-up sessions aim to identify how

extremes of neglect may appear in subject classroom areas, and review the relevant school frameworks to address neglect and cruelty. When trainees attend their first placement, adolescent classroom behaviours are observed, which present opportunities to reflect upon encounters with safeguarding and general classroom behaviour management issues. Issues such as engaging with generalised policy directives and managing low-level disruption are considered. However, policies regarding online behaviours and AASB may need to be addressed at this stage in the education ITT safeguarding curriculum, as they are not thought to directly influence classroom teaching. In my opinion, this is a serious oversight as it is well documented that online behaviours significantly impact classroom behaviours (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019).

Adolescent sexualised behaviours are currently presented to trainees during specific lectures delivered in January. These lectures use a film clip of an adolescent party where underage drinking, peer pressure and sexual activities are the focus of the presentation. However, this lecture and the accompanying seminars do not address smartphone technology misuse or issues surrounding adolescents filming sexual activity. This lecture misses opportunities for trainees to consider adolescent technology misuse and the criminality of collecting and sharing imagery among peers. Sexting behaviours are briefly discussed in a lecture about 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2019). However, ITT does not currently address how teachers should respond to adolescent sexting, online aggression, technology misuse or online bullying. This omission leaves the trainees vulnerable and unaware of their legal responsibilities regarding handling pupils' personal devices that may contain child pornography. Devices in this context are hand-held portable electronic communications tools that provide the facility to access software applications and the internet and capture photographs and film footage such as smartphones. Some personal devices can also track and

trace the movements of individuals, which may be concerning for some young people and can facilitate harassment, which can lead to disclosure events.

### **1.5: School Policy and School Settings**

This section discusses school policy enactment and how local education authorities devise policies and guidelines to inform and support the actions of school staff at local levels to comply with government guidelines.

From personal experience, schools operating within the same local authorities or Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) adapt centralised policies to create documents bespoke to the school and address individual school circumstances. Legislation (*PCA, 1978*) mandates that schools have legal responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Safeguarding policies create frameworks for this legal responsibility and contain directives which should direct school employees when responding to safeguarding incidents. School leadership teams develop these directives with their governing bodies and align their documents with local authorities and government policies, using policy adoption processes. These processes involve reviews and approval by school governing bodies legally responsible for protecting children in their charge and complying with government directives. Schools also disseminate policy requirements through staff training and guide the application of localised school policies. MATs formulate central core policies that may have additional localised policy addendums for each school belonging to the trust. The University collaborates with academies and local authority-governed schools, and trainees are required to operationalise safeguarding procedures encountered in all school settings. The diverse nature of schools policies impedes offering a one-size-fits-all safeguarding policy training initiative.

School staff and trainee adherence to school safeguarding policies are imperative. Staff are professionally legally obligated and accountable to the headteacher and governing body for policy enactment (DfE, 2010). They must demonstrate that they act within prescribed guidance provided by school policy frameworks. However, when safeguarding policy does not contain clear directives and guidance, policies are open to misinterpretation, and issues can arise from adolescent behaviour anomalies which may occur.

Adolescent behaviours differ from those of adults as they are forming their identities. (Bobkowski et al., 2016) and prone to risk-taking behaviours (Heugler and Ruch, 2021; Hollis and Belton, 2017; Setty, 2020;). Risk-taking can involve experimental behaviours and participation in behavioural trends that may be harmful (Megías-Roble et al., 2022). These behavioural trends can include radicalisation (Farrell, 2016). Alternatively, experimental sexualised behaviours may include new online applications or software features (Bianchi et al., 2017). Recent examples of online trends include media applications such as 'TikTok™' or 'Snapchat™'. Adolescents may be aware of the operational software features but are unaware of how the software works or the implications of using the software, such as user agreements. Snapchat™, the software application, provides tools to capture and transmit an image, but the image can disappear after transmission. Some software applications can override this software, allowing a user to capture a shared image, retain it on a personal device and rebroadcast the image later to an unintended audience, which is an example of a new online behavioural trend.

Teacher policy enactment errors and misjudgments may occur when new behavioural trends are encountered in school. These trends may result in teachers forming personal and subjective interpretations of policy guidelines and acting upon those interpretations

independent of policy guidelines. For example, some trainees may understand software features, such as the ability to capture an image after it has disappeared from a screen. In contrast, other teachers may need to learn how the software works and may be dismissive of pupil reports of AASB. Rivers (et al., 2014) called for teachers to be regularly trained in social media trends and reporting mechanisms to enable them to 'advise young people effectively'. This emphasis on teachers as a support mechanism suggests that school training needs require addressing.

This lack of teacher understanding regarding software features and behavioural trends may lead to personal interpretations of policy guidance and cause policy implementation errors. Such errors may contribute to disparate safeguarding practices in schools that compromise the protection of children and teachers. These errors could be important when a device and software can capture and distribute an image quickly and widely using social media applications. The image may only be visible to most recipients for a short period, however, some recipients may be able to save the image on their devices after the initial transmission transaction. These saved image transactions may not be visible to the subject of the image, and they may be unaware of who has seen it, which can be distressing. Additionally, the subject of the image may be aware of the transmission, but it may no longer appear on their device, consequently, victims may have no proof that an AASB transaction has occurred. Teachers addressing such an incident may need to be made aware of the software features used to facilitate AASB activities and may be unaware that some software has features that enable image curation on personal devices. Victims may experience upset and frustration, when teachers may respond incorrectly due to their lack of knowledge regarding software devices and capabilities and understanding of the relevant policy directives to address this issue (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019).

### **1.5.1: Safeguarding Policy and ITT.**

This section discusses how current training measures have been influenced and how trainees know safeguarding policy in placement schools.

The Teaching Standards (DfE, 2014) require trainees to understand and operationalise safeguarding policy enactment procedures. Therefore, each school placement undertaken by the trainee requires a policy familiarisation process that currently involves using a booklet entitled 'Noticing'. The Noticing booklet directs the trainees through various tasks and encourages them to engage with school policy documents. The booklet tasks are affiliated with different school policies, which enable the trainees to develop their policy knowledge and improve their understanding of policy enactment requirements. Trainees are instructed to complete task activities in the Noticing booklet in school during the two-week placement induction period.

Trainees and schools often overlook completing the 'Noticing' booklet tasks, which can subsequently lead to problems for the trainees when they are required to enact policy as part of their professional responsibilities. This oversight could have severe consequences for trainees responding to behaviour and safeguarding incidents, where clear policy enactment pathways may be prescriptive. Each placement school may have different policy enactment pathways that are essential for their safeguarding procedures, which must be strictly adhered to by teachers as there are legal accountabilities and the potential for the involvement of external agencies.

### 1.5.2: Trainees Locating and Accessing Policy

From my experience, disclosure incidents require familiarisation with policy naming conventions when collaborating with schools, as policies and practices addressing AASB behaviours may differ between schools' settings. UKCCIS (2017) recommend that schools should have discrete sexting policies, but this may not always be the case and may require further exploration beyond this research. Policy naming conventions and acronyms may create confusion and dissonance for school trainees, which may hinder accessing the correct policies. Policies entitled 'E-Safety', 'Safeguarding' or 'Child Protection' may all address the challenges of adolescent online behaviours. However, it may be difficult for trainees to navigate these policies, as they require an underpinning knowledge of where operational directives might be contained within a specific policy.

Safeguarding terminology confusion may arise where definition and policy naming dissonances occur between safeguarding policies in different schools; confusion may arise where terminology and categorisation of behaviours differ. The United Kingdom (UK) Government have previously defined online aggression as a behaviour issue (DfE, 2018). General behaviour policy enactment processes often require collating incident evidence to explain and justify courses of action taken to resolve behaviour issues. However, collating AASB evidence may involve teachers disseminating pornographic imagery of children, which is a criminal offence (*CJA, 1988; 2004; PCA, 1978*), and may involve added complications for trainees when resolving AASB incidents and implementing policy.

Cyberbullying can also be an example of policy naming convention dissonance. Cyberbullying and physical bullying behaviours include acts of aggression that can be interrelated, yet they are separate activities (Beer et al., 2019). However, some schools categorise these behaviours

differently. Cyberbullying may form part of an 'E-Safety' policy, and physical bullying could be part of the 'Acceptable Behaviour' policy in schools. Conversely, the cyberbullying policy may be incorporated into the physical bullying policy or exist independently as a stand-alone document. Capturing what trainees have learnt from their varied experiences in their placement schools may help to establish if they know how to locate, navigate and access policies relating to AASB specifically, despite apparent policy naming dissonances.

### **1.5.3: Disclosures. Policy Enactment and the Impact on ITT**

Specific sexting policy guidance was issued to schools in 2017 by the UKCCIS (2017). This publication prompted personal reflection regarding reviewing the ITT curriculum for computing trainees, particularly regarding the National Curriculum that includes digital literacy (DfE, 2014). Teachers must 'regularly update their knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding' (DfE, 2019, p.35), which provides for AASB annually. However, trainees may misunderstand these safeguarding policy requirements due to the time constraints of the PGCE programme and the timing of safeguarding training in schools. Generally, teachers undertake school safeguarding training before trainee placement in schools early in September. This may limit trainees accessing placement-specific guidance regarding safeguarding training and policy updates during the PGCE training period, depending on the school's provision for safeguarding training.

### **1.5.4: The Reactive Nature of Policy**

Safeguarding policies are dynamic. (Littler, 2020) and are reviewed and updated periodically, typically when a national policy changes. Annual government policy publications (DfE 2018; DfE, 2019; 2020; 2021; 2022; 2023) drive changes in education safeguarding policy. However, studying the history of national safeguarding policy updates has revealed an emergent policy

update process. Figure 4 below illustrates the catalyst for safeguarding policy changes in response to specific incidents (Evans and Keating, 2016). Generally, an event occurs involving a child's death or injury (Evans and Keating, 2016; Firmin, 2020). Subsequent inquiries result in new recommendations for legislation and policy changes (Davies and Ward, 2012). Therefore, the reactive nature of safeguarding policy may be transient, not static, and evolve, as illustrated in Figure 4 below.



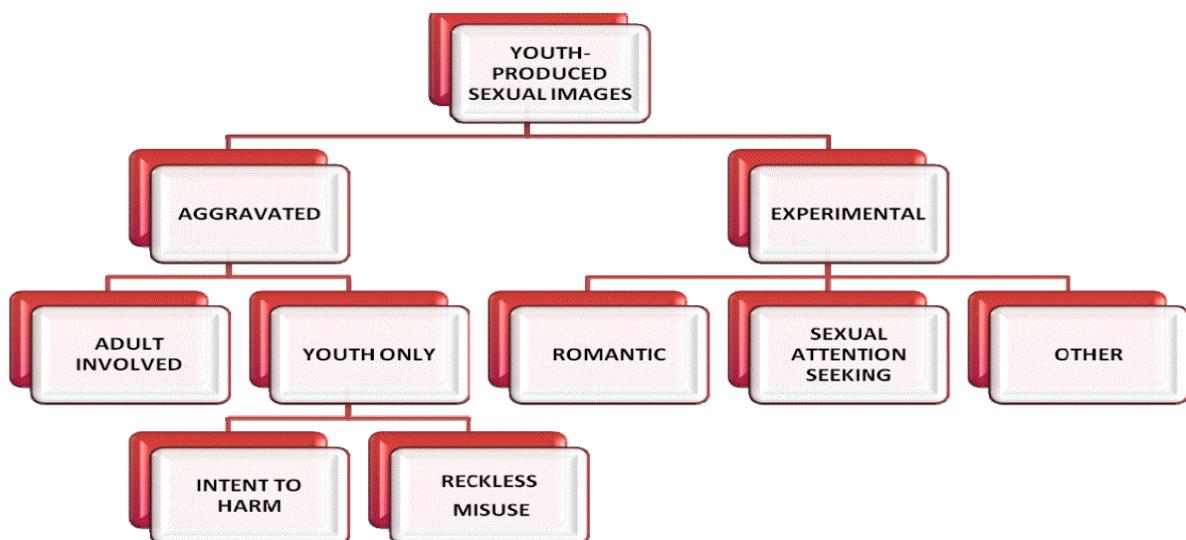
**Figure 4: The Policy Update Pattern** (Evans and Keating, 2016)

### 1.5.5: Sexting Frameworks and the Experts

The UKCCIS (2017) comprises of representations from over two hundred organisations working together to advise government bodies and has charitable status. The Council was formed as a recommendation from the Byron Report (2008) to guide schools regarding children's online behaviours and how they should stay safe online. Byron's (2018) professional guidance summary assumes trainee knowledge of school reporting systems, including references to sexting behaviours and directives regarding disclosures that should be

taken seriously, reported, and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). These policy directives are supported by training materials (UKCCIS, 2017; 2020), which contain information derived from the Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) study of sexting, which has informed this thesis.

Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) reviewed 550 cases of adolescent sexting behaviours from legal reports occurring between 2008 and 2009. Their study contained excerpts from twenty-one sexting incidents, used to illustrate and categorise typical sexting behaviours. The Wolak and Finkelhor study (2011) and the UKCCIS (2017) materials omission from ITT training materials may leave trainees without adequate guidance regarding professional frames of reference for addressing sexting behaviours. Trainees may be unable to recognise or categorise sexting incidents correctly, which may result in AASB being addressed inappropriately in school. This study created an evidence-based typology of sexting behaviours, as illustrated in Figure 5 below, which may help trainees identify AASB.



**Figure 5: Wolak and Finkelhor Taxonomy of Sexting Behaviour**

Recent UKCCIS (2020) guidance also provides updated information for practising teachers regarding disclosures and offers further support by defining sexting imagery as 'nude or semi-nude' (UKCCIS, 2020, p.7) imagery. However, this material does not provide directives for trainee teachers or ITT.

In school settings, DSOs are responsible for addressing AASB, collating details of incidents from received disclosures and deciding appropriate actions; this process is directed by school safeguarding policy. DSOs are essential to this study as some contribute to the ITT provision by providing training regarding professional safeguarding expectations of trainees from the school pastoral teams. The DSO expectations and perspectives concerning safeguarding may be essential to aid understanding concerning how trainees should address AASB.

DSO views have yet to be canvassed from the perspective of researching safeguarding training for new entrants to the teaching profession. The practicalities of professionally addressing AASB behaviours define this thesis as practitioner research in professional practice (Creaton, 2020). Therefore, the Professional Doctorate Framework is appropriate for this research into AASB, ITT and safeguarding awareness.

## **1.6: Emergent Technology and Emergent Adolescent Behaviours**

Smartphones are the preferred personal device of young people (Stoilova et al., 2020) and are used to build close and engaged contact between peers (Kettle et al., 2014). Personal devices possess an exponential capability and capacity to create and store libraries of uncensored sexualised images that may be transmitted liberally among adolescents. This

sexualised data may often be shared across smartphone networks without consent or regard of the consequences for individuals as the subjects of such transmissions.

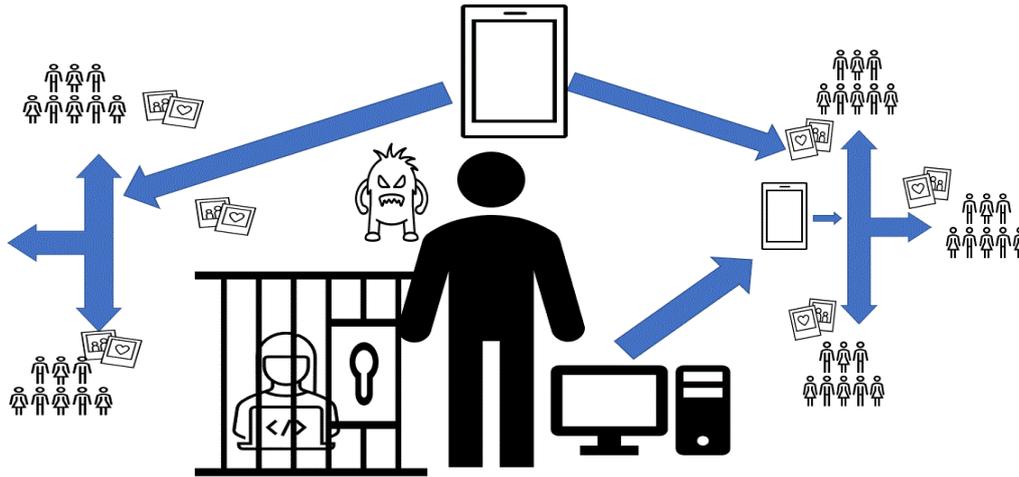
Zani and Cicognani (2006) discuss the convergence of smartphone technology as coinciding with a generational development of experimental adolescent online behaviours, where discoveries about their social world and identities are made. Van Zalk and Monks (2020) discuss the convergence of personal device technical capability with developmental challenges regarding adolescent emotional intelligence. They claim that adolescent emotional intelligence may not be as developed as their knowledge of technology use. Adolescence can be a period of increased risk-taking behaviours, where a heightened appetite for impulsive, novelty-seeking activities may exist (Megías-Robles, et al., 2022). During this adolescent developmental period, the increased emphasis on peer and 'personal relationships' (Jackson and Goossens, 2006, p.206) can be challenging for adolescents to navigate. Media misrepresentations may significantly impact adolescents 'emotional navigation' of reality, particularly concerning sexual behaviours (Smith, et al., 2013).

Baudrillard (1994) presents the notion of 'hyperreality', which glamorises sexualised behaviours within celebrity cultures that can normalise online sexualised self-presentation. Reality television shows use this form of sexualised self-presentation to attract large audiences for income generation purposes, for example, 'Love Island <sup>TM</sup>'. Such broadcast material may be deliberately edited to showcase overtly sexualised behaviours, further perpetuating the hyperreality Baudrillard (1994) describes. Adolescents attempt to emulate these sexualised behaviours to attract attention from their peer groups in their social media presentations, using their personal devices. Adolescents who perpetuate bullying behaviours in hyperreal situations (Baudrillard, 1994) may utilise sexually overt communication to

humiliate victims (Lievens, 2014). Perpetrators are often shielded from the consequences of victim responses to sexually overt communications because of smartphone mediation that protects the perpetrator from exposure to the victim's reactions and distress (Youth and Policing Education Hub, 2018).

The actions described above are forms of bullying behaviours, which are defined as 'repeated negative actions, over time, on the part of one or more pupils' (Olweus, 1993, p.8.). This definition was refined to include 'intentional victimisation' and 'aggression' (Olweus et al., 1999, p.10). Cyberbullying uses the Internet and personal devices to conduct online bullying activities (Beer, et al., 2019; Hinduja and Patchin, 2014), which involve communications devised to repeatedly victimise and intimidate the victim over time (Siegle, 2010). AASB bullying activities rely upon technology to transmit sexualised imagery of the victim, intending to harm or humiliate the victim, which is a form of sexually aggressive bullying (Machackova, et al., 2020; Muncaster and Ohlsson, 2020).

Some adolescents may use coercive bullying techniques to acquire online libraries of peer-sexualised images, intending to raise their social status (Aynsley et al., 2017; Burke, 2021). Figure 6 below illustrates how this coercive bullying process may be driven by smartphone technology, and how such behaviour 'harms the victims' (Savirimuthu, 2012, p.48), often causing significant emotional distress (Gasso et al., 2019; Hinduja and Patchin, 2014; Siegle, 2010). Bullying victims can become locked into a cycles of aggressive victimisation, which was discovered initially by Olweus(1993). The Office of Communications (OFCOM) (2023) report that coercive behaviours may be difficult for victims to escape, whilst the perpetrators perceived social status may increases by the sharing of sexualised imagery



**Figure 6: The Coercive Trap: Repeated Transmissions from Bullying Communications**

Hollis and Belton (2017) cited 4 studies which acknowledged AASB as cyberbullying (Cowie and Colliety, 2010; Hackett et al., 2016; Siegle, 2010; Villacampa, 2017). However, these studies did not discuss preparing novice teachers to address such behaviours, or help to establish colleagues' professional expectations concerning a trainee's ability to address AASB disclosures, which is the aim of this research. AASB disclosures are transactions where pupils may share an account of an incident with a teacher or another person, where sexualised imagery has been exchanged. New teachers may find it challenging to act upon the issues discussed during a disclosure incident because of the sexualised nature of these incidents.

### **1.6.1: Prevalence and Impact of AASB**

Research evidence published by OFSTED and conducted in 32 schools by interviewing 900 adolescents suggests that creating, digitally curating and distributing sexualised imagery is 'prolific in schools' in England (OFSTED, 2021, p.4). The legalities of sexting behaviours are complex and are legislatively addressed in the *PCA (1978)*, which was passed before smartphone technology and adolescent sexting behaviour existed. *PCA (1978)* legislation legally protects children from engagement in sexual activity, which includes filming,

photographing and distributing sexualised imagery. Imagery depicting children engaged in sexual behaviour is classified in law as child pornography and is an illegal criminal activity.

Teachers may become exposed to child pornography as part of an AASB disclosure process because evidence submitted as part of the disclosure process can contain imagery legally defined as child pornography. AASB activities may have caused the Government to reflect upon their definitions of sexual abuse in schools to include AASB behaviours (DfE, 2021b).

Table 2 below illustrates some of the data from this report and further highlights why this research may be essential for ITT. The prevalence statistics presented below further support the rationale for conducting this research. Whilst this research does not aim to establish the prevalence of sexting and AASB activities, this issue will be further discussed in the literature review.

**Table 2: AASB OFSTED 2020 Data from Schools**

Activity	Pupil Prevalence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictures or videos they did not want to see were sent to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 88%</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being put under pressure to provide sexual images of themselves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80%</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictures or videos they send are shared more widely without their knowledge or consent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 73%</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being photographed or videoed without their knowledge or consent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59%</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils who have experienced having pictures or videos of themselves circulated without their knowledge (they did not know about their image being circulated)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 51%</li> </ul>

*Source (OFSTED, 2021)*

### **1.6.2: Categorising Sexting Behaviours to Contextualise AASB.**

There are several reasons why sexting behaviours may occur, which are ‘complex’ (UKCCIS, 2020) and will be discussed further in the Literature Review chapter. Pupils are often reluctant to disclose involvement in sexting activity to teachers, because they may feel concerned or

fearful of peer punishment for disclosing sexting behaviours (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019; De Ridder, 2019; Phippen, 2012). New teachers may be required to clearly understand such implications when addressing sexting behaviour disclosures as they are brought to their attention. Teachers should be able to identify specific sexting behaviours, particularly AASB, and follow safeguarding procedures systematically and professionally so that adolescents are not further victimised (Bradley et al., 2020). Teachers should support adolescents, without jeopardising future investigations (UKCCIS., 2017). Directives for providing specific pupil support for AASB victims, are not included in current UKCCIS (2020) publications and also omitted from current ITT curriculum materials.

### **1.6.3: Computing Teachers and AASB behaviours**

Smartphone technology has enabled pupils to breach or bypass school-security systems, which are designed to protect children. Such breaches facilitate pupil distribution of illegal sexualised images, as smartphone transmissions cannot easily be monitored by the school technical support systems. Computing teachers are required to understand smartphone technology and sexting behaviours as part of the professional mandatory obligations to deliver the National Curriculum (DfE, 2014). This obligation includes educating adolescents regarding the consequences of bypassing school security systems, digitally curating and disseminating sexualised imagery and online bullying behaviours. The 'Relationships Curriculum' (DfE, 2019b) reinforces this expectation and expands these professional obligations beyond computing teachers to other curriculum subjects. The combined influence of the Relationships (DfE, 2019) and Computer Science (DfE, 2014) curricula contain implied, but not explicit, directives regarding addressing online behaviours. This lack of explicit directives, including guidance regarding adolescent sexualised digital imagery curation and

transmission, frustrates the current ITT regime. The absence of directives regarding sexting behaviours from the current National Curriculum (DfE, 2014) and the Carter ITT Review (2015) has resulted in schools offering different computing curriculum interpretations that are difficult to apply within the current ITT provision.

#### **1.6.4: Theoretical Approach to Designing Research Questions**

This research is theoretically underpinned by adapting Papert's (1993) CT theory (Quinlan and Cross, 2020). CT is a 4-part theoretical approach to problem-solving. The first stage is decomposition, which breaks a large problem into smaller parts. The second part applies abstraction principles that support removing unnecessary information to retain crucial elements which aid problem resolution. Information unnecessary to this research has included prevalence, which has briefly been acknowledged in this thesis, but not explored in depth. The third phase directs the researcher to look for patterns in the smaller parts to see if the process can be replicated. The fourth and final phase seeks to apply an algorithm to address resolving the problem.

AASB can be a large, complex, and problematic phenomenon, particularly when considering the application of safeguarding policy in the context of receiving a disclosure. Applying CT to explore an AASB disclosure involves deconstructing the details into smaller parts in order to comprehend the crucial details accurately. These details include the activity, location, distribution and motivation, this information supports establishing the type of sexting behaviour being addressed by the teacher and poses the following questions that have structured this research: -

- Can trainees define sexting behaviour?
- How might trainees plan to respond to encounters with AASB disclosures?

- What are the school's expectations for addressing AASB disclosures?
- How does the government suggest trainees should learn about addressing AASB disclosures?

CT theory has been applied to construct the parts or strands for this research that are identified in Table 3 below. Research questions have been devised by organising the crucial details pertaining to AASB, as identified above.

### **1.6.5: Research Questions**

CT supported identifying three interdependent variables which influenced the development of the research questions, which are listed below:

1. The current knowledge base of AASB behaviours held by trainee computing teachers, after their training period has concluded. This should establish how and if adolescent sexting activity was addressed during training.
2. Ascertaining professional expectations regarding addressing AASB, by asking safeguarding experts what they believe trainee computing teachers should know about addressing AASB before they embark on professional teaching careers. The thesis then explores knowledge gaps between professional expectations and trainee knowledge of AASB. If gaps exist, then adaptations during training may improve a trainee's preparedness to address AASB disclosures.
3. Where and how trainees have acquired their knowledge of AASB and how they currently plan to address AASB.

**Table 3: Research Questions**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Addressed by:</b>	<b>Directed to:</b>
RQ1 How do trainees define sexting behaviours?	Questionnaire and thematic analysis of responses. Review of selected literature.	Trainee Participants (20 participants)
RQ2. How should trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?	Review of selected literature Interviews and thematic analysis of responses.	Participant experts (6 participants) 3 Consultants 3 DSOs
RQ3. How do trainees plan to respond to AASB?	Survey and thematic analysis of responses. Review of selected literature.	Trainee Participants (20 participants) Focus Group (5 participants sub-group)

The safeguarding expert groups are comprised of the following.

- 1 Practitioner experts: These are people employed in schools as DSOs who manage AASB disclosures.
- 2 Consultant Experts: These advise teachers and safeguarding boards as part of their professional responsibilities. They function as consultants to formulate government policy regarding sexting behaviours.

## **1.7: Conclusion**

The publication of OFSTED (2021) data (Table 2 above) and the updates to the National Curriculum (DfE 2014; DfE 2019) may result in increased pupil AASB disclosures in schools. This potential for higher AASB disclosures may result in punitive consequences for teachers if they fail to implement policy guidance correctly. These two factors of raised awareness and the potential for increased pupil disclosure justify this research, which investigates trainees' understanding of safeguarding policy implementation, how trainees currently define sexting behaviour and how they plan to address AASB disclosures. Additionally, this research seeks to establish if professional expectations regarding how to address AASB and align with trainee plans to address AASB.

Trainees may be supported by establishing their personal school experience of professional development regarding AASB, which could identify if ITT curriculum changes are necessary in response to OFSTED’s (2021) current findings. The three areas of AASB, ITT safeguarding training experience and professional expectations regarding implementing safeguarding policy have not previously been researched. Therefore, the findings may help safeguarding professionals to plan their training experiences in school. Table 4 below illustrates how the research questions and sub-questions are linked with the research aims listed in research strands A, B and C. These strands were devised to maintain a focus and organise this research into three distinct and separate strands to address the research questions.

**Table 4: Research Strands, Questions and Sub-questions**

<p><b>Strand A: Trainee Understanding.</b> (RQ1: How do trainee teachers define ‘sexting’ behaviour?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A1. What is the extent of the trainee's knowledge of the variants of AASB amongst eleven–sixteen-year-old school pupils’?</li> <li>• A2. Have trainees been exposed to AASB incidents in schools during their training period?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strand B1: Expert Expectations.</b> (RQ2: How should trainee teachers respond to AASB disclosures?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B1.1a. What are national safeguarding experts’ or consultants' expectations regarding trainees’ preparedness to deal with AASB in school?</li> <li>• B1.1b. What strategies or policies are in place in school to support trainee teachers in learning how to respond to AASB?</li> <li>• 2:1c. How do experts think trainees should respond to disclosures of AASB?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strand B2: DSO understanding.</b> (RQ2: How should trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB disclosures?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B2.1a. What are the DSO’s expectations regarding trainee preparedness to deal with AASB issues in school?</li> <li>• B2:1b. What strategies or policies are in place in school to support trainee teachers in learning how to respond to AASB?</li> <li>• B2.1c. How do DSOs think trainees should respond to disclosures of AASB?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strand C: Policy Disparity/Implementation Issues</b> (RQ3: How do trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• C1. How aware are trainees of current policies to support resolving AASB (at the national, local authority and school level)?</li> <li>• C2. How do trainees plan to use policy to respond to disclosures of AASB?</li> </ul>

Finally, it is essential to identify what training currently takes place regarding AASB disclosures

to establish if ITT curriculum changes are required to respond to the OFSTED (2021) data. This

area of AASB, ITT, and professional expectations regarding the implementation of safeguarding policy have not been explored.

## **CHAPTER TWO: SELECTIVE LITERATURE REVIEW of AASB and SEXTING BEHAVIOURS**

### **2.1: Introduction**

This chapter explores selective peer-reviewed academic literature and government publications regarding addressing and managing sexting disclosures. Selective research literature was read and reviewed, and the information was synthesised (Heyvaert et al., 2017) by applying CT theory (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020). This process involved establishing the literature findings regarding defining sexting and establishing the problems associated with managing sexting disclosures. The literature findings were organised into subtopics (Walsh and Downe, 2004), which were then used to create an overarching picture of the processes involved in defining, addressing, and managing AASB disclosures, paying attention to detail that included the nuances of sexting behaviours. This synthesised approach supports this thesis by addressing the three research questions, defining and breaking them into smaller parts to discuss them systematically. The application of CT theory (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) revealed three interrelated areas: adolescent sexting behaviour definitions, government policies and directives regarding addressing AASB disclosures and the impact of sexting behaviours on the ITT curriculum. This literature review uses CT to structure the research to address the research questions, starting with defining and moving towards suggestions or directives for addressing sexting behaviours aimed at trainees.

As adolescent behaviours and technology are evolving (OFCOM, 2023), safeguarding research in education faces significant challenges, particularly regarding sexting behaviours, adolescent technology misuse and ITT. Contemporary and emergent hardware and software capabilities present opportunities for adolescent online behaviours to evolve (Ahern and

Mechling, 2013; Barrense-Dias et al., 2017 Ojeda and Del Ray, 2021), and these behaviours may present challenges for ITT, teachers and schools managing the behaviour.

This literature review was difficult to conduct due to the many facets of AASB and managing this behaviour. Walsh and Downe (2004) supported this review process by providing a structure to frame and manage the construction of this review process.

## **2.2: Aims of the Review**

It was difficult to locate research exploring AASB or generalised sexting behaviour in an ITT context. Therefore, this synthesised selective literature review adopted themes that align with the research questions and aims listed below.

1. To search academic literature to acquire definitions of sexting behaviour and arrange these definitions chronologically to establish the origins of the term 'sexting.'
2. To define from academic literature characteristics that differentiate aggressive sexting behaviours from other types of sexting behaviours and typify the characteristics of AASB.
3. Identify directives and guidance published in academic literature for teachers regarding how to address AASB in school.
4. To ascertain when the government first became aware of the possibility that children could use technology to share and become exposed to pornographic imagery.

Identifying characteristics of adolescent sexting behaviours may support trainees in establishing aggressive intent in AASB disclosures. The reasons for exploring this type of behaviour have been discussed previously. However, a review of peer-reviewed academic

literature from both a historical and contemporary perspective may provide helpful insights into addressing disclosure.

### **2.3: Synthesised Selective Literature Review Method.**

The COVID-19 SARS virus limited the ability to physically access and retrieve journals from the library facilities. Therefore, the literature searches used various accessible hardware devices from locations remote from the university. To construct this literature review, peer-reviewed journal articles were sourced from several academic research databases that included Scopus, JSTOR, Taylor and Francis Journals, EBSCO, Discover More, Academic Search Premier, Sage Journals, Wiley Research and Elsevier, which contain accessible search features for blind users. Initially, ninety-eight papers were selected for the literature review included in this thesis. Chronologically, these papers ranged between 1985 to 2023 and are included in Table 10 as part of the sexting definition review process.

#### **2.3.1: Academic Literature Search Strategy**

For this review, Gough et al.'s. (2017) literature review strategy has been adopted, which involves:-

- Identifying peer-reviewed journals containing definitions of sexting behaviour.
- Selecting published systematic literature reviews that included adolescent sexting, where the method of conducting the review was clearly stated in the paper. This type of review was identified by reading the paper's abstract and methodology or strategy section.
- Exploring newer studies that use empirical research methods.
- Encoding studies and literature reviews using NVivo to thematically analyse the documents (Braun and Clarke, 2022; Charmaz, 2014)

- Creating summaries of the studies by applying a study skills support strategy called PARTS, which has been adapted from Ellis (1993) and McLoughlin and Leather (2013) that have been devised to support dyslexic adults.

PARTS (Ellis,1993) is an acronym for ‘Perform, Analyse, Review, Think, and State Relationships’. It is a five-phase evaluative method for constructing a literature review. The PARTS evaluation system consists of the following five steps.

- Perform goal setting, which defined whether an article related to the research aims. The goal here involved creating search criteria which located articles that responded directly to the research questions.
- Analyse small elements of the article, such as headings, and try to predict how the article's contents might inform the research questions. When several elements have been collected, synthesise them.
- Review more significant elements, such as introductions or summaries, and find keywords that show the author’s thoughts. Paraphrase the article’s main message and try to link additional information to what is already known.
- Think of questions. Check the questions posed by the article’s questions and then look at how the questions related to the research questions.
- State relationships between the article and the research. How did the article relate to this research and current knowledge?

Searches were conducted between May 2021 and June 2021, with updated searches performed in December 2022 and December 2023 using the databases identified on page forty-nine and the search terms presented in Table 5.

### **2.3.2: Screening**

Gough et al.'s (2013) thematic approach, presented in Table 5, illustrated the database screening process applied to all academic databases and used generic search terms to locate journal articles for inclusion in the synthesised selected literature review. Search themes organised papers into categories, supporting subsequent literature analysis. This grouping also enabled a continuation of this review process for future searches to create a 'Living Review' (Gough et al., 2013, p. 26) and to allow the addition of further publications before the thesis completion, if required.

Generic terms were initially applied to search criteria and included 'Sexting.' Additional keywords further refined the search criteria to locate journal articles which addressed specific areas related to the research questions. For example, 'Sexting' and the additional keywords 'Literature Review' returned ten articles. The search was refined to return three articles, eliminating seven from the search return. This refinement process was repeated throughout the searches to refine the search returns.

Additional keywords and strings are illustrated below in Table five.

**Table 5: Academic Search Terms and Foci**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Generic Search Term Key Words Applied</b>	<b>Specific Search Strings/Terms Applied</b>
Sexting Terminology Literature Review	Sexting and Literature Review	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Teen Sexting	Sexting AND Teens	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Adolescent Sexting	Sexting AND Adolescents	Education, Young Person, and Teenagers
Nudies	Sexting AND Nudies	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Definition	Sexting AND Definition	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Disclosure	Sexting AND Disclosure	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Policy	Sexting AND Policy	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Government Guidance	Sexting AND Government Guidance	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Aggression	Sexting AND Aggression	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Addressing Sexting Behaviour	Sexting AND addressing sexting behaviour	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Consent	Sexting AND Consent	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Downblousing	Sexting AND Downblousing	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers
Upskirting	Sexting AND Upskirting	Education, Young Person, Adolescents and Teenagers

**2.3.3: Excluded Terms**

This thesis has adopted the definition of a child as provided by The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) that legally defined a child as eighteen or younger. Age definition and categorisation are essential as this thesis addresses adolescent behaviour. Government safeguarding policy in England has also adopted the UNCRC (1989) definition in their child safeguarding publications (DfE, 2017; 2018; 2019b; 2020; 2021; 2022; 2023) referenced in this thesis. Terminology, such as child, tweens, juvenile, preadolescent, young adult, student, and pupil, all returned articles that contained data subjects whose ages fell outside the age parameters for adolescents. These terms were excluded from this thesis as they included different age ranges from this research. Excluded age parameters were children

aged ten or younger and adults aged nineteen or older, as these age ranges fall outside the parameters for English secondary education (currently between eleven and eighteen years old).

### 2.3.3: Filtering the Searches

The search filtering process also involved using a combination of age ranges, timescales, and some terminology to ensure the returns from the literature searches met the criteria for inclusion in this selected synthesised literature review. More specific search terms, such as education, adolescents, and teenagers, refined the search returns to align with the three research questions and the literature review aims. A further refinement process allowed the concatenation of search terminology such as ‘Sexting’ and ‘Young People,’ concentrated the search criteria to identify and return articles that more closely align with the research aims. These concatenated search terms and specific term filters are illustrated in Table 6 below.

**Table 6: Initial Filtration Terms**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Generic Search Term Filters</b>	<b>Specific Terms Filters</b>
Policy	Sexting AND School Policy	Education Adolescents and Teenagers
Young People	Sexting AND Young People	Education Adolescents and Teenagers
Upskirting	Sexting AND Upskirting	Education Adolescents and Teenagers
Downblousing	Sexting AND Downblousing	Education Adolescents and Teenagers

Timescale filters applied to the year of publication, filtered articles and improved the searches to return recent relevant publications. Terms such as ‘within the last three years’ yielded 1386 peer-reviewed articles published between 2018 and 2021. Further refinement of timescales

filtered the search returns to 313 peer-reviewed papers published between 2021 and 2023, which concluded the timescale filter for this selective review process.

Duplicate articles returned from search processes were identified and removed using RefWorks™. Further reading reduced the selected literature to 152 peer-reviewed papers published in 4-star journals. Only four of the 152 papers were referred to as critical studies for this thesis, as the 152 authors frequently referenced these four studies in their published papers, which can be seen in Appendix two. Only forty-six of the papers contained the term ‘sexting’ in the paper's title. Table 7 below illustrates the articles returned from applying the filters discussed above to return publications that address the research questions.

**Table 7: Final Filtration Methods for Search Themes**

<b>Filter Criteria</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Total</b>
All Search Terms +Scholarly Peer-Reviewed	Five years	4005
All Search Terms + Scholarly Peer-Reviewed	3 Years	1386
All Search Terms + Scholarly Peer-Reviewed	Last 12 months	313
Duplicates removed	Last 12 Months	152
Sexting in Title	Last 12 Months	46
Critical Studies Referenced in the Papers	No Time Constraints	4

#### **2.3.4: Additional Physical Paper Screening**

Assistive technology supported additional screening, including physically reading journal articles, titles, abstracts, and conclusions to identify if terminology such as ‘Sexting,’ ‘Adolescent,’ ‘Education,’ or ‘Teacher’ featured specifically within articles. The age range of an article's research sample was manually screened to ensure the correct age parameters of between eleven and eighteen-year-olds were for inclusion in this study. This manual screening process established the direct relevance of journal articles and left forty-six core

papers, formulating the basis for this synthesised literature review. The papers were read entirely several times, and the critical studies cited and referenced repeatedly within these core papers were located and added to this literature review. In total, 114 articles were read and contributed to the study. Additional papers, which fell outside the date range of 2018 to 2023, included publications that contributed significantly to the study from both a historical and analysis perspective, as these articles supported the evolution of the term ‘sexting’. Significant papers included the Wolak and Finkelhor study (2011), The Byron Review (2008) and some of the seminal works of Olweus (1973) concerning aggressive bullying. These papers can be seen below in Table 8 and were added to the literature, as authors in the core papers reviewed frequently cited them.

**Table 8: Significant Papers Falling Outside Search Parameters.**

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Byron Review(2008)	Online harms and instigated the setting up of UKCCIS
Byron Review Update (2018)	Reviewed the 2008 update and identified shortfalls and successes from the review
The Wired Report (Rivers et al., 2014)	Included empirical research from children about sexting behaviours
The Harmful Sexual Behaviours Report (Hollis & Belton, 2017)	Referred to sexting behaviours specifically but did not meet the search terms for the filtering process
Harms Experienced Online (Livingstone, 2014)	Cited many times in the selected core papers;
Electronic Media and Violence Report (Ferndon et al., 2009)	Fell outside the age parameters but specifically discussed adolescent sexting activity
Sexting a Typology (Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011)	Cited many times and provided definitions and categories of sexting behaviours
Personality and Aggression (Olweus, 1973)	Identifies adolescent aggressive behaviour traits

A paper analysis exercise was conducted using CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020), which involved further reading and then exporting articles into NVivo™ to organise excerpts of the papers thematically into sets using keywords or nodes. NVivo™ software supported a

process that helped to achieve a more in-depth review by grouping excerpts into themes. This analysis involved listing the papers, assigning them identification numbers, reading and reviewing papers systematically and extracting excerpts. The process eliminated sixteen articles that referenced cyberbullying themes but did not specifically reference sexting behaviours. This analysis resulted in ninety-eight pertinent articles in the synthesised selective literature review. Most of these articles are included in Table 10 in section 2.5 below.

### **2.3.5: Selecting Literature to Guide the Selective Literature Review**

Definitions are necessary for this review because the primary focus of research question one concerns the ability to recognise and define sexting behaviours. Two literature reviews guided this aspect of the review, as they specifically explored literature that reviewed the key terms 'sexting' and 'definition.' These literature reviews are: -

- A. Barrense-Dias et al., (2017)
- B. Handschuh et al., (2018)

Literature review A was Barrense-Dias et al. (2017), who reviewed eighteen journal articles concerning adolescent sexting. These articles specifically explored definitions and included citations from Chalfen (2009, p.258), who defined sexting behaviour as 'the practice of using a camera, and a cell phone to take and send nude (including semi-nude) photographs to other cell phones or Internet sites'. Walker et al. (2013, p.697) provided a less descriptive definition of 'production and distribution of sexually explicit images via communication technologies' that was also included in this review. Barrense-Dias et al. (2017) found that definitions of sexting were misrepresented but did not offer a new description or definition of sexting behaviours.

Literature review B was written by Handschuh et al (2018), who undertook a meta-analysis of six articles. These articles used Lenhart's (2009, p.3) definition of sexting behaviour as 'the creating, sharing, and forwarding of sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images' and Mitchell et al. (2011, p.14) 'sending sexual images' and sometimes sexual texts via smartphones and other electronic devices.

NVivo™ software supported analysing these two papers, and Table 9 below illustrates how the keywords used from these papers to create nodes in NVivo that provided a structure to capture journal content for constructing this review. Excerpts from selected journal articles captured data that specifically addressed the research questions and structured the content of this review.

#### **2.4: Structure of the Literature Review**

The synthesised paper reviewed for this research were structured using themes or 'Nodes' within NVivo, which were assigned labels referred to as tags. The tags were assigned names pertinent to the excerpt captured from within the papers. The tags in Table 9 below supported the organisation of themes and sub-themes, that enabled the construction of relevant literary references for this study. The thematic organisation of excerpts contextualised the exploration of journal article content and addressed the three research questions that supported the construction of this selective literature review which can be seen in Table 9 below.

**Table 9: Keywords NVivo Nodes to Construct this Literature Review**

Prevalence Sexting Definition Gender Impact Risky Behaviour Medium Age Legal Implications School Sexting Activity Implications Preventative Measures Reasons Sample size. Teacher Actions Concerns Parents Disclosure Policy Curriculum Images Theory Teens and Technology Sexualised Behaviour Definitions Sexting distribution Law	Consequences Constituent Victim and Perpetrator Celebrity Events to Help Further Support Electronic Aggression Definition Sexuality Responding Pornography Offline Activity Historical Activity Awareness Method Peer Actions Digital Literacy Safeguarding Pornographic Material or Content Intervention Consent Industry Implications Language Title Perceptions Ethnicity Usage Data Risk Assessment	Dissemination Malicious Intent Adolescent Vignettes Biological Factors Sexuality (2) Peer Support
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The theme ‘Sexting Activity’ contained sub-nodes identified from the literature. For example, the sub-node tag ‘Medium’ revealed the method and technology used to conduct or facilitate the adolescent sexting activity. The sub-node ‘Medium’ included further sub-nodes such as ‘Smartphone,’ ‘Social Media,’ or ‘the Internet,’ which emerged from reading the articles. Tagging and using sub-nodes enabled a more profound analysis, which captured sub-categories within categories that deepened understanding of a term.

Initially, this review explored definitions of sexting behaviours using selected peer-reviewed literature to inform research question one, which was to define sexting behaviours. Disclosure reports may require further elaboration, which should involve clear, concise descriptions and categorisations of pupil sexting activity, noted by the teacher, which describes the sexting

behaviour accurately using standardised vocabulary to define behaviour for consideration in future safeguarding disclosure reports. The node tagged 'Sexting Definition' captured how the selected literature defined specific types of sexting behaviours, which could inform the standardised vocabulary used for reporting sexting behaviours.

A further example of how tagging and sub-nodes have supported the construction of this review is the node entitled 'Reasons,' which captures why adolescents may engage in sexting behaviours. The 'Reasons' node contains sub-nodes that capture article excerpts regarding behaviours such as coercion, bullying and peer pressure associated with AASB. The node 'Prevalence' enabled the collation of statistical data regarding adolescent engagement in sexting activity. The school policies discussion was informed by key nodes that included 'Schools,' 'Curriculum,' 'Disclosure,' 'Policy,' 'School Staff,' and 'Teacher Actions' which captured policy directives relating to AASB resolution. Collectively, the literature captured within these nodes addressed research question two: 'How should trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB disclosures?' The literature identified specific guidance for teachers regarding managing disclosures of sexting behaviours in secondary schools, which could be adapted to train and prepare computing trainees to address AASB.

This review also explored government policy directives regarding AASB and teacher directives that identified government awareness of potential issues surrounding adolescent exposure to sexualised online imagery and how policy evolved from that point. Finally, the literature review analysed further guidance to support teachers with curriculum delivery and educating adolescents regarding sexting behaviours. Trainee teachers could use this material to improve their understanding of addressing AASB with pupils as part of the obligations of the digital literacy curriculum.

## **2.5: Defining Sexting Behaviours and Aggressive Adolescent Sexting Behaviour (AASB)**

This section reviewed the articles to explore current, historical, and evolutionary aspects of sexting behaviours. The intention was to define the characteristics of aggressive sexting behaviours based on the peer-reviewed articles.

### **2.5.1: Preliminary Definitions that Support Understanding Sexting Behaviours.**

Initially, the aim was to establish a comprehensive shared academic definition of sexting behaviour and its constituents. However, academic terminology affiliated with defining sexting behaviours also requires precise definitions. Several research papers outline problems with defining sexting behaviour and describe the complexity of attaining a widely accepted definition of sexting (Hertz and Ferdon, 2008; Strohmaier et al., 2014; Walker et al., 2013;). This research primarily concerns trainee teachers, schools, and adolescent behaviours. Therefore, my research presents definitions below to clarify the terminology adopted for this review and to support the reader's comprehension of how the literature was interpreted.

- **Adolescents:** -The Government has published a clearly defined and widely accepted view of the adolescent age group. The Department for Health (Viner, 2012) and the DfE (2012) share the UKCCIS (2017) definition, which has been adopted for this literature review and thesis. 'Adolescents are between eleven and eighteen years old' (UKCCIS, 2017, p.5). I acknowledge that sexting behaviour can involve younger children and older adults, but this activity is not relevant to this research.
- **Sexting:** -The Government currently define sexting as the 'production or sharing of sexual photos and videos' (UKCCIS, 2017, p.6). Materials may include nude or nearly nude images and or sexual acts (UKCCIS, 2020). Sexting is also referenced as 'youth-

produced sexual imagery' (Hollis and Belton, 2017). However, this research uses the Wolak and Finkelhor paper (2011) as a starting point to define and categorise sexting behaviours, as illustrated above in Chapter 1 (Figure 5), as UKCCIS (2017) utilised this definition in professional training materials for practising teachers.

- **Trusted adults:** - Persons aged nineteen or older, with whom adolescents are willing to be vulnerable and share information. Disclosers may risk relying on trusted adults because they believe the adult will 'protect their well-being and be dependable' (Meltzer et al., 2018, p.576). Trusted adults include teachers or other staff in school, with whom the adolescent may interact.
- **Disclosure:** A transaction that involves revealing a sexting engagement to a "trusted adult" (Meltzer et al., 2018, p.576; OFSTED, 2021a, p.4; Pringle et al., 2019, p.34;). The disclosure transaction involves exchanging information with the receiving trusted adult, with a potential expectation of undertaking steps to protect the adolescent.

Several disclosure methods are discussed in this thesis and could include direct adolescents-to-teacher discussions; school systems exposing sexting transactions on networked school computer systems; friends discussing sexting activity with teachers or trusted adults such as a teaching assistant or support workers (OFSTED, 2021a); parental support conversations with teachers. Disclosures may also be obtained from school network managers or the police (Choi et al., 2016).

### **2.5.2: Issues with Defining and Categorising Sexting Behaviour from within the Selected Literature.**

Sexting terminology references may be 'confusing,' as UKCCIS (2017, p.5) refers to adolescent sexting behaviour as 'Youth Produced Sexual Imagery'. In contrast, NSPCC refers to AASB as

'Harmful Sexual Behaviour' (Hackett et al., 2016, p.12). These terms are interchangeable within government publications (DfE, 2018) and could confuse trainees. Sexting references have generational nuances referring to the same behaviours, which can obfuscate the activity. Adolescents use words such as 'Selfies,' 'Nudies,' "Nudes,' 'Nude Selfies,' and 'Dic Pics' (Youth and Policing Education Hub, 2018, p.4) when discussing sexting behaviours. Whereas adults generally use the term 'sexting' to reference sending text messages that contain sexual words (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017).

Generational differences in terminology used may be problematic for teachers, who, as adults, may not be aware of terminology dissonance between generations (UKCCIS, 2020; Barrense-Dias et al., 2017). Confusing definitions such as 'Sexy Online Self Presentation,' 'sexy poses', and 'sexually suggestive but not explicit body displays' (Van Oosten and Vandenbosch, 2017, p.42) problematise defining and classifying sexting behaviours, as authors may not clearly define 'sexy,' 'suggestive,' and 'self-presentation'. Difficulties also arise when aiming to establish a shared professional terminology consensus. Terms such as 'sexually explicit' and 'beyond a nude picture' could be unclear or confusing to trainees (Cooper et al., 2016; Lenhart, 2009; UKCCIS,2020). However, some authors address terminology confusion by adopting definitions of sexting provided by other authors in their publications. Choi et al. (2016) refer to Klette et al. (2014, p.50), where sexting is defined as 'electronically sending and receiving sexually explicit images.' However, the authors still do not define 'sexually explicit,' which adds to the confusion about the constituents of sexting behaviour.

Official definitions frequently reference negative connotations of sexting behaviours and fail to acknowledge normalised adolescent sexting as 'exploratory, experimental or entertaining' behaviours (Bianchi et al., 2017, p.169; Chalfen, 2009, p.259). Professionally, teachers are

required to understand and respond appropriately to both positive and negative aspects of adolescent sexting behaviour. However, positive aspects of sexting are rarely discussed. UKCCIS (2020) and Hacketts et al. (2016) publications are currently utilised as necessary safeguarding training reference materials. However, they do not acknowledge the positive aspects of sexting behaviours, and omitting positive aspects of sexting behaviours presents a professionally skewed perspective; therefore, positive aspects are referenced in this literature review.

Positively Perceived Sexting Behaviours (PPSBs) are essential to this literature review, as understanding both positive and negative aspects of sexting behaviours may be helpful to decision-making processes. (Woodley et al., 2024). Positively perceived aspects of sexting behaviour were first studied in 2011 by a team of health researchers, (McKellar and Sillence, 2020) Who researched the positive impact of online behaviours on sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Smith et al., (2013) also referenced the positive impact of the decline of adolescent transmission of STDs, which they attribute to sexting behaviours.

Further PPSB evidence was discussed by Yeung et al. (2014), who referenced the positive aspects of developing intimacy and personal relationships by sharing sexting images in mutually exclusive relationships. The failure to address safe PPSB and experimental sexting behaviours may result in difficulties when discerning harmful behaviours from experimental behaviours and cause DSOs to increase unnecessary workloads.

Definitions extended beyond photograph dissemination to include text messages, film clips, and different file types (Holoyda et al., 2018; Ngo et al., 2017; Wood et al., 2015) included in electronic transmissions, also classified as sexting activity. Therefore, definitions should be

revised beyond transmission and receipt of images to include film clips, emoticons, and animations.

This review sought to establish a consensus definition of sexting behaviour that could help trainees, which was challenging to establish and achieve from the literature examined. Ploharz (2017) discussed the importance of a consensus when defining sexting activity and suggested using a 'clear and categorical definition of sexting behaviour as being vital for measuring sexting activity'. He suggests that in order to understand sexting behaviour accurately, it is essential to establish reasons for adolescent engagement in sexting behaviours.

### **2.5.3: The Evolution of Sexting Terminology: Literature Analysis**

The evolving nature of sexting behaviour and associated terminology required the further analysis of fifty-nine articles, which provided one hundred and thirty-4 definitions of sexting behaviours. These definitions were analysed and chronologically ordered, revealing an emerging spectrum of evolving sexting terminology and activities. Some of the fifty-nine papers were omitted from the review because the definition they offered had been referenced in a previous paper or did not offer a new definition. The analysed terms illustrated a spectrum of sexting activity occurring among adolescents, which required further investigation.

Establishing a consensus where no consensus exists was difficult, and this research sought to find an accurate representation of sexting behaviour by examining the selected literature. By concatenating evidence from Barrense-Dias et al., (2017) and Handschuh et al. (2018), a new sexting definition can be offered in this thesis. The four authors cited in these papers, Chalfen (2009), Lenhart (2009), Mitchell et al. (2011), and Walker et al. (2013), contributed to this new

concatenated sexting definition. This new definition established that sexting behaviour involves 'creating and sharing images of a sexual nature that may include nude or nearly nude imagery, animations, emojis or text messages with sexualised content, that are curated and distributed using personal communications devices' (Hewitson, 2023). This newly created definition established a starting point for describing sexting behaviour. Furthermore, this new definition afforded the inclusion of transmitted imagery that does not include displays of overt sexual activity but contains suggestive elements that justify defining an image transmission as sexting behaviour. Revisiting the Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) taxonomy of sexting provided a structure for further analysing the articles by supporting, identifying and clarifying characteristics and definitions of 'experimental and aggravated sexting behaviours'. The structure used below may help trainees discern courses of action when receiving future disclosures in school.

#### **2.5.4: Primary Sexting**

Primary sexting was defined, in the selected literature, as the 'electronic creation, or production and sharing of images, distributed by the creator' (Calvert, 2009, p.10; Lievens, 2014, p.258; Villacampa, 2017, p.10). This deliberate and consensual activity occurs when images are created and shared on personal devices, and the object of the image has a targeted audience.

#### **2.5.5: Secondary Sexting**

Secondary Sexting is defined as receiving, curating, and sharing sexting images or messages created by someone else (DfE, 2021; Stanley et al., 2016; Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011). The image sharer intends to transmit to a broader than initially intended audience (Del Ray et al., 2017; Lievens, 2014; Patrick et al., 2015; Villacampa, 2017). The person or persons who are

the subject of the image may be unaware of the existence of the image or the extent of the image distribution. Consent has not been obtained prior to image sharing from the image's subject. Secondary sexting transmissions are categorised as AASB transactions due to the absence of consent from the image subject.

#### **2.5.6: Active Sexting**

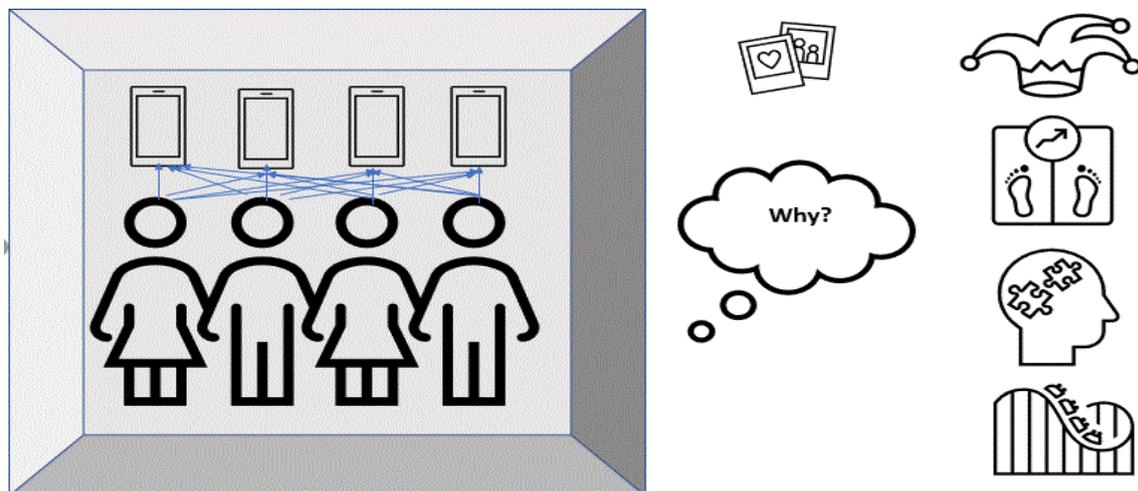
Active Sexting is defined as the act of 'creating and distributing' (Powell et al., 2019, p.393), showing, posting, sending, or forwarding to third parties images of a sexual nature. Such images include 'nude or nearly nude images' (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017, p.546) that are sent and received with the consent of both the 'recipient and the sender' (Strohmaier et al., 2014, p 252), who are engaged in a relationship (Cooper et al., 2016; Lloyd, 2020). The image has an intended audience, and no consent for wider or liberal distribution beyond the original intended audience is granted. Active sexts are shared for social cohesion in a peer group or romantic relationship.

#### **2.5.7: Passive Sexting**

Passive Sexting is the act of receiving and re-distributing sexualised imagery. Received imagery may be redistributed beyond the original intended audience (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017). Passive sexting does not involve creating images and may be motivated by peer pressure or kudos. Passive sexting differs from primary sexting because the person disseminating the image may not know the subject of the image, nor have they created the image. The image distributor does not have consent to retain, copy or share the image (Lloyd, 2020; UKCCIS, 2017). Consent can be a transient issue and subject to change, based on many factors discussed later in this chapter because at no point does a passive sexter have the consent of the subject of the image.

### 2.5.8: Experimental Sexting

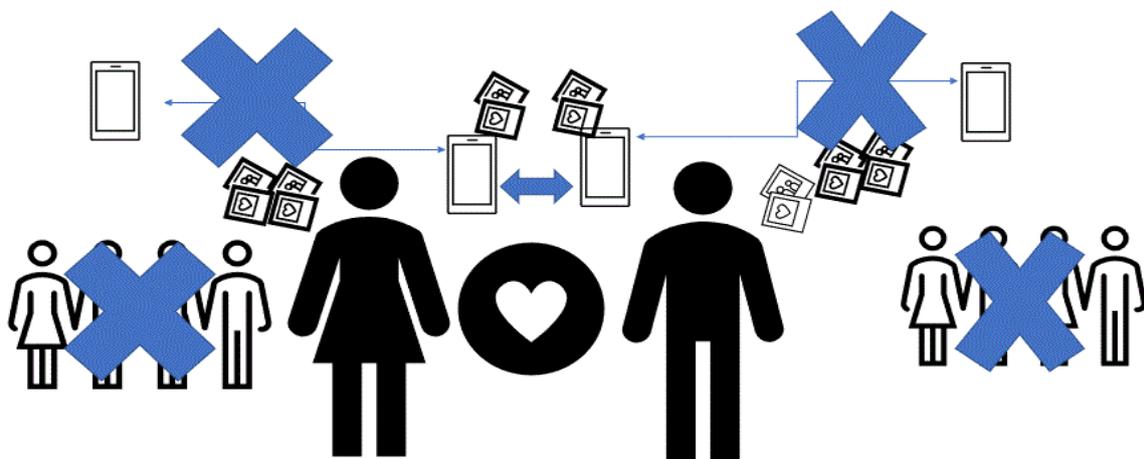
Experimental sexting involves creating and distributing photos between peer groups or partners with shared consent to a predetermined audience, as illustrated in Figure 7 below (Garcia-Gomez, 2017; Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011).



**Figure 7: Experimental Sexting Behaviour**

Whilst imagery may contain nudity, there may be no sexual intent behind the image distribution. Reasons for distribution can include affirming positive body image, entertainment, and 'social cohesion' as a form of gossip (Buren and Lunde, 2018; Cooper, 2016; Gewirtz-Meydan et al., 2018, p.257). Experimental sexting can help detect physical abnormalities amongst peers (Ling and Li, 2020; Van Ouytsel, 2017) and peer groups moderate 'sharing behaviours' (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017) as unwritten rules govern consent. These unwritten rules confine image exchange and distribution between group members. Evidence suggests that experimental sexting supports cohesion in peer relationships (Choi et al., 2016; Walker et al., 2013)

Experimental sexting also occurs in romantic relationships between consenting partners (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017). This type of sexting involves the exclusive sharing of flirtatious sexual images, sexualised text messages and intimate photographs of body parts (Albury and Crawford, 2012; Walker et al., 2013;), and creating filmed sexual activity (Villacampa, 2017, p.11). Emojis depicting sexual activity or film clips (Bobkowski et al., 2016, p.69) may also be shared in experimental sexting transactions.



**Figure 8: Sexting with Consent in an Exclusive Relationship.**

Adolescents are largely ‘unaware’ of the criminality of online sexting behaviours (Cowie and Colliety, 2010). Consensual experimental sexting behaviours are ‘rarely disclosed’ to teachers (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019, p.12) as peer regulation confines image distribution boundaries within the group for as long as cordial relationships are maintained.

The legal issues attributed to the pupils’ age significantly impact experimental sexting behaviour as the legal age of consent for engaging in sexual activity in England is sixteen; however, the legal age for transmitting sexual imagery is eighteen. Therefore, an experimental sexting activity involving the transmission of sexualised images of children aged eighteen or younger is illegal because they are ‘legally categorised’ as children (UNRC,1989).

Children are legally unable to provide consent and may not fully understand consent implications when sharing personal sexualised images. This legal age categorisation creates problematic anomalies for older adolescents engaging in sexting behaviours that capture images of engagement in personal sexual activity. Law enforcement agencies found adolescent age anomalies problematic, and The College of Police issued a directive to avoid criminalising older adolescents (Home Office, 2016), referred to as 'Clause 21'. Clause 21 is a policing policy which aims to reduce the number of children acquiring criminal records by acknowledging the age of a child and the ability to consent to sexting behaviour. When referring a sexting incident to the police, this clause advises recording the offence but not pursuing criminal prosecution. Avoiding further criminal action protects adolescents from acquiring criminal records. The decision to prosecute hinges on the issue of the adolescent's ability to consent, which will be discussed further in this literature review.

Changes in relationship statuses between adolescents can complicate consent issues, as consent may be withdrawn, making consent a transient issue. Relationship statuses change and can result in sexting behaviours shifting from consensual experimental to aggressive sexting behaviour (Van Ouytsel et al., 2017). Consensually acquired images can become tools of aggression and weapons, with the intent of wounding or humiliating the victim of an image.

#### **2.5.9: Defining AASB**

The term AASB, in this research, was created by the researcher to redefine specific sexting behaviours. 'Adolescent' defines the age group of young people referred to in this research (UNCRC, 1989). 'Aggressive' refers to the intention behind the transactional message transmission or exchange. Aggression aligns with Olweus's (1973) definition of aggression and bullying, which refers to the intent to harm' repeatedly over time. 'Sexting' describes the

transactional activity of sharing either text messages, nude or nearly nude imagery containing sexual content or references to sexual behaviour contained in emojis or animations. 'Behaviour' encompasses activities where adolescents react or respond to events within a specific environment (Robinson, 1917). The personal device environment consists of using smartphones, tablets, or personal devices using network connectivity, mobile phone capabilities, and social media platforms (Campbell and Choudhury, 2012). Adolescents distribute text, filmed imagery or photographs containing sexual references in this environment. Therefore, the concatenated definition of AASB referred to in this thesis references young people aged between eleven and eighteen years old who are using technology and social media platforms to transmit text messages or pictures of a sexual nature or depict sexual activity, with the intent to harm or intimidate another person, as a form of coercion, bullying or intimidation (Hewitson, 2023).

Aggression, manifested through online behaviours (Lievens, 2014), can be referred to as cyberbullying and is a widely recognised form of aggressive behaviour (DeSmet et al., 2018; Smith, 2014). Bullying and aggression in schools were explored by Olweus (1973) and again in 1993 (Olweus,1993), where sets of behaviours that constitute bullying were referenced. He defined the intent to 'pick on, harass or pester with the intent to cause harm' (Olweus,1993, p.8) and later added the terms 'victimisation' and then 'exposed repeatedly, over time, by one or more persons', with 'the intent to inflict injury or discomfort upon another (person)' (Olweus, 1999, p.10). It can be ascertained from his definition that aggressive online behaviour may be intentional, targeted, and inflicted repeatedly on an individual by one or more persons. Genta et al. (2012, p.24) stated that contemporary aggressive behaviours intending to 'victimise or injure' a person have transitioned from physical interactions to using personal electronic devices to transmit images to harm or victimise adolescents. Initially,

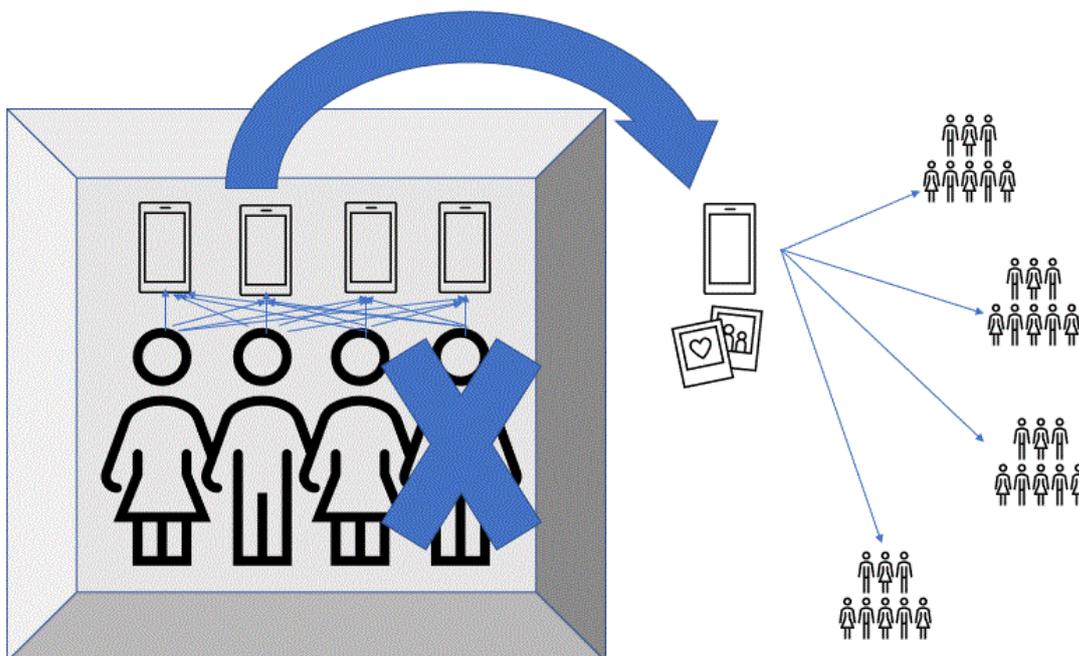
aggressive online transactions were conducted using text-based messages on mobile devices (Lievens, 2014), but they have now evolved into transmitting harmful images (Hamilton-Giachritsis et al., 2017).

