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Emotion Coaching: Moving from Behaviourism to Nurture in a Nursery Class

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on the process of moving from a Behaviourist approach to managing young children's behaviour, to an attachment-led approach supporting nursery-aged children to regulate their own behaviours through emotion-coaching experiences. The study supports the development of new understandings about emotion-coaching as a strategy for supporting young children's meta-emotion, social interactions and attachments within a Scottish nursery context. Such a study is important in order to respond to new understandings about attachment and brain development. The research approach adopted in this dissertation, included a comprehensive review of relevant literature on Attachment Theory and emotion-coaching, linked with an ongoing Action Research framework within the focus nursery class. Adopting a child-centred approach, the study collected the perspectives of pre-school children experiencing emotion-coaching in their nursery environment, utilising the participatory tools of The Mosaic Approach. The findings from this research offer evidence that the experience of emotion-coaching provided an increased repertoire of emotional language in young children; supported a developing understanding of the emotions behind behaviours; enabled children to choose appropriate strategies to respond to strong emotions; and enhanced young children's ability to self-regulate their emotions and subsequent behaviours. The main conclusions drawn from this study are that emotion-coaching provides early years educators with a practical application of an attachment-led pedagogy; that emotion-coaching supports young children's developing emotional intelligence and subsequent social skills; and that

young children can learn to regulate their own and others' emotions when supported to develop their meta-emotion through emotion-coaching. This dissertation recommends that educators, rather than 'disciplining' a young child's behaviour patterns through sanction/reward approaches, should focus instead on supporting children's increasingly complex meta-emotion to develop emotional self-awareness, self-regulation of behaviour and increasingly empathic co-regulatory responses.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1   Background

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) (2012) requires that educators must "use a variety of strategies to build relationships with learners, promote positive behaviour and celebrate success" (p.16). Building relationships which support children's emotional and social development has positive effects on children's academic outcomes (Graziano, Reavis, Keane & Calkins, 2007), on their higher order cognitive processes such as memory, attention and forward planning (Blair, 2002), on peer popularity (Graziano, Keane & Calkins, 2007), and on behavioural regulation (Howse, Calkins, Anastopoulos, Keane & Shelton, 2003). For many pedagogues, provision of this social and emotional support translates to the use of strategies such as behaviour charts, reward stickers, house points, detentions, exclusions and time-out (Hook, 2013; Payne, 2015; Chaplain, 2016). These approaches to behaviour management in schools reflect a system of sanction and reward focusing on behaviour and consequence. Grounded in Behaviourist Theory (Skinner, 1938, 1953, 1968), this approach advocates that the best way to manage behaviour is through a system of positive and negative reinforcement.

However, recent advances in neuroscience and brain imaging have led to a new understanding of how the brain develops in response to social interactions (Cozolino, 2014; Goleman, 2007; Siegel, 2015). Understanding the brain as a social organ, impacted upon by social and emotional experiences, wired by relational interactions,

and shaped by attachment relationships, has led to recognition of the need to develop a 'brain-nurturing' approach to supporting children's behaviour in schools (Siegel, 2012, 2015). In a policy response to this, the Scottish Government (2017) are proposing a move away from Behaviourism-influenced strategies, directing Scottish pedagogues towards nurturing approaches grounded in Attachment Theory.

Based on the work of Bowlby (1958), 'attachment' describes the deep, emotional bond between two people; a bond which has profound consequences on a child's future development (Ainsworth, 1973, 1991; Bowlby, 1969, 1977, 1988; Harlow & Zimmerman, 1958; Schaffer & Emerson, 1964, Siegel & Bryson, 2012; Srouffe & Siegel, 2011; Zeedyk, 2014). Attachment Theory, at the heart of this nurturing approach, emphasises "the importance of connectedness and attachment for supporting children…" (Education Scotland, 2017, p.25). The recent framework, "Applying Nurture as a Whole School Approach," defines this approach as focusing on "attunement, warmth and connection" (Education Scotland, 2017, p.13). Pedagogues are encouraged to consider children's attachment needs, using techniques and strategies to promote warm, positive interactions and to develop an understanding of how children may be taught to manage their emotions through self-regulation (Scottish Government, 2014). It will be argued in this thesis, therefore, that it is important to provide Scottish pedagogues with research on the process of moving towards an attachment-led, nurturing ethos and on the effectiveness of available nurture strategies on children's emotional self-regulation.

In response to this philosophical shift at governmental level the local authority (LA), in which this study is located, has embraced an authority-wide, attachment-aware ethos. To support this change of focus, the LA have chosen to incorporate the "Solihull Approach," a framework for education and health staff, promoting a "more secure attachment between babies/children and their carers" (North Lanarkshire Partnership, 2013, para 1). Based on the work of Douglas (2001), child psychologist and psychotherapist, this approach has been developed to amalgamate Attachment Theory with practice in the training of professionals working with children and families. Originally designed to support health visitors, the Solihull Approach is now bringing attachment and nurture to the centre of whole-school approaches to behaviour management (Douglas, 2011).

In an 18-month study Lowenhoff (2004) found that nursery staff, school counsellors and other professionals, trained in the Solihull Approach, experienced positive changes in their attitudes and practice toward managing children's behaviour. However, Brigham and Smith (2014), in a study of the day to day implementation of the approach, found staff understanding could often be "superficial," resulting in a "formulaic application" with inappropriate behaviour management strategies (p.35). Consequently, to avoid this 'superficial' application of the Solihull Approach, I engaged in wider professional reading than the initial Solihull training provided, and identified additional nurture-based strategies, supplementary to the Solihull program (Bomber, 2007; Geddes, 2006; Gerhardt, 2014; Gottman, 1997; Siegel & Bryson, 2012; Zeedyk, 2014).

This thesis will give due consideration to the impact of these strategies adopted by myself and my nursery colleagues, cognisant of the latest developments in the neuroscience of attachment and nurture. Furthermore, while there is a host of available research evidencing adults' experiences of the Solihull Approach, including parents, fosters carers and pedagogues (Bateson, Delaney & Pybus, 2008; Lowenhoff, 2004; Madigan, Paton & Mackett, 2017), there remains a lack of research evidencing *children's* experience of attachment-led practice and its impact on *their* social and emotional understanding. Therefore, this thesis will adopt a child-centred approach, gathering evidence on children's developing meta-emotion apropos a nurturing, attachment-led ethos and its associated strategies.

1.2   Research Focus

This study is positioned within an ongoing Action Research Process (Figure 1) in which our nursery team has moved from the traditional Behaviourist model of 'managing behaviour' towards an attachment-led model of 'emotional self-regulation.' Figure 1 represents the four cycles of Action Research through which we developed our understanding and practical application of attachment and nurture-led approaches. Cycle 1 identifies the initial stimulus of the research, the work of Siegel Bryson titled, "Time-Outs are Hurting Your Child" (2014) which was presented to us by our LA Quality Improvement Officer. Upon reading and discussing the article we were motivated to question our behaviour policy, thus inspiring our reflective journey of researching, re-thinking and re-training in nurturing approaches. Cycle 2 details the process through which we began to implement behaviour strategies in line with the attachment-led Solihull Approach. Cycle 3 identifies the developing recognition by

staff of the need to support children's emotional *self*-regulation and further possible strategies to aid this. Cycle 4, the current phase of Action Research on which this study focuses, considers the use of developmentally-appropriate nurture strategies and their effect on children.

Cycle 1

Reflect
on children's behaviour

Problem
"Time Out" Article

Research
Behaviourism vs Nurture
Staff attend
Solihull Training

Plan Action
"Time Out" technique
removed from Behaviour
Policy

Take Action
"Time Out"
no longer in use

Cycle 2

Reflect
on children's behaviour

Problem
managing children's behaviour

Research
Revsisit Solihull
Approach for strategies

Plan Action
Consider a
Take-a-Break space

Take Action
Introduce
Take-A-Break space

Cycle 3

Reflect
on children's behaviour

Problem
children regulating their emotions

Research
Gottman's
Emotion-Coaching techniques

Plan Action
Staff agree use of
emotion-coaching strategies

Take Action
Introduce
5 emotion-coaching techniques

Cycle 4

Reflect
on children's emotional self-regulation

Problem
supporting children's challenging emotions

Research
further strategies
Staff read Siegel's
"12 steps to Nurture"

Plan Action
Create emotion-coaching cue cards
and language prompts

Current Study
Collect data on children's responses
to all emotion-coaching strategies in use

Figure 1. Ongoing Cycles of Action Research – From Behaviour Management to Self-Regulation in a Scottish Nursery Class

Through this Action Research process, coinciding with certified training in the Solihull Approach as provided by the LA, we investigated the use of nurture-based strategies to replace the current sanction/reward system. However, while staff found the Solihull Approach to be comprehensive as a *philosophical* approach to behaviour management, valuable in guiding them towards a pedagogical understanding of behaviour for learning, they also found it lacking in the *practical* applications and strategies for which they were searching. We discovered that the Solihull Approach alone did not provide us with an exhaustive set of strategies to "build relationships with learners, promote positive behaviour and celebrate success" (GTCS, 2012, p.16). While skilled in the behaviour management techniques of Behaviourism (charts, warning systems and exclusions), we soon discovered that removal of these strategies, in line with our developing attachment-led ethos, created an ambiguity about how to respond to children's emotions and subsequent social behaviours. Staff discussion identified that this had led to a decrease in staff confidence, a lack of consistency in staff responses to behaviour management and an increase in children's distressed behaviours. Consequently, we initiated an investigation into supplementary strategies which could provide consistency of approach for both staff and children.

Following further professional inquiry, I discovered five specific Emotion-Coaching techniques (Figure 2) originally proposed by Gottman (1997). These were practical, effective and complimentary to the Solihull Approach.
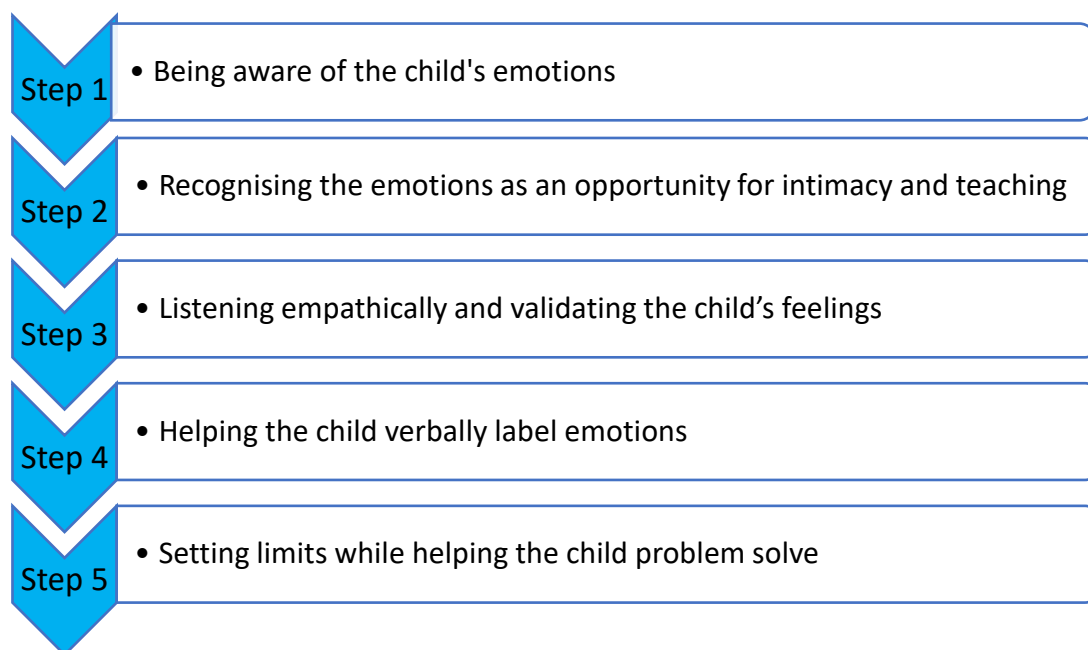
Figure 2. The Five Steps of Emotion-Coaching adapted from Gottman (1997)

Built upon a secure grounding in Attachment Theory and embedded within the nursery's Solihull Approach, we selected these emotion-coaching strategies with the overall aim of supporting children's emotional development and self-regulation skills. The children responded positively to this increasingly consistent approach, with staff noting that children were calmed and soothed by these empathic interactions. The team have further supplemented this emotion-coaching approach with visual cue cards and resources matched to children's stages of development, in line with techniques devised by Siegel and Bryson (2012) (Appendix B). This research study focuses on the impact of these emotion-coaching strategies on the children's meta-emotion and subsequent emotional regulation.

The Scottish Government (2017) have recognised that it is critical to the wellbeing of children that their educators are confident in employing nurturing approaches that "support de-escalation" (p29), "develop…awareness of emotion" (p32), "develop and enhance resilience" (p34), "help children and young people feel safe" (p37), and "help children…regulate their own behaviour" (p41). This educational policy shift towards nurture and attachment at a government level, influenced by recent research in attachment, nurture and behaviour (Boxall, 2002; Kennedy, Landor & Todd, 2011; Lucas, Insley & Buckland, 2006; Sosou & Ellis, 2014; Black, Chamberlain, Murray, Sewel & Skelton, 2012) will continue to impact on all staff and pupils throughout Scottish education and thus makes this study of children's responses to emotion-coaching techniques a valuable addition to current pedagogical thinking and research.

1.3   Overall Research Aim and Individual Research Objectives

The overall aim of this research is to advance an understanding of the impact of emotion-coaching techniques on the emotional understanding and emotional self-regulation of young children. The thesis aims to provide insights into young children's meta-emotion: how they think about and understand emotion and the way in which this knowledge impacts upon their behaviour within their social environment. With Scottish pedagogues being directed away from Behaviourism-influenced strategies and towards nurturing approaches, it is important to provide staff with research which considers the effectiveness of available nurture strategies.

To date, research on emotion-coaching has tended to focus on parent-child relationships and on the use of emotion-coaching as a positive parenting strategy

(Gottman, Katz & Hooven, 1996; Gottman, 1997; Havighurst et al, 2013; Lauw, Havighurst, Wilson, Harley & Northam, 2014). In recent years the 'Emotion-Coaching UK' team at Bath Spa University have sought to widen the research, bringing emotion-coaching into the UK education system (Rose, Gilbert & McGuire-Sneickus, 2015, 2016; Parker, Rose & Gilbert, 2016). Yet, data published from this research has predominantly focused on secondary school environments, with the overwhelming focus being the parent/staff assessment of children's behaviour, not on the children's growing understanding of emotion and its impact on their social skills.

This study aims to address this lacuna in the research by focusing on a group of nursery-aged children, their experience of emotion-coaching techniques, their developing emotional awareness and the impact of this on their emotional understanding and regulation. It provides a rich description of how children in an attachment-led nursery develop recognition and understanding of emotion, and how this affects interactions in the social environment of the nursery. Using child-centred methods the research aims to record the experiences and thoughts of children as they unfold in their day-to-day nursery environment, using their ways of communicating to gather information on their meta-emotion and understanding of the social environment. In summary, this study aims to support the development of new understandings about emotion-coaching as a strategy for supporting young children's meta-emotion, social interactions and attachments within a Scottish nursery context.

Specifically, the objectives of this research are to:

- *Observe* and *identify* emotion-coaching strategies experienced by young children

- *Explore* changes in young children's identification and understanding of emotion in themselves and others after a period of emotion-coaching

- *Consider* the impact of emotion-coaching on a child's emotional self-regulation

This research will contribute to the understanding of emotion-coaching as a possible nurture strategy for supporting children's meta-emotion in a number of important ways: firstly, by providing an overview of the process of moving from Behaviourist approaches to attachment-led practice in our nursery class; secondly, by critically examining the philosophy and implementation of the attachment-based Solihull Approach and the possibility of supplementing this approach with emotion-coaching techniques; and thirdly, by obtaining the perspective of children on their developing understanding of emotion and its impact on their social comprehension.

Chapter Two examines why pedagogues must support children's emotional and social development, reviewing research which highlights the importance of the early years as a critical period for building the social brain. The chapter then provides an overview of the literature pertaining to the process of transitioning from a sanction/reward system of behaviour management to an emotion-coaching system of emotional self-regulation. It considers the traditional Behaviourist paradigm contrasting this with current research promoting an attachment-led philosophy which are all factors that are

relevant to this study. The chapter concludes with the research questions identified from the review of the literature.

Chapter Three outlines and justifies the methodology for this qualitative, child-centred study. It details the research aims, observation techniques and methods of analysis, positioning the study within an ongoing Action Research Framework.

Chapter Four reports on findings from the study, discussing children's meta-emotion and subsequent emotional regulation strategies. Significant themes arising from the empirical research are addressed and children's views are carefully considered.

Chapter Five concludes the thesis by revisiting the overall aims and specific objectives of this study. The key themes are summarised, limitations of the study are examined and areas for further research are proposed.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 The Importance of Social-Emotional Development

The emotional regulation skills of young children are positively associated with later academic success, early literacy and maths scores, and classroom behaviours (Graziano et al, 2007). In Scotland, as multi-agency teams focus on closing the attainment gap, the role of children's emotional and social development must be recognised as a fundamental component of success. Goleman (1996) identified that educational and social success have a stronger correlation with emotional-social competence than cognitive abilities. Positive early school adjustment (Denham et al, 2012b), attention skills (Von Salisch, Denham & Koch, 2017), and executive function skills such as working memory, flexible thinking and self-control (Denham et al, 2012a), are all shown to be mediated by social-emotional competence. Schonert-Reichl et al. (2015) identified that children who received a supportive social-emotional learning program displayed improved cognitive control, lower stress levels, greater empathy, improved emotional control, greater optimism, positive school self-concept and increased peer acceptance.

According to Siegel (2012), building relationships which support children's social-emotional development has positive effects on children's neurological development and subsequent academic and social outcomes. This chapter examines the body of research in relation to this claim, research which influenced the nursery pedagogues. It will be argued that a move away from Behaviourism towards a 'brain-nurturing'

approach would best support the children's social-emotional development during the critical early years period.

2.2 Action Research Cycle 1

From Behaviourism towards Attachment

"Time-Outs are hurting your child," state Siegel and Bryson (2014) in their Time Magazine article. Siegel, director of the Mindsight Institute, argues that the isolation experienced by children in Time-Out situations negatively affects the physical structure of their brains, leading to long-term feelings of rejection, distress, dysregulation and anger. Siegel explains that brain structure is inherently adaptable in response to persistent environmental experiences and this neuroplasticity necessitates careful, compassionate and 'mindful' discipline strategies focusing on "teaching – not punishment" (para. 2).

At the time of this magazine publication, our nursery class had a behaviour policy incorporating Time-Out (referred to by staff as 'Thinking-Time') as the climax of any ongoing, punitive, behavioural interventions. Reflecting traditional Behaviourist theory (Skinner, 1938, 1953, 1968) staff used Thinking-Time, intending to decrease the likelihood of negative behaviours. This was accompanied by a process of positive reinforcement involving stickers, stamper charts and reward certificates in an endeavour to strengthen pro-social behaviours. Grace (2016) demonstrates the way in which this behavioural theory of child development can be translated into practical behaviour strategies through the ABC Model of behaviour management, in which

behaviour is controlled through identifying the Antecedent (trigger), acknowledging the Behaviour (i.e. 'good' or 'bad' behaviour) and experiencing the Consequence (positive or negative). However, Siegel and Bryson dispute that Time-Out is an appropriate technique, contending that it "deprives (children) of an opportunity to build skills (like) collaboration, conversation and respect…" which instead could enable children to become "empathic decision makers who are empowered to figure things out on their own" (para. 5).

We faced a quandary; to continue down the well-trodden path of utilising sanction/reward techniques such as 'Time-Out,' common throughout many nursery and primary schools within the UK (Foot, Woolfson, Terras & Norfolk, 2004; Hook, 2014; Payne, 2015; Chaplain, 2016), or alternatively, to research and develop a different approach to managing young pupils' behaviour. As staff embarked on professional reading, revisiting Scottish government documents, they repeatedly discovered terms such as 'attachment', 'nurture', 'empathy' and 'self-regulation' (Scottish Government, 2009, 2012, 2014). Perhaps then, it is time to move away from punishment and isolation - the traditional Behaviourist approach, towards a pedagogy based in nurture and attachment?

Borduin-Quetsch, Wallace, Herschell and McNeill (2015) would emphatically disagree, claiming that years of research and literature has fully substantiated the role of Behaviourist approaches such as Time-Out. Borduin-Quetsch et al. (2015) argue that many studies have evidenced the use of Time-Out as a strategy for reducing

negative behaviours in children (Everett, Hupp & Olmi, 2010; McNeil & Hembree-Kigin, 2010; Miller, 1976; O'Leary, O'Leary & Becker, 1967). However, while it should be acknowledged that Borduin-Quetsch and colleagues have provided a comprehensive review of the literature supporting the Behaviourist paradigm, they have nonetheless failed to acknowledge the growing body of evidence that identifies the negative impact of this sanction/reward system (isolation, rejection, anger, rupture), and the positive impact of a more inclusive approach to children's behavioural development (problem-solving, empathy, creative thinking, teamwork, self-regulation) focusing on teaching social and emotional competencies (Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Cozolino, 2013; Gottman, Katz & Hooven, 1996; Gottman, 1997; Graziano, Reavis, Keane & Calkins, 2007; Havighurst, Wilson, Prior, Harley & Kehoe, 2010; Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007; Rose, Gilbert & McGuire-Sneickus, 2015; Rose, Gilbert & McGuire-Sneickus 2016; Shaughnessy, 2012; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2004; Wilson, Havighurst & Harley, 2012).

Staff thereupon embarked on attachment training offered by the LA, which had recently selected the Solihull Approach (Douglas, 2001) as a model upon which to develop attachment-led practice across the sector, indicating a notable shift from traditional Behaviourism towards approaches mindful of emotion, empathy and nurture (North Lanarkshire Partnership, 2013). In alignment with Siegel and Bryson (2014), the key philosophy contained within the Solihull Approach is the critical importance of brain development in the early years of life, and the way in which the brain creates neural pathways based on attachment experiences (Solihull Approach Team, 2014). For professionals such as early years pedagogues, this necessitates a

developmentally-tailored approach to behaviour management, providing positive experiences involving the regulation of emotions.

In becoming conversant with the Solihull Approach of 'containment and reciprocity' (Douglas, 2007), the nursery team determined that 'Time-Out' would now be removed from our behaviour policy. We rejected the argument offered by McNeil and Hembree-Kigin (2010) that, following a Time-Out, adults can support a child to recover their emotional control and attempt to heal the relationship. Rather, the staff acknowledged the possibility of isolation and rejection and took a step away from Behaviourism towards an attachment-led ethos.

2.3 Action Research Cycle 2

From the Solihull Approach towards Attachment-Based Techniques

Recognising three key components of the Solihull Approach - Reciprocity, Containment, and Behaviour for Learning (Solihull Approach Team, 2014), we were mindful that "connections in the brain can be hindered if there is poor reciprocity or containment" (Solihull Approach Team, 2014, p.3.10). Brazelton, Kozlowski and Main (1974) identified the need for 'reciprocity,' where adult and child are involved in an intimate cycle of "initiation, regulation and termination" of social-emotional interactions (Solihull Approach Team, 2014, p.5.4). The Solihull philosophy asserts that the 'dance of reciprocity' is a requirement of any emotionally healthy relationship and that any 'rupture' within this carefully orchestrated social interplay must be

immediately followed by 'repair' to ensure that the child develops "self-regulation, a clear sense of self, language development and social skills" (p.5.1). This is contrary to the Behaviourist paradigm in which sanction/reward are believed to be valuable behaviour management tools. Jabeen, Anis-ul-Haque and Riaz (2013) charge that the rejection of positive and negative reinforcement leads to children with poorer emotion regulation and poorer parental attachment. In contrast, the Solihull philosophy views sanction/reward systems as causing frequent 'rupture' that lead to issues of low self-esteem and a loss of trust in others (Brazelton et al, 1974).

The second characteristic of the Solihull model is the fundamental requirement of 'containment.' Containment is a term used in the practice of psychotherapy (Bion, 1959), characterising the process by which a person receives emotional information from another and, in response, communicates this emotion calmly and concisely. This process of containment, when practiced between adult and child, appears to promote resilience and reduce behaviour problems in children (Douglas & Brennan, 2004; Bateson, Delaney & Pybus, 2008; Appleton, Douglas & Rheeston, 2016). The Solihull Approach advises that these processes of physical and emotional containment will enable the brain to develop healthy connections through experiencing and categorising positive emotional interactions. Coupled with the 'dance of reciprocity,' this will lead to improved interactions between adult and child, resulting in a reduction in the requirement for behaviour management strategies (Johnson & Wilson, 2012). In contrast, Borduin-Quetsch et al. (2015) contend that an adult, choosing to interact with a child experiencing a distressing tantrum, would be offering negative attention,

therefore reinforcing the behaviour and leading to a resulting increase in frequency of tantrums.

However, the staff team opted to follow the Solihull model of 'containment and reciprocity,' and mindful of the basic tenets of Attachment Theory, began instead to *engage* with children experiencing distressing emotions, as opposed to opting for exclusion. However, as Brigham and Smith (2014) alluded to, staff soon indicated that they lacked confidence in developing appropriate strategies based on this Solihull theoretical model. Dunlop and colleagues claimed that 85% of Early Years and Early Primary educators have reported the need for more training in strategies for behaviour management (Dunlop et al, 2008) and, following the removal of the Time-Out sanction, the nursery staff appeared to lack options in the event of children displaying strong emotions.

Consequently, I elected to research Attachment Theory further, anticipating that a deeper understanding may lead to more appropriate strategies for behaviour management. Bowlby (1958) formulated his 'Attachment Theory' around the premise that a child's relationship to its main caregiver will have a profound effect on the child's behaviour, learning and overall development. Attachment Theory has been further developed with an understanding that children may well attach to more than one adult throughout their life (Bowlby, 1988; Commodari, 2013; Geddes, 2006). Rose et al. (2016) contend that a secure attachment between a child and an adult (including a teacher), will support the development of social-emotional understanding in the

child, enabling them to "regulate emotions, reduce fear, attune to others, have self-understanding and insight, empathy for others and appropriate moral reasoning" (2016, p.2). As a result, I identified a link between Attachment Theory and Siegel and Bryson's concept of 'Time-In,' in which adults create, "a loving connection such as sitting *with* the child and talking or comforting" (2014, para. 8). Thereupon, the nursery 'Take-a-Break' space was introduced.