The Byron Review (2008) acknowledged children's online aggressive 'risky behaviours' referencing online game playing and messenger services, where aggressive text messages were exchanged. Image exchange was not identified in Byron's initial research; however, in her ten-year review, Byron (2018) acknowledged the changing landscape of digital environments for adolescents and discussed opportunities for grooming and coercion over mobile platforms. In 2019, Byron claimed, at the annual National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) online safety conference, that over 1000 prosecutions for sending sexual messages could be attributed to gaming and mobile phone devices (NSPCC, 2019). Byron (2018) acknowledged that teacher training should include children's online behaviours. She references the consequences for adolescents engaged in criminal, abusive or threatening online behaviours such as intimidation, extortion, or coercion to obtain sexual imagery (NSPCC, 2019). These behaviour consequences are also referenced by Choi et al. (2016). Ringrose et al. (2012), where distributing such imagery without the consent or awareness of the person or the object of the image (Strassberg et al., 2017) can have significant negative consequences for perpetrators (Ferndon et al., 2009) and victims who may feel bullied or victimised (Holoyda et al., 2018). Byrons' recommendations included teacher education to address these challenges.

#### **2.5.10: Victim Ostracisation, Bullying and AASB**

Ostracisation and AASB are depicted below in Figure 9, where group members reject a peer (Ferndon et al., 2009). During ostracisation, the imagery previously shared within the confines

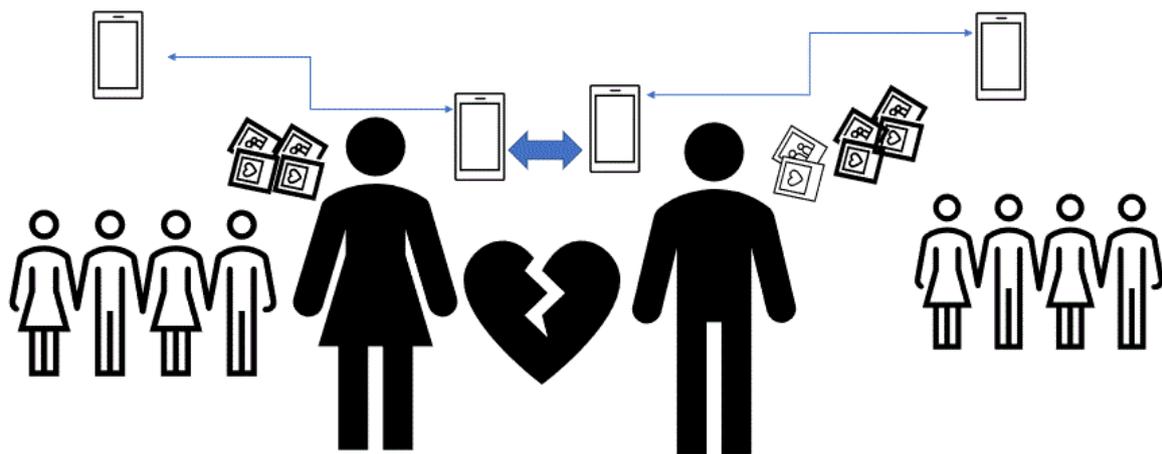
of a peer group may be liberally distributed to an external audience for intimidation, humiliation or bullying purposes (Cooper et al., 2016). The imagery can be shared and reshared often, and the victim loses control over the sharing process (Lievens, 2014). This loss of control adds to the distress of the subject of the image and can result in significant harm to the adolescent victim (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017; Cooper et al., 2016; Machackova et al., 2020; Strohmaier et al., 2014).



**Figure 9: Aggressive Sexting: Peer Bullying**

Another form of AASB, revenge pornography, illustrated in Figure 10 below, occurs when adolescents may have previously created consensual images within the confines of a romantic relationship (Hasinoff, 2017; Van Ouytsel et al., 2017) are distributed beyond the intended audience. Both parties provide conditional consent for image sharing within the confinement of the relationship, where they exclusively send and receive sexualised images of each other (Muncaster and Ohlsson, 2020), with the intent to flirt or enhance the relationship. However,

once the relationship has ended, consent to share may be withdrawn. One or both partners may continue to liberally distribute imagery created during the relationship to a broader audience (Villacampa, 2017) without the 'knowledge or consent' of the other party (Lloyd, 2017, p.61) to humiliate or harm the subject of the image (Holoyda et al., 2018; Powell et al., 2019).



**Figure 10: Revenge Pornography**

### **2.5.11: Distinguishing between Experimental Sexting and AASB**

For trainee teachers to address AASB, they must be able to identify the constituents of AASB and discern factors that differentiate aggressive sexting from other types of sexting behaviours. In instances where there are changes in relationship status, the intent of sharing or consent alters the categorisation of sexting behaviour from experimental behaviour to AASB, which will be illustrated further in this chapter.

The literature supports the view that three characteristics differentiate aggressive behaviours from experimental sexting behaviours. These characteristics are 'consent' (Villacampa, 2017,

p.11), 'intent' (Lloyd, 2020, p.786) and 'change in the relationship status' (Garcia-Gomez, 2017, p.399). Each of these three AASB characteristics will be discussed in more depth below.

#### **2.5.12: Consent**

Consent to share can be a complex area within adolescent sexting, as there are legal, moral, and cultural dimensions (Albury and Crawford, 2012; Eyler and Jeste, 2006; Popova, 2019) affiliated with consent, which, if ignored, may result in criminal proceedings for adolescents. Conceptually, consent issues originated from property law, referring to ownership (Popova, 2019, p.13), who has permission to use or share imagery. Imagery ownership is an essential factor to consider when addressing AASB incidents. Ownership invokes criminal law, which intends to protect individuals and their property, preserve order, and punish perpetrators (Storey and Martin, 2019).

The creation and curation of images within a relationship context may be to enhance the relationship or create 'bonds of trust' (Cooper et al., 2016, p.706). Sharing imagery in this context requires consideration for the image's subject, which should be paramount (Glance et al., 2021). Therefore, consent may be a critical, discerning feature of experimental sexting. However, informed consent requires the ability 'to deliberate' (Eyler and Jeste, 2006, p.554). This implies a physical or mental 'willingness', signalled and interpreted, sometimes tacitly, through 'behavioural cues' (Muehlenhard et al., 2016, p.460) that adolescents may not understand or interpret. The subject of the image should primarily give consent, which can also be granted by the image-sharing platform (Holoyda et al., 2018). Aggressive sexting does not consider or seek consent from either the subject or the platform (Glance et al., 2021). Legally, adolescents cannot consent to engage in a sexting activity (CJA, 2004; DfE, 2021a; PCA, 1978; UNCRC, 1989)

Permission settings of software platforms can compromise consent. Snapchat™ software, an image-sharing platform which displays images for brief time limits and then deletes them, may be a platform where consent can be compromised. Snapchat™ security breaches may be compromised by knowledgeable adolescents, who acquire widely available tools that can bypass software security measures and enable the collection of sexual imagery (Lloyd, 2020). Once captured, imagery can be stored and redistributed beyond the intended audience. Adolescents may be unaware of ‘software compromises’ (Hensen Mandau, 2021, p.436). The resultant breaches and compromised image redistribution can leave adolescents feeling emotions such as shame and embarrassment.

### **2.5.13: Intent**

Intent continues to be a critical factor when discerning between aggressive and experimental sexting behaviours. Adolescents engage in sexting behaviours for distinct reasons. Evidence suggests that extrovert adolescent personalities may create and distribute sexualised imagery, and attention-seeking may be the intention (Van Oosten and Vandenbosch, 2017; Van Ouytsel et al., 2017). However, these personality types can become subject to hostile and aggressive behaviour, and images can be redistributed to humiliate and bully the object of the image (Cooper et al., 2016).

Further evidence suggests that creating sexting imagery ‘showcases risk-taking activity’ (Bell et al., 2007, p.302). Creators of Upskirting and down-blousing imagery often host digitally collated libraries stored on personal mobile devices (Van Ouytsel et al., 2014). Images often referred to as ‘Nudies’ gain adolescent peer kudos, which elevates adolescent statuses amongst peers (Cooper et al., 2016). Evidence also suggests adolescents may share and reshare ‘nude’ imagery amongst their peer groups (UKCCIS, 2017), primarily to ‘improve their

peer status' (Van Ouytsel et al., 2015; p.289) to fit in with peer groups and deflect attention from the sharer.

Resharing imagery can form part of a peer defence mechanism called 'bystander behaviours' (Beer et al., 2019, p.343). Often, the persons distributing imagery have not created the imagery, and the intent of circulating images may be to 'deflect attention away from the bystander' (Beer et al., 2019) and onto the subject of the image (Fenaughty and Harre, 2013).

#### **2.5.14: Relationship Status**

The ephemeral nature of adolescent relationship statuses can impact establishing consent. The positive and negative aspects of consent were discussed previously in this review. However, adolescent consent can be transient (Lievens, 2014), and this can frustrate resolving AASB incidents for teachers supporting AASB victims. Relationship statuses are particularly significant for teachers, who may be required to discern between an AASB incident and experimental behaviour at the point of disclosure. Authors agree that consent concerns permissions from both the image creator and the image object for images to be categorised as experimental (Chalfen, 2009; Klette et al., 2014; Ringrose et al., 2012).

The issue of consent could be a binary defining characteristic of sexting behaviour (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017; Crofts et al., 2015; Hollis and Belton, 2017; Ringrose et al., 2012), which could support teachers when investigating a sexting incident for reporting purposes. The absence of consent could denote aggression, coercion, or bullying, which are essential indicators for teachers addressing sexting in school (Chalfen, 2009; Crofts et al., 2015; Ferndon et al., 2009; Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011).

When discussed in the reviewed literature, academics refer to peer relationships and adolescent development as either a process or a period in human development. Hormones

govern adolescent emotions and behaviours and are subject to change (Bear et al., 2001). Two related areas considered critical for this review are adolescent romantic and peer relationships. A crucial consideration during a disclosure event may be the relationship status of the adolescent image subject to the parties involved in the sexting distribution behaviour, mainly where there may be aggressive intentions (Cooper et al., 2016).

When adolescents establish peer relationships, predefined unwritten boundaries and 'codes of behaviour' exist (Bianchi et al., 2017, p.165). When peer groups engage in sexting behaviours, unwritten rules, boundaries, and behaviour codes (Vanden Abeele et al., 2014) support establishing shared behaviour concepts regarding viewing and transmitting imagery. Rules, boundaries, and codes of behaviour change when relationship statuses change, subsequently impacting the unwritten rules governing sexting transactions between peer groups. The reviewed literature has provided evidence to suggest that relationship statuses can help to determine if the transmission intent was aggressive (Lloyd, 2018). Hostile peer relationships are examples of adolescent vulnerability to AASB; members of the peer group may decide to share images more widely than the peer group boundary (Ringrose et al., 2012). This type of distribution may be perceived as a 'joke' amongst the peer group (Walker et al., 2013), but the object of the image may perceive this differently.

Romantic relationships may use sexting to progress towards an exclusive partnership (Villacampa, 2017, p.17). Adolescents, particularly girls, may transmit sexualised images (Aynsley et al., 2017) to flirt or entice a prospective partner to enhance the relationship prospects (Strohmaier et al., 2014). These images are transmitted exclusively with a mutual understanding that the transmitter perceives the intended audience should be only the image recipient (Lenhart, 2009). However, the image recipient may not share this intention and 'may

be flirting to acquire a collection of sexual images for redistribution purposes' and to enhance their reputation amongst peers (Aynsley et al., 2017, p.18). Evidence suggests that males may ask females for sexualised imagery to determine 'female readiness for sexual activity' (Patrick et al., 2015, p.482). Here, the intention may be to establish the viability of a sexual relationship before pursuing or progressing a relationship further (Olushola, 2017) as a kind of litmus test to establish the possibility of sexual gratification.

Choi et al.,2016) suggest that the ending of a romantic relationship may be a point where adolescents are particularly 'vulnerable to coercion'(Walker et al., 2013, p.698). Coercive force may drive and perpetuate a relationship (Drouin and Tobin, 2014). Where the intentions of the sender and receiver are misaligned, the sender hopes for the relationship to continue, and the receiver intends to redistribute imagery. Revenge porn, a previously discussed phenomenon and an adolescent vulnerability occurs when a relationship concludes and one or both parties seek vengeance. 'Revenge porn' (Holoyda et al., 2018, p.173) is a form of AASB and maybe a relationship status consideration for teachers.

The relationships curriculum (DfE, 2019b) could help trainees discern between experimental and aggressive sexting behaviours. This would help trainees support the pupils and direct them towards practical help. Aggressive sexting behaviours may require additional pastoral support and interventions for both the victim and perpetrator to address the behaviours and prevent further harm. Teachers may be required to support and monitor subsequent behaviour interventions in schools.

## **2.6: Prevalence of Sexting Activity**

Adolescent sexting prevalence refers to the frequency of the occurrence of adolescent sexting incidents. Prevalence data may be expressed as a statistic, a percentage, or a ratio in academic

literature. Statistics may indicate age groups susceptible to sexting activity, and this may help trainees prepare for disclosure events during placement. Prevalence may be challenging to establish due to dissonance regarding how academics define and measure sexting activity. Van Oosten and Vandenbosch (2017, p.43) explore adolescents 'willingness to sext', with clearly defined sexting activities and present detailed gender-specific findings regarding particular sexting activities. However, because the data refers to the willingness to participate and not actual sexting activities, this paper was discounted from review. Lievens (2014) suggests that transmission mediums impact the prevalence of sexting behaviours, where the internet was the transmission mode; he used Livingstone et al (2011), to suggest that fifteen percent of eleven-to sixteen-year-olds received sexting messages. Lievens (2014) reports that three percent sent messages where the transmission mode was online. Strohmaier et al. (2014) estimated that between one-fifth and one-third of adolescents engage in sexting behaviour and found that 50% of his sample of 'minors' had 'exchanged' photographic and non-photographic sexts. The literature suggests a dissonance amongst academics regarding prevalence statistics, so the current OFSTED (2021) position has been accepted for this thesis.

Molla-Esparza et al. (2023) conducted a systematic literature review regarding generalised sexting behaviours in schools, presenting disparities in academic papers reporting prevalence statistics and how sexting incidents are recorded. Several authors discussed the disparities (Cooper et al., 2016; Klettler et al., 2014; Lievens, 2014; Molla-Esparza et al., 2023) and the impact of sexting behaviour on school adolescents. The authors cited agreed with Lievens (2014) regarding the difficulties of ascertaining prevalence. The OFSTED (2021a) statistics presented in Table 1 suggest that sexual aggression towards girls may be more prevalent than initially thought. They report 51% of female adolescents as being unaware they are the object of sexting imagery acquired from voyeuristic behaviours such as Upskirting or Downblousing

(DfE, 2019). OFSTED (2021a) reported that 88% of female adolescents have sent sexts, and 80% of female adolescents feel that they have been pressured into sending sexual images.

The peer-reviewed literature presents a mixed picture of sexting activity prevalence, which has resulted in this research acknowledging that prevalence is a prominent issue. However, it is outside the remit of the focus of this research.

## **2.7: Policy Directives and Guidance for Teachers Managing AASB**

This literature review aspect addressed research question three: 'How do trainees plan to respond to AASB? UKCCIS (2017) guidance directs teachers to work 'swiftly and confidently' to ensure that children are safeguarded, supported, and educated regarding sexting behaviours. UKCCIS (2017) guidance is referenced in twenty-five academic papers, with seventy-4 references to specific teacher actions. These recommendations were captured using NVivo and varied within the literature. Choi et al. (2016) discussed teachers establishing whether victimisation was a factor in a sexting disclosure. However, policy evidence suggests teachers should not ask questions; they should listen and record the facts of a disclosure incident. Suggestions varied, including teachers talking to teens about preventative measures (Cohen, 2020), and there was no consensus in the literature regarding how teachers should address sexting behaviours in schools.

### **2.7.1: Policy Concerns**

The DfE currently influences safeguarding policy in state schools. 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2023) is published annually with policy updates and was first published in 2010. Each update considers new evolving pupil online habits. Recent publications include voyeuristic behaviours such as 'Upskirting' and downblousing. This behaviour involves

smartphones capturing sexualised imagery underneath clothing without the consent of the person being photographed (DfE, 2019). This behaviour illustrates how policy evolves in response to behaviour changes.

The government presents sexting behaviour to teachers in policy as one activity: taking and disseminating photographs containing sexual imagery. However, evidence suggests that AASB activity may be complex and requires further understanding.

### **2.7.2: Drivers of Change Impacting Safeguarding Policies**

Smartphone usage and technology evolution are beyond the scope of this research. However, the ubiquitous nature of smartphone usage and the development of smartphone hardware and software capabilities have resulted in well-documented problems for teachers. (Calvert, 2009; Temple and Choi, 2014; UKCCIS, 2017; Van Oosten and Vandebosch, 2017). Smartphone technology may influence pupil behaviour and policy; the literature suggests that most AASB use smartphone technology (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019; UKCCIS, 2020). The curriculum delivered to new entrants to the teaching profession may require more discussions concerning the impact of smartphone technology.

UKCCIS (2017, p.7) stated that 61% of secondary school headteachers viewed sexting as a 'significant concern', which indicates that adolescent sexting activity may have a high priority in schools. Given the suggestion that addressing sexting may be a high priority for headteachers, it should follow that there should be an abundance of literature to support teachers. However, this was not the case. In the selected literature, thirty-six sources provided specific direction for teachers, but the advice was unclear and disparate. UKCCIS (2020) also suggested that policy should include directives to help teachers recognise sexting

behaviours and refer disclosures of sexting behaviours to appropriate persons in the school. Additionally, teachers should engage in training that provides directives on applying the school policy and know how to record incidents in school systems (DfE, 2011). Furthermore, teachers should create an 'emotionally safe classroom' climate where boundaries around teacher confidentiality are clarified. If teachers suspect children or young people are vulnerable or at risk, the school's safeguarding protocols should be followed (UKCCIS, 2017). Rivers et al. (2014, p.6) discussed the requirement for teachers to 'proactively monitor' adolescents in the classroom. However, this may not be possible during lessons. During this research, sexting behaviours were not featured in the ITT curriculum; however, references appeared in the Relationships Curriculum (DfE, 2019b). Trainees should be exposed to the Relationships Curriculum as part of their placement teaching obligations.

### **2.7.3: School Policy Guidance**

Policy recommendations for addressing aggressive online behaviours were first suggested by Willard (2007), who identified eight aggressive online activities that required school policy guidance—4 of his eight recommendations involved directives regarding image dissemination. Furthermore, Hinduja and Patchin (2009) and Siegle (2010) produced leaflets directed towards practising teachers that referenced Willard's work (2007) that condensed cyberbullying issues for teachers, with suggestions for how to address online bullying. Siegle (2010), in his publication, identified sexting specifically as an 'abuse of the 21st Century' which requires significant attention from schools, and he discussed the role of the school curriculum regarding addressing AASB. These authors also refer to the legal implications regarding exchanging images online and the requirement for school policies to address aggressive online behaviours. They did not, however, guide teachers regarding what to do in

the event of receiving a sexting disclosure from an adolescent in school.

Lloyd (2020) addressed issues surrounding teachers responding to harmful sexual behaviours, including sexting behaviours, and outlined the disparate ways schools respond to both consensual and non-consensual sexting. However, the paper only addressed the consequences for pupils engaging in sexting behaviour and not the process of teachers receiving a disclosure (Lloyd, 2020) or guidance on responding to an incident. Lloyd's paper addresses the lack of robust guidance regarding managing sexting behaviours and identifies the issue of inadequate preparation for teachers. It was apparent from the discussion that the teacher participants could not discern between acceptable and unacceptable sexting behaviours (Lloyd, 2020) and, as a direct result, treated all disclosures as prohibited behaviours.

The ability of teachers to distinguish between consensual (experimental) and non-consensual (aggressive) image sharing (Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011) highlights one of the many challenges for teachers who manage AASB incidents directly. Lloyd (2020) suggests that the impact of the inability to differentiate may be significant for teachers. She perceives there may be limited guidance on what interventions have been 'tried and tested.' This may be particularly important when considering AASB interventions and the ability to discern between the two behaviour types, which may influence the intervention measures implemented by the teacher. Barrense-Dias et al. (2017) recommended that teachers should have a better knowledge of sexting to enable more effective intervention measures from teachers. Dolev-Cohen and Levkovich (2020) suggested that not knowing how to manage aggressive online victimisation may increase a teacher's stress levels, impacting their well-being, as receiving a pupil disclosure invokes a pastoral process, where additional pupil help, and support may be required. This help process can result in teachers experiencing feelings of inherent

responsibility that can invoke emotional responses in the teacher. Dolev-Cohen and Levkovich (2020) suggest teachers are 'unprepared' for the emotional aspects of receiving AASB disclosures.

UKCCIS (2020) advised that school staff should know how to recognise and refer disclosure incidents involving youth-produced sexual imagery. They suggest addressing this within staff training and the organisation's child protection policy. Allnock and Atkinson (2019, p.13) discuss a 'culture of complacency' and suggest that schools are not doing enough to address the issues of online aggression. The lack of action from teachers has perpetuated a culture of silence from pupils who might otherwise report sexting behaviours. This silence could be attributed to inadequate policy responses regarding the consequences of sexting behaviours in schools. Rivers et al. (2014, p.27) state that 'teachers were the second source of student support;' however, trainees were unhappy with teacher responses.

There may be a confusing array of teacher responses to sexting behaviours. Lloyd (2020) suggested the reactions ranged from removing the pupil's phone to informing the police, with limited 'robust guidance' for teachers. UKCCIS (2017, p.18) suggest teachers should be trained in 'school systems to record sexting behaviour incidents', making recommendations that included expectations for teachers to be trained in record-keeping, taking appropriate actions, and tenaciously following up. The expectation that teachers can keep up-to-date records that are complete implies that schools have an effective reporting system to support teachers and that they have received adequate training in using such systems. UKCCIS also suggest that teacher records should demonstrate that they can identify and manage the risk of harm (UKCCIS 2017). A training implication could include a programme that supports the teachers with materials highlighting the risks of harm, such as AASB, and such training could

illuminate pathways to recording incidents where risk or harm might be identified. UKCCIS (2017) assumes that school staff members can deliver such training and that time and money are available to support conducting training.

A further suggestion directs teachers to ask adolescents to remove imagery from their mobile phones and personal devices (UKCCIS, 2017). The report implies that teachers should know how to remove imagery from personal devices and where to signpost pupils for this support. Further publications from DfE (2021), OFSTED (2021) and UKCCIS (2020) also require schools to keep safeguarding records to demonstrate sound decision-making, appropriate responses to concerns and evidence of relevant referrals made promptly. This guidance implies that teachers have time to create such a report, understand sexting behaviour, that teachers can justify the courses of action they have taken, and have concise report-writing skills. This expectation suggests that school safeguarding systems should have a framework to support teacher decision-making processes for report writing. Upon receiving a disclosure, the UKCCIS (2020) report implies that teachers should have time to document an incident. Terminology such as 'timely' and 'immediately' imply that responding promptly to the disclosure should be a high priority for schools. However, classroom teachers may find UKCCIS guidance challenging to implement in a timely when undertaking a full teaching timetable. The guidance (UKCCIS,2017), whilst referring to safeguarding leads specifically for recording disclosures, also applies to teachers who receive and report disclosures. Classroom teachers should be trained to undertake the challenges of recording disclosures.

#### **2.7.4: Policy Evolution**

The evolution and development of national safeguarding policies are illustrated in Appendix

2D. This table chronologically defines how safeguarding policy has evolved and the catalysts for policy development since the 1800s. Reviewing the data revealed a policy cycle which has developed as the direct result of an incident, followed by a government inquiry, leading to an investigation, a report, and recommendations. The most recent safeguarding policy evolution involved school inspection safeguarding guidance (OFSTED, 2021a), where Inspectors described their safeguarding expectations when inspecting schools. OFSTED's position appears to have changed regarding adolescent sexualised behaviour and now assumes AASB occurs amongst adolescents inside schools (OFSTED, 2021a); previously, this was not the case. Furthermore, OFSTED has published specific guidance concerning adolescent sexualised behaviours for professionals in school (OFSTED, 2021a), updated from the UKCCIS (2020) publication.

OFSTED acknowledge that responsibility for resolving sexting incidents may not rest solely upon a teacher (OFSTED, 2021a); they suggest that sexting should be discussed with adolescents in school as part of the curriculum (DfE, 2019) to promote healthy relationships. Such curriculum discussions with adolescents would support raising awareness of sexual coercion and could be undertaken in subjects such as Personal Health and Social Education (PSHE) (DfE 2019, p.22; OFSTED, 2021a, p.6). However, there are no suggestions regarding training teachers about sexual coercion or healthy relationships.

Byron (2018) posited that 49% of secondary school teachers required training in e-safety issues, including coercion in relationships. OFSTED (2021a) more recently suggested the need for development and training for all school staff on sexting prevalence and how to identify harmful sexual behaviour. These issues were addressed earlier in the literature review, where the need for development and training was highlighted. The literature supports the view that teachers lack clarity and understanding concerning the challenges presented by AASB

(McKellar and Sillence, 2020). Teachers should be aware of the potential consequences for adolescents who share sexually suggestive pictures where an intent to harm pupils may be evident (Lievens, 2014). Teachers play a significant role in helping young people understand the consequences of poor decisions (Bairagi and Munot, 2019; Livingstone et al., 2023). In a digital age where text and images are exponentially disseminated (Siegle, 2010), teachers may be significant in helping adolescents. However, the teacher's inability to establish if sexting and victimisation are linked and whether sexual coercion may be involved could hinder pupils from receiving the right help and support regarding AASB.

#### **2.7.5: Policy Interpretation and Language Barriers.**

They are safeguarding language, terminology and frames of reference, placing shifting expectations upon teachers in secondary education. Keeping adolescents safe while they are developing and learning about themselves may be particularly important; OFSTED (2021a) suggest sexting behaviour has now become 'normalised' as part of adolescent development. However, the terminology associated with AASB may be complicated for new teachers to understand and navigate. The literature examined for this review addresses academics and practising teachers but not trainee teachers. There were gaps in the literature, and academics have not addressed safeguarding needs in their research for new entrants to the teaching profession. Understanding sexting behaviours and safeguarding terminology should be part of the safeguarding remit for computer science teachers. As part of their teaching responsibilities, they are expected to deliver learning material regarding digital literacy, staying safe online, and recognising inappropriate content (DfE, 2014, p.5). Sexting references have generational nuances referring to the same behaviours. Adolescents use words such as 'Selfies,' 'Nudies,' "Nudes,' Nude Selfies,' and 'Dic Pics' (Youth and Policing Education Hub,

2018, p.4). Whereas adults generally use the term 'sexting' referring to 'sending text messages' containing sexual words (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017, p.2361). Generational differences in terminology used may be problematic for teachers, who, as adults, may not be aware of safeguarding terminology dissonances between adolescents and adults. Therefore, during training, it would be helpful to establish how the literature defines sexting activity behaviours to clarify shared definitions for both adolescents and teachers.

The definitions found in the selected academic literature for this research are in chronological order in Table 10 below. Trainees may need to understand how terminologies are affiliated with sexting behaviours, as they may be required to justify actions taken during professional practice and describe how they have addressed or categorised adolescent behaviours. (DfE, 2019). Accurate definitions may also be essential for school pupil referral pathways and safeguarding documentation (DfE, 2021).

The following table contains definitions of sexting behaviours from some papers used in the selective literature review.

**Table 10: Analysis of Terminology and Definitions of Sexting Behaviours**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Terminology</b>	<b>Definition</b>
2004	Williams	Sexting	Production, possession, or distribution of sexually explicit images
2004	Williams	Sexting	Sexting is often understood to be the receiving and sending of sexually explicit or sexually suggestive images or videos via mobile phone (sex + text).
2004	Williams	Sexting	The practice among some young women and men is creating, sharing, sending, or posting sexually suggestive or explicit messages or images via the Internet or mobile phones.
2004	Williams	Sexting	Mobile phone communications: Other electronic communications, e.g., emails, posting photos or videos on the web (ego, YouTube, or Facebook), and using iPads, iPods, and other electronic devices with internet connections to send images.
2004	Williams	Sexting	From consensual sharing of images between two adolescents to more sinister behaviour involving the dissemination of images to third parties
2004	Williams	Sexting	Boyfriend and girlfriend taking explicit photos of or recording a video of themselves and sharing the images (consensual)
2004	Williams	Sexting	A person producing a sexually explicit image of him or herself and sharing that image electronically with another person (either solicited or unsolicited) (i.e., non-consensual and consensual) or where a person encourages or requests a child to forward the image it may be part of a 'consensual' adolescent relationship or attempt to commence a relationship, e.g., flirting, or it could be severe grooming by an online predator.
2004	Williams	Sexting	A person who has received an image with the consent of the person in the image then disseminates that image electronically to other persons without the first person's approval (and the recipients could repeat this) (non-consensual dissemination)
2004	Williams	Sexting	Image taken of a child without that child's knowledge or consent and then shared electronically with another person or persons (non-consensual recording and dissemination) (e.g., a child could take a photo of another child showering and send it to friends)
2010	Siegle	Sexting	Sexting, which is sending or forwarding nude, sexually suggestive, or explicit pictures on a cell phone or online,

Date	Author	Terminology	Definition
2010	Hinduja and Patchin	Sexting	We define sexting as “the sending or receiving of sexually explicit or sexually suggestive images or video via a cell phone.” Most commonly, the term has been used to describe incidents where teenagers take nude or semi-nude (e.g., topless) pictures of themselves and distribute those pictures to others using their cell phones (although it is also possible to distribute such images via social networking sites, email, instant messaging programs, and video chat). The images are often initially sent to romantic partners or interests but can find their way into the hands of others, which is what creates the problems.
2011	Mitchell, Wolak and Finkelhor	Sexting	Sexting refers to sending sexual images and sometimes sexual texts via cell phones and other electronic devices.
2012	Ringrose, et al.	Sexting	Sexting has been conventionally defined as the ‘exchange of sexual messages or images (Livingstone et al., 2011) and ‘the creating, sharing, and forwarding of sexually suggestive nude or nude images’ (Lenhart, 2009) through mobile phones or the internet
2012	Ringrose et al.	Sexting	the creating, sharing, and forwarding of sexually suggestive nude or nude images’ (Lenhart, 2009) through mobile phones and the internet.
2012	Ringrose, et al.	Sexting	Lounsbury et al. recommend a stricter definition focused on illegal images being exchanged by legal minors (under eighteen years old) so that the evidence directly informs legal interventions.
2012	Ringrose, et al.	Sexting	Sending or receiving phone messages of sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude photos or videos of themselves or of someone they knew on their cell phones (2009: p.4), excluding text messages without visual content or those shared by other means such as email or social networking sites.
2012	Ringrose et al.	Sexting	Sending and receiving of ‘nude or nearly nude photographs,
2012	Ringrose, et al.	Sexting	Online (not mobile) ‘sexual messages or images ... (which meant) talk about having sex or images of people naked or having sex.
2012	Ringrose, et al.	Sexting	Aggravated (including criminal or abusive elements in the creation of sexual images) and experimental (youth-produced) sexting, further dividing the latter by motivation (romantic, sexual attention-seeking, other)
2012	Ringrose, et al.	Sexting	Sexting may include boys asking girls for photos in their bra, bikini or with naked breasts, etc.; boys claiming to have such photos on their phones; children sending sexually explicit messages over the phone or internet; the negotiation of sexual propositions on digital devices;
2012	Ringrose et al.	Sexting	The accessing and recirculation of pornography on phones
2012	Ringrose, et al.	Sexting	Use of cellular telephony and sexting may encompass other online activities involving a computer or other Internet-enabled device.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Terminology</b>	<b>Definition</b>
2012	Ringrose et al.	Sexting	The production, consumption, and distribution of sexual communications
2012	Ringrose et al.	Sexting	Sexting – as a set of practices
2012	Ringrose et al.	Sexting	Sexting can include ‘exposing’ sexually revealing or compromising photos or ‘sex talk.’
2012	NSPCC	Sexting	“Exchange of sexual messages or images” and “creating, sharing and forwarding sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images” through mobile phones and the Internet.
2012	NSPCC	Sexting	Sexting cannot be described in absolute terms – wanted versus unwanted sexual activity, deliberate versus accidental exposure – for much of young people’s engagement with sexual messages and images is ambiguous. Few teens wish to be excluded from sexual banter, gossip, discussion or, indeed, from the flirtatious activity that is endemic in youth culture.
2013	Walrave, Heirman and Hallam	Adolescent Sexting	The electronic swapping of sexually intimate texts or images
2014	Temple et al.	Teen Sexting	Teen sexting (defined herein as electronically sending sexually explicit images from one adolescent to another)
2014	Van Ouytsel, et al.	Sexting	Adolescents' engagement in sending sexually explicit pictures through the internet or the mobile phone (i.e., sexting)
2014	Van Ouytsel, et al.	Sexting	Sent a sexually suggestive picture (naked or half naked) of themselves using the internet or a mobile phone in the months prior to the study.
2014	Crofts and Lee	Sexting	Sexting concerns the digital recording of sexually suggestive or explicit images and distribution by mobile phone messaging or through the internet on social network sites, such as Facebook, Myspace, and YouTube. <sup>1</sup>
2014	O'Sullivan	Sexting	Sexting refers to sending a sexually explicit image or information, typically a nude or semi-nude photograph, via a text message, email, or other forms of computer-based medium.
2014	O'Sullivan	Sexting	Receiving a nude or semi-nude photograph (“sext”).
2014	Karaian	Sexting	Behaviour as well as any ‘sexual communication [] with content that includes both pictures and text messages sent using cell phones and other electronic media’ (Wolak et al., 2011: 2).
2014	Klettke, Hallford, Mellor	Sexting	We will define sexting as the sending, receiving, or forwarding of sexually explicit messages, images, or photos to others through electronic means, primarily between cellular phones.
2014	Klettke, Hallford, Mellor	Sexting	Sexting was defined as sending texts or photos, receiving texts or photos, or sending as well as receiving texts or photos of a sexual nature.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Terminology</b>	<b>Definition</b>
2014	Klettke, Hallford, Mellor	Sexting	One notable issue with research examining sexting behaviour is the variability with which sexting behaviour has been defined and measured (Lounsbury et al., 2011).
2014	Klettke, Hallford, Mellor	Sexting	Sexually suggestive texts versus sexually explicit photos (e.g., Drouin and Landgraff, 2012; Henderson and Morgan, 2011), others have measured them collectively as generalised sexting behaviour (e.g., Lenhart, 2009; Rice et al., 2012). Individuals might also differentially interpret descriptions such as ‘semi-nude’ or ‘sexually suggestive,’ which may result in confusing terms and subsequent measurement errors.
2014	Ybarra and Mitchell	Sexting	“Sexting” originated as a media term [1] that refers to sending sexual images via text messaging and can also include uploading sexual pictures to Web sites.
2014	Ybarra and Mitchell	Sexting	“Sending or showing someone sexual pictures of yourself where you were nude or nearly nude.”
2014	Ybarra and Mitchell	Sexting	The present study defines the behaviour as sending “nude or nearly nude” pictures. This could represent a broad range of behaviours, ranging from being in a revealing bathing suit or shirtless to being completely nude. Mitchell et al. [9] used a similar definition and then asked a follow-up question about whether the picture was sexually explicit (i.e., showing naked breasts, genitals, or bottoms). This narrower definition reduced the rate by more than half: 2.5% of ten-to seventeen-year-olds endorsed the broader definition, whereas 1% endorsed the narrower definition. Importantly, even with this broad definition, these three national studies note uniformly low rates of sexting.
2014	Ybarra and Mitchell	Sexting	Youth may experience depressive symptomatology due to this broader pattern of sexual risk behaviour or knowing that a sexual picture of them is “out;” Youth with depressive symptomatology may be more inclined to engage in sexting. Also, sexual pictures that include one being “nude or nearly nude” reflect a range of pictures, from youth engaging in sexual acts to adolescent females posing in bathing suits to “flash” the camera [9]. The degree of sexual explicitness in the photos may relate to different odds of negative consequences or harmful impact. Certainly, too, sexual behaviour can be sensitive to a discussion, and youth may under-report their engagement with these behaviours.
2014	Van Ouytsel, et al.	Sexting	Using a single-item question asking the respondents whether they had sent a sexually suggestive picture (naked or half naked) of themselves using the internet or a mobile phone in the months prior to the study.
2014	Stonard, et al.	Adolescent Dating Violence and Abuse (ADVA)	Adolescent Dating Violence and Abuse (ADVA), less research has investigated the relevance of Electronic Communication Technology (ECT), such as mobile phones and communication tools via the Internet to ADVA

Date	Author	Terminology	Definition
2014	Stonard, et al.	TAADVA	Technology Assisted Adolescent Dating Violence and Abuse (TAADVA).
2014	Stonard, et al.	TAADVA	“Any behaviours that are threatening, controlling, violent, abusive, harassing or stalking that are directed towards a current or former romantic partner by the other within the context of an adolescent (10–18 years old) dating relationship. This can include a combination of physical, psychological/emotional, and sexual behaviours and can occur in person or electronically via technology (such as a mobile phone or online) regardless of gender or sexuality.”
2014	Stonard, et al.	Cybering	Mishna, McLuckie, et al. (2009) also found that teenagers as young as thirteen years old depicted being involved in intense online sexual and romantic relationships, describing encounters that ranged from explicit sexual dialogue (referred to as “cybering”) and displaying nudity via webcams (referred to as “flashing”) to long-term monogamous relationships that either progressed to actual meetings or remained within a cyber context. According to the young people in this study, these online relationships were sustained through “almost daily” contact through email, webcam, and sometimes via phones.
2014	Stonard, et al.	Sexting	A new phenomenon involving ECTs among adolescents is the practice of “sexting.” Lenhart (2009, p. 3) has defined “sexting” as ‘the creating, sharing, and forwarding of sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images by teens. In a review of quantitative research on sexting, Ringrose, Gill, Livingstone, and Harvey (2012) reported that between 15 and 40% of young people participate in sexting, depending on their age and the way sexting is measured. The authors also found that few teens wished to be excluded from sexual banter, gossip, discussion or from the flirtatious activity that is endemic in youth culture and that sexting was not just practised on a one-to-one basis but as a group, networked phenomenon. It has been suggested that adolescence is a time of sexual exploration not only in real-life situations but also in the virtual reality of online sex through media such as the Internet, Chatrooms, and webcams (de Bruin et al., 2006).
2015	Wood, et al.	Sexting	Sending/receiving sexual images has commonly and problematically been referred to as ‘sexting.’
2015	Wood, et al.	Sexting	Exchange of sexual messages or images (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, Olafsson, and with members of the EU Kids Online Network, 2011) and ‘the creating, sharing, and forwarding of sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images’ (Lenhart, 2009) through mobile phones or the internet. It is described in the Oxford English Dictionary as ‘The action or practice of sending or exchanging sexually explicit or suggestive messages or images electronically, esp. using a mobile phone (OED online, 2015).

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Terminology</b>	<b>Definition</b>
2015	Ybarra and Mitchell	Sexting	Defined as “sending or showing someone sexual pictures of yourself nude or nearly nude.” The definition also includes sending sexually suggestive messages
2016	Van Ouytsel, et al.	Sexting	Sexting can be broadly defined as “sexually explicit content communicated via text messages, smartphones, or visual and Sexting can be broadly defined as “sexually explicit content communicated via text messages, smartphones, or visual and Web 2.0 activities such as social networking sites” (Ringrose et al., 2012)
2016	Black, Mezzina, and Thompson	Sexting	The practice of sending sexually explicit messages or images over the internet or via text messaging. (Mitchell, Finkelhor, Jones, and Wolak, 2012)
2016	Choi, Van Ouytsel, Temple	Sexting	Sexting behaviour (i.e., sending, requesting, being asked for a sext, and receiving a sext without permission).
2016	Choi, Van Ouytsel, Temple	Sexting	Sexting can be broadly defined as the sending of sexually explicit text messages or images via the Internet or mobile phone
2016	McLaughlin	Teen Sexting	Teen sexting is defined as the practice among teens of taking nude or partially nude digital images of themselves or others and texting them to other teens, emailing them to other teens or posting them on websites such as Myspace.com or Facebook.com.
2016	McLaughlin	Teen Sexting	Sexting can be viewed as an outgrowth of society’s overt sexualization of girls and women. Most reported sexting incidents involve the self-creation or consensual creation of sexual photos by teenage women and the further dissemination of them
2016	McLaughlin	Sexting	Depictions of minors which portray sexual acts
2016	Stanley, et al.	Sexting	the sending and receiving of sexual images and messages, known as “sexting
2016	Stanley, et al.	Sexting	"Sexting" can be conceptualised as a process whereby young people produce their pornography, and some of the young people interviewed perceived a commonality between sending sexual images and online pornography.
2016	Martellozzo, et al.	Naked Selfies	Young people had not taken naked selfies; Just over half of those who had taken intimate selfies had shared them with others; these are mainly, but not always, people they know;
2016	Martellozzo, et al.	Sexting	None of the children in focus groups described sexting as taking and sharing self-generated photographs of naked bodies or body parts. Instead, they interpreted sexting as writing and sharing sexually explicit or intimate words to people they knew, typically their boyfriend or girlfriend;

Date	Author	Terminology	Definition
2016	Martellozzo, et al.	Sexting	Young people do not recognise that sending intimate images is a form of sexting and that such images could be illegal. Children and young people seem to understand 'sexting' that adults do not share
2016	Martellozzo, et al.	Sexting	Agreement among children and young people from all age groups that sexting meant: "Texting about sex" (Female, 13) or "Texting with sexual comments" (Female, 14)
2016	Martellozzo, et al.	Sexting	"Texting someone dirty things" (Male, 14) and "Talking about sex by the text" (Female, 12)
2016	Martellozzo, et al.	Sexting	It was noted during the interviews that none of the children referred to sexting as "self-photographing nude body or body parts and sending to others" (Jaishankar, 2009, p. 21). They seemed to interpret sexting more as writing and sharing explicit messages with people they knew.
2016	Martellozzo, et al.	Sexting	Young people's definition of 'sexting' was more about erotic text than it was about images.
2016	Hollis and Belton	Sexting	Sexting: The NSPCC defines 'sexting' as "the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet" (NSPCC, 2016). It can also refer to written messages that are sexual
2016	Hollis and Belton	Indecent Images of Children IIOC	This may include the making, viewing and distribution of indecent images of children (IIOC) or other types of illegal/harmful pornography, grooming other children and young people online, and the online sexual victimisation of children and young people through images and chat.
2016	Hollis and Belton	Sexting	Self-taken sexual images that may not have been initiated from sexual abuse (commonly known as 'sexting').
2016	Hollis and Belton	Sexting	'Sexting' is "the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet" (NSPCC, 2016).
2016	Hollis and Belton	Sexting	The definition of sexting varies, whereby some studies will include semi-naked images while others will include naked images only.
2016	Choi, Van Ouytsel, and Temple	Sexting	Sexting can be broadly defined as the sending of sexually explicit text messages or images via the Internet or mobile phone (Drouin et al., 2013; Houck et al., 2014).
2016	Bobkowski, Shafer, and Ortiz	Sexting	"Sexting" (i.e., sending sexually explicit photos or messages via an electronic device)

Date	Author	Terminology	Definition
2017	Van Oosten and Vandenbosch	Sexy Self Presentation	Sexy self-presentation can be defined as self-presentation on SNSs, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, which is characterised by sexy poses and sexually suggestive but not explicit e-body displays (e.g., Baumgartner et al.,2015). When adolescents engage in body display on SNSs, they especially show their body by wearing revealing clothing (15%) but rarely pose in lingerie, underwear, bra (2.25%), or swimwear (1.31%) and are seldom nude (1.36%) (Hall et al., 2012).
2017	Van Oosten and Vandenbosch	Sexy Self Presentation	Some teens also report more sexually explicit forms of sexy self-presentation, namely sending sexually explicit.
2017	Van Oosten and Vandenbosch	Sexy Suggestive Self Presentation	Sexually suggestive self-presentations on SNSs predict the willingness to engage in more explicit forms of self-presentation (i.e., sexting)
2017	UKCCIS	'Youth produced sexual imagery.'	'Sexting' there is no clear definition of 'sexting.' Many professionals consider sexting to be 'sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet.' <sup>4</sup>
2017	UKCCIS	'Youth produced sexual imagery.'	A person under the age of eighteen creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of eighteen.
2017	UKCCIS	'Youth produced sexual imagery.'	A person under the age of eighteen shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of eighteen with a peer under the age of eighteen or an adult
2017	UKCCIS	'Youth produced sexual imagery.'	A person under the age of eighteen owns sexual imagery created by another person under the age of eighteen.
2017	UKCCIS	Sexting	The imagery contains a naked young person or a topless girl or displays genitals or sex acts, including masturbation; it will be considered indecent. Indecent images may also include overtly sexual images of young people in their underwear.

Date	Author	Terminology	Definition
2017	Ploharz	Sexting	The term “sexting” was coined by the news media in the middle part of the 2000s and describes the sending and receiving of sexually natural text and picture messages among teenagers (Hasinoff, 2012). The term gained much popularity in 2012. It was added to the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “the sending of sexually explicit messages or images by cell phone” (Merriam-Webster, 2015).
2017	Hollis and Belton	Harmful Sexual Behaviour	“One or more children are engaging in sexual discussions or acts – using the internet or any image-creating/sharing or communication device – which is considered inappropriate or harmful given their age or stage of development. This behaviour falls on a continuum of severity from pornography to online child sexual abuse.”
2017	Hasinoff	Sexting	Sexting is the practice of sharing personal sexual images via mobile phone or any digital communication,
2017	Kosenko, Luurs, Binder	Sexting	To create and exchange messages and images of a sexual nature, a practice commonly referred to as sexting.
2017	Kosenko, Luurs, Binder	Sexting	This included sharing sexual pictures “in person, on the Internet, and cell phones and text messaging” (p. 758). The measures employed in these studies also characterised the form and content of sexts in diverse ways. Eight studies focused entirely on images, including pictures and videos; the remaining studies (n=6) assessed images and text. Measures most referred to sext content as sexually explicit, suggestive, or provocative in nature (n= 7). Other measures referred to sext content as “sexual” in nature (n= 2), and six studies included questions regarding nude, nearly nude, or semi-nude photos. Ten studies specified the photo or message subject (i.e., images of or messages about oneself), but only Yeung and colleagues (2014) asked about the relational context in which sexting occurred.
2017	Kosenko, Luurs, Binder	Sexting	Defined sexting content as sexually suggestive or explicit but did not explain what messages or images counted as such. For instance, do breastfeeding images, which have been flagged on social media sites as sexual and obscene (Ibrahim, 2012), qualify as sexually suggestive or explicit? Relying on such nebulous terminology has proven problematic in research and legislation on pornography and could create similar problems with respect to sexting (Suarez, 2008). Some researchers attempted to clarify what was meant by sexually suggestive or explicit by specifying that sexts involved nude or semi-nude photos, which leaves written messages out of the definition.
2017	Ngo, Jaishankar and Agustina	Sexting	Defined 'Sexting, as the portmanteau of Sex and Texting,

Date	Author	Terminology	Definition
2017	Ngo, Jaishankar and Agustina	Sexting	Defined as sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages or nude, partially nude, or sexually suggestive digital images of oneself or others via a cell phone, e-mail, Internet, or Social Networking Service (Brown et al., 2009; Calvert, 2009; Corbett, 2009; Dilberto and Matthey, 2009; Halder and Jaishankar, 2014; Jaishankar, 2009, Walker and Moak, 2010). Sexting is a global phenomenon (Agustina and Gómez-Durán, 2012; Halder and Jaishankar, 2014).
2017	Weisskirch, Drouin, and Delevi	Sexting	Sexting is commonly understood as the sending and receiving of sexually suggestive or sexually explicit photos, videos, or text via cell phone or other technologies.
2017	Weisskirch, Drouin, and Delevi	Sexting	Sexting is defined as the sending and receiving of sexually suggestive or sexually explicit photographs, videos, or texts, primarily through cellular phones but also through other electronic means (Lenhart, 2009; National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 2008)
2017	Branley and Covey	Sexting	Sexting, sending embarrassing photos,
2017	Brinkley, et al.	Sexting	Sexting is sending sexually explicit or suggestive images, videos, or text messages via digital communication (Cox Communications, 2009).
2017	Brinkley, et al.	Sexting	sexting is sending text messages containing written sexual content, and unlike previous studies, this research examined the actual content of adolescents' text messages
2017	Brinkley, et al.	Sexting	Defining sexting as sending nude or nearly nude photos or videos of themselves or someone else,
2017	Van Ouytsel, Van Gool, Walrave, Ponnet and Peeters	Sexting	Sexting can be broadly defined as 'the sending, receiving, or forwarding of sexually explicit messages, images, or photos to others through electronic means, primarily between cellular phones' (Klettke, Hallford, and Mellor 2014, p.45)
2017	Anastassiou	Sexting	The term "sexting" refers to the sending and receiving of sexually explicit imagery via some form of virtual messaging.
2017	Anastassiou	Sexting	"Sexually explicit content communicated via text messages, smartphones, or visual and web 2.0 activities such as social networking sites" (Ringrose et al., 2012, p. 9
2017	Gámez-Guadix, Santisteban and Resett	Sexting	Voluntarily sending sexual content (e.g., photos, videos) among adolescents via the Internet and mobile phones, a phenomenon called sexting,
2017	Gámez-Guadix, Santisteban and Resett	Sexting	The voluntary creation and delivery of text messages, photos, or videos, with personal sexual content via the Internet or mobile devices

Date	Author	Terminology	Definition
2017	Gámez-Guadix, Santisteban and Resett	Sexting	In some studies, sexting has been limited to sending sexually suggestive photos or videos. In others, images of someone naked or semi-naked have been analysed, whereas others have also included sexually explicit text messages, photos, or videos (Mitchell et al., 2012). This inconsistency in the definition has caused difficulties in comparing previous data. Recent studies indicate that sexting frequency may vary depending on the content, which is why it is important to analyse sexual written information (e.g., text messages), as well as images sent with sexual content
2017	Bianchia, et al.	Sexting	The exchange of sexually suggestive and provocative content via smartphones, the Internet, or social networks,
2017	Wolak, et al.	Sextortion	Sextortion is one of several terms (e.g., sexting, non-consensual sharing of sexual images, revenge pornography) that have been used to refer to the non-consensual, malicious, or criminally motivated distribution of sexual images via cell phones and other digital media. Sextortion relates to situations in which perpetrators threaten to expose sexual images to coerce victims to provide additional pictures, engage in sexual activity
2017	Wolak, et al.	Non-Consensual Photography	Non-consensual pornography (i.e., distribution of sexual images without consent
2017	Wolak, et al.	Revenge Porn	Revenge pornography (i.e., malicious distribution of sexual images
2017	Van Oosten and Vandenbosch	Sexy Self Presentation	Sexy self-presentation can be defined as self-presentation on SNSs, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, which is characterised by sexy poses and sexually suggestive but not explicit e body displays (e.g., Baumgartner et al., 2015).
2017	Woodward, Evans, and Brooks	Sexting	Sexting involves the sending or receiving of sexually explicit messages (Englander 2012), as well as the receiving or forwarding of nude and/or partially nude images or videos (Wastler 2010; Wolak, Finkelhor, and Mitchell, 2012).
2017	Woodward, Evans, and Brooks	Sexting	For this study, we defined sexting behaviours like previous studies where a sext is an act of sending, receiving, or forwarding nude photos through a cellular telephone (Mitchell et al. 2012; Temple et al. 2012; Van Ouytsel et al., 2014).
2017	Garcia-Gomez	Sexting	The electronic swapping of sexually provocative images and texts, commonly known as sexting,
2017	Strassberg, Cann, and Velarde	Sexting	many adolescents acknowledge having exchanged sexually explicit cell phone pictures of themselves, a behaviour termed sexting.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Terminology</b>	<b>Definition</b>
2017	Strassberg, Cann, and Velarde	Sexting	Specifically, (1) sexting has been operationally defined in many ways (e.g., nude, nearly nude, sexually suggestive, sexually provocative pictures, or even explicit/suggestive/provocative text messages).
2018	Holoyda, et al.	Sexting	generally, involves the transmission of text, pictures, or videos containing sexual material.
2018	Holoyda, et al.	Sexting	Sexually themed conversation, sexual exploration, and explicit image-sharing via mobile devices
2018	Holoyda, et al.	Sexting	When defining this behaviour, authors consider different media types, actions, transmission modes, and sexual characteristics. In terms of media types, researchers have variously considered sending text messages, images, or videos – alone or in combination – to be sexting. They also distinguished “active sexting” (including creating, posting, sending, showing, and forwarding messages) from “passive sexting” (such as requesting, receiving, or receiving requests for sexual messages). All studies considered transmission via an Internet-enabled or mobile device to be sexting, while some distinguished between posting online generally and directly sending messages or images to another person. Lastly, they found that studies utilize a variety of sexual “descriptors” for the media, including sext, sexting, sexy, sexually explicit, sexually related, sexually suggestive, sexual content, nude, naked, and nearly or partially nude or naked. Even among those researching this behaviour, there is no single definition for what constitutes sexting. Furthermore, the term's similarity to “texting” suggests an exclusive focus on the text content.
2018	Holoyda, et al.	Sexting	Use of cellular telephony, sexting may encompass other online activities involving a computer or other Internet-enabled device.
2018	Lloyd	Sexting	‘Sexting,’ understood as the consensual distribution of self-generated sexually explicit imagery through internet-connected mobile devices, one
2018	Lloyd	Sexting	The consensual sharing of self-generated sexual imagery via internet-connected mobile technology
2018	Lloyd	Sexting	Making, possessing, and distributing any imagery of someone under eighteen that is “indecent” is illegal. This includes imagery of yourself if you are under eighteen.’
2018	Gewirtz-Meydan, Mitchell, Rothman	Sexting	The practice of children using new media technologies to send or distribute sexually explicit images of themselves or others to their peers, a practice commonly known as sexting
2018	Gewirtz-Meydan, Mitchell, Rothman	Sexting	Sexting involves the digital recording of sexually suggestive or explicit images and distribution by mobile phone messaging or through the internet, such as through social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube) (Crofts and Lee, 2013).
2018	Gewirtz-Meydan, Mitchell, Rothman	Sexting	Sexting is a remarkably varied phenomenon in terms of context, meaning, and intention, with the potential for consensual and non-consensual aspects of the activity (Cooper, Quayle, Jonsson, and Svedin, 20).

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Terminology</b>	<b>Definition</b>
2019	Powell, Henry, Flynn, and Scott	Image-based sexual abuse	Image-based sexual abuse (IBSA) involves three key behaviours: the non-consensual taking or creation of nude or sexual images; the non-consensual sharing or distribution of nude or sexual images; and threats made to distribute nude or sexual images.
2019	Powell, Henry, Flynn, and Scott	Image-based sexual abuse	refers to the taking, distributing, or making of threats to distribute a nude or sexual image without a person's consent (see, e.g., DeKeseredy and Schwartz, 2016; McGlynn and Rackley, 2017; McGlynn, Rackley, and Houghton, 2017; Powell and Henry, 2016; Powell and Henry, 2017; Powell, Henry, and Flynn, 2018). <sup>1</sup>
2019	Powell, Henry, Flynn, and Scott	Upskirting and Downblousing	voyeurism, where perpetrators seek to create or distribute images as a form of sexual gratification or social status building, including (but not limited to) 'Upskirting' and 'down-blousing.'
2019	Barrense-Diaz, Suris and Akre	Sexting	Sexting is a complex phenomenon that entails an exchange between the adolescent and online and offline contexts that may result in different experiences and outcomes (Cooper et al., 2016; Livingstone & Mason, 2015; Ringrose et al., 2012).
2019	Allnock and Atkinson	Harmful Sexual Behaviour	'Harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB) is an umbrella phrase applied in research and practice in the United Kingdom (UK) and some English-speaking nations to capture a wide range of problematic and abusive behaviours displayed by children and young people (Hackett et al., 2015; Shlonsky et al., 2017). Hackett et al. (2015, p.12)
2019	Allnock and Atkinson	Harmful Sexual Behaviour	Hackett et al. (2015, p.12) define HSB as "sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate that may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child, young person or adult", proposing a developmentally specific continuum of inappropriate, problematic, abusive, and violent behaviours.
2019	Allnock and Atkinson	Image-based sexual abuse	Experienced image-based sexual abuse and had intimate photos redistributed by their partner without their consent
2020	Machackova, H., et al.	Cyberhate	We also focused on cyberhate victimisation, which is when people are and feel targeted by hateful content online.
2020	UKCCIS	Nudes and Semi Nudes	(UKCIS, 2020), this is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams online by young people under eighteen. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's Airdrop, which works offline. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics.'
2021	Meehan, Claire	Sext	To produce the image, the image is shared
2021	Meehan, Claire	Sext	Creating and sharing intimate images

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Terminology</b>	<b>Definition</b>
2021	Odeja, et al.	Sexting Behaviours	Sending, receiving and third party forwarding.... Intimate communications.... Messages with sexual content
2021	Pistoni et al.	Sexting	sending texts or photos, receiving texts or photos, or sending as well as receiving texts or photos of a sexual nature
2021	Courtice and Shaughnessy	Sexting	sexting evolved to include sexually explicit photos and videos
2023	Hu et al.	Sexting	The exchange of intimate messages, images, and videos via digital means

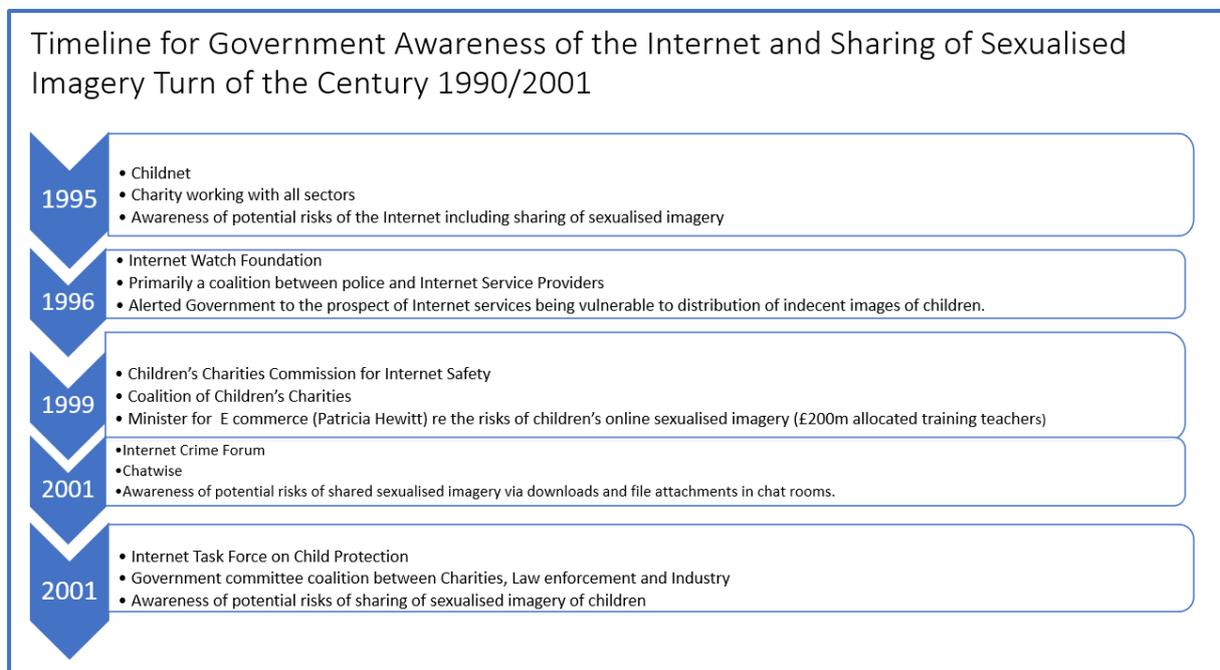
## 2.8: Government Guidance

Successive governments, since 1988 (Jenkins, 1988), have been made aware from various sources of the internet's capacity to expose children to harm. This harm originates from children being exposed to sexualised imagery through electronic file sharing. Figure 11 illustrates evidence of changes in the law resulting from collaborative charity-led campaigns and law enforcement agendas, where the government was collectively lobbied for legislation changes concerning children's safety and online file-sharing behaviours. Jenkins (1998) acknowledged crimes committed on the internet involving child pornography and that the internet had tools to facilitate exchanges of such imagery, which he suggested was evidenced in the prosecution rates for child pornography crimes.

However, in 2001, the impetus to address child pornography image exchange changed with the re-election of the Labour government, which introduced 'The Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families' (Department of Health, 2001). This framework was devised to improve life chances for children, and safeguarding became part of these discussions. Before 2001 (Jackson et al., 2003), government discussions were conducted with charitable organisations that lobbied the government, internet service providers, the Home Office and law enforcement agencies. These charities advocated for children and the issues surrounding child pornography image exchanges on the internet. The DfE and OFSTED did not become involved in the agenda to address online exchanges of child pornography until 2015 when safeguarding was introduced to the OFSTED inspection regime.

Between 1988 and 2001, organisations referenced in Figure 11 took responsibility for lobbying the government regarding children's Internet use and file-sharing and educating parents. During this period, file-sharing behaviours were thought to occur at home

(Valkenberg and Soeters, 2001). The Home Office-produced educational campaigns targeting parents through parental advice publications and leaflets addressing children’s online behaviour issues. However, the government were aware of the possibility for children to become exposed to sexualised imagery via file sharing and hardware online as early as 1995. Teachers and educational establishments were not directly involved in addressing online behaviours until the Byron Review (2008), in which online safety, children, and safeguarding were discussed. The review instigated and devised by the New Labour Government raised awareness and supported parents and school professionals regarding the risks of children's online behaviours.



**Figure 11: Early Developments for Protecting Children Online (Hewitson, 2023)**

The exposure of children to sexualised imagery was alluded to in Byron’s 2008 report, using terminology like ‘inappropriate material’ and the creation of inappropriate content by young people (Byron, 2008). An outcome of the Byron Review (2008) was the formation of UKCCIS, a body of two hundred organisations that conduct research and produce publications

regarding children's online behaviours. UKCCIS (2017) was responsible for the first publication to address pupil sexting behaviour and the exchange of imagery of a sexualised nature involving children. The publication (UKCCIS, 2017) cites the Wolak and Finkelhor study (2011) to categorise and classify sexting into a taxonomy of behaviours, and their research material formulates a basis for my study.

Since 2010, successive UK governments have produced safeguarding publications containing policy directives and guidance for schools, case studies, and summaries of other empirical research to inform school safeguarding agendas. The first publication was titled 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) (DfE, 2010), which was subsequently updated in September each year (DfE, 2023). Sexting behaviours were addressed explicitly in the 2017 publication (DfE, 2017). However, responsibility for children's online behaviour was still attributed to home, as schools claimed they had systems to control online traffic via centralised servers and software to intercept network traffic. However, mobile phone technology currently bypasses school network security systems and allows data sharing on school premises, which school systems cannot easily intercept. The KCSIE publication (DfE, 2020) refers to Upskirting and Downblousing behaviours and acknowledges the possibility that image creation and exchanges of this type of sexting behaviour may occur on school premises.

Furthermore, OFSTED discussed the pernicious nature of sexual aggression in schools (2021a). However, online aggression, specifically AASB, is not currently featured as prominently as coding in the ITT computing curriculum. (DfE, 2014). The prioritising of computer coding skills has significantly impacted the capacity of the curriculum for trainees and to address and prepare them to manage AASB and online aggression in schools.

State schools are responsible for providing young people with 'skills, attributes and knowledge, to help them navigate risks and learn how to seek the support of adults, should they encounter problems' (DfE, 2019). The National Curriculum (DfE, 2014) includes direction regarding online behaviour, including teaching and learning opportunities regarding how school youth-produced sexual imagery should be addressed and how to receive such help. Choi et al. (2016) discussed how schools could teach adolescents how to respond to pressures to engage in sexual acts by discussing effective negotiation strategies and communication styles.

## **2.9: Conclusion and Literature Findings**

This selected literature review supported addressing the three research questions for this thesis by initially establishing that no widely accepted definition of sexting behaviour exists. Furthermore, there are no directives for addressing AASB. However, the government appears to have produced many directives to address sexting behaviours aimed at practising teachers and not new entrants to the teaching profession.

This review identified the constituents of distinct types of sexting behaviour in response to research question one. This review also established sexting as a continuum of behaviours (Davidson et al., 2012) that ranged from flirty consensual text messages to files containing graphic child pornography obtained by coercive methods. Similarly, distributing sexting communications can be categorised by the reason for transmitting imagery, ranging from fun and flirting to bullying, humiliating, aggressive, and controlling behaviours (Davidson et al., 2012; Lemke and Rogers, 2020; Woodley et al., 2024). A further behaviour consideration concerns the transmission rate, ranging from one-to-one (Buren and Lunde, 2018) transmission between romantic partners and friends to multiple mass transmissions across

global networks. These continuums may be helpful to the trainees and provide them with information to help them professionally discern between experimental and aggressive adolescent sexting behaviours (AASB). The information gleaned from this review may have implications for the ITT curriculum, the actions of the teacher receiving the disclosure, and the outcomes for the pupils involved after a disclosure incident.

This literature review explored research question two, 'How should trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?' It found that there are no specific directives for trainee teachers. However, there are directives for practising teachers that are as disparate and conflicting as the definitions of sexting behaviours. Thirty-three papers contained 150 specific suggestions for school actions and directives for teachers. Still, in some instances, it was unclear whether the directives were for the safeguarding team or the teacher.

This review explored research question three to try and find information to support trainees in understanding how to manage sexting behaviours. The selected literature review found a gap in the literature for addressing this question; 'How do trainees plan to respond to AASB?' All publications reviewed referred to practising teachers, designated safeguarding leads and headteachers except for Byron (2008; 2018) and OFSTED (2021a), where references were made for the requirement to train teachers, but not new entrants to the teaching profession.

Finally, the selected review concluded that the government has been aware of sharing pornographic imagery of children obtained by aggression and coercion, referred to in this thesis as AASB, for many years. AASB appears to be a growing problem for the government and schools, and the government suggests that it should be addressed in the school curriculum. However, circumstances surrounding changes to the National Curriculum in 2014 resulted in the following issues.

- Sexting behaviours may not be addressed as effectively as in schools due to the computer science National Curriculum's emphasis on coding (DfE, 2014).
- The ITT curriculum omits training on sexting behaviours, which could be attributed to online behaviours omitted from the Carter Review (2015).
- The introduction of the 'Relationships Curriculum' (DfE, 2019b) has placed responsibility on teachers outside of computer science as a subject area, where teachers may not have the technical knowledge to address the intricacies, the technological expertise to understand sexting behaviours and personal device usage.

Finally, the mistaken government assumption that parents are responsible for educating children regarding sexting behaviours and online dangers has further conflated the issues surrounding AASB. Parents may not have access to research or educational materials to support addressing adolescent sexting issues, particularly AASB, which further justifies ensuring computing teacher training addresses AASB behaviours as part of the ITT curriculum to support teachers, pupils, and parents.