2.4 Action Research Cycle 3

From Attachment-Based Techniques to Emotion-Coaching

Linking our deeper understanding of Attachment Theory and brain development with the concepts of Containment and Reciprocity, we began to approach the management of children's behaviour via the identification of the causal emotions. The team, dedicated to creating a nurturing and attachment-based ethos in the playroom, were now looking for best practice in how to enable children to recognise and regulate their emotions.

Further research led to an Australian program, "Tuning Into Kids" (TIK), which aims to develop children's social-emotional cognition through 'emotion-coaching' (Havighurst et al, 2010). For the nursery team, with our fresh pedagogical belief in the value of Attachment Theory and a philosophy in line with the Solihull Approach, TIK appeared to offer the practical application we sought. An evidenced-based parenting programme, TIK proposes an emotion-coaching foundation, encouraging parents to view misbehaviours as a 'signal' from the child, which the parent then

'reads' and helps the child to explore (Havighurst et al, 2010). Thus, the nursery staff now began to observe 'anti-social' behaviours as a signal of *distress* from the child.

A term coined by Gottman et al (1996), and expanded upon by Gottman (1997), 'emotion-coaching' refers to the way in which parents:

> teach their children strategies to deal with life's ups and downs. They don't object to their children's displays of anger, sadness and fear. Nor do they ignore them. Instead, they accept negative emotions as part of life and they use emotional moments as opportunities for teaching their kids important life lessons and building closer relationships (p.21).

Gottman (1997) contends that, through exposure to emotion-coaching, children learn to recognise their own emotions and develop the skills to self-regulate these emotions. In accordance with this, the nursery staff now focused on children's 'emotional moments,' using them as an opportunity to empathise with children and to engage in teaching children how to recognise and regulate emotions. Havighurst et al. (2013) confirm that parents embracing this approach identified that causes and consequences of emotions were highlighted more frequently and, as a result, a reduction in child behaviour problems was reported. Furthermore, an increase in parents' own emotional awareness and a reduction in their own dismissive attitudes towards emotions and behaviours was recorded.

Gottman and colleagues maintain that what underpins this success is "an emotionally responsive and coaching parenting style," with "clear limits and effective discipline" (Gottman et al, 1996, p249). Havighurst et al. (2013) assert that adhering to the 5 steps of emotion-coaching in the TIK program led parents to report a reduction in the frequency and intensity of problem behaviours, and to the transfer of these improved behaviours from home to the school setting. However, upon collating teacher-reported changes in the children's behaviour at school, Havighurst et al. (2013) found a reduction in reported improvements, which may indicate a greater degree of objectivity in teachers' responses. Barker, Pistrang and Elliot (2002) claim that due to social desirability bias, respondents in a study (parents in this instance) may admit to greater levels of improvement than reality indicates. Furthermore, the TIK program is exclusively designed for parents and does not explore the role of emotion-coaching in a school context. Therefore, to gain a holistic understanding of its impact, I now extended my research into emotion-coaching within educational settings.

A team at Bath Spa University was found to have developed a program of 'Attachment Aware Schools' (AAS), providing practical interventions based on the emotion-coaching process. I believed that this evidence-based program, grounded in Attachment Theory and focussed on interventions that work for "the brain, mind and body, to support children's emotional and social learning" (Rose et al, 2016, p3), would complement the Solihull Approach now embedded in the nursery.

Rose et al. (2015) assert that educators trained in the AAS program, using Gottman's five-step strategy, witness a reduction in disruptive behaviours, improved social competency, improved self-regulation of behaviour across different settings, and increased academic attainment. Furthermore, a growing body of research suggests that a child's self-regulation of emotion correlates with behaviour regulation, social functioning and long-term academic achievement (Denham et al., 2012; Lauw, Havighurst, Wilson, Harley & Northam, 2014; Locke, Miller, Seifer & Heinze, 2015; Ritblatt, Hokoda & Van Liew, 2017; Sette, Spinrad & Baumgartner, 2017). Gus et al. (2017) advocate that, as the emotion-coaching approach increases children's wellbeing and academic progress, staff and parent wellbeing increases, staff absence decreases, and parents report improvements in family life. The nursery staff, now implementing emotion-coaching techniques, were experiencing similar positive outcomes in terms of children's emotional self-regulation and parents were reporting children's developing emotional literacy at home. However, staff confidence in managing the youngest children's emotions appeared to be less well supported, and so I returned to my program of research.

2.5 Action Research Cycle 4

Towards developmentally appropriate, nurture-based, emotion-coaching

I discovered that the current evidence base supporting emotion-coaching, while rapidly growing is, to date, focused mainly on primary schools (Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Geddes, 2006; Gus et al, 2017), secondary schools (Rose et al, 2015; Rose et al, 2016; Gus et al, 2017), or parents (Havighurst et al, 2013; Lauw et al, 2014). Neither

Gottman (1997), nor many of his successors, have closely considered issues around the different developmental stages of meta-emotion and its impact on the effectiveness of emotion-coaching strategies with young children in a nursery environment. Silkenbeumer, Schiller and Kartner (2018) have observed emotion-coaching in a preschool class, finding that teachers co-regulation and emotion-coaching input correlates with the child's developmental level. Yet, as with many emotion-coaching studies, the focus is on the adult, not the child. Other recent publications include several case studies involving emotion-coaching with children aged 5-6 years old (Rose et al, 2017; Gus et al, 2017) and exploring emotion regulation training for preschool children aged 5 (Graziano & Hart, 2016). Thus far, there is limited evidence of the impact of emotion-coaching techniques with younger children of nursery age (3-5).

However, Siegel and Bryson (2012) have further developed Gottman's emotion-coaching approach, producing a comprehensive list of 12 practical, age-appropriate strategies for teachers to implement in nurturing children and guiding their emotional self-regulation. The nursery staff, feeling that the Solihull Approach lacked a comprehensive set of concrete, practical strategies, and finding that the five-step emotion-coaching program left them feeling inadequately prepared to manage the youngest children's emotions, thought that the developmentally-appropriate techniques proposed by Siegel and Bryson (2012), would bridge this gap.

Moving from Behaviourism to nurture in the nursery class has necessitated a deeper pedagogical understanding of attachment, nurture, brain development and young children's meta-emotion. Furthermore, the Action Research process has guided the team towards the provision of a range of techniques, sensitively selected to cater for each child's developmental stage of meta-emotion and self-regulation. An ethos of nurture enhanced by the 'take-a-break' space, visual cue cards (Appendix B), language prompts, social stories, self-regulatory stress toys, weighted blankets, attachment necklaces and the language of Containment and Reciprocity, have created an environment in which the young children in the nursery can be supported to develop self-esteem, positive self-image and self-regulatory behaviours.

2.6 The Child's Perspective

Focusing on the rights of the child

The literature review has identified that, irrespective of the age group involved, the preponderance of emotion-coaching research has tended to focus on teacher-reported or parent-reported impact of emotion-coaching. Poulou (2017) suggests, in a comparative study of preschool teacher-reported and pupil-reported perceptions, that there was a lack of consensus in the views of the teacher-pupil emotional relationship. This raises the issue of adult bias and suggests a lack of consideration of children's perspectives (Longobardi, Gastaldi, Prino, Pasta & Settanni, 2017).

The emergence of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has brought new understandings about the rights of children, with Article 12 stating

that "when making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account" (UNICEF, 1989). McAuley and Rose (2017) argue that children's perspectives of their social-emotional development must be central to social-emotional research and any subsequent policy developments. Studies of children's involvement in measuring their own well-being, highlight that, although there may be challenges in gathering children's opinions on their own emotional development, the benefits outweigh the difficulties (Ben-Arieh, 2005; Punch 2002; Skattebol et al, 2013). Longobardi, Pasta, Gastaldi and Prino (2017) advocate listening to children, suggesting techniques such as the use of children's drawings to gather information on the child's view of their behaviour in school. Gathering children's perspectives requires consultation, observation and conversations (Clark, Kjorholt & Moss, 2005), 'listening' to both their actions and their words. Fisher (2013) suggests that in gathering children's perspectives, the pedagogues must observe "how the child approaches a task and what strategies they use for solving problems" (2013, p.32), then use this to gain insight into the child's meta-cognition and meta-emotion.

Scottish Government policy dictates that nursery pedagogues be "child-centred, acknowledge children's views and actively involve children in meaningful ways in everyday decisions" (Scottish Government, 2014, p.23). It highlights that children's opinions must be carefully considered, and effective processes carefully implemented, to enable children to share their perspectives (HMIE, 2009). Carlina Rinaldi, President of Reggio Children, argues that "listening is not only a technique...it is a way of thinking and seeing ourselves in relationship with others and the world. It's about how

we as people wish to be in the world. It's about how we want our society to be. It's a cultural, political and ethical idea" (cited in Moss, 2006, p.21). For the nursery pedagogues embracing attachment-led practice and the neuroscience of nurture, and, recognising the critical importance of social-emotional development for the young pupils, gathering the children's perspective is now central to the ethos of our Action Research. Therefore, this current empirical research will focus on young children's perspectives of emotion-coaching, using a child-led methodology to gather evidence of the children's views. The research focuses on the experiences of the children in relation to the impact of emotion-coaching on their meta-emotion and emotional self-regulation.

2.7 Conclusion

The Need for Empirical Research

Moving towards attachment-led practice in a nursery class is a complex and multi-faceted process. The way in which young children develop emotional awareness and self-regulation is just one factor. The pedagogy of the educators must be grounded in Attachment Theory with staff invested in the philosophical shift towards nurture, fully aware of their own meta-emotion and the emotional climate they create in the classroom (Morris, Denham, Bassett & Curby, 2013).

The literature review highlights the absence of evidence of the impact of emotion-coaching intervention on young children in a nursery environment, and the importance of gathering the children's views of their experiences. The developmental

understanding of emotion at such a young age requires further investigation, particularly in terms of how young children recognise, understand and respond to the variety of emotions that underpin their behaviours. This necessitates this empirical research, based upon the following research questions:

Research Question 1: Does an emotion-coaching approach influence young children's identification and understanding of their own and others' emotions?

Research Question 2: What impact does an emotion-coaching approach have on young children's emotional responses and subsequent self-regulation skills?

Research Question 3: What emotion regulation strategies does emotion-coaching input elicit from young children?

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction to the Research Methods

This research aims to investigate the development of meta-emotion and emotional self-regulation in young children in response to an emotion-coaching approach. Several objectives have been identified within the context of the attachment-led nursery environment:

1. *Observe* and *identify* emotion-coaching strategies experienced by young children
2. *Explore* changes in young children's identification and understanding of emotion in themselves and others after a period of emotion-coaching
3. *Consider* the impact of emotion-coaching on a young child's emotional self-regulation

This chapter, detailing the child-led methodology, outlines the research strategy adopted to address the focused research questions presented in the previous chapter. The following section positions the study in an ongoing Action Research framework, justifying the qualitative, child-led approach through the lens of Interpretivism. This is followed by identification and justification of the means of data collection and analysis, concluding with acknowledgment of any possible limitations in the selected research framework.

3.2 The Research Methodology

3.2.1 Action Research Framework

An Action Research approach has been selected, aiming to ensure continuation of the process of problem-solving and professional enquiry, well-established by the nursery team's improvement-focused ethos, as detailed in Chapter 2 (Figure 1). Based on Stringer's model of Action Research (1999), the essence is "on promoting change" as part of an ongoing cycle of self-reflective study (Biggam, 2015, p.160). Donaldson (2011) advocates that teachers become researchers; that in their day-to-day practice, a model of practitioner enquiry should be evident, underpinning their pedagogy and positively impacting upon the pupil experience. An Action Research approach provides a coherent framework in which pedagogues can systematise and theoretically ground the process of reflection and research (Altrichter, Feldman, Posch & Somekh, 2013).

However, Reeves, Redford and McQueen (2010), in a study exploring teachers' use of practitioner research, raise the question of validity in the Action Research process. Referring to Noffke's Typology of Action Research (2009), Reeves et al. describe practitioner enquiry as bound by "professional, personal and political beliefs," which potentially influence and impact upon the teacher-researcher's objectivity (p.77). Donaldson (2011) counteracts this criticism, embracing this subjectivity and arguing that research undertaken by teachers *needs* to be bound by personal beliefs to ensure it is "…relevant, sustained and effective…within a culture of 'pull' from teachers

rather than 'push' from outside the classroom" (p.10). In recognition of Donaldson's report, the GTCS (n.d.) actively promote the ongoing participation of pedagogues in Action Research, substantiating its use as a research tool to "improve pedagogy to support student attainment and achievement" (para. 1).

Further highlighting the use of Action Research as a tool for pedagogical enquiry is the Attachment Research Community (ARC), a membership body for educators and researchers committed to being 'Attachment Aware.' ARC contend that Action Research is best suited for "busy practitioners to use in the context of school practice, as well as for being robust and accessible" (Attachment Research Community, n.d.). As part of the Attachment Aware Schools programme, and as members of ARC, Rose et al. (2016) have detailed an Action Research phase central to their recent pilot study, supporting practitioners in the adoption of emotion-coaching strategies within their practice. This use of an Action Research framework by Rose and colleagues, supporting the development of a new pedagogical approach in practice, is mirrored in the framework that is central to this emotion-coaching study in the nursery class.

3.2.2 Child-Centred Methodology

A significant aspect of this research addresses Research Question 1, with the objective of studying the children's perception of emotion, the children's recognition of emotion within themselves and their ability to read the emotions of others. The Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.) describes the word *empathy* as "the ability to understand and share the feelings of another," a skill which Wang and Wang (2015) postulate as a predictor

of children's social-emotional competence. Wang and Wang, through development of an Empathy and Theory of Mind Scale (EToMS), assessed children's social predispositions via parental questionnaires, arguing that parental reports would be "relatively unbiased and more cost- and time-efficient" (p.1). Wang and Wang further contend that self-reporting by children is less reliable and more inconvenient due to possible language limitations.

However, when considering an exploration of young children's identification and understanding of emotion, arguably the young child is the *only* individual who has access to the feelings and emotions of the individual child being studied. For this reason, a creative and developmentally-appropriate, child-led methodology is potentially a more credible way to gather evidence of children's developing meta-emotion. Yet, in relation to Research Question 3; the impact of emotion-coaching, many studies have focused, not on the children's perception of emotional impact, but on the adults' assessment of the results (Gottman, Katz & Hooven, 1996; Havighurst et al, 2010; Havighurst et al, 2013; Lauw et al, 2014; Rose et al, 2015; Rose et al, 2016; Wilson et al, 2012). Gottman et al. (1996) argue that, following emotion-coaching interventions, "little attention has been placed on examining the parents' feelings and cognitions about their own affect or their feelings and cognitions about their child's affect" (p.243). It would appear however, from the literature review, that little attention has, in fact, been focused on the *child's* own affect and meta-emotion.

This gap in existing research was identified in Chapter Two, offering evidence of the need for the children's voice to be heard within the emotion-coaching research community. Gus et al. (2017) refer to 'pupil structured reflections' in which children were asked their viewpoint on how adults supported them via emotion-coaching techniques, and how the children thought this support impacted upon them. However, the sample consisted of only a small number of primary-school aged children in attendance at an independent specialist school, and Gus et al. acknowledge that this limits the "credibility and the ability to generalise the findings of this study to other schools and settings" (p.105).

This thesis therefore addresses this identified gap, adopting a child-centred approach by collecting the perspectives of pre-school children experiencing emotion-coaching in a nursery environment. Wang and Wang (2015) observe that young children's limited early-language skills can be an obstacle in gathering data on their comprehension of emotion. However, Clarke and Moss (2011) advocate use of the 'Mosaic Approach', offering an array of methods to provide children with developmentally-appropriate communication tools.

Moss (2006) asserts that children must be respected as individuals "to be listened to, not objects to be studied" (p.17). Through the Mosaic Approach, Clarke and Moss (2011) advocate that young children are given the opportunity to show that they are "the experts on their own lives" (p.55). Participatory tools such as child-interviewing, photography, book-making, child-led tours, role-play stories, and observation, provide

the children with the opportunities to be active participants in the gathering and sharing of information about themselves (Clarke et al, 2005; Fisher, 2013). In Scottish Education, this child-led, participatory approach is at the heart of the Curriculum for Excellence. It is influential in many current education policies (Scottish Government, 2004, 2009, 2012, 2014; Education Scotland, 2015, 2016), encouraging responsible, successful, effective, confident children, both capable and competent in "building and testing theories about (them)self and the world around (them)" (OECD, 2004, p.12). This listening pedagogy, respectful of young children's voices, and cognisant of young children's capabilities, is central to the tenet of all three Research Questions, questioning how children respond to emotion-coaching input. This study, supported by the Mosaic Approach, intends to empower the young children to enlighten us.

3.2.3 A Qualitative, Interpretivist Approach

In light of the literature review and the identification of the need to hear the children's voice, this study will adopt a qualitative approach, based within an Interpretivist research paradigm. Herbert Blumer (1992), a leading exponent of Interpretivism, justified this sociological approach, arguing that individuals construct their own experience of the social world:

> Human beings interpret or 'define' each other's actions instead of
> merely reacting to each other's actions. Their 'response' is not
> made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on
> the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human

interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or

by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions (p.82).

This sociological paradigm is fundamental to the purpose of this study. The research aims to explore the link between a child's understanding of emotion, how they *interpret* the emotion and how they proceed to use this knowledge in social practice. To research how a developing understanding of emotion might impact on children's behaviour, to provide for the complexity and subtlety of how children respond to emotion-coaching techniques, and to allow for links to be made between context, emotion-coaching techniques and behavioural outcomes, a qualitative and interpretivist stance is conceivably the most prudent (Robert-Holmes, 2014).

All three research questions are best addressed through a qualitative approach, enabling the collection of data via quality, in-depth responses (Biggam, 2015), and providing an understanding of the social situations through dialogue and discussion. This methodology allows children to fully express their breadth of knowledge and understanding of emotion in a more personal and flexible way (Carson, Gilmore, Perry & Gronhaug, 2001). It further provides the structure for a pre- and post- intervention analysis of one focus group, assessing children's *understanding* of the emotions contained within social situations presented within the Box Full of Feelings task (Appendix C). A quantitative approach involving a structured questionnaire or interview may have gathered numerical data and resultant descriptive statistics (McLeod, 2017) but this approach to data gathering is arguably, too limited. It requires

the recording of children's responses in set categories, without their own personal explanations, thus losing sight of the complexities, ambiguities and contradictions inherent in children's experiences of their social world (Denscombe, 2010).

While the adoption of a qualitative approach has been identified as the most appropriate for gathering data from the children in this study, it should be noted that, upon commencement of the data analysis, the opportunity for a level of quantitative analysis did present itself. Within observations and throughout children's communications, patterns began to emerge which could be coded and contrasted through a quantitative lens, adding an important further level of analysis. Therefore, this study, while adhering to a qualitative, interpretivist stance in its data gathering, offers a mixed methods approach to the data analysis.

Using a mixed-methods approach to study emotion-coaching impact, Rose et al (2015) focused on staff training, use of emotion-coaching techniques, understanding of emotion and evaluation of impact. This positivist case study focused on the impact on pupils in terms of time-outs and exclusions, consequences and rewards i.e. Behaviourist-type sanctions. The nursery class in the current study no longer adhere to Behaviourist notions of sanction/reward, thus removing the possibility of utilising a similar approach. Furthermore, Rose et al. (2015) did not research the children's understanding of the techniques, the children's own understanding of emotions or the children's ability to use the techniques themselves to self-regulate. There was therefore, no focus on the impact of the emotion-coaching intervention on the child's

meta-emotion. A quantitative approach to the case study gave only statistical changes in experience of sanctions, with no detail on changes in pupil meta-emotion.

For these reasons, this present research adheres to qualitative and interpretivist approaches, focusing on the emotional understanding behind the children's actions. This promotes an opportunity to note when children express their ideas about emotion, and their motivations behind their actions, linking closely to the nursery's underlying ethos of the Solihull Approach and emotion-coaching philosophy. Emotion-coaching is about truly listening to and hearing children, seeing the depth of emotion behind the behaviours they display (Gottman et al, 1996; Gottman, 1997; Siegel & Bryson, 2012; Solihull Approach Team, 2012). A qualitative, interpretivist approach acknowledges the depth of human interaction involved in this process.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Biggam (2015) proposes that, in contrast to the measurements and data associated with quantitative research, qualitative research supports "in-depth, exploratory studies…studying things in their natural settings…" (p.162). This Action Research project offers details of young children in their nursery setting, utilising semi-structured interviews and the Mosaic Approach of child-interviews, photography tours, mind-mapping, role-play stories and unstructured narrative observations to provide a rich description of how young children respond to the emotion-coaching intervention in the moment, and what *they* perceive from such experiences. Thus, the

qualitative data from this study provides insights into children's complex meta-emotion as opposed to a rigid, statistical representation of their world (Bell, 2005).

The research was conducted during both the morning and afternoon sessions of a mainstream school nursery class of pupils aged 3-5, cared for by five Early Years pedagogues. In line with the approach of Rose and colleagues' emotion-coaching study (2015), focus groups were identified. Rose et al. (2015) selected those children identified as most at risk of exclusion, however, this study aims to take a wider overview of how emotion-coaching can support all children in the management of behaviour and relationships. For this reason, two small focus groups of children were invited to participate in the activities offered as part of this study (Appendix D).

3.3.1 Focus Group 1 (FG1)

FG1 consisted of those pupils who had most recently joined the nursery class and had the least experience of the emotion-coaching techniques within the nursery. This group was formed to allow for data collection of pre- and post-emotion coaching experience. The identification and understanding of emotion by these children was collated using a semi-structured interview, recording their responses to a set of eight emotion story-picture prompts from a resource called The Box Full of Feelings (Kogs, Moons & Depondt, 2004). A set of semi-structured interview questions was prepared (Appendix E) with answers noted in an observational diary. Children were first asked what emotion the character in the story-picture was feeling. For those children who offered no answer a multiple-choice option was then offered i.e. "Is the character happy, sad,

scared or angry?" The need for this option was noted in the observational diary each time.

While the Box Full of Feelings resource may be supplemented by Laevers' Social Competence Test (Edmunds & Stewart-Brown, 2003), for the purposes of this study the decision was made to reject the use of this or any other emotional-social competence recording instrument. Completion of observations and recording of data via such a structured instrument raised the possibility of a loss of the freedom that enables children to share all their developing knowledge of emotion, and for the researcher to observe its full impact. Waller and Bitou (2011, p.101) advise practitioners to develop an ethical approach to listening which ensures that "children have the space to articulate their views and perspectives beyond the constraints of adult views, interpretations and agendas." For this reason, an adult-created, adult-structured recording instrument was deemed inappropriate for this study.

FG1 children then experienced the emotion-coaching techniques utilised within the nursery class, focusing on their emotional literacy, empathy, self-calming techniques, body language and emotional self-regulation. Following a six-week time period, the eight story-picture prompts were revisited, allowing analysis of any impact from children's emotion-coaching experiences within the nursery playroom. In line with Research Question 1, FG1 aimed to provide an overall picture of the influence of the emotion-coaching techniques on children's identification and understanding of

emotion within this timeframe, using a semi-structured interview to ensure the children were given a true voice.

3.3.2 Focus Group 2 (FG2)

FG2 contained a cross-section of children, based on the total time spent in nursery and their experience of these emotion-coaching strategies. This group comprised of a purposive sample of children who were 3, 4 or 5 years old and who had attended the nursery for a period of 1, 2 or 3 years. This sampling technique was selected to support the analysis of the impact of emotion-coaching on a child's emotional understanding and self-regulation across different timescales and age groups (Research Questions 1 and 2). Thomas (2017) argues that this style of sampling is non-probabilistic and would therefore, not be reflective of the whole nursery. However, to ensure the research gathered evidence on children who have received varying levels of emotion-coaching input, and who display varying levels of emotional self-regulation, a purposive sample selecting a cross-section of children was deemed to be the best method.

The child-led Mosaic Approach (Appendix F) led the data collection process, with FG2 being offered opportunities to communicate their thoughts and emotions as they unfolded in their day-to-day nursery environment. Using their own words, drawings, photographs and actions, children shared their views on their own meta-emotion and understanding of the social environment. A 'story stem' approach (Platteuw, 2011) was part of this Mosaic, offering children the use of dolls to devise and enact an ending to an emotion-focused story. An empty square was allocated to the 'Mosaic' to provide

flexibility and opportunity for improvisation, recognised by Clark (2017) as "theoretically and methodologically important" (p.72). To supplement this child-led approach, an event-contingent diary (Appendix G), detailing significant observations, was completed by the researcher. This unstructured, narrative approach allowed for notification of verbal and physical responses to emotion-coaching techniques as necessary to answer the three research questions.

3.3.3 Framework for Data Analysis

Following collection of the above data, a constant-comparative method of interpretation (Thomas, 2017, p.244) was utilised to code and identify themes found within the children's responses. For FG1, the data gathered from the semi-structured interviews allowed for comparison of emotional understanding pre- and post-intervention. This data was likewise coded using a constant-comparative method and the key themes were cross-referenced with those arising from the Mosaic Approach. Biggam (2015) contends that through cross-referencing of themed subsets, a more cohesive picture of the overall data can be built. In this study, these emerging themes were subsequently mapped to establish any changes in children's meta-emotion and in children's emotional self-regulation. Rose et al. (2015), using a similar constant-comparative process, identified key themes relating to adults' experience using emotion-coaching techniques. Based on the teachers' experiences, the key categories which emerged were Professional Practice, Adult Self-Regulation and Behavioural Impact on Child. Previous research has yet to identify key themes for emotion-coached children, however, this child-led study now aims to provide these key themes.