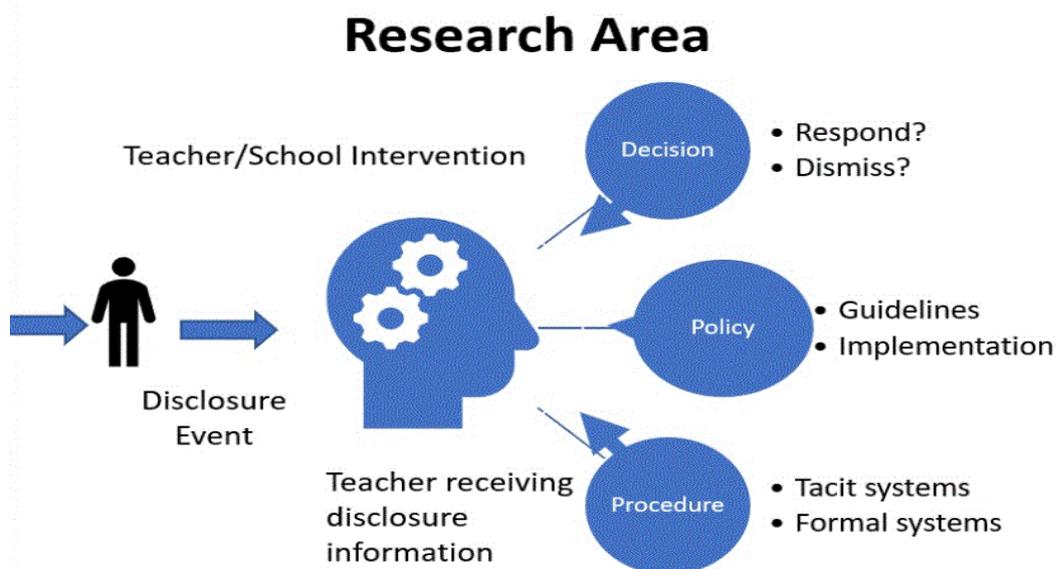
## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses how I have adapted Kincheloe and Berry's (2004) version of Levi-Strauss's (1962) Bricolage methodology to study human AASB behaviour. The rationale behind applying Kincheloe's (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004) interpretation of Bricolage for this thesis is that the methodology can be flexible and adapted to accommodate more than one perspective of a phenomenon, which might be crucial to this research. Bricolage methodology supports data-collection methods and provides a structure for ethical considerations when addressing AASB. Bricolage also aligns with the philosophical interpretivist paradigm and CT theory to explore the problem of addressing AASB disclosures.

Bricolage incorporated CT, which aided the decomposition of AASB into smaller manageable parts and provided a structure to independently observe and investigate the three research strands, A, B and C. The three research strands (A, B and C) are the smaller manageable parts and support a thorough investigation of AASB from both the trainee secondary school computing teachers' perspectives and expert opinions. Capturing current trainee understanding of adolescent sexting behaviours and trainee plans to manage aggressive sexting disclosures (Hertz and Ferdon, 2008, p.14) is vital to this thesis. This chapter also discusses the methodology adaptations used for exploring consultant and practitioner expert opinions regarding how trainees should receive and address AASB disclosures in schools. Contextualising the disclosure processes for sexting behaviours may help to understand the issues surrounding addressing AASB. Disclosures are presented from various sources (OFSTED 2021a, p.11; OFSTED, 2021a, p.7) and involve stakeholder conversations between a teacher and a pupil, parents, colleagues, or the police. Disclosure conversations are transactions that reveal adolescent engagement in sexting behaviours.

Computer teachers are explored explicitly in my research because of National Curriculum requirements (DfE, 2014) regarding understanding online safety and the ability to address pupil safeguarding needs. The National Curriculum (DfE, 2014, p.87) stipulates that teachers should know how to 'use technology safely, respectfully, responsibly, and securely... protecting their [pupils'] online identity and privacy; recognise inappropriate content, contact, and conduct, and identify how to report concerns. These National Curriculum (DfE, 2014) requirements encompass educating pupils about safeguarding systems and sexting behaviours. Government safeguarding policy publications KCSIE requires teachers to address 'online peer abuse and know how to report it' (DfE, 2019, p.93, DfE, 2021a, p.2); such reports are AASB disclosures and support why this research may be necessary.

Figure 12 below presents decisions trainees may encounter when facing disclosure events. To address a disclosure, a trainee must be able to define the sexting behaviour and plan a response to the disclosure event.



**Figure 12: The Disclosure Decision-Making Process.**

Previous exposure to policy and procedures may influence how trainees respond to and invoke safeguarding processes when constructing their responses. Bricolage methodology supports exploring trainee preparation for constructing a response to manage a disclosure event.

### **3.1: Research Aims and Purpose**

The rationale for exploring AASB disclosures hinges upon three main arguments, which structure the approach to this research: the trainees' preparedness to address AASB, the safety of future pupils in their care, and the expert expectations regarding actioning AASB. School safeguarding systems and policies are updated annually, according to government guidance. The university computing ITT provision addresses school safeguarding systems, which should be reviewed annually to reflect policy changes. However, school systems differ, and there may be no 'one size fits all' approach to addressing safeguarding policy, which may create dissonance for ITT training.

The chosen research methodology was Kincheloe and Berry's (2004) adaptation of Bricolage. The bricolage methodology allows combining methods from the social sciences, humanities, and other areas to create a suitable inquiry model (Yee and Bremner, 2011). Levi-Strauss (1962) first utilised Bricolage as a methodology to study ways of understanding human behaviour. This research aims to produce findings demonstrating the current perceptions, knowledge, and understanding of twenty trainee computing teachers. Computing teachers were chosen for this research because of the requirements for delivering a digital literacy curriculum to pupils (DfE, 2014). This investigation establishes trainee perceptions and experiences of AASB, alongside expectations of professional safeguarding experts regarding

addressing AASB, to establish if gaps exist between expert expectations and trainee knowledge and understanding.

Additionally, this research captures trainee responses to operationalising safeguarding policy concerning AASB in English secondary schools. It aims to establish the trainee's awareness of current government safeguarding policy operational aspects derived from recent Government policy publications. 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2019; 2020; 2021; 2022; 2023). Aggressive sexting behaviours can be challenging to address and emotionally charged. Current policy dictates that some disclosures may require specialist interventions from external agencies, including the police or social services. This research explores trainees' preparedness for these eventualities.

### **3.1.1: Approaching the Research**

Quantitative methodologies were considered for this research; however, numeric data may hide nuances and meanings, which could obscure the research participants' experiences and understanding, including how trainees plan to manage AASB in schools after their training. On reflection, a quantitative methodology could provide statistical data regarding certain aspects of adolescent sexting behaviours. However, during the research period, OFSTED (2021b) published quantitative data regarding AASB, which negated the requirement to establish statistical prevalence data concerning adolescent sexting behaviour encountered. This statistical data is presented in Table 1.

This research, being qualitative in nature (Braun and Clarke, 2013; Denzin and Lincoln, 2018), offers a unique perspective as it delves into non-numerical data and interprets meaning from it. The insights derived from these data interpretations are of significant value, shedding light

on the understanding of trainees and the expectations of experts in safeguarding training to address AASB in ITT.

### **3.1.2: Contributing Theoretical Perspectives.**

Complexity (Heugler & Ruch, 2021) was a considered theory for this research, as it can define relationships between interlinked systems where interdependent variables within each system interconnect. Disclosure would be an interconnected variable as causal categories for change within each system can be described, such as the requirement to deliver the relationships curriculum (DfE, 2019). However, the effect of change cannot be characterised using this theory (Byrne and Callaghan, 2014) as many independent interlinked variables, such as the curriculum, the teacher's knowledge base, and pupil behaviours, coexist. Complexity theory has now evolved to encompass a post-modernist view of complexity with two distinct paradigms: General Complexity and Restricted Complexity (Byrne and Callaghan, 2014, p.39; Davis and Sumara, 2006, p.73). General complexity spans the physical and social world to encompass biological, social and cultural aspects of systems and intersubjectivity between systems. General complexity has Freudian origins, suggesting that complexity extends beyond individualism and may be a transitory state (Davis and Sumara, 2006, p.73). Restricted complexity has pragmatic roots and subscribes to the view that morals and ethics inform collective and personal meaning within a system.

The coexistence of systems for adolescent education and ITT requires establishing and maintaining independent systems for organisations to work together effectively. Nodes of interaction exist between university and school systems with affiliated power structures within these nodes, influencing many aspects of training provision. Prudent management may be required for such systems to coexist and operate effectively, referred to in complexity

theory as equilibrium (Byrne and Callaghan, 2014). This simplified explanation of an ontological perspective originates in mathematics and physics, but the social sciences have adapted to complexity and used it to explore organisational systems. However, this research seeks to establish a current picture of practice and does not seek to manage complex relationships between organisations. Therefore, complexity theory was influential as it explains how these organisations operate and coexist. This research established the current training regime requirement for ITT and explained how the responsibility for this training could be devolved between organisations. Therefore, complexity was disregarded as a theoretical approach but requires acknowledgement of the contribution complexity makes to exploring the sensitivities of inter-organisational safeguarding agendas.

CT was a suitable theoretical alternative, as it provides a problem-solving conceptual framework to represent reality, encompass complexity and address the research questions. CT (Papert, 1993), a methodology devised by Seymour Papert acknowledges complexity theory and uses abstraction, decomposition, pattern recognition and algorithms to address a problem. However, Papert (1993) refers to the epistemological foundations of his work as drawing upon Piaget (1970; 1977), who studied the rules which govern learning and uses mathematical constructs. Papert's work (1993) uses logic to structure solving problems. It should be familiar to the computing trainee research participants, as he formulates part of the pedagogical foundations used during the training of computing teachers for lesson preparation. The methodology was further developed by Csizmadia et al. (2015) and then refined by Quinlan and Cross (2020) for teacher development. CT theory guides the research questions and the data-collection processes as some data-collection tools are structured as problems that align with CT (Quinlan and Cross, 2020) and algorithmic thinking used in computing classrooms.

Whilst acknowledging that it might not be desirable to include a variety of theoretical influences in doctoral study, recognition that addressing adolescent sexting may be a transdisciplinary activity, which could be influenced by several academic theories that may contribute to my research, Bricolage (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004) was used in conjunction with Goffman (1959) and Berger and Luckman (1967), who posit that layers of reality exist before the research process commences. For example, smartphones exist as communication tools, and vocabulary exists to describe smartphone usage. Children and schools exist, together with adults, some of whom serve the function of teachers in schools and some responsible for resolving AASB as safeguarding staff (DSOs). The relationships between children, teachers and DSOs exist, as do peer relationships.

Social relationships are constructed when humans encounter physical objects, particularly with smartphone technology (Campbell and Choudhury, 2012). Smartphone interactions between adolescent peer groups have been omitted from this research due to the application of CT (Quinlan and Cross, 2020), as abstraction removes unnecessary detail. Therefore, I accept that AASB happens, and the focus remains on addressing disclosures of AASB using smartphones or technology interactions between adolescents.

The epistemological assumption for this research is that interpretations of socially constructed shared realities occur when adolescent private worlds and teachers' value systems become acquainted during an AASB disclosure event. These subjective realities have multiple facets that link the perspectives of the researcher, the researcher, and the audience (Creswell, 1998). Teachers and pupils construct their interpretations of an AASB event, and Sarandakos (1998, p.36) explains, 'reality is what people see it to be'. However, computing teachers must understand these constructed realities and social interactions to construct a

representative account when reporting an AASB event for school safeguarding purposes; addressing AASB disclosure interactions may involve multiple perspectives. Therefore, this research uses mixed research methods to elicit data. This chapter discusses how mixed methods and theoretical perspectives worked together to address the research questions for my thesis. Stake (1995) identified that mixed methods approaches may encompass interpretive paradigms as an 'inductive lens' (Tight, 2017, p.101) which this research has adopted and will be discussed later.

Denzin and Lincoln (2018) discuss how researching from multiple perspectives like this creates a polyphony of voices (Nollan, 2004), where the voices interweave so that no one voice appears dominant in the research. In a theoretical polyphony, each theorist's perspective informs and directs an aspect of the research. Therefore, this research may be more informed than driven by theory. Street-level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 2010) and CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) primarily support structuring the research, as this research focuses on three research questions that address the disclosure process. CT, as earlier discussed, uses abstraction, decomposition, pattern recognition and applying an algorithm to discern whether the data addresses the research question. Abstraction was an essential and necessary aspect of the CT (Quinlan and Cross, 2020) process, as it helped remove unimportant details and establish which data supported the research questions. Decomposition helped to identify the required participants and structure the investigative research tools. Street-level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 2010) supported the creation of tools that helped to establish initially whether trainees understand and engage with policy enactment when they plan to address AASB behaviour. Lipsky (2010) also supported the creation of data capture tools that acquired expert expectations of trainees regarding the use and adherence to policies and processes.

four theories have contributed to this research by influencing the tools used and deciding on the research participants. These theories link together; for example, Lipsky's (1980) theory of street-level bureaucracy informed acquiring the expectations of professional experts for novice computing teachers who enact policy that may involve decision-making and performing administrative reporting tasks as part of their professional roles. This theory also informs structuring the data capture tools for the trainees, as my research seeks to establish their awareness of administrative processes and policy decisions, which would be applied practically in schools.

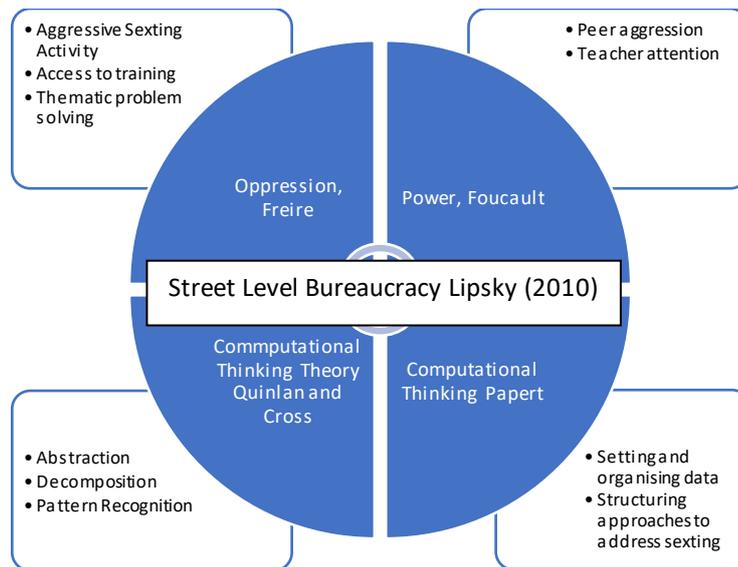
Lipsky's updated version of 'street-level bureaucracy' (Lipsky, 2010) theory concerns understanding how processes and administration link with the theories considered and is included in Figure 13 below. Street Level Bureaucracy (Lipsky, 2010) and Freire's Theory of Oppression (1996) provide insight into the responsibility divested in teachers regarding policy enactment in school. In Freire's Theory of Oppression, problem-solving responsibilities have been applied to teachers, resulting in 'dehumanisation' (Freire, 1996, p.26). He discusses the influence of neoliberal politics, whose culture has created by-products, such as emergent technologies and online pupil behaviour, that may have created oppressive workloads for teachers.

Byron's publications span a decade from 2008 to 2018 (Byron, 2008; Byron, 2018) and draw attention to the by-products of technological advances, and highlight school teachers' restricted access to training, which can occur for many reasons, including political, educational priorities in areas other than pupil mobile phone usage. Freire's (1996) and Lipsky's (1980; 2010) references to teacher workload have indirectly influenced this research, particularly concerning acquiring data to establish policy enactment expectations from

participant experts. These theories also influenced plans for approaches to accommodate acquiring research data within oppressive DSO workloads, which was an essential and challenging consideration.

The requirement for trainee teachers to use school pastoral systems includes receiving and documenting disclosure information acquired from pupil safeguarding discussions. This requires recording information using appropriate terminology and passing information to DSOs in a timely manner using school reporting and pastoral systems. Furthermore, trainees may be required to disseminate records to relevant persons in school (in this instance, DSOs). These tasks highlight the bureaucratic responsibilities involved in contemporary safeguarding workloads.

Safeguarding systems have introduced bureaucratic responsibilities. (Lipsky, 2010) that may require further training updates to support trainee teachers. Investigation points include expectations regarding the trainee's ability to define sexting behaviour; understanding potential workload impact (which may include expected disclosure times); relationships between disclosing adolescents and the teacher recipient; deciding whether to contact parents or guardians of the adolescent; and expectations regarding familiarisation with policy, procedure and terminology. Trainees may be required to learn and exercise discretion regarding revealing what information to whom, where and when. Lipsky's (2010) expectations illustrate how the theories link together and are illustrated below in Figure 13.



**Figure 13: Theoretical Influences for This Thesis**

A semi-structured approach to data collection allowed flexibility in the techniques and tools used. The data collection process ensures that all participants can express opinions and viewpoints that they consider important (Bryman, 2012) for safeguarding purposes.

One qualitative paradigm considered was Berger and Luckman's (1967, p.35) 'Social Constructivism', which contemplated extracting meaning from social interactions. However, this research did not require the identification of the intent behind behavioural interactions, as the acronym (AASB) defines the intention. However, this research requires several perspectives and opinions regarding implementing and operationalising safeguarding practices. Therefore, the social constructivism paradigm aligns with this research as I am considering the lived experience, thoughts, and feelings of the participants, as opinions and meaning are essential to the findings of this research. This research explored how trainees plan to address or operationalise safeguarding policy in schools, how they plan to respond to reports of adolescent sexting behaviour incidents, and where they have received training to implement their thoughts and ideas. Fundamentally, this research considered trainees' planned interactions when receiving an AASB disclosure incident. An AASB interaction

demonstrates an adolescent power dynamic, where the intention to oppress or humiliate the subject of an image via the image-sharing transaction may be a form of bullying (Beer et al., 2019)

‘Transitional safeguarding’ has also been a considered theory for this research; it concerns physical and emotional aspects of adolescent developmental behaviours during the transition period between childhood and adulthood (Heugler and Ruch, 2021). The theory also addresses relationships, approaches to risk and aspects of adolescent vulnerability. Adolescents often experiment with adult behaviours, with limited awareness of risk perception and consequences (Holmes and Smith, 2022). Vulnerability in the context of risk and relationships purports that adolescents may engage in sexual behaviours that expose them to risks, such as unplanned pregnancies or exposure to coercive relationships. Where adolescents do not recognise coercive behaviours, they may also not possess the necessary skillsets to manage coercive relationships, rendering them vulnerable to exploitation, particularly regarding sending photographs (AASB). Whilst this theory did not directly influence the research process, it does provide a context for understanding sexting behaviour for this research.

The Relationship Curriculum (DfE, 2019) aims to address transitional aspects of childhood and was launched by the Government during the data-collection period. However, the pandemic interrupted this curriculum (DfE, 2019), which may have impacted trainee exposure and experience. Therefore, it has been included in the methodology because it is an essential consideration for AASB disclosure.

Aligning this research with specific philosophies was challenging for professional doctorate study (Fulton et al., 2013), as this research crosses many transdisciplinary boundaries that could detract from exploring planned safeguarding policy enactment. These boundaries created challenges from a combination of personal, tacit, and theoretical knowledge regarding relationships, behaviour, aggression, operationalising policy awareness, digital literacy, and safeguarding knowledge, which has supported the construction of the methodology for this thesis. These underpinning transdisciplinary issues I have experienced during my tenure as a professional in educational settings have influenced my philosophical perspective regarding safeguarding implementation. Therefore, I can conclude that I have adopted the interpretivist paradigm because I am trying to establish expectations and lived experience (Van Manen, 1990).

This research may also be categorised as 'insider research' (Mercer, 2007, p. 3) because of my privileged access to work-based practices of the participant trainee teachers, safeguarding consultants and safeguarding practitioners, all professional colleagues. Participant experts are informed and seasoned safeguarding practitioners, and the participating education establishments have close personal professional associations, which I have established over several years and are linked together via partnership agreements. Each establishment differs in its approach to safeguarding, and each school's safeguarding policies also differ. These differences may impact the safeguarding provision and training offered to trainees and, therefore, require consideration when addressing this research. Maintaining good professional working relationships with participant experts, beyond the research process was paramount, and an assurance was given to them that both their identity and specific location would be protected. To maintain this level of professional respect, certain discussion areas were discounted from this research, which included sexual trafficking of minors as this may

indicate the location of the participating schools; the discussion was planned during the preliminary interview briefing meeting.

Insider research (Mercer, 2007) can be sensitive, as disclosing safeguarding system weaknesses may expose organisational vulnerabilities. Mitigation for such exposure was planned by assuring the participants that their professional practice was not being scrutinised and that the aim was to improve trainee placement preparedness. However, improvement in training may indicate a deficit training model that can be equally sensitive, unfavourably viewed, and potentially damaging to ongoing working relationships. Therefore, this research plans to foster supportive and consultative relationships regarding safeguarding process improvement, which may evidence a stronger consultative training partnership (Bourne, 2019). Therefore, expert data capture processes (Strand B1) plan to use face-to-face data capture methods to facilitate clarification opportunities and reinforce the purpose of personal and professional updating. Updating the ITT course provision rather than scrutinising professional practice may help demonstrate a proactive approach to safeguarding training and may mitigate potentially harmful impacts.

### **3.1.3: Reflexivity and Methodological Rigour**

As an 'early career researcher' (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2018, p.328), my values and opinions have shaped my approach to this research. These personal values were formed from significant practical experience. I have delivered the digital literacy curriculum including online behaviours for over 25 years to adolescents in schools and 20 years to trainee teachers. These experiences have included addressing peer AASB incidents in school and personal encounters with AASB. I have observed intentional harms inflicted upon victims by their peers, adults and sometimes professional colleagues. To clarify, these strong opinions

and personal disenfranchisement stem from observing ‘delayed government responses’ (Hewitson, 2023 p.108), where government have absolved themselves of their responsibility and neglected keeping children safe online. The top-down approach to policy implementation and the lack of funding for training teachers are evidence of the failures of successive governments to adequately support teachers with safeguarding children against AASB.

These experiences present difficulties regarding being unbiased, value-free and objective. I recognised, in order to conduct effective qualitative research, solutions were required to mitigate the potential impact of my opinions and biases on my research. My personal biases could have invalidated my research findings. A professional doctoral thesis aims to produce robust valuable practitioner knowledge (Costley and Fulton, 2019) to improve professional practice, and strong opinions can hinder conducting robust qualitative research. However, this research focus transcended my personal opinions regarding how to improve the ITT curriculum and aimed to synthesise the findings, using the interpretivist paradigm. The potential for trainees to mismanage AASB disclosures was a further catalyst for this research, as was the desire to improve the preparation of trainees.

To mitigate for these strong subjective opinions, I used CT theory (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) in order to guide and influence the approach to this research. I robustly applied theoretical principles to palliate the effect of my opinions and observations. I established theory driven ‘practical points of significance’ (Costley and Fulton, 2019, p. 9) that concerned receiving and addressing AASB disclosures.

The practical points of significance were devised to ascertain if trainees' current knowledge and understanding equipped them to implement safeguarding policy when receiving and actioning AASB disclosures practically and identify if changes to the current ITT safeguarding

curriculum were required. The third practical point of significance explored experienced safeguarding experts and practical expectations for receiving and actioning AASB disclosures. These three practical points define this thesis as a professional educational doctorate rather than a philosophical doctorate. Together, they robustly establish whether changes are required to the current safeguarding training provision for AASB disclosures, and they form the basis of the three research questions which have directed this research.

The two theoretical approaches, CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) and street-level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 2010), played a crucial role in shaping the research questions, as discussed earlier. This research bridges the gap between two interconnected but misaligned workplaces, schools and universities. The theoretical elements necessary for functioning in practice environments are imparted in the university, while schools provide the practical experiential elements of training to support 'performing effectively' (Bourne, 2019, p.1). These alignments are depicted in Figure 14, where the trainee is perceived to be at the centre of the training environment. However, in reality, the trainees are peripheral to the core activities of both schools and universities. The core activities in schools revolve around educating pupils, while universities focus on providing higher education and research opportunities. This misalignment of educational institutional goals within the education partnership complicates aligning this research with one singular paradigm. By linking the professional expectations of safeguarding practices when disclosures occur and establishing the current trainee knowledge of safeguarding practices, this research has connected these two workplaces and supported the determination of whether improvements to safeguarding practices are necessary. Moreover, this research provided an opportunity to critically reflect upon my personal practice and gave me a voice from within the educational safeguarding

community. The ability to apply the two theoretical perspectives and critically reflect upon my opinions of AASB further validates the research process and authenticates my findings.

#### **3.1.4: Philosophical Influences**

This research adopts an interpretive stance (Bairagi and Munot, 2019; Schaffer, 2016), as it explores how AASB disclosure might be addressed and aims to acquire a shared meaning which may support trainees moving a disclosure event towards the correct resolution pathway. The interpretivist paradigm is based upon 'the lived experience.' (Van Manen, 1990) In this instance, three perspectives are considered: the trainee and their understanding of safeguarding, the experience of consultant experts, and the expectations of DSOs in schools. The interpretivist paradigm supports the view that different people from divergent backgrounds can view a phenomenon in differing perspectives to create knowledge. Panya and Narwath (2022) claim that richness might be obtained from exploring these views and how people understand and interpret societal events. Exploring AASB disclosures and presenting simulated AASB events or vignettes to trainees could help generate knowledge regarding how trainee teachers might understand an event. Presenting experts with addressing an AASB event as a safeguarding training dilemma should capture their knowledge and lived experience (Van Manen, 1990) regarding how they think this should be responded to create new ITT training knowledge.

To start this interpretivist process, it was essential to establish trainees' perceptions of adolescent sexting behaviour. Establishing if trainees could discern between different types of AASB, such as revenge pornography, captured their lived experience (Van Manen, 1990) of sexting behaviours. From this starting point, further explorations of trainees' reactions to simulated AASB events helped to capture what the trainees thought might be occurring and

how they felt they should respond. Capturing these trainees' planned responses revealed their understanding of their role in addressing AASB disclosures where aggression or bullying were intentional motivations.

AASB can be a demonstration of adolescent power dynamics (Foucault, 1977) Moreover, it may be a form of bullying (Olweus et al., 1999); conversely, disclosing AASB behaviour can be seen as a form of weakness and an inability to solve problems, even shame (Gomez and Meyer, 2012; Hackett et al., 2016). This exploration of how trainee teachers may plan to address AASB disclosures has been based on my initial feelings that trainees may be inadequately prepared to address adolescent online aggression. Setty (2020, p.117) discusses power dynamics associated with the researcher's right to speak and the privilege of interpreting reality via the chosen methodological approach. Atkins and Wallace (2012, p.27) discuss research as a 'process of monitoring to improving practice', which defines me as a reflective practitioner and accurately outlines the purpose of my research.

There are preexisting interpretivist paradigm models that have been applied in similar contexts, for example, in the disclosure and resolution of child sexual abuse as discussed by Draucker et al. (2011) and Piazza and Berring (2009) and in cyberbullying disclosure (Dehue, 2013; Vangool et al., 2015). It may be important to establish if a model exists to support trainee teachers in resolving AASB disclosures.

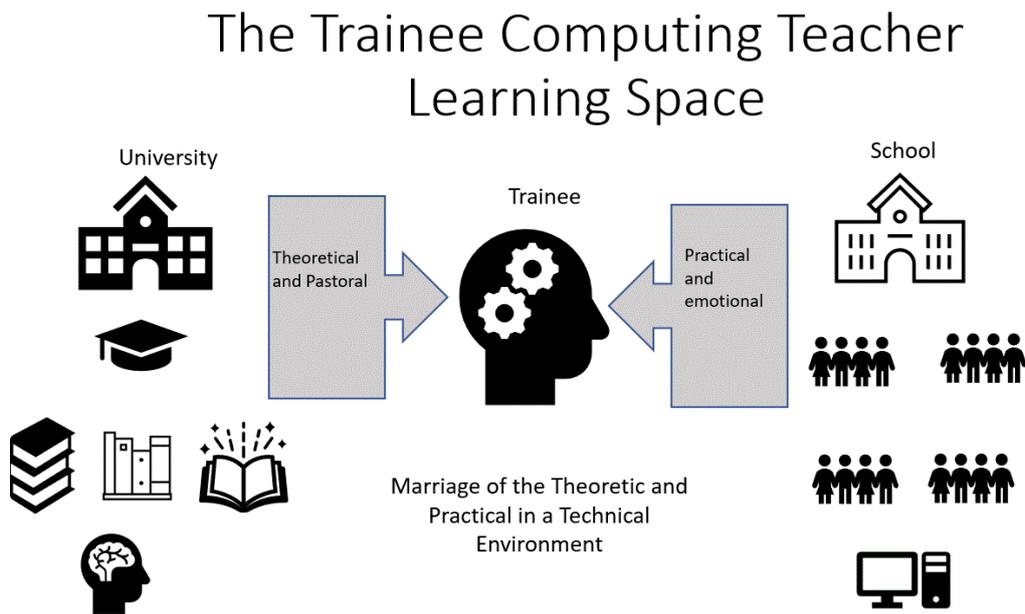
The philosophical basis for my research stems from my personal experience of disclosure and personal beliefs regarding the disclosure process. If gaps exist between trainee understanding and expert expectations for the operationalisation of safeguarding policy, then there might be potential for inadequate support for victims of AASB. Inadequate support after the disclosure experience may harm adolescents and their future intimate relationships. From my

experience, receiving and actioning adolescent disclosures are an important and often overlooked area of training, which can result in unintentional harm (Hensen Mandau, 2021) inflicted upon disclosure victims by ineffective 'professional' handling. Therefore, this research is underpinned by a personal desire to capture perceptions regarding planned courses of action after exposure to a modelled disclosure transaction or vignette to correct misunderstandings and support adolescents involved in risky behaviours (Holoyda et al., 2018) and provide trainees with an informed perspective.

Disclosure processes are not easily captured in schools for research purposes, and accountability to government bodies could contribute to a school's reluctance to participate in such research. Government expectations concerning competency measurements for safeguarding training and policy implementation where Government policy uses assertive, consequential language (DfE, 2023). For example, phrases such as 'It is essential that everybody working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities' (DfE, 2023, p.6) create school vulnerability. This punitive language conveys and indicates a power dynamic. (Foucault, 1977) between the government and schools, which is unhelpful in safeguarding processes and has constrained my research in this area. School incidents concerning the protection of adolescents are particularly sensitive, and revealing school safeguarding inadequacies may create far-reaching consequences for headteachers.

Constructivism was a considered approach; however, the misalignment of school and university core goals, as indicated in Figure 14 below, ruled out this paradigm. Therefore, this thesis aligns with the interpretivist paradigm due to the requirement to gather interpretations of reality (lived experience) from the trainee participants and expectations from experts. The interpretivist epistemological perspective was chosen because it allows exploring the 'socially

constructed world' (Somekh and Lewin, 2017, p.6), illustrated in Figure 14, of human behaviours and interpretations within the safeguarding environments from trainee and expert perspectives. Differences between school safeguarding policy processes and implementation of safeguarding expectations have generated new practitioner safeguarding knowledge.



**Figure 14: The Trainee Computing Teacher Learning Space.**

To undertake this research, I constructed a team of safeguarding knowledge co-constructors, which consisted of DSOs, consultants, trainees, and the researcher who formed a team of knowledge co-constructors. The team significantly contributed to collecting, analysing, and interpreting disclosure realities. CT principles supported constructing modelled disclosure incidents using abstraction, decomposition, and pattern recognition to create the research tools (Quinlan and Cross, 2020).

Other theories contributed to the structure of this research process and are illustrated in Table 11, which outlines the planned methods for acquiring participant data to address the three research questions.

**Table 11: Methodology Table**

Question	Method
<p>How is sexting defined?</p> <p>What are the suggested or recommended ways for dealing with pupil disclosures of involvement with the sharing of sexualised images?</p>	<p>Review of extant literature</p> <p>Review of extant literature</p>
<p>What is the extent of the trainee’s knowledge of sexting in the population group (eleven–sixteen-year-old pupils)?</p> <p>How do trainees respond or plan to respond to AASB in schools?</p>	<p>Questionnaire</p> <p>Vignettes and Semi-Structured Questionnaire. Analysis of semi-structured questionnaire responses to vignettes</p>
<p>How do trainees respond or plan to respond to sexting in schools?</p>	<p>Focus Group. Review responses from analysis of semi-structured questionnaire responses to vignettes.</p>
<p>What are the expectations in terms of the trainee’s preparedness to deal with issues of sexting in school?</p> <p>What strategies and policies are in place to support trainees’ teachers?</p>	<p>Semi Structured Interviews</p> <p>Focus Group</p> <p>Documentary analysis</p> <p>Literature review</p>

Before engaging with this research, trainees and school staff collaborated with me to conduct ITT processes; close supportive relationships existed in this environment. These close, supportive training relationships facilitated conveying the operational expectations for

safeguarding policy implementation in schools during training, and these close links are required to continue over time. Recognising and acknowledging the importance of perpetuating these relationships in this context is paramount to this research process. These relationships presented an opportunity to gain profound insights from a position of trust between myself, the researcher and the participants, which requires protection.

Setty (2020) describes the challenge of producing generalisable findings from qualitative research in a safeguarding context. The profound insights gained into managing AASB provided by this research have created opportunities to reflect upon experiences and interactions with colleagues I respect. Reflecting upon these experiences may contribute to understanding how addressing AASB might improve and be better understood. Exploring trainee perspectives could offer professional practitioners insights and enhance planning for trainee exposure to AASB disclosures during training. Identifying if these improvements are required may have been overlooked by quantitative approaches. Exploring 'reality from participants' perspectives' (Henwood and Pidgeon, 1992, p.16) in the context of AASB disclosures and decision-making based upon the information trainees have received during ITT training categorised this research as inductive. (Gray, 2018). Inductive research can be discernible from deductive research because it does not seek to identify cause and effect (Ali and Birley, 1998). Deductive research uses existing theory to develop a hypothesis, influencing the variables that inform how the researcher should use the chosen approach to conduct the study. Inductive research, however, considers the meaning rather than the number of instances of an event or natural phenomenon occurring in a social situation. (Van Manen, 1990). Gray (2018) discusses how qualitative, inductive research may involve the immersion of researchers in the social realities of processes and activities. He argues that this

immersion better positions the researcher to explore the nuances of the area researched and discover meaning.

### **3.2: Bricolage Methodology**

The chosen research methodology was Kincheloe and Berry's (2004) adaptation of Bricolage. The Bricolage methodology allows combining methods from the social sciences, humanities, and other areas to derive a suitable inquiry model (Yee and Bremner, 2011). Levi-Strauss (1962) first utilised Bricolage as a methodology to study ways of understanding human behaviour.

The rationale behind applying Kincheloe's (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004) interpretation of Bricolage for this thesis was that the methodology was flexible and could be adapted to accommodate more than one perspective of a phenomenon, which was crucial to this research. Ledstaetter (2018) discusses bricolage methodology and how diverging interpretations can result in diverging standards and lead to dissonance in standards surrounding a phenomenon. Bricolage methodology provided a creative space for exploring a phenomenon from multiple perspectives.

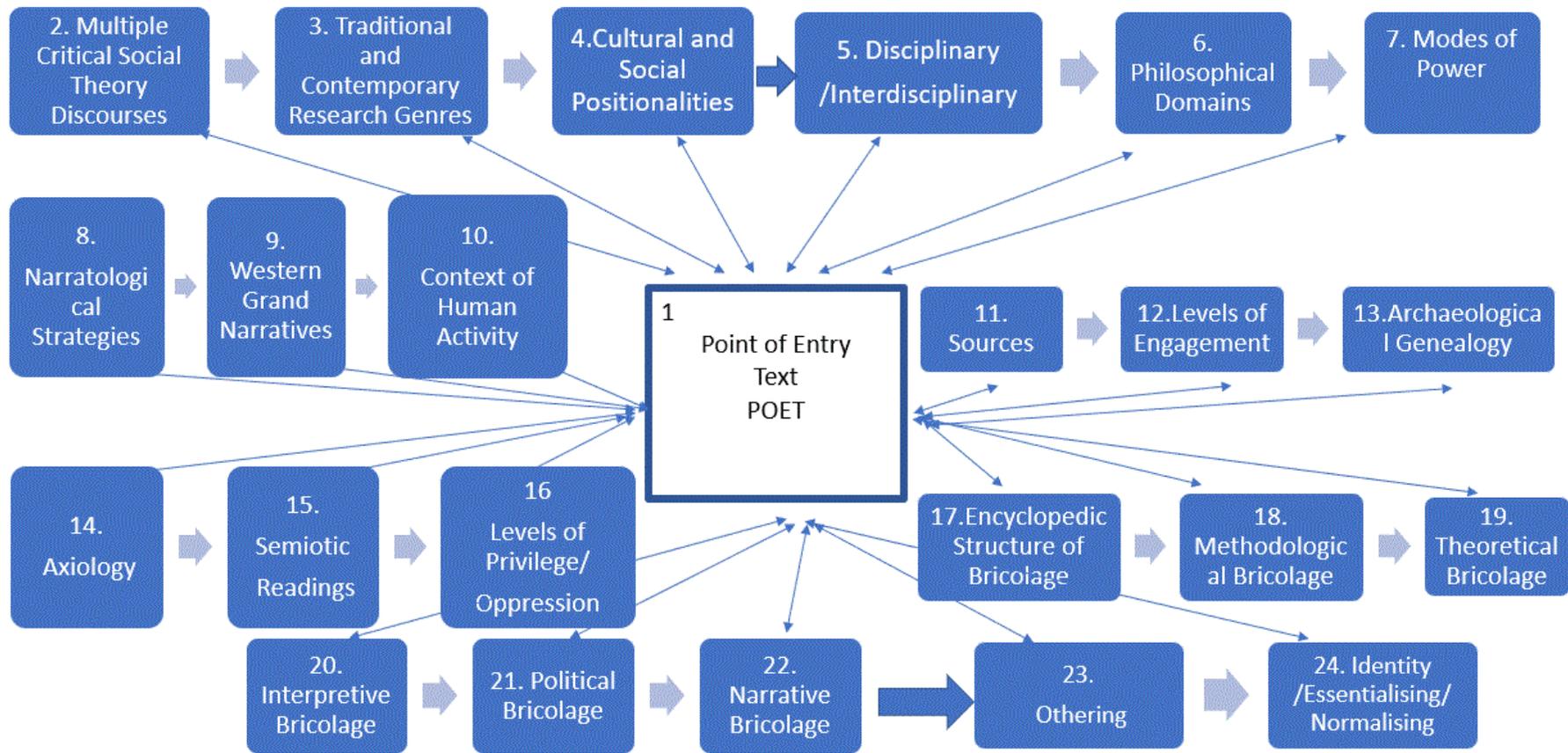
The French word bricolage is derived from the term bricoleur, which refers to building or construction (Papert, 1993) using available tools. This 'tools to hand' approach projects an image of disorganisation, implying not using correct tools or misusing them, such as when tools are adapted for something other than their original intended purpose. For example, a trowel can dig into and fill a hole, but the edges can lever open a paint tin or serve as a screwdriver. This example of adapting tools beyond their original purposes is featured in the methods section of this thesis, where the adaptation of tools is prominently featured.

Bricolage is a mathematical approach to knowledge constructions, and Papert (1993) described the methodology as working in sets to construct thoughts as they appear inside the head. Kincheloe (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004) adapted this structured approach, as discussed by Papert, for research purposes. The bricolage methodology provides a matrix that supports early career researchers in constructing a research project that allows participants to be organised into sets. This organisation of participants supported exploring the complexities of allowing AASB and disclosure to be viewed from a 'sets' perspective.

Kincheloe and Berry's matrix (2004) was constructed to apply the Bricolage method. A 'Point of Entry Text' or POET is featured at the matrix's centre. The POET can be any artefact that generates meaning, such as a photograph, a document, or a vignette. The POET is the starting point or anchor in the matrix and is threaded through the matrix. POETs for this research included the vignettes and survey responses, definitions of sexting, the problem presented to the experts regarding AASB, safeguarding and ITT, specifically, expert expectations for trainees responding to AASB disclosure incidents.

Challenges and points were identified with each threading, and perspectives were obtained. Each time the POET was threaded through an aspect of the bricolage matrix, a new challenge or perspective was acquired. These threads, referred to as visits, consist of using the POET and reviewing the matrix area visited concerning the POET.

The matrix is illustrated below in Figure 15.



**The Bricolage Matrix: The Point of Entry**

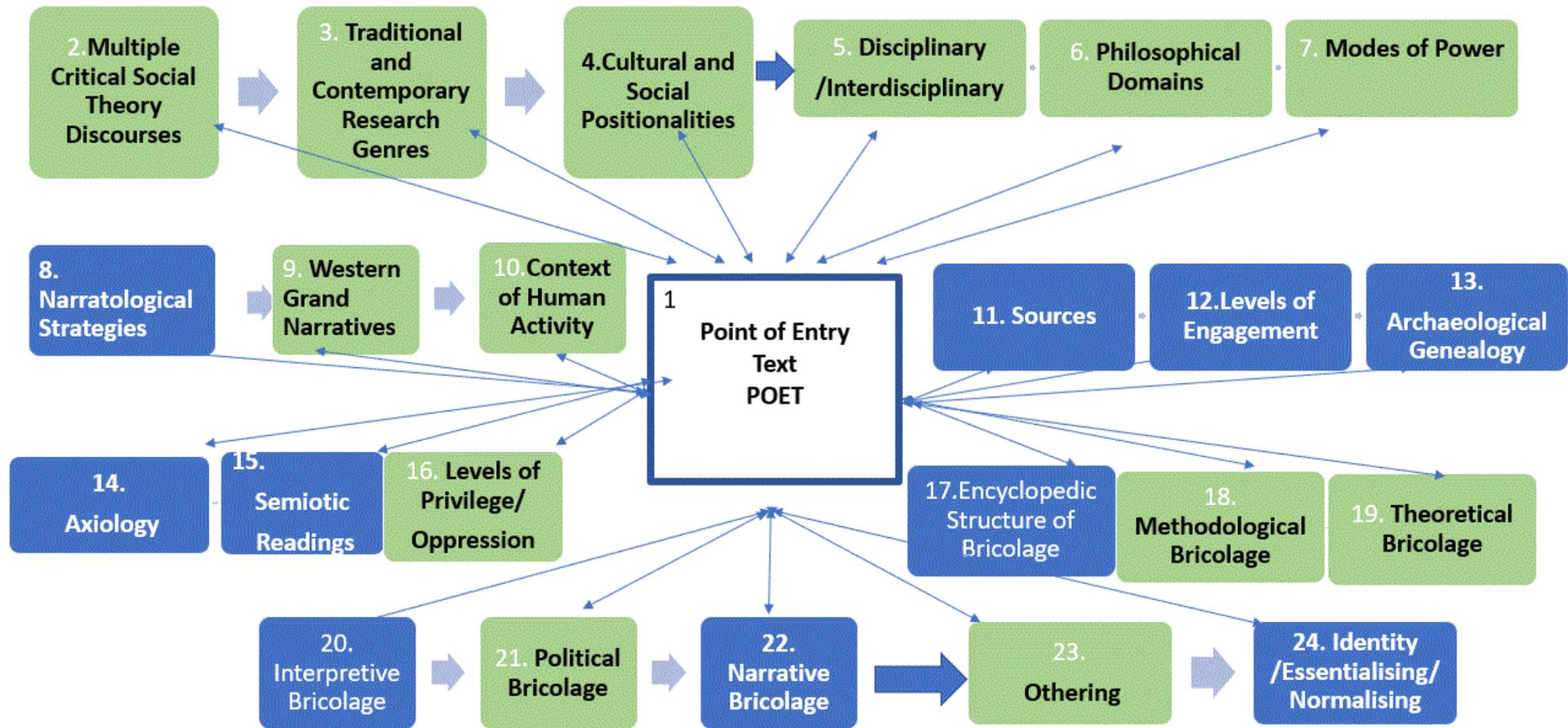
*Kincheloe and Berry (2004, p.110)*

**Figure 15: The Bricolage Matrix.**

The matrix is flexible and can be adapted because not all matrix areas apply to every research project; areas were added or removed where necessary. Therefore, parts of the matrix were not visited because the matrix was adapted specifically for this research. Figures 16 and 17 illustrate this research's construction of the Bricolage matrix. It was an iterative process as each matrix area was explored and considered.

The 'Narratological Strategies' matrix area was initially disregarded but then reintegrated for ethical reasons, as vignettes and storytelling were necessary. Brown and Thompson (2013) discuss drawing upon 'narratological ideas' to inform studies, and the vignette strategy became imperative to this research to anonymise data-collection methods to protect participants from harm (BERA, 2018). Findings from the Wolak and Finkelhor study (2011) concerning adolescent sexting behaviours were adapted to create vignette tools. The authors sought and granted permission to edit and use their data. Vignettes are one of the data-collection instruments used in this research.

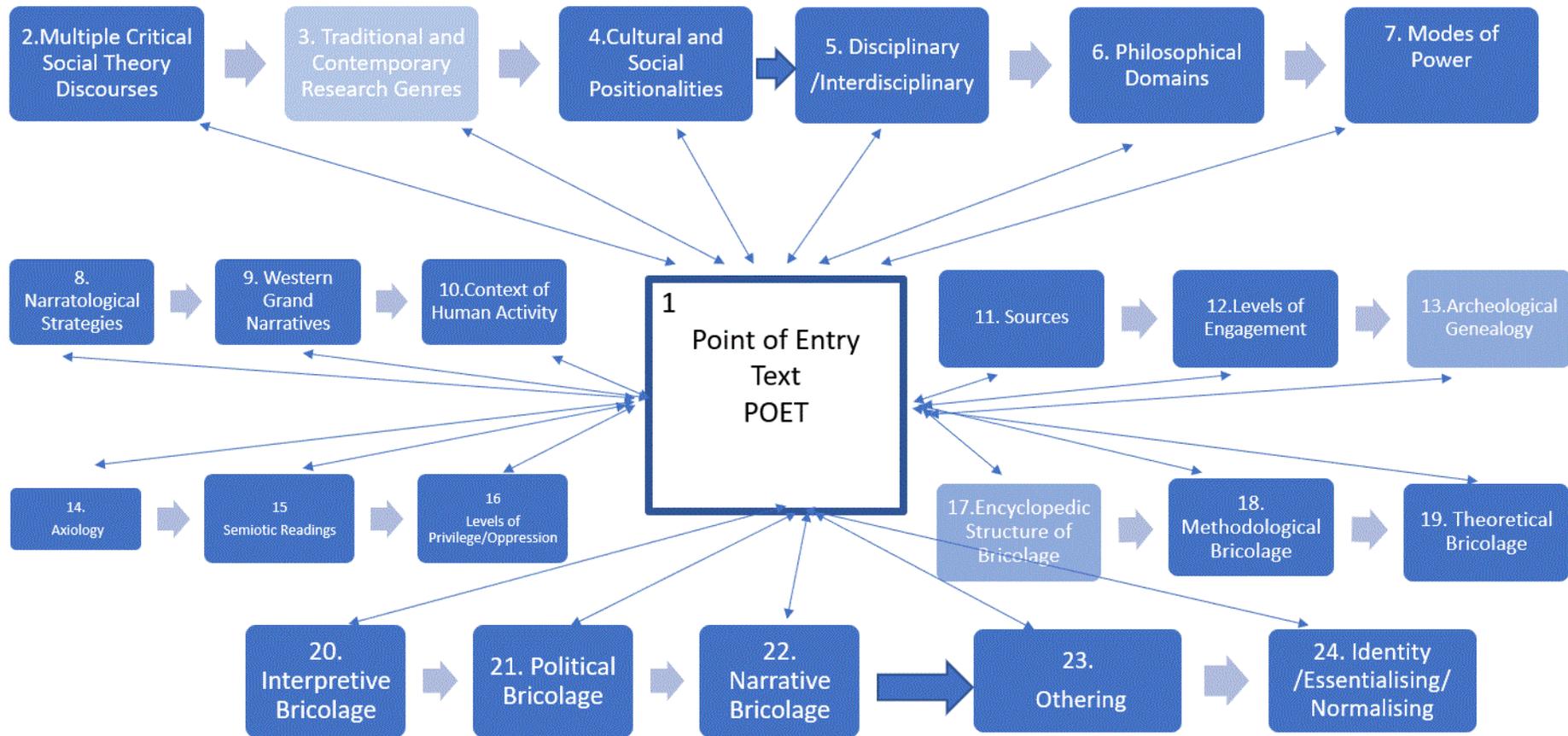
Figure 16 illustrates an iterative process in which different areas of the matrix were considered, discounted, and subsequently reconsidered during the threading process. The blue areas represent discounted tools, and the green areas represent those that were included. This iterative process is addressed in Table 12 below.



The Bricolage Matrix: The Point of Entry

*Adaptation of Kincheloe and Berry (2004, p.110)*

Figure 16: Adapted Bricolage Matrix (first draft).



**Figure 17: Bricolage Matrix**

The application of the bricolage matrix, Table 12 below, demonstrates the challenges arising from threading the Vignette and Survey combined data capture tool as the POET. This threading process was repeated for the focus group and interviews with the two expert groups.

**Table 12: Bricolage Threading Application Trainee Vignettes and Survey Combined Method.**

<b>Point Two Multiple critical social theory discourses</b>	<b>Point Three Traditional and Contemporary Research Genres</b>	<b>Point four Cultural Social Positionalities</b>	<b>Point Five Disciplinary/Trans- Disciplinary</b>	<b>Point Six Philosophical Domains</b>	<b>Point Seven Modes of Power</b>
<p>POET Application</p> <p>Twenty versions of POET Threaded Vignettes and Survey</p> <p>Critical social theory discourses addressed Lipsky Street Level Bureaucracy, Baudrillard, and adolescent engagement with hyperreality.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Vignettes and Survey Responses are interpreted to define responses</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Safeguarding Responses/Expectations Training Responses/Expectations</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>National Safeguarding Agenda/ National Curriculum for Computing/Personal Health and Social Care Curriculum.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>How trainees understood adolescent engagement in hyperreality.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Trainee understanding of power as manifested by adolescents in peer groups.</p>
<p>Challenges raised.</p> <p>Are you a good computer science teacher?</p> <p>Does the inability to identify and address AASB mean that the participants are poor teachers?</p> <p>Need to define, address?</p>	<p>Challenges Raised</p> <p>Need for definition identified?</p> <p>Poor resolution pathways?</p> <p>Dissonance regarding knowledge of the role of DSO?</p>	<p>Challenges Raised</p> <p>The inequity of trainee experience?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Are trainees aware of their responsibility to address AASB in schools as part of the PHSC?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Are trainees aware of how adolescents engage with online media and share imagery? Do they understand how adolescents use aggression online?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Are trainees aware of power dynamics and how they are manifested on social media platforms? Are they aware of the differences in the scenarios presented to them?</p>

<b>Point Eight Narratological Strategies</b>	<b>Point Nine Western Grand Narratives</b>	<b>Point Ten Context of Human Activity</b>	<b>Point Eleven Sources</b>	<b>Point Twelve Levels of Engagement</b>	<b>Point Thirteen Archaeological Genealogy</b>
<p>POET Application</p> <p>Use of vignettes to represent reality.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>The ability of trainees to identify from the vignette AASB and describe how they would manage AASB objectively.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>The vignettes and survey illustrated different contexts for sexting, not just AASB.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Responses to survey questions were presented with vignettes. Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) study.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Responses to survey questions will indicate trainee engagement level with DfE KCSIE Safeguarding publications and DfE Relationships Curriculum.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Awareness of the Wolak and Finkelhor study (2011) will demonstrate exposure to UKCCIS (2017) Sexting in Schools and colleges, which refers to the Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) study.</p>
<p>Challenge</p> <p>Are trainees viewing these vignette scenarios as if they are addressing authentic disclosures in school?</p> <p>Do they recognise that each scenario is different and addresses a different aspect of AASB?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Can trainees identify and differentiate AASB and use systems and policies to address disclosures objectively?</p> <p>Do trainees view disclosures as an objective process?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Can trainees identify why adolescents might engage in AASB activity?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Trainee responses may identify disparate levels of placement engagement with safeguarding training.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Trainee responses indicate exposure to government policy documents in school settings and the most recent government curriculum directives.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Scenarios for this research formulate part of school safeguarding training materials. Recognition of scenarios indicates exposure or lack thereof to sexting safeguarding training.</p>

<b>Point 4teen Axiology</b>	<b>Point Fifteen Semiotic Readings</b>	<b>Point Sixteen Levels of Privilege/Oppression</b>	<b>Point Seventeen Encyclopaedic Structure of Bricolage</b>	<b>Point Eighteen Methodological Bricolage</b>	<b>Point Nineteen Theoretical Bricolage</b>
<p>POET Application</p> <p>Value of knowledge of AASB, the ability to discern between AASB and sexting behaviour. Current levels of sexual violence girls are exposed to in school.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Key safeguarding publications which address sexting behaviours. Awareness of UKCCIS guidance (2017)</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>The oppressive nature of AASB is addressed in three of the five vignettes.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>The ability of trainees to respond to a disclosure incident while maintaining professional teacher identity and their capacity to address the incident.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Combining two adapted methods creates a tool that captures trainee responses to specific scenarios.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>The systems and structures affiliated with safeguarding practices in the school environments. Survey questions regarding plans to address specific disclosures.</p>
<p>Challenge</p> <p>Trainees' ability to recognise AASB scenarios and respond to them effectively. Awareness of how AASB can harm adolescents, particularly girls. Preparedness to address emotional aspects of managing AASB.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Trainees' exposure to critical documents regarding sexting training in schools.</p> <p>Ability to define sexting behaviour and identify characteristics and types of sexting behaviours</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Trainees' ability to identify the oppressive nature of an AASB transaction and record their planned responses.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Trainees' ability to recognise professionalism and appropriate responses to AASB and act within guidelines.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Am I capturing responses without the influence of the researcher?</p> <p>Am I capturing accurate responses from trainees that reflect their current safeguarding knowledge?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Trainees should know the key persons involved in school safeguarding systems and their professional responsibilities towards these critical persons.</p> <p>Trainee awareness of policy enactment, including how to access and implement policy in the school environment.</p>

<b>Point Twenty Interpretive Bricolage</b>	<b>Point Twenty-One Political Bricolage</b>	<b>Point Twenty-Two Narrative Bricolage</b>	<b>Point Twenty-Three Othering</b>	<b>Point Twenty-4 Identity/Essentialising/Normalising</b>	
<p>POET Application</p> <p>The expectation was that participants could read and review the scenarios provided and devise appropriate responses based on their training.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>The 2015 Carter ITT curriculum review omitted safeguard and adolescent online behaviour. Byron's review in 2008 signposted the impact of adolescent online behaviours, and UKCCIS 2017 released school guidance. The survey established if government guidance has impacted training.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Reflexivity. This research was instigated by personal reflection on training provisions for AASB and the work of Wolak and Finkelhor (2011).</p> <p>The vignette survey tool provides further insight into how new entrants view this in teaching.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Digital literacy encompasses addressing and delivering lessons regarding online behaviours. Does this require 'other' computing teachers from teachers in curriculum areas? Resolving AASB is a teaching obligation for computing teachers.</p> <p>The survey questions capture trainee responses regarding plans for addressing AASB disclosures.</p>	<p>POET Application</p> <p>Can computing teachers identify their role in addressing AASB as part of their professional responsibilities?</p> <p>Survey questions capture the perception of the role within the responses.</p>	
<p>Challenge</p> <p>Survey responses reveal trainee perceptions of safeguarding training and preparedness to address AASB in school.</p> <p>Do trainees feel prepared?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Survey responses reveal exposure to UKCCIS (2017) training for schools regarding sexting behaviours.</p> <p>Low exposure may equate to poor preparation.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Survey responses reveal the level of exposure to UKCCIS training and planned responses to the scenarios.</p> <p>Professional preparedness?</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>Survey responses reveal trainee perceptions regarding the professional requirements to address AASB.</p> <p>Professional Preparedness?</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Survey responses reveal trainee perceptions regarding their professional identity.</p> <p>Do trainees see addressing AASB as part of their professional responsibilities?</p>	

### **3.2.1: Summarising the Application of the Bricolage Methodology**

This exploration aimed to ascertain if preparation for AASB disclosure forms part of the ITT training programme. Key to this research was constructing a 'portfolio of evidence' (Fulton et al., 2013, p.103) from multiple perspectives to establish how trainees define sexting behaviour, how trainees plan to respond to AASB disclosures and how experts expect trainees to respond to AASB disclosures. The Bricolage methodology applied to this research supported incorporating historical behaviours, sexting definitions over time, trainee experience and understanding, expert expectations, safeguarding policy evolution and policy directive.

Bricolage theory supported the ability to draw together the participant perspectives to address the research questions and identify if there was a dissonance between trainee understanding and expert perspectives. The collective participant facets supported the construction of a rich picture of how AASB is currently addressed in the context of current safeguarding policy and practice, which identified dissonances in perspectives and practice. Where dissonance was found, changes may be required to the computing ITT safeguarding curriculum.

### **3.2.2: The Sampling Process**

Newby (2014) stated that the quality of the research data acquired depends on the right people participating in the study. All participants were selected using purposive sampling (Bryman et al., 2021; Gray, 2018;). Purposive sampling is the process of selecting data subjects using specific criteria to address the research questions from an 'informed perspective.' Gray (2018) discussed the tensions in using purposive sampling as a selection method, stating that researcher bias could impact the sample. However, the purposive sampling approach enabled

me to control discussion aspects of data collection. Devising purposes selection criterion provided a focus and an opportunity to ensure open and honest data-collection discussions from both the informed perspectives of trainee school experience, and selected expert opinions.

Purposive sampling supported the establishment of appropriate criteria to help formulate the right participant groups (Gray, 2018). Prerequisite selection criteria for trainee participants required them to have completed the PGCE programme before participating in the research process. This criterion enabled consideration of both the school placement and university training experience holistically from the perspective of completing the ITT process. Criteria for engaging with the focus group for trainees included completion of the ITT training process and participation in the initial vignette survey data-collection process. One trainee asked to be involved in the focus and vignette-survey data-collection groups; they disclosed they had been an AASB victim of coercively obtained sexualised photographic imagery, which had been distributed online. The data subject had a personal stake in supporting teachers who address AASB. After ensuring appropriate well-being support, their contribution added a critical perspective to this research. The focus group participants were also purposively sampled to clarify their responses to the vignette survey as part of a quality assurance triangulation process.

One of the pivotal purposive sampling criteria for selecting consultant experts was their participation in the 'Keeping Children Safe Online' (NSPCC, 2019) conference proceedings. The NSPCC charity responds to distressed children and trains school professionals about safeguarding issues. Sexting, image transmission, and online behaviours formulated a sizeable proportion of the conference proceedings (NSPCC, 2019). I targeted attending specific

conference sessions with discussion themes centred on adolescent sexting behaviours. The three consultant expert participants were selected from those people who were key speakers in the NSPCC (2019) conference proceedings, who were invited, and consented to participate in this research following their conference presentations. The consultant participant experts, referred to hereafter as 'consultant experts', are specialist advisors to teachers and are employed in organisations, such as local authorities, as specialist safeguarding advisors. Their responsibilities include the creating and dissemination of materials and information about safeguarding policy, processes and procedures. Consultant experts hold a variety of qualifications and experience, ranging from police intelligence work for crimes involving sexualised images of children, to academic professors with specialist knowledge of the transmission of sexualised images of children and their online distribution (Quayle et al., 2019). There was also a safeguarding officer from an international children's television channel. These three individuals formed the consultant expert panel for this research.

However, the consultant experts had no experience of directly resolving classroom AASB incidents. Therefore, this research required additional experts with specialist experience and expertise concerning sexting in schools. This essential additional expert participant group were selected using purposive sampling.

The purposive selection criteria for the second expert participant group, were experienced school safeguarding practitioners, referred to hereafter as the 'practitioners experts' group. The selection criterion included having experience and expertise concerning addressing and resolving sexting in schools. These participants must work in schools, managing pupil safeguarding issues, receiving disclosure reports and creating action plans to address sexting

behaviours. The schools in which the practitioner experts were employed should have existing policies to address adolescent sexting behaviours. Participants in this group were specifically required to be experienced explicitly in implementing pastoral management systems, with discreet responsibilities for adolescents in school, as part of their management and curriculum delivery responsibilities (DfE, 2014).

Further practitioner expert participant purposive selection criteria included working in partnership with universities delivering ITT provision, as they were required to have worked with trainees. A preexisting training partnership agreement with a HEI must be in place to ensure participants are contractually obliged, through an ITT partnership agreement, to train secondary school computing teachers. Additional critical purposive sampling selection criteria for this participant group involved checking if they had five or more years of experience working as a DSO in a secondary school, this was a critical factor. The reason for inviting these practitioner experts who specifically met these criteria was their exposure to UKCCIS (2017) directives issued to schools and colleges to address sexting behaviours amongst pupils, and their exposure to Keeping Children Safe in Education. (DfE, 2019). Therefore, sampling criterion for this group of experts was purposive and defined by their exposure to and management of safeguarding practices in school; the school's engagement with HEI ITT processes; they must host ITT placements and provide safeguarding training to trainees on placement.

Using purposive sampling, the expert participant group was divided into those working in schools (practitioners) and those with school advisory roles (consultants). These categories justified the requirement for two separate groups of participant experts. The experts' assumptions regarding the trainee knowledge base were essential for this research. (Meyer,

2004). The expert sampling exercise was conducted over two years due to the workload and availability of the safeguarding participant experts, and ensuring the purposive selection criteria was met. Adherence to the selection criteria impeded the recruitment of some practitioner experts.

The sampling process enabled participants to be arranged into 4 distinct groups, which were assigned explicitly to three previously identified strands A, B and C.

Strand A explored research question one with twenty volunteer trainee computing teacher participants from the same cohort who were approached directly after training. These purposively sampled volunteers were surveyed to capture their definitions of sexting behaviour and clarify whether they could identify the constituents of sexting. They also provided survey feedback concerning addressing AASB via vignette scenarios.

Strand B explores research question two: How should trainee teachers respond to AASB disclosures? The two groups of experts were required to define their professional expectations regarding how they thought trainees should be prepared to respond to AASB disclosures. Discussions with practitioner and consultant experts were difficult to schedule, due to their work commitments. The researcher addressed this obstacle by accommodating their time constraints. Figure 18 below illustrates how the participant expert groups contributed to the data quality acquired for this study.



**Figure 18: Expert Data Corpus**

Strand C had two participant groups. Group one was comprised of twenty trainee secondary computing teacher volunteers, and group two was comprised of a subgroup of twenty participants, consisting of five of the survey group participants. Both groups explored research question three by responding to the five sexting disclosure vignette incidents. Group two also attended an online focus group. The findings were derived from their interpretation of trainees' school and university training experiences and opinions.

### **3.3: Data-collection Methods**

The design and planning stages of data-collection methods for the three research strands were iterative, enabling personal reflection regarding the most appropriate approach for data collection and using CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) to design and organise the data-collection tools. A primary consideration was eliciting data from trainee participants without directly influencing their responses. A remotely administered online survey was

presented to trainees after experimentation with data-collection methods from previous trainee cohorts. The design process was organised into three distinct strands, as identified above and below in Table 3. Each strand was devised separately to address each research question independently. The data-collection methods and the consideration for each method are discussed in this section.

### **3.3.1: Ethical Considerations**

Ethical guidelines in qualitative research are established on philosophical principles (Reid et al., 2018) of beneficence, nonmaleficence, respect, equitable treatment, and fairness. These principles governed the research process as all data was carefully analysed and presented, and theoretical influences were considered. Equitable treatment and fairness underpin this research process. The research identifies plans to address AASB, and it is hoped that future teachers will receive equitable training and be able to use policy directives to support pupil disclosures fairly and confidently.

Participants were treated with dignity and respect, fully briefed before engagement, and support services were available throughout and beyond the research data collection process. All participants were allowed to withdraw, and this process was thoroughly explained to them.

Exploring planned resolutions for AASB posed significant inherent ethical concerns for novice researchers and trainees. Inherent ethical problems included legal, moral, cultural and issues regarding adolescent sexual behaviours (Bradley et al., 2020) and consent (Popova, 2019). Legal issues include an outline of the legal understanding of informed consent and privacy. 'Informed consent' (Popova, 2019, p.13,) a fundamental underpinning ethical issue which has

shaped the approach to this research, is a crucial defining concept for aggressive sexting behaviour (Bradley et al., 2020; Eyler and Jeste, 2006). Therefore, it was essential to establish trainee understanding of consent prior to engaging with this research. Consent was discussed in detail with trainee participants during a pre-research briefing. Additionally, a question-and-answer session included a presentation and opportunities to discuss informed consent to ensure participants had a shared understanding of Popova's (2019) definition and could define what informed consent means to them as adults. Trainees understood informed consent when providing consent to participate in the research. On reflection, I am unclear if they understood informed consent in the context of AASB. I was careful to discuss the ethical implications of this research participation without discussing informed consent as a defining feature of AASB, to minimise potential influences on the outcomes of this research. As a reflexive measure, the attendance registers for a session conducted during the PGCE course regarding informed consent and student sexual behaviour were reviewed to check that the participants attended this session before engaging with the research process. During the induction process, this session reminded participants that they had previously received informed consent during the PGCE programme.

From my safeguarding role and through experiences of collaborating with schools' attitudes towards children engaging in sexual behaviour, teachers' responses to AASB incidents may be emotionally charged. Schools participating had children under the age of sixteen years old who are currently engaging in sexting behaviours, which correlated with the OFSTED (2021) prevalence findings. From my personal experience and discussions with safeguarding colleagues, the police and legal practitioners, consensual adolescent sexting behaviours are progressive. The police are reluctant to prosecute adolescents for engaging in sexting

behaviours (Aynsley et al., 2017; Calvert, 2009). Clause 21 (Home Office, 2016) recognises that older adolescents may be sexually active, and whilst filming such activity remains illegal, it provides a caveat for the police to record the crime without proceeding to prosecution. This may be an indication of the prevalence of adolescent engagement in sexting behaviour. The police still record the crime but do not proceed towards prosecution where the adolescents are aged fifteen years old or older, where the imagery has not been distributed beyond an intended audience, and the adolescent appears to consent to engagement in sexting activity mutually.

Research participants could find sexting confrontational; they may hold deep-seated moral or religious beliefs concerning sexually active children. From personal safeguarding experience, AASB imagery may include films of adolescents engaging in nonconsensual sexual activity, such as an inebriated adolescent becoming subjected to unsolicited sexual activity and liberal peer dissemination of the subsequent recording of such behaviours for entertainment purposes (Choi et al., 2016; DfE, 2021; LLOYD, 2020). Whilst participants are not exposed to such imagery during the research process, they may reflect upon the reviewed vignettes, which may cause emotional feelings and distress in response to the vignette content. Trainees may not understand their legal requirement to address AASB as part of their teaching responsibility as part of the digital literacy aspects of the National Curriculum (DfE, 2014) and this may be distressing to them.

To support participants during and after the research process, the University counselling team and mental health provision were informed of the planned research and data-collection process, and their availability was a significant scheduling consideration. Data collection was timed to coincide with summer months, when demand for university mental health support

services may be minimal, and services can be made aware when data-collection activities are being undertaken. During the induction process, participants were informed of the sensitivity of the material they may engage with, and a contingency plan to signpost them towards university support services should they be required was implemented using emails, discussion, and leaflets. To protect the participants, at no point during this research where they presented with sexting imagery.

Recommendations from the findings and potential updates to localised ITT safeguarding training and provision for trainees in Northwest England will be shared amongst colleagues. Following the conclusion of this research, this research could potentially be disseminated across the wider UK safeguarding community and ITT computing training network. For this reason, participant data was anonymised.

### **3.3.2: Preliminary Data-collection Design Issues and Further Ethical Considerations.**

Data-collection designs were affected by the international COVID-19 SARS pandemic restrictions, which significantly impacted the ability to conduct face-to-face interviews and focus groups. To circumnavigate these issues, data-collection plans were amended to support conducting some aspects of the data collection remotely. These amendments involved editing the data-collection forms to work with Google Forms and the interview scripts to support Teams™ software.