Through these emerging themes, displayed in table form, links between the experience of emotion-coaching techniques and the emotional responses of the children are considered. These key ideas are suitable for comparison in terms of the emotion-coaching exposure-time, providing an opportunity to consider possible differences in terms of impact and timescale, as referred to in the third research question. The data collected in this empirical study must then be reflectively and carefully analysed and clearly based within the relevant field of literature (Roberts-Holmes, 2014). Figure 3 details this analytical process, adapted from Wolcott's 'Description, Analysis, Interpretation' model (1994).

FG1 Box Full of Feelings Semi-Structured Interview Data

FG2 Mosaic Approach Data

Describe Data and Identify Themes

Describe Data and Identify Themes

Group Themes to Identify
Key Themes

Interpret Findings and Position within the field of Emotion Coaching Literature

Figure 3: Qualitative Data Analysis Process for Nursery Class Emotion Coaching Study adapted from Wolcott (1994)

3.4 Limitations and Potential Problems

All research has its limitations and this study is no exception. Robert-Holmes (2014) advises that part of the process of ensuring validity requires the qualitative researcher to consider their personal "feelings, impressions and judgements…to alleviate bias" (p.213). This issue has been identified and addressed previously, with reference to Donaldson's report and the *need* for teachers to hold personal beliefs as a motivation for their research.

In adopting a focus group approach, structured by purposive sampling, this study of a small nursery class restricted its number of participants even further. Such a small sample size leads to issues with "generalisability" (Biggam, 2015, p.299), similar to issues identified by Gus et al. (2017). However, to enable a single researcher to provide a rich narrative and a detailed description of the emotional responses of young children to emotion-coaching techniques, a small sample size is beneficial.

In consideration of the impact of emotional understanding on subsequent self-regulation, an Interpretivist paradigm has been advanced, promoting an understanding of behaviour as a response to emotion and allowing for insight into the meta-emotion behind children's actions. Again, caution should be exercised in generalising any findings as the small amount of quantitative data generated has not been statistically analysed. Rose et al. (2015) offered statistically significant results relating to the change in 'antisocial' behaviours following a period of emotion-coaching, however, in the focus nursery class, emotion-coaching is used with children for both positive

and negative behaviour experiences, not just for 'antisocial' behaviours. Therefore, the use of sanction/reward as a means of quantifying change is not available.

A further potential problem may be in terms of the validity of the results in following an Action Research framework. The nursery staff have experienced continuous cycles of Action Research moving away from Behaviourism towards nurture, attachment and emotion-coaching. Does it therefore, need to be a long-term change process for any practitioner team to embrace attachment and emotion-coaching? Are the results perhaps situational and relevant only to this nursery? The question arises whether another team of early years pedagogues would experience similar results without the historical Action Research. Certainly, Rose et al. (2016) have described an Action Research phase as central to their recent emotion-coaching study and have emphasised the need for training and supporting practitioners to ensure the successful implementation of emotion-coaching strategies in their own establishments.

Ethical considerations precluded the use of a control group. The nursery behaviour policy now promotes an attachment-led approach with emotion-coaching replacing the previous sanction/reward system. It would, therefore, not be ethically appropriate to select a group of children who did not experience the emotion-coaching techniques. For this reason, FG1, the newest children in the nursery, were selected to allow for an insight into pre- and post- experience of these attachment-led strategies.

An information letter and consent forms were distributed to all parents of selected participants and written consent was received from all parents of children involved. Anonymity and confidentiality are paramount; therefore, pseudonyms have been selected and neither the nursery class nor the staff and children are identifiable. The children were given full information about the research in order to give their 'informed consent' to participate and, to ensure confidentiality, all observational data was uploaded on a daily basis to the University's secure online file storage area.

This chapter has presented the rationale for this qualitative, child-centred research, both detailing and justifying the research strategy. Potential limitations have been acknowledged and elucidated, with the aim of minimising conceivable criticisms. The next chapter reports on the results of the study, detailing the findings on children's meta-emotion and observed emotional regulation, co-constructed by adults and children through the different tools and methodology adopted. Clark argues that through "combining the narratives and images of these individual pieces (tools), it brings a greater level of understanding…" (Clark, 2017, p.56) and Chapter Four offers the results of such a multi-modal approach.

4.0 Action-Research Findings: Description, Discussion & Synthesis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the results of the Action Research described in the previous chapter. The research examines two groups of children, referred to as FG1 and FG2, attending an attachment-led nursery class, with both groups experiencing emotion-coaching as a strategy for developing behavioural self-regulation. For FG1, data was collected via semi-structured interviews, 6 weeks apart, pre-and post-intervention. For FG2, data was collected via the child-led Mosaic Approach across a 6-week period. All data was coded using a constant-comparative method, key themes were identified for each group and then cross-referenced between the groups.

The empirical data is detailed in a systematic way, with reference to each of the three research questions. Question One considers children's *identification* and *understanding* of emotion. Question 2 considers children's *emotional responses* and Question 3 considers children's *strategies for self-regulation.* For these aspects: *identification*, *understanding*, *responses* and *strategies,* results are detailed for FG1, FG2 and then both groups combined.

Prior to the results, it is necessary to place the study in context as part of an ongoing cycle of Action Research within the focus nursery. The nursery staff has participated in formal and informal training, professional reading and pedagogical discussion,

developmental work in both policy and practice, and are committed to fostering an attachment-led ethos in their nursery class. It is in the context of these experiences and philosophical changes that this research has been completed.

The transcripts of children's responses in FG1, in relation to aspects of the Research Questions, are detailed in Appendix H. For FG2, the Mosaic Approach gathered a large amount of qualitative data, for which full transcripts are not appropriate within the scope of this thesis (but are available on request). The data has, therefore, been summarised in tables for each aspect of the Mosaic Approach and these are found in Appendix I.

4.2 Findings

4.2.1 Identification of Emotion

Research Question 1: Does an emotion-coaching approach influence young children's **identification** and understanding of their own and others' emotions?

4.2.1.1 FG1: Identification of Emotion

10 children were interviewed about the emotions within the Box Full of Feelings stories. In Session 1, at the pre-read stage, 9 of the responses did not identify the emotion Happy, instead offering non-emotion responses such as "*tickly*," and "*laughing*." 6 responses did not identify Sad, with 2 children identifying "*crying*" as

an emotion and 1 child giving no response at all. 13 responses did not initially identify Scared and only 2 identified the emotion without requiring multiple-choice support. Some children tried to describe the emotional *reasoning* behind the Scared story whilst being unable to identify the actual emotion word e.g. "*the dog gonna bite her.*" Only 6 responses identified Angry with 6 others confusing Angry with Sad. Comparing the pre-read stage (looking at the picture), with the post-read stage (after listening to the story), children's responses showed no marked increase in emotional identification of Happy and Sad emotions. Both before and after emotion-coaching intervention for Scared or Angry emotions, listening to the story helped some children to identify the correct emotion.

The biggest change in the children's emotional identification is evident following the six-weeks emotion-coaching intervention (Table 1). Pre- and Post-read, every child but one identified the emotion Happy. All children now identified Sad and all, but 2 children, identified Scared. 15 responses now identified Angry, with some children still experiencing confusion between Angry, Sad and Scared.

	FG1 Pre-Emotion Coaching Identification Session 1		6 weeks Emotion Coaching Experience	FG1 Post-Emotion Coaching Identification Session 2	
	Pre-read	Post-read		Pre-read	Post-read
Happy	11/20	11/20		19/20	20/20
Sad	14/20	13/20		20/20	20/20
Scared	7/20	12/20		18/20	19/20
Angry	6/20	8/20		14/20	15/20
Total	38/80	44/80		71/80	74/80
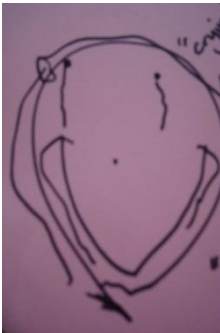
Table 1.

Increasing Emotional Identification in Box Full of Feelings Task in Focus Group 1 (FG1)

Note. At the Pre-read stage children are shown only the story illustration.
At the Post-read stage children have listened to the story and look again at the illustration.

4.2.1.2 FG2: Identification of Emotion

Within the Mosaic Approach, the children experienced activities such as Mind-Mapping, Tours, and Drawings in which they identified emotions. Children's drawings showed a level of detail which increased with age. While this is to be expected, the children's ability to identify and describe the emotion in drawings also increased with time spent in the nursery. For example, Hannah and Cara are only 1 month apart in age, but 12 months apart in emotion-coaching exposure time. In terms of emotional identification, Cara displayed a noticeably greater knowledge of the physical 'features' of the emotion as detailed below (Table 2).

Table 2.	
Drawings by Two Children of Similar Age with Different Emotion Coaching Exposure Time	
Hannah	Cara
52 months old	53 months old
6 months in EC nursery	15 months in EC nursery
I smile.	*Happy, smile, mouth goes up, eyes open, I laughing, dancing is good.*
Sad	*Crying, tears, sad, sad eyes, mouth down the sides.*
No response	*Afraid, eyes open big, mouth open, go aaaargh! Maybe a big spider!*
Stomp your feet	*Angry eyes, eyes down, angry teeth, stomp, stomp. (clenches fists)*

For all four emotions studied, time spent in the emotion-coaching nursery closely correlated with an increasingly detailed verbal description and visual representation of emotion within the children's drawings (Appendix J). The increasing ability to identify emotion is further highlighted in the Story-Stem aspect of the Mosaic Approach as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3. Increasing Emotion Identification in Story Stems Task by Emotion Coaching Exposure Time – Focus Group 2 (FG2)						
Child	Age in months	Months in EC nursery	Emotion Identification			
			Happy	Sad	Scared	Angry
Dylan	41	6	✓			
David	47	6	✓	✓	✓	
Thomas	49	6	✓	✓	✓	
Hannah	52	6		✓	✓	
Cara	53	15	✓	✓	✓	✓
Susan	54	18	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clare	60	24	✓	✓	✓	✓

In considering the children's ability to identify an emotion within short stories, the 3 children with the longest exposure time to emotion-coaching techniques are the children who correctly identify every emotion. While Thomas, Hannah, Cara, Susan

and Clare are all in their preschool year, it appears that Cara, Susan and Clare's emotional identification skills have been positively influenced by their increased experience of emotion-coaching within the nursery.

4.2.1.3 FG1 and FG2: Identification of Emotion

Through listening to the children's voice in both focus groups, a picture emerges of the need to provide children with a language through which to discuss emotion, and while caution should be exercised in appraising these descriptive results, this does not undermine the tendency of the children to better identify their feelings and emotions. Furthermore, while some younger children had limited overall language skills and others had limited emotional language, in both groups the experience of emotion-coaching provided an increased repertoire of emotional language – a language which better enables emotional expression.

The literature review highlighted the need to provide children with teaching about emotion, developing their meta-emotion rather than 'shutting them down' via sanction/reward techniques. Gottman (1997) highlights that through emotion-coaching children learn to recognise and name emotions, providing a basis upon which self-regulation can develop. This developing emotional literacy creates strong neurological connections in the young child's brain (Siegel, 2012), connections which lead to increased emotional understanding and regulation. In FG1 Daniel provided an insight into the way in which this increasing emotional understanding can also begin to improve a child's self-image. In his pre-intervention interview Daniel used the word

"bad" 8 times, focusing on the character of the story as being "bad" rather than identifying the emotion. In his post-intervention interview he replaces "bad" with emotion words such as angry, scared or sad. This shows a developing understanding of the emotions behind the behaviours, an understanding which can help children to develop an improved self-concept and greater positivity about themselves (Schonert-Reichl et al, 2015).

4.2.2 Understanding of Emotion

Research Question 1: Does an emotion-coaching approach influence young children's identification and **understanding** of their own and others' emotions?

4.2.2.1 FG1: Understanding of Emotion

The children were interviewed about the reason for the emotion within each Box Full of Feelings story (Table 4). In Session 1, at the pre-read stage, 21 responses out of a possible 80 indicated an understanding of the cause of the emotion in the story. Post-read this understanding increased slightly to 30 out of 80 responses. In many cases the children offered no response or replied, "*don't know*," unable to provide any insight into the emotion of the story.

Table 4.

Increasing Emotional Understanding in Box Full of Feelings Task
(Providing an Emotionally Appropriate Response) – Focus Group 2 (FG2)

	FG1 Pre-Emotion Coaching Session 1		6 weeks Emotion Coaching Experience	FG1 Post-Emotion Coaching Session 2	
	Pre-read	Post-read		Pre-read	Post-read
Happy	7/20	8/20		20/20	18/20
Sad	6/20	6/20		12/20	19/20
Scared	4/20	9/20		18/20	20/20
Angry	4/20	7/20		15/20	19/20
Total	21/80	30/80		65/80	76/80

Note. At the Pre-read stage children are shown only the story illustration.
At the Post-read stage children have listened to the story and look again at the illustration.

Following six-weeks emotion-coaching experience, every child evidence increased emotional understanding (Table 4). Both Pre- and Post-read, the children displayed an improvement in emotional understanding with statements such as, "*Her sad 'cause she's laughing at her*," and "*He angry to mummy. He wants to play!*" Following intervention, 76 out of 80 responses correctly identified emotional understanding of each story. All children identified why the character felt Happy in the Pre-read. In the Post-read all 20 responses were emotionally appropriate for the Scared stories and 19 responses indicated emotional understanding in both the Sad and Angry stories.