Further design problems concerned school partners who initially agreed to provide AASB incidents as case studies to support this research. However, school case study materials and AASB prevalence data were vetoed by the headteachers approached for this study, as they were concerned about the impact, impression and perceptions such data might invoke among

stakeholders, such as parents. Schools consider reports of AASB as confidential, sensitive, and protected by the General Data Protection Register (GDPR) as part of the *Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018* (UK Government, 2018), which is administered by the Information Commission Office (ICO) (2018). The ICO is a government body that addresses complaints regarding the use of personal data and uses legislation to protect individuals. These issues significantly impacted this research, as school case studies are protected by *DPA (2018)* legislation, which was relatively new and may have been poorly understood by schools when they were approached to participate in this study. While collectively, the issues highlighted above indicated that researching AASB may be complex and sensitive, I felt these sensitivities indicated that AASB ought to be researched, particularly after two years of unsuccessfully trying to gain access to case study materials from schools. The design process for approaches to data collection required further consideration.

Further design considerations included restrictions and time constraints for conducting data-collection processes, and this was due to the scheduling of the PGCE programme, which constrained opportunities to revisit trainee participants for data-collection purposes. A narrow window of opportunity existed to acquire participant data at the end of the training process. This constraint resulted in a smaller than anticipated cohort of trainee participants who could respond to the data-collection processes. This constraint was influenced by the restrictive sampling criteria I imposed, which required trainee programme completion prior to participation to protect the integrity of this research. Initially, thirty trainees agreed to participate, and some did not meet the course completion sampling criteria; there were no alternative time slots for trainee participation in the data-collection processes.

Additionally, if I conducted face-to-face interviews with trainees before the training period concluded, significant ethical challenges may have impacted this research. Trainees may have found it difficult to differentiate between me as a course leader and a researcher. The designs of the data-collection tools required careful consideration to reduce the impact of a pre-existing power dynamic between the trainees and the researcher. Cunningham and Hall (2022) discuss the researcher-student relationship in the context of academic integrity and bias. They state that pre-existing relationships present significant challenges regarding social desirability bias. Rongits (2022) explores researcher-participant relationships, referencing specifically a 'strategic dance' (Rongits, 2022, p.6) that ensues when researchers engage with student participants. Professional and supportive relationships between the course leader and trainee participants developed before, during and after the PGCE programme were ethically significant considerations. Close trainee relationships emerged due to the researcher's significant personal involvement in their development during the ITT programme. A spirit of candour existed to support addressing their challenges and help them navigate the professional school environment; this has been encouraged throughout the program. To achieve this candour, a mutual respect developed between the trainees and myself as the trainee participants' course leader. This personal involvement was a strength of this study as I knew the received academic input. I could identify and attribute where training was derived from sources other than the university and where this had occurred.

Finally, at the conclusion of the course, I was no longer their course leader, which minimised my ability to influence the trainees' ability to provide honest responses (Cunningham and Hall, 2022). This could, without careful management, impact the integrity of this research.

Professional interpersonal relationships with practitioner experts were also a significant design strength. The strong professional associations between the school and the university continued beyond the research process, as I was a safeguarding lead and regularly interacted with DSOs. Partnership relationships were key to the ITT training regime, and reviewing training and support provided as part of the partnership agreement was sensitive. Good cordial, professional relationships were required to conduct the training processes, influencing the choice of method and design for this aspect of the research.

Ethical issues for aspects of this research conflicted, and the responsibility to protect the identity of the participants was particularly paramount. It has not been easy to guarantee complete anonymity for the contributions to the study of the participants, as they belong to a group of individuals who work in partnership with the university. However, the university was anonymised to protect its identity; this also supported anonymising schools that regularly host trainees on placement. However, measures have been taken to ensure that specific data cannot be attributed to individual data subjects, which was particularly important for the DSOs and trainee participants interviewed.

### **3.3.3: Designing Trainee Vignettes**

Finch (1987) devised vignettes as a research tool to present information in 'story formats' (Schoenberg and Ravdal, 2000, p.64) that captured experiences (Piantandida and Garman, 2010, p.246). Vignettes present 'critical incidents' (Lacey et al., 2010, p.190) of adolescent sexting behaviours as stories to elicit responses from the trainees. Stories are not easily presented through surveys (Poulou, 2011). Vignettes and surveys enabled the thematic organisation and presentation of sexting incidents to participants of different types of sexting

activity. The researcher could then acquire specific data regarding responding to different sexting behaviours and, more specifically, AASB activity.

Vignettes minimised risks associated with exposure to legal and ethical issues affiliated with adolescent sexting incidents. They provided data to trainee participants in the format of a story-controlled exposure to risk by using previously resolved sexting incidents and standardising the exposure to AASB. It would be unethical to expose trainees to current sexting scenarios in schools for research purposes, as trainees may not provide resolutions to disclosures and may distress pupils. Therefore, presenting sexting incidents as a simulated reality enabled the exploration of trainee interpretations, management and response to AASB incidents.

The vignettes were presented as scenarios to enable the sexting incident to be easily 'categorised and coded' (Moon, 2010, p.115). Each scenario referred to an actual sexting incident and a disclosure method. Six vignette scenarios were developed; five were delivered with online surveys to twenty trainees. The sixth vignette formed part of the trainee focus group discussion to clarify and verify data collected from the previous five vignettes.

The vignettes were purposively edited to elicit emotions and draw upon the trainees' coping skills that may be invoked during a disclosure incident (Brown and Thompson, 2013, p.1146). Creative Bricolage facilitated the exploration of the narrative responses created by the trainees as they reacted to each vignette scenario.

The vignette scenarios were derived from Wolak and Finkelhor's (2011) 'A Taxonomy of Sexting', who investigated sexting activity in high schools. However, Wolak and Finkelhor's (2011) study of sexting incidents did not discuss disclosure methods; therefore, the vignettes were edited to include different disclosure methods. One vignette and one disclosure method

were combined to form the basis of a simulated but complete sexting scenario, which formed part of the data-collection tool. Labels (available in Appendix 3) were assigned to vignettes to represent the type of sexting scenario and disclosure method. The recreation of reality through vignettes currently used in government training materials for practising school DSOs (UKCCIS, 2017) may be helpful in eliciting emotional responses. These training materials contain previously resolved AASB incidents used in Wolak and Finkelhor's (2011) study of sexting behaviour and were used to simulate actual sexting incidents. This simulated vignette exposure method elicited emotional responses. The discussion here captures trainee descriptions of anticipated emotional reactions to AASB incidents rather than actual emotional responses. Trainees revealed differing emotions as they encountered each vignette.

#### **3.3.4: Data-Collection Survey Design**

There are 4 stages in designing the survey questions, which correspond with those identified by Gray (2018, p.238). The first stage concerns 'extracting information' regarding sexting definitions sexting and acquiring planned responses to sexting incidents, including AASB disclosures. The five survey questions in Appendix 3 are open-ended and devised to address research question three. These five questions are repeated with each of the five specific vignettes. Participants will write in free form without prompts. The open questions use text boxes to facilitate the collection of descriptive answers.

#### **3.3.5: Data-Collection Trainee Focus Group**

Appendix three contains this research's third data-collection tool, which involved a small focus group of five trainees. The purpose of the focus group was to explore the vignettes and

survey responses collectively in a discussion further and to clarify any inconsistencies or anomalies in the data collected from the vignettes and survey. The group discussion was framed around a sixth previously unseen vignette, which was excluded from the survey data-collection process because of the complexity of this sixth scenario. The five survey questions featured previously in the vignette/survey data-collection process were discussion prompts during the focus group. Examples of discussion prompts included 'In the survey, you said sexting is defined as....' The prompt questions explore training experiences, how they planned to operationalise their response to AASB, how their mentors had guided them to manage AASB, how they would describe their emotional response to the vignette scenario, and finally, which policies informed their response.

The focus group lasted 60 minutes, commencing after the PGCE course concluded, using a secure online TEAMS platform, accessed by email invitation only due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 SARS pandemic. Participants were known to each other and could identify with each other. This approach presented tensions regarding the facilitation of the group and the nuances of extracting data through 'group dynamics'(Bryman et al., 2021, p. 454). The participants knew the researcher as she tutored them throughout the PGCE Secondary Computing programme. Trainees were selected from the vignette and survey participant volunteers because of the 'supportive working relationships' established between this group (Gray, 2018, p. 485) before this research commenced. The participant relationships supported positive group interactions, as the selected trainees were loquacious and personable, which enabled frank discussions between the focus group members. Positive group dynamics were necessary because of the sensitive nature of discussion topics and the ethical issues regarding discussing participant responses. This familiarity enhanced the discussion process and maintained confidentiality. The focus group discussion was audio-recorded and subsequently

transcribed. All transcribed information was stored on a password-protected computer in a locked office and used facial recognition software to gain access.

### **3.3.6: Data-Collection Expert Groups**

This data-collection phase was developed by revisiting the 'Bricolage Matrix' (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004, p.110) to explore AASB from an expert perspective. Semi-structured interview questions were constructed to address research question two (RQ2:) How should trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB? The Delphi method (de Meyrick, 2003) informed the design for expert data-collection, as this method elicits data from experts (Newby, 2014) to establish a 'consensus' (Lacey et al., 2010, p. 228) of opinions from experts. CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) supported posing the complex problem of exploring trainee ITT provision concerning their preparedness to address disclosures of sexting behaviour and guided the design of the expert data-collection process. The training problem posed to the practitioner experts asked them to place themselves as an ITT trainer requiring updates on current safeguarding training regarding AASB. By posing the difficulties encountered when training trainees regarding addressing disclosures of sexting behaviours as a problem, CT theory approach (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) supported constructing discussions which canvassed expert opinions concerning what they think trainees should do when addressing disclosures of sexting behaviour and AASB.

Experts, by definition, are rare and were defined by Newby (2014, p.256) 'as persons within a given field, with qualities of such as experience...[and] having extensive knowledge of the issue and views on what is desirable.' Here, the field of knowledge consisted of the purposive sampling criteria: AASB knowledge, five or more years of experience in addressing AASB

professionally as a consultant or in a school, which provided an informed opinion regarding how to resolve incidences of AASB best.

The expert participants were divided into two groups, so for consistency, Strand B was further refined to have Strand B 1 and B2.

### **3.3.7a: Strand B1 Consultant Expert Data-Collection**

The data-collection approach for Strand B was the same process for B1 and B2 but with a different audience. The process consisted of three sixty-minute audio-recorded semi-structured interviews conducted in places of work and a panel discussion conducted and recorded at the NSPCC conference. Interview conversations were captured by a digital data recorder and transcribed by the researcher. The transcripts were sent to the participants in text format for approval. The original data was collected in person but transcribed into text. The text-based data was planned for analysis, as both mediums contained the same content.

Strand B1 involved consultant experts and two data-collection methods involving the same problem-solving approach. The first was a small panel discussion before the NSPCC conference audience (NSPCC, 2019). During the conference, permission was sought and obtained from the three consultant experts, who presented keynote conference addresses regarding adolescent sexting behaviours. These addresses were advertised in conference publicity materials, as was the format of the conference sessions. Each session included questioning time at the end of each presentation. During question time, the consultant participant experts were questioned on their opinions of how trainees should respond to AASB. The presenters also appeared together in a panel discussion during the conference proceedings. This session data was captured on a data audio recorder and transcribed to text

format. The transcripts were sent to the presenters for approval before inclusion in the analysis process.

A further data collection exercise for strand B1 is contained in Appendix 3, consisting of the same CT problem-solving approach. Consultant experts were given the problem of how they would address training trainee teachers regarding disclosures of sexting behaviours, particularly those of an aggressive nature. Questions included 'if they were a trainer,' and 'how would they manage training?' 'What do they expect trainees to know about sexting behaviour when they have concluded their training?' These questions are contained in Appendix 3E. Two of the three consultant experts agreed to be interviewed. The same scenario and set of questions were presented to the practitioner experts for strand B2 in their places of work.

By conducting face-to-face interviews with each expert, it was possible to obtain the viewpoints of the two experts on a 'more personal level' (Bryman et al., 2021, p.245) without scrutinising a conference audience. Panel discussions with consultant experts were in a public arena, where the panel's audience and the other consultant experts scrutinised their comments and opinions. By interviewing consultant experts independently, they could answer questions personally to clarify their views. One of the consultant experts provided a serendipitous invitation to visit his work colleagues in Belfast. This opportunity provided an opportunity to explore how the safeguarding business addressed AASB, including CPD and weekly broadcast updates. These materials were not included in the complete data corpus in Figure 20 for this research but have been used in the discussion chapter.

### **3.3.7b: Strand B2 Practitioner Expert Data-Collection**

The practitioner experts were particularly politically sensitive participants due to the pre-existing ITT partnership relationship between the schools and the university. For the Strand B2 data-collection process, a face-to-face interview was the most efficient method due to the workload of DSOs in school settings. The interview questions in Appendix 3 focussed on praxis, precisely how they operationalised safeguarding policy and how they, as experts, expected trainee teachers to respond to AASB during placements. The DSO practitioner experts understood the ITT process as they formed part of the training regime, occasionally delivered lectures to the PGCE cohort, and hosted placements in school.

As a teacher trainer and a DSO, the researcher was exposed to DSO practitioner experts, particularly in times of crisis where trainees breached safeguarding operations. Therefore, understanding the safeguarding training experienced by the trainees was sensitive and problematic. The researcher did not want to be critical of practitioner experts' professional practices or training regimes. The researcher wanted to harmonise the DSO training regime with the ITT provision to meet government policy requirements regarding ASSB (DfE, 2020). It was essential to avoid destabilising the existing equilibrium between the school and the university as the ITT partnership interlinked on many levels. Therefore, the relationship between these entities was sensitive and critical to ITT training. Suggestions of inadequate training provision in schools carried consequences, particularly in a geographical area where several ITT providers compete for placements.

The CT theoretical framework supporting constructing open discussion, where problems were presented to the practitioner expert, could elicit relevant responses during the data-collection process. The emphasis was the researchers' requirement to update personal and professional safeguarding knowledge as a catalyst for this research rather than reviewing the school

training provision. Therefore, the data-collection process emphasised an exchange of expert views (Kvale, 1996) that targeted updating operational safeguarding knowledge. During the pilot research discussions with DSOs, the researcher posed the problem of updating their safeguarding knowledge to improve the trainee's training regime. This approach recognised the practitioners' role as experts and facilitated asking them for help to improve training. It also dispelled concerns about criticism to reassure the participants.

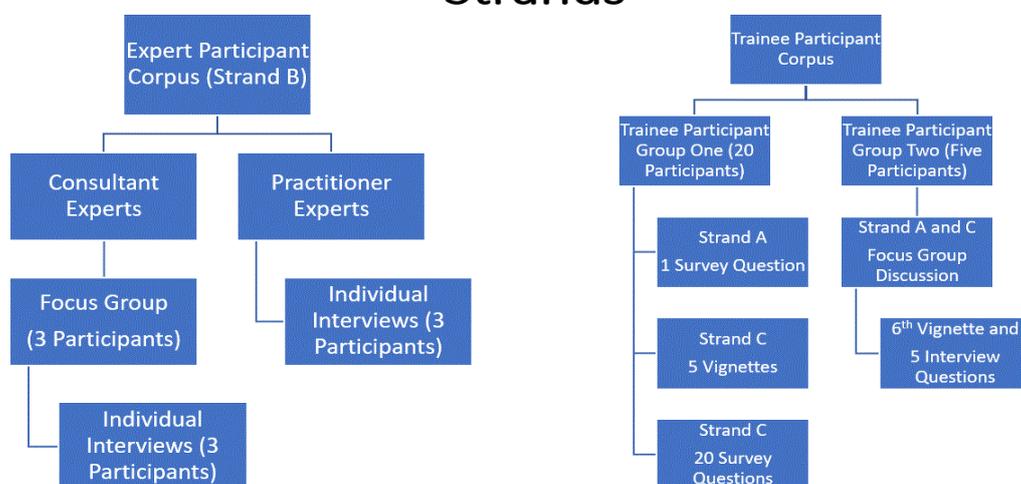
The design focussed on extracting how participants as DSOs thought the university should update their practice to reflect current safeguarding practices in schools. A semi-structured interview with open questions encouraged a dialogue that emphasised the personal reasons for researching safeguarding to open a frank exchange of views (Kvale, 1996). These discussions between practitioner experts and professional work colleagues who deal with AASB frequently enabled an investigation of safeguarding practice.

Topical and political sensitivities were managed by using the time directly before and directly after the sixty-minute interview to discuss with the participants how working relationships could be improved between DSOs. Their status and value as practitioner experts were discussed before the interview. These discussions were not audio recorded as part of the interview discussions, as the researcher wanted to express gratitude for participation. The preliminary and post-discussions set the tone for the interview and a continued positive working relationship with the DSO; although not part of the data-collection process, these discussions required acknowledgement regarding how these discussions managed sensitivities. The subsequent interview transcripts were sent to the DSOs for review before inclusion in the analysis process.

Figure 20 clearly outlines the participant groups and how each participant group contributed to the data acquisition process, including strands A, B and C. Each participant group and the number of participants in each group are identified. The chosen design for this research may initially appear complex and disjointed, but Figure 20 illustrates how the data corpus was organised and constructed to support knowledge creation.

This research required input from four distinct groups, two distinct types of participant experts, and a group and subgroup of trainee participants; these participant groups increased the complexity of the research design.

## Data Corpus: Data Collection Methods and Strands



**Figure 19: The Complete Data Corpus for this Research.**

### 3.3.8: Additional Data-Collection Considerations and Designs

This research adopts four distinct and separate data capture methods to address the three research questions, as illustrated in Table 13 below, and involves four small groups of participants. These four groups were necessary because of the perspectives they provided.

Each participant group required their own data-collection method. This requirement created design issues, and CT theory supported overcoming some of these challenges using sets. The theory supported presenting each participant group (set) with a problem during the data capture design process, and the problem-solving approach supported structuring the data capture tools. Each participant group was presented with a distinct set of problems, and developing an appropriate questioning method for each problem was simplified.

**Table 13: Data Collection Methods.**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Trainee Participants</b>	<b>Trainee Participants</b>	<b>Practitioner participant experts</b>	<b>Practitioner participant experts</b>
<b>No of Participants</b>	<b>(20)</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(3)</b>
<b>Question</b>	RQ1: How do trainee teachers define 'sexting' behaviour? RQ3 How do trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?	RQ1: How do trainee teachers define 'sexting' behaviour? RQ3 How do trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?	RQ2: How should trainee teachers respond to AASB disclosures?	RQ2: How should trainee teachers respond to AASB disclosures?
<b>Method</b>	Online Vignettes and Survey	Vignette Online Focus Group	Interview	Interview
<b>Time Constraint</b>	After PGCE Training, July	Conclusion of Training after the Vignette and survey process concluded.	PGCE Duration 10-month period	PGCE Duration ten-month period
<b>Outcome</b>	Text Survey Responses	Digital Audio Recording and Text Transcript.	Digital Audio Recording and Text Transcript	Digital Audio Recording and Text Transcript

The data-collection method adopted a quadrangular verification approach (Forero et al., 2018) to support a quality assurance process and ensure that the data collected was reliable and valid. The first trainee data collection employed a vignette-survey method consisting of five vignettes, a disclosure narrative, and a survey. The survey questions focussed on capturing their knowledge and planned responses to the vignette scenarios (Finch, 1987) and were planned to be repeated five times with different scenarios. A definition question (Kvale, 1996) was incorporated into the survey to address trainee participants' understanding of AASB. Trainees were also asked if they had encountered behaviour like the one presented in the vignette to capture their lived experience (Van Manen, 1990). These tasks' repetitive nature helped verify trainee responses and understanding of sexting and AASB.

The second method, the focus group, supported the vignette-survey data capture method by creating a data capture tool that could address any anomalies in the data by clarifying meaning where there might be uncertainty. A sixth, more complex AASB vignette was presented during this process to prompt an open discussion within the focus group that would be audio recorded and transcribed to text.

The third design plan involved constructing a series of semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1996) that would be conducted individually with the two expert groups, consultants, and practitioners. Again, CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) theory supported the design of these data capture tools. The third design planned to pose the problem of training ITT computing teachers to address AASB disclosures in schools, initially to the consultant experts and then ask for guidance and advice through interview questions.

The fourth design plan involved repeating the same process as the third but targeting the practitioner experts precisely and presenting them with a school safeguarding AASB training

problem. The problem consisted of asking the DSOs how I could better prepare the trainees to engage with safeguarding policy in their school when trainees are presented with an AASB disclosure. The interview questions were then adapted to this scenario by asking them if they could help support the safeguarding training process in this area. The conversations would then be audio recorded and transcribed to text to support analysis.

These data capture processes were initially organised into three phases:

Phase plans to investigate Strand A and three sub-strands addressed RQ1 and RQ3, as illustrated in Table 4 below. Primarily, these research questions established how the trainees defined sexting behaviour and provided resources for them to elaborate on their understanding of the constituents of AASB.

Phase two was divided into two sub-strands and investigated Strand B. Strand B involved canvassing views from two distinct groups of participants, (B1) 'Consultant Experts' and (B2) 'Practitioner Experts', via face-to-face interviews. The interview process uses the same questions to capture data from both subgroups. The expert group division occurred because initial discussions revealed that consultant experts (B1) had extensive knowledge of AASB gained from reading, research, and publication but possessed limited practical exposure to working in schools with pupils where disclosures are received. However, they could address RQ2 because they provide consultancy services and training to DSOs and Safeguarding Leads in schools about sexting behaviour.

This research explored phase three, the second part of strand C, identified in Figure 16 and Table 3. This phase investigated trainee knowledge of school safeguarding policies and implementation procedures. It also explored trainees' knowledge of addressing disclosures,

practical exposure to AASB, safeguarding training, and emotional responses to AASB disclosures.

Phase three data-collection methods include vignettes, an online survey, and a focus group that addressed RQ3. The expected outcomes for this phase were:

- The naming, identifying, and locating by trainees of school safeguarding policies.
- Establishing if relevant safeguarding policies are easy for trainees to access, for example, online or in a handbook physically.
- Identify if policy documents or information was provided for the trainees during school induction programmes.
- Capture the trainees' emotional responses to the vignette scenarios and any additional training the trainees had received.
- Record trainee encounters with sexting behaviour during placements.

The final part of phase three, the focus group, addressed anomalies from ambiguous survey responses that emerged from the survey data-collection process. Therefore, the survey vignette analysis commenced before the focus group discussion as this process clarified the survey data, which informed the focus group discussions. Figure 17 illustrates the time cycle and processes for Strand A, Strand B and Strand C research processes.

Due to the COVID-19 SARS pandemic, this three-phased design changed, and part of phase three was incorporated into phase one. This change meant that RQ1 and part of RQ3 were planned to be addressed simultaneously as part of the survey and vignette data-collection method to protect participants. Research question one (RQ1) 's definition question was incorporated as part of the survey and administered to the trainees as a standalone survey

question in strand C's data-collection process. Strand C established if the trainees had encountered sexting behaviour during their school training placements and how they were prepared for such encounters using the vignette-survey scenarios method. The definitions of sexting and the responses to the vignette survey questions were derived from the same group of trainee participants. By combining strand A and part of strand C processes, an accurate picture of the knowledge base of the trainee cohort may be established as the participant group addressed the relevant strands and phases of the research.

Trainee participants' data-collection challenges were addressed by inviting them to attend a project induction session, which was presented as an option after completing their PGCE training. This induction session reiterated to the trainees that participation in the study was optional, and they could withdraw from the study at any time up to three weeks after the data-collection process concluded. The induction presentation discussed the benefits of this research to their future careers and the potential impact on the broader safeguarding community. After the information pack was issued, participants could read the research information pack and ask questions. The presentation, discussion, and clarified consent terms, including how to withdraw from the study. At the end of the process, the participants had a period to ask questions about the study and discuss the withdrawal process if required. This induction process ensured informed consent from participants. The information pack, consent forms and other participant documentation can be found in Appendix 3.

Strand B2 explored the safeguarding consultant experts' broader overview and understanding of what they believed trainee teachers should know regarding managing AASB. Experts imparted knowledge and advice concerning their lived experiences, insights, and perceptions of AASB from a specialist's perspective (Van Manen, 1990, p. 54). These expert perspectives

informed school safeguarding and training processes and contextualised professional expectations regarding how trainees should address AASB incidents in schools.

In summary, Kincheloe and Berry's (2004) definition of the characteristics of multiple perspective methodology supported the creation of data capture tools to acquire specialised knowledge from two groups of experts and discuss their 'lived experience,' which may establish expert expectations of trainees. Strand B1 explores Consultants B2 and safeguarding practitioners' beliefs and expectations regarding what trainee teachers should know about managing AASB from the perspective of practical knowledge of addressing AASB disclosures with pupils in school settings.

Strand A participants are twenty trainees who completed the definition question and the vignette survey data-collection tool. Strand B consists of six participant experts organised into two expert groups of three practitioner experts and three consultant participant experts. Strand C participants are the same twenty trainees who completed the definition question for Strand A and completed the vignette survey data-collection process. A fourth group supported Strand C, and this group consisted of a selection of five of the 20 Strand A trainee participants who had completed the online vignette survey. The data corpus groups are illustrated in Figure 20 below.

## Addressing the Research Questions

Strand A and Strand C Trainees	Vignette-Survey Group	Focus Group	
Sample Size	20 Trainees	5 Trainees (Subgroup of Survey Group)	RQ1 How <b>do</b> trainees define sexting behaviours?
Research Questions	RQ1 and RQ3	RQ1 and RQ3	RQ2 How <b>should</b> trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?
Administration of Data Collection Tool	End of June/Beginning of July 2020. Participant administered Google Forms	End of July 2020 Teams Discussion Online	RQ3 How <b>do</b> trainees plan to respond to AASB?

Strand A and Strand C data capture processes for RQ1 and RQ3 in the Vignette-Survey Group were concatenated due to the COVID-19 SARS Pandemic

Strand B Experts	B1 Group	B2 Group
Sample Size	3 Consultant Experts	3 Practitioner Experts
Research Questions	RQ2	RQ2
Administration of Data Collection Tool	Ongoing over 2 Years from 2020- 2022	Ongoing over 2 years from 2019 to 2021

**Figure 20: Addressing the Research Questions**

### 3.3.9: Data Analysis Ethics and Tensions

During the data analysis, anonymising data and removing location references were essential to protect and maintain pre-existing relationships between school and university partnerships. Safeguarding relationships within the partnership should be paramount and remains a sensitive ethical consideration for this research. AASB activity in schools continues to be both a political and sensitive topic. Therefore, the scrutiny, guidance, and approval from two university ethics panels supported refining this research process to protect the participants involved.

A personal predisposition towards protecting professional colleagues influenced the data-collection process. The approach produced themes that supported colleagues and new entrants to the teaching profession rather than criticising the current safeguarding provision. Participants' understanding of AASB disclosure focused on trainee participants' existing knowledge base and guidance provided by participant experts on how to address AASB in

schools. From personal experience, school colleagues have suffered significant consequences due to addressing AASB disclosures in school.

A further ethical consideration for this research was 'professional exploitation' (Silverman, 2011, p.90). The power dynamic relationship between trainee participants and their researcher course leader (Miles et al., 2020) required careful consideration. Trainees may not provide truthful answers during data-collection processes, timed to coincide with the course conclusion as they complete their training and assessment period. The data-collection timing minimised the potential for trainee exploitation during the data-capture process as they were volunteers, and their answers would not influence the course outcomes.

Ethical design considerations included independently extracting information from the trainees away from the researcher's presence and limiting opportunities for the researcher to influence their responses during the data-collection process. 'Socially desired biased' trainee responses were avoided using social distancing (Bryman, 2012, p.226; Gray, 2018, p.264). Trainee views were canvassed using an IT room, and survey administration was conducted by members of the course team and not the researcher. CT theory (Quinlan and Cross, 2020) influenced the design of all the data-collection instruments, the vignette surveys, the focus group, and the interview questions. Each tool presented problems for the participants to address, and problem-solving provided a structure and a process for addressing participant responses, which addresses researcher bias as the process is led by CT theory. CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) facilitated posing vignettes of scenarios and questions to participants as problems to solve as it was unethical to utilise school data. Participants were seen as knowledge co-creators rather than having their training provision scrutinised; this approach minimised researcher influence. Online text-based data acquisition

formats mediated data collection for strands A and C, creating distance between the researcher and the data subjects. This text-based approach enabled the sight-impaired researcher to use assistive technology to interpret text-based data. Trainee participants received the survey through a hyperlink administered individually to trainees in a classroom workshop. Trainees' exposure to 'interviewer effects' (Bryman et al., 2021, p.221) was minimal, and the environment provided one-to-one opportunities to acquire honest answers to the survey questions. Trainee responses were known only to the researcher.

The data-collection process encouraged trainees to read the vignette problem and then address the survey questions as if they had encountered the scenario presented in the vignette within the school setting. Similarly, the expert participant group were approached with the problem of being a course leader for new entrants to the teaching profession and asked how they would solve the problem of delivering practical training about receiving AASB disclosures.

The survey and focus group questions captured both school based AASB encounters during training and trainee participants' understanding of policy operationalisation that may support them in subsequent decision-making processes. The survey questions were redesigned to elicit 'clear, descriptive responses' to open questions and were presented with the vignettes (Gray, 2018, p.261). Descriptions included details of their training, exposure to policy, practical experiences, decision-making processes, and emotional preparedness. Repeating the same questions for each of the five vignettes ascertained where trainees received their safeguarding training; how trainees planned to use safeguarding policy and how emotionally prepared trainees were to cope with receiving disclosures.

### **3.3.10: Data Management Plan**

The five data-collection methods were interviews as voice recordings and text transcripts, focus groups as voice recordings and text-based transcripts, survey data as text-based data files, panel discussions as voice recordings, and text-based transcripts from the interview panel. Additionally, a text-based research diary was compiled throughout the research process, which was used as a personal reflexive writing and thinking tool to support the research process and collate essential information, such as permission from authors and acquiring ethical approval.

All the data for this research was analysed as text-based data. Audio recordings were recorded on an audio data recorder and then personally transcribed to text-based data. This provided an opportunity to revisit the data. After transcription, the transcripts were sent to the participants for approval. The survey responses collected text data, and the trainee focus group was audio recorded, transcribed, and sent back to the participants for approval. As a result of these transcription and data-collection processes, all the data used in the analysis process was text-based rather than audio recordings.

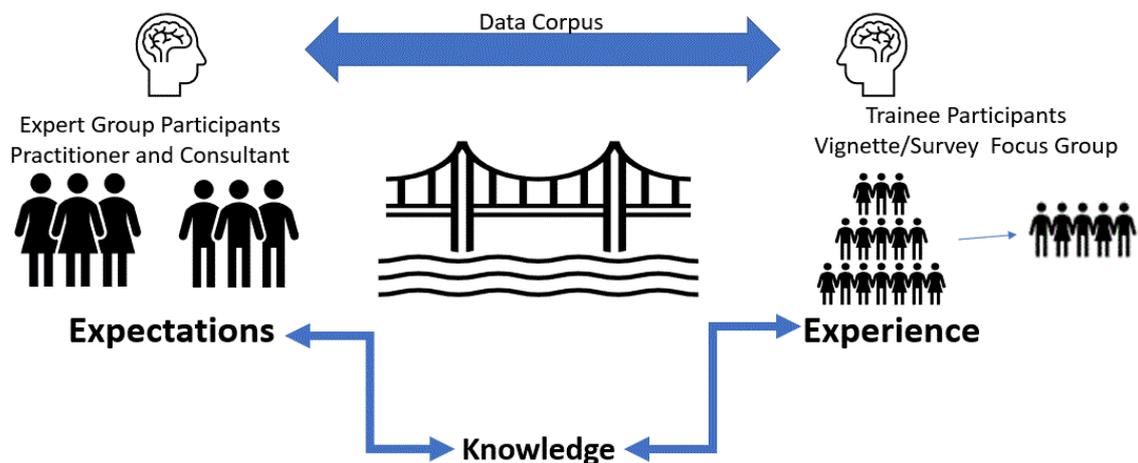
Storage and management for data acquired to conduct this research were rigorously designed to comply with *DPA (2018)* legislation. All data was anonymised, and training courses regarding managing data files and complying with *DPA (2018)* were attended in early 2018 before data collection commenced. This commitment to *DPA (2018)* compliance ensures the ethical standards of the research. Data will be stored for five years between 2019 to 2024 and then deleted.

The data shared in subsequent publications will be transparently presented, with excerpts carefully chosen to ensure they do not include information that can identify participants

individually. Identifying data was deleted two weeks after data collection. However, participant contributions are known to the researcher. Files have been stored in a text-based format using One Drive on a University account, which is password-protected and uses university cloud-based security measures. Data were accessed using a password-protected computer that used facial recognition software and is only accessible by the researcher.

Bricolage methodology enabled the research design to encompass inputs from four distinct groups of participants to be considered during the design process, as illustrated in Figure 21. Each expert group, both the consultant and the practitioner expert, provided expert advice and support for the study but had different perspectives on safeguarding. One perspective, the practitioners, was operational and concerned only with the schools where they worked, whereas the consultants had a strategic overview of a group of schools. The interview, designed and used for both groups, was presented in separate locations to each group of participants. The school-based practitioner experts understood they were discussing issues separately, but their views were being considered with fellow DSO colleagues familiar with the ITT process. Whereas the consultant experts were unfamiliar with the PGCE programme, the university, and the data they provided was impartial to the ITT process.

# How the Data Corpus Enabled Knowledge Creation



**Figure 21: Data Corpus and Knowledge Creation Activities.**

### 3.3.11: Designing an Appropriate Data Analysis Method

The analysis technique section will first present why this technique was chosen and how thematic analysis was applied to the datasets following the six steps suggested by Braun and Clark (2013), cited in Delahunt and Maguire (2017).

The data-collection tools were designed and planned to address the three research questions. Bricolage (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004) and CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) are principal theories that permeate the research design process. The bricolage methodology supported the creation of combined data capture tools to ensure the acquired data can address the research questions. Street Level Bureaucracy (Lipsky, 2010) theory guided the research tools to capture data regarding administrative and policy processes and decisions trainees planned to undertake when addressing AASB disclosures.

Braun and Clarke's (2022) interpretation of thematic analysis was chosen as this was the most appropriate method to answer the research questions and aligned with CT (Quinlan & Cross, 2020) as abstraction, decomposition, and identification of patterns form part of the TA process. The thematic analysis comprised six steps or phases (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017) with many advantages for researchers new to analysing qualitative data (Miles et al., 2020).

### **3.3.12: Justification for the use of Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis (TA) is a widely used, distinct and accepted method for analysing qualitative data. It is not a methodology but an analysis technique because it offers a systematic approach to developing, analysing, and interpreting patterns across a dataset (Braun and Clarke, 2022). The TA approach complemented Bricolage and CT because it is not aligned with specific theoretical stances and is compatible with various research designs. TA is suited to practitioner research because it provides an analysis framework rather than a theory directing the analysis process. The TA processes were transparent, enabling other researchers and readers to easily follow and see how I derived my findings (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.174; Guest et al., 2012). TA enabled the researcher to explore text content and avoid making assumptions concerning themes not evident from the data analysis process (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.180). TA simplified applying analysis techniques for me as a visually impaired researcher and was compatible with assistive technology, that was a key consideration.

The vocalised data was transposed to text format and carefully and iteratively read, highlighted, segregated, and organised or disregarded where it was not relevant to the study. After many iterations of this process, the meaningful 'chunks' of information collected from the data were organised to address the research questions.

The emergent themes addressed the research questions, and during the analysis process, where overlaps and commonalities occurred, themes were modified. This modification process enabled further thematic refinements within the data and the derivation of findings from more than one data source, which strengthened and added rigour to the modest claims of my research. The resulting thematic map can be viewed in Table 18 below, and the resultant thematic map is then shown in Figure 22.

**Table 14: Examples of Refining Themes and Codes Using the Trainee Participant Dataset**

<b>Theme:1</b> <b>Understanding of Aggressive Adolescent Sexting Behaviour (AASB)</b>	<b>Theme:2</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme: 3</b> <b>Practical Courses of Action to Address AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme: 4</b> <b>Recommended Ways of Dealing with AASB</b>	<b>Theme: 5</b> <b>Trainee Emotional to AASB</b>
<p>Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages using technology</p> <p>using a variety of media to message another person sexually.</p> <p>Dismissive of AASB</p> <p>Perception of AASB (negative and positive)</p> <p>It is challenging to manage AASB.</p> <p>Motivation for AASB (bullying, sexual abuse )</p> <p>Prevalence and impact of ASB</p> <p>Impact of ASB on victims and others</p>	<p>Not received any safeguarding training specifically about sexting</p> <p>Notifying the DSL /Safeguarding Officer as part of the safeguarding procedure</p> <p>Received specific training on School Systems (CPOMS)</p> <p>Training through the school’s CPD process during placement (clarity)</p> <p>Safeguarding training locations, either university or school setting or both</p> <p>Forward-thinking schools raising awareness of ASB as part of the curriculum, passing it on to trainee teachers</p> <p>Disparate levels of confidence across trainees in knowledge and application of safeguarding procedures</p> <p>Acting outside the safeguarding procedure</p>	<p>Report to Safeguarding Officer</p> <p>Report to Police</p> <p>Report to Childline</p> <p>Outside the remit for the role of the teacher</p> <p>Report to an Unspecified person in the College</p> <p>Support the child, Support from members of staff.</p> <p>Listen to the child</p> <p>Don’t ask Leading questions</p> <p>Don’t promise confidentiality.</p> <p>Ensure Pupils Support</p> <p>Listen to the pupils</p> <p>Contact University</p>	<p>Record Detail</p> <p>Document (the discussion)</p> <p>Record on CPOMs (School data system)</p> <p>Establish the Location of the Incident (Inside or Outside the School)</p> <p>Report to DSO/DSL/Safeguarding Team</p> <p>Report to the Police</p> <p>Timeliness of Reporting/Immediacy</p> <p>Do not look at pictures</p> <p>Ensure Pupils Support</p> <p>Listen to the pupil</p> <p>No Recommendations</p> <p>Regular Training</p> <p>Policy Training</p> <p>Behaviour Management Training</p>	<p>Horrified but outwardly calm.</p> <p>Emotionally difficult but maintain professionalism. Nonjudgmental Professional behaviour overcomes personal feelings to ensure a response in line with policy</p> <p>The expectation of communicating with the mother, potential emotional reaction?</p> <p>No emotional response expectation that Safeguarding Officer will deal with emotions?</p> <p>Feel the need to protect the child, to help the child. Determined to act</p> <p>Difficult because of the emotional attachment to pupils</p> <p>Upset, Concerned, Empathy, Sympathy, Compassion, Shocked, Horrified, Overwhelmed, Embarrassed</p> <p>the potential subject matter of conversations?</p> <p>Require counselling</p> <p>Proud because the pupil chose me to disclose to</p>

<b>Theme:1</b> <b>Understanding of Aggressive Adolescent Sexting Behaviour (AASB)</b>	<b>Theme:2</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme: 3</b> <b>Practical Courses of Action to Address AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme: 4</b> <b>Recommended Ways of Dealing with AASB</b>	<b>Theme: 5</b> <b>Trainee Emotional to AASB</b>
<p><i>Examples of actual responses:</i></p> <p><i>"Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages."</i></p> <p><i>'Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image or video.'</i></p>	<p><i>Examples of actual responses:</i></p> <p><i>'During training, context was given to issues around sexual behaviour of student other parties.</i></p> <p>I was made aware that sexting might be an issue that would be taught across the school to raise awareness. The lessons were designed to describe sexting and how it can impact and what consequences it can have on the people involved.'</p>	<p><i>Examples of actual responses:</i></p> <p><i>'I would listen to the child's claims and make her aware that I am unable to keep the information between myself and her. I would then inform the child that the information will be passed onto the relevant person, i.e., the school's safeguarding Officer.'</i></p>	<p><i>Examples of actual responses:</i></p> <p><i>'In this situation, I recommend that the teacher should inform the safeguarding Officer as well as giving a PSHE lesson on sexting and grooming. Discussing the big impacts, it has on people, especially on teenagers.'</i></p>	<p><i>Examples of actual responses:</i></p> <p><i>'I would show compassion but make sure that I let the student know that we as teachers are here to help them. I would also have a firm tone when I am notifying them about telling a safeguarding officer. Even if they are uncomfortable with myself telling another person, I would still have to tell another senior member of staff to deal with this.</i></p> <p><i>'As a trainee, I would feel overwhelmed as this incident can often come as a shock. I would also feel determined to act as soon as possible to resolve this issue through the appropriate channels.</i></p> <p><i>I would be concerned about the disclosure and pass on any information to the safeguarding team who are dealing with the issues.'</i></p>

This table was used to develop subthemes that evolved from the grouped participant responses.

## Thematic Map Dealing with Disclosure

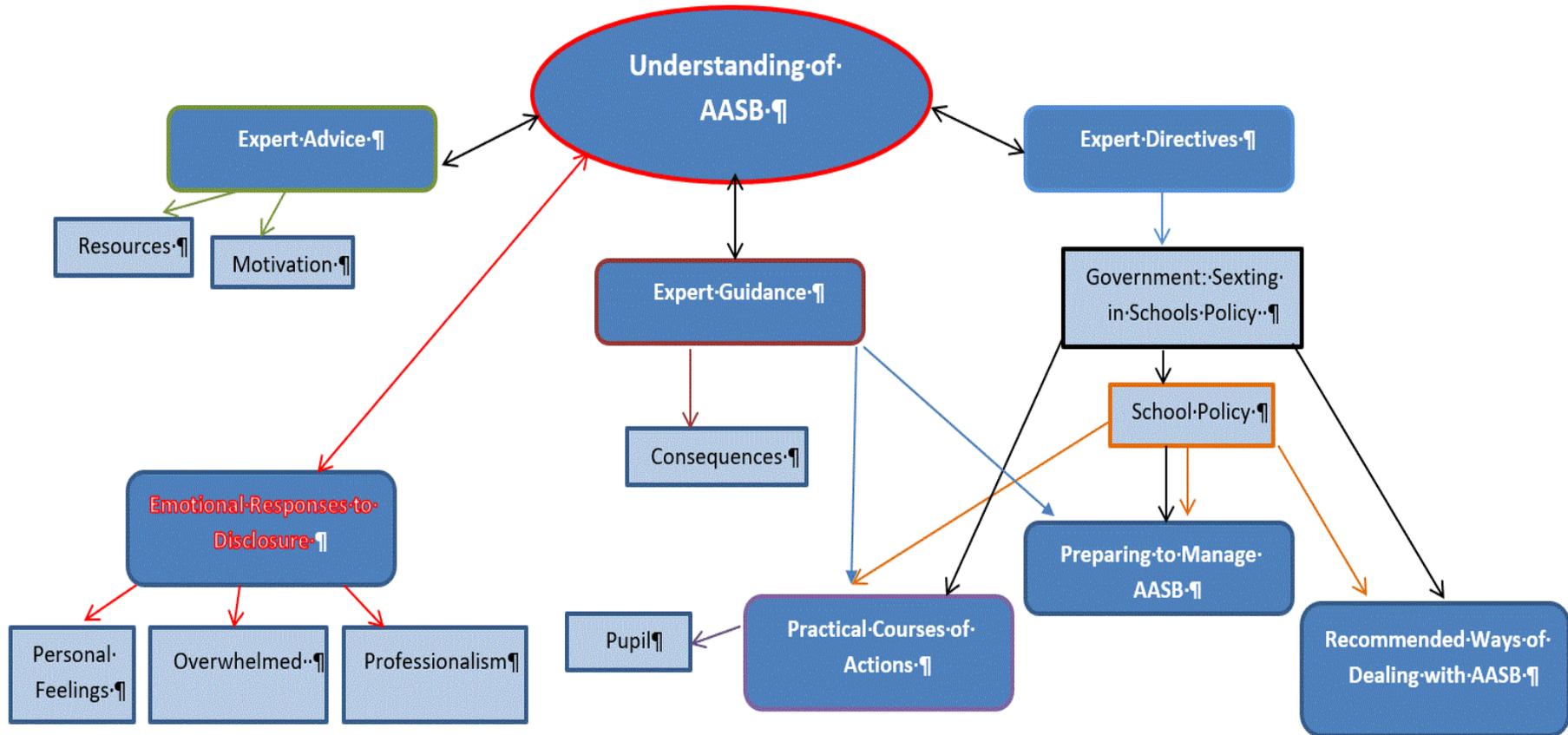


Figure 22: Thematic Map for Dealing with Disclosure

### **3.3.13: Conclusion**

The Bricolage methodology and the methods chosen and adopted for this research addressed the three research questions effectively. Several designs were considered to explore AASB and operationalising safeguarding work-based practices due to the sensitivities of insider research. However, the research tools were adapted to accommodate the sensitive nature of exploring AASB from more than one perspective and to accommodate the ethical considerations for conducting this research.

Aspects of Braun and Clarke's (2022) analysis method were challenging to a novice sight-impaired researcher. The systematic, repetitive reading of the data was difficult and time-consuming in comparison to a sighted reader and required significant reflection (Miles et al., 2020). Such reflection included establishing exactly what the participant responses were referring to in their data. The data acquired from the application of Kincheloe and Berry's (2004) Bricolage interpretation using CT (Quinlan and Cross, 2020) and TA (Braun and Clarke, 2022) for data analysis demonstrated that this methodology used to design and conduct this research process was successful. The candid responses acquired from the research discussion enabled new perspectives to emerge, which supported the aims of this research and addressed the three research questions. These responses will be discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1: Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings from this research and how these findings relate to the research questions and the literature, as presented in the synthesised selective literature review in Chapter 2. The three strands of this research, A, B and C, are considered in the context of the eight themes identified by applying Braun and Clarke's (2022) Thematic Analysis (TA). This chapter uses the results of applying TA to discuss the impact of AASB disclosure from the resulting data produced by the vignette surveys focus groups from trainees and interview results from the expert dataset. These themes emerged from carefully analysing the datasets, which supported the structure of this chapter.

The eight themes are.

1. Understanding of AASB (the ability to define sexting behaviour).
2. Preparing to manage AASB (training received during placements).
3. Practical courses of action to address AASB (practical school policy directives).
4. Recommended ways of dealing with AASB (trainee awareness of broader publications addressing sexting behaviours).
5. Emotional responses to disclosure (how the trainees felt when reading the vignette scenarios or how they might feel if they encountered sexting behaviour in school).
6. Expert advice (personal advice provided to the trainees from the participant expert's perspective but not as directives or recommendations).
7. Expert guidance (recommendations that are not legal directives but can help resolve AASB disclosures).

8. Expert directives (includes legally binding statements, published by the government that may have legal implications for teachers).

This chapter identifies and links practitioner and consultant expert expectations regarding addressing AASB using expert and trainee responses. Both trainee and expert datasets were linked to the three research questions that permeated this thesis. The discussion also aligned with the thematic map presented in Chapter 3, which illustrated the central theme, "*Definition of AASB*", and theoretical discussions in the preceding chapters, which support understanding the complex nature of responding to AASB disclosures in schools.

To clarify how this research links together, the discussion components are the eight themes, the three research questions and the three research strands A, B and C. Table 21 below explains how these components linked and supported the discussion in this chapter, by clarifying how the research questions have been addressed. Findings from fieldwork with both trainees and experts are integrated throughout this chapter.

To support and illustrate the points made, illustrative quotations from both trainees and experts from the research findings are included in this thematic discussion.

**Table 15: Mapping of Themes and Strands with the Research Questions.**

Trainee Themes	Research Questions
<b>Theme 1: Strand A</b> Understanding of Aggressive Adolescent Sexting Behaviour (AASB)	Research question 1. <b>How do trainees define sexting behaviours?</b> Capture explanatory answers addressing how trainees defined AASB.
<b>Theme 2: Strand C</b> Preparing to manage AASB. <b>Strand C</b>	Research Question 3. <b>How do trainees plan to respond to AASB?</b> Examples of data included in the codes are “preparation provided by workshops and seminars,” “preparation provided by the Safeguarding Officers,” information about referral pathways, including computer-based systems, and “awareness of different emotions anticipated when responding to AASB.”
<b>Theme 3: Strand C</b> Practical Courses of Action to Address AASB	As above
<b>Theme 4: Strand C</b> Recommended Ways of Dealing with AASB	As above
<b>Theme 5: Strand C</b> Emotional Responses to Disclosure	As above
Expert Themes	Research Questions
<b>Theme 6: Strand B</b> Expert Advice	Research question 2. <b>How should trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?</b> Identified expert perceptions of what trainees should know about addressing AASB. Examples of codes include data concerning the transmission of sexting, the impact and prevalence of sexting and AASB, the use of AASB as a harassment and bullying tool and various training resources.
<b>Theme 7: Strand B</b> Expert Guidance <b>Strand B</b>	As above
<b>Theme 8: Strand B</b> Expert Directives	As above

#### **4.1.1: Theoretical Considerations Pertinent to the Discussion of AASB Disclosures.**

Both practitioner and consultant participant expert interviews were conducted using CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) as a theoretical underpinning for this research. The interviews presented the experts with the problem of keeping up to date with practitioner knowledge from a lecturer's perspective. CT theory was applied to update professional expectations regarding trainees receiving disclosures in schools.

Analysed findings derived from expert expectations concerning trainees were deconstructed and aligned with the corresponding trainee findings to improve understanding of the themes. This reconstruction process aligned with Lipsky's theory (2010) as it helped to establish an expert expectation and whether the trainee's responses aligned with the expectation. Lipsky (1980; 2010) explored administrative processes and how they are managed in pressured situations. The deconstruction CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) approach has resulted in a discussion guided by expert expectations regarding the application of administrative processes, which addressed expectations and understanding by connecting interrelated, interconnected themes. The discussion structure combines expert findings with trainee findings. It opens with a dialogue of expert advice, guidance, or directives regarding how trainees should address a specific aspect of AASB. The first five trainee themes are discussed in conjunction with the three expert themes, and the themes derived from the expert expectations have been absorbed into the trainee thematic discussion. The thematic discussion concludes with the trainee's planned approach to addressing the element under discussion. CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) supports constructing discussions, as analysing the findings abstracted relevant points, which encouraged exploring or decomposing data responses to find patterns in the data regarding disclosure resolution.

Trainee responses are presented in a thematically organised manner and do not contain references to individual trainees to protect their identity.

Themes one and five deviate from the thematic discussion pattern, focusing solely on findings from the trainee participant's understanding or opinion and not on the expert findings. Theme one collated trainee definitions of sexting. Theme five collated trainee emotional responses to the vignette disclosures.

The discussion also included trainee participants' perceptions regarding the training they received regarding how to address AASB while attending school placements. Managing AASB included preparing to receive, document, and respond to disclosures regarding AASB. The data included procedural, practical, and emotional responses, as discussed below.

#### **4.2: Theme 1 Understanding of Aggressive Adolescent Sexting Behaviour (AASB).**

This section discusses the findings regarding question one from the survey and focus group, which asked trainees, *"How do they define sexting behaviours?"* The analysis of trainee responses enabled the establishment of a subjective indicator of a trainee's ability to define sexting behaviour. This question used CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) to establish understanding amongst the trainee participants regarding adolescent sexting behaviours and whether there was an awareness of a 'continuum of different types of sexting behaviours' (Davidson et al., 2012; Kokkiniset al., 2023). The data revealed a limited awareness of the continuum of sexting behaviours experienced by adolescents. This included the trainees' inability to identify both experimental and aggressive sexting behaviours (AASB). Trainee responses to the definition question were organised into subthemes, which included 'Using, Sending, Texting, Flirting, Harmful, Bullying and Sexual or Personal'; each theme will be

explored individually. A small minority of trainees could define sexting behaviours and understood the behaviour to include 'using' various media to transmit messages. Two individual trainee responses included:

*"Using a variety of media to message another person sexually."*

*"I would refer to the behaviour as the use of electrical devices and social media in order to seek sexual gratification from another individual. This could include messages, images, and videos."*

These findings indicate an understanding that 'using', in the context of electronic sexting transmissions, can include both sending and receiving different file types that contain sexualised content (Buren and Lunde, 2018). Some academics acknowledge that the content of these file transmissions is used for sexual gratification purposes (Dully et al., 2023). These responses indicate that these trainees are aware of several communication channels; they do not discuss specific channels in their responses but are implied in the context of 'using' in the response.

The second subtheme for defining sexting behaviour, 'Sending,' refers to broadcasting a sexualised message to recipients. One trainee indirectly referred to primary sexting behaviour as identified by Calvert (2009), Lievens (2014) and Villacampa (2017), which is the deliberate creation of sexualised images by an individual for transmission to recipients.

*"Sending sexually explicit images of yourself through text messages."*

Participant awareness of primary sexting was significantly limited, appearing only once in the twenty responses. The above quote did not use the correct terminology of primary sexting,

but the response indicated trainee awareness of this one facet of sexting behaviour as defined by UKCCIS (2017).

Further subcategories of sexting defined by UKCCIS (2017) include secondary and passive behaviours, which involve receiving messages and redistributing. The reference to 'sending' was the most common response to question one, as fifty percent of the respondents (ten trainees) referred to actively sending and not passively receiving messages.

Two trainees included value judgements in their response to question one in the quotes below, using the word 'inappropriate.' This was a significant finding because this further indicates a lack of exposure to training materials and indicates a requirement for training. These two responses were:

*Sending inappropriate messages by text.*

*Using digital devices to send inappropriate images.*

The word 'inappropriate' indicates the trainees' opinions and may be problematic for them, as professional teachers, when receiving a disclosure. Labelling behaviour as 'inappropriate' may influence how they present teaching materials to pupils and discuss this behaviour with disclosing pupils. These opinions may influence pupils' feelings of shame and guilt and prevent them from disclosing AASB (Popova, 2019).

However, only three responses indicated a clear awareness regarding how sexting messages are distributed. These three responses included:

*Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image, or video.*

*Sending sexually explicit materials through various forms of media and telecommunication.*

*Sending sexual images through digital means (email, text).*

All trainee participants are computer science teachers, and their training curriculum currently includes material regarding content communication and network transmissions (DfE 2014; 2019; OFSTED, 2021). More trainees were expected to include transmission methods in their responses because of their subject area, exposure to network technologies, and school experience. Again, this finding may indicate that trainees could be required to undergo further training and development.

Finally, regarding 'sending,' one trainee, referenced below, referred only to sending text messages with some reference to content but did not acknowledge the variety of methods or media used.

*"Sending sexually explicit text messages."*

This finding concerns only one trainee, and it signifies a potential lack of awareness regarding specific message content and precise transmission methods used in their definition. This, again, may indicate a requirement for further training.

A third subcategory of defining sexting concerns the intent behind the behaviour, which some trainees offered as part of their definition. The first of these intentions was 'flirting,' as described in the quote below:

*"Flirting with another person over text messages."*

Whilst the intention does not accurately describe the behaviour, it does demonstrate that one trainee may be aware of the role of body image in sexting behaviour, as described by Bianchi et al. (2017). This response also indicates an awareness of experimental sexting behaviours referenced by Wolak and Finkelhor (2011). However, the definition offered by the trainee does not utilise an accurate definition of sexting behaviour.

The term 'harmful' offered by one trainee also referenced the prevalence of the behaviour, as seen below:

*“Widespread and potentially harmful if misused.”*

This response does not offer a definition but discusses the impact of the behaviour, which may be necessary when receiving a disclosure. This lack of a definitive definition may again indicate a lack of exposure to UKCCIS (2017) recommended training materials, and there were further responses that discussed the impact of sexting behaviour but did not offer a definition.

Two further responses offered value judgements regarding the impact of sexting behaviour, which did not include a definition.

*“It is a sensitive topic which everyone should be made aware of by the age of eleven.”*

*“The negative impacts it has on people affected by it and people surrounding them.”*

These two responses, and the previous response discussing 'harmful' behaviour, further indicated a lack of awareness of a definition and two interesting points regarding the impact of the behaviour. The first one stipulates an opinion regarding the perceived age limit and their perception of the nature of sexting as being a risk. The focus group later confirmed this as an area that trainees find challenging to discuss with pupils; again, this indicates a lack of training. A further issue here was the association only with the negative aspects and the failure to acknowledge PPSB (Woodley et al., 2024), which may impact how they, as teachers, may address disclosures. The trainee's perception of only the negative impacts on people affected by sexting behaviour also indicates a lack of training and poor awareness of a definition.

A further subcategory of sending was ‘bullying,’ which refers to the use of a sexting transmission to humiliate or harm a person within their peer group (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019). The response below indicates an awareness of bullying behaviour:

*“Bullying via electronic communications.”*

Bullying using electronic devices can be categorised as cyberbullying (Siegle, 2010) and has Foucauldian theoretical influences (Foucault, 1977). Often, punishment meted out by peers can take the form of humiliation. In this instance, punishment can consist of the repeated sharing of embarrassing imagery as a form of cyberbullying (Smith, 2014). AASB is categorised as cyberbullying because of the intent of causing harm repeatedly over time (Olweuset al., 1999; Stoilova et al., 2020). The trainee response indicates a lack of awareness of AASB, which includes the contributions to cyberbullying by bystanders who receive and transmit imagery. Bystander behaviour (Beer et al., 2019) can be a form of cyberbullying (AASB) where people might use electronic devices to share sexting imagery further, despite an awareness of the consequences to the individual, to maintain a social position with peers. Beer et al. (2019) discuss bystander behaviour in the context of cyberbullying. While the imagery specifics discussed in this paper may not be the focus, the fear of peer consequences may motivate adolescents as behaviour drivers. Allnock and Atkinson (2019) support the view that trying to stop cyberbullying behaviour may be futile for adolescents, as there may be peer repercussions.

A fifth subcategory regarding the sexual nature of sexting was described in the responses elicited from five trainees, who identified the sexual nature of sexting transmissions in their responses. Their responses described sexual behaviour as a motive rather than a description of the behaviour. Four of the five trainee responses included:

*“Sexting should be considered to be a form of sexual abuse.”*

*“Sexual references made over text about the other person or another person, either planned or fantasised.”*

*“Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages using technology.”*

*“Using a variety of media to message another person sexually.”*

The first response indicated above, whilst not offering a definition, offers a value judgement and attempts to categorise the behaviour with the suggestion of criminal intent. The three other responses focus on the intention and transmission media, which moves towards providing a definition. However, this definition does not align with the one provided in UKCCIS (2017) again, indicating a lack of exposure to training material during the school experience period.

These collective ‘sending’ responses demonstrated a lack of awareness of the full spectrum of sexting behaviours identified by Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) and a lack of exposure to government-recommended sexting training materials (UKCCIS, 2017;2020) for schools. The Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) and UKCCIS (2017) training materials delineate sexting behaviours into experimental and aggressive behaviours, which the trainees in this sample had not defined.

#### **4.2.1: Theme 1: Definition Summary.**

The expert expectations were that trainees should be able to identify and define the constituents of adolescent sexting behaviours. However, the data revealed that trainee participants could only superficially describe sexting activity and could not succinctly explain a sexting transaction. It was clear from the sample data that there were disparate levels of

understanding among the trainees regarding the nature of adolescent sexting behaviours.

The two quotes below indicate the range of individual responses:

*“Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages using technology.”*

*“It is a sensitive topic which everyone should be made aware of by the age of eleven.*

*“The negative impacts it has on people that have been affected by it as well as people surrounding them.”*

These two responses demonstrate a limited ability to understand sexting behaviour and indicate an inability amongst trainees to define sexting behaviours accurately. This inability to define sexting behaviour and recognise AASB may impact the trainee's ability to address sexting disclosures in schools effectively and appropriately, as their role requires. This inability suggests two issues concerning becoming effective administrators and decision-makers (Lipsky, 2010) when receiving a disclosure, which requires addressing. First is the awareness of the transaction content within the disclosure, and second is awareness of the distribution channels used to share the image. Furthermore, the trainee responses did not discuss awareness of sexting transactions that included materials such as film clips, emojis or animations with sexualised content, which can all be part of a sexting disclosure.

Trainee responses were brief and used subjective adjectives such as '*explicit*' and '*graphic*' but failed to elaborate upon the adjectives that clarified their definitions. The focus group also did not offer a description beyond the term '*graphic*,' which was interpreted as '*detailed*.' This failure to clarify the definition aligns with Klettle et al., (2014) literature findings, where academics fail to elaborate on what they mean when they use subjective terms. Most trainees failed to discuss creating imagery (primary sexting) or redistributing (secondary sexting) received imagery. Whilst not able to describe or define sexting clearly, three responses

identified the harmful nature of sexting behaviour. One trainee identified bullying as a motive for sexting behaviour, but the motivation was not discussed in other responses. The variety of descriptions and definitions indicated a level of awareness of AASB amongst the trainee participants. However, there was limited evidence of the participant's ability to define aggressive aspects of sexting behaviour clearly.

Most trainees did not include a description of how sexting transactions were conducted. The literature suggests transmission beyond the original intended target audience may be shared and problematic (Gasso et al., 2019; OFSTED, 2021), with extensive distribution significantly increasing the distress levels for disclosure victims. This lack of participant awareness of sexting transmission could be problematic when receiving and actioning disclosures from adolescents and supports the argument of a need for further training. Such training materials could include information regarding accepted definitions, descriptions of the constituents of different types of sexting behaviours, transmission methods used, mechanisms that support participating in sexting behaviours and how aggressive behaviours can be perpetuated. Furthermore, training materials should clearly describe AASB and define the attributes of each type of aggressive behaviour to provide trainees with guidance to support identifying when sexting behaviour develops aggressive traits (Del Ray et al., 2019; Lievens, 2014; Patrick et al., 2015; Villacampa, 2017).

#### **4.2.2: Transmission Medium.**

The findings, explicitly identifying the smartphone as a primary transmission medium for distributing sexting imagery within the participant definitions, were problematic. Two trainees used “electronic devices” terminology, which signified a limited trainee awareness of the transmission medium and suggested the need to highlight to trainees the significance of the smartphone’s role in conducting AASB activity. A potential recommendation may be

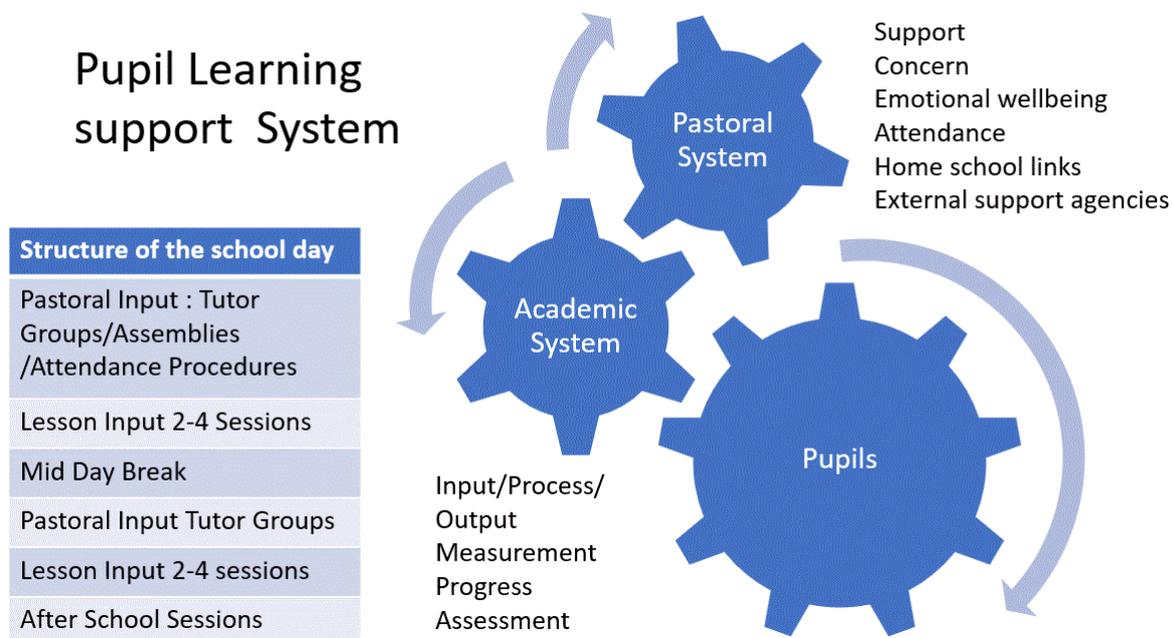
that smartphones should feature in future training materials for trainees when discussing AASB transmission medium.

### **4.3: Theme 2 Preparing to Manage AASB**

This theme discusses how trainees may have been prepared to respond to adolescent sexting disclosures and addresses research question two: “How should trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?” To address this research question, it is necessary to acknowledge the importance of the expectations affiliated with teachers' obligation to “perform pastoral duties” (DfE, 2011, p.11) as part of their professional roles. These pastoral duties extend beyond their subject teaching responsibilities and are integral to safeguarding processes and pupil support systems. These duties include periods in the school day where pupil discussion opportunities may arise, and pupil disclosures are likely to occur. The data from one practitioner expert interview revealed that current expectations are:

*“Disclosures are likely to occur during pastoral school periods.”*

During these pastoral school periods, pupils may discuss personal problems with teachers. As illustrated in the diagram below, this pastoral time has been constructed from interview discussions with the three practitioner experts. The discussion revealed that there are two time periods in the school day where disclosure conversations may happen.



**Figure 23: Pastoral Processes and the School Day.**

An expert participant also shared the expectation that the trainees:

*“should be prepared to engage with safeguarding processes and expect disclosures.”*

The trainees responded to the Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) case studies presented as vignettes to mimic disclosure scenarios as data-collection tools. The vignettes addressed research questions two and three and were recommended by UKCCIS (2017) to schools as a vehicle to train teachers about sexting behaviours. The practitioner experts shared, during interviews, that they had delivered UKCCIS (2017) training materials during school placements to trainees in their schools. Two of the consultant experts stated their expectation was that:

*“Trainees should be specifically directed towards UKCCIS (2017) materials... this direction should occur during the school safeguarding training provision.”*

However, the trainee data revealed that participants had not previously seen the vignette scenarios, which indicates they may not have received the UKCCIS (2017) sexting training during their placements.

The data revealed that the expert groups agreed on the following:

*“Trainees should be prepared for pastoral duties, which include receiving training to manage disclosures of sexting behaviours by pupils.”*

Furthermore, the data analysis concerning safeguarding training and trainee participants revealed that specific preparation or training for responding to disclosures was disparate. Training ranged from no training to specific training on school safeguarding computer systems. The survey responses contained very few descriptions of actual training received during their placements in school. Example responses included:

*“Training to counter these issues is limited to hypothetical conversations.”*

*“I would have used the appropriate safeguarding and child protection procedures, in line with my school training and take particular care in following the schools safeguarding policy.”*

These responses indicated that to prepare trainees to apply policy effectively (Lipsky, 2010), there may be a requirement to deliver some standardised training, including exposure to safeguarding policies and practical guidance materials. Such training may consider how to exercise, adhere to and implement policy. However, this research revealed that most trainees were aware of the DSO’s responsibility to implement policy, and there was a shared understanding of the requirement to refer safeguarding issues to the DSO, as indicated in the trainee response below.

*“Notify the DSO”.*

This was a typical response from twelve trainees after presenting each safeguarding vignette scenario. However, there was a limited understanding of how to notify the school DSO, and this notification process was not routinely in the trainee responses. Two trainees understood the requirement to use a computer system but did not state how they had been trained. Some trainee responses, see the two quotes below, claimed that they had not received any training for reporting sexting or AASB incidents:

*“Not covered this during training.”*

*“I only had a basic safeguarding training; I remember a lecture about sexting but never came across a situation like that in school, so I had no training in school.”*

These responses indicated that trainees had not read the ‘Noticing’ induction exercises provided to them by the University for completion during placement induction. Furthermore, these responses reveal that they had not engaged in school training processes if offered and had limited engagement with the materials provided to them regarding safeguarding. This finding reveals that any training offered to trainees should have some form of assessment affiliated with safeguarding policies. This assessment would capture their level of understanding and allow the use of relevant intervention strategies, which could be developed and implemented as part of their training to support them in becoming effective policy administrators (Lipsky, 2010).

The quote below reveals a dangerous reliance upon ‘common sense’:

*“I have not prepared for this situation. Instead, I would use elements of common sense and report it to this safeguarding officer.”*

This evidence suggests that there may be a requirement for a standardised initial approach to AASB training before attending school placement. Such training might include a recommendation to attend bespoke training on school safeguarding reporting systems or

look for opportunities to engage with policy, shadowing relevant professionals. Reliance upon 'common sense' may lead the trainee to treat an AASB disclosure as a general behaviour issue and misreport the disclosure, which could have legal consequences for them (Calvert, 2009). Generalised behaviour issues are addressed using evidence as a basis for deciding outcomes. More serious general behaviour issues can require collating evidence and then passing the evidence on to a school behaviour specialist. This approach could be problematic for trainees, who could participate in criminal activity by inadvertently passing child pornography on to other teachers.

The trainee response below was interesting, as it describes training content, however, it does not discuss how or where this training was delivered.

*"During training, context was given to issues around sexual behaviour of student other parties."*

*"I was made aware that sexting might be an issue which would be taught across the school to raise awareness. The lessons were designed to describe sexting and how it can impact and what consequences it can have on the people involved."*

Using the term 'lessons' may indicate that the trainee participated in or observed planning for classroom lesson delivery as part of their placement training in preparation for the DfE (2019) 'Relationship Curriculum'. The purpose of the exposure to delivering lessons regarding sexting and AASB was unclear from the trainee's response. However, this was the only instance where exposure to the 'Relationships' (DfE, 2019) curriculum was discussed. This discussion indicates that there were plans for delivering this curriculum in schools to address AASB; however, this may have been interrupted by the COVID-19 SARS pandemic.

Only 4 of the 20 trainee participant responses discussed specific training activities. A sample response is quoted below:

*“Attending safeguarding training.”*

In summary, the training discussed by the 4 trainee participants appears to be generalised safeguarding training and does not explicitly address AASB disclosures. The trainees did not state the training content or where they had received training. The most recent government school guidance addresses online sexualised violence (DfE, 2021a; 2021b) and recommended training for teachers currently employed in schools but omitted ITT provision. The responsibility for delivering ITT provision in schools rests with the person who signs the partnership agreement, and decisions may be at the discretion of individual schools and universities. There are no lists or agreements, other than the Teaching Standards (DFE, 2012), which address aspects of safeguarding training, which does not include AASB or sexting behaviour. Consequently, there appears to be a concern about the omission of clear guidance regarding the safeguarding preparation and training of trainee teachers in placement settings. Therefore, it could be questioned how trainee teachers, specifically computer science teachers, are supported in acquiring current safeguarding training concerning AASB. It was also unclear if safeguarding competency for addressing sexting, and AASB had been assessed within the ITT curriculum.

When the data-collection processes were conducted for this research, the current DfE (2021b) and OFSTED (2021) guidances were unavailable; these documents have since been published. However, these publications still fail to clarify or assign responsibility for ITT safeguarding training or induction for new entrants into the teaching profession, specifically regarding AASB. Consequently, despite these new publications, the training issues identified in this research remain problematic for new entrants to the teaching profession.

#### **4.4: Theme 3 Practical Courses of Action to Address AASB.**

The primary focus of this themed discussion is derived from practitioner expert and trainee responses regarding operationally responding to an AASB disclosure. This theme includes how the trainees plan to respond to a disclosure practically and discusses whether there are gaps between expert expectations and trainee-planned practical responses.

During the focus group discussions, one of the trainees revealed:

*“There have been very few problems in my placement schools with sexting behaviours. Because of the school's policy that banned the use of mobile phones on school premises.”*

This finding indicated this trainee's awareness of policy and the impact of policy implementation on pupil behaviour (Aynsley et al., 2017). Effectively, if the pupil had no access to their mobile phone during the school day, then engagement in AASB would be restricted during school hours. Cowie and Colliety (2010) discuss how this finding may be problematic for trainee preparedness to enact policy and claim that sanctions can often displace sensitivities to bullying behaviours. The policy to ban mobile phones on school premises may dissuade pupils from disclosing AASB, which may impede the trainee's ability to become an effective policy administrators (Lipsky, 2010). The ban on mobile phones may potentially restrict pupil disclosure instances. Total bans on the use of mobile phones in schools is one of the latest policy responses from the government (DfE, 2023), which requires further investigation.

Further analysis revealed that safeguarding experts thought:

*“The practical aspects of training, regarding receiving AASB disclosures in ITT safeguarding provision, for computing teachers, could be improved.”*

The data revealed that experts have an assumed knowledge base, associated beliefs, and expectations regarding professional computer science teachers. Quotes revealing this included:

*“Trainees should know how to locate policy and follow safeguarding directives...”*

*“I expect them to know how to complete a report and forward the information to the safeguarding lead in school...”*

This assumed knowledge base of safeguarding experts was not documented before this research and is, therefore, not currently utilised in training programmes. The assumptions practitioner and consultant experts have held regarding computer science teachers have now been captured and documented as part of this research and can now be considered and incorporated as part of future ITT safeguarding training. The experts had several practical expectations of the trainees, which were identified below as quotes from the interview data:

*“Trainees should read the school safeguarding policy and identify reporting pathways.”*  
*(from two Practitioner participant experts)*

*“Trainees should know, understand and effectively use the school safeguarding reporting systems.”*

*“Trainees should be able to receive competently and action disclosures, which include reporting to the DSO with the details of the disclosure incident.”*

*“Procedurally, trainees should know processes involved in receiving and recording the disclosures. This includes an awareness of not asking pupils leading questions, just listening and receiving information, and, where possible taking notes during the disclosure conversation of the incident details.”*

These individual expert expectations collectively align with Lipsky's (1980) definition of 'Street Level Bureaucrats,' where policy implementation forms part of effective administrative processes. Furthermore, expectations are that trainees, when recording details of the disclosure incident, only write what they have seen and heard and not document opinions on the disclosure incident record. Incident recording was not part of the research process, and was not tested during the data-collection activities, but what the trainees knew about practically responding was collected and analysed, and handling data contained on mobile devices was part of this process.

The participant experts expected that, as computer scientists, the trainees should know the practicalities of handling a mobile phone, which may contain AASB imagery. This expectation specifically included:

*“An instruction that the trainee should not use or access the phone or look at any imagery contained on the phone.”*

*“If the policy requirement was phone confiscation for further examination then trainees are expected to know this and implement it .”*

*“The teacher should supervise the pupil switching the phone off and placing it in a sealed container to be passed on to the DSO.”*

*“The trainees should not attempt downloading or passing the imagery or communications on to a third party.”*

These trainee expectations appear to be clear and realistic and align with Lipsky's (1980's) practical policy procedure expectations. However, the findings reveal that only a few trainees knew the practicalities concerning handling adolescent mobile phones containing AASB

transactions and confiscation whilst addressing a disclosure incident. The analysed data revealed exciting results regarding trainee knowledge of managing mobile device confiscation:

*“Immediately contact DSL/safeguarding, lock the phone away in a drawer, preferably with another staff member present, until someone else can deal with the illegal material.”*

*“I would report this ASAP to the safeguarding officer as responsibilities as a form tutor does not allow me to handle this independently. I would not inform the trainees involved of my actions in case they try to dispose of the messages.”*

*“Confiscate phone and place inside an envelope as may be used for evidence for police investigation.”*

*“Confiscate any device which contains the sensitive material and keep them in a secure location for the DSO and the appropriate authorities to handle.”*

*“I would confiscate phones with any images on and report to the safeguarding officer. Follow the school policy regarding incident.”*

*“Confiscate the phone and report to safeguarding immediately.”*

A commonality among these six responses was that the process they intended to follow required escalating, again effectively aligning with Lipsky’s (2010) effective management administration processes. Four participants indicated an awareness of keeping the phone in a secure location, whether that was a drawer, an envelope, or locked away. This suggests an alignment with a procedure (Lipsky, 2010) they should follow when addressing a disclosure incident.

The first response shown above was informative, as it demonstrated in-depth knowledge, which could indicate that the trainee may have been involved in a policy training process to support their administrative development (Lipsky, 1980). The trainee then shared a potential awareness of a directive that an AASB disclosure resolution was beyond their remit or responsibility as a classroom teacher. Furthermore, the requirement for a witness to confiscate the phone indicated that the trainee might be aware of the critical nature of the confiscation process relating to consent. (Popova, 2019). Additionally, the inclusion of the phrase *'illegal material'* demonstrates an awareness of the law concerning child pornography. These indications demonstrate that this trainee knew legalities, policies, procedures, and professional boundaries. This finding indicates that they may have been well prepared to implement safeguarding procedures with pupils in school (Lipsky, 2010) However, this was a unique trainee participant response.

The data revealed that eighteen responses understood the requirement to notify the safeguarding officer of the disclosure. However, they did not elaborate on how this process should happen, except for one trainee, who discussed using the school safeguarding computer system for reporting. Typical responses to the preparation and training questions included the phrase:

*"Referral to the DSO."*

This was a promising finding, illustrating that, whilst training may be disparate across schools, a prevalent idea exists amongst the trainees that information should be passed on within the school system. Most trainees understood the requirement to notify the DSO. However, the following two findings were concerning, as they indicate a lack of understanding of policy, procedure, and process (Lipsky, 2010):

*“Report to the appropriate people, who can then talk to family.”*

*“Report to school and police.”*

These responses indicated that the trainees are prepared to act out of the process and may be confused regarding the reporting process when receiving a disclosure. This specific scenario concerned AASB in the context of bullying and image sharing amongst a peer group. The last response, where the trainee considers reporting to the police, clearly indicates they are unaware of their responsibility to follow policy and procedure and are prepared to act outside policy guidance. Approaching the police could be personally problematic for the trainee and suggests that they have not read the safeguarding policies, or the induction materials prepared by the university. This response highlights the requirement to ensure consistency of training provision. There appears to be an additional requirement to monitor policy engagement as part of the ITT process and potentially record when trainees have read the safeguarding policy and procedures for addressing AASB incidents.

A further extremely concerning response reveals several alarming issues:

*“I would confront the pupil who showed me the leaked picture and ask who sent it to them. After finding however, many pupils have received, I would tell them to delete the photo as it is against the law. I would also inform a safeguarding officer about the leaked photo of the 13-year-old girl and the reason behind it.”*

This trainee was a younger cohort member and demonstrated a general lack of understanding of AASB issues. The term ‘leaked picture’ was concerning and indicates that there may be a normalised acceptance of AASB, which is accepted, secretive, contained and peer-managed within pupil peer groups. However, there was no acknowledgement from the trainee that the pupil may be a victim of further bullying from disclosing the sexting imagery (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019). The trainee’s attitude of opinionated confrontation and their overly

confident instigation of an undirected and potentially inappropriate (DfE, 2021) approach to this scenario could have damaging and far-reaching consequences for both the victim (Buren and Lunde, 2018), the trainee and potentially the school. This lack of trainee awareness regarding policy engagement and their failure to undertake the crucial policy reading required during the induction process was alarming, as it indicates this trainee has not grasped the importance of policy engagement (DfE, 2021).

The policy contains critical information, and this trainee's proposed actions further support the previous discussion point where reading monitoring may be critical. Furthermore, this response evidences a potential paucity of trainee awareness regarding legislation concerning child protection and child pornography imagery distribution, which is concerning and requires addressing to enable the trainee to effectively manage a disclosure process (Lipsky, 2010).

It was clear from the data responses that some trainees had undertaken induction processes, and had engaged with the induction materials provided for them. However, the responses indicated that these undertakings were inconsistent across partnership settings. There was a mixed response when explicitly questioning where trainees had received their safeguarding training. Some trainees recalled university lectures they had attended, and others recalled interactions with the safeguarding officers in school.

Two of the trainees recalled not ever receiving any safeguarding training. These responses are shown below:

*"Not at all really. We have not discussed this in class."*

*"Not sure. I think it would be in safeguarding training."*

Again, these trainee responses are alarming as they may indicate a lack of preparation to read and engage with safeguarding policy and process during the commencement of a new school

placement. Additionally, this may indicate the trainee was absent from university ITT safeguarding training, is not catching up with missed work, has forgotten this aspect of their training, and may have gaps in other practice areas. The placement schools they attend engage with school safeguarding training for teachers as a legal requirement. This training consists of policy updates and may include AASB. However, this training may be presented to teachers before the trainees are placed in the school, or it may be the case that they are not delivering training regarding AASB because the trainees are supervised during their placements. The trainee would not receive AASB safeguarding training in each of these cases. It may be that miscommunications exist between the university and the school or that each element of the partnership assumes this training to have taken place prior to engagement with school settings, as the receipt of training has not been previously explored.

Some trainees recalled specific information they received during safeguarding training concerning being unable to keep disclosed information 'secret' as in these two quotes:

*"Tell the trainees that you cannot keep information to yourself and must tell the appropriate people. Gather as much detail as possible and then report to the safeguarding officer."*

*"If the student discloses the information, gather as much as possible. Tell the student you (the teacher) cannot keep this to yourself and tell the safeguarding officer."*

This data revealed an awareness of general safeguarding processes, including the requirement to complete a reporting protocol as a practical procedural aspect of school operational safeguarding practice. The quotes indicated school training, as they were aware of a requirement to record and pass on information and not guarantee confidentiality to the

discloser. Only two trainee participants reported an awareness of this requirement to follow a reporting procedure.

There were other concerning practical responses, where the trainee discussed reporting to the DSO but added:

*“...If I found that this had not been appropriately managed or reported, I would feel confident to contact the police to make a report of the crime that had taken place”.*

This statement demonstrated confusion regarding the following process (Ojeda and Del Ray, 2021) and an intention to judge the effectiveness of the disclosure process, therefore acting outside of policy guidance. This response could potentially offend the school and instigate disciplinary action for the trainee. This may indicate inadequate training, trainee disregard for the advice provided during safeguarding university lectures, or a potential failure to read safeguarding policies within the school setting. Safeguarding policies should stipulate clear reporting pathways and include directives regarding school responsibilities for contacting external agencies. Safeguarding policies may also contain ‘Whistleblowing’ policies (DfE, 2021), which would direct the trainee towards the appropriate staff members in the school for whistleblowing processes.

In summary, this theme concerned whether the trainees could identify where they had received safeguarding training concerning AASB and sexting. Whilst two of the trainees clearly stated where they had received safeguarding training, none of the trainees recalled having received specific training regarding AASB, sexual violence or sexting behaviour.

There was general awareness among trainee participants of the role of a DSO, and eight trainee participants specifically identified the DSO as the school reporting point. Four trainees understood the need to use safeguarding software systems such as CPOMs to report

disclosure incidents; however, only one trainee could specifically name and identify the software. The data suggested that trainees had limited awareness of other pastoral systems, or practical help that could support pupils who are victims of AASB, such as counselling services. This theme signifies a requirement to explore the effectiveness of induction and for further research regarding reading policies at the start of the placement process. This induction process should document policy reading dates and include trainee descriptions of reporting pathways for implementing policy (Lipsky, 2010).

#### **4.5: Theme 4 Recommended Ways of Dealing with AASB**

This theme explored guidance provided to the trainees regarding applying policy and addressed expert expectations, alongside trainees' understanding of receiving and actioning a disclosure.

Expert data responses revealed anomalies concerning recommendations for managing disclosures, including imagery and AASB. These anomalies involved an overlap between the responsibilities and boundaries of home and school, including parental awareness of adolescent online behaviours. School engagement with the resolution of aggressive adolescent behaviours, such as physical bullying, may be influenced by variables, such as where the incident occurred, the time, and potentially the persons involved. These variables introduce boundaries and constraints which do not always apply to AASB incidents. For example, factors influencing a bullying incident, such as the time of day, location, and persons involved, may determine the extent of teacher intervention in the incident. However, if a pupil disclosed an AASB incident occurring during a school holiday or school closure period, the expert expectations were:

*“The disclosure incident must be received, documented, reported by the teacher, and managed by the DSO in school.”*

This means that the experts expected addressing and resolving AASB to differ from physical bullying, which indicates that expert expectations of teacher interventions may differ. In the case of physical bullying, expert data revealed that:

*“If a physical bullying incident occurred outside of school unless there was a disruption to the classroom or pupil relationships, then the school should consider this a parental matter unless there is evidence of continued harm to a child.”*

However, an AASB incident may not be viewed as bullying, and the recommended pathways for addressing such disclosures may differ from physical bullying. These differences may make addressing AASB incidents difficult for the trainees to understand, where school sexting policies are not in place or poorly referenced in the placement school documentation. The expert expectations are:

*“There would be no time delineation or cut-off point for the responsibility of schools to address sexting behaviours... It is not solely the parent’s responsibility to manage online behaviours as they may not have received safeguarding training or guidance.”*

Similarly, a shared expectation from the consultant expert data was:

*“DSOs can address within reason, previous AASB events in schools, they are professionally obligated to act upon received disclosures.”*

However, experts were unclear about the timescales or parameters for engaging with historical incidents. One practitioner expert referred to:

*“Incidents that rumble on without resolution, resurrected by pupils’ online behaviours during holiday periods despite interventions.”*

These findings specifically concern the DSO role and parental engagement and indicate that practitioner experts also need opportunities to share issues in a professional forum, but this might be beyond the scope of this research.

The trainee responses to recommended ways for dealing with disclosure revealed disparate levels of understanding. One response illustrates the lack of trainee understanding concerning boundaries between school and parental intervention:

*“Take as much detail as possible and report to the safeguarding officer. However, as this incident happened outside school, I don’t think the school could do much.”*

This important finding suggests that trainees may be unaware of how school policy can direct DSOs to collaborate, where appropriate, with parents (DfE, 2021) when responding to an AASB incident and support pupils, regardless of where the incident occurred. Again, this indicates that this trainee may not have observed the recommendation to read the school policy and engage with policy directives. Further responses that revealed a lack of clarity regarding directives beyond reporting to the DSO are illustrated by a typified response below:

*“Reporting it straight to the school’s DSO.”*

This response indicated a generic understanding that escalation to the DSO must be involved in managing the disclosure. However, there was a general paucity of awareness regarding further recommendations for addressing AASB. Several strategies are available to a teacher referenced in DfE (2023) publications, such as referral to school counselling services or addressing online behaviours as part of learning materials (DfE, 2019). A more concerning response was offered by one trainee below:

*“Not sure.”*

As a tutor and course leader, I found this alarming response challenging to understand: a graduate computing trainee who had attended school placements was unaware of any recommendations regarding addressing AASB. This response may indicate that engagement with safeguarding experts during the ITT process may be required to raise awareness of current recommendations and prepare trainees for bureaucratic responsibilities (Lipsky, 2010). This approach would be a new ITT undertaking. It would require careful planning, consideration, and further research within the expert participant cohort to determine which experts are best placed to engage in the ITT process. These persons must demonstrate a more comprehensive understanding of their school policies and should be engaged with other practitioner experts and safeguarding networks. One practitioner expert revealed that:

*“I collaborate disclosure incidents with the police and with the county LADO provision. I get asked to speak to other safeguarding leads at hub meetings and share information and examples of practice, but it is hard to get out of school.”*

Whilst this research does not investigate DSOs and their wider engagement in safeguarding communities, the trainee teacher requirements to address AASB disclosures may benefit from collective exposure during ITT processes. However, the collaborative activities conducted between DSOs and the police were outside the scope of this research.

One DSOs shared a recommendation for an innovative, preventative measure for addressing AASB behaviours in school:

*“A pupil panel addressed an assembly. The panel had 4 year 12 (sixteen to eighteen years old) who discussed their behaviour in their younger years, sexting behaviours, and the actions they regret.”*

The expert felt that this approach effectively addressed AASB pupil issues and claimed:

*“The pupil panel delivered a well-received message and resulted in a decline in AASB activity, but this was not measured...However, I don’t have the time required to plan this.”*

Innovative intervention activities or safeguarding approaches adopted by DSOs were not considered for this research. However, sharing examples of good practice among DSOs may be helpful.

A practitioner expert shared:

*“Behaviours (sexting) are happening, although pupils may not always report incidents... I see stages in adolescent development where AASB activities were more prolific than in other phases of adolescent development. We see years nine and ten (ages thirteen and fifteen) are more likely to sext.”*

This adolescent development period corresponds with Van Ouytsel et al.'s (2015) findings and may help trainees prepare for when to expect pupil sexting disclosures. However, the practitioner experts did not clearly understand the reasons for this behaviour, which may indicate a requirement for further research into AASB.

Consultant expert interview discussions revealed:

*“Mobile application software is available to schools, which is free to schools, to support adolescents and school staff.”*

The software provided a holistic solution to schools, which included pupil support, parent communications regarding online behaviour, and support materials for parents concerning distinctive abusive behaviours, including image transmissions. The sponsor regularly updates the application, which enables teachers to receive information about emerging online activities, dangers, and guidance about the practical aspects of addressing AASB. The application could support ITT safeguarding provision. The software sponsor, a school insurance organisation, provides a cost-effective and accessible solution to schools as they absorb the software development and administrative costs. Accessing the software application requires a download to personal devices. It includes links to school safeguarding teams and Childline, a charity that supports child victims of bullying, trauma, and sexual aggression. The sponsor responds to pupil injury claims and has experience in addressing high-profile, legal, child safeguarding incidents. Therefore, the motives for sponsoring such software are not entirely altruistic, given the potential cost implications for legal action from victims of AASB.

The BBC (2019) launched a software application offering preventative guidance and advice concerning pupil online transactions. The application measured message content and recipient perception of aggressive message transmissions, using emojis and brief comments, regarding text message content only, not image transmissions. However, this software application was withdrawn in 2022 without explanation.

In summary, trainees and DSOs, when questioned, were unaware of new recommended ways of addressing AASB and posed questions concerning the software applications used in schools. These findings indicate a requirement to improve communications and engagement within safeguarding networks. Discussions with DSOs indicate interest in acquiring further

information. However, during the interview, they shared reservations concerning budgetary constraints for accessing training due to the impact of costs on school budgets. Training requires teachers to attend courses that enable access to these free resources but incur costs to schools for substitute teachers. Practitioner participants also shared the implications of workload demands, which created obstacles that included managing reports of safeguarding issues in conjunction with the teaching workload. These issues, whilst affecting safeguarding training, are outside the remit of this research. A future recommendation could be that ITT providers facilitate and host safeguarding training, including expert-led training, where software solutions are presented to teachers.

However, the trainees' responses concerning recommended ways of responding to disclosure were encouraging. Eighty-five percent of participants understood the DSO's role was to address disclosure incidents. However, they were unaware of preventative measures such as using the 'Relationships Curriculum' (DfE 2019b), which explicitly addresses coercion and AASB. Trainee knowledge was limited concerning reporting and did not extend to the prevention of AASB. There was limited awareness of support available for the victim after an AASB incident.

During the trainee focus group, participants revealed they had not received further input on dealing with AASB beyond university lectures. This included no recommendations for courses or resources which could support them in managing AASB incidents. Trainees discussed planned safeguarding input as part of their induction program in school for their new professional roles. However, none of the trainees had received staff handbooks or guidance concerning safeguarding policy, which they had to reflect upon before starting their professional employment.

#### 4.6: Theme 5 Trainee Emotional Responses to AASB Disclosures

This theme discussed how trainees should respond emotionally to AASB disclosures and explored findings concerning emotional responses to AASB disclosures. All practitioner experts disclosed their anxieties when addressing disclosures during interviews. Specific comments included:

*“I go home on a Friday and worry that I have missed something... I rarely have a lunch break.”*

*“Breaktimes as you can see are constantly interrupted. I have to speak with parents before and after the school day. I don’t know how long I can sustain this.”*

Work-related stress, and how safeguarding impacts work-life balance for DSOs, (Del Ray et al., 2019 ) was an unprompted discussion in each interview, and an important finding. Protecting these participants' identities was paramount, and career damage was a significant consideration for these participants. Therefore, practitioner wellbeing discussions have been omitted from these findings as they are unrelated to the research questions, but they have not been ignored, and will be addressed in the next chapter.

The emotional impact of responding to AASB prompted responses concerning anxiety and stress factors for trainees. Responses included:

*“I would be horrified but try to stay calm while communicating.”*

Emotions may influence a trainee’s ability to remain composed and respond appropriately to AASB disclosure (Beer, et al., 2019). The findings concerning trainee emotional preparedness, indicated emotional training may be helpful. The consultant expert participants did not discuss emotional reactions or how trainees should respond, nor did they offer opinions or guidance regarding addressing the trainee's emotional responses when addressing AASB in

schools. It appears that there was an expectation that trainees would understand professional behaviours.

Two trainee participants discussed the need for professionalism without defining what this meant. The focus group discussions, when asked about how trainees view professionalism in this context, defined it as follows:

*“Suppressing or ‘parking’ initial emotions.”*

One trainee participant shared this insightful response:

*“I would feel overwhelmed as this incident can often come as a shock. I would also feel determined to act as soon as possible to resolve this issue.”*

These responses collectively revealed significant emotional details, which require consideration if presented during a safeguarding disclosure event. The vignette method (Finch, 1987) They have presented incidents that deliberately provoked varied emotive responses. Where coercive techniques were used to obtain sexting imagery, where adult involvement was disclosed or where it was clear that abusive behaviour may have occurred, such vignettes elicited feelings of being overwhelmed or shocked. It was unclear how trainees had been prepared to manage these emotions during disclosure events. Vignette tools (Finch, 1987) provided valuable insights concerning trainee perceptions of addressing overwhelming safeguarding tasks. Responding to disclosures requires a detached and objective approach from the trainee, particularly unexpected disclosures. However, there was a lack of clarity concerning whether trainees felt they could draw upon specific skill sets (Hu et al., 2023) to help them cope with or override their feelings of being overwhelmed. It was unclear whether trainees had received specific training concerning skillsets to support the emotional aspects of responding to disclosure situations. Responses such as:

*“Remain calm.”*

*“Not to be shocked.”*

*“It would be difficult for me to deal with it as I really care for my trainees.”*

*“I would try to remain as calm and non-judgemental whilst initially conversing with the student.”*

*“Very upset!”*

These emotions revealed a trainee's inner panic, further reinforcing Hu et al.'s (2023) findings. Being 'overwhelmed' when receiving the disclosure details was a frequently shared emotion. Similarly, trainee participants who expressed 'feeling upset', did not discuss how they would set aside their emotions during the disclosure event. The focus group also discussed emotions and feelings, and trainee responses echoed those expressed in the survey, revealing that participants felt unprepared to address the emotional aspects of safeguarding. Rahmawatia et al., (2021) discussed the challenges for teachers managing their emotions when interacting with pupils and called for further research into emotional management to gain a deeper understanding. Therefore, emotional management requires further investigation and supports Rahmawatia's findings (Rahmawatia et al., 2021).

One trainee shared a different emotion:

*“I would be concerned about the discloser.”*

This interesting observation may indicate a recommendation for adolescent education to include materials to support managing their emotions, which aligns with the DfE's (2019) Relationships Curriculum. Trainee responses used the word 'concern' several times during the survey and focus group.

Following the disclosure event, teacher recipients may not experience closure; for reasons of confidentiality or legality, they may not be privy to decisions made or actions taken

concerning the pupil after reporting. Trainee participants described feeling unprepared for being excluded from the post-disclosure aspects of safeguarding processes or the decisions made. Focus group discussions revealed that trainees expect feedback from post-disclosure outcomes. Comments such as:

*“Why are we not included in the discussions after a safeguarding incident?”*

This response indicated that pastoral aspects of disclosure incidents synergise metaphorically with baton relay races. Where disclosure events serve as a figurative baton in the trainees' possession, as pastoral tutors, trainees would receive information from the disclosing pupil and then pass the disclosure details on to the DSO. When the DSO receives the disclosure (baton), some trainees perceive ownership of the disclosure as problematic as recipients and have a relationship with the discloser (Rahmawatia et al., 2021). However, the 'letting go of the baton' (ownership) is a missing link in the disclosure training process. Comments such as:

*“I would be concerned about the disclosure and pass on any information to the safeguarding team.”*

*“I would most likely require some sort of counselling after this to be able to comprehend what had been discussed and to ensure that there would be no further issues in the future.”*

These responses revealed the perception that participation in the disclosure process requires several skill sets, including parking emotions, seeking support, letting go of emotions, and owning a problem after escalation. During their training period, participants developed concern and empathy for the pupils encountered during the training processes. Concern and empathy could explain the action of the trainee participant who considered contacting the police independently concerning their perception of the DSO response in school.

To summarise, the experts did not address the emotional encounters discussed by the trainees, where emotions such as shock, upset, anger, and disgust were revealed. Experts did not reveal their expectations concerning trainees managing personal emotional reactions. However, the trainee data revealed the potential for trainees to encounter strong emotions attributed to unexpected AASB encounters. Furthermore, the expert expectations were unanimous:

*“Trainees should receive disclosures professionally, be non-judgemental and behave reassuringly towards disclosure victims and perpetrators.”*

Experts expected trainee awareness of school post-disclosure pupil support systems. However, experts did not offer advice or support regarding the perpetrators who distributed AASB imagery, nor did they discuss suppressing the anger trainees may feel when talking about perpetrator behaviours. Controlling anger when receiving and documenting incidents requires a non-judgemental approach (DfE, 2019). However, trainees indicated they require further training in managing and addressing personal emotions. A future recommendation could include training about ‘letting go’ of incidents and trusting professional colleagues’ judgement. Trainee expectations can be managed through guidance and training. Curricular responsibilities concerning professional reporting require trainees to understand and apply the safeguarding processes personally. Therefore, the training requirement for trainees to read and be familiar with individual school safeguarding policies before engaging with teaching commitments should be an inherent process. Training could also clarify safeguarding roles, including omission from decision-making processes or receiving progression feedback. Emotional support for teachers was a neglected area of the training process.

Government safeguarding policy documentation places significant emphasis on being vigilant, actioning safeguarding concerns, and responding to safeguarding disclosures promptly and procedurally (DfE, 2021a). However, emotive aspects of safeguarding disclosures have not been addressed in DfE policy guidance; the Teaching Standards (DfE, 2011, p.12) emphasise teachers should develop ‘good relationships’ with pupils and deliver digital literacy, which includes AASB, as part of the National Curriculum (DfE, 2014). Pupil disclosure events frequently occur because they have a professional, caring relationship with the teacher (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019), which correlates anecdotally with the researcher's ‘lived experience.’ (Van Manen, 1990). Teachers should create environments where pupils feel comfortable disclosing concerns (DfE 2012). This statement suggests that managing emotions may be part of AASB management training. However, the data revealed only one reference to self-care, where a participant discussed seeking counselling to address emotions encountered during disclosure incidents. This alarming lack of self-care illustrated the heavy emotional burden on professional teachers. The personal responsibility for self-care suggests an additional requirement to the already significant portfolio of professional obligations required to deliver the computing curriculum.

The National Curriculum (DfE, 2014) mandates that computing teachers are professionally responsible for educating pupils about sexting and AASB. Professional responsibilities are outlined in this statement :

*“Understand a range of ways to use technology safely, respectfully, responsibly and securely, including protecting their online identity and privacy; recognise inappropriate content, contact and conduct and know how to report concerns” (DfE 2014, p. 232).*

It has been challenging to establish if computing teachers are more likely to receive disclosures than teachers in other subject areas. However, this research suggests an increased likelihood of AASB discussion in computing lessons; further research may be required to substantiate this claim. The data from this research suggests a greater need to address sexting behaviours specifically as part of the computing ITT curriculum.

Additionally, consultant experts unanimously expected that trainees should reassure the pupils that images can be removed and should know how to remove imagery from the internet and social media networks. However, besides application file deletion, participant awareness of imagery removal from social media platforms could have been improved. Trainees have not received training in searching for specific photographic files using metadata or instruction on reporting inappropriate images to authorities or social media companies. Childline (2024) recently launched the 'Report Remove' software tool to support AASB victims. This tool provides support for managing image removal online and reporting online abuse. There are no plans to update trainees concerning using this software tool.

#### **4.7: Summary of Discussion and Findings.**

The CT framework (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) has enabled the exploration of AASB disclosures and trainees' ability to enact safeguarding procedures. The policy was explored using Lipsky's (2010) theory concerning professional administrative expectations. These combined theories have supported the construction of this chapter and thesis by providing a lens through which to view knowledge and expectations in a thematically organised manner. The organisation of data into themes was constructed using CT (Papert, 1993; Quinlan and Cross, 2020) and Braun and Clarke's (2022) thematic analysis. This approach was critical because the themes collectively supported breaking down the

complexities of AASB from an ITT perspective and helped to establish expert expectations regarding the implementation of safeguarding policy.

The analysis process has been instrumental in addressing the three research questions by enabling the construction of eight interlinked themes from the data. These themes, meticulously crafted through a careful analysis process, have not only revealed the safeguarding expectations of experts concerning AASB disclosure but also the knowledge base currently held by trainee computing teachers. The eight themes, acting as a roadmap, have supported organizing the data to respond to the knowledge gaps concerning preparing computing teachers to address the critical issues embroiled within an AASB disclosure event.

The findings from this research suggest a greater need to incorporate addressing sexting behaviours, including AASB, as part of the computing ITT curriculum for secondary computer science teachers. This would support the trainees' understanding of this phenomenon and help them to effectively implement safeguarding policy as part of the pastoral, administrative expectations (DfE, 2014; 2023; Lipsky, 2010;) required for a classroom teacher. This training should incorporate clear definitions of several types of sexting behaviour, outline defining characteristics of such behaviours (UKCCIS, 2017; Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011;) and aid understanding of how AASB occurs, including distribution methods among peers and more widely.

The data demonstrates that trainees' understanding of safeguarding policy and reporting mechanisms for disclosure incidents requires monitoring to ensure they correctly understand safeguarding policy implementation processes. This process should ensure that trainees have read and understood the safeguarding policies and reporting processes (DfE, 2023) for their placement schools. The presentation of this safeguarding monitoring and reporting process

for the trainees should include materials adapted to the trainees' level of understanding and clear explanations of safeguarding terminology.

The data also revealed an expert's assumption that the trainees arrive in school with knowledge of safeguarding. Trainees have a general awareness of reporting information to the safeguarding team, but the level of understanding about practical courses of action required for addressing safeguarding disclosures was disparate. The practicalities and legalities of handling personal devices during a disclosure incident were not widely understood among trainees.

Recommended ways of dealing with AASB disclosures were an interesting area, as data revealed limited awareness among practitioners and trainees of current and innovative methods of addressing adolescent sexting behaviours. This could be attributed to the costs of attending conferences, the ability to engage with wider safeguarding networks, time constraints, and difficulties in accessing general training events.

Furthermore, the university ITT curriculum and training providers are required to address the emotional issues surrounding receiving and acting on disclosures from adolescents. Trainees require clear directives concerning where their involvement as teachers ends in the safeguarding disclosure process. Training in emotional issues would help trainees understand where they have met their professional expectations (Rahmawatia et al., 2021) and identify where intervention is required to manage trainee emotions and well-being. The data suggests that conducting further research into professional expectations regarding managing emotions in a school setting may be helpful.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

### **5.1: Introduction**

This chapter draws together and concludes this research investigation regarding addressing AASB disclosures from the perspective of expert expectations and ITT computing trainee understanding. This thesis makes ten recommendations regarding changes to the safeguarding curriculum as currently delivered in one institution in the North-West of England. The recommendations from this research are derived from a review of selected literature and trainee and expert opinions from both safeguarding specialist consultants and school-based practitioner experts.

The dataset consisted of expert opinions derived from semi-structured interviews that were transcribed, examined and analysed thematically. Additionally, the views and experiences of twenty trainee secondary computing teacher participants were reviewed and analysed thematically. The trainee dataset was derived from the analysed responses to a survey regarding vignettes constructed from AASB incidents, constructed from Wolak and Finkelhor's (2011) study and a focus group. The researcher presented the vignettes to the trainees during the data-collection process as disclosure reports documenting sexting behaviour incidents that had previously occurred in school settings.

AASB has been the acronym and terminology utilised throughout this study to describe a specific type of sexting behaviour with malicious intent. The AASB behaviour definition involves circulating sexualised imagery of a pupil beyond the initial intended audience to harm the person who is the subject of the image. The vignettes explored the planned intervention of computing teachers as part of the pupil disclosure processes, which required computing

trainee teachers to have operational knowledge of initiating safeguarding processes to support pupils.

## **5.2: The Current Picture**

At the commencement of this research in 2018, sexting continued to be an evolving adolescent behaviour. My experience as a school behaviour manager provided personal insights into the prolific, pernicious and far-reaching impacts of AASB. Whilst establishing the prevalence of AASB was not a part of this study, statistical reports of sexting behaviours have previously been grossly underestimated by academics researching sexting in schools. Reports range between 'five and twenty per cent' (Chapter Two, Section 2.6) of pupils as having experienced AASB. However, recently, OFSTED (2021b) acknowledged that disclosures of AASBs in schools have significantly increased and acknowledged that these behaviours, specifically targeting female pupils, are frequent occurrences in schools. They suggest ninety per cent of school girls have experienced online and offline sexualised aggression.

UKCCIS (2017) directed their publications generally at safeguarding teams in schools and did not target subject teachers or, more specifically, new entrants to the teaching profession. The DfE referenced AASB from the UKCCIS report (DfE, 2017; 2020) explicitly in the 'Relationships Curriculum' (DfE, 2019b). However, when this research was conducted, computing trainees had not accessed this curriculum or any subsequent training materials.

During this study, trainee participants reported that their safeguarding curriculum training mainly focussed on physical harm. Safeguarding incidents presented as training materials included case studies containing incidences of physical harm to children. However, whilst acknowledging that training regarding addressing disclosed incidents of physical harm

remains necessary, to date, aggressive sexting behaviours have not been discussed in the Computing ITT safeguarding curriculum.

The current preparation for teachers who engage with the ITT computing curriculum has primarily focused on physical computing, programming, CT and algorithm use. The practical aspects of teaching computing as a subject at key stages three and 4 focus more specifically on programming. Many training events, materials, and resources are dedicated to upskilling teachers in programming and electronics skills. However, fewer resources are dedicated to the computing curriculum's digital literacy aspects. Therefore, sexting and online behaviours do not currently appear as a priority for teaching or training materials for new entrants to the teaching profession.

The Relationships Curriculum (DfE, 2019b), aimed at all subject areas in secondary schools, not just computing, has highlighted the importance of educating children regarding acceptable technology use and the consequences of misuse. The new curriculum includes guidance on 'relationships and technology usage' (DfE, 2019b, p.12) and is directed towards Headteachers. Headteachers should provide scheduled lessons that address these complex issues, including sexual violence, online relationships, exploitation, internet safety, and mental health. However, this research indicates that trainees have not been exposed to the Relationships Curriculum (DfE, 2019b). In addition, they have not received training to help them address AASB. Addressing these aggressive behaviours aligns with the purposes of digital literacy in computing (DfE, 2012) and the new 'Relationships Curriculum' (DfE 2019b), which aims to keep children safe online.

The expert findings highlighted that although experts expected trainees to understand adolescent sexting behaviours and how to address such behaviours, expert perceptions of trainee understanding were limited. Trainee participants could not succinctly describe the general constituents of sexting behaviours, nor could trainees typify aggressive sexting behaviours. Additionally, trainees were limited in their understanding of how to address disclosures of sexting behaviours effectively. Trainees' knowledge did not extend beyond the requirement to report incidents to the DSO.

The trainees' knowledge of addressing AASB was limited not only by their lack of understanding of implementing safeguarding policy but also by their capacity to manage their emotional responses when receiving and addressing an AASB disclosure. They also had a limited understanding of the term 'professionalism' and how it applied to managing safeguarding disclosures.

### **5.3: The Recommendations**

The following ten recommendations are derived from the findings of this research:

#### **5.3.1: Recommendation One: Support with Defining Sexting Behaviours.**

**It is recommended that computing teachers should receive training which supports their ability to define sexting, AASB and related adolescent online behaviours.**

The experts' expectations revealed that trainees should understand the terminology that describes sexting behaviours and the associated definitions. Providing descriptions of sexting behaviours for trainees would give them access to shared terms of reference. These shared terms of reference would enable trainees to clearly and accurately describe the constituents

of sexting behaviours professionally, particularly those of an aggressive and coercive nature, for reporting purposes.

### **5.3.2: Recommendation Two. Update the ITT Computing Curriculum.**

**It is recommended that the current ITT curriculum be updated to include introducing a computing subject knowledge module that explicitly addresses adolescent sexting behaviours.**

This research revealed that trainees understood sexting behaviour to be sending images only. It would be advisable to introduce a learning module into the computing ITT training curriculum that explicitly addresses adolescent sexting behaviours, including AASB, as part of the digital literacy element of the computing curriculum. Such a module would contain the following aspects: definitions of sexting; modes and media used to conduct sexting; types of sexting activity such as passive, aggressive, primary and secondary; how sexting changes from passive to aggressive behaviour and how consent impacts categorising sexting behaviours.

Introducing this module as part of their safeguarding and subject knowledge training would support the requirement to teach online behaviours and online safety to adolescents in secondary schools (DfE, 2012). This would support trainees in developing an understanding of their safeguarding obligations and prepare them to undertake professional safeguarding responsibilities toward pupils, including receiving disclosures.

### **5.3.3: Recommendation Three. Provision of a Glossary containing Safeguarding and Sexting Terminology.**

**It is recommended that a glossary of terms accompany the updated ITT safeguarding module for each computing trainee, outlining the terminology affiliated with safeguarding and sexting behaviours.**

A glossary of terms presented to the trainees as part of their training materials that includes keywords and associated terminology to describe the constituents of sexting behaviours would be beneficial. Such a glossary would provide a reference document to guide trainees when managing disclosures. It should include safeguarding terminology, specific professional references to adolescent sexting behaviours and colloquial terminology utilised by adolescents to reference sexting behaviours. These terms include 'nudies', 'dic pics' and other terminologies. Trainees should also be aware that sexting behaviour descriptions among adolescents are dynamic and transient. It may be helpful to signpost trainees to resources such as 'Urban Dictionaries' containing adolescent terminologies and clear descriptions of colloquial terms used to describe adolescent behaviours, effectively a glossary of sexting terminologies. Such terminologies are ever-evolving and require regular updating, which could be an area for future linguistic research studies.

When reporting disclosures, the glossary would enable trainees to clarify behaviours colloquially referenced by pupils. Using a glossary would support effective reporting by providing a shared understanding of the terminology utilised by pupils when disclosing sexting behaviours. Using correct sexting terminology may help to identify the types of behaviour disclosed by pupils and whether these behaviours are aggressive. The glossary would also facilitate the provision of appropriate guidance to trainees after disclosure and support trainees when signposting pupils to the appropriate services after the disclosure event

#### **5.3.4: Recommendation 4. Provide Training and Guidance Materials to Support Trainee Recognition of Technology Use for AASB Activities.**

**The newly recommended ITT safeguarding module should contain resources that support the trainee's understanding of how adolescents engage in aggressive online behaviours and include references to technologies that facilitate AASB.**

The glossary in 'Recommendation Three' should also include the relevant descriptors of adolescents engaging with AASB using digital devices. This glossary should also reference additional terminology to describe activities such as creating imagery (primary sexting), sending or transmitting imagery, receiving and storing imagery, and redistributing imagery (secondary sexting). A glossary would also support the school safeguarding teams when acting upon a disclosure report. For example, is the image an intended audience or not? Was the image transmitted beyond this original intended audience (secondary sexting)? How was this achieved, and how widely has the image been distributed?

When receiving an AASB pupil disclosure, trainees should clarify the specific activity discussed by the discloser during reporting. This may enable better support for the pupil and disclosure clarity for incident reporting purposes. Professional terminology should supplement the adolescent terminology used to report the incident to provide clarity to the safeguarding team.

The trainees should have clear guidance regarding how technology facilitates AASB. For example, smartphone capabilities, internet technology, and network connectivity, combined with social media sites and other online transmission media platforms, facilitate the distribution of sexting imagery. Awareness of how these technologies work together would be helpful when describing AASB activities.

The technological aspects of AASB are also crucial to safeguarding reporting systems, as reports may require accurate descriptions of how the images were created and transmitted within the safeguarding disclosure report. Additionally, reports should contain details of the intended recipient and where the image has been distributed. Has the distribution process progressed beyond the original intended recipient? Furthermore, reports should document

the technology and devices used to distribute an image. Adolescents require protection from AASB behaviours (Home Office, 1978) and precise information regarding the consequences of storing and disseminating illegal imagery on their personal devices. Adolescents may require notification of the requirement to remove such imagery from their personal devices and clear guidance regarding how to delete imagery. Guidance for trainees should include directives regarding how to send such notifications, and computing trainees should be aware of the legal and technological implications of creating, receiving and transmitting AASB imagery.

### **5.3.5: Recommendation Five. Trainee Support with Identifying AASB**

**It is recommended that trainees are provided with tools and resources that enable them to differentiate, specifically AASB, from other types of sexting behaviours.**

Trainees should be able to differentiate between passive and aggressive sexting behaviours, distinguishing between passive experimental sexting and aggressive coercive sexting behaviours. Experts expect that trainees should be able to identify features of aggressive sexting behaviours that include imagery distributed beyond the intended audience for bullying, harassment or intimidation purposes. Similarly, images obtained coercively or without consent demonstrate AASB and may require specialist support.

Training should also recognise the transient nature of adolescent consent. Currently, the legal framework does not recognise experimental sexting behaviours within mutually exclusive groups of older adolescents (Home Office, 2016). However, safeguarding reporting may require details of the nature of the adolescent relationships, which determine consent status. Examples include broken relationships, where consent to possess and distribute imagery has

been withdrawn by the object of the image (person). The safeguarding teams address the sensitivities of relationships, so information regarding the relationship status may be relevant to the disclosure process.

One consultant expert participant recommended that trainees be introduced to 'Clause 21' (Home Office, 2016) during their ITT period. Clause 21 acknowledges that adolescents aged fifteen and above, participate in experimental sexting behaviours. Primarily, Clause 21 reduces the risk of adolescent prosecution for sexual offences and minimises adolescent entry on the sex offenders register by recognising the experimental nature of some adolescent sexting behaviours.

Adolescent experimental behaviours can cloud professional judgements regarding the legalities of sexting behaviours for educationalists. Knowledge of 'Clause 21' (Home Office, 2016) would support the trainees administering school safeguarding systems when managing disclosures of sexting behaviours. Whilst issues surrounding consent when engaging in sexting behaviours are apparent, Clause 21 supports safeguarding professionals in schools by providing the police, external agencies, and their administrative systems with tools to address experimental sexting behaviours. Without Clause 21, experimental sexting behaviour could overwhelm school administrative and pastoral systems due to the prolific nature of adolescent sexting activity. Whilst trainees are required to report disclosures of AASB in school, they are not required to interact with external agencies regarding pupil sexting behaviours. However, an awareness of Clause 21 and experimental sexting would support the safeguarding reporting process and the safeguarding team and potentially save time when DSOs receive disclosure reports for investigation.

Additionally, training regarding consent as a topic area, currently centres around a film presented by the Trainees Union, which focuses on the ability to consent to sexual behaviour. Trainee computer science teachers are required to understand consent beyond their personal sexual behaviours, for the purposes of delivering digital literacy lessons. Essentially, trainees should understand how experimental sexting impacts the transient nature of consent in adolescent relationships. Establishing consent may be vital for reporting purposes and discerning whether or not behaviour can be categorised as aggressive. Consent and the complexities of adolescent relationships further support this recommendation that trainees should understand the coercive nature of sexting activities. In particular, trainees should know how adolescent sexting behaviours can transition from experimental to aggressive behaviours by changes in relationship statuses between adolescent friendships and romantic relationships.

### **5.3.6: Recommendation Six. Monitored Trainee Engagement with Placement Safeguarding Policy.**

**It is recommended that trainees should have access to and have read the safeguarding policies pertaining to their placement setting before the commencement of a professional teaching practice placement.**

This recommendation concerns a requirement for trainees to demonstrate, before working in a specific school, that they have read the school safeguarding policies and know how to respond to and report pupil disclosures, specifically AASB.

The university notifies trainees of the placement name and location before attending their school placements, and school safeguarding policy documents are publicly available on school websites and accessible to trainees. However, this research revealed trainees do not always read them. A requirement for trainees to read and paraphrase the safeguarding policy would

consolidate their understanding and ensure they have familiarised themselves with the safeguarding policy before interacting with pupils. The paraphrased safeguarding policy document should be checked by supervising tutors and should form part of the assessment process for passing a placement.

This recommendation to read the safeguarding policy would support trainees when receiving disclosures, as they would be aware of the various reporting pathways in schools for different types of safeguarding disclosures. Reading safeguarding policy would also provide an awareness of support available to pupils that the trainees participants were unaware of during this research. If trainees had read the policy, they might have understood the reporting pathways better and the support available for pupils.

The reading of safeguarding policies could also be measured by presenting the trainees with a short quiz as part of the induction process or asking the trainees to produce a response to typical disclosure incidents received by the safeguarding officer. Additionally, the resources could use as diagrams to describe different types of sexting behaviours or the vignette scenarios (UKCCIS, 2017) could be adapted, and could be used as training materials for trainees. This process would highlight those trainees who have not understood the policy and would enable the safeguarding team to support trainees during their training.

### **5.3.7: Recommendation Seven. Trainee Identification of School Safeguarding Reporting Pathways.**

**It is recommended that trainees should be able to identify, access and implement school safeguarding reporting pathways that are pertinent to their current professional practice placement prior to attending the placement.**

Further to Recommendation Six, to read and paraphrase the safeguarding policy before the placement commences, Recommendation Seven requires the trainee to identify and define the safeguarding reporting pathway and procedures within the placement school's safeguarding system.

This research revealed that experts expected trainees to be able to identify safeguarding reporting pathways and procedures in school systems. However, this research also revealed that trainees did understand the requirement to inform the school safeguarding team. This research also revealed that trainees did not clearly understand the reporting procedures beyond informing the DSO of a disclosure incident. Furthermore, this research revealed that some trainees identified incorrect reporting pathways that would not conform with school safeguarding policies.

It would be helpful to both the trainees and the safeguarding teams in schools if, before induction, trainees could construct a data flow diagram that illustrates their awareness of the school safeguarding reporting pathways as outlined in the school policy. The school safeguarding team could review this data flow diagram during the induction period to ensure the trainee has correctly understood the reporting system and clarify any misunderstandings. Trainees must construct and understand data flow diagrams to illustrate diagrammatic representations of computing systems as part of their curriculum delivery requirements. Therefore, a recommendation to construct a diagram should be simple for them to produce and within the skillset of all computing trainees.

#### **5.3.8: Recommendation Eight. Provison to Enhance Emotional Preparedness Training during ITT Processes.**

**It is recommended that trainees should receive specific training for personal emotional resilience and well-being as part of the ITT programme.**

The data revealed that trainees experienced many emotions when reviewing the vignette scenarios. This aspect of professionalism and emotions was an unanticipated aspect of this investigation. The experts did not discuss emotions and professionalism in as much detail as other aspects of AASB. They only discussed controlled responses to disclosure incidents so that pupils would not be alarmed or shocked by teacher responses or reactions to AASB incidents. Professionalism and emotional control when dealing with distressing incidents are strongly connected, and knowing how to control emotions may be essential for the well-being of the pupils and the trainees.

Emotions are a significant factor when responding to disclosures, as discussed in the findings section, and it may be helpful to explore this further with trainees. Trainee participants had not anticipated their emotional responses to the vignettes, and some reported feeling overwhelmed, shocked and upset. It was unclear how they planned to mask these emotions while receiving a disclosure. Emotional responses and professionalism are areas that would benefit from further research. It was unclear which aspects of the disclosure had led to feelings of shock or upset for the trainee participants. It may be helpful for the trainees to receive training regarding masking personal emotions when dealing with safeguarding incidents and where and when trainees should seek personal emotional support from professional colleagues.

Additionally, only one trainee indicated in their survey responses that they would seek emotional support such as counselling. Anticipation or expectation that trainees would experience a wide range of emotions during teaching careers was not something the trainees considered. The research revealed a limited awareness of the need to support their personal well-being and develop emotional resilience. Trainee emotional resilience may be vital when

addressing adolescent emotions with pupils, with whom they will form professional relationships of care and compassion. Therefore, as part of the induction process, it would be helpful to signpost trainees towards the currently available emotional support in school or elsewhere.

Emotional support was not an anticipated area for this investigation; it has emerged as a finding from this research. It may also be helpful to research forms of emotional support for teachers, particularly new entrants to the teaching profession, as trainees could be signposted towards such emotional support.

### **5.3.9: Recommendation Nine. Professional Engagement with Safeguarding Education Experts as part of ITT Processes.**

**It is recommended that trainees should receive specialist training from both practitioner experts and consultants expert as part of the ITT process. Such professional experts should currently work in or with school safeguarding systems and should provide materials bespoke to the ITT safeguarding training process.**

It would be helpful for trainees to engage with consultant and practitioner experts during their ITT safeguarding training. Practitioner experts revealed during the interview discussions, a desire to interact with trainees in the university before embarking on their placements.

Safeguarding policy introduction and updates could be conducted by consultant and practitioner experts during the PGCE training process to broaden the safeguarding input to the trainees. Both sets of experts can contribute to ITT safeguarding training; the practitioner experts provide materials regarding operational aspects of safeguarding in schools; consultant experts offer an awareness of the broader safeguarding policy and resources.

Engaging with safeguarding experts would provide opportunities to conduct professional updates, disseminate new learning materials and research regarding recent developments of tools and systems for safeguarding purposes. Such a training provision should provide a question-and-answer session for trainees to address misunderstandings and prepare them for school placements. Introductions to consultants would also provide access to current safeguarding research, which would update the course team and the trainees who are not proactively researching safeguarding.

#### **5.3.10: Recommendation Ten. Inclusion of Safeguarding Conferences in ITT provision.**

**It is recommended that the ITT training provision extends opportunities for trainees to attend safeguarding conferences and safeguarding networking events.**

The opportunity to attend a safeguarding conference would support trainee participants' understanding of AASB and prepare them for the impact of such behaviours. The involvement of safeguarding consultant experts in ITT training and conferences may provide a mechanism for experts to cascade new training materials to schools.

A safeguarding conference could provide a platform for academics to distribute current research and publications to trainees. Safeguarding consultants regularly publish new research and practice updates which could support the trainees and provide potential solutions to regularly encountered issues. Consultant experts may produce new software applications to support the trainees when addressing AASB in schools. Such opportunities would showcase consultant expert products and services and present opportunities for networking with professional colleagues, which may provide further safeguarding training opportunities for trainees. Currently, the NSPCC hosts such safeguarding conferences over two days in London. Such conferences are expensive and require a significant school

investment for staff to attend. Hosting such conferences at ITT HEI providers would make the conferences more accessible to safeguarding professionals and trainee teachers.

Such conferences should be scheduled at the start of the academic year and could be opened to partner schools to provide professional updates. Introducing trainees to safeguarding conferences and events would broaden their understanding of educational safeguarding systems and provide valuable networking opportunities, enriching their training and future teaching careers. By establishing links and connections with safeguarding experts through listening to presentations, acquiring links to appropriate professional social media channels, and having opportunities to speak directly with experts, trainees could develop their understanding of research into safeguarding. Trainees engaged in conference events would be able to establish their professional networks, which could support their future careers and provide access to safeguarding updates from professional networks.

## **Conclusion**

This research explores the knowledge base of trainee computing teachers, practitioners and expert consultants regarding AASB. Academic literature and investigative research methods were used to conduct this investigation. The research aimed to establish expert expectations regarding addressing sexting activity and ascertained how trainee teachers plan to receive and action disclosures of sexting behaviours, specifically AASB.

This timely and vital research in the current educational context of adolescent online sexting behaviours may help trainees to understand the nuances of adolescent sexting behaviours. The creation of sexualised imagery was previously understood to have been conducted off school premises. However, smartphone behaviours have evolved in recent years to include

new tools and technology that enable pupil mobile phone misuse on school premises. Tools such as 'selfie sticks' and applications that provide internet access allow adolescents to create, distribute and redistribute imagery of a sexual nature on school premises at more prolific rates than was previously thought. Research suggests that sexting behaviours, particularly AASB, when used for bullying and intimidation purposes, can often be disclosed to teachers for resolution by adolescents as a 'last resort' (Allnock and Atkinson, 2019, p. 12) when adolescents have exhausted all sources of help. This last resort, coupled with the reported prolific nature of bullying sexting behaviours, including AASB, increases the likelihood of disclosure to teachers, which supports the argument for better preparation of trainees about receiving and actioning disclosures.

The acknowledgement of the evolution of sexting behaviours and earlier policy publications by the DfE, such as KCSIE (DfE, 2017; 2018; 2019; 2020) caused the researcher to review the current ITT safeguarding curriculum as delivered to trainee computing teachers. More specifically, this research examined how trainees receive information regarding receiving AASB disclosures during their training period to establish if the current curriculum content met with the expectations of professional experts. This research has revealed an inadequacy of provision when measured against expert expectations. These inadequacies require addressing during the training period for new entrants to the teaching profession.

There were four initial underpinning aims for this thesis.

1. To establish if changes are needed to the ITT curriculum specifically concerning safeguarding training for trainee secondary computing teachers.
2. To show existing trainee knowledge by acquiring definitions from trainees of sexting behaviours, and to establish how trainees define the constructs of sexting behaviours;

to establish if trainees can identify the types of activities and transactions taking place when adolescents engage in sexting behaviours. This knowledge may affect how trainees address disclosures of AASB.

3. To establish expert expectations for trainees when addressing disclosures of adolescent sexting activity, particularly those of an aggressive nature (AASB). The ability of trainees to discern between adolescent motivational factors or categories of sexting behaviours.
4. To show how trainees planned to respond to disclosures of AASB and if their training exposed them to current materials using the Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) study.

This research revealed that the current PGCE training curriculum does not effectively address AASB or other sexting behaviours during the training period. The findings also revealed that safeguarding training received by trainees in their placement schools was disparate and, in some instances, inadequate.

Completing the university ITT curriculum requires a significant personal investment of time for a trainee, beyond school and university attendance, to meet the programme demands. The current time constraints of the PGCE programme significantly limit exposure to school-based training regarding pupil online behaviours and disclosure incidents. The interspersal of school-based and university-based training interrupts trainees receiving some aspects of school-based safeguarding training, which generally occur at the start of the academic year when trainees attend university.

Trainees must independently research school safeguarding policy and provision; this task is not measured or monitored effectively. This research has revealed that trainees failed to explore policy or safeguarding provisions independently, possibly because of the time

demands of placements. It has also revealed that good practice may not involve signposting trainees towards a policy and expect them to read and understand the implications of implementing the policy. Trainees require support to unpick policy implementation's impact, which includes understanding safeguarding terminology and how this translates into practical applications. Furthermore, they need support with adolescent terminology, language and vocabulary to enable them to report incidents effectively.

Policy enactment can be a complex area and difficult to understand, particularly for ITT safeguarding purposes due to the diverse nature of adolescent education settings. The research revealed that opportunities for trainees to experience AASB disclosure incidents and engage with safeguarding policy enactment had not presented themselves during their school placements. When asked in the survey, none of the trainees have received a disclosure of sexting behaviours. However, experts revealed an expectation of the preparedness of computing teachers to address AASB and enact safeguarding policy. The current ITT curriculum does not meet these expert safeguarding expectations. Thus, the current ITT training curriculum is not practical or equitable for the trainees and should be reviewed and updated to address AASB and sexting behaviours during the ITT period in an equitable standardised format, modular, as suggested in the above recommendations. If AASB training could be accommodated within the ITT curriculum, such training will encourage familiarisation with policy, policy directives and safeguarding developments. Training may also encourage engagement with safeguarding terminology which could improve the quality of incident reporting and improve understanding safeguarding acronyms and terminology usage before attending placement, therefore, building trainee confidence.

Adding a safeguarding module to the computing PGCE ITT programme bespoke to trainees, would enable the receipt of standardised safeguarding training before attending placements. Such activity would support trainee exposure to the practicalities of addressing AASB disclosures. The vignettes used in this research could be presented as a part of the training modules. Additionally, the subject knowledge aspects of training and preparation of the trainees could be adapted to use school safeguarding policies to address sexting behaviours, particularly AASB.

The inability to find the relevant school policies and directives may impact the preparation of trainees for future employment in schools. Anomalies in school policy naming conventions could be presented to the trainees, such as providing different names for policies associated with sexting behaviours, such as E-Safety Policy, Acceptable Technology Use, or Bullying Policies which may contain directives for sexting behaviours. Adding a safeguarding module and affiliated training would help trainees navigate the safeguarding policies in school and capture these anomalies in policy naming conventions which could help trainees to locate, within existing policy groups or structures, the necessary policy directives to address AASB.

Furthermore, exposure to practical safeguarding opportunities during school placements is currently limited for several reasons. Personal observations caused me to believe that general patterns of adolescent online behaviours occur more frequently at the beginning of a school year or after a protracted holiday period. Generally, during these time periods, trainees are not attending placements. Some age groups are more susceptible to online sexualised activity, and trainee exposure to these age groups may be limited during placements.

Further considerations include trainee engagement in school staff safeguarding training. This concerns the fact that trainees are largely unaware of their placement schools at the

commencement of the academic year. Trainees' participation in mandatory school safeguarding training may be restricted as timetables may not align with the timetables or availability of school safeguarding leads or teams. Therefore, the trainees may not be provided with opportunities to interact with DSOs, thus limiting their exposure to safeguarding, pupil disclosure and policy training. This oversight may have led to trainees expressing feelings of a lack of confidence when addressing disclosures. Reviewing the current safeguarding training offered to trainees identified opportunities for DSOs to deliver the university safeguarding training provision. Such a provision would enable trainees to meet with a DSO before placement engagement, to receive practical training from DSOs and to experience diverse approaches to addressing disclosures.

There are limitations to the safeguarding training and resources available to train new entrants into the teaching profession (Tarr et al., 2013, p.110). A significant proportion of safeguarding training materials are designed, developed and incorporated into schools as 'Continued Professional Development' (CPD) courses. CPD courses are generally aimed at qualified teachers who are familiar with policy enactment in schools. Therefore, such teachers are familiar with the language, terminology and acronyms utilised to address safeguarding issues, which are not always familiar to trainees. By linking training with practising DSOs, explanations of professional terminology, acronyms and processes could be clarified in the training process, and training resources could be updated to address the bespoke requirements for new entrants to the teaching profession.

The experts revealed constraints regarding access to safeguarding training for schools and ITT professionals and stated that this was due to available professional development funding. Current funding streams do not include ITT professionals and exclude university-based ITT

safeguarding lecturers from school safeguarding training. This has resulted in university ITT lecturers safeguarding knowledge becoming misaligned with new and current school practices and directives, and outdated safeguarding knowledge. This lack of access to such training for university lecturers was one of the catalysts for this research project, as I recognised my knowledge base required updating to address the trainee safeguarding learning needs, particularly surrounding AASB. By providing safeguarding training within the university that encompasses practitioner experts' and consultants' input, the ITT provision can become and remain up to date.

This research also concludes that responding to AASB can expose trainee teachers to unexpected emotional responses, which may be difficult for them to control in professional environments. These emotional responses from trainees are due to the potential for emotionally distressed adolescents who may share sensitive information with a teacher during a disclosure incident. The caring professional relationships trainees may have fostered with pupils expose them to personal feelings that may cloud their professional judgement. Therefore, responding to a child in an emotionally charged state may be difficult. The research showed that trainees were unprepared professionally to cope with their emotional responses to sexting disclosures. Therefore, training provision should address professional emotional resilience and well-being, mainly when performing pastoral duties.

A further development from this research has been the development of a confidential shared platform to support DSOs and others where advice, guidance, concerns, and support can be shared among a supportive practitioner community. Effectively, this has established a community of practice where over nine thousand practitioners engage in sharing good practice.

Finally, the findings revealed that trainee teachers reluctantly engage with safeguarding policy. This research draws parallels between ITT and safeguarding policy and ITT, and the government *'Prevent'* policy agenda. Policy enactment research previously conducted by Farrell (2016) revealed that trainees experienced difficulties when they had to implement the *'Prevent'* policy agenda in schools regarding the radicalisation of young Muslim pupils. Farrell's (2016) findings discussed trainee reluctance and trainee confidence issues for addressing radicalisation incidents in schools. The same reluctance and confidence issues exist in both addressing both AASB and pupil radicalisation; both are uncomfortable issues. Both cases reveal malicious exploitative adolescent behaviours with the intent to harm. In both instances, the trainee has professional safeguarding expectations to prevent children from harm, and both require strict adherence to school policies.

The current focus of the computing ITT curriculum, subject knowledge about the ability to apply the principles of CT, and trainees' ability to teach children to produce and edit code may stifle digital literacy and safeguarding training. Whilst coding skillsets are essential, they should not override the importance of digital literacy in the ITT curriculum, which equips children with the skillsets to stay safe online and behave respectfully towards other online users.