The increase in Pre-read understanding following intervention indicates that the children are developing the ability to 'read' a facial expression, 'read' a social situation and understand another's emotions. Post-read results further indicate that the young children, following emotion-coaching experience, had a far greater understanding of social situations and the underlying emotions.

4.2.2.2 FG2: Understanding of Emotion

The children talked about emotion across all aspects of the Mosaic Approach. Snapshot Observations highlighted the use of emotional language and gesture embedded within children's play, with increasing frequency related to child's exposure time to emotion-coaching techniques (Appendix I). Clare, who has attended the nursery for 24 months, was observed at the water area making an angry face at a child and saying, "*You've just splashed Karen*! *You've made her wet and you've hurt her feelings! That's really sad!*" Susan, who had bumped her eye was observed thanking a child who had helped her, saying, "*I'm going to give a big, big hug! He was so nice to me and made me happy again*." Even the youngest child, Dylan, whose emotional language is less developed, was able to 'read' social situations and understand the causal emotion. He was observed watching a child who was crying, then picking up a toy car and pointing to the child, indicating he wanted to give it to the child to help him feel better.

Across the Mosaic Approach the children displayed varying levels of emotional understanding. Discussion following Children's Drawings indicated a developing

understanding of what may cause an emotion, in line with their emotion-coaching experience. Table 5 presents a sample of two children's discussions about their drawings.

	Table 5. Drawing Discussion Extracts of Two Children of Differing Age and Emotion Coaching Exposure Time – Focus Group 2 (FG2)	
	Dylan	Clare
	6 months Emotion Coaching Exposure	24 months Emotion Coaching Exposure
Happy	*Smile*	*I make fun. When my friend is over she gives big happy smiles. Mummy makes me so, so happy. I love to get happy.*
Sad	*Sad, tears.*	*Cry, tears, mouth is down, I take a little drink and I feel better. I get sad when I fall down.*
Scared	*Scared*	*Open mouth. It's very, very not nice when something jumps out! You feel aaaargh!*
Angry	*Teeth. Grrr!*	*Your eyes go angry, you stomp your leg out, your mouth goes grrr! Just take a drink and feel happy again.*

When asked during the interviews, "What makes you feel this emotion?" all children gave responses, although some were less emotionally aware. Those children with greater emotion-coaching experience gave appropriate responses for all emotions, including greater relevant details (Table 6).

	Table 6. Interview Extracts of Three Children Selected by Age and Emotion Coaching Exposure Time (EC Time) – Focus Group 2 (FG2)		
Age in Months	David	Thomas	Cara
	41	49	53
EC Time	6	6	15
Happy	*Happy at my friends. Help me. Kind at me.*	*Sometimes I play with my toys. My dinosaur with tyres.*	*Having funny stuff and having games and having mummy and a kiss and a cuddle and a high five fist pump! I love mummy's long hair too!*
Sad	*I sad when Laura hurts me. 'Cause she hurt my feelings.*	*When Ella doesn't make any more room for me for my trains.*	*Hurting me and I don't be happy when you're lost. That makes me sad.*
Scared	*Ouch!*	*When mummy gives Ella a big row.*	*Tripping and falling on dirt. It makes me cry. The ice, it's slippy. I don't like it.*
Angry	*I angry at Laura. That's 'cause she hurt me like this!*	*If daddy be nice to me or listen to me.*	*Stomping. Boys making me annoyed, touching my things. Don't touch my things!*

Across the Mosaic Approach children's responses indicated a confidence to talk about emotion. Children used all aspects of the Mosaic to share their thoughts about emotion and all but one child (the youngest), spoke openly and enthusiastically about their emotional experiences and understandings. The children were eager to participate in each activity, eager to share their emotional insights and equally confident to talk about happiness, sadness, fear or anger (Figures 4 - 7).

A Snapshot Observation	Children's Drawings	Story Stem Extracts
Cara: *I'm doing the chicken dance today!* (wiggles her body, flaps her hands, does a funny dance, laughs). *I am so, so happy!* (wiggles her body, moves up and down, smiles). *I'm going to stay at daddy's today and I'm taking Goldilocks and I'm happy, happy, happy!*		Clare*: Very happy! They're jumping and tickling their backs!* (big smile) Susan: *Happy! Play with the ball…and Rosie the dog can play too!* Cara*: She's happy, happy! They are jumping! Dancing!* Hannah: *Funny* Thomas: *Happy! They play hide and seek.* David: *Happy! Play a game, a funny game!* Dylan: *Happy!*

Photograph Tour	HAPPY	Interview Extracts
I get to hide. Why do you like to hide? *Because no one can see me and its quiet!* (smiles)	**HAPPY** Children's Emotion Regulation Strategies: *Play, dance, hug, get a friend, draw*	*Smile. Jump. Mummy and Daddy. Play with friends and toys. Funny games High five fist pump. Go on a swing. Feels nice. Feels good. I love it!*

A Mindmap Extract	Photograph Tour: Registration Tree	Describing Happy
I can play with my friend. It feels so lovely. I love her. I love my mummy, and daddy and sister too. That's me being happy. I'm smiling."	*It makes me happy when I come to nursery* (smiles)	*When my friend is over she gives big happy smiles. Mummy makes me so, so happy. I love to get happy.*

Figure 4. Sample Extracts from Mosaic Approach: Children's thoughts and ideas about the emotion 'Happy' - Focus Group 2 (FG2)

A Snapshot Observation	Children's Drawings	Story Stem Extracts
David: *I get it for her 'cause she hurt!* (Gets icepack from the freezer, points to crying child) David: *She got bumped on the eye. I help her, she crying. He bump her. I get the ice bag for her.* Staff: How do you think she feels now you've helped her? David: *Better…good* (smiles).		Clare: *Sad. She says sorry for kicking the ball.* Susan: *Sad. She needs to hug her, say sorry for shouting.* Cara: *Sad. She said I'm sorry…they are friends now. Hug!* Thomas: *Sad. He says sorry I kicked the ball. His friend says sorry I not play with you.* David: *That's why he give him a huggle.* Dylan: *He's crying.*
Photography Tour *I come here to see if there is a friend. They make me feel better and be kind to me.*	**SAD** Children's Emotion Regulation Strategies: *Go and play outside, listen to music, give them a toy, find a friend, read a book, go to the Take-a-Break Space, drink water, breathe, cuddle.*	**Interview Extracts** *Crying face. Your face goes down* *Mouth down. Sad when hurt* *Getting lost. Nobody to play with* *Getting bored. When mummy shouts.* *It feels like a zombie. Feels sore in tummy*
Mindmap Extract *Bump…sad*	**Photography Tour** *She cuddles me*	**Describing Sad** *Cry…tears…mouth is down…I take a little drink and I feel better. I get sad when I fall down.*

Figure 5. Sample Extracts from Mosaic Approach: Children's thoughts and ideas about the emotion 'Sad'- Focus Group 2 (FG2)
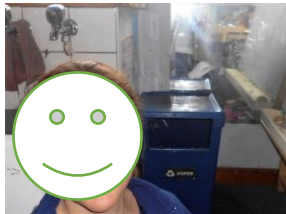
A Snapshot Observation	Drawings	Story Stem Extracts
Susan: *My mummy says she won't shout at me anymore (smiles). I told her I don't like her being a grumpy-bum. I told her I get scared and don't like it. I'm so happy. Mummy says I'm her best girl and she'll not shout anymore.*		Clare: *She puts the dog in the back there and locks the door, so he can't scare Mary…so the dog can't frighten her again* Susan: *Scared. Much better mummy carried her to be safe.* Cara: *Scared. She don't like the dog. I don't like big dogs. She gives the wee girl a hug 'cause she's scared.* David: *Scared. He runs to mum.*
Photograph Tour *He gets me a snack…I feel better*	**SCARED** Children's Emotion Regulation Strategies: *Run away, cuddle, find somebody to help, Daddy, cuddle teddy, play games, scare them back, Nan and Papa, deep breaths, hug, hide, calm down, get a drink, eat snack, draw picture, read book, wait.*	**Interview Extracts** *Scared of the dark.* *Mummy shouting* *Snakes. Tripping and falling in dirt. Don't like blood. Someone sneaking up on me. Monsters. Scary crocodiles. My heart be sad. I'm worried. I don't like it. Feels bad in my tummy.*
Mindmap Extract *It's you! You give me hugs. You read books. I love you. You always help me.*	**Photograph Tour** *I would do a picture…of something scary, like a dinosaur. Then I wouldn't be scared anymore!*	**Describing Scared** *Open mouth…very, very not nice when something jumps out! You feel aaaargh!*

Figure 6. Sample Extracts from Mosaic Approach: Children's thoughts and ideas about the emotion 'Scared'- Focus Group 2 (FG2)

A Snapshot Observation	Drawings	Story Stem Extracts
Clare: *NO! I wanted daddy to get me!* (stamps foot, moans, folds arms, makes angry face). Staff: Are you feeling really angry? Clare: Y*es! I wanted my daddy.* Staff: Can you think of anything you could do just now to help you feel calm again, then we can sort this out together? Clare: *I know! A drink of water*! (Runs to the water machine, pours a cup of water, takes a sip, takes a very deep breath, smiles). Clare: *OK, I'm calm now.*		Clare: *Angry! Sorry I put(ted) your picture on the floor. Mary said sorry I was angry* . Susan: *Angry! Tell the teacher, say sorry, have a hug, draw a picture together.* Cara: *Angry, calm down. She goes big breaths. Lies on the cushions. She says I'm sorry. Do you want a hug?* Hannah: *Tell the ladies somebody threw my picture, somebody pick it up.*
Photograph Tour *I look to it when I'm angry. I breathe. I sit here. Then I'm just calm.*	**ANGRY** Children's Emotion Regulation Strategies: *Get mummy and daddy, tell teacher, cuddles, run, Take-a-break, cool down, slow walk, quiet place, deep breaths, cuddle blanket, say 'stop', go by myself, drink, hug, say 'I love you', sleep in my bed, nice music.*	**Interview Extracts** *Angry face. Cry. Roar. Bang the door. Stamp my feet. Someone hurt me. When people always win. Mummy shouting or grumpy When someone annoys me. Boys make me annoyed. Don't touch my things, it's like fireworks. It feels hot. I really, really want to stay happy. I hate angry.*
Mindmap Extract *I calm down…It's so nice and quiet. People go away, and I get peace and quiet. I hold toys and it makes me calm down."*	**Photograph Tour** *I rock, feel better!*	**Describing Scared** *Your eyes go angry…you stomp your leg out…your mouth goes grrr…just take a drink and feel happy again.*

Figure 7. Sample Extracts from Mosaic Approach: Children's thoughts and ideas about the emotion 'Angry' - Focus Group 2 (FG2)

4.2.2.3 FG1 and FG2: Understanding of Emotion

Through engagement with the children in both groups, it is evident that children can find it challenging to understanding their own emotions and to understand the cause of another's emotions. The results from FG1 indicate that, with emotion-coaching input, young children can, in a relatively short time period, show a tendency to make good progress in understanding others' emotions. The results from the FG2 Mosaics indicate that, through emotion-coaching experience, young children develop an understanding of themselves and what impacts upon their own emotions. Development of this meta-emotion enables children to 'read' other people's emotions, to 'read' emotional situations and to develop confidence in their own emotional responses. Borduin-Quetsch et al. (2015) argue that Behaviourist approaches such as Time-Out, are beneficial for reducing negative behaviours in children, however, these strategies are adult-controlled as opposed to teaching children independent regulation of their emotions. The children in this study have strongly indicated that they are capable of developing an independent understanding of emotion and responding appropriately to these strong emotions. As Gottman argues, adults must "teach their children strategies to deal with life's ups and downs…and use emotional moments as opportunities for teaching their kids important life lessons" (1997, p.21) Emotion-coaching provides adults with just such a teaching method.

4.2.3 Regulation of Emotional Responses

Research Question 2: What impact does an emotion-coaching approach have on young children's **emotional responses and subsequent self-regulation skills**?

Research Question 3: What **emotion regulation strategies** does emotion-coaching input elicit from young children?

4.2.3.1 FG1: Regulation of Emotional Responses

Each child was read 8 stories from the Box Full of Feelings and, within the semi-structured interview, was asked what they thought the character could do next to manage their emotion.

In Session 1, five of the children could offer no response to this question for any emotion and 5 offered a small array of strategies. John offered the most strategies (6), notable because John's parent had approached the nursery a few weeks earlier requesting support with managing John's emotions. Staff had provided a visual emotion-coaching chart and now John was referring to these strategies in the interview. However, out of a possible 80 strategy suggestions, the children offered only 16 (Table 7).

Table 7.