The recommendations in this concluding chapter of this thesis are modest, achievable directives devised to support computing teachers as they enter the teaching profession. The recommendations signpost trainees towards pathways to create supportive networks to further develop their understanding of addressing AASB. Furthermore, this research recommends pathways to achieve these modest changes, which would impact future computing teachers' confidence, ability, and well-being. Trainees would be better prepared

and be able to manage disclosure incidents regardless of how aggressive sexualised online behaviours evolve.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix 2A: Search Terms and Filtering for Selective Literature Review

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## Appendix 2B; Prevalence Analysis Table

**Table 16: Sexting Terminology and Prevalence**

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2018	Holoyda et al	Trouble at Teens Fingertips	2014 Baumgartner et al	0.9	Sexting	Sent Rec	11 to 16		Bulgaria
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave et al.	1	Explicit	Sent	15 to 19		UK
2015	Stroud et al.	It's more than just a sext.		1	Explicit	Sent			UK
2019	Van Oosten and Vandenbosch	Sexy online self-presentation	2015, Baumgartner et al.	1.31	Swimwear	N/A	0	N/A	Netherlands
2019	Van Oosten and Vandenbosch	Sexy online self-presentation	2015, Baumgartner et al.	1.36	Nude	N/A	0	N/A	Netherlands
2016	Choi et al.	Association between sexting and sexual coercion	2016, Cooper et al.	2	Webcam	Sent	12 to 17	N/A	UK
2014	Lievens	Bullying and Sexting in Social Networks		2	Suggestive	Sent	12 to 17		UK
2019	Van Oosten and Vandenbosch	Sexy online self-presentation	2015, Baumgartner et al	2.25	Underwear	N/A	0	N/A	Netherlands

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2018	Girwitz-Meyden	What do kids think about sexting?		2.5	Nude	Sent			
2014	Rivers et al.	Wired Report	2009 Cox Communications	3	Nude	Sent	13 to 19	N/A	Not stated
2017	Choi et al.	Association between sexting and sexual coercion		3	Suggestive	Sent	11 to 18	N/A	
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave et al.	3	Sext	Sent	15 to 19		
2017	O'Connor et al.	Sexting Legislation in the United States and Abroad:	2016, Baumgartner et al.	3	Sexting				
2014	Rivers et al.	Wired Report	2009 Pew Internet and American Life	4	Nude	Sent	14 to 24	N/A	USA
2015	The Selfie Cop	Sexting the SAD statistics	2014 O'Neill	4	Text	Rec	11 or 12		
2018	Holoyda et al.	Trouble at Teens Fingertips	2010 Pew Internet and American Life	4	Nude	Sent	12 to 17		
2019	Powell et al.	Image-based sexual abuse		4	Sexting	Sent			
2016	Martazello et al.	I wasn't sure if it was normal to watch it.		4	Explicit	Sent			
2018	Girwitz-Meyden	What do kids think about sexting?	2009, Lenhart	4	Nude	Sent			

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting	2009, Pew	4	Suggestive	Sent	12 to 17		
2014	VanOuytsel	A Brief Report Association between Adolescents		5.25	Nude	Sent			
2014	Lievens	Bullying and Sexting in Social Networks	2011 Livingstone et al.	6	Text	Rec	9 to 16		
2016	Choi et al.	Association between sexting and sexual coercion	2016, Cooper et al.	7	Suggestive	Sent	12 to 17	N/A	
2015	Stroud et al.	It's more than just a sext.		7	Sexting	Sent	13 to 18		
2016	Martazello et al.	I wasn't sure if it was normal to watch it.		7	Nude	Sent			
2018	Girwitz-Meyden	What do kids think about sexting?	2015, Kopecky	7	Nude	Sent			
2018	Girwitz-Meyden	What do kids think about sexting?		7.1	Nude	Rec			
2018	Holoyda et al.	Trouble at Teens Fingertips	2009 Pew Internet and American Life	8	Suggestive	Sent	17		USA
2014	Rivers et al.	Wired Report	2009 Cox Communications	9	Nude	Sent	13 to 19	N/A	Not stated
2017	Bianchi et al.	Sexting as the Mirror on the wall	2017 Morelli	9	Sexting No Desc	Sent	0	N/A	Italy
2014	Rivers. et al.	Wired Report	2009 MTV and Assoc Press	10	Nude	Sent	14 to 24	N/A	Not stated

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2018	Choi et al.	Association between sexting and sexual coercion		10	Suggestive	Sent	11 to 18	N/A	
2015	The Selfie Cop	Sexting the SAD statistics	2014 O'Neill	10	Text	Rec	13 or 14		
2017	Ploharz	An Evolutionary Base Examination of Sexting Behaviour	2013 Drouin	10	Sexting Image	Sent			
2019	Powell et al.	Image-based sexual abuse	2015 Patrick et al.	10	Nude	Sent			
2015	Wood Barter et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave et al.	10	Sext	Sent	15 to 19		Cyprus
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting	2009, MTV	10	Nude	Sent	14 to 24		
2017	Bianchi et al.	Sexting as the Mirror on the wall	2010 Hinduja	10.2	Sexting No Description	Sent	0		
2014	Klettke et al.	Sexting Literature Review	2009 Cox Communications	10.2	Sexting No Description	Sent			
2017	Kosenko et al.	Sexting and Sexual Behaviour, 2011–2015		10.2	Sexting	Sent			
2016	Choi et al.	Association between sexting and sexual coercion	2016, Cooper et al.	11	Text	Sent	12 to 17	N/A	
2019	Powell et al.	Image-based sexual abuse	2014 Strohmaier	11	Sexting No Desc	Sent			

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2017	O'Connor et al.	Sexting Legislation in the United States and Abroad:	2014, Walrave	11	Nude	Sent	15 to 18		
2016	Choi et al.	Association between sexting and sexual coercion		11.1	Sexting No Desc	19	F	USA	
2014	VanOuytsel	A Brief Report Association between Adolescents	2013 Delevi and Weisskirch	11.1	Explicit	Sent	13 to 19		
2019	Powell et al.	Image-based sexual abuse		11.1	Sexting No Desc	Sent/Rec			
2018	Holoyda, et al.	Trouble at Teens Fingertips	2014 Baumgartner	11.5	Sexting	Sent/Rec	11 to 16		Sweden
2017	Bianchi et al.	Sexting as the Mirror on the wall	2011 Hinduja	11.96	Sexting Image	Sent	0		
2017	Bianchi et al.	Sexting as the Mirror on the wall	2012 Mitchell	11.96	Sexting Image	Sent	0		
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting.		12	Sexting				
2019	Powell et al.	Image-based sexual abuse	2016 Morelli	13	Sext	Sent			
2017	Hamilton-Giachritsis	Everyone deserves to be happy and safe	2017 Martellozzo	13	Nude	Sent			
2019	Van Oosten and Vandenbosch	Sexy online self-presentation	2015, Baumgartner et al.	15	Revealing Clothing	N/A	0	N/A	Netherlands

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2014	Rivers et al.	Wired Report	2009 MTV and Assoc Press	15	Nude	Rec	14 to 24	N/A	Not stated
2014	Rivers et al.	Wired Report	2009 Pew Internet and American Life	15	Nude	Rec	14 to 24	N/A	USA
2014	Lievens	Bullying and Sexting in Social Networks		15	Sexting No Desc	Rec	11 to 16		
2016	Halloran McLaughlin	Crime and Punishment		15	Sexting Images	Sent			USA
2018	Holoyda et al.	Trouble at Teens Fingertips	2014 Livingston and Gorzig	15	Sexting No Desc	Sent/Rec	11 to 16		
2018	Holoyda et al.	Trouble at Teens Fingertips	2010 Pew Internet and American Life	15	Nude	Rec	12 to 17		
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave, et al.	15	Sext	Rec	15 to 19		
2015	Stroud et al.	It's more than just a sext.		15	Text	Sent			
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting	2009, Pew	15	Suggestive	Rec	12 to 17		
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting	2009, Pew	15	Suggestive	Rec	12 to 17		
2017	Bianchi et al.	Sexting as the Mirror on the wall	2013 Fleischer	15.48	Sexting Image	Sent			

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2017	O'Connor et al.	Sexting Legislation in the United States and Abroad:	2013, Fleschler Pesking	16.3	Nude	Sent			
2014	Rivers et al.	Wired Report	2009 Cox Communications	17	Nude	Rec	13 to 19	N/A	Not stated
2014	Lievens	Bullying and Sexting in Social Networks		17	Suggestive	Rec	12 to 17		
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave, et al.	18	Sexting	Sent/Rec	15 to 19		
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave, et al.	19	Nude	Sent	15 to 19		
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting	2009, Cox	19	Nude	Sent/Rec	13 to 18		USA
2015	The Selfie Cop	Sexting the SAD statistics	2014 O'Neill	20	Text	Rec			
2018	Holoyda et al.	Trouble at Teens Fingertips	2009 Lenhart	20	Sexting No Desc	Sent	15		
2019	Powell et al.	Image-based sexual abuse	2015 Crofts, et al.	20	Sexting	Sent			
2019	Powell et al.	Image-based sexual abuse	2016 Garcia et al.	20	Sext	Sent		F	
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting	2009, Sex Tech	20	Nude	Sent			

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2017	O'Connor et al.	Sexting Legislation in the United States and Abroad:	2013, Strassberg, et al.	20	Explicit	Sent			
2014	O'Sullivan	Linking online sexual activities to health outcomes among teens.	2010, Baumgartner, et al.	20	Nude	Sent/Rec			
2016	Martazello et al.	I wasn't sure if it was normal to watch it.		21	Sexting	Sent/Rec	11 to 12		
2015	The Selfie Cop	Sexting the SAD statistics	2014 O'Neill	22	Text	Rec	15 or 16		
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave, et al.	22	Sext	Sent	15 to 19		Italy
2014	Rivers et al.	Wired Report	None	24	Nude			N/A	UK
2018	Siegle	Cyberbullying and Sexting		25	Nude	Sent/Rec	14 to 17		
2019	Powell et al.	Image-based sexual abuse	2016 Garcia et al.	25	Sext	Sent		M	
2016	Martazello et al.	I wasn't sure if it was normal to watch it.		26	Explicit	Rec			
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave, et al.	28	Sext	Sent	15 to 19		Bulgaria
2018	Girwitz-Meyden	What do kids think about sexting?	2012, Temple	28	Nude	Sent	14 to 19		
2018	Holoyda et al.	Trouble at Teens Fingertips	2009 Pew Internet and American Life	30	Nude	Rec	17		USA

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave, et al.	30	Sext	Sent	15 to 19		Norway
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting	2009 Cross et al.	30	Suggestive	Rec			
2017	UKCCIS	Sexting in Schools and Colleges	2016 Martellozzo	30.6	Nude	Sent			
2014	Rivers et al.	Wired Report	2008 National campaign	31	Nude	Rec	13 to 19	N/A	Not stated
2017	O'Connor et al.	Sexting Legislation in the United States and Abroad:	2013, Fleschler Pesking	31	Nude	Rec			
2018	Holoyda et al.	Trouble at Teens Fingertips	2009 Lenhart	33	Sexting No Description	Sent	17		
2016	Martazello et al.	I wasn't sure if it was normal to watch it.		36	Nude	Sent			
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	2015 Walrave, et al.	38	Sext	Sent	15 to 19		England
2016	Halloran McLaughlin	Crime and Punishment		39	Suggestive	Sent			USA
2016	Martazello et al.	I wasn't sure if it was normal to watch it.		39	Sexting	Sent/Rec	13 to 14		
2016	Martazello et al.	I wasn't sure if it was normal to watch it.		42	Sexting	Sent/Rec	15 to 16		
2018	Sklenarova	Online sexual solicitation by adults and peers – Results		43.3	Sexting Image	Sent/Rec	14 to 17		

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
		from a population-based German sample							
2016	Halloran McLaughlin	Crime and Punishment		44	Sexting No Desc	Sent			USA
2017	Hamilton-Giachritsis	Everyone deserves to be happy and safe	2015 Barter et al.	44	Sexting Image	Sent	14 to 17	F	
2017	Hollis and Belton	Exploring Technology Assisted Harmful Sexual Behaviour		46	Explicit	Rec			
2016	Halloran McLaughlin	Crime and Punishment		48	Suggestive	Rec			USA
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting	2009, Sex Tech	48	Suggestive	Rec	13 to 19		
2018	Ploharz	An Evolutionary Base Examination of Sexting Behaviour	2014 Drouin	50	Suggestive	Sent			
2018	Sklenarova	Online sexual solicitation by adults and peers – Results from a population-based German sample		51.3	Sexting		14 to 17		Germany
2017	Hamilton-Giachritsis	Everyone deserves to be happy and safe		54	Sexting Images	Rec			
2017	UKCCIS	Sexting in Schools and Colleges	2016 Martellozo	54.9	Nude	Sent			

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2017	Hamilton-Giachritsis	Everyone deserves to be happy and safe		55	Sext	Sent	16		
2019	Van Oosten and Vandenbosch	Sexy online self-presentation	2012, Temple	57	Request	N/A	0	N/A	Netherlands
2004	Williams	Sexting Adolescents and the Criminal Law		58.9	Sexting Image	Rec	12		
2017	UKCCIS	Sexting in Schools and Colleges	2008 Sabina	58.9	Sexting Image	Rec	12		
2018	Siegle	Cyberbullying and Sexting		61	Naked	Sent			
2016	Martazello et al.	I wasn't sure if it was normal to watch it		61	Nude	Sent			
2004	Williams	Sexting Adolescents and the Criminal Law		62	Sexting Image	Rec	18	F	
2017	UKCCIS	Sexting in Schools and Colleges	2008 Sabina	62	Sexting Image	Rec	18	F	
2017	Gómez-Guadix	Sexting among Spanish		65	Sexting No Desc	Send	16		
2016	Halloran McLaughlin	Crime and Punishment		65.5	Sexting No Desc	Sent			USA
2016	Halloran McLaughlin	Crime and Punishment		66	Explicit	Sent/Rec		M	USA
2017	Hamilton-Giachritsis	Everyone deserves to be happy and safe		67	Sexting Images	Sent			
2017	Gómez-Guadix	Sexting among Spanish		68	Sexting No Desc	Rec	16		
2016	Halloran McLaughlin	Crime and Punishment		69	Nude	Rec			USA

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2017	Bianchi et al.	Sexting as the Mirror on the wall	2016 Morelli	73	Sexting No Desc	Sent	0	N/A	Italy
2017	Bianchi et al.	Sexting as the Mirror on the wall	2016 Morelli	78	Sexting No Desc	Rec	0	N/A	Italy
2004	Williams	Sexting Adolescents and the Criminal Law		92.4	Sexting Image	Rec	16		
2017	UKCCIS	Sexting in Schools and Colleges	2008 Sabina	92.4	Sexting Image	Rec	16		
2004	Williams	Sexting Adolescents and the Criminal Law		93	Sexting Image	Rec	18	M	
2017	UKCCIS	Sexting in Schools and Colleges	2008 Sabina	93	Sexting Image	Rec	18	M	
2017	Gómez-Guadix	Sexting among Spanish	2009 Lenhart	1.3 to 15	Sexting No Desc	Sent/Rec			
2016	Choi et al.	Association between sexting and sexual coercion		15 - 28	Suggestive	Sent	11 to 18	N/A	
2014	Temple et al.	A Brief Report on Teen Sexting	2012 Temple	15 to 28	Sext	Sent			
2016	Stanley et al.	Pornography, Sexual Coercion and Abuse and Sexting in Young People's Intimate Relationships: A European Study		15 to 32	Sexting Images/Text	Sent		M	
2012	Ringrose et al.	A qualitative study of children and young people sexting.		15 to 40	Sexting	Sent Rec	11 to 16		

Year	Author	Paper	Internal Reference in paper	Prevalence %	Category	Send/Rec	Age	Gender	Country
2017	Gámez-Guadix	Sexting among Spanish	2012 Dake	15 to 50	Sexting Images	Sent			
2017	O'Connor et al.	Sexting Legislation in the United States and Abroad:	2012, Mitchell	2.5 to 7,1	Nude	Sent/Rec	10 to 17		USA
2017	Bianchi, et al.	Sexting as the Mirror on the wall	2012 Eurispes et al	20 to 33	Sexting No Desc	Sent/Rec	0	N/A	Italy
2016	Stanley et al.	Pornography, Sexual Coercion and Abuse and Sexting in Young People's Intimate Relationships: A European Study		20 to 47	Sexting	Sent		M	
2015	Wood, et al.,	Images across Europe	MTV 2009	3 to 34	Sexting	Sent			
2017	Gámez-Guadix	Sexting among Spanish	2013 Fleschler	54 to 87	Text	Send			
2016	Stanley et al.	Pornography, Sexual Coercion and Abuse and Sexting in Young People's Intimate Relationships: A European Study		6 to 44	Sexting Images/Text	Sent		F	UK
2017	Gámez-Guadix	Sexting among Spanish	2016 Cooper	7 to 27	Sexting No Desc	Send			Spain
2015	Wood et al.	Images across Europe	MTV 2009	7 to 42	Sexting	Rec			UK
2016	Stanley et al.	Pornography, Sexual Coercion and Abuse and Sexting in Young People's Intimate		9 to 49	Sexting	Sent		F	UK

<b>Year</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Paper</b>	<b>Internal Reference in paper</b>	<b>Prevalence %</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Send/Rec</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Country</b>
		Relationships: A European Study							
2016	Choi et al.	Association between sexting and sexual coercion	2013 Delevi and Weisskirch		Sexting	Sent		F	

## Appendix 3

Appendix 3 is organised into procedures followed during this research as part of the methodology.

3A is concerned with processes undertaken prior to commencing the research. These processes included:

- 3A1 Obtain permission to use materials from Wolak and Finkelhor's 2011 study.
- 3A2 Ethical approval from two universities.
- 3A3 Participant Consent forms.

3B to 3E is concerned with the data-collection tools used during this research.

### Appendix 3A1: Permission from Wolak and Finkelhor

Correspondence from my Research Diary

26/04/18

Reviewed the SOI Document and researched Data Analysis techniques for Ethnographic Research Methods  
I read Researchgate and found the following information.

[https://www.researchgate.net/post/What\\_methods\\_of\\_analysis\\_can\\_be\\_used\\_for\\_a\\_study\\_of\\_ethnography](https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_methods_of_analysis_can_be_used_for_a_study_of_ethnography)

Bought the Finkelhor and Wolak Book Childhood Victimization.

I am thinking about using a Documentary Analysis approach to analyse the data, and I am hoping to examine resolution methods and reactions.

I found an interesting article about Vygotsky.

Tony Harland 2003 Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and Problem-Based Learning; Linking a theoretical concept with practice through action research. Teaching in Higher Education, Volume 8 No 2 pp263 -272

09/04/18

Permission to use Article for Further ResearchFD  
Finkelhor, David <David.Finkelhor@unh.edu>

|

Mon 09/04, 19:20

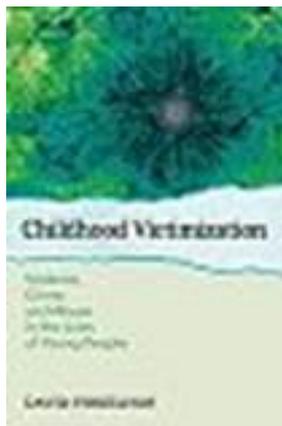
Everything is on our website.

<http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/internet-crimes/papers.html>

David Finkelhor  
Crimes Against Children Research Center  
Family Research Laboratory  
Department of Sociology, University of New Hampshire  
Durham, NH 03824  
Tel 603 862-2761\* Fax 603 862-1122  
email: david.finkelhor@unh.edu  
Web: <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/>



My book. Click on it for more details and to order.



DH

Dawn Hewitson

Mon 09/04, 19:16

Hi, thank you so much. I wondered if you have published any recent material regarding Sexting specifically or if you have any publications in the pipeline. Kind regards, Dawn. Sent from my iPhone.

FD

Finkelhor, David <David.Finkelhor@unh.edu>

Reply all|

Mon 09/04, 13:05

Dawn Hewitson.

Wolak, Janis <Janis.Wolak@unh.edu>

Inbox

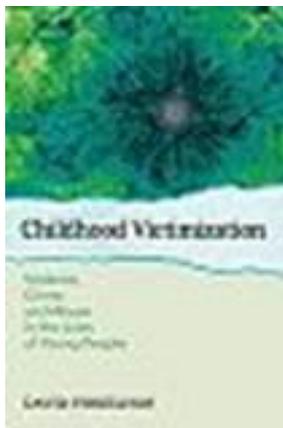
Label: Keep for (2 years) Expires: 08/04/2020 13:05

You are welcome to use the material.

David Finkelhor  
Crimes Against Children Research Center  
Family Research Laboratory  
Department of Sociology, University of New Hampshire  
Durham, NH 03824  
Tel 603 862-2761\* Fax 603 862-1122  
email: david.finkelhor@unh.edu  
Web: <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/>



My book. Click on it for more details and to order.



Reply all|  
Today, 09:36  
Janis.Wolak@unh.edu.  
David.Finkelhor@unh.edu  
Hi,

I am an early career researcher currently studying for my Ed D. I would like to use your article as a basis for my study. I am exploring how student teachers respond to sexting incidents of sexting disclosure. I want to use five of the cases you have presented in your paper Sexting, A Typology.

I would like to use the cases as vignettes because I have visited several schools and acquired data for my study. In each instance, the schools I approached withdrew from the study, claiming that they did not want their school to be included in the study because of potential problems with parents.

The cases you use are typical of some of the instances I have encountered in my studies. I would be most grateful if you would allow me to use your paper as a basis for my study.

Kind regards

Dawn Hewitson

Solstice Fellow, FRSA, FHEA, MBCS, MA, PGCTLHE, PGCM, PGCE, B Sc (Hons)

Senior Lecturer Computing Education

Course Leader PGCE Computer Science and IT

Edge Hill University

Tel: 01695 650979

Contacted Wolak and Finkelhor

We have not yet sorted out the Ethical Approval and must adjust the working document to reflect the research design.

My next job is to contact Wolak and Finkelhor to see if there are any more up-to-date publications and ask for permission to use vignettes.

## Appendix 3A2: Ethical Approvals



University of Central Lancashire

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE

Ethics Committee Application Form

PLEASE NOTE THAT ONLY ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION IS ACCEPTED

This application form is to be used to seek approval from one of the three University Ethics Committees (BAHSS, PSYSOC, and STEMH). Where this document refers to the 'Ethics Committee,' this denotes BAHSS, PSYSOC, and STEMH. These Ethics Committees deal with all staff and postgraduate research student projects. Taught projects (undergraduate and MSc dissertation projects) will normally be dealt with via the School process/committee.

If unsure whether your activity requires ethical approval, please complete a UCLan Ethics Checklist. If the proposed activity involves animals, you should not use this form. For further details, please contact the Ethics and Integrity Unit within Research Services at [EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk).

Please refer to the [notes for guidance on completing the form](#).

If this application relates to a project/phase previously approved by one of the UCLan Ethics Committees, please supply the corresponding reference number(s) from your decision letter(s). ONLY REQUIRED FOR PHASED PROJECT SUBMISSIONS		
<b>Previous Ethics Approval Ref No</b>		
<b>1.1 Project Type:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Research Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Masters by Research <input type="checkbox"/> MPhil Research <input type="checkbox"/> PhD Research <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional Doctorate	<input type="checkbox"/> Taught Masters <input type="checkbox"/> Undergrad Research <input type="checkbox"/> Internship
<b>1.2 Principal Investigator:</b>		
Name	School	Email
Dawn Hewitson	Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching	<a href="mailto:hewitsd@edgehill.ac.uk">hewitsd@edgehill.ac.uk</a>
<b>1.3 Other Researchers / Student:</b>		
Name	School	Email
	Choose an item.	

	Choose an item.	
	Choose an item.	
<b>1.4 Project Title:</b>		
<b>Dealing with disclosure: Exploring the preparation of Pre-Service Secondary Trainee Teachers for encounters with pupils' disclosing engagement in Sexting activity</b>		
<b>1.5 Proposed Start Date:</b>		
30/03/2019		
<b>1.6 Proposed End Date:</b>		
31/12/2023		
<b>1.7 Is this project receiving any external funding</b> (including donations of samples, equipment, etc)?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
<i>If yes, please provide details of the funding sources and their role in the current proposal.</i>		
<b>1.8 Project Description</b> (in layperson's terms), including the aim(s) and justification of the project (max three hundred words)		
<p>The researcher is seeking approval for a Doctoral in Education project. The project aims to explore how trainee computer science teachers with school experience perceive responding to pupil sexting activity disclosures, how they reflect on their training experience, and how the trainees understand operationalising and responding to policy.</p> <p>The researcher believes this is an important and timely study. There is little empirical evidence regarding how trainee teachers respond to safeguarding incidents and disclosures of sexting, or how teachers articulate their understanding of operationalising safeguarding policy. In recent years there has been anecdotal evidence from DSOs in schools and studies from trade unions which serves to suggest sexting activity by pupils is causing concern amongst teachers.</p> <p>There are legal implications surrounding the resolution of sexting activity, which could have drastic career changes and personal consequences for teachers. Specifically, when presented with a disclosure situation, a teacher could embark on a course of action which could end their teaching career and render them liable for prosecution for inadvertently distributing child pornography (<i>PCA, 1978, s1; CJA,1988, s160</i>). Before the publication of the UKCCIS (2016), 'Sexting in Schools Guidance, safety, cyberbullying and Stranger Danger via Social Media and Gaming (Byron, -2008,11) were safeguarding priorities for schools and included in DfE safeguarding priorities' (DCSF, 2010, 43). However, the evolution of smartphone capabilities enabled the transmission of images via networks and social media. A by-product of this technology evolution, the ubiquitous availability of smartphones to young people, and the empowerment of children (UNICEF, 1988) coupled with celebrity behaviour such as 'Kardashian Culture' have normalised overtly sexualised imagery being publicly distributed by adolescents. -</p> <p><i>Give a summary of the background, purpose, and possible benefits of the project. This should include a statement on the academic rationale, context of the activity and justification for conducting the project.</i></p>		

**1.9 Methodology** Please be specific

*Provide an outline of the proposed method, including details of sample numbers, source of samples, type of data collected, equipment required and any modifications thereof, etc.*

The researched area occupies a unique complex juxtaposition within education, where several disciplines converge such as, behaviour management, social justice, power, and organisational management. Where professional intervention by teachers with pupils involves a significant level of knowledge surrounding procedures and protocols required to intervene, signpost, and support the pupils successfully, support the school, and contribute to any subsequent follow-up process within the context of the legal frameworks previously identified. For this reason, a mixed methods qualitative approach will be adopted. The research method chosen has been developed by the researcher using a combination of methods. The approach created is a blend of two approaches: normative case study methodology (Tight, 2017:101-104 and Yin, 2012:41-43) and using a series of Vignettes combined with questionnaires and a focus group to structure the study and define the context of the data-collection area.

**1.10 Has the quality of the project been assessed?** (Select all that apply)

- Independent external review
- Internal review (e.g. involving colleagues, academic supervisor, School process)
- Research Programme Approval gained on [Click here to enter a date](#). ***(Please note that RPA is a prerequisite for Research Degree Student, including Prof Doc, projects to be able to submit for ethics)***
- None
- Other

If other please give details

**1.11 Please provide details as to the storage and protection of your physical /electronic data for the next 5 years – as per UCLan requirements – or whichever archive period is appropriate**

The interview recording will be kept on a password-protected computer accessible to the researchers. Respondents will be informed that all their data will be stored on a secure password-protected computer. By adhering to the University of Central Lancashire's and Edge Hill University's 'Research Ethics Code of Conduct' and BERA's (2018, 28 and 35) guidelines, the researchers will commit to the following actions:

The University of Central Lancashire CELT Ethics Review Committee and the Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee will be asked to consent to conducting questionnaires and focus groups.

All participants will be issued a participant information sheet that gives an overview of the project and outlines the participants' expectations.

All participants will be asked to complete a consent form.

The researcher is a student at the University of Central Lancashire and an employee at Edge Hill University, and shall 'operate within an ethic of respect' for everyone (BERA 2018: pp28)

No participant shall be exposed to any danger or harm (BERA, 2018, pp. 19-20), and no detriment will arise from participation or non-participation in the interviews.

No incentives will be used to participate in the interview.

Interview data will be held in password-protected files on a password-protected computer stored in a locked office. The machine will be closed and switched off after any work period and will not be left unattended or accessible to persons other than the researcher and the supervisory team.

Participants will be anonymised in the writing-up process.

Privacy and rights to confidentiality and anonymity will always be respected.

Participants will be informed that they reserve the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

Research integrity will be upheld throughout and will comply with *The Concordat to Support Research Integrity* (Universities UK 2017)

Participants will be invited to read and comment on a summary of findings of the draft research report.

In the event of illegal behaviour being brought to the attention of the researcher, the appropriate authorities will be informed.  
If distress or emotional behaviour is brought to the researcher's attention, the appropriate support services will be informed, and participants will be signposted to the appropriate welfare and wellbeing teams at the Universities.

**1.12 How is it intended that the project results will be reported and disseminated?**  
(Select all that apply)

- Peer-reviewed journal – hard copy or online
- Internal report
- Conference presentation
- Other publication
- Written feedback to research participants
- Presentation to participants or relevant community groups
- Dissertation/Thesis
- Other

If other, please give details.

**1.13 Will the activity involve any external organisation for which separate and specific approval is required** (e.g., NHS; school; any criminal justice agencies including the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Prison Service or Probation Service)?

Yes  No

IF **YES**, BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH THIS FORM, click [here](#) to CHECK WHEN, HOW AND WHAT IS REQUIRED

If yes, please provide details of the external organisation and attached letter of approval

**1.14 The nature of this project is most appropriately described as research involving :-**  
(more than one may apply)

- Behavioural observation
- Questionnaire(s) – *please provide a copy of the questionnaire/survey*
- Interview(s) – *please provide a list of questions to be asked, or if semi-structured the topics*
- Qualitative methodologies (e.g., focus groups) - *please provide the questions/topics to be covered*
- Psychological experiments
- Epidemiological studies
- Data linkage studies
- Psychiatric or clinical psychology studies
- Human physiological investigation(s)
- Biomechanical device(s)
- Human tissue(s)<sup>1</sup>
- Human genetic analysis
- A clinical trial of drug(s) or device(s)
- Lab-based experiment – *please provide relevant COHSS / RA forms*
- Archaeological excavation/fieldwork

<sup>1</sup> Please email [EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk) if any project involves HT.

<input type="checkbox"/> Re-analysis of archaeological finds/ancient artefacts <input type="checkbox"/> Human remains analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Lone working or travel to unfamiliar places (e.g., interviews in participants' homes) - <i>please provide relevant risk assessment form</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify in the box below)
If 'Other', please provide details.
<b>1.15 Human Participants, Data or Material – the project will involve: -</b>
Please select the appropriate box(es)
<input type="checkbox"/> Participants [proceed to next question 1.16] <input type="checkbox"/> Data [proceed to question 1.29] <input type="checkbox"/> Tissues / Fluids / DNA Samples [proceed to question 1.30] <input type="checkbox"/> Remains [proceed to question 1.32]
<b>1.16 Will the participants be from any of the following groups:</b> (Tick as many as applicable)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trainees or staff of this University <sup>2</sup> <input type="checkbox"/> Children/legal minors (anyone under the age of 18 years) <input type="checkbox"/> Patients or clients of professionals <input type="checkbox"/> Those with learning disability <input type="checkbox"/> Those who are unconscious, severely ill, or have a terminal illness <input type="checkbox"/> Those in emergency situations <input type="checkbox"/> Those with mental illness (mainly if detained under the Mental Health Act) <input type="checkbox"/> Those without mental capacity <input type="checkbox"/> Those with dementia <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoners <input type="checkbox"/> Young Offenders <input type="checkbox"/> Adults who are unable to consent for themselves <input type="checkbox"/> Any other person whose capacity to consent may be compromised <input type="checkbox"/> A member of an organisation where another individual may also need to give consent <input type="checkbox"/> Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator, e.g., those in care homes <input type="checkbox"/> Other vulnerable groups (please list in the box below)
If 'Other' please provide details the training process for the trainees will have concluded
<b>1.16a Justify their inclusion</b>
<i>Ethical approval covers <b>all participants</b>, but attention must be given to those in a vulnerable category. Therefore, you need to fully justify their inclusion and give details of extra steps taken to assure their protection.</i>
The study seeks to improve the understanding of the process under which trainees are prepared to encounter operationalising safeguarding procedures and policies, and how they have encountered these processes during their training period. In order to improve this process, as a starting point, the researcher needs to canvass the views and experiences of both the trainee teacher and the DSOs independently. The ethical processes from the host universities and the universities where the data subjects have been drawn have been consulted. Research guidance for undertaking research with trainees has been followed in

<sup>2</sup> Where staff or trainees at the university are being used, please explain how this is not convenience sampling.

preparing this application. The trainees, DSO/L in schools, head teachers, and University DSO will be provided with information about the project's aims. The information will enable them to provide voluntary informed consent before the data-collection introduction sessions. Gatekeepers and other University staff will be present during the data-collection process.

Respondents will not be identified in the study. They are not required to provide their names or to reveal the settings in which they are training.

All participants will be issued a participant information sheet that gives an overview of the project and outlines the participants' expectations.

All participants will be asked to complete a consent form.

The researcher is a student at the University of Central Lancashire and an employee at Edge Hill University, and shall 'operate within an ethic of respect' for everyone (BERA 2018: pp28)

No participant shall be exposed to any danger or harm (BERA, 2018, pp. 19-20), and no detriment will arise from participation or non-participation in the interviews.

No incentives will be used to participate in the interview.

Interview data will be held in password-protected files on a password-protected computer stored in a locked office. The machine will be closed and switched off after any work period and will not be left unattended or accessible to persons other than the researcher and the supervisory team.

Participants will be anonymised in the writing-up process.

Privacy and rights to confidentiality and anonymity will always be respected.

Participants will be informed that they can withdraw from the research at any time.

Research integrity will be upheld throughout and will comply with *The Concordat to Support Research Integrity* (Universities UK 2017)

Participants will be invited to read and comment on a summary of the findings of the draft research report.

If illegal behaviour is brought to the researcher's attention, the appropriate authorities will be informed.

If distress or emotional behaviour is brought to the researcher's attention, the appropriate support services will be informed, and participants will be signposted to the appropriate welfare and wellbeing teams at the Universities.

Finally, the data-collection process will be conducted after the trainees have concluded their training with the University. The timescale removes the power differentials of this research study.

**1.16b Is a [DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service \(formerly CRB – Criminal Records Bureau\)](#) check required?**

*Certain activities and/or groups of individuals require DBS (formerly CRB) clearance. If unclear, please seek advice.*

Yes  No

If yes, please advise status of DBS clearance (e.g., gained; in process; etc)

**1.16c All staff should be aware of [UCLan's Policy and Procedures on Safeguarding and Prevent](#). Please confirm that, where relevant to your project, the appropriate training has been undertaken (please give date).**

*Please refer to UCLan's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Prevent guidance.*

Yes  No

If yes, please give details and dates of relevant training sessions – external or internal.

**1.17 Please indicate precisely how participants in the study will be (i) identified, (ii) approached and (iii) recruited?**

If an advertisement and/or information sheet is being used, please attached
Please see attached
<b>1.18 Will consent be sought from the participants and how will this be obtained?</b>
If a written consent form is being used, please attach
<b>1.19 How long will the participants have to decide whether to take part in the research?</b>
<b>1.20 What arrangements have been made for participants who might not adequately understand verbal explanations or written information, or who have special communication needs?</b>
<i>Gives details of what arrangements have been made (e.g., translation, use of interpreters, etc).</i>
I have arranged for a graphical poster to be displayed for the trainees involved one of the participants is registered as partially sighted and will be given larger print and I will present a session prior to the data-collection exercise which includes graphical information
<b>1.21 Payment or incentives: Do you propose to pay or reward participants?</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please provided details
<b>1.22 Will deception of the participant be necessary during the project?</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please provide justification
<b>1.23 Does your project involve the potential imbalance of power/authority/status, particularly those which might compromise a participant giving informed consent?</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please detail including how this will be mitigated. <i>Describe the relationship and the steps to be taken by the investigator to ensure that participation is purely voluntary and not influenced by the relationship in any way.</i>
<b>1.24 Does the project involve <u>any</u> possible distress, discomfort, or harm (or offense) to participants or researchers? (Including physical, social, emotional, psychological and/or aims to shock / offend – e.g., Art)</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please explain. <i>Describe the potential for distress, discomfort, harm or offense and what measures are in place to protect the participants and/or researcher(s). Please carefully consider all</i>

*potential causes of distress, including likely reaction to the subject matter, debriefing or participant upset.*

Trainees may not have previously encountered Sexting behaviour. The six vignettes presented to the trainees are factually correct scenarios which have happened to young people. Some trainees may find this information distressing.

If distress or emotional behaviour is brought to the researcher's attention, the appropriate support services will be informed, and participants will be signposted to the appropriate welfare and wellbeing teams at the Universities.

The appropriate services for trainees will be informed of the dates and times of research data collection and dissemination to ensure staff availability in the event of student distress.

Trainees will also have the assurance that these incidents are historical and have been previously resolved with the relevant authorities and systems in place in schools.

**1.25 Does the activity involve any information pertaining to illegal activities or materials or the disclosure thereof?**

Yes  No

If yes, please detail.

*Describe involvement and explain what risk management procedures will be put in place.*

Some sexting activities are illegal.

Trainees will also have the assurance that the incidents presented to them during the research process are historical and have been previously resolved with the relevant authorities and systems in place in schools.

Trainees will not be asked to look at imagery.

In the event of illegal behaviour being brought to the attention of the researcher, the appropriate authorities will be informed.

**1.26 What mechanism is there for participants to withdraw from the project, at what interval(s) and how is this communicated to the participants?**

Trainees will be given a withdrawal form and two-week window of opportunity to withdraw from the study.

**1.27 What are the potential benefits of the research?**

There is limited knowledge surrounding the training of new entrants to the profession and how they should operationalise safeguarding policy. The Ofsted Strategy 2017 -2022 (2017,9) refers to inspection regimes and how inspectors will examine safeguarding policies to ascertain how schools implement safeguarding practices and policies. The Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013) mandate teachers to 'have a proper professional regard for the ethos and policies of the school' and 'an understanding of and to act within statutory frameworks. Safeguarding is a significant framework in schools. Although safeguarding is not explicitly referred to in the Teaching Standards, knowledge of the ability to operationalise the policy is implied.

Cloud computing and the encouragement of initiatives such as. 'Bring your own devices (BYOD)' into schools has further compounded the problem of pupils' online activity. Pupils are exposed to a space with limitations regarding controlling the environment. Baudrillard (1991:13-17) conceptualises this environment children are exposed to online, theorising the experience. He refers to hyperreality and the free space in which fantasies can be enacted, and behaviour is unregulated. Children conduct their social interactions in the

arena of the hyperreal, using their mobile devices as tools to navigate this experience, often without understanding the consequences of these interactions. The pupil device-based activity has resulted in yet another suite of policies for teachers (DfE 2017). These cloud computing policies govern how schools use and integrate personal devices. BYOD can compromise school safeguarding measures. Personal devices can circumnavigate security measures in school settings as devices can have independent access to the Internet, which negates the need to use the school servers. The safety of children's information sharing in school depends mainly upon data passing through the school server system as network traffic. This network traffic passes through software filters, where the filtering software detects anomalies in network traffic and creates alerts for these anomalies, allowing the school to intervene by responding to the alert. Personal devices can bypass school servers, thus potentially compromising safeguarding measures adopted by the schools because the filtration system may not be able to access the data being transmitted by the device.

This research is conducted during curriculum and policy changes (DfE, 2018). Where Safeguarding features high on OFSTED agendas, and as school policies shift towards acknowledging the impact on pupils of online behaviour in school (UKCCIS, 2017). There are moves towards incorporating changes into how online behaviour is managed in schools through regular training sessions for DSOs, LSCB, 2019). However, little is known about the impact of pupil disclosure and the operationalisation of safeguarding policy by trainee teachers who are new to the profession. I hope to investigate trainees' preparedness to be the recipients of pupil disclosures, particularly surrounding pupil online sexting activity and how they feel the training they have received has prepared them to deal with disclosure and the peculiarities that incidents of this nature present.

**1.28 Debriefing, Support and/or Feedback to Participants**

*Describe any debriefing, support, or feedback that participants will receive following the project and when.*

The focus group interviews will provide each of the two groups, independently, with an opportunity to evaluate and reflect upon how disclosure incidences are responded to and discuss how responses to incidents the researcher has chosen focus group as a method of data collection because of its alignment to case study methodology and the opportunity to share collective voices and experiences of each of the two groups. Enabling the data subjects to interact with each other and share views provides an alternative method of collecting data where the research focus can be shared and discussed with minimal input from the researcher (Cohen, Manion and Morrison. 2008).

**1.29 Will the project involve access to confidential information about people without their consent?**

Yes  No

If yes, please explain and justify.

*State what information will be sought, from which organisations, and what the requirements are for this information.*

**1.30 Confidentiality/Anonymity - Will the project involve:**

	Yes	No
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Non-anonymisation of participants (i.e., researchers may or will know the identity of participants and be able to return responses)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Participants having the consented option of being identified in any publication arising from the research?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The use of <a href="#">personal data</a> (i.e. anything that may identify them – e.g. institutional role – see DP checklist for further guidance)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>If yes to any, please attach the completed <a href="#">Data Protection (DP) checklist</a>.</i>		
<b>1.31 Does the project involve human tissue?</b> <sup>3</sup> See the Supplementary List of Materials for the Human Tissue Act (HTA) to check what is classified as human tissue.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
If no, please skip to question 1.32. If yes, please provide full details and answer questions 1.31a-c		
<b>1.31a Who is sourcing the human tissue?</b> (e.g., a tissue bank governed by its own HTA licence)		
<b>1.31b Will the human tissue be stored at UCLan?</b> (Please note restrictions on storage)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
If yes, please state how long and in what form - cellular or acellular (DNA extracted) <i>Please note – if human tissue is only kept for DNA extraction, rendering it acellular, the HTA storage regulations may not apply. If holding for DNA extraction, please state the length of time the tissue would be stored pre-extraction.</i>		
<b>1.31c Is the human tissue being used for an activity listed as a ‘scheduled purpose’ under Schedule 1 Parts 1 and 2 of the Human Tissue Act 2004?</b> (Click <a href="#">here</a> to see a list of HTA ‘scheduled purpose’ activities)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
<b>1.32 Does the project involve excavation and study of human remains?</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
If yes, please give details. <i>Discuss the provisions for examining the remains and managing community/public concerns, legal requirements, etc.</i>		

<sup>3</sup> Until such time as the University gains its own HTA Research Licence, human tissue that is for a ‘scheduled purpose’ and not sourced from a BioBank or part of an NREC approved project can only be stored for a maximum of 5 days.

## DECLARATION

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This declaration needs to be signed by the Principal Investigator (PI), and the student where it relates to a student project (for research student projects PI is Director of Studies and for Taught or Undergrad project the PI is the Supervisor). Electronic submission of the form is required to [EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk). Where available insert electronic signature(s) – alternatively, provide an email in lieu of appropriate party.

<b>Declaration of the:</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Principal Investigator
<b>OR</b>
Director of Studies/Supervisor and Student Investigator
(Please check as appropriate)
The information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I take full responsibility for it.
I have read and understand the <a href="#">University's</a>
I have read and understand the University's policy and procedures on <a href="#">Safeguarding and Prevent</a> .
I undertake to abide by the ethical principles underlying the Declaration of Helsinki and the <a href="#">University Code of Conduct for Research</a> , together with the codes of practice laid down by any relevant professional or learned society.
If the project is approved, I undertake to adhere to the project plan, the terms of the full application of which the Ethics Committee* has given a favourable opinion and any conditions of the Ethics Committee in giving its favourable opinion.
I undertake to seek an ethical opinion from the Ethics Committee before implementing substantial amendments to the project or to the terms of the full application of which the Ethics Committee has given a favourable opinion.
I understand that I am responsible for monitoring the research at all times.
If there are any serious and/or adverse events, I understand that I am responsible for immediately stopping the research and alerting the Ethics Committee within 24 hours of the occurrence, via <a href="mailto:EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk">EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk</a> .
I am aware of my responsibility to be up to date and comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.
I understand that research records/data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in the future.
I understand that the university will hold personal data about me as a researcher in this application and that this will be managed according to the principles established in the Data Protection Act.
I understand that the information in this application, any supporting documentation, and all correspondence with the Ethics Committee relating to the application will be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. The information may be disclosed in response to requests made under the Act, except where statutory exemptions apply.

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\* Ethics Committee refers to either BAHSS, PSYSOC or STEMH

I understand that all conditions apply to any co-applicants and researchers involved in the project and that I must ensure that they abide by them.	
<b>As the Principal Investigator, I understand my responsibility to work within ethical and other guidelines</b> set out by the University Policies and professional standards.	
<b>For Supervisor/Director of Studies:</b> I understand my responsibilities as Supervisor/Director of Studies and will ensure that the student investigator always abides by the University's Policies on Research Ethics.	
<b>For the Student Investigator:</b> I understand my responsibilities to work within a set of ethical and other guidelines as agreed in advance with my Supervisor/Director of Studies and understand that I must comply with the University's regulations and any other applicable code of ethics at all times.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Signature of Principal Investigator:</b> or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Supervisor or Director of Studies</b>	
<b>Print Name:</b>	<b>Dr Paul Doherty</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>06/03/2019</b>
<b>Signature of Student Investigator:</b>	
<b>Print Name:</b>	<b>Dawn Hewitson</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>06/03/2019</b>

**Title: Dealing with disclosure: Exploring the preparation of Pre-Service Secondary Trainee Teachers for encounters with pupils' disclosing engagement in Sexting activity**

**Aim**

The researcher is seeking approval for a doctoral Education project entitled 'Dealing with Disclosure: Exploring the Preparation of Pre-Service Secondary Trainee, Teachers for Encounters with Pupils' disclosing engagement in Sexting Activity.' The project explores how trainee computer science teachers with school experience perceive responding to pupil sexting activity disclosures, how they reflect on their training experience, and how the trainees understand operationalising and responding to policy.

The researcher believes this is an important and timely study. There is little empirical evidence about how trainee teachers respond to safeguarding incidents and disclosures of sexting or how teachers articulate their understanding of operationalising safeguarding policy. In recent

years, there has been anecdotal evidence from DSOs in schools and studies from trade unions, which suggests that sexting activity by pupils is causing concern among teachers.

There are legal implications surrounding the resolution of sexting activity, which could have drastic career changes and personal consequences for teachers. Specifically, when presented with a disclosure situation, a teacher could embark on a course of action which could end their teaching career and render them liable for prosecution for inadvertently distributing child pornography (*CJA, 1988, s160; PCA (1978), s1;*). Before the publication of the UKCCIS (2016) 'Sexting in Schools Guidance, safety, cyberbullying and stranger danger via social media and gaming (Byron, -2008, p.11) were safeguarding priorities for schools and included in DfE safeguarding priorities' (DCSF, 2010, 43). However, the evolution of smartphone capabilities enabled the transmission of images via networks and social media. A by-product of this technology evolution, the ubiquitous availability of smartphones to young people, and the empowerment of children (UNICEF, 1988) coupled with celebrity behaviour such as 'Kardashian Culture' have normalised overtly sexualised imagery being publicly distributed by adolescents.

### **Context of the Proposal**

The evolution of mobile phone technological capabilities and features, coupled with the vast array of applications developed and made available to mobile phone users, created the 'smartphone,' which has had unexpected consequences in schools. The integrated nature of smartphone technology has significantly impacted the ease of data transmission. Significantly changing the speed and distribution metrics of imagery, which are often impulsively distributed by adolescents from the mobile phone to social media platforms and then further transmitted between social media platforms and personal profiles, often globally and for a variety of underlying purposes, not least of which is the intention to bully or intimidate.

A behaviour of concern is 'Sexting,' which is defined as the electronic transmission of images and messages. This type of behaviour poses specific challenges when the subject of an image is a child under eighteen. Sexting falls under the umbrella defined as 'harmful sexual behaviour' (Hackett et al., 2016; p.12). Regardless of the motive for transmitting the image, sexting activity is illegal under the Protection of Children Act 1978 and the Criminal Justice Act 1988 if the subject of the image is under eighteen.

The Government has imposed a duty of care on schools, colleges, and universities to safeguard children (DfE 2010, 2013, 2018). Schools and colleges must have safeguarding policies and update staff via training. Schools have responded to these directives and the problems posed by mobile phone technology and social networking by creating suites of safeguarding policies, which govern how teachers can and should respond to safeguarding

incidents. Safeguarding guidelines, incorporated into the National Curriculum (DfE 2013 p.2), recommend that schools educate children to use technology 'safely and responsibly'.

In 2016, the Cyberbullying Research Centre surveyed 5500 adolescents aged between twelve and seventeen. Twelve percent revealed they had sent sexual images, and eighteen percent have received them (Patchin, 2017). Yara et al. (2017) conducted a literature review which highlighted the disparate nature of statistical evidence surrounding sexting activity among adolescents. However, there is a consensus that sexting behaviour is taking place amongst adolescents. It is problematic for several reasons (Murray 2018, 26) reported a year-on-year increase in police referrals for adolescent sexting behaviour, as does the Wired Report (Rivers, 2014).

There is limited knowledge surrounding the training of new entrants to the profession and how they should operationalise safeguarding policy. The Ofsted Strategy 2017 -2022 (2017) refers to inspection regimes and how inspectors will examine safeguarding policies to find how schools implement safeguarding practices and policies. The Teachers' Standards (DfE 2013) mandate teachers to 'have a proper professional regard for the ethos and policies of the school' and 'an understanding of and to act within statutory frameworks. Safeguarding is a significant framework in schools. Although safeguarding is not explicitly referred to in the Teaching Standards, knowledge of the ability to operationalise the policy is implied.

Cloud computing and the encouragement of initiatives such as. 'Bring your own devices (BYOD)' into schools has further compounded the problem of pupils' online activity. Pupils are exposed to a space with limitations regarding controlling the environment. Baudrillard (1991:13-17) conceptualises this environment children are exposed to online, theorising the experience. He refers to hyperreality and the free space in which fantasies can be enacted, and behaviour is unregulated. Children conduct their social interactions in the arena of the hyperreal, using their mobile devices as tools to navigate this experience, often without understanding the consequences of these interactions. The pupil device-based activity has resulted in yet another suite of policies for teachers (DfE 2017). These cloud computing policies govern how schools use and integrate personal devices.

BYOD can compromise school safeguarding measures. Personal devices can circumnavigate security measures in school settings as devices can have independent access to the Internet, which negates the need to use the school servers. The safety of children's information sharing in school depends on data passing through the school server system as network traffic. This network traffic passes through software filters, where the filtering software detects anomalies in network traffic and creates alerts for these anomalies, allowing the school to intervene by responding to the alert. Personal devices can bypass school servers, thus potentially compromising safeguarding measures adopted by the schools, because the filtration system may not be able to access the data being transmitted by the device.

This research was conducted during curriculum and policy changes (DfE 2018). Where Safeguarding features high on OFSTED agendas, and as school policies shift towards acknowledging the impact on pupils of online behaviour in school (UKCCIS, 2017). There are moves towards incorporating changes into how online behaviour is managed in schools by regular training sessions for DSOs (LSCB, 2019). However, little is known about the impact of pupil disclosure and the operationalisation of safeguarding policy by trainee teachers who are new to the profession. I hope to investigate trainees' preparedness to be the recipients of pupil disclosures, particularly surrounding pupil online sexting activity and how they feel the training they have received has prepared them to deal with disclosure and the peculiarities that incidents of this nature present.

## **Objectives**

Nick Gibb spotlighted pupil behaviour in schools regarding mobile phone usage (Austin, 2019). Although sexting behaviour was not the focus of the article, it was cited as being one of the reasons phones should be banned in schools. Anecdotal responses on specialist social media forums for computing teachers, where several teachers responded to Nick Gibb, suggested a shared belief amongst teachers that managing incidents surrounding mobile phone use in school is problematic, but there is a dichotomy. Mobile phone usage can enrich lessons, but it was agreed that children need education on proper mobile phone usage (Byron, 2018).

There are two elements of the recent reports that this proposal aims to address:

A call for more research, particularly on the impact of pupil behaviour on social media platforms. I want to explore the potential impact on trainee teachers when responding to disclosures of pupil sexting behaviours on mobile phones and the subsequent issues surrounding trying to resolve such issues.

The evaluation of current provisions and preparedness of new entrants to the profession will be conducted with a view to updating the training and professional development programmes for trainee teachers. This investigation will examine existing provisions and training to prepare trainees to address pupil online behaviour disclosures after their subsequent training period (UKCCIS, 2017; Byron, 2018).

This research may make a modest contribution to meeting policymakers' demands by examining current practices and seeking to capture trainee voices. I also hope to draw upon the expertise of DSOs/Leads in Northwest England schools to document current school requirements and expectations surrounding new entrants to the teaching profession. Participants in this study live and work in the Northwest of England.

The acquisition of trainees' perceptions, experiences of, and responses to pupil disclosure of involvement in the generated and dissemination of sexual imagery, as a research method, is undertaken to explore the data generated by their responses. Thus, I seek to collaborate with trainees to capture an understanding of policy operationalisation in the hope of exposing areas where trainees feel vulnerable and unprepared and, conversely, where they feel confident and able to act in an informed manner.

### **Overarching Research Questions:**

The research questions provide insights into the complex social reality of operationalising safeguarding policy. I am primarily exploring three areas: To support this study, I have structured my research overarching questions as follows.

#### **R1**

How do trainees define sexting behaviour?

#### **R2**

What are the expectations of DSOs/Leads expectations when teachers are presented with pupil-disseminated sexualised imagery?

How should trainees address disclosures of sexting behaviour?

#### **R3**

How do trainees plan to implement the school safeguarding policy?

Including operationalised safeguarding policy when presented with a disclosure of a pupil producing and disseminating sexualised imagery, often referred to as 'Sexting'?

These questions have resulted in three distinct research areas, hereafter referred to as 'strands': -

Trainee understanding of sexting,

DSO/L expectations

Disparity of policy and implementation issues,

These are referred to as Strand A, Strand B, and Strand C. The overarching aims of the project link each of these areas together. Each of these 'strands' is underpinned by one research question and a set of sub questions, which will be explored during the research process. I have broken down the strands and sub questions as identified below.

### **Strand A Trainee Understanding Sexting Behaviour**

*How do trainees define what is commonly termed as sexting (or harmful sexual behaviour) among eleven to sixteen-year-old school pupils?*

*What is the extent of trainees' knowledge of sexting in the population group (eleven to sixteen years of pupils)?*

*How do trainees respond or plan to respond to sexting in schools?*

### ***Strand B DSOs/Lead Requirements***

*What are DSOs/Leads' expectations in terms of trainee's preparedness to deal with issues of sexting in school?*

*What strategies and policies are in place to support trainees' teachers?*

### ***Strand C Trainee understanding of Policy/Implementation Issues***

*Exploration of current policy (national LA and school level):*

*What should trainees know?*

*How should trainees respond?*

### **Outline of the project**

#### Strand A

Trainee teachers in one setting will be invited to participate in the research for convenient sampling. The volunteer trainees will be prepared by the researcher so that they can read information sheets, review consent forms and respond and ask questions regarding the information presented to them, which will canvas their views and experiences of operationalising safeguarding policy. The researcher will lead the data-collection process and invite trainees from the cohort to participate, involving forty trainee teachers. The researcher will provide the cohort with information about the project and consent forms as the gatekeepers to the research process.

The trainees participating in this project will be: -

Volunteers,

Computer Science Trainee teachers

Training will be undertaken in a minimum of two school settings.

Will have completed their school-based training and their assignment work for the course (for ethical reasons)

Will be aged between 21 and 60 years old.

#### Strand B

The DSOs/Leads will initially be prepared to participate in the research via face-to-face discussion and a school-based meeting, followed up with an email and a project overview. The researcher will lead the data-collection process, inviting the DSOs/Leads (DSO/DSL) to participate. The researcher will provide the DSO/DSL with information about the project and consent forms as the gatekeepers to the research process.

The DSOs/Leads (DSO/DSL) are:

Persons currently occupying the post of DSO/DSL in partner schools, i.e., hosting trainees.

Volunteers and involved in ITT provision hosting trainee teachers on placement.

We will have hosted the trainee teachers on placement during the same academic year as the study's participants.

*NB DSO and DSL are interchangeable terms for the same role in school settings. They refer to the person appointed by the Head Teacher and Board of Governors to oversee the Safeguarding processes and policies within the school setting.*

#### Strand C

The policies for this study will be available in the public domain and online from government, local authority, and school websites.

Safeguarding policies are produced at three distinct levels.

Macro level. Government policies and directives operate at a national level.

Meso level. Local Government and Child Safeguarding board policies operate at a regional level, such as Lancashire, Cumbria, Cheshire, or other regions.

Micro-level policies in individual schools should link with both the macro-level and meso-level directives but have clear direction regarding responding to issues.

This strand will establish how trainees might respond to sexting incidents as directed by the policies. It will also involve corroborating what an effective response from a trainee teacher is and what information they would need to know to respond effectively to a disclosure of a sexting incident.

Data will be collected in three phases, as outlined below. I am seeking ethical approval for phases one, two, and three.

Date	Activity
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February 2019 to April 2019	Complete Statement of Intent and Ethics Approval form
July 2019– Aug 2019	Sampling, agreement of participants, participant consent form, participant information sheet
Sept 2019- Dec 2020	Literature Review
Apr 2019 – Aug 2019	Piloting questions, gaining consent
May 2019 – August 2020	Data collection, transcription, and analysis
Aug 2020– Dec 2021	Second interview/'back translation'
Jan 2022 – January 2023	Writing Up EdD thesis

Data-collection:

Introductory meetings Trainees	May 2019- June 2019	Preparatory research training activities.
Introductory meetings DSO/DSL	July 2019	Share the project's aims with participating DSO/DSL and Trainee volunteers.
Introductory Meeting Focus Group	July 2019	Share the aims of the project with participating Trainee volunteers
Phase1	July 2019	Vignette and Questionnaire
Phase 2	May 2019 to Jan 2020	Peer research Focus group
Phase 3	December 2022	Roundtable dissemination event

### **Organisation of data collection**

Introductory meetings:

To prepare the participants for the data-collection process, the researcher will organise meetings with the university trainees and the DSOs/Ls in their school setting. It is anticipated that the trainee teacher meeting will occur in May, and the DSO/L's meetings will happen between May and July (2019) timescale. The meetings will outline expectations of participating in the study and discuss ethical concerns or issues, highlighting the support available to participants should they find the material upsetting. Finally, participants will be provided with project details. The meeting with the trainee teachers will take place in a classroom or lecture theatre in the University setting and will last approximately one hour.

*The researcher will:*

Introduce themselves and discuss the background of the study.

Share the intended aims and the methodology of the project and open this up to discussion and comment with the participants.

Share aspirations with student teachers and DSO/L's, each in their respective groups of

Group one      Trainees

Group 2 DSO/L's

These groups will operate independently of each other during the research process so that the research landscape is not polluted by the views and experiences of one group influencing the other.

Based on the findings, explore the potential to create resources for future training, use, and CPD. These may include lecture materials, workshop materials, visual materials for schools, such as posters or short film clips, and visual resources for presentations and conferences.

The researcher will share and plan a research timetable to identify appropriate dates for subsequent meetings and a focus group activity with the trainee teachers and DSO/L's.

The meetings in school settings with DSOs will focus on the nature of research, research methodology and ethics. This will be conducted via presentations and discussions. The researcher anticipates that the meeting will last approximately one hour and will take place in school meeting rooms or offices.

The researcher is, therefore, requesting ethical approval to undertake the following activities during the introduction phase:

Introductory research induction sessions with two separate groups will outline and review the qualitative research methods and survey/ questionnaire design with the trainee teachers in one group and the DSO/Ls in another group, each in their respective educational settings.

A qualitative focus group interview was conducted with the DSO/Ls and then with the trainee teachers. The focus group interviews will provide each of the two groups, independently, with an opportunity to evaluate and reflect upon how disclosure incidences are responded to and discuss how responses to incidents the researcher has chosen focus group as a method of data collection because of its alignment to case study methodology and the opportunity to share collective voices and experiences of each of the two groups. Enabling the data subjects to interact with each other and share views provides an alternative method of collecting data where the research focus can be shared and discussed with minimal input from the researcher. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2008, 377).

It is hoped that the reflexive nature of focus groups will enable data to emerge from the process of group interactions and discussion. The data is anticipated to emerge inductively through the group's interactions, and the questions will focus on the direction of the conversation, prompting discussion and generating data.

Using these qualitative methods with the trainee teacher and DSO/Ls, the researcher seeks to capture reflections and conversations by creating a space for data to emerge from the discussion process, providing a context within which safeguarding practice can be examined.

The researcher will record the sessions using digital voice recorders, and the debate and conversation generated will form part of the project's empirical data-collection process.

### **Methodology and Method**

The theoretical frameworks for resolving sexting are complex because of the nature of the topic. Theoretically, the research falls into a sociological context, informed by several theoretical perspectives and domains such as social justice, power dynamics, behaviourism, violence, discipline and punishment, social relationships, and organisational structures. Defining and reconciling a specific research method for this project has been challenging, given that there are two overarching aims. Primarily, the aim is to improve the researcher's knowledge of operationalising current safeguarding practices surrounding disclosure and the expectations in school for practising teachers when dealing with disclosures of a safeguarding nature. A secondary aim is to use the knowledge gained from improving understanding of this area to improve the training process for the trainees by creating a model or framework for the ITT training process.

The research is participatory, as the views and understanding of trainee teachers need to be obtained to acquire a starting point from which to progress knowledge and understanding. Therefore, the research is qualitative and will use qualitative research methodologies.

The researched area occupies a unique complex juxtaposition within education, where several disciplines converge such as, behaviour management, social justice, power, and organisational management. Where professional intervention by teachers with pupils involves a significant level of knowledge surrounding procedures and protocols required to intervene, signpost, and support the pupils successfully, support the school, and contribute to any subsequent follow-up process within the context of the legal frameworks previously identified. For this reason, a mixed methods qualitative approach will be adopted.

The research method chosen has been developed by the researcher using a combination of methods. The approach created is a blend of two approaches: normative case study methodology (Tight, 2017:101-104 and

Yin, 2012:41-43) and using a series of Vignettes combined with questionnaires and a focus group to structure the study and define the context of the data-collection area.

However, In the first phase, the researcher will conduct a questionnaire delivered by the researcher in the University setting. Vignettes will formulate part of the questionnaire process. Vignettes are short scenarios used as a research method by Finch (1987) to create a context within which information can be presented to data subjects. In this instance a series of six small scenarios, around two paragraphs will be constructed and presented to the trainees, with a corresponding series of questions, identified above in Strand A. Data for these scenarios will be acquired from Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) study, which examined 550 incidences of pupil sexting behaviour and created a classification system for this sexting behaviour. Utilising vignettes as part of the research method, enables the researcher to expose trainees to previously resolved incidents, providing opportunities to identify trainee responses as if they were live occurrences. Permission has been sought and acquired from the authors of this study to use this material.

The Vignettes will be edited to include five different, commonly used disclosure methods in school, each vignette will be assigned a different disclosure method, appropriate to the vignette scenario. It is hoped this combined vignette approach will enhance the structure of the research, creating a commonality of experience as the trainees' progress through the data-collection process, and the approach is designed to elicit responses from the trainee, enabling a comparison of the responses to each scenario, and collective responses.

The legalities and issues surrounding resolving sexting incidents, and the innate complexities of pupils being party to the transmission of pornographic images involving minors, have far reaching consequences for teachers. These issues have been considered alongside the inexperience of both the trainee teachers and the researcher participating in this study. Additionally, the moral and ethical dilemmas involved in using 'live disclosures' of pupil sexting behaviour, coupled with the potential for legal recriminations, has steered the researcher away from using 'live disclosures. To clarify, this means the researcher will not seek to acquire data from incidents recorded in partnership school settings who have hosted or are currently hosting trainees. Again, this is for ethical reasons, to not cause harm (BERA, 2018, p. 19-20) to the schools.

Structuring the research around the acquisition of sexting incidents from school settings could further complicate the process. Acquiring a disparate range of experiences to be reviewed in the data-collection exercise could hinder the analysis process and result in data that is not meaningful or comparable.

### **Recruitment of participants**

#### **Vignettes Trainees**

For the trainee vignettes and focus group aspects of the research, the researcher will distribute an invitation via email and notifications on the virtual learning environment, advertising a session to the trainees and inviting them to participate in the research. During this session, the researcher will deliver a presentation outlining the research purposes, why it is needed, and the benefits of participating. The presentation will be delivered with the intention of registering participant interest, and this will be made clear in the invitation message.

Those expressing an interest will be provided with an information letter, consent forms, and withdrawal forms; a final list of participants will be compiled from the attendees. Thus, a convenient sampling approach will be facilitated for Strand A, in that those who attend and take forms will be allowed to participate. Their consent and participation will be re-visited to ensure process consent throughout the project (i.e., not just the data-collection stages). The researcher will specifically discuss ethics with the attendees to reassure confidentiality and anonymity in the study.

Following the introductory session, participants will be invited to a further data-collection session in an IT suite at the University. A brief introduction to the research instrument will commence, and a link to a google form will be shared and the data-collection exercise will commence. The researcher will remain in the room as tech support, but also as the DSOs for the University, they will ensure participants who may be distressed by the materials presented, have access to the relevant support.

The Well Being and Student Support team will be notified by email of the plans for data-collection sessions dates and times, and their availability will be checked prior to the commencement of the data-collection exercise.

#### Focus Group Trainees

For the focus group, twelve different computer science trainees will be invited to a subsequent introduction session. The researcher will distribute an invitation via email, advertising to the trainees a session inviting them to participate in the research. During this session, the researcher will deliver a presentation, outlining the research purposes, why it is needed and the benefits of taking part. The presentation will be delivered with the intention to register participant interest, and this will be made clear in the invitation message.

Those expressing an interest will be provided with an information letter, consent forms and withdrawal forms, from the attendees a final list of eight participants will be compiled, to construct a representative sample of the cohort. The researcher will specifically discuss ethics with the attendees to reassure confidentiality and anonymity in the study.

#### Next steps

##### Focus Group DSO/L's

In the second phase of data-collection, the researcher will invite DSO/L's via email and face to face discussions to an introductory session inviting them to participate in the research. During this session, the researcher will deliver a presentation, outlining the research purposes, why it is needed and the benefits of taking part. The presentation will be delivered with the intention to register participant interest, and this will be made clear in the invitation message.

Those expressing an interest will be provided with an information letter, consent forms and withdrawal forms, from the attendees a final list of participants will be compiled. Thus, a convenient sampling approach will be facilitated for Strand B in that those who attend and take forms will be allowed to participate. Their consent and participation will be re-visited to ensure process consent throughout the project (i.e., not just the data-collection stages). The researcher will specifically discuss ethics with the attendees to reassure confidentiality and anonymity in the study.

Emails will be sent to 80 DSO/L's, and it is anticipated that fifteen will respond and participate in the study.

In the second phase, the researcher will conduct a questionnaire with current DSOs in school settings.

The researcher will use a digital recorder to record the focus group discussions. The focus group interviews will be transcribed, and the researcher will analyse the data and identify key themes.

The researcher will share the themes identified in the questionnaires with their focus group to establish respondent validation. Once this has been undertaken, the researchers will organise a dissemination event as a summary document, presented at a round table discussion with the respective group. A recording of the event will be made available online.

#### Policy Implementation Issues and Disparity.

Safeguarding and Sexting Policies from Government, Local Authorities and schools will be reviewed to identify expected courses of action on disclosure. The policies will be reviewed as part of a documentary analysis.

When viewing the policy, the researcher will be specifically looking for any advice or guidance given to teachers which directs pathway of action in the event of a disclosure when in school. It is hoped that a pathway can be identified at each level.

Questions asked here are: -

What are the courses of action suggested?

What is the responsibility of the teacher receiving the disclosure information?

Specific ethical considerations

The ethical processes from both the host University's and the University from which the data subjects have been drawn from have been consulted. Research guidance for undertaking research with trainees has been followed in the preparation of this application. The trainees, DSO/L is in schools, head teachers and University DSO will be provided with information about the aims of the project. The information will enable them to provide voluntary informed consent in advance of the data-collection introduction sessions. Gatekeepers, that is other University staff, will be present during the data-collection process.

Respondents will not be identified in the study. They are not required to provide their names or to reveal the settings in which they are training.

The interview recording will be kept on a password protected computer only accessible to the researchers. Respondents will be informed that all their data will be stored on a secure password protected computer.

By adhering to University of Central Lancashire's and Edge Hill University's 'Research Ethics Code of Conduct' and BERA's (2018, 28 and 35) guidelines, the researchers will commit to the following actions:

Consent for conducting questionnaires and focus groups will be sought from the University of Central Lancashire CELT Ethics Review Committee and Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee.

All participants will be issued a participant information sheet that gives an overview of the project and outlines the expectations of the participants.

All participants will be asked to complete a consent form.

The researcher is a student at the University of Central Lancashire and an employee at Edge Hill University, and shall 'operate within an ethic of respect' for everyone (BERA 2018: pp28)

No participant shall be exposed to any danger or harm (BERA, 2018, p. 19-20), and no detriment will arise from participation or non-participation in the interviews.

No incentives will be used to participate in the interview.

Interview data will be held in password-protected files on a password-protected computer stored in a locked office. The machine will be closed and switched off after any work period and will not be left unattended or accessible to persons other than the researcher and the supervisory team.

Participants will be anonymised in the writing-up process.

Privacy and rights to confidentiality and anonymity will always be respected.

Participants will be informed that they can withdraw from the research at any time.

Research integrity will be upheld throughout and will comply with *The Concordat to Support Research Integrity* (Universities UK 2017)

Participants will be invited to read and comment on a summary of the findings of the draft research report.

If illegal behaviour is brought to the researcher's attention, the appropriate authorities will be informed.

In the event of distress or emotional behaviour being brought to the attention of the researcher, the appropriate support services will be informed, and participants will be signposted to the appropriate welfare and wellbeing teams at the Universities.

The appropriate services for trainees will be informed the dates and times research data-collection and dissemination to ensure staff availability in the event of student distress.

**Supporting documents**

- Participant information letters
- Participant voluntary consent forms
- Exemplar focus group questions.

Please note information and consent forms for the participating schools does not include the names of the participating teachers. Names of participating teachers or trainees, these will be added after ethical approval has been granted.

Processes by which ethical review will be in place.

Respondents are advised to contact the researchers with any queries and concerns. They will be provided with the researchers' business e-mail contact details and phone numbers.

Respondents are advised to contact the secretary to the University research ethics committee of the research office on [EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk) in the first instance or [Research@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:Research@edgehill.ac.uk) if they have any ethical concerns. They will be provided with e-mail and phone contact details for the secretary.

### **Researcher**

Dawn Hewitson (Early Career Researcher) Research undertaken as part of Ed D Studies at the University of Central Lancashire, and Senior Lecturer at Edge Hill University

### **Reference List**

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## **Excerpt from Research Diary**

Tue 07/05, 08:08

Dawn Hewitson

[Signed Ethics Approval Form - Dawn Hewitson.pdf](#)

341 KB

Download Save to OneDrive - Edge Hill University

Action Items

Dear Dawn,

Re: Responding to Disclosure: Preparing Pre-Service Secondary Computer Science Trainees for issues surrounding technology misuse

I can confirm that this application has been approved by the Chair of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee; you may now proceed with the research.

The approval will remain in force for 24 months, during which you should alert us to any changes in the proposal which might have ethical implications. If you need to continue collecting data after 24 months, you should re-apply for ethical approval.

I have attached an updated pro forma confirming approval. Please retain this document for your records.

I wish you the best of luck with the project.

Best wishes,

Dr Francis Farrell

Julie Kirby

Research Administrator

Edge Hill University

Faculty of Education

St Helens Road

Ormskirk

L39 4QP

[kirbyjul@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:kirbyjul@edgehill.ac.uk)

01695584235

**\*\*Please note my working hours are Monday to Thursday**

Research Ethics Committee (REC) Application for ethical approval Please note: • This form has been created specifically for electronic completion using Microsoft Word 2013 on a PC. Some key features of this form may be incompatible with other software and Macs. • All items on this form require a response to allow the REC to scrutinise fully the research. Incomplete applications may be returned to you, delaying the decision-making process. • Applicants should consult the EHU Ethics and Governance documents. • Any ethical approval granted based on this application covers only the original study specified in the application for this time specified (unless advised otherwise by the relevant REC at the time of approval). • If a study is extended or changed and further use of samples or data from a study already completed is required, you must notify the REC, which granted your original approval. Researcher details Lead researcher at EHU 1. Forename: Dawn 2. Surname: Hewitson 3. Primary dept./ area: FAS: Select dept./area. FoE: Secondary and Further Education FHSC: Select dept./area. Other: Click here to enter text. 4. Is this application for a project in your capacity as EHU staff or EHU student? EHU staff N.B. GTAs should always select 'postgraduate student (PhD)' 5. Details of 'postgraduate student (other)': Prof Doctorate Names and affiliations of research team (Inc. supervisors if the applicant is a student) six. CELT Research Centre UCLAN Candice Satchwell Research Office Signed Ethics Approval Form - Dawn Hewitson Page 2 of 9 Dr Paul Doherty Supervisor Project details seven. Title: Responding to Disclosure: Preparing Pre-Service Secondary Computer Science Trainees for Issues Surrounding Technology Misuse Eight. 1 Start date: 01/03/2018 9. End date: 25/12/2021 10. Source of funding: Personal Funding and Edge Hill 11.

Research method: Mixed Methods (please specify) twelve. Detail of other/ mixed methods: Vignettes and Structured survey Risk assessment thirteen. Have you read and considered the guidance on Research Risk Assessment at EHU (ROGOV-06) and addressed any matters arising from this? Yes  No  14.1 What are the key risks associated with your proposal? No 14.2 How do you plan to mitigate these? Click here to enter text. Data-collection and research methods fifteen. Does this research involve human tissue? Yes  No  15.1 If yes, does this activity fall under the University's Human Tissue Authority (HTA) licence?2 Yes  No  16. Does this research fall under the Nagoya Protocol?3 Yes  No  1 The project starts and end dates in questions 8 and 9, respectively, refer to the element of your research requiring ethical approval, such as, but not limited to, the period in which you seek consent from participants and the period of data collection. If you are in doubt, please seek advice. 2 Please refer to the EHU HTA web pages - <https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/research/human-tissue/>. You will also need to obtain the signature of the University's HTA licence Designated Individual at the end of this form. 3 The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity: It applies to genetic resources that the CBD covers. Please refer to the University's Research Ethics Policy Research Office Signed Ethics Approval Form - Dawn Hewitson Page 3 of 9 17. Does this research require working with sensitive materials?4 Yes  No  18. Do your data-collection and research methods include any of the following? Please tick all that apply. Non-invasive  Collection of other bodily tissues, secretions, or excretions  Administering drugs or other substances  Deception (excluding blind research design)  Blood sample (via needle insertion)  Use of distressing images, video, or other media  Blood sample (not via needle insertion)  Other physically or psychologically invasive method  19. Please provide brief details of the research method(s) and use of human tissue. Click here to enter text. 20. Location of project: EHU 21. For details on other locations, click here to enter text. 22. Could the location present risks to the researcher(s) or third parties (e.g., the public, research subjects, etc.)? Yes  No  23. Please provide brief details: The researcher is a DSO and will signpost Trainees to relevant services 24. Research subjects: EHU trainees twenty-five. Detail of other subjects: Headteachers 26. If you work with children or vulnerable adults, please indicate whether you have Disclosure and Barring Service clearance. Yes  No  4 Research involving access to susceptible materials, including access to the 'dark web', security-related materials, and other materials of a distressing or sensitive nature are subject to special arrangements: Please refer to the University's Research Ethics Policy Research Office Signed Ethics Approval Form - Dawn Hewitson Page 4 of 9 Ethical approval information Please attach separate sheet(s) for this section if necessary 27. Has this proposal been through external or parallel ethical approval processes? Yes  No  28. Details: Click here to enter text. 29. Is this health-related research? Yes  No  29.1 If yes, is the University acting as sponsor? Yes  No  30. Is this proposal an extension of a project that has previously undergone ethical approval procedures? Yes  No  31. Details (including any reference numbers): Click here to enter text. 32. Does this proposal require a specific ethical approval action (e.g., letter, facility) to be produced to support the project? Yes  No  33. Details: A Letter to provide evidence of approval Research Office Signed Ethics Approval Form - Dawn Hewitson Page 5 of 9 Outline of the Project and Ethical Issues Please attach your research proposal. Proposals should include details under the categories listed below. They can be presented in a submission written specifically for this document or consist of other written documents that outline the project (e.g., to external funders) if a

cover sheet specifies where each of the categories listed is elaborated. Submissions should include such detail to allow readers to understand the applicants' attention to ethical issues and problems. Categories  Title of project/aims and objective of the project  Outline of the project  Methodology and outline of methods and analysis  Identification of research participants  Timescales and staging of the project  Budget and logistics/sources of funding  Specific ethical considerations/risk assessment  Relevant supporting documents (e.g. consent forms, information sheets, invitation letters)  Confirmation that EHU policies and procedures have been followed (e.g. risk assessment, health and safety protocol)  Processes by which ethical review will be in place throughout the project  Details of research staff

Research Office Signed Ethics Approval Form - Dawn Hewitson Page 6 of 9  
Applicant signature (Lead researcher if part of a research team) EHU Designated Individual signature (Only activity involving human tissue) ▼ Please insert or type your signature in the relevant box below ▼ D S Hewitson Date: 14/05/2018 Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)  
Please obtain support from your Head of Department/Area before submitting this form to the appropriate REC contact (see below). Head of Department/Area supporting statement: The Head of Department/Area (HoD) should be satisfied that the application for ethical approval is of an appropriate standard and that suitable controls have been introduced by the researcher(s) for health and safety, risk assessment and other governance issues. N.B. If the applicant is a HoD, this supporting statement should come from his/her line manager.  
Supporting statement: I have discussed the project with Dawn and am satisfied that all necessary controls will be in place. I confirm that there should not be any conflict between the time demands of the project and other aspects of Dawn's role within the university. She has my full support in making this application. HoD name: Phil Rigby HoD signature Please insert or type your signature in the box below PA Rigby Date: 02/07/2018 Your completed, signed form should be returned to: FAS: Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) Secretary (Ruth Carr) FHSC: Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) Secretary (Daniel Brown) FoE: Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) Secretary (Julie Kirby) Research Office Signed Ethics Approval Form - Dawn Hewitson Page 7 of 9 DREC/FREC Decision  
The DREC/FREC responsible for scrutinising this application should ensure the applicant's Head of Department (or Research Degree Supervisor) is made aware of the application and its progress. Comments from DREC/FREC Chair Dear, I can confirm that the Faculty Research Ethics Committee Chair has approved this application; you may now proceed with the research. The approval will remain in force for 24 months, during which you should alert us to any changes in the proposal which might have ethical implications. If you need to continue collecting data after 24 months, you should re-apply for ethical approval. Chair name: Dr Francis Farrell DREC/FREC Chair signature Please insert or type your signature in the box below Dr Francis Farrell Date: 03/05/2019 DREC/FREC decision Is the following decision that of DREC or FREC? FREC Approved  Application reference: FOE18-DH01  
Re-submit to this DREC/FREC  Minute reference: [Click here to enter text.](#) Re-submit for chair's action  DREC/FREC date: [Click here to enter a date.](#) Refer to FREC  Decision date: [Click here to enter a date.](#) Refer to URESC  Further action where needed: [Click here to enter text.](#) Rejected  Please note: if rejected, the applicant has the right to appeal with URESC as per the Framework for Research Ethics (RO-GOV-03) Research Office Signed Ethics Approval Form - Dawn Hewitson Page 8 of 9 Research Office Signed Ethics Approval Form - Dawn Hewitson Page 9 of 9 URESC decision (where applicable) Comments from URESC Chair [Click here to enter text.](#) Chair name: [Click here to enter text.](#) URESC Chair signature: Please insert or type your signature in the box below. Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#) URESC decision Approved  Application reference: [Click here to enter text.](#) Re-submit to DREC  Minute reference: [Click here to enter text.](#) Re-submit to FREC  URESC date:

Click here to enter a date. Re-submit to URESC  Decision date: Click here to enter a date.  
Rejected  Further action where needed: Click here to enter text. Document updated  
November 2017

30/04/19

So, things are progressing slightly. I now have ethical approval from one institution, but I need approval from Edge Hill. I sent the documentation, but they have not seen the attachment, which is the letter approving the Research,

This is a copy of the letter.

08 April 2019 Paul Doherty / Dawn Hewitson Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching University of Central Lancashire Dear Paul / Dawn Re: BAHSS Ethics Committee Application Unique Reference Number: BAHSS 649 The BAHSS ethics committee has approved your proposal application 'Dealing with disclosure: Exploring the preparation of Pre-Service Secondary Trainee Teachers for encounters with pupils' disclosing engagement in Sexting activity'. Approval is granted up to the end of the project date. It is your responsibility to ensure that • the project is carried out in line with the information provided in the forms you have submitted • you regularly re-consider the ethical issues that may be raised in generating and analysing your data • any proposed amendments/changes to the project are raised with, and approved, by Committee • you notify EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk if the end date changes or the project does not start • serious adverse events that occur from the project are reported to Committee • a closure report is submitted to complete the ethics governance procedures (Existing paperwork can be used for this purposes e.g. funder's end of grant report; abstract for student award or NRES final report. If none of these are available, use e-Ethics Closure Report Proforma). Yours sincerely, Duncan Sayer Chair BAHSS Ethics Committee \* for research degree trainees, this will be the final lapse date NB - Ethical approval is contingent on any completed health and safety checklists and necessary approvals gained as a result.

The file pathway for this is.

My Documents/Ed Research/Ethics forms/Approval BAHSS 649 Ethical Approval.pdf

Additionally, I have been working with a Research Mentor, Antonia Hayes, who is brilliant. She has helped me shape my literature review. I really feel like I am making progress with this project.

I am still looking at and analysing research papers using NVivo. I have not made as much progress as I would have liked, but I have had shoulder surgery, and I have felt in a low mood.

However, I have discovered in the literature two different definitions of sexting from Lievens 2014

Primary Sexting, which is between two consenting persons and has a consensual intended audience.

Secondary Sexting is where the images or text have been disseminated beyond the original intended audience.

28/03/19

I have not recorded things here for a while because I have been busy trying to do things. So here is where I am at. My Ethical Approval has been knocked back again, so I am updating that and trying to make improvements.

I have a lovely support person who has been helping me manage my workload. Her name is Antonia Hayes, and she is brilliant.

Regarding reading, I am still looking at the NVivo research papers and thematically analysing them. I have done quite a bit but am still working on that.

I have created my research instrument and am now working on two things. I need to complete my focus group interview questions for the Trainee Focus Group and the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

I also need to prepare a presentation for the trainees and the Designated Safeguarding Leads to introduce my project and help them decide to participate in the study.

22.01.19

Today, I am spending a day chasing up the ethical approval documentation that I originally sent in June. I still have not heard back, so I have resent it today.

I am working now on my literature review for an assignment.

I have also created a folder and document highlighting the number of policies that may need consulting for guidance when confronted with a sexting incident.

The document is called.

Policies surrounding Sexting are found in the ED D folder in a Policies document.

11/11/18

This is the response from our Data Protection Officer when I sent her an overview of my Ethical Approval documentation. I thought I would include it here, so it is included with all the other research documentation I have.

08 April 2019

Paul Doherty / Dawn Hewitson  
Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching  
University of Central Lancashire

Dear Paul / Dawn

Re: BAHSS Ethics Committee Application  
Unique Reference Number: BAHSS 649

The BAHSS ethics committee has granted approval of your proposal application 'Dealing with pupil disclosure: Exploring the preparation of Pre-Service Secondary Trainee Teachers for encounters with pupils' disclosing engagement in Sexting activity'. Approval is granted up to the end of project date.

It is your responsibility to ensure that

- the project is carried out in line with the information provided in the forms you have submitted
- you regularly re-consider the ethical issues that may be raised in generating and analysing your data
- any proposed amendments/changes to the project are raised with, and approved, by Committee
- you notify [EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk) if the end date changes or the project does not start
- serious adverse events that occur from the project are reported to Committee
- a closure report is submitted to complete the ethics governance procedures (Existing paperwork can be used for this purposes e.g. funder's end of grant report; abstract for student award or NRES final report. If none of these are available use [e-Ethics Closure Report Proforma](#)).

Yours sincerely



Duncan Sayer  
Chair  
BAHSS Ethics Committee

\* for research degree students this will be the final lapse date

*NB - Ethical approval is contingent on any health and safety checklists having been completed and necessary approvals gained as a result.*

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## **Appendix 3A3: Participant Information Sheet**

### **Participant Information Booklet**

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This information sheet provides information regarding research undertaken as part of my Doctorate in Education to explore safeguarding education for trainee teachers.

**Study title.**

**Responding to Disclosure: Preparing Pre-Service Secondary Computer Science Trainee Teachers for issues related to pupil sexting, disclosure, and engaging with school safeguarding policies for pupil technology misuse incidents.**

Principal researcher

*Dawn Hewitson: Senior Lecturer and Course Leader Edge Hill University, Faculty of Education.*

Email: [Hewitsd@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:Hewitsd@edgehill.ac.uk)

Tel: 01695 650979

*Supervisor: Dr Paul Doherty, Senior Lecturer and Course Leader University of Central Lancashire, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.*

Email: [PWDoherty@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:PWDoherty@uclan.ac.uk)

Invitation

I want to invite you to participate in a small-scale study based on a previous study conducted by Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) examining the issues surrounding the disclosure of instances of pupils engaging in sexting behaviour, which may occur outside of school and may require the intervention of classroom teachers to support the pupil. Teachers often feel unprepared to deal with these pupil encounters, and it is hoped from this research that training for future teachers can be improved.

Before deciding whether to participate, you must understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please carefully read the information following this invitation and discuss it with others. If anything is unclear or requires further information, please do not hesitate to contact me (Dawn Hewitson) or my Supervisor (Dr Paul Doherty); our details are enclosed above, and we will be happy to discuss this project with you.

Kind Regards

Dawn Hewitson

Senior Lecturer and Course Leader

**Information Sheet**

**Date first June 2019**

What is the purpose of the study?

From personal experience, when I first encountered sexting behaviour, I was unprepared and untrained to deal with this type of activity. I was unaware there are laws governing the transmission of images, as smartphone technology available to pupils had not evolved to include image transmission. Guidance in the area of teacher resolution of pupil online activity was minimal. I find myself reflecting annually on the preparedness of the teachers I train, particularly regarding the area of sexting, as it appears to be a cross-curricular topic with multi-disciplinary facets, encompassing issues such as power, identity, social capital and punishment, with limited guidance for teachers and pupils, but with seemingly increased levels of pupil activity.

Reflecting on my encounters with pupils' sexting activity in schools, my shortcomings and unpreparedness, and the potential for trainee encounters with sexting have combined to become catalysts for this study. This view of lack of preparation during training is shared by Tanya Byron (2018;11), who suggests that teacher training programmes should equip teachers to deal with online issues. This reinforces the importance of doing more to prepare trainees for online behaviours, which they seem statistically more likely to encounter as part of their teaching career. In particular, I feel I should be able to prepare them specifically for sexting activity and their emotional reactions to adolescents engaging in what is also deemed to be 'harmful sexual behaviour' (Hollis and Belton, 2017:28) and I am keen to examine how I can develop my practices to improve the preparedness of new entrants to the teaching profession, at a time when there are increased expectations for pupil behaviour issues to be resolved within the school setting.

This study aims to understand safeguarding procedures in secondary schools in England and explore trainee teacher perceptions of pupil sexting behaviour. I want to explore how trainee teachers may respond to incidents of pupils disclosing sexting behaviours to teachers, which may have occurred outside of school premises but could be discussed with teachers in schools by pupils. Primarily, I am exploring three areas:

### ***Strand A Trainee Understanding***

*How do trainees define what is commonly termed as sexting (or harmful sexual behaviour) among eleven- to sixteen-year-old school pupils?*

*What is the extent of trainees' knowledge of sexting in the population group (eleven-to sixteen-year-old pupils)?*

*How do they respond or plan to respond to texting in schools?*

### ***Strand B Head Teacher Requirements***

*What are head teachers' expectations in terms of trainees' preparedness to deal with issues of sexting in school?*

*What strategies and policies are in place to support trainee teachers?*

### **Strand C Policy Disparity/Implementation Issues**

*Exploration of current policy (national LA and school level):*

*What should trainees know?*

*How should trainees respond?*

### **Why have I been invited?**

You have been chosen to help with his project because you are either: -

A trainee teacher who has recently completed your PGCE training experience.

You are a senior leader in the school responsible for overseeing the Safeguarding process.

You may have experiences or information that may support future trainees and update their understanding of safeguarding systems and procedures.

### **Consent**

You do not have to participate; it is up to you to decide after reading the information sheet. I would like written consent from you personally on the enclosed sheet by signing and placing your initials in the appropriate boxes on the consent form to indicate you are taking part as a volunteer. You understand this study's purpose and consent to have interviews recorded.

Your information will be used only to conduct this study, which will explore responses, expectations, and encounters with sexting behaviour in schools. It will be anonymised, encoded, and known only to the researcher (Dawn Hewitson).

Your data will be stored on a password-protected computer in a secure location in a locked room. The research results will be submitted as part of my thesis for a Doctorate in Education and may appear in subsequent publications in academic materials such as books or journals. The findings from this research may also be adapted, published, and shared among educational settings where children encounter technology.

*At Edge Hill, we are committed to respecting and protecting your personal information. For information about how we use your data, please see [Edgehill.ac.uk/about/legal/privacy](http://Edgehill.ac.uk/about/legal/privacy).*

Research, data protection legislation and the lawful basis for processing personal data.

*DPA (2018)* operates parallel to various other data protection legislation and updates. It expands people's rights to see, correct, and, typically, delete *personal* data that an organisation holds.

You will be allowed to view, edit, and correct the data you provided.

The data will be obtained to improve understanding of disclosures of sexting behaviour in schools. I am seeking information to improve the process of training new teachers for encounters with sexting behaviour and to establish what trainee teachers are required to know from practitioner experts in schools. What is required of the role of a form tutor or for teaching staff who may encounter disclosures of sexting behaviour?

Academic research is a public good for current and future generations, so

the lawful basis for research data collection is a 'public task.' It is necessary to collect data on personal responses to establish what is known or 'necessary for the performance of Responding to Disclosures and how this can help teachers when they progress to employment in schools.

The nature of the personal data I will collect are responses to surveys, interviews and focus group tasks. The personal data collected will be contained only in the response sheets, stored securely, and known only to the researcher.

I have consulted the university ethics committees at both universities, received ethical approval to conduct this research, consulted with the relevant Data Protection staff, and obtained consent for this research.

.

### **Can I withdraw my consent?**

You can withdraw from the study, and there is a withdrawal sheet in this information booklet that you can use. However, I will be unable to withdraw you after a two-week period, as the data will have been processed, and it will be difficult to identify your personal data. Upon receiving such a request within the time limit, the researcher will locate and remove your data from the study.

Please note that anonymous data cannot be withdrawn as the participant cannot be identified.

Because research is conducted in the public interest, participants will not have open-ended rights over their data under *DPA (2018)*, although they retain the right to object. I will not hold identifiable data any longer than necessary for my research, and I will anonymise or delete personal data as soon as possible.

### **Will my participation be confidential?**

I will protect participants' data to comply with data protection legislation. Any identifiable data (e.g., names, contact details, non-anonymised questionnaires, or interview transcripts) will be stored in a locked cupboard or on a password-protected computer stored in a locked

office. The researcher will only access personal data, which will be stored safely with limited access. Where data is required to be transported, encryption and password-protected software will be utilised using University systems such as OneDrive.

There are limits to confidentiality. I am obliged to act if a disclosure is made that directly or indirectly suggests harm to the participant or others, criminal activity, or bad practice. This will involve notifying the University Safeguarding officer and may involve other outside agencies. Incidences will be reported using Faculty Safeguarding procedures.

### **What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The results will be published in journal articles, contributed to a book, and included in conference proceedings. Anonymity will be preserved in these publications. However, I may be compelled to disclose certain information to the authorities in a legal challenge.

The data will be retained for three years and anonymised within two weeks of capture. The data will change as it is processed into comments and observations. These comments and processes will be included in future publications.

### **Who has reviewed the study?**

The relevant research ethics committee has reviewed the study at the University of Central Lancashire and Edge Hill University.

What will I be asked to do?

If you consent to take part, the process will involve completing an online semi-structured survey and potentially participating in an interview and/or a focus group. You will have to complete the online survey initially, which should take about an hour. The focus group proposed will also involve an online discussion with several trainees (6 or 8), which should take no longer than an hour.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Possible side effects/adverse effects of taking part could include physical or psychological effects, where you may have encountered behaviour of this nature either personally or as part of your professional practice. You may experience feelings. Please note that the materials you have been exposed to have been responded to and resolved professionally, and should you require further help, we have online facilities available to you, such as whether the matter is sensitive, embarrassing, or potentially upsetting). How will you respond should any adverse effects occur? What support systems will you have in place should it be a sensitive or upsetting topic? Are any safety measures on standby? How quickly will the participants be able to access the support (e.g., if you are referring people to a third-party agency)?

Health-related findings

If participation results in a finding that has potential health important to you as a participant, then please let the researcher know, and we can withdraw you immediately from the study and seek the correct support for you,

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

It may be unlikely that you will benefit personally from participation, except for the opportunity to reflect on your decision-making process. However, you may feel better from having the opportunity to share experiences or help improve services.

Is there someone independent I can talk to about the research?

In addition to my contact details at the start, I have provided the contact details of my study supervisor. Please contact us if you have any feedback or queries you do not wish to share with the researcher or have concerns or a complaint.

[PWDoherty@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:PWDoherty@uclan.ac.uk)

### **Support**

You can contact the Student Wellbeing Team at Edge Hill University or The Big White Wall for aftercare support.

Dawn Hewitson CELT University of Central Lancashire, Fylde Road, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 2HE

Education Research Ed D (CELT)

## **Privacy Document; *DPA (2018)* Regulations**

Name of Researcher: Dawn Hewitson

Title of Project: Dealing with disclosure: Exploring the preparation of Pre-Service Secondary Trainee Teachers for encounters with pupils' disclosing engagement in Sexting activity

Statement of Intent

Respect for the privacy and security of your data is significant to both the researcher and the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) at the University of Central Lancashire, where the researcher is currently studying for the Professional Doctorate in Education. Personal data is held and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (*DPA, 2018*) legislation.

This privacy document specifically relates to the personal data processed by the researcher Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). This Privacy Document should be read in conjunction with the Data Protection Policy from the University of Central Lancashire

[https://www.uclan.ac.uk/data\\_protection/assets/data-protection-policy.pdf](https://www.uclan.ac.uk/data_protection/assets/data-protection-policy.pdf)

[https://www.uclan.ac.uk/data\\_protection/assets/information-management-policy-jan2018.pdf](https://www.uclan.ac.uk/data_protection/assets/information-management-policy-jan2018.pdf)

What information will be collected?

The researcher may collect personal data in the following ways:

If you consent to participate in this research, you will be asked for your name, age, email contact and telephone number.

When you make an enquiry in person, by telephone, or by email regarding this research project, the researcher may collect the following personal data: your name, contact information, including full postal address, a contact telephone number, and an email address.

### **How we use the data we collect about you: Data Protection.**

Respect for the privacy and security of the participants is significant to the researcher. Personal data is held and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (*DPA, 2018*) This legislation relates explicitly to the personal data processed by the researcher. The researcher will not disclose or sell personal data to third parties under any circumstances and will not permit them to sell the shared data. The data held about the data subject will be stored in secure, password-protected systems and can only be accessed by Dawn Hewitson.

Data may be retained for up to 5 years or until a request to do otherwise is received. The researcher will remove or delete some information when replaced with updated information. Participants have the right to access and be informed of what personal data this project holds about them and what it is used for. Participants can request the researcher to stop using the images/recordings at any time using the contact details provided in the information sheet, in

which case it will not be used in future but may continue to appear in publications already in circulation. Participants can withdraw consent or change information at any time in the data-collection process and up to two weeks after the data has collection process has concluded by emailing hewitsd@edgehill.ac.uk

We may contact you via various communication methods (including email and telephone). Communications may include:

Administration relating to data collection.

Responding to your enquiry

Invitation to participate in a focus group.

Further information: -

You can use the contact details below to ask the researcher to stop using your data or recordings for up to two weeks after the data-collection period has concluded. In this case, the data will not be used in the future but may continue to appear in publications already in circulation.

How does the researcher keep your information safe?

The researcher will not sell your data to third parties under any circumstances and will not permit third parties to access or acquire data regarding this project. The researcher's data about you is stored in secure, password-protected systems and can only be accessed by the researcher and the supervising staff working in the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).

How long will the researcher keep my information?

The researcher will retain your data unprocessed for two weeks. After this time, the data will be encoded with a coding system known only to the researcher. In this coded format, the researcher may retain your data for up to five years or until you request us to do otherwise.

The researcher will remove or delete some information when replaced with updated information. You can request the researcher to stop using your data or recordings up to two weeks after the data-collection process has concluded. You can do this via the Withdrawal of Consent Form, which is in the Participant Information Pack, in which case your data will not be used in future.

You can withdraw your consent or change your information for a period of up to two weeks after the data-collection process has concluded by emailing Dawn Hewitson via hewitsd@edgehill.ac.uk

## Consent Form Expert Participant

Title of Project: Responding to Disclosure: Preparing Pre-Service Secondary Computer Science Trainee Teachers for AASB Disclosures.

Names of Researchers: Dawn Hewitson

Please read:	Please Tick
I have read and understood the information sheet dated first June 2019 for the above study.	
I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have these answered satisfactorily.	
I understand that my participation in this research study will not affect my role as a partnership trainer.	
I understand that my participation in this research study is voluntary. If I wish to withdraw during the data collection period, I am free to do so without providing any reason. The data will be destroyed and removed from the study.	
I understand that my comments in the interview process will be part of the data collected for this study, and my anonymity will be ensured. I consent to all my contributions being included and quoted in this study.	
I consent to the group interview being recorded on a digital voice recording device. I understand that the data acquired from me will be stored safely and securely in line with <i>DPA (2018)</i> legislation.	
I understand that the information I provide will be used for a research project and will be published. I understand that I have the right to review and comment on an executive summary of the draft paper before the final submission.	
I agree to take part in the above study.	
<b>Name of Participant:</b>  Signature  Date	

Dawn Hewitson

CELT University of Central Lancashire, Fylde Road, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 2HE  
Edge Hill University, Faculty of Education, St Helens Rd, Ormskirk, L39 4QP. Tel: +44 (0) 1695 575 171

## Consent Form Trainee Teacher Participant

Title of Project: Responding to Disclosure: Preparing Pre-Service Secondary Computer Science Trainee Teachers for AASB Disclosures.

Names of Researchers: Dawn Hewitson

Please read:	Please Tick
I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study dated first June 2019.	
I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have these answered satisfactorily.	
I understand that my participation in this research study will not affect my role as a partnership trainer.	
I understand that my participation in this research study is voluntary. If I wish to withdraw during the data collection period, I am free to do so without providing any reason. The data will be destroyed and removed from the study.	
I understand that my comments in the interview process will be part of the data collected for this study, and my anonymity will ensure. I consent for all my contributions to be included and quoted in this study.	
I consent to the group interview being recorded on a digital voice recording device. I understand that the data acquired from me will be stored safely and securely in line with <i>DPA (2018)</i> legislation.	
I understand that the information I provide will be used for a research project and will be published. I understand that I have the right to review and comment on an executive summary of the draft paper before the final submission.	
I agree to take part in the above study.	
<b>Name of Participant:</b>  Signature  Date	

Dawn Hewitson

CELT University of Central Lancashire, Fylde Road, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 2HE

Edge Hill University, Faculty of Education, St Helens Rd, Ormskirk, L39 4QP

Tel: +44 (0) 1695 575 171

## Withdrawal of Consent Form

Title of Project: Responding to Disclosure: Preparing Pre-Service Secondary Computer Science Trainee Teachers for AASB Disclosures.

Research Activity: Vignette Survey/DSO Interview/Focus Group *Please circle as appropriate.*

Names of Researchers: Dawn Hewitson

<b>Please read:</b>	<b>Please Tick</b>	<b>Date Actioned and Initials</b>
I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study dated first June 2019.		
I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have these answered satisfactorily.		
I understand that my right to withdraw consent for participation in this research study will not affect my role as a trainee teacher or future relationships with Edge Hill University or the University of Central Lancashire.		
I understand that my participation in this research study was voluntary, and by withdrawing consent, the data provided by me will be destroyed.		
I understand that my comments in the interview process which would have formed part of the data collected for this study, will be destroyed		
<b>Name of Participant:</b>  Signature  Date	<b>Withdrawal actions concluded and checked by the supervisor</b>  Signature  Date	

## **Appendix 3B: Vignettes and Survey Data-collection Tools and Questions**

### **The Design of the Research Vignettes**

#### **Vignettes**

Categories of Research

Key Codes for Vignettes

A= Adult Involved

B= Youth Only with Intent to Harm

C=Youth Only Reckless Misuse

D= Romantic

E= Sexual Attention Seeking

*Categories derived from Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011 Sexting a Typology*

Methods of Disclosure

1= Gossip overheard by the teacher in school

2= Friend reporting to a teacher (not directly involved)

3= Parental Disclosure to school

4= Self Disclosure to the teacher

5= Network manager alert from network management software

#### **Vignette 1 Code A3**

A 14-year-old girl was drawn into a sexual relationship with her step-uncle, who was thirty-eight and lived in another town. They communicated online for over a month, and then he introduced sexual topics into their conversations. He sent her sexual pictures of himself, and she sent him pictures of all sorts, including sexual images. After six months, the uncle visited the house and took the girl back to his home. While at his home, they took hundreds of sexually explicit pictures of themselves and each other. The mother has reported this to the school's tutor and police.

#### **Vignette 2 Code B2**

A 13-year-old girl sent a topless photo of herself to her 14-year-old boyfriend. When they broke up, the boy sent the photo to several teens via his mobile phone, and many of the recipients forwarded the image to others. Over two hundred people received the picture. This incident was reported to the form tutor by a 13-year-old girl in the same class who received the picture on her phone.

### **Vignette 3 Code B3**

Two secondary school-aged girls (A and B) got mad at each other. They had been friends and had access to nude photos of each other. Girl A showed a nude photo of Girl B to another girl. Girl B thought the photo had been shown to many people. To get even Girl B sent a picture of Girl A's breasts to several boys. Several days later, both girls went to the headteacher's office crying and upset.

### **Vignette 4 Code C5**

At a party where there was heavy drinking, three boys in the shallow end of a swimming pool pulled down their swim trunks and had a 'swordfight.' A girl filmed this and sent the film clip via her mobile phone to six other people. The three boys did not know she had filmed to sword fight or sent it to other people. The film clip was discovered by the network manager, who passed it on to the form tutor of the girl who had sent the film clip.

### **Vignette 5 Code D3**

A 14-year-old boy and a 12-year-old girl who were boyfriend and girlfriend for a couple of weeks sent sexual pictures and film clips to one another, including pictures showing masturbation. The girl's mother found the pictures of the boy on her daughter's mobile phone and phoned the girl's form tutor to arrange a meeting. During the meeting, the mother said she wanted the boy prosecuted. However, the school disclosed that her daughter had sent photos, too, and she wanted her prosecuted too.

### **Vignette 6 Code E4**

An unpopular girl had a crush on a classmate. She sent him film clips of herself using her mobile phone doing a strip tease and playing with her breasts. He talked about this in school, but he did not show film clips to other people or post them on social media. However, the girl was cyberbullied as a result. She discussed this situation with her form tutor, who noticed she had been off school recently, and had received reports from other teachers that she seemed upset and on her own a lot in lessons.

## **Appendix 3C: Questions for the Trainees Responding to Scenarios**

### **Initial Questions**

These were the initial survey questions

1. How have you been prepared for dealing with incidents like this?  
Theme: Training
2. How would you respond to this situation?  
Theme: Instruction/Informed Decision Making
3. How should you deal with this incident?  
Theme: Awareness of relevant policy
4. How would you feel if you had to deal with this situation?  
Theme: Emotional preparation, impact
5. Has this happened during your training period?  
Theme: Practical experience

What is sexting? (Standalone question asked once.)

Theme: Definition/Understanding

### **How Questions Evolved**

- Can you define Sexting?
- Can you describe how you have been prepared for dealing with an incident of this nature during your training period?
- What would be your course of action when confronted with the above situation?
- Have you encountered this type of incident during your teaching placement?
- What are the recommended ways of dealing with this type of incident in your school setting?
- What do you think are the emotional impacts for teachers being confronted with a scenario like the one above, where disclosures of adolescents sharing sexualised images using smartphone technology have taken place?

### **Focus group questions.**

1. What are strategies and/or policies in place in school to support trainee teachers in learning how to respond to AASB? Can you describe details of any incidence of disclosure of pupils sharing sexting-type images during your training period, which have either been reported to you personally or have involved the teams you have worked with within the school?
2. Can you discuss details surrounding the disclosure of the incident?
3. Could you provide information regarding the stages of resolving the incident?
4. Which specific school policies informed the courses of action you undertook because of this disclosure?

## **Appendix 3D: Interview Questions Practitioner experts and Consultant Experts**

### **Vignette Scenario for experts.**

I am trying to update the preparation of the trainee teachers for their future pastoral roles by reviewing the safeguarding ITT curriculum. Sexting is not covered in the training curriculum, so I plan to update the curriculum to include sexting behaviours.

1. If you were in my shoes, how would you advise trainees to address pupils disclosing sexting incidents in school?
2. What advice would you give to the trainees?
3. Are there any policies or publications you would signpost the trainees towards?
4. If you were a teacher, what advice would you give to pupils who are maybe engaging in sexting activity or be victims of AASB?

### **Additional Practitioner expert Questions**

5. What are your (DSOs (DSOs)) expectations regarding the preparedness of trainee teachers to deal with sexting issues in school?
6. What are strategies and/or policies in place in school to support trainee teachers in learning how to respond to AASB?

### **Additional Consultant Expert Questions**

7. What are the National Expert's expectations regarding the preparedness of trainee teachers to deal with sexting issues in school?
8. What strategies and/or policies do National Experts think are in place in school to support trainee teachers learning how to respond to AASB

## **Appendix 3E: Focus Group Questions**

Focus group question one:

'I am a trainer of computing teachers, and I am concerned about their ability to address sexting activity in school. If you had my role and were tasked with this, how would you address the task of training them?' What do they think trainee teachers should know regarding Responding to Disclosures of sexting behaviour? What advice would you give new professional entrants when dealing with a pupil disclosing a sexting incident?

Focus group question two: 'As a trainee teacher in a school, if a pupil disclosed that they had been the victim of aggressive sexting behaviour, how would you address this?'

Focus group question three: 'Could you put that advice into simple steps?'

Delahunt and Maguire (2017, p.3358) provided an additional six-point review framework to quality assure the TA process, which involved checking the themes from step 4 of the analysis process and supporting the refinement of themes; this quality assurance process is illustrated in Table 18 below.

**Table 17: Delahunt and Maguires Quality Assurance Process**

Quality Assurance Question	Quality Assurance Process
<b>Point 1: Does the data support the themes?</b>	The themes emerged from reading the data; therefore, the data supported the themes, and both the data and the themes addressed the research questions.
<b>Point 2: Do the themes make sense?</b>	The themes did make sense as they addressed the research questions. In the example provided by Delahunt and Maguire (2017, p. 3358), using the research questions to inform the themes was not an effective way of undertaking the data analysis process. The emergent themes were independent of the research questions in this research.
<b>Point 3: Am I trying to fit too much into a theme?</b>	There are some themes where reducing the level of granularity would have detracted from understanding the data. An example is the theme "Practical courses of action", which had three sub-themes that could have been independent themes. These were referral pathways, pupil support, and data systems. However, independently as themes, they would have detracted from the overarching theme of practical aspects of addressing AASB. Practical courses of action aligned with research question three, "How do trainees plan to address AASB?"
<b>Point 4: If themes overlap, are they separate themes?</b>	Two themes in the trainee dataset explore similar things but are distinct and separate. <i>'Preparing to Manage AASB'</i> and <i>'Recommended Ways of Dealing with AASB'</i> overlap and could be concatenated on the first view of the data. However, <i>'Recommended Ways'</i> refers specifically to advise, and guidance provided during placement, not specific training methods; this theme captured personal tacit knowledge shared with trainees during placement.
<b>Point 5: Are there themes within themes (subthemes)?</b>	Some themes, for example, <i>'Emotional Responses to Disclosure'</i> , have distinct emotional categories. There are <i>'Empathetic Emotions'</i> such as compassion, concern, and sympathy; there are also <i>'Aggressive Emotions'</i> such as anger and annoyance. Sub-themes were created within the theme of <i>'Emotions'</i> to capture the full spectrum of emotions encountered during AASB incidents.
<b>Point 6: Are there other themes within the data?</b>	Pupil advice was a frequently occurring theme. However, pupil advice digressed away from the research and was disregarded.

Delahunt and Maguire's (2017) quality assurance framework enabled the completion of the review and further refinement of the themes. Therefore, this quality assurance process was necessary and helpful to step 4 before progressing to steps 5 and 6.

Figure 22 (p.182) above illustrates the final themes and the centrality of theme one to this research process. The diagram places the importance of understanding AASB as a central theme; this understanding is critical to begin to address disclosures of AASB amongst adolescents (Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011).

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme</b> <b>Recommended Ways of Dealing with AASB</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
Codes: (Meaningful chunk of data)	Codes:	Codes:	Codes	Codes:
Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages to using technology	Not to panic  Seek Advice (Not sure where from)  (Question regarding what would they do and how would they report?)	Report to Safeguarding Officer  Report to the safeguarding officer and form tutor.  Report to Head of Year  Report to SLT  Hand phone to DSO/DSL	Gather information and Report	Disappointed  Shocked  Angry  Report to legal authorities (Indignant although not described specifically)
Dismissive of AASB	Notifying the DSL as part of the safeguarding procedure  Directed to speak to Safeguarding officer in school	Outside remit for role for the teacher  Report to the police	Refer/Report to DSL/DSO/SLT	No emotional response expectation that Safeguarding Officer will deal with emotions?  No Emotions  Non-Judgemental

<p>Challenging to manage ASB.</p> <p>Perception of ASB (negative and positive)</p>	<p>Received specific training on School Systems (CPOMS)</p> <p>Training through the school's CPD process during placement (clarity)</p>	<p>Report to Unspecified person in the college</p> <p>Limitations not allowed to act independently</p>	<p>Listen to pupil</p> <p>Don't ask leading questions</p> <p>Record Conversation</p>	<p>Difficult because of the emotional attachment to pupils</p> <p>Upset</p> <p>Concern</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Worried</p> <p>Sympathy</p> <p>Compassion</p>
<p>Motivation for ASB (bullying, sexual abuse )</p>	<p>Safeguarding Officer. Safeguarding or Safeguarding Officer but no specific courses of action or guidance?</p> <p>Safeguarding Seminars/Training/ Workshops</p> <p>In-School Training/Placement Training</p>	<p>Support the child,</p> <p>Support from members of staff.</p>	<p>Follow policy</p> <p>Invoke safeguarding procedures</p> <p>Follow protocols and procedures</p>	<p>Reassurance</p> <p>Supportive</p> <p>Honest (got to tell others)</p>

Prevalence and impact of ASB	<p>Disparate levels of confidence across trainees in knowledge and application of safeguarding procedures</p> <p>Acting outside safeguarding procedure</p>	<p>Listen to the child</p> <p>Lecture the children</p> <p>Talk to the children</p> <p>Talk to children independently</p> <p>Closely monitor the child/children</p> <p>Tell children to delete images off the phone</p>	Record information on the school computer system (CPOMS)	<p>Calm</p> <p>Neutral response but not specified</p>
Impact of ASB on victim and others	Forward-thinking schools raising awareness of ASB as part of the curriculum, passing it on to trainee teachers	Diffuse the situation (Anger/Feelings), no suggestions as to how.	Uncertain how to deal with this	<p>Feel the need to protect the child.</p> <p>Feel the need to help the child</p> <p>Determined to act</p>

	<p>Initial or Induction training in school</p> <p>Safeguarding training location, either university or school setting or both</p> <p>Hypothetical training in University</p>	<p>If I were the form tutor, I would talk to each of them on their own and then I would report it to their pastoral head of year.</p>	<p>Phones/Smartwatches not allowed in school</p>	
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	No specific training	<p>Not to look at any photos or see the image.</p> <p>Ensure the image must not be shared further.</p> <p>If any phones have these images confiscate the phone (this was the specific school policy).</p> <p>Confiscate phone and keep it in a secure location.</p> <p>Confiscate and place in an envelope.</p>	Discuss legal implications	
	Trained to keep records and pass on to DSL	Not inform pupils of actions		

<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>“Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages.”</i></p> <p><i>‘Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image or video.’</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>‘I have been told to speak to the Safeguarding Officer if faced with this kind of incident, but it was not mentioned specifically.’</i></p> <p><i>My training advises me to report this to the safeguarding officer ASAP. Training to counter these types of issues is limited to hypothetical conversations.</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>“After finding however, many pupils have received, I would tell them to delete the photo as it is against the law. I would also inform a safeguarding officer about the leaked photo of the 13-year-old girl and the reason behind it.”</i></p>		<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>“I think that there would be a neutral response as being informed by a student about their own problems is the showing that they are willing to talk. Also, confronting another pupil who spread the leaked photo would be shown a neutral response as his side of the story will need to be listened to as well, as to why he sent those nude photos and also why did both boy and girl take nude photos and send it to each other. They have most likely been taught about how sexting is against the law for people under the age of eighteen.”</i></p>
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### Vignette 3 Code B3

#### Have you encountered this type of incident during your teaching placement?

Twenty-one responses

0510152025YesNo0 (0%)0 (0%)21 (100%)21 (100%)

#### Value Count

Yes 0

No 21

#### Can you describe what course of action would you take if you were confronted with the above situation? Twenty-one responses

I would report this ASAP to the safeguarding officer as responsibilities as a form tutor do not allow me to handle this independently.

Safeguard officer.

Contact Safeguarding

Referral to DSO

CPOMS - Pass to DSL

I would refer it to the safeguarding officer.

Talk with Girl B about the incident, writing everything down, saying that this information will only go to the people who need to know (DSL. etc.) and not asking any leading questions and then report it to the DSL.

I would have sent them to the headteacher as well.

Contact the safeguarding officer. Speak to both girls about why it is harmful to behave this way.

Not look at images but may confiscate any phones with such images on them.

I would ask both girls what they were doing by doing this, and also why they thought that action was acceptable.

Report it to safeguarding officer.

Even if I have been told the head had been made aware of it, I would still inform the DSL of anything I have heard and write down any comments.

Involve parents and safeguarding.

Again, I would seize any device and store it in a safe location for the DSO and the appropriate authorities to handle.

Both girls would into a lot of trouble due not only harassing each other but also taking nude photos of each other and sending it to other people.

Report to DSL to ask to speak to those involved,

confiscate the mobile phone, place into an envelope, and ensure that it was secured as this could be used for evidence. Ensure that the school's safeguarding team had been informed and make sure that I update CPOMs as soon as possible.

Do not view the images myself but confiscate the phones and report the incident immediately.

I would take the situation to the Safeguarding Officer. But if I was the headteacher in this situation, I would not know what to do. If it was myself 'in charge' I would attempt to find out who the picture was sent to and try to have the picture deleted from all devices.

As soon as I knew which two trainees this involved, I would report this to the safeguarding officer but not tell the girls that I have done so.

I would pass on any concerns or information to the designated safeguarding team.

**Can you describe how you have been prepared for dealing with an incident of this nature during your training period? Twenty-one responses?**

Via a variety of workshops and seminars

Safeguard officer.

By Contact Safeguarding

Safeguarding training in university and both placement schools

CPOMS - Pass to DSL

we were told to always go to the safeguarding officer with cases like this.

Attending a CPD session and session within university when a child comes to you with a safeguarding situation.

Not at all really. We have not discussed this in class.

Safeguarding training at school and university.

Through use of safeguarding policies

I have not really prepared for this situation, instead, I would use elements of common sense and report it to this safeguarding officer.

Document everything and always inform the DSL.

Safeguarding

I have learned how to handle situations like this within university lectures and staff training days.

I have been trained by informing a safeguarding officer about this situation and inform both girls to delete those pictures immediately.

Seminar and in-house training

received formal training in regard to reporting the incident.

Initial safeguarding training.

Take it to the Safeguarding Officer and letting them deal with it, do not get involved beyond that.

Training for this type of situation has been limited to hypothetical conversations through seminars.

Safeguarding training and team briefs

**What are the recommended ways of dealing with this type of incident in your school setting? Twenty-one responses**

Parents would be informed of the incident by the safeguarding officer, and actions would be taken to prevent this from happening again.

Safeguard officer.

Contact Safeguarding

Referral to DSO

CPOMS - Pass to DSL

refer it to the safeguarding officer.

If the student wishes to discuss the situation, write down everything that they say, say that it will only go to the people who need to know, not asking any leading questions and then report to the DSL.

Not at all really. We have not discussed this in class.

Not sure. I think it would be in safeguarding training.

Liaise with the safeguarding officer.

Through safeguarding

Again, this type of situation would be reported to the safeguarding officer.

Document everything and always inform the DSL asap.

Safeguarding

I would have used the appropriate safeguarding and child protection procedures, in line with my school training and take particular care in following the schools safeguarding policy.

Recommended setting would be to inform the trainees how it is against the law to harass people in any way as well as sexting with one another if they are under the age of eighteen.

Report to DSL

report to the school safeguarding team.

Report to the DSOs immediately.

Taking it to and leaving it with the Safeguarding Officer.

Report the incident straight away to the safeguarding officer.

Safeguarding protocols, policies, and procedures

### **What do you think your emotional response would be if confronted with pupil disclosure of this nature in your placement school?** Twenty-one responses

I would be disappointed in the girls but also the school, as the girls may not have been educated properly of the implications of owning and sending copies of sexual content of underage people. Safeguard officer.

Stay calm and reassure the student that the case will be solved by responsible authorities.

Very concerned for those involved but must follow the safeguarding policy.

Unknown

I would feel sorry for both girls.

Concern for Girl Bs well-being

I would be worried because if I had to deal with this, they might send them to me.

I would speak to pupils about the dangers of sharing images online and the damage it can cause.

A bit angry

Empathetic/Sympathetic

Concerned for the girl's well-being and annoyed at anyone sharing the picture.

Surprised

Very upset

I think that both pupils would be given a neutral response with a firm tone of voice to let them notify that what they have done was completely wrong and cruel.

Hurt but would remain calm n professional.

Likely to speak to someone in regard to the case and make sure that the matter had been dealt with to prevent further harm.

Concern

I would be angry with both trainees as it is revenge porn. It was a silly thing to have on each other's Phones, never mind showing it to anyone.

The response from the two girls is a typical response on both parts despite the sexual nature of the issue itself. This type of response would happen with most topics. However, I would feel slightly disappointed in the girls and the school that they have not been effectively taught about the dangers of storing/sending sexual images.

I would be concerned and pass on the accurate information to the safeguarding team.

**Table 18: Example of Thematic Analysis of Vignette 3**

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme</b> <b>Recommended ways of dealing with the incident</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
<b>Codes:</b> (Meaningful chunk of data)	<b>Codes:</b>	<b>Codes:</b>		<b>Codes:</b>
Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages using technology	Report to safeguarding office	Report to DSO/DSL Urgent (Timeliness) Report to Headteacher Report to SLT Report to Parents	Inform Parent Inform DSO/DSL Inform Safeguarding Team	Disappointed
Dismissive of ASB	Notifying the DSL as part of the safeguarding procedure	Report on school Computer Systems (CPOMS)	Record on School System	Calm No emotional response Professional
Challenging to manage ASB.  Perception of ASB (negative and positive)	Received specific training on School Systems (CPOMS)  Training through the school's CPD process during placement (clarity)	Procedural Response Talk to the pupil Record the details Pass details on to DSO/DSL/SLT/Head	Discuss with pupil	Concern Worried Very upset Angry Surprised

				Annoyed Hurt
Motivation for ASB (bullying, sexual abuse )	Safeguarding Officer  Safeguarding Training/ Workshops/Seminars	Explain dangers to the pupils  Explain that pupils are in trouble  Ask pupils for motivation  Not informing pupils they have been reported	Not sure about dealing with it	Empathy Sympathy Compassion
Prevalence and impact of ASB	Not been prepared but would use common sense  Not at all prepared been discussed in class.	Not look at images  Research images  Delete image	Use Child Protection procedures	Helplessness due to ineffective teaching.
Impact of ASB on victim and others	Training in  School  University  Both	Confiscate phone  Secure phone  Pass phone onto DSO	Discuss legalities with pupils	
	Team Briefs			
	Familiarisation with school policy			

<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>“Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages.”</i></p> <p><i>‘Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image or video.’</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>“I have learned how to handle situations like this within University lectures and staff training days.”</i></p> <p><i>“I have been trained by informing a safeguarding officer about this situation and inform both girls to delete those pictures immediately.”</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>“Both girls would into a lot of trouble due not only harassing each other but also taking nude photos of each other and sending it to other people.”</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>“If the student wishes to discuss the situation, write down everything that they say, say that it will only go to the people who need to know, not asking any leading questions and then report to the DSL.”</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>‘The response from the two girls is a typical response on both parts despite the sexual nature of the issue itself. This type of response would happen with most topics. However, I would feel slightly disappointed in the girls and the school that they have not been effectively taught about the dangers of storing/sending sexual images.’</i></p>
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## Vignette 4 Code C5

Have you encountered this type of incident during your teaching placement? Twenty-one responses

0510152025YesNo0 (0%)0 (0%)21 (100%)21 (100%)

### Value Count

Yes 0

No 21

**Can you describe what course of action would you take if you were confronted with the above situation?** Twenty-one responses

I would pass the information straight to the safeguarding officer.

Safeguard officer.

Contact Safeguarding

Referral to DSO

CPOMS - Pass to DSL

I would refer it to the safeguarding officer.

Report it directly the DSL.

I would have spoken to the boys and then passed it on to the head of year.

I would not look at the film clip but would confiscate any phones said to have the video on it. I would inform the safeguarding officer and liaise with them and the form tutor. I would speak to pupils about the dangers and repercussions of sharing videos online and how to stay safe online.

Ask the trainees what they were thinking and pass on to SLT and DSL.

I genuinely do not know what to do other than report this to the safeguarding officer.

DSL and ensure that the police are contacted. The network manager has, while meaning well, shared child porn

Report safeguarding.

I would confiscate any device and ask the DSO for advice on what to do further.

I would inform the girl to take down that video a delete immediately from her phone. I would also inform the safeguarding officer of the school as well as the head of year.

Report to DSL

report this incident to the schools safeguarding team and ensure that the matter is being dealt with. Ensure that the girl and boys are separated until the investigation had been completed.

Report the information given to the safeguarding officer.

I would take it to the Safeguarding Officer.

I would not send the video anywhere yet. I would contact the safeguarding officer first and ask them what they wish me to do with the video as this is highly sensitive.

I would take the accurate accounts and pass them to the safeguarding lead.

## **Can you describe how you have been prepared for dealing with an incident of this nature, during your training period?** Twenty-one responses

Via a variety of workshops and seminars  
Safeguard officer.  
Yes, the college has prepared us to be urgent and contact the relevant authorities.  
Safeguarding training in university and both placement schools  
CPOMS - Pass to DSL  
we didn't have a specific training for cases like this.  
Attending a CPD session on safeguarding and discussing it in university  
Not at all really. I  
Safeguarding training in school and university. Digital and online safety lessons.  
Through safeguarding  
Again, this type of situation would be reported to the safeguarding officer.  
Contact DSL if unsure ask the line manager.  
Safeguarding training  
University lectures and staff training.  
I was trained to let a safeguarding officer be notified about the current situation and what I was told on what happened during that party. I would also inform them that the network manager was the one who discovered it first.  
Seminar and in-house training  
I feel with this incident i would be unsure what to do.  
Safeguarding training at university and school placements  
Meetings with the Safeguarding Officer and outlining of types of situations to inform them of.  
My training tells me that the course of action here is wrong, and the network manager should not have sent the video to the form tutor as this is not the correct protocol.  
safeguarding training

## **What are the recommended ways of dealing with this type of incident in your school setting?** Twenty-one responses

Report all information to the safeguarding officer.  
Safeguard officer.  
Contact Safeguarding  
Referral to DSO  
CPOMS - Pass to DSL  
refer it to the safeguarding officer.  
Make a report of the incident and then report to the DSL.  
Not sure, probably go to talk to my mentor about it.  
Report to form tutors and safeguarding. Provide online safety advice to pupils and reinforce the dangers of sharing content online.  
Through the safeguarding policy of the school.  
Again, this type of situation would be reported to the safeguarding officer.  
Contact DSL always ask if unsure.  
Safeguarding  
I would have used the appropriate safeguarding and child protection procedures, in line with my school training and take particular care in following the schools safeguarding policy.  
Recommended ways of dealing with such type of situation is to inform the safeguarding officer as well as the pupil's parents as to what has happened during the incident and what procedures will be taking place.  
Report to DSL n get content removed.  
Confiscate phone and place inside an envelope as may be used for evidence for police investigation.  
Report to the safeguarding officer.

Don't send the clip anywhere else, inform the Safeguarding Officer with the names of those involved - if known.

The best course of action would be to inform the safeguarding officer and seek their advice.

The safeguarding policies and procedures

### **What do you think your emotional response would be if confronted with pupil disclosure of this nature in your placement school?** Twenty-one responses

I would be disappointed in the girl, who filmed and sent the video. However, I would also be disappointed in the network manager for sending the video to a form tutor as they must not have taken the school policy into consideration. Most schools would ask the person who have found the content to immediately contact the safeguarding officer and not send it to form tutor.

Safeguard officer.

Stay calm.

Concern for trainees but must follow safeguarding policy.

Unknown

I would feel sorry for the trainees.

Concern for how this will affect the boys in the video.

I think I would be embarrassed but I also think I would have a word with the girl.

I would try to advise pupils and inform them of the dangers of sharing content online and what could be the repercussions of such behaviour.

A bit angry but also sympathetic

I would feel awkward when dealing with this type of situation, empathetic and sympathetic.

I would be annoyed at the boys for being stupid enough to one be in the situation and two get caught on camera.

annoyed but remain professional.

Very upset

I would be acting as a professional and informing the pupils as to what they did was wrong and against the law. I would also inform them that this is a very serious issue and one that will be required to be investigated further by a senior member of staff who appropriate to deal with this issue.

Calm n professional

I would be sure to seek counselling for this incident.

Concern

Emotionally I would feel that it is a joke that has gone terribly wrong. I don't think the Network Manager should have sent it to the form tutor but to the Safeguarding Officer.

If I were the form tutor, I would not appreciate the network manager sending me the video as he/she has not sent it through the proper channels.

I would be concerned and pass on the information to the designated staff.

## Vignette 5 Code E4

Have you encountered this type of incident during your teaching placement? Twenty-one responses

05101520YesNo1 (4.8%)1 (4.8%)20 (95.2%)20 (95.2%)

### Value Count

Yes 1

No 20

**Can you describe what course of action would you take if you were confronted with the above situation?** Twenty-one responses

I would discuss that I cannot keep this information to myself, but only the relevant people would be told in order to help with the situation.

Safeguard officer.

Contact Safeguarding

Referral to DSO

CPOMS - Pass to DSL

I would refer it to the safeguarding officer.

Ask the student if they're ok if it was me noticing the change in behaviour before they report the incident. If the student wishes to discuss the incident, write down everything they say, say that the information will only go to the people who need to know, not asking leading questions and reporting directly to the DLS.

I would speak to the girl and see if I can help.

I would speak to the pupil about sharing images and videos of herself and what the ramifications could be. Advise how to stay safe online and talk about how this behaviour is not a good way to behave and why. I would endeavour to build her confidence in other aspects at school. I would thank the boy for not sharing clips and ensure the content was deleted but would ask if the matter could be kept private and not discussed more with other pupils, giving reasons why. I would share any action with the safeguarding officer.

I would ask the boy what he thought he was doing and also remind the girl that this is not a way to behave in the real world.

Report this to safeguarding officer.

I would inform the student that I can't keep it confidential and would document everything. The documentation would go straight to the safeguarding team.

Safeguarding

I would report the incident to the DSO.

I would be showing sympathy towards the pupil as well as informing her that everything will be okay.

Listen to child, don't probe n report to DSL.

I would ensure that the schools safeguarding team had been informed.

Report to safeguarding officer.

Inform the Safeguarding Officer. Perhaps take the classes that week through cyberbullying and how people can protect themselves online.

If the student wanted to disclose this information with me, I would tell her I cannot keep the information to myself, but I would share it only with appropriate members of staff to help resolve the situation. This would most likely be the safeguarding officer. I would pass on the information to the safeguarding team.

### **Can you describe how you have been prepared for dealing with an incident of this nature, during your training period?** Twenty-one responses

Via a variety of workshops and seminars.

I also had a few "false alarms" when I was on placement. When trainees ask me, "and I tell you something?". which my response is, "if this is a serious matter, I cannot keep this to myself and must inform the appropriate members of staff."

Safeguard officer.

Contact Safeguarding

Safeguarding training in university and both placement schools

CPOMS - Pass to DSL

refer it to the safeguarding officer.

Safeguarding training at school and university

I don't think I have.

Safeguarding and online safety discussions in school and university

Through safeguarding

Report this to safeguarding officer.

I would inform the student that I can't keep it confidential and would document everything. The documentation would go straight to the safeguarding team.

Safeguarding

University lectures/seminars and staff training.

I have trained by asking the pupil to write down what had happened as well as reassuring her that everything will be alright. I would also inform her that what she did was illegal, and I would have to inform the police about this.

Seminar n in house training

Received formal training and aware to report issues to the safeguarding.

Safeguarding training at university and school placements

I have been told to take all incidents to the Safeguarding Officer and tell the visiting tutor.

This type of issue has been discussed a lot during training, and a step-by-step course action is advised to follow in order to resolve the issue without complications.

Safeguarding training and team meetings.

### **What are the recommended ways of dealing with this type of incident in your school setting?** Twenty-one responses

Safeguard officer.

Contact Safeguarding

Referral to DSO

CPOMS - Pass to DSL

refer it to the safeguarding officer.

Ask the student if they're ok. If the student wishes to discuss the incident, write down everything they say, say that the information will only go to the people who need to know, not asking leading questions and reporting directly to the DLS.

Not sure

Inform the safeguarding officer. Talk about online safety to pupils.

Through the safeguarding policy

Report this to safeguarding officer.

Document everything and contact safeguarding.

Safeguarding

I would have used the appropriate safeguarding and child protection procedures, in line with my school training and take particular care in following the schools safeguarding policy. By informing a safeguarding officer about everything that has gone with both pupils.  
Report to DSL  
Confiscate phone and place inside an envelope as may be used for evidence for police investigation.  
Report to the safeguarding officer.  
Inform the Safeguarding Officer do not attempt to follow up the situation and (if still a trainee) inform the visiting tutor.  
If the student discloses the information, gather as much as possible. Tell the student you (the teacher) cannot keep this to yourself and tell the safeguarding officer.  
Safeguarding policies and procedures and training on how to catch early signs to prevent safeguarding issues.

**What do you think your emotional response would be, if confronted with pupil disclosure of this nature in your placement school?** Twenty-one responses

I would become very conscious of the fact that this is a serious matter, and I would take note of any small details as they could end up being very significant.  
Safeguard officer.  
Stay calm.  
Concern for trainees but must follow safeguarding policy.  
Unknown  
I would feel sorry for the girl.  
Concern for the girl as she is being coming very upset and that may escalate.  
I would be very concerned for the girl.  
To discuss sharing of online content and its repercussions with pupils involved. To try to build self-esteem of the girl. Reinforce with pupils internet safety and respect for each other.  
Annoyed and sympathetic to the girl  
empathetic and sympathetic  
Annoyed at the boy and concerned for the girl.  
Angry  
I'd be upset.  
I would have given a calm reaction if a pupil has disclosed this type of incident with me, also not to be persistent on asking questions as to why she recorded video clips of such type.  
Calm m reassuring  
I would seek counselling for this incident.  
Concern  
Sad for the girl, angry that there are people who would attack that person online.  
I would try to stay as calm as possible to help ease the student's anxiety of the situation they're in and speak to them in a calm manner.  
I would be concerned and pass on any information to the designated safeguarding team.

**Table 19: Example Analysis of Vignette 4**

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme</b> <b>Recommended ways of dealing with the incident</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
Codes: (Meaningful chunk of data)	Codes:	Codes:	Codes:	Codes:
Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages using technology	Seminars Workshops College Preparation	Report to DSO/DSL Report to Headteacher Report to Head of Year Report to SLT Report to the Police	Inform DSO/DSL Inform Safeguarding Team Inform Form Tutor Seek advice	Disappointed with Pupils Disappointed with Staff (Network Manager)
Dismissive of ASB	Training in University Training in Schools Training in Both Placements Curriculum Training	Report on school Computer Systems (CPOMS)	Record on School System	Calm Professional
Challenging to manage ASB.	Received specific training on School Systems (CPOMS)	Procedural Response Speak to the pupil	Create a record Share record with DSO	Concern Embarrassed

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme</b> <b>Recommended ways of dealing with the incident</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
Perception of ASB (negative and positive)	Training through the school's CPD process during placement (clarity)  Staff Training (non specific)	Ask the pupil to remove the image  Record the details  Pass details on to DSO/DSL/SLT/Head  Keep pupils separate during the incident		Very upset  Angry  Awkward  Surprised  Annoyed  Hurt
Motivation for ASB (bullying, sexual abuse )	Meetings with Safeguarding Officer  Specific Safeguarding Training/ Workshops/Seminars	Genuine lack of knowledge and uncertainty	Not sure about dealing with it	Empathy  Sympathy  Compassion
Prevalence and impact of ASB	No Training  Not been prepared but would use common sense  Not at all prepared been discussed in class.	Not look at images  Research images  Delete image  Retain the image and await instruction	Use Child Protection policies and procedures	Do not know

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme</b> <b>Recommended ways of dealing with the incident</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
Impact of ASB on victim and others	Familiarisation with school policy (re network manager forwarding message)	Confiscate phone Pass phone onto DSO	Provide guidance to the pupils	Concerned about the professional behaviour of another member of staff
			Confiscate phone Keep phone securely Retain imagery for investigation.	
<b>Examples of actual responses:</b> "Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages."  'Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image or video.'	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b>  "I was trained to let a safeguarding officer be notified about the current situation and what I was told on what happened during that party. I would also inform them that the network manager was the one who discovered it first."	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b>  "I would not look at the film clip but would confiscate any phones said to have the video on it. I would inform the safeguarding officer and liaise with them and the form tutor. I would speak to pupils about the dangers and repercussions of sharing videos online and how to stay safe online."	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b>  "Report to form tutors and safeguarding. Provide online safety advice to pupils and reinforce the dangers of sharing content online."	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b>  'I would be disappointed in the girl, who filmed and sent the video. However, I would also be disappointed in the network manager for sending the video to a form tutor as they must not have taken the school policy into consideration. Most schools would ask the person who have found

Theme: Understanding of AASB	Theme: Preparing to manage AASB	Theme: Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)	Theme Recommended ways of dealing with the incident	Theme : Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB
				<p>the content to immediately contact the safeguarding officer and not send it to form tutor.</p>

**Table 20: Example Analysis of Vignette 5**

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme</b> <b>Recommended ways of dealing with the incident</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
Codes: (Meaningful chunk of data)	Codes:	Codes:	Codes	Codes:
Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages using technology	Workshops Seminars	Report to DSO/DSL Report to SLT Pass details on to DSO/DSL/SLT/Head	Inform Parent Inform DSO/DSL Inform Safeguarding Team	Disappointed
Dismissive of ASB	Notifying the DSL as part of the safeguarding procedure	Report on school Computer Systems (CPOMS)	Record on School System	Calm No emotional response Professional
Challenging to manage ASB.	Received specific training on School Systems (CPOMS)  Training through the school's CPD process during placement	Procedural Response  Talk to the pupil	Discuss with pupil	Concern Worried Very upset

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme</b> <b>Recommended ways of dealing with the incident</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
Perception of ASB (negative and positive)		Check pupil wellbeing  Record the details		Angry  Surprised  Annoyed  Hurt
Motivation for ASB (bullying, sexual abuse )	Safeguarding Officer  Safeguarding Training/ Workshops/Seminars	Explain the need to share  Build pupil confidence  Ask pupils for motivation  Thank the boy for not passing it on.	Not sure about dealing with it	Empathy  Sympathy  Compassion
Prevalence and impact of ASB	Not been prepared.	Not look at images  Research images  Delete image	Use Child Protection procedures	Helplessness due to ineffective teaching.

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme</b> <b>Recommended ways of dealing with the incident</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
Impact of ASB on victim and others	Training in School University Both		Discuss legalities with pupils	
<b>Examples of actual responses:</b> <i>“Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages.”</i>  <i>‘Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image or video.’</i>	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b> <i>“I have learned how to handle situations like this within University lectures and staff training days.”</i>  <i>“I have been trained by informing a safeguarding officer about this situation and inform both girls to delete those pictures immediately.”</i>	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b>  <i>“Ask the student if they're ok if it was me noticing the change in behaviour before they report the incident. If the student wishes to discuss the incident, write down everything</i>	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b>  <i>“If the student wishes to discuss the situation, write down everything that they say, say that it will only go to the people who need to know, not asking any leading questions and then report to the DSL.”</i>	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b>  <i>‘The response from the two girls is a typical response on both parts despite the sexual nature of the issue itself. This type of response would happen with most topics. However, I would feel slightly disappointed in the</i>

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme</b> <b>Recommended ways of dealing with the incident</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
		<p>they say, say that the information will only go to the people who need to know, not asking leading questions and reporting directly to the DLS.</p>		<p><i>girls and the school that they have not been effectively taught about the dangers of storing/sending sexual images.</i></p>

## Focus Group

Would you be happy to participate in a focus group? 21 responses?