Children's Increasing Knowledge of Emotion Regulation Strategies following Emotion Coaching Exposure – Focus Group 1

	Session 1 Pre-Emotion Coaching Intervention								6 weeks Emotion-coaching experience	Session 2 Post-Emotion Coaching Intervention							
Story No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Ann				Mum	Run	Adult		Mum		Play	Hug	Hug	Hug	Hug	Hug	Breath	Hug
Daniel										Play		Drink	Drink	Dad	Mum	Calm Eat	Breath
Eva										Play	Drink	Drink	Drink Play	Drink	Drink Sit		Drink Quiet
Frances						Mum		Talk		Play	Eat	Quiet	Walk Hug	Music	Hug Calm	Lie down	Drink
Gail			Hug		Drink			Nap		Talk	Hug	Drink	Drink	Mum	Drink	Calm Quiet	Calm Quiet
Joe										Play	Hug			Drink			
John		Hug	Run	Breath		Breath	Breath	Talk		Play	Hug	Calm Play	Breath	Breath	Calm Hug	Calm Breath	Breath
Lewis										Play			Calm	Calm	Calm	Count	Calm
Liam		Bed								Play	Hug	Hug	Drink	Drink	Walk	Drink	Breath
Robert										Play	Hug	Run		Run	Play	Walk Play	Play

Inappropriate or No Response ☐   Emotionally Aware Response ▮

Following 6 weeks emotion-coaching experience, every child could offer a variety of emotion regulation (ER) strategies. Some children's responses indicated they had a liking for a particular strategy such as Ann, who chose 'hug' 6 times and Eva, who suggested having a 'drink' 6 times. Other children, such as Frances, were more varied in their strategy responses, perhaps choosing a strategy more tailored to the specific story situation. Children offered 70 of a possible 80 strategy suggestions in Session 2, a noticeable increase from Session 1, six weeks earlier.

4.2.3.2 FG2: Regulation of Emotional Responses

Throughout the Mosaic Approach, the children referred to many ER strategies within Drawings, Interviews, Photography Tours and Mind-maps. Children demonstrated how to use ER strategies to resolve social situations within Story-Stem activities and, throughout the Snapshot Observations children utilised a wide variety of ER strategies on a frequent basis.

The children identified many physical items within the playroom as being helpful in emotion regulation. The Take-a-Break Space was mentioned often during the Photography Tour and Mind-mapping with comments such as:

- *It helps me get my power back 'cause it's quiet.*

- *I breathe, relax. In the Take-a-Break space I just get calm.*

- *I look at the pictures like the angry one then the happy one. When I look at the one I'm feeling it makes me happy.*

- *I just go on the cushions and look at the pictures…happy ones, sad ones, scary ones and angry ones.*

- *It's so nice and quiet. People go away and I get peace and quiet.*

Other environmental features mentioned by children were the chill-out pods, the stress-release toys and the cloakroom area. Children referred to these within their Tours and Mind-maps.

- *I go in the Chill-Out Pod*
- *You get to hide. I love hiding.*
- *I like to go in with my friend. That's happy.*

- *I like the cloakroom*
- *No people come out here. I like that.*
- *Its peace and quiet.*

- *It's a squeezy Toy*
- *I get this and play with it. Then I go to here (Take-a-break space).*
- *I hold toys and it makes me calm down.*
- *I touch squeezy toys. They're nice.*

Staff and other children were frequently referred to as aids in regulating emotions, with every child choosing to photograph at least one person whom they felt helped to regulate them. Children could also identify what that person does to help them:

- *He could play somewhere with me. It cheers me up.*

- *She makes me feel better… she gives me loads of hugs.*

- *You give me hugs. You read books. 'Cause I love you. You always help me.*

- *He'll calm me down. He talks to me and I get calm.*

- *I say, 'I cross.' She say, 'I give you a huggle OK?' That's why it's better.*

- *She cuddles me. It feels good.*

While every child did have knowledge of ER strategies, the frequency with which these strategies presented across the Mosaic Approach was impacted upon by the length of time the child had spent in the focus nursery. All preschool children did evidence a larger number of strategies than the younger children, however, across the preschool group there was a notable variation (Table 8). Cara, Susan and Clare, who had attended the focus nursery for over a year, thus experiencing greater emotion-coaching intervention, evidenced the more frequent use of strategies throughout their Mosaics.

Table 8.

Number of Emotion Regulation Strategies (ER) Identified Across Mosaic Approach in Relation to Emotion Coaching Exposure Time in Months (EC) – Focus Group 2 (FG2)

EC Exposure Time	6mth				18mth		24mth
Name	Dylan	David	Thomas	Hannah	Cara	Susan	Clare
ER Strategies	39	61	67	70	97	88	92
Stage	Ante preschool		Preschool				

4.2.3.3 FG1 and FG2: Regulation of Emotional Responses

FG1 displayed more knowledge of ER strategies following the emotion-coaching intervention. FG2 displayed an increasing knowledge of and use of ER strategies linked to exposure time to emotion-coaching experiences. FG2 displayed a wider array of strategies compared to FG1 and, between the two groups, the most popular ER strategies were not matching (Table 9).

Table 9.

Frequency of Emotion Regulation Strategies for Focus Group 1 (FG1), Focus Group 2 (FG2) and the Groups Combined, in Relation to Emotion Coaching Exposure (EC)

FG1 Pre-EC			FG1 Post-EC		FG2		FG1 Post-EC and FG2 combined	Total
Approach Adult	4		Drink / Snack	18	Emotional Gesture / Language	80	Emotional Gesture / Language	81
Deep Breath	3		Hug / Cuddle	15	Approach Adult	74	Approach Adult	77
Hug / Cuddle	2		Play Games	13	Empathic Gesture / Language	52	Hug / Cuddle	55
Exercise	2		Deep Breath	7	Hug / Cuddle	40	Empathic Gesture / Language	52
Quiet Time	1		Exercise	6	Approach Friend	38	Approach Friend	39
Drink	1		Alone / Quiet	5	Take-a-Break	31	Drink / Snack	35
Emotional Gesture / Language	1		Approach Adult	3	Alone / Quiet	24	Take-a-Break	31
Apologise	1		Approach Friend	1	Stress Relief Toys	20	Alone / Quiet	29
			Emotional Gesture / Language	1	Sharing Techniques	18	Play Games	29
			Music	1	Drink / Snack	17	Deep Breath	21
			Counting	1	Play Games	16	Stress Relief Toys	20
					Apology	15	Sharing Techniques	18
					Deep Breath	14	Apology	15
					Emotion Picture Cards	10	Exercise	12
					Sand / Water	7	Emotion Pictures	10
					Draw / Paint	6	Sand / Water	7
					Exercise	6	Draw / Paint	6
					Read	5	Read	5
					Toilet	3	Toilet	3
					Music	2	Music	3
							Counting	2

(Vertical label between columns 2 and 3: Emotion-Coaching Exposure)

Upon further analysis of the data, key themes begin to emerge across both groups in relation to the nature of children's emotion regulation (Table 10). *Co-regulation* of the child, with help from an adult or peer is evident in both groups and is, notably, the most frequent strategy for FG1 pre-intervention. FG2, who have a far wider array of strategies, also still view adult support as a key to their regulation, with hugs and cuddles being high on the agenda.

Table 10. Key Themes Identified in Young Children's Emotion Regulation Strategies				
Co- Regulation *with* **Others**	**Self-Regulation**			**Co- Regulation** *of* **Others**
Approach Others	Address Emotions	Self-Distraction	Self-Removal	Empathy
Approach Adult Hug / Cuddle Approach Friend	Emotional Gesture / Language Sharing techniques Apologise Emotion Picture Cards	Drink / Snack Play Games Exercise Deep Breath Stress Relief Toys Sand, Water, Draw, Paint Read, Music, Count	Take-a-Break Alone Quiet Toilet	Empathic Gesture Empathic Language

With the development of Attachment Theory (Commodari, 2013; Geddes, 2006) has come an understanding that how children 'attach' to teachers can impact upon their social-emotional understanding. For the children in this study, these *co-regulating*, loving, nurturing relationships appear to be crucial to their developing self-regulation.

Both groups displayed many *self-regulating* strategies, and these can be themed into three subsets: Addressing Emotions, Self-Distraction and Self-Removal. Addressing Emotions through emotional language and gesture is the most common strategy used by FG2 children i.e. talking about their emotions and physically expressing their emotions to others. This is at the heart of emotion-coaching. Children who learn *how* to talk about their feelings and *how* to express them in an appropriate way, have the key to self-regulation (Gottman, 1997). The children in this study repeatedly displayed that talking about emotions led them to a greater understanding of emotion and a wider array of strategies for self-regulation.

For FG1, Self-Distraction is the most common strategy approach. The strategies selected by children involve movement, body awareness and a re-focus of the mind. This is in direct opposition to the Time-Out strategy advocated so strongly by Borduin-Quetsch et al. (2015) in which children are expected to sit still and focus their thoughts on the preceding negative situation and their behaviour. However, the children in this study, particularly in FG1, are informing us that re-direction and distraction are preferable strategies with which to independently regulate their emotions.

Self-Removal strategies were evident in FG1 and featured strongly for FG2 children. Many children referred to the Take-a-Break space and the need for Quiet Time. However, in contrast to the Behaviourist concept of Time-Out, this is *self-selected* quiet time, not imposed by the adult and not causing 'rupture' in the adult-child relationship. Removing the possibility of the isolation or rejection of an adult-imposed

Time-Out and providing the child with space (physically and emotionally) to regain their emotional balance, offers children a respect and empathy which will further improve their self-esteem and self-control (Denham et al, 2012a).

The empathic nature of emotion-coaching appears to provide safe, co-regulating relationships, improves self-esteem and develops in children a belief in their ability to self-regulate. Emotion-coaching further enhances self-regulation through providing children with possible strategies which they can access in many different social situations. The children in FG1 and FG2 now have a wide array of ER strategies at their disposal, guided as necessary, by warm, loving co-regulating adults. Silkenbeumer et al. (2018) similarly identified that, in supporting children's developing emotion-regulation, adults firstly develop children's emotional awareness through warm relationships and secondly, they support the child to "co-construct a repertoire of effective emotion regulation strategies" (p.73).

However, this present study extends the typology of Silkenbeumer et al, identifying a further stage in the children's emotional understanding (Figure 8). Children in FG2 displayed an ability to co-regulate *other children and adults* i.e. Empathy. Through empathic gesture and language, noted across the Mosaic Approach, the young children displayed a developing meta-emotion encompassing the feelings and needs of others.

Figure 8. Stages of Emotional Regulation Development via Emotion-Coaching Experiences
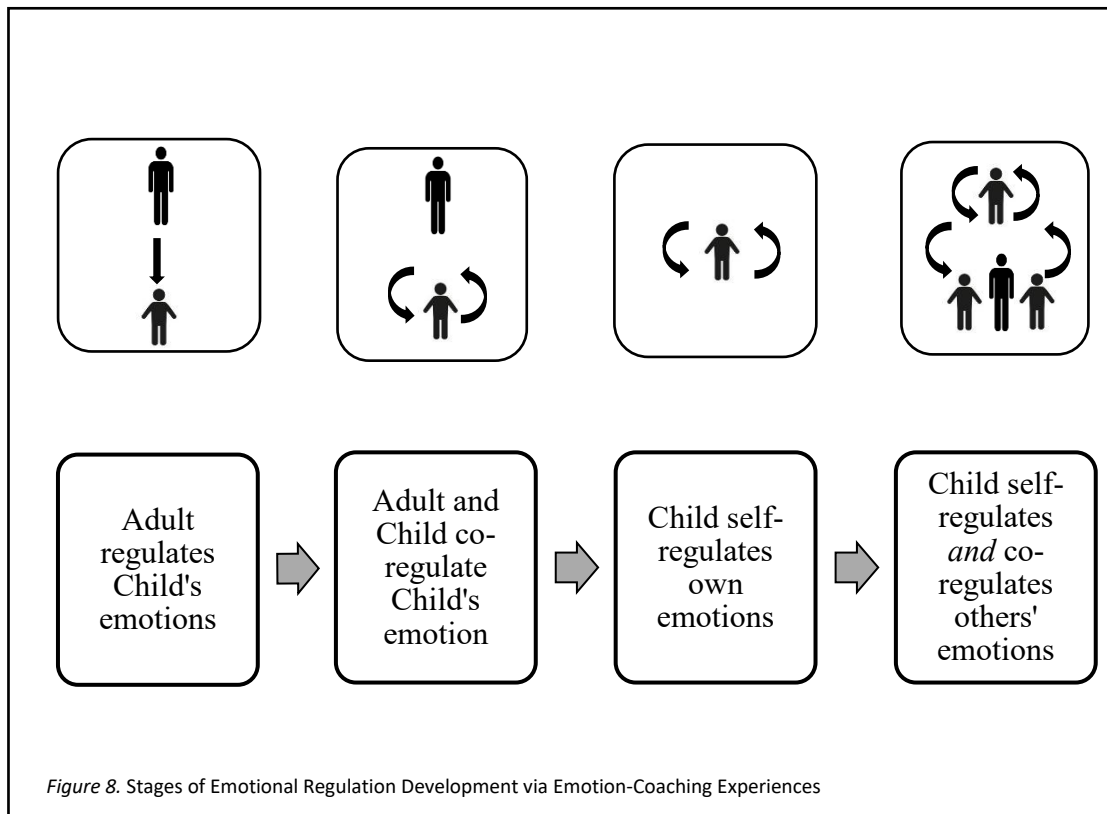
Wang and Wang (2015) argue that empathy is a predictor of children's later emotional-social competence and this study found that emotion-coaching not only impacts upon children's emotional understanding and self-regulation skills but additionally develops emotionally-empathic responses in children. If, as Siegel (2012) argues, the brain is inherently adaptable in response to persistent environmental experiences, then an emotion-coaching environment consisting of co-regulation, self-regulation and empathy, must surely be a 'brain-nurturing' environment for our young children.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

The overall aim of this research was to support the development of new understandings about emotion-coaching as a strategy for supporting young children's meta-emotion, social interactions and attachments within a Scottish nursery context. The specific research objectives were to:

- *Observe* and *identify* emotion-coaching strategies experienced by young children
- *Explore* changes in young children's identification and understanding of emotion in themselves and others after a period of emotion-coaching
- *Consider* the impact of emotion-coaching on a child's emotional self-regulation

This chapter will revisit these research objectives, summarise the findings from the study and offer conclusions based on these findings. Recommendations for future research will be identified and discussed. The contribution of this research to current knowledge about emotion-coaching and young children's emotional regulation will be considered and any perceived limitations will be highlighted. The chapter will conclude with a personal reflection on the overall research process and the specific lessons learned.