Yes No 28.6% 71.4%

Yes 15

No 6

**Table 21: Example Thematic Analysis of Focus Group**

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with ASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to ASB</b>
Codes: (Meaningful chunk of data)	Codes:	Codes:	Codes:
Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages using technology	Not received any safeguarding training specifically about sexting	Report to Safeguarding Officer	Horrified but outwardly calm.  Emotionally difficult but maintain professionalism.  Professional behaviours overcome personal feelings to ensure response in line with policy  Calm and nonjudgemental  Expectation of communicating with mother, potential emotional reaction?
Dimissive of ASB	Notifying the DSL as part of the safeguarding procedure	Outside remit for role for the teacher	No emotional response expectation that Safeguarding Officer will deal with emotions?  No Emotions

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with ASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to ASB</b>
Challenging to manage ASB.  Perception of ASB (negative and positive)	Received specific training on School Systems (CPOMS)  Training through the school's CPD process during placement (clarity)	Report to Unspecified person in the college	Difficult because of the emotional attachment to pupils  Upset  Concern  Empathy  Sympathy  Compassion  Shock  Horrified  Overwhelmed
Motivation for ASB (bullying, sexual abuse )	Safeguarding Officer.  Safeguarding Training/ Workshops	Support the child, Support from members of staff.	Embarrassed potential subject matter of conversations?
Prevalence and impact of ASB	Disparate levels of confidence across trainees in knowledge and application of safeguarding procedures  Acting outside safeguarding procedure	Listen to the child	Proud because the pupil chose me to disclose to

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with ASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to ASB</b>
Impact of ASB on victim and others	Forward thinking schools raising awareness of ASB as part of the curriculum passing it on to trainee teachers	Document revelations	Feel the need to protect the child. Feel the need to help the child Determined to act
	Safeguarding training location either university or school setting or both		
<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>“Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages.”</i></p> <p><i>‘Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image or video.’</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>‘During training context was given to issues around sexual behaviour of student other parties.</i></p> <p><i>I was made aware that sexting might be an issue which would be taught across the school to raise awareness. The lessons were designed to describe sexting and how it can impact and what consequences it can have on the people involved.’</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>‘I would listen to the child's claims and make her aware that I am unable to keep the information between myself and her. I would then inform the child that the information will be passed onto the relevant person, i.e., the schools safeguarding officer.’</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>‘I would show compassion but make sure that I let the student know that we as teachers are here to help them. I would also have a firm tone when I am notifying them about telling a safeguarding officer. Even if they are uncomfortable with myself telling another person I would still have to tell another senior member of staff to deal with this.’</i></p> <p><i>‘As a trainee I would feel overwhelmed as this incident can often come as a shock. I</i></p>

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with ASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to ASB</b>
			<p><i>would also feel determined to act as soon as possible to resolve this issue through the appropriate channels.</i></p> <p><i>I would be concerned about the disclosure and pass on any information to the safeguarding team who are dealing with the issues.'</i></p>

### Vignette 6 Code D3

Have you encountered this type of incident during your teaching placement? Twenty-one responses

0510152025YesNo0 (0%)0 (0%)21 (100%)21 (100%)

#### Value Count

Yes 0

No 21

Can you describe what course of action would you take if you were confronted with the above situation? Twenty-one responses

in the meeting | I would ask the safeguarding officer to be present as they would know a great deal more than me on how to handle the situation.  
Safeguard officer.  
Contact Safeguarding  
Referral to DSO  
CPOMS - Pass to DSL  
As a trainee teacher I wouldn't be dealing with situation like this  
Reporting straight the DSL  
I think I would say involve the police.  
I would contact the safeguarding officer and introduce the parents to liaise with them.  
Try to diffuse the situation by telling the mother of the girl that her daughter was also sending sexual pictures of herself.  
Report this to the safeguarding officer.  
Document everything the mother says, contact safeguarding and potentially the police depending on what my line manager said after discussing it.  
Safeguarding  
Report it to the DSO.  
I would be devastated from the inside; however, I would have to show professionalism towards both the parent and the pupil. I would have to act calm and cautious.  
Report to DSL.  
report on CPOM's.  
Report to the safeguarding officer.  
Inform the Safeguarding Officer and if I am the form tutor, attempt to calm the situation so that the Safeguarding Officer can deal with it.  
I would tell the mother that the boy cannot be prosecuted, and this information must be shared with the school's safeguarding officer in order to resolve the issue.  
Pass on the accurate account to the safeguarding team.

Can you describe how you have been prepared for dealing with an incident of this nature, during your training period? Twenty-one responses

Via a variety of workshops and seminars  
Safeguard officer.  
to urgently contact the relevant authorities  
Safeguarding training in university and both placement schools.  
CPOMS - Pass to DSL  
refer it to the safeguarding officer.  
We have not discussed the legal situation of two minors sending each other sexually explicit messages, after reading a few articles it seems to fall on the side of not prosecuting minors who engage in this behaviour together.  
Not at all  
Safeguarding Training at school and University.  
Safeguarding policy  
Report this to the safeguarding officer.  
Document everything and contact DSL.  
Safeguarding  
University lectures and staff training.  
I have been prepared to inform the parent that we as the school will take this matter further but also inform the parent that their child will be prosecuted as well as she was sexting which as well is against the law. I would have another member of staff with me in the room as to witness to what has been said.  
Seminar n in house training  
formal training - aware to report to safeguarding and police if required.  
Safeguarding training at university and school placements  
I have been told to inform the Safeguarding Officer of these types of situations.  
This type of situation has not come up much during training (that I can remember). However, other techniques and advice given can be applied to this situation such as talk through the appropriate channels e.g., safeguarding officer.  
Safeguarding trainings

What do you think your emotional response would be, if confronted with pupil disclosure of this nature in your placement school?<sup>21</sup> responses?

I would be disappointed in the trainees and the school as the trainees may not have been effectively taught the consequences of sexting and distributing sexual content.  
Safeguard officer.  
stay calm.  
Concern for the pupils but must act professionally and follow process.  
Unknown  
I would feel sorry for them.  
Concern for both of the pupils  
really upset and worried  
I would refer the parents to the safeguarding officer and more senior members of the school staff to deal with this incident. I would continue to provide internet safety resources and information to pupils in school.  
I'd be quite taken aback and also feel quite trusted by the pupil.  
I am not sure.  
I would be concerned for both of the trainees but relieved that neither of them had their contact leaked.  
Shocked but remain professional and call in the relevant people.  
Very upset.  
I would be fully discreet with this information and be supportive towards the pupils through this difficult time.  
Shock but remain professional.  
I would speak to a counsellor in regard to the matter to ensure that it would not cause any effect later on.  
Concern

Disgust for starters, I would want to leave it to someone else as soon as possible.  
I would be most likely be overwhelmed by the mother's complaint as she would be probably enraged. However, I would also try to be calm and collected in order to bring the atmosphere to a calm environment.  
I would be concerned and pass on the information to the safeguarding team.

What are the recommended ways of dealing with this type of incident in your school settings? Twenty-one responses

Report immediately to safeguarding officer.  
Safeguard officer.  
stay calm and contact the relevant authorities.  
Referral to DSO  
CPOMS - Pass to DSL  
refer it to the safeguarding officer.  
Have extra people at this meeting including the DSL, possibly a member of SLT.  
Not sure  
Liaise with senior staff and safeguarding staff members.  
Safeguarding policy  
Report this to the safeguarding officer.  
Document everything and contact DSL.  
Safeguarding  
I would have used the appropriate safeguarding and child protection procedures, in line with my school training and take particular care in following the schools safeguarding policy.  
The recommended ways are to have another member of staff present and to inform the safeguarding officers about this incident.  
Report to DSL.  
Confiscate phone and place inside an envelope as may be used for evidence for police investigation.  
Report immediately to safeguarding officer.  
Hand it over to the Safeguarding Officer or the head teacher if the Safeguarding Officer is not available.  
I do not have the authority to handle the situation effectively and I would pass all information onto the safeguarding officer.  
Safeguarding policies and procedures

Thank you for taking part in this survey. Do you require further help or support as a result of taking part in this survey? One response

YesNo100%

Yes 0

No 1

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage ASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with ASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to ASB</b>
Codes:  (Meaningful chunk of data)	Codes:	Codes:	Codes:
Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages using technology	Not received any safeguarding training specifically about sexting	Report to Safeguarding Officer	<p>Horrified but outwardly calm.</p> <p>Emotionally difficult but maintain professionalism.</p> <p>Professional behaviours overcome personal feelings to ensure response in line with policy</p> <p>Calm and nonjudgemental</p> <p>Expectation of communicating with mother, potential emotional reaction?</p>
Dismissive of ASB	Notifying the DSL as part of the safeguarding procedure	Outside remit for role for the teacher	<p>No emotional response expectation that Safeguarding Officer will deal with emotions?</p> <p>No Emotions</p>
Challenging to manage ASB.	Received specific training on School Systems (CPOMS)	Report to Unspecified person in the college	<p>Difficult because of the emotional attachment to pupils</p> <p>Upset</p>

Perception of ASB (negative and positive)	Training through the school's CPD process during placement (clarity)		Concern Empathy Sympathy Compassion Shock Horrified Overwhelmed
Motivation for ASB (bullying, sexual abuse )	Safeguarding Officer. Safeguarding Training/ Workshops	Support the child, Support from members of staff.	Embarrassed potential subject matter of conversations?
Prevalence and impact of ASB	Disparate levels of confidence across trainees in knowledge and application of safeguarding procedures  Acting outside safeguarding procedure	Listen to the child	Proud because the pupil chose me to disclose to
Impact of ASB on victim and others	Forward thinking schools raising awareness of ASB as part of the curriculum passing it on to trainee teachers	Document revelations	Feel the need to protect the child. Feel the need to help the child Determined to act
	Safeguarding training location either university or school setting or both		

<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>“Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages.”</i></p> <p><i>‘Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image or video.’</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>‘During training context was given to issues around sexual behaviour of student other parties.</i></p> <p><i>I was made aware that sexting might be an issue which would be taught across the school to raise awareness. The lessons were designed to describe sexting and how it can impact and what consequences it can have on the people involved.’</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>‘I would listen to the child's claims and make her aware that I am unable to keep the information between myself and her. I would then inform the child that the information will be passed onto the relevant person, i.e., the schools safeguarding officer.’</i></p>	<p><b>Examples of actual responses:</b></p> <p><i>‘I would show compassion but make sure that I let the student know that we as teachers are here to help them. I would also have a firm tone when I am notifying them about telling a safeguarding officer. Even if they are uncomfortable with myself telling another person I would still have to tell another senior member of staff to deal with this.’</i></p> <p><i>‘As a trainee I would feel overwhelmed as this incident can often come as a shock. I would also feel determined to act as soon as possible to resolve this issue through the appropriate channels.</i></p> <p><i>I would be concerned about the disclosure and pass on any information to the safeguarding team who are dealing with the issues.’</i></p>
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**Table 22: Addressing Strand A and Strand C.**

Indicator	Methods, Data Sources and Data Types	Responsible Party	Timing	Analysis	Interpretation	Ethical Considerations
Trainee <b>definitions</b> of Sexting behaviours	An online survey of trainees. Text-based data acquired. The definition question was presented as part of the survey process. Responses were elicited in a text-based format.	Research offices at respective institutions. Obtained ethical approval from both institution's research offices' ethical approval processes	The question was administered at the end of the PGCE programme during the summer after the course had concluded.	Inductive coding to determine factors that define sexting activity. Thematic analysis and CT	Identify factors trainees define as contributing factors to adolescent sexting activity	Ensure all trainees freely participated of their own free will and were not influenced by the researcher's understanding of the definition of sexting. The researcher was not present during the data-collection exercise. The room used contained no display materials related to sexting behaviours. Trainees were positioned at personal computers maintaining a one seat distance to avoid views of adjacent screens. Trainees were discouraged from accessing the internet for the duration of the survey administration process.
How do trainees plan to address the vignettes	Survey questions, Vignettes and focus group discussion	The researcher administered the survey and the focus group discussion, aligned with ethical permissions.	The data collection process was conducted in the summer at the conclusion of the PGCE programme.	Inductive coding to determine how trainees plan to address	Identify factors attributed to resolving and addressing AASB activity	Particular care was given to the trainee who has been a victim of AASB. Support services were made aware of potential requests for wellbeing and support services. Observations for signs of tension or stress were made, and pre- and post-focus group discussions took place with this participant.
Review and quality assurance. Clarification	Vignette AASB scenarios	Researcher to confirm that research is conducted when the Wellbeing Team can support trainees and that the trainees know how to contact the well-being team.	End of PGCE programme (as described above.)	Inductive coding to determine constituents of sexting behaviour as identified by the trainees	Identify which components of sexting behaviours are identified by trainees.	As mentioned above, trainees may be parents of adolescents who have engaged in sexting behaviours or may have been victims themselves.  Ensuring support services are available to the trainees, such as wellbeing teams.

<b>Research Question:</b> <i>How do trainee teachers define 'sexting' behaviour?</i>						
Trainee definitions of sexting behaviour	Vignette AASB scenarios	Researcher.	End of PGCE programme (as described above).	Inductive coding to determine constituents of sexting behaviour as identified by the trainees	Identify which constituents of sexting behaviours can be identified by trainees.	As mentioned above, trainees may be parents of adolescents who have engaged in sexting behaviours or may have been victims themselves.  Ensuring support services are available to the trainees, such as wellbeing teams.
	An online survey of trainees	Check that research is conducted when the Wellbeing team can support trainees and check the trainees know how to contact the well-being team.				
	Text format responses to survey questions					
	Focus Group responses were recorded and transcribed into text responses					

Table 23 below illustrates how the data capture process for Strand B that addresses research question two. The questions were posed to the two different expert participant groups (Practitioner and Consultant Experts). The table illustrates when the data was collected, how the data was analysed and interpreted.

**Table 23: Addressing Research Question Two (Strand B).**

<b>Research Question 2: How should trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB?</b>						
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Data Source and Methods</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Analysis</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Ethical Considerations</b>
<p>Expert expectations regarding trainee's ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainee definition of sexting.</li> <li>• Address disclosure of adolescent sexting behaviour in the school setting</li> <li>• Expectations regarding the ability to manage pupil emotions during disclosure.</li> </ul> <p>Expectations of the Practitioner experts (DSO)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define sexting.</li> <li>• Address disclosure of adolescent sexting behaviour in the school setting</li> <li>• Expectations regarding the ability to manage pupil emotions during the disclosure process</li> </ul> <p>What strategies or policies are available to support trainee teachers in learning how to respond to AASB?</p>	<p>Interview responses. x 3</p> <p>Voice recordings</p> <p>Transcription of voice to text</p> <p>Text transcriptions made visible to participant experts.</p>	<p>Researcher</p>	<p>Throughout the duration of the academic year between August and July.</p>	<p>Inductive coding using thematic analysis to ascertain the expert expectations of the trainees when presented with AASB activity.</p> <p>Identify qualities or skillsets DSOs expect to find in Trainee teachers and identify what they expect to have been included in their</p>	<p>Identify meaningful chunks of data that identify expert expectations</p>	<p>Awareness of the role of the expert and the potential impact of the answers to the questions (do not harm).</p> <p>This may reveal a lack of knowledge on behalf of the DSO surrounding which policies are available in school or guidance which is available. It is important to This may reveal a lack of knowledge on behalf of the DSO surrounding which policies are available in school or guidance which is available. It is important not to identify individual DSOs during the analysis process as they have agreed to participate in the understanding that their contributions are anonymous. Before reporting the findings, DSOs must have sight of the interview transcripts.</p>

Table 16 below illustrates how the data captured for Strand C addresses research question three; the survey and focus group questions were posed to the two different trainee participant groups (Vignette/Survey group and one focus group).

**Table 24: Addressing Research Question Three (Strand C).**

Indicator	Data Source and Methods	Responsible Party	Timing	Analysis	Interpretation	Ethical Considerations
<b>Research Question: How should trainee teachers plan to respond to AASB disclosures?</b>						
What is the extent of trainees' knowledge of AASB activity amongst school pupils?	Vignette AASB scenarios	Researcher. Check research is conducted when the Wellbeing team have availability to support trainees and that the trainees are aware of how to contact the well-being team	End of PGCE programme after completing the programme and before embarking on a teaching career June/July	Inductive coding used thematic analysis to determine factors that trainees know regarding AASB activity amongst pupils.	Identify which AASB factors they have identified, such as distinct types of AASB activity, potential ages of pupils involved and	As mentioned above, trainees may be parents of adolescents who have engaged in sexting behaviours or may have been victims themselves. Ensuring support services are available to the trainees, such as well-being teams.
	An online survey of trainees					
	Text responses					
Have Trainees been exposed to AASB incidents in schools during their training period?	Focus Group responses transcribed into text responses			Emergent themes and meaningful data will address the research question		
	The online survey of trainees	The researcher will design and create a survey tool that can be delivered to trainees remotely and elicit responses.	End of PGCE programme after completing the programme and before embarking on a teaching career June/July	Inductive coding using thematic analysis to determine whether trainees have received disclosures of AASB activity	Identify the extent of trainee exposure to sexting disclosures during school placements, exploring what types of sexting they have been exposed to and how frequently.	As mentioned above, trainees may have been distressed by incidents of sexting occurring during school placements. Ensuring data-collection exercise is conducted at a time when support services are available.
	Text-based survey responses	The researcher created a focus group using a				
Focus Group responses were transcribed into text-based responses.	The researcher; adheres to the ethical approval process					

Indicator	Data Source and Methods	Responsible Party	Timing	Analysis	Interpretation	Ethical Considerations
Can trainees identify the distinct types of sexting activity? Can they identify aggressive behaviours?	Vignette and focus group responses. Transcribed to text-based responses	The researcher and a colleague to observe for signs of stress in the trainees	End of PGCE programme after completing the programme and before embarking on a teaching career June/July	Inductive coding using thematic analysis to determine trainees would respond to disclosures of AASB activity	Identify meaningful chunks of data that define trainees planned responses.	Prior exposure to sexting behaviours, stress or tension responding to questions.  Awareness of the availability of well-being team
Trainees' knowledge of planned responses to school pupils' AASB incidents	Vignette AASB scenarios	The researcher develops the vignette scenarios to represent aggressive AASB which may be encountered in school.	End of PGCE programme after completing the programme and before embarking on a teaching career June/July	Inductive coding using thematic analysis to determine how trainees of AASB activity	Identify meaningful chunks of data that define trainees planned responses.	Prior exposure to sexting behaviours, stress or tension responding to questions.  Awareness of the availability of well-being team
	An online survey of trainees					
	Text responses	Survey questions are attributed to each scenario				
	Focus Group responses transcribed into text responses					
Have Trainees been exposed to AASB incidents in schools during their training period?	The online survey of trainees	The researcher is responsible for the survey tool, and this question is of importance as there may be distress associated with exposure to AASB incidents.	End of PGCE programme before embarking on a teaching career	Inductive coding using thematic analysis to determine the exposure of trainees to AASB activity	Identify meaningful chunks of data that identify trainees' exposure to AASB	Prior exposure to sexting behaviours, stress or tension responding to questions.  Awareness of the availability of well-being team
	Text survey responses					
	Yes/No Question					
	Focus Group responses were transcribed into text-based responses.	In the focus group, the researcher is responsible for monitoring the interactions of the participants in the group				
	Yes/No Question					
	Hand count					

**Table 25: Example analysis of Focus Group.**

<b>Theme:</b> <b>Understanding of Adolescent Sexting Behaviour (AASB)</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Preparing to manage AASB</b>	<b>Theme:</b> <b>Practical Considerations with AASB (Actions)</b>	<b>Theme :</b> <b>Emotional Teacher Responses to AASB</b>
Codes: (Meaningful chunk of data)	Codes:	Codes:	Codes:
The technology used to send in AASB Sending of sexual imagery, video and messages using technology	Not received any safeguarding training specifically about sexting	Report to Safeguarding Officer	Horrified but outwardly calm. Emotionally difficult but maintain professionalism. Professional behaviour overcome personal feelings to ensure response in line with policy Calm and nonjudgemental Expectation of communicating with mother, potential emotional reaction?
Dismissive of ASB Perception of ASB (negative and positive)	Notifying the DSL as part of the safeguarding procedure	Outside remit for role for the teacher	No emotional response expectation that Safeguarding Officer will deal with emotions? No Emotions
Challenging to manage AASB.	Received specific training on School Systems (CPOMS)	Report to Unspecified person in the college	Difficult because of the emotional attachment to pupils Upset

	Training through the school's CPD process during placement (clarity)		Concern Empathy Sympathy Compassion Shock Horried Overwhelmed
Motivation for ASB (bullying, sexual abuse )	Safeguarding Officer. Safeguarding Training/ Workshops	Support the child, Support from members of staff.	Embarrassed potential subject matter of conversations?
Prevalence and impact of ASB	Disparate levels of confidence across trainees in knowledge and application of safeguarding procedures Acting outside safeguarding procedure	Listen to the child	Proud because the pupil chose me to disclose to
Impact of ASB on victim and others	Forward-thinking schools raising awareness of ASB as part of the curriculum, passing it on to trainee teachers	Document revelations	Feel the need to protect the child. Feel the need to help the child Determined to act
	Safeguarding training location, either university or school setting or both		
<b>Examples of actual responses:</b> "Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages."	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b>	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b> <i>'I would listen to the child's claims and make her aware that I am unable to keep the</i>	<b>Examples of actual responses:</b> <i>'I would show compassion but make sure that I let the</i>

<p><i>'Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image or video.'</i></p>	<p><i>'During training, context was given to issues around sexual behaviour of student other parties.</i></p> <p><i>I was made aware that sexting might be an issue which would be taught across the school to raise awareness. The lessons were designed to describe sexting and how it can impact and what consequences it can have on the people involved.'</i></p>	<p><i>information between myself and her. I would then inform the child that the information will be passed onto the relevant person, i.e., the schools safeguarding officer.'</i></p>	<p><i>student know that we as teachers are here to help them. I would also have a firm tone when I am notifying them about telling a safeguarding officer. Even if they are uncomfortable with myself telling another person I would still have to tell another senior member of staff to deal with this.'</i></p> <p><i>'As a trainee I would feel overwhelmed as this incident can often come as a shock. I would also feel determined to act as soon as possible to resolve this issue through the appropriate channels.</i></p> <p><i>I would be concerned about the disclosure and pass on any information to the safeguarding team who are dealing with the issues.'</i></p>
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## Appendix 4D Themes, Subthemes and Codes

Table 26: Example Subthemes and Codes Across the Dataset

Preliminary Theme 1: Definition	Preliminary Theme 2 Preparation	Preliminary Theme 3 Actions	Preliminary Theme 4 Recommendations	Preliminary Theme 5 Emotions	Preliminary Theme 6 Expert Advice	Preliminary Theme 7 Expert Guidance	Preliminary Theme 8 Expert Directives
<p>Codes</p> <p><b>Using</b></p> <p>using a variety of media to message another person in a sexual manor.</p> <p>I would refer to the behaviour as use of electrical devices and social media in order to seek sexual gratification from another individual. This could include message, images, and videos.</p> <p><b>Sending</b></p> <p>sending sexually explicit images of yourself through text messages</p> <p>sending inappropriate messages by text</p>	<p>Codes</p> <p><b>Workshops and Seminars (University)</b></p> <p>Via a variety of workshops and seminars</p> <p>Safeguarding training</p> <p>I only had a basic safeguarding training. I remember a lecture about sexting but never came across a situation like that in school, so had no training in school.</p> <p>We have had training about safeguarding within school and University.</p>	<p>Codes</p> <p><b>Report</b></p> <p>I would report this ASAP to the safeguarding officer as responsibilities as a form tutor do not allow me to handle this independently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguard officer.</li> </ul> <p>Report immediately to DSO.</p> <p>CPOMS - Pass to DSL</p> <p>I would refer this to the DSOs.</p> <p>I would be shocked, and I would ask advice from somebody in school.</p> <p>Report it as soon as I can to the schools designated safeguarding lead.</p>	<p>Codes</p> <p><b>Record and Refer</b></p> <p>Take as much detail as possible and then report to the safeguarding officer. However, as this incident happened outside school, I don't think much could be done by the school.</p> <p>Immediately contact the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team before leaving school, make sure everything is documented.</p> <p><b>Report</b></p> <p>Safeguard officer.</p> <p>Raise this with safeguarding.</p> <p>As above - immediate referral to DSO</p> <p>CPOMS - Pass to DSL</p>	<p>Codes</p> <p><b>Shock/Horror</b></p> <p>I would be horrified but I would try to contain myself in order to stay calm while communicating with the mother/Safeguard officer.</p> <p>Not to be shocked and record every detail of our conversation.</p> <p>Emotionally it would be difficult, but the safeguarding policy must be followed.</p> <p>Unknown.</p> <p>It's hard to imagine but I am sure it would be difficult for me to deal with it as I really care for my trainees.</p> <p>Concern for the pupils well-being, anger that a 38-year-old would do that kind of behaviour with a 14-year-old.</p>	<p>Codes</p> <p>And so, it is very, because so many of our trainees are just like 'everybody does it.' 'Yeah, you know, yeah. 'Everybody does it,' and you are just like when you do certain, it's just like, 'What!'</p> <p>So, we do. The police come, in year seven and eight and do a Safer Internet. So, they talk about the legalities around it. And then we do obviously assemblies throughout the year. Yeah. What to do, you know, don't do it, but if you do, then this is where you need to go for help.</p> <p>Yeah, I think we would like that. We</p>	<p>Codes</p> <p><b>Guidance</b></p> <p>Well, I, I normally do a talk to them about safeguarding when they first arrive in school, and we... we chat about the kids and their behaviour. We talk about Facebook and the problems... it's a nightmare. So, sexting, yeh, well I think we would expect them to know what it is, and, and I think, why the kids do it. Most of our trainees are quite young and I think that they</p> <p>So, you, you will know what it's like then.... (laughs). Yeah, so we were talking about knowing what sexting is. Yeah, I think they should, yeah, should know what it is. They should be able to listen to what the pupil is saying, so they don't really need to be able to label what they are hearing from the kid, but they</p>	<p>Codes</p> <p><b>Directives</b></p> <p>There are so many different instances, but generally, we ask them to listen. Well, it starts before then really. It would be helpful if they could read the policy. Yeah, read the policy before they start teaching, really, and not assume what they have seen in the previous school is the same here. Read our policy. Do you use KISS? You know the paper that comes out, it comes out in September. I have all the things in there that are happening.</p> <p>We have training at *XXXX for it each year and I have to come back here and tell everyone about it. What's it called... Safe in Education you know. Keeping children safe in education. (<i>Referring to the most recent publication of Keeping</i></p>

<b>Preliminary Theme 1: Definition</b>	<b>Preliminary Theme 2 Preparation</b>	<b>Preliminary Theme 3 Actions</b>	<b>Preliminary Theme 4 Recommendations</b>	<b>Preliminary Theme 5 Emotions</b>	<b>Preliminary Theme 6 Expert Advice</b>	<b>Preliminary Theme 7 Expert Guidance</b>	<b>Preliminary Theme 8 Expert Directives</b>
<p>Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages</p> <p>Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image, or video</p> <p>I would define it as sending sexy images to another person.</p> <p>Sending sexual images through digital means (email, text)</p> <p>Using digital devices to send inappropriate images.</p> <p>Sending sexually explicit materials through various forms of media and telecommunication</p> <p>Sending sexually explicit text messages</p> <p>Intentionally sending sexual messages/media to another party</p> <p><b>Texting</b></p>	<p>I have been given suitable training throughout my PGCE course in order to deal with situations of this.</p> <p>I was trained to let a safeguarding officer know the minute this has been reported.</p> <p>I was made aware that sexting might be an issue which would be taught across the school to raise awareness. The lessons were designed to describe sexting and how it can impact and what consequences it can have on the people involved.</p> <p><b>Unclear</b></p> <p>I would report this incident to the safeguarding officer ASAP.</p>	<p>I would report this to the Safeguarding officer at school.</p> <p>Immediately contact the DSL/add an incident on cpoms. If the student brings it up do not ask any leading questions, document everything, inform the student you can't keep it secret etc.</p> <p>I would report it to my DoS.</p> <p>I have been trained not to ask questions, listen to what the student has to say and tell them clearly that I must pass the information on to a senior member of staff (safeguarding lead), and they may want to speak to them. I must then report this immediately and follow this up to make sure that it has been dealt with.</p>	<p>Referral to the safeguarding officer</p> <p>Reporting it straight to the schools DSL</p> <p>Report the information immediately to the safeguarding officer.</p> <p>Report all matters to the DoS.</p> <p>Report straight to the safeguarding team including a formal log on CPOMS.</p> <p>Report immediately, even if I have a lesson, I must get a teacher to cover my lesson to be able to report the incident.</p> <p>Report to safeguarding officer as soon as possible before anything else.</p> <p>Regular safeguarding and behaviour management training to identify concerns. The safeguarding protocols and designated staff are in place who deal with</p>	<p>I would be embarrassed, and I think I would be upset for the pupil.</p> <p>I would feel a professional duty to see all was being done to protect the child. If the disclosure was to myself, I would make the child aware that I may have to pass on details to the safeguarding officer at school and could not keep it secret but would reassure the girl that I was someone that could listen, help, and advise.</p> <p>Quite upset, but also, I would feel proud that they felt I was approachable enough to tell me.</p> <p>I would be empathetic and sympathetic towards the child.</p> <p>Concerned for the student, I would want to protect the student from the situation. I would try to remain as calm and non-judgemental whilst initially conversing with the student.</p>	<p>do have quite a few of them, them sorts, it's the stuff I deal with mainly, and it would be a big help if, help if when they are describing what they have been told, if they could... could say what they think is happening when asked, but not write it down. It just helps.</p> <p>Well, there is so much of it, we get about 1 or 2 a week, and if it is just after the holidays, it goes mad. Weekends are, are bad too. It's like when they are at school, they don't seem to have the same time, but you know.... Of a weekend, they go mad with their phones. It's like one of em gets a picture, and they pass it round. They think it's a laugh. It is like entertainment. You wonder why, why they do it. Some of it is not them, they</p>	<p>should know what they are talking about.</p> <p>The kids and the parents, they buy them these phones, but they don't tell them about what can happen. They expect us to sort it. We only touch the tip of the iceberg. The police, Yeah, but I think they need to know about where the trouble starts. You can't tell them not to do it, because they will, it's like the forbidden fruit. But they need to know it is illegal, whether they have permission or not regularly come in to talk to kids individually, because of a photo that has been circulated. They don't seem to know it is a crime. Do the trainees know that?</p> <p>Well, there is a publication you could use, but it is a bit old now, but you could give them that. There are some things from Orange... I think. I... I would start with dealing with the phones.</p> <p>They (<i>the phones</i>) should be away, away in class.</p>	<p><i>Children Safe in Education KCSIE 2019)</i></p> <p>So yeah, yeah, they should have training about Kiss before they come here, we tell them about safeguarding and policy, but the problem is that it is bullying as well. We have an online policy for online behaviour, but they don't really... well that's not true, they do... But mostly they do it at home. To be honest, there are so many policies they need to know, we could do with their placement starting here in September, or even before the holidays. It would help them.</p> <p>It would be helpful if they could read the policy. Yeah, read the policy before they start teaching, really, and not assume what they have seen in the previous school is the same here. Read our policy.</p> <p>I would tell them about government policy, KISS. I would tell them about individual school policies, but most of all, I would</p>

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<p>Texting sexual content</p> <p><b>Flirting</b></p> <p>Flirting with another person over text messages</p> <p><b>Harmful</b></p> <p>Widespread and potentially harmful if misused.</p> <p><b>Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a sensitive topic which everyone should be made aware of by the age of eleven.</li> </ul> <p>The negative impacts it has on people that have been affected by it as well as people surrounding them.</p> <p><b>Bullying</b></p> <p>Bullying via electronic communications</p>	<p>Through Safeguarding</p> <p>During training context was given to issues around sexual behaviour of student other parties.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding Officer (School)</b></p> <p>Safeguard officer. to quickly raise an alarm with the college and get advice and follow the proper course of action.</p> <p>Safeguarding training</p> <p>CPOMS - Pass to DSL</p> <p>During my first placement I had a CPD session on safeguarding and this was one of the topics discussed</p> <p>We have had training about safeguarding within</p>	<p>Inform the Safeguarding officer and (if still a trainee) inform the visiting tutor.</p> <p>The extent of advice given during training was to always keep information confidential and report to the safeguarding.</p> <p><b>Contact University</b></p> <p>Contact the College for best advice.</p> <p><b>Support the Pupil</b></p> <p>I would take steps to ensure the girl was supported, if need be, as well as ensure that she had the support she needed from all members of staff.</p> <p>I would listen to the child's claims and make her aware that I am unable to keep the information</p>	<p>the safeguarding issues according to policies and procedures.</p> <p><b>Unsure/Unclear</b></p> <p>Not sure</p> <p>Through the safeguarding lead</p> <p>They were no laid out recommended ways to deal with this incident beyond speaking to the Safeguarding Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul> <p><b>Phone advice.</b></p> <p>To report to the Safeguarding officer within the school. To not look at any photos involved in the situation.</p> <p><b>Pupil Supported</b></p> <p>Ensure the pupil had support available for them.</p> <p>Listen to child, don't prob n report to DSL.</p> <p>In this situation, I recommend that the teacher should inform the safeguarding officer</p>	<p>Shocked, but remain professional.</p> <p>Very upset</p> <p>I would show compassion but make sure that I let the student know that we as teachers are here to help them. I would also have a firm tone when I am notifying them about telling a safeguarding officer. Even if they are uncomfortable with myself telling another person I would still have to tell another senior member of staff to deal with this.</p> <p>Shock but hid it to allow the child to express or disclose their feelings.</p> <p>Emotionally, this would be a difficult topic to cover with any individual involved. I would most likely require some sort of counselling after this in order to be able to comprehend what had been discussed and to ensure that there would be no further issues in the future.</p>	<p>are playing around with a picture, sort of bragging, but some of it is really nasty stuff. We have had a few really bad ones. (Door knock) Can you excuse me a minute?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have loads of stuff here you could have. *XXXX from *XXXX Police is always dropping stuff off to use to share with the kids. We have that County Lines. You know that is a big thing as well. Nightmare....</li> </ul> <p>But yeah, the *XXXX training is good because we all get together as DSOs and talk. There isn't anywhere for us to share really, and you can't do emails, because of privacy. But we have a good old chat when we get together.</p> <p>Permission... yeah, they need to know</p>	<p>That way they can't share in class. But it is the phones that are the problem.</p> <p>The kids need to know about their phones and what they have in their pocket.</p> <p>They need to know it's a crime, they are all underage, here they are. It will be different in a school with a sixth form. There are so many issues aren't there?</p> <p>Yeah, but I think they need to know about where the trouble starts. You can't tell them not to do it, because they will, it's like the forbidden fruit. But they need to know it is illegal, whether they have permission or not.</p> <p>Some sexting is aggressive, well the stuff we see is. The other stuff is contained, they don't share it with us, they keep it to themselves. But it is when they start falling out, they use anything they can to get the upper hand. The main one is when they are</p>	<p>train them to listen to the kids.</p>

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<p>Sexting should be considered to be a form of sexual abuse.</p> <p><b>Sexual or Personal</b></p> <p>Sexual references made over text about the other person or another person, either planned or fantasised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate level of communication revealing personal information</li> </ul>	<p>school and University.</p> <p>Immediately contact the DSL/add an incident on cpoms. If the student brings it up, do not ask any leading questions, document everything, inform the student you can't keep it secret, etc.</p> <p>I would have used the appropriate safeguarding and child protection procedures in line with my school training and taken particular care in following the school safeguarding policy.</p> <p>Safeguarding seminars and tutorials with placement</p> <p>First instance would be to speak to the school safeguarding team to ensure that this matter has been reported. If I found that this had</p>	<p>between myself and her. I would then inform the child that the information will be passed onto the relevant person, i.e., the schools safeguarding officer.</p> <p>I would firstly, let the student know that before they tell me anything serious, I would have to let a safeguarding officer be notified as to what the student has told me. I would not continuously be persistent and keep asking questions but instead, let the student tell me what has been going on.</p> <p>Report to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Outside Agencies</b></li> </ul> <p>Speak to and work with relevant outside agencies to support the family and child.</p>	<p>as well as giving a PSHE lesson on sexting and grooming. Discussing the big impacts, it has on people, especially on teenagers.</p> <p>External Agencies.</p> <p>Contact the police if no immediate action has been taken.</p>	<p>I would be shocked, but I would not show it.</p> <p>I would be horrified, and it would make me very uncomfortable to talk about.</p> <p>As a trainee I would feel overwhelmed as this incident can often come as a shock. I would also feel determined to act as soon as possible to resolve this issue through the appropriate channels.</p> <p>I would be concerned about the disclosure and pass on any information to the safeguarding team who are dealing with the issues.</p>	<p>that they don't have permission to share. Consent. yeah consent. They need to know about the law, about what pornography is and, and how age impacts on that. Bullying is a nightmare for them (<i>the trainees</i>) when they don't know what to do.</p> <p>But yeah, consent is a difficult one, it's hard, they, well one minute they are all best of friends and then the next it's like all hell breaks loose.</p> <p>But it doesn't help when you have these celebs. They post these pictures, the sexy poses, and they have had boob implants and stuff. The pictures have been touched up, and the kids think they are the same, but they aren't.</p>	<p>going out with each other, they take pictures and then when it all ends it can get a bit nasty. It used to be he said... she said...but now it's like 'have you seen this....' And there are some pictures the kids want to see more of. It's like them card collections you know, like footie cards, they seem to like to have lots of nudies on their phones, boys.</p> <p>They need to know about the sex offender's register. Yeah... there are. There are kids who have ended up on there. It ruins their lives. So yeah, pornography and spreading pornography needs to be on there.</p> <p>They think they are the only one. But we get at least one a week. (<i>Frequency</i>)</p> <p>Most of the disclosures we get are aggressive. That's why they are coming to us. It has kind of, well... got out of hand, and they can't deal with it. So that is why they tell someone. Yeah. so, most of the sexting</p>	

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	<p>not been appropriately managed or reported, I would feel confident to contact the police in order to make a report of the crime that had taken place.</p> <p>I have attended safeguarding training at both placement schools and been given numerous scenarios.</p> <p>I was made aware of who the Safeguarding Officer is and was told to inform them of any and all suspicions.</p> <p><b>No Training</b></p> <p>Not covered this during training</p>	<p>Safeguarding lead and also police / Childline</p> <p>I would listen to what the individual was saying and ensure that I stipulate that everything that is being told to me would need to be passed on to the schools safeguarding team officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>I would pass on the concerns and information to the safeguarding team in the school.</p>			<p>a film clip of a pillow, yeah... They burst the pillow in a windy field and then ask the kids to pick up the feathers. They use the feathers, as an, an analogy. Sort of, well... representing the picture being shared. Of course, they can't get all the feathers back, so, so it is like, well it's like the picture, isn't it? That's a good one to show them.</p> <p>They need to know how to listen and then how to erm... take notes. Some of them have tried in the past to write down what they are thinking, and that is not helpful. They need to write what they have heard and seen, who was there with them, who they name as being involved in the incident... What do the parents know if they are mentioned?</p>	<p>disclosures are aggressive. They feel like the whole world has seen pictures of them. Or they think everyone hates them. We tell them it is yesterday's chip papers. Not to worry about it and see if they can get the picture taken down.</p> <p>It would be good if they knew the reporting system. Where the forms are and, erm... had a good look at them before they need to use them</p>	

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					<p>Because they (<i>the police</i>) need to keep a log of sexting activity, as it is a criminal offence, yeah, they don't record all of it as a crime. I am not sure what happens. But we do report aggressive sexting, yes.</p>		

**Table 27: Preliminary Themes and Associated Codes Emerging from the Data Corpus**

Preliminary Theme 1: Defining Sexting	Preliminary Theme 2 Preparation	Preliminary Theme 3 Practical Actions	Preliminary Theme 4 Recommended Ways	Preliminary Theme 5 Emotional Responses	Preliminary Theme 6 Expert Advice	Preliminary Theme 7 Expert Guidance	Preliminary Theme 8 Expert Directives
<p><b>Subtheme: Using</b></p> <p>using a variety of media to message another person in a sexual manner.</p> <p>I would refer to the behaviour as the use of electrical devices and social media to seek sexual gratification from another individual. This could include a message, images, and videos.</p> <p><b>Sub-theme: Sending</b></p> <p>sending sexually explicit images of yourself through text messages</p> <p>sending inappropriate messages by text</p> <p>Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages</p> <p>Sending sexually explicit messages via text, image, or video</p> <p>I would define it as sending sexy images to another person.</p>	<p><b>Subtheme: Workshops and Seminars (University)</b></p> <p>Via a variety of workshops and seminars</p> <p>Safeguarding training</p> <p>I only had a basic safeguarding training; I remember a lecture about sexting but never came across a situation like that in school, so had no training in school.</p> <p>We have had training about safeguarding within school and University.</p> <p>I have been given suitable training throughout my PGCE course in order to deal with situations of this.</p> <p>I was trained to let a safeguarding officer know the minute this has been reported.</p> <p>I was made aware that sexting might be an issue which would be taught across the school to raise awareness. The lessons</p>	<p><b>Subtheme: Report</b></p> <p>I would report this ASAP to the safeguarding Officer as responsibilities as a form tutor do not allow me to handle this independently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguard Officer.</li> </ul> <p>Report immediately to DSO.</p> <p>CPOMS - Pass to DSL</p> <p>I would refer this to the DSOs.</p> <p>I would be shocked, and I would ask advice from somebody in school.</p> <p>Report it as soon as I can to the schools designated safeguarding lead.</p> <p>I would report this to the Safeguarding Officer at school.</p> <p>Immediately contact the DSL/add an incident on cpoms. If the student brings it up do not ask</p>	<p><b>Subtheme: Record and Refer</b></p> <p>Take as much detail as possible and then report to the safeguarding Officer. However, as this incident happened outside school, I don't think much could be done by the school.</p> <p>Immediately contact the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team before leaving school, make sure everything is documented.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Report</b></p> <p>Safeguard Officer.</p> <p>Raise this with safeguarding.</p> <p>As above - immediate referral to DSO.</p> <p>CPOMS - Pass to DSL</p> <p>Referral to the safeguarding Officer.</p>	<p><b>Subtheme: Shock/Horror</b></p> <p>I would be horrified, but I would try to contain myself in order to stay calm while communicating with the mother/Safeguard officer.</p> <p>I would be shocked, but I would not show it.</p> <p>I would be horrified, and it would make me very uncomfortable to talk about.</p> <p>Shocked, but remain professional.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Difficult</b></p> <p>Emotionally it would be difficult, but the safeguarding policy must be followed.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Unknown.</b></p> <p>It's hard to imagine, but I am sure it would be difficult for me to deal</p>	<p><b>Subtheme: Prevalence</b></p> <p>And so, it is very because so many of our trainees are just like 'everybody does it.' 'Yeah, you know, yeah. 'Everybody does it,' and you are just like when you do certain, it's just like, 'What!'</p> <p>Well, there is so much of it, we get about 1 or 2 a week, and if it is just after the holidays, it goes mad. Weekends are, are bad too. It's like when they are at school, they don't seem to have the same time, but you know.... Of a weekend, they go mad with their phones.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Police Informal</b></p> <p>So, we do; the Police come, in year seven and eight and do a Safer Internet. So, they talk about the legalities around it. And then we do obviously assemblies throughout the year. Yeah. What to do, you know, don't do it, but if</p>	<p><b>Subtheme: Talks</b></p> <p>Well, I, I normally do a talk to them about safeguarding when they first arrive in school, and we... we chat about the kids and their behaviour. We talk about Facebook and the problems... it's a nightmare. So, sexting, yeh, well I think we would expect them to know what it is, and, and I think, why the kids do it. Most of our trainees are quite young and I think that they</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Definitions</b></p> <p>So, you, you will know what it's like then.... (laughs). Yeah, so we were talking about knowing what sexting is. Yeah, I think they should, yeah, should know what it is. They should be able to listen to what the pupil is saying, so they don't really need to be able to label what they are hearing from the kid, but they should know what they are talking about.</p>	<p><b>Subtheme: School Policy</b></p> <p>It would be helpful if they could read the policy. Yeah, read the policy before they start teaching, really, and not assume what they have seen in the previous school is the same here. Read our policy.</p> <p>There are so many different instances, but generally, we ask them to listen. Well, it starts before then really. It would be helpful if they could read the policy. Yeah, read the policy before they start teaching, really, and not assume what they have seen in the previous school is the same here.</p> <p>It would be helpful if they could read the policy. Yeah, read the policy before they start teaching, really, and not assume what they have seen in the</p>

Preliminary Theme 1: Defining Sexting	Preliminary Theme 2 Preparation	Preliminary Theme 3 Practical Actions	Preliminary Theme 4 Recommended Ways	Preliminary Theme 5 Emotional Responses	Preliminary Theme 6 Expert Advice	Preliminary Theme 7 Expert Guidance	Preliminary Theme 8 Expert Directives
<p>Sending sexual images through digital means (email, text)</p> <p>Using digital devices to send inappropriate images.</p> <p>Sending sexually explicit materials through various forms of media and telecommunication</p> <p>Sending sexually explicit text messages</p> <p>Intentionally sending sexual messages/media to another party.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Texting</b></p> <p>Texting sexual content</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Flirting</b></p> <p>Flirting with another person over text messages</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Harmful</b></p> <p>Widespread and potentially harmful if misused.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>were designed to describe sexting and how it can impact, and what consequences it can have on the people involved.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Unclear</b></p> <p>I would report this incident to the safeguarding officer ASAP.</p> <p>Through Safeguarding</p> <p>During training, context was given to issues around sexual behaviour of trainees and other parties.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Safeguarding Officer (School)</b></p> <p>Safeguard Officer. to quickly raise an alarm with the College and get advice and follow the proper course of action.</p> <p>Safeguarding training</p> <p>CPOMS - Pass to DSL.</p> <p>During my first placement, I had a CPD session on safeguarding, and this was</p>	<p>any leading questions, document everything, inform the student you can't keep it secret etc.</p> <p>I would report it to my DoS.</p> <p>I have been trained not to ask questions, listen to what the student has to say and tell them clearly that I must pass the information on to a senior member of staff (safeguarding lead), and they may want to speak to them. I must then report this immediately and follow this up to make sure that it has been dealt with. Inform the Safeguarding Officer and (if still a trainee) inform the visiting tutor.</p> <p>The extent of advice given during training was to always keep information confidential and report to the safeguarding.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Contact University</b></p> <p>Contact the College for best advice.</p>	<p>Reporting it straight to the school's DSL.</p> <p>Report the information immediately to the safeguarding Officer.</p> <p>Report all matters to the DoS.</p> <p>Report straight to the safeguarding team including a formal log on CPOMS.</p> <p>Report immediately, even if I have a lesson, I must get a teacher to cover my lesson to be able to report the incident.</p> <p>Report to safeguarding officer as soon as possible before anything else.</p> <p>Regular safeguarding and behaviour management training to identify concerns. The safeguarding protocols and designated staff are in place who deal with the safeguarding issues according to</p>	<p>with it as I really care for my trainees.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Professionalism</b></p> <p>Not to be shocked and record every detail of our conversation.</p> <p>Concern for the pupil's wellbeing, anger that a 38-year-old would do that kind of behaviour with a 14-year-old.</p> <p>I would feel a professional duty to see all was being done to protect the child. If the disclosure was to myself, I would make the child aware that I may have to pass on details to the safeguarding Officer at school and could not keep it secret but would reassure the girl that I was someone that could listen, help, and advise.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Embarrassed</b></p> <p>I would be embarrassed, and I think I would be upset for the pupil.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Upset</b></p> <p>Quite upset, I would also feel proud that they felt</p>	<p>you do, then this is where you need to go for help.</p> <p><b>Subtheme Terminology</b></p> <p>Yeah, I think we would like that. We do have quite a few of them, them sorts, it's the stuff I deal with mainly, and it would be a big help if, help if when they are describing what they have been told, if they could... could say what they think is happening when asked, but not write it down. It just helps.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Activity</b></p> <p>It's like one of em gets a picture, and they pass it around. They think it's a laugh. It is like entertainment. You wonder why, why they do it. Some of it is not them, they are playing around with a picture, sort of bragging, but some of it is really nasty stuff. We have had a few really bad ones. (Door knock) Can you excuse me a minute?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><b>Subtheme Resources</b></p>	<p><b>Subtheme: Expectations</b></p> <p>The kids and the parents, they buy them these phones, but they don't tell them about what can happen. They expect us to sort it. We only touch the tip of the iceberg. The Police Yeah, but I think they need to know about where the trouble starts. You can't tell them not to do it, because they will. It's like the forbidden fruit.</p> <p>But they need to know it is illegal, whether they have permission or not regularly come in to talk to kids individually, because of a photo that has been circulated. They don't seem to know it is a crime. Do the trainees know that?</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Behaviour Management</b></p> <p>They (<i>the phones</i>) should be away, away in class. That way they can't share in class. But it is the phones that are the problem.</p> <p>The kids need to know about their phones and</p>	<p>previous school is the same here. Read our policy.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Government Policy</b></p> <p>Read our policy. Do you use KISS? You know the paper that comes out, it comes out in September. I have all the things in there that are happening.</p> <p>We have training at *XXXX for it each year and I have to come back here and tell everyone about it. What's it called... Safe in Education you know. Keeping children safe in Education. (<i>Referring to the most recent publication of Keeping Children Safe in Education KCSIE 2019</i>)</p> <p>So yeah, yeah, they should have training about Kiss before they come here, we tell them about safeguarding and policy, but the problem is that it is bullying as well. We have an online policy</p>

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<p>It is a sensitive topic which everyone should be made aware of by the age of eleven.</p> <p>The negative impacts it has on people that have been affected by it as well as people surrounding them.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Bullying</b></p> <p>Bullying via electronic communications Sexting should be a form of sexual abuse.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Sexual or Personal</b></p> <p>Sexual references made over text about the other person or another person, either planned or fantasised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inappropriate level of communication revealing personal information</li> </ul>	<p>one of the topics discussed.</p> <p>We have had training about safeguarding within school and University.</p> <p>Immediately contact the DSL/add an incident on cpoms. If the student brings it up, do not ask any leading questions, document everything, inform the student you can't keep it secret etc.</p> <p>I would have used the appropriate safeguarding and child protection procedures in line with my school training and take particular care in following the schools safeguarding policy.</p> <p>Safeguarding seminar and tutorials with placement</p> <p>The first instance would be to speak to the school safeguarding team to ensure that this matter has been reported. If I found that this had not been appropriately managed or reported, I would feel confident to contact the Police in order to make a report of the crime that had taken place.</p>	<p><b>Subtheme: Support the Pupil</b></p> <p>I would take steps to ensure the girl was supported, if need be, as well as ensure that she had the support she needed from all members of staff.</p> <p>I would listen to the child's claims and make her aware that I am unable to keep the information between myself and her. I would then inform the child that the information will be passed onto the relevant person, i.e., the school's safeguarding Officer.</p> <p>I would firstly let the student know that before they tell me anything serious, I would have to let a safeguarding officer be notified as to what the student has told me. I would not continuously be persistent and keep asking questions but instead, let the student tell me what has been going on.</p> <p>Report to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<p>policies and procedures.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Unsure/Unclear</b></p> <p>Not sure</p> <p>Through the safeguarding lead</p> <p>There were no recommended ways to deal with this incident beyond speaking to the Safeguarding Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul> <p><b>Subtheme: Phone advice</b></p> <p>To report to Safeguarding Officer within the school. Do not look at any photos involved in the situation.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Pupil Supported</b></p> <p>Ensure the pupil had Support available for them.</p> <p>Listen to child, don't prob n report to DSL.</p> <p>In this situation, I recommend that the teacher should inform</p>	<p>I was approachable enough to tell me.</p> <p>Very upset</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Empathy</b></p> <p>I would be empathetic and sympathetic towards the child.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Concern</b></p> <p>Concerned for the student, I would want to protect the student from the situation. I would try to remain as calm and non-judgemental whilst initially conversing with the student.</p> <p><b>Subtheme Compassion</b></p> <p>I would show compassion but make sure that I let the student know that we as teachers are here to help them. I would also have a firm tone when I am notifying them about telling a safeguarding officer. Even if they are uncomfortable with myself telling another person, I would still have to tell another senior member of staff to deal with this.</p>	<p>We have loads of stuff here you could have.</p> <p>*XXXX from *XXXX</p> <p>Police is always dropping stuff off to use to share with the kids. We have that County Lines. You know that is a big thing as well. Nightmare...</p> <p>a film clip of a pillow, yeah... They burst the pillow in a windy field and then ask the kids to pick up the feathers. They use the feathers as an, an analogy. Sort of, well... representing the picture being shared. Of course, they can't get all the feathers back, so, so it is like, well it's like the picture, isn't it? That's a good one to show them.</p> <p>Well, there is a publication you could use, but it is a bit old now, but you could give them that. There are some things from Orange. I think. I... I would start with dealing with the phones.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Training.</b></p> <p>But yeah, the *XXXX training is good because we all get together as DSOs and talk. There isn't anywhere for us to</p>	<p>what they have in their pocket.</p> <p>They need to know it's a crime, they are all underage, here they are. It will be different in a school with a sixth form. There are so many issues aren't there?</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Bullying</b></p> <p>Yeah, but I think they need to know about where the trouble starts. You can't tell them not to do it, because they will, it's like the forbidden fruit. But they need to know it is illegal, whether they have permission or not.</p> <p>Some sexting is aggressive, well the stuff we see is. The other stuff is contained, they don't share it with us, they keep it to themselves. But it is when they start falling out, they use anything they can to get the upper hand. The main one is when they are going out with each other, they take pictures and then when it all ends it can get a bit nasty. It used to be he</p>	<p>for online behaviour, but they don't really... well, that's not true, they do... But mostly they do it at home. To be honest, there are so many policies they need to know, we could do with their placement starting here in September, or even before the holidays. It would help them.</p> <p>I would tell them about government policy, KISS. I would tell them about individual school policies, but most of all, I would train them to listen to the kids.</p> <p><b>Subtheme External Reporting</b></p> <p>because they (<i>the Police</i>) need to keep a log of sexting activity. It is a criminal offence. Yeah, they don't record all of it as a crime. I am not sure what happens. But we do report aggressive sexting, yes.</p>

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	<p>I have attended safeguarding training at both placement schools and been given numerous scenarios.</p> <p>I was made aware of who the Safeguarding Officer is and was told to inform them of all suspicions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><b>Subtheme: No Training</b></p> <p>Not covered this during training.</p>	<p><b>Subtheme: Outside Agencies</b></p> <p>Speak to and work with relevant outside agencies to support the family and child.</p> <p>Safeguarding lead and police / Childline</p> <p>I would listen to what the individual was saying and ensure that I stipulate that everything that is being told to me would need to be passed on to the schools safeguarding team/officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>I would pass on the concerns and information to the safeguarding team in the school.</p>	<p>the safeguarding Officer as well as giving a PSHE lesson on sexting and grooming. Discussing the big impacts, it has on people, especially on teenagers.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: External Agencies</b></p> <p>Contact the Police if no immediate action has been taken.</p>	<p>Shock but hide it to allow the child to express or disclose their feelings.</p> <p>Emotionally, this would be a difficult topic to cover with any individual involved. I would most likely require some sort of counselling after this in order to be able to comprehend what had been discussed and to ensure that there would be no further issues in the future.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Overwhelmed</b></p> <p>As a trainee, I would feel overwhelmed as this incident can often come as a shock. I would also feel determined to act as soon as possible to resolve this issue through the appropriate channels.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Concerned</b></p> <p>I would be concerned about the disclosure and pass on any information to the safeguarding team who are dealing with the issues.</p>	<p>share really, and you can't do emails, because of privacy. But we have a good old chat when we get together.</p> <p>They need to know how to listen and then how to, erm... take notes.</p> <p>Some of them have tried in the past to write down what they are thinking, and that is not helpful.</p> <p>They need to write what they have heard and seen, who was there with them, and who they name as being involved in the incident... What do the parents know if they are mentioned?</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Consent</b></p> <p>Permission... yeah, they need to know that they don't have permission to share. Consent. yeah, consent. They need to know about the law, about what pornography is and, and how age impacts that.</p> <p>But yeah, consent is a difficult one, it's hard,</p>	<p>said... she said...but now it's like 'have you seen this....' And there are some pictures the kids want to see more of. It's like them card collections, you know, like footie cards, they seem to like to have lots of nudies on their phones, boys.</p> <p><b>Subtheme: Consequences</b></p> <p>They need to know about the sex offender's register. Yeah... there are. There are kids who have ended up on there. It ruins their lives. So yeah, pornography and spreading pornography needs to be on there.</p> <p>They think they are the only one. But we get it at least once a week. <i>(Frequency)</i></p> <p>Most of the disclosures we get are aggressive. That's why they are coming to us. It has kind of, well... got out of hand, and they can't deal with it. So that is why they tell someone. Yeah. so, most of the sexting disclosures are aggressive. They feel like</p>	

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					<p>they, well one minute they are all best of friends and then the next it's like all hell breaks loose.</p> <p><b>Subtheme:</b> <b>Protagonists/Catalysts</b> Bullying is a nightmare for them (<i>the trainees</i>) when they don't know what to do.</p> <p>But it doesn't help when you have these celebs. They post these pictures, the sexy poses, and they have had boob implants and stuff. The pictures have been touched up, and the kids think they are the same, but they aren't.</p>	<p>the whole world has seen pictures of them. Or they think everyone hates them. We tell them it is yesterday's chip papers. Not to worry about it and see if they can get the picture taken down.</p> <p>It would be good if they knew the reporting system. Where the forms are and, erm... had a good look at them before they need to use them</p>	

\*XXXX indicates anonymised data, where the participant has named a placement, or a person and this data has been deleted and replaced.

**Table 28: Final Refined Themes and Subthemes with Definitions for the Data Corpus**

Reviewed Themes (Step 4)	Sub-themes.	Definition ( <i>As defined from the data corpus</i> )
<p><b>Central Theme: Theme 1 Understanding ASB</b></p> <p>This theme relates to how trainees define Aggressive Adolescent Sexting Behaviours (AASB) and includes constituent behaviours and how the experts believe they should define them.</p>	<p>Using</p> <p>Sending Texting</p> <p>Flirting</p> <p>Bullying</p> <p>Sexual/Personal</p> <p>Harmful</p> <p>Impact</p>	<p><i>'Using'</i> was defined as the medium or device used to conduct AASB, and it is critical to define participant understanding of the mechanisms that facilitate AASB.</p> <p><i>'Sending'</i> is defined as transmitting AASB communications. <i>'Texting'</i> is defined as the method used to transmit messages.</p> <p><i>'Flirting'</i> is defined in the dataset as a reason trainee believe adolescents engage in sexting behaviour within relationships.</p> <p><i>'Bullying'</i> is defined in the dataset as a reason trainee believe adolescents engage in AASB where the intention is to harm an individual.</p> <p><i>'Sexual/Personal'</i> is why trainees believe adolescents engage in sexting behaviour.</p> <p><i>'Harmful'</i> is a description trainee believe is a consequence of adolescents engaging in AASB.</p> <p><i>'Impact'</i> is defined as the effect trainees believe adolescents experience from engaging in sexting behaviour.</p>
<p><b>Theme 2 Preparing to manage AASB:</b></p> <p>This theme relates to the training and preparation trainees have received, designed to help them manage a disclosure incident of AASB.</p>	<p>Workshops and Seminars</p> <p>Unclear</p> <p>Safeguarding Officer</p> <p>No Training</p>	<p><i>'Workshops and Seminars'</i> are defined as the participants' location and type of training. This theme helps to ascertain where the training has taken place.</p> <p><i>'Unclear'</i> is defined as a description of the participant's awareness of the training they have received. When a participant is unclear, they are unsure where their training has taken place.</p> <p><i>'Safeguarding Officer'</i> is defined as a person in school who has delivered training about sexting behaviour to the trainee participants.</p> <p><i>'No Training'</i> is defined as the participant lacking awareness of having received training about sexting or AASB during the PGCE program.</p>

Reviewed Themes (Step 4)	Sub-themes.	Definition ( <i>As defined from the data corpus</i> )
<p><b>Theme 3</b> <b>Practical courses of action</b></p> <p>This theme relates to a teacher's practical actions in response to behaviours they encounter when receiving a disclosure incident. Effectively, the first course of action.</p>	<p>Report</p> <p>Contact University</p> <p>Outside Agencies</p> <p>Support Pupil</p> <p>Unsure</p>	<p><i>'Report'</i> is the trainee participant's awareness of their responsibility to pass the disclosure information on to the safeguarding team.</p> <p><i>'Contact University'</i> is a course of action a trainee participant would take when unsure of the school's reporting regime.</p> <p><i>'Outside Agencies'</i> are reporting pathways that involve reporting the disclosure incident to external agencies, such as the Police, without the authorisation of the school, therefore, failing to observe policy guidance in school.</p> <p><i>'Support Pupil'</i> is defined as the trainee's awareness of the support available to pupils in school following an AASB disclosure incident.</p> <p><i>'Unsure'</i> is defined as the lack of awareness of a trainee participant when they were unclear about practical actions, they should take on receipt of a disclosure.</p>
<p><b>Theme 4</b> <b>Recommended ways of dealing with ASB incidents</b></p> <p>This theme relates directly to how the trainees have been trained, specifically in schools, how mentors taught trainees to address AASB and trainee observations of teachers addressing AASB in school settings during their training.</p>	<p>Refer</p> <p>Report to DSO</p> <p>CPOMS+DSO</p> <p>Unsure</p> <p>Phone Advice</p> <p>Pupil Supported</p>	<p><i>'Refer'</i> is a process of notification, an initial conversation with the school's safeguarding team.</p> <p><i>'Report to DSO'</i> is defined as the process of recording the details of an AASB disclosure incident by creating a paper record of a disclosure incident for the school safeguarding team.</p> <p><i>'CPOMS+DSO'</i> is a specialist electronic system used in schools to record and report an AASB disclosure incident, which results in the DSO having an electronic record of an incident.</p> <p><i>'Unsure'</i> is a lack of awareness amongst trainee participants regarding recommended ways of responding to a disclosure incident.</p> <p><i>'Phone Advice'</i> is the trainee's awareness of what to do with hardware, such as mobile phones, which may contain sexting images once they receive a disclosure.</p>

Reviewed Themes (Step 4)	Sub-themes.	Definition ( <i>As defined from the data corpus</i> )
		'Pupil Supported' is defined as the trainee's awareness of how they should 'follow up' after a disclosure event to support the pupil and signpost to additional services.
<p><b>Theme 5 Emotional responses teachers'</b></p> <p>This theme relates to how the trainees expect to feel when they receive a disclosure from a pupil.</p>	<p>Shock/Horror</p> <p>Difficult</p> <p>Unknown</p> <p>Professionalism</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Upset</p> <p>Overwhelmed</p>	<p>'Shock/Horror' is an initial emotion described by trainee participants of unexpectedness surrounding receiving a disclosure incident.</p> <p>'Difficult' is an emotion described by trainee participants as feeling unprepared or challenged emotionally with professionally fulfilling the requirements of a disclosure incident.</p> <p>'Unknown' is the trainee participant's inability to express their emotions because they may not have professionally experienced a disclosure incident.</p> <p>'Professionalism' is the trainee participant's ability to objectively address a disclosure event and manage their personal feelings when engaged with a pupil.</p> <p>'Empathy' is the trainee participant's feelings and ability to relate to how the discloser might feel and respond sympathetically.</p> <p>'Upset' is the trainee participant's anticipated feelings of sadness or distress at the prospect of receiving an AASB disclosure.</p> <p>'Overwhelmed' is defined as the trainee participant's feelings regarding their inability to cope with the range of emotions and professional expectations when receiving an AASB disclosure from a pupil.</p>
<p><b>Theme 6 Expert Advice</b></p> <p>This theme relates to the expert participant expectations regarding trainees and their knowledge</p>	<p>Prevalence</p> <p>Police Informal Intervention</p> <p>Terminology</p>	<p>'Prevalence' is the expert opinion on the frequency of disclosure events within a school.</p> <p>'The experts define Police Informal Intervention' as preventative actions taken by the Police in schools or educational measures to raise awareness amongst pupils of the issues surrounding sexting activity and AASB.</p> <p>'Terminology' is defined as the expert's opinion regarding the safeguarding vocabulary required for a trainee to be able to describe and document a sexting event clearly and succinctly for reporting purposes.</p>

Reviewed Themes (Step 4)	Sub-themes.	Definition ( <i>As defined from the data corpus</i> )
base before addressing an AASB disclosure.	Consent/ Permission  Protagonist	<p><i>'Consent/ Permission'</i> is a trainee's awareness of consent, the ability to consent and the trainee's ability to establish whether a pupil is justified in their decision to engage in sexting activity. The trainee should identify coercion and establish when an image has been shared beyond its original intended audience.</p> <p><i>The experts define 'Protagonists'</i> as people encouraging young people to share sexualised imagery. These can be celebrities who may liberally share sexualised images on social media or peer groups who encourage the sharing of imagery.</p>
<p><b>Theme 7 Expert Guidance</b></p> <p>This theme relates to the participant experts' instructions to teachers regarding where to get help to deliver a safeguarding curriculum.</p>	<p>Talks</p> <p>Definitions</p> <p>Expectations</p> <p>Resources</p> <p>Behaviour Management</p> <p>Bullying</p> <p>Consequences</p>	<p><i>'Talks'</i> are defined by experts as persons or organisations that provide safeguarding resources to schools in the format of a presentation to pupils.</p> <p><i>'Definitions'</i> are defined by the experts as the requirement to have explicit knowledge, understanding and an ability to use safeguarding terminology accurately and appropriately to describe adolescent sexting behaviours and to be able to report sexting activity accurately.</p> <p>The experts define <i>'Expectations'</i> as the knowledge and understanding expected of trainee teachers regarding school processes to address sexting and AASB.</p> <p><i>'Resources'</i> are defined by the experts as materials produced by reputable organisations to support pupils, their parents or guardians, teachers, and trainee teachers in understanding adolescents' sexting and AASB.</p> <p><i>'Behaviour Management'</i> is defined by experts as the requirement for trainee teachers to know about school Behaviour Management Systems and policies, to address mobile phone usage, misuse, and sexting behaviours.</p> <p><i>The experts define 'Bullying'</i> as the requirement for trainee teachers to identify bullying behaviours amongst pupils, where sexting behaviours are featured, particularly aggressive behaviours.</p> <p>The experts define <i>'Consequences'</i> as the requirement for trainee teachers to be aware that sexting activity amongst adolescents is illegal and can have profound consequences for pupils, including being registered as</p>

Reviewed Themes (Step 4)	Sub-themes.	Definition ( <i>As defined from the data corpus</i> )
		a sex offender. In addition, ' <i>Consequences</i> ' also refers to the victim who may suffer significant distress and harm that may be long-term.
<p><b>Theme 8 Expert Directives</b></p> <p>This theme relates to the expert participant's mandatory instructions to trainee teachers regarding safeguarding professional responsibilities and addressing AASB behaviours in schools.</p>	<p>School Policy</p> <p>Government Policy</p>	<p>'<i>School Policy</i>' is defined by the experts as the expectation that trainee teachers are required to know the location of safeguarding policies, read the guidelines and be able to operationalise them in school placements, and for their future employment.</p> <p>'Government Policy' is defined by the experts' as the expectation that trainee teachers have read and received training regarding current government safeguarding publications, which include 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and Government directives regarding AASB and sexual aggression in schools.</p>