5.2 Research Objectives: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.2.1 Research Objective 1: Emotion-Coaching Strategies

The literature review identified that implementation of the Solihull Approach, could often be "superficial" and "formulaic" (Brigham & Smith, 2014, p.35). This suggests the need for research into how to best support staff with the application of such innovative pedagogical strategies. My study planned to consider the impact of emotion-coaching strategies adopted by staff as a supplement to the Solihull Approach. An event-contingent diary was planned as a tool for gathering information on the use of these strategies with the children. However, in reality this proved very challenging to manage. Emotion-coaching is so embedded into the language and interactions within our nursery that it quickly became evident that there would be continuous note-writing were all emotion-coaching 'events' observed between staff and children to be noted. Within the FG2 Snapshot Observations staff emotion-coaching was observed frequently, however, these observations were focused on the children's emotional responses, their understanding of emotion and on their regulation skills, not on the specific strategies in use by staff. Subsequently, this study has not fully met the first Objective. Emotion-coaching input from staff *has* been observed and *is* present in the transcripts of FG2 Snapshot Observations but has not been *identified* or detailed in any systematic way.

Yet, this constant use of emotion-coaching language and attuned interactions by staff offers an interesting insight into the success of emotion-coaching within the nursery.

Staff-child relationships point to emotion-coaching as being a whole social-pedagogical ethos within the nursery, not just an additional strategy to be implemented as circumstances dictate. From this, a conclusion *can* be drawn about the strategies witnessed. Emotion-coaching is not, in fact, about specific strategies. It is about an approach that nurtures, co-regulates and supports children at all times across their whole nursery experience. Emotion-coaching, as evidenced in this study, is the practical application of a strong attachment-informed and emotionally-intelligent philosophy. From this conclusion comes the first recommendation:

> ➢ early years educators, looking to implement emotion-coaching as a behaviour 'strategy,' must firstly become cognisant of Attachment Theory and the underpinning neuroscience, building from this a warm, loving, brain-nurturing pedagogy inclusive of emotion-coaching.

This recommendation firmly acknowledges the role of the adult and the influence that staff meta-emotion and subsequent pedagogy can have on the success of emotion-coaching. Future research may wish to consider what factors best support an emotionally-aware pedagogy.

5.2.2 Research Objective 2: Identification and Understanding of Emotion

The literature review indicated that attachment-led practice necessitates that emotional moments be used as teaching opportunities with a focus on 'containment' of children's emotions. The empirical data from this research indicates that, even a very short time in an emotion-coaching environment positively impacts children's emotional

understanding and, emotion-coaching can support the development of children's identification and understanding of emotion. Children's comprehension of the emotions and reactions of themselves and others was found to develop with emotion-coaching support. Children then distinguish between emotions, recognising them through facial expressions, body gestures and through 'reading' social situations, resulting in a burgeoning self-confidence. This leads to the conclusion that emotion-coaching develops young children's emotional intelligence, social acuity and subsequent self-esteem, thus generating a second recommendation:

➢ rather than 'disciplining' a child's behaviour patterns, educators should intervene at an earlier stage, focusing instead on the child's meta-emotion and patterns of thinking. This recommendation would create a positive mental health approach in which teaching emotional thinking skills and social-emotional awareness supersedes the traditional sanction/reward and Time-Out approaches.

This recommendation could lead to future research with specific sub-groups of children whose social and emotional development requires additional support. Perhaps children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder may particularly benefit from an emotion coaching approach? Could children who have experienced early childhood trauma find support through such an approach? Further research is required.

5.2.3 Research Objective 3: Regulation of Emotion

The literature review established that children's emotion-regulation is closely correlated with future academic success, highlighting that children who have developed emotional awareness and subsequent emotion-regulation skills also have lower stress levels, increased self-esteem and increased peer acceptance. This study considered the impact of emotion-coaching on children's self-regulation skills and identified that, in practice, young children are capable of both self-regulation *and* co-regulation of others. Children of nursery age have displayed that they have the capacity to make positive, pro-active choices about how they respond to strong emotions in themselves and others. The resultant conclusion is that young children can learn to regulate their own emotions when supported to develop their meta-emotion and when provided with appropriate alternative strategies. In this study, emotional support was provided in a safe, non-judgemental, nurturing, attachment-led environment, and this engenders the third recommendation:

> ➢ Consider whether this developing meta-emotion is situation-specific. Future research could consider, following emotion-coaching experience, whether the subsequent self-regulation and co-regulation skills are then transferable to a non-emotion-coaching environment? To a sanction-and-reward, Behaviourism influenced environment? To the home environment? To a school classroom?

5.3 Contribution to Knowledge

This study has focused on children, aged 3-5 years, within a Scottish nursery class. The literature review highlighted that emotion-coaching impact studies have traditionally focused on the home environment or the compulsory schooling environment, and on parents or staff views. This study adds to the growing body of research on emotion-coaching, indicating that young children are capable of increasingly complex meta-emotion; of emotional self-awareness, self-regulation of emotion and behaviour and, of increasingly empathic co-regulatory thinking and behaviours. This has implications for 'behaviour management' and the way in which early years educators respond to the behavioural manifestations of young children's strong emotions. Adult intervention via sanctioning distressed behaviours denies young children the opportunity to identify the causal emotion, to consciously regulate the emotion and then to make positive choices about the subsequent behaviour (Figure 9).

Figure 9. The Pathway of Interventions: Emotion Coaching v Behaviourism
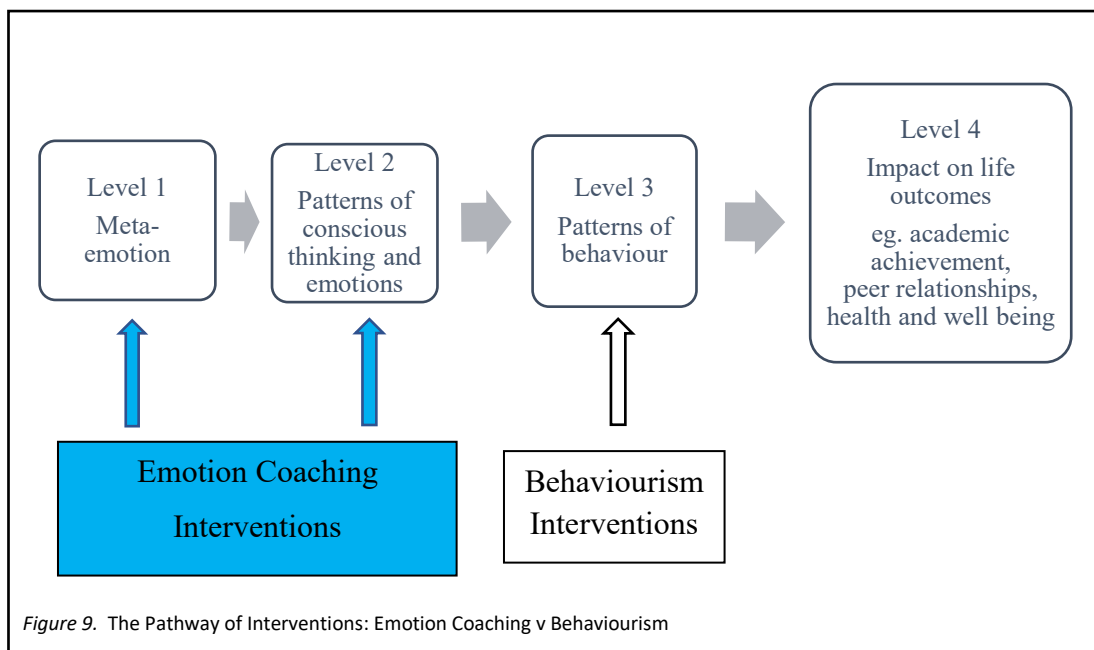
The above cascade diagram illustrates opportunities for intervention in teaching behaviour regulation to a young child. Acting at Level 4 is reactive; reacting to negative impacts already influencing a child's life outcomes. Traditional Behaviourism techniques of sanction/reward impact at Level 3; they may affect narrow, short term changes to outcomes but essentially act too late and are likely to meet resistance as emotional understanding may be less well developed. Acting at Level 2 creates a co-regulatory relationship between adult and child and is where emotion-coaching can initially impact. However, supporting a child at Level 1 arguably creates emotional ownership, maturity, independence and resilience, leading to an emotional intelligence which positively impacts upon patterns of conscious thinking, patterns of behaviour and subsequent life outcomes.

5.4 Limitations

As with all research, there are some limitations. Due to the small sample size, generalisations cannot be made. This issue was discussed and addressed in Chapter 3. Implementing research in one's own class raised some issues as note-taking and observations were necessarily limited by the day-to-day events of a busy, creative class of young children. Resultantly, many wonderful examples of emotion-coaching interactions between staff, children and their peers were not able to be noted. However, this does not undermine the research, but instead strengthens the claim that emotion-coaching and empathic interactions are embedded in the interactions within the focus nursery.

Validity was discussed and addressed in Chapter 3, in relation to whether the results are specific to this nursery and the cycles of Action Research previously completed by the staff team. This issue has been further addressed above in the first recommendation. Validity may also raise the question of children's varying experiences of parenting styles and behavioural approaches at home. However, while some children may experience a parental emotion-coaching approach, and others a sanction/reward approach, the empirical data indicates an improvement in *all* children's emotion identification and understanding following the 6-week intervention, thus minimising concerns over the validity of these results.

The use of The Box Full of Feelings as a pre- and post-intervention tool may raise a further question of validity. Perhaps the children were more relaxed, better understood the expectations, and were more confident in the post-intervention experience. However, the large amount of data gathered across the two groups allows for the triangulation of data and supports the proposal that an emotion-coaching approach has been influential in developing the children's identification, understanding and regulation of emotion.

One final possible limitation with this research is reliability. The Mosaic Approach generated a vast amount of data, much of which cannot be presented in the scope of this thesis. The results section provides only a snapshot of the data collected, with further data presented in the attached appendices. However, the fascinating full scripts for children's photography tours, mind-maps, story-stems, interviews and observations needs must be set aside from a dissertation of this size. Therefore, the results displayed

have been carefully selected to ensure an overall sense of the data collected, to minimise criticisms about reliability and to confirm that the findings are trustworthy.

5.5 Self-Reflection

The research focus of emotion-coaching was a topic of genuine interest following my 'discovery' of the technique one year previously. Observing the nurturing interactions between staff and children and hearing anecdotal evidence from the team about the success of emotion-coaching, the decision was taken to research the reported impact in a more objective, impartial manner. This leads to the first piece of advice for future students: there must be a willingness to challenge any assumptions made, to be willing to unpick the evidence, and to be open to generating results which do not support the original anecdotal evidence.

'Emotion-coaching' *initially* appeared a straightforward research focus. However, at the onset of writing the proposal and considering the methodology, issues arose around the core research questions. It became evident that a decision would need to be made on whether the research subjects would be the staff or the children? The University of Strathclyde Handbook advises Masters' students to rely on key forms of support and so the staff team, family, and the research supervisor were all approached to discuss the options available to narrow the research focus. Following discussions and further reading, a gap was identified in the current body of emotion-coaching research and from this, the research questions were generated. Advice to future students would

include approaching friends, family and colleagues as this proved an invaluable tool, providing differing opinions upon which to decide the best course of action.

Further support was received through initiating contact with the AAS team and Emotion Coaching UK. Through email communications, advice was received on Action Research methodology, current emotion-coaching research projects and recommended literature. This communication led to an invitation being extended to attend the Attachment Research Community (ARC) Annual Conference in Birmingham in December 2017. Attendance at this conference presented the opportunity to meet with the Emotion Coaching UK team, to attend attachment-focused seminars and to network with authors, trainers, presenters, teachers and researchers, all subscribing to an attachment-led philosophy. This networking experience further consolidated my strong pedagogical belief in 'brain-nurturing' approaches, whilst further highlighting the gap in research, being that of young children's experiences of emotion-coaching.

The importance and wider relevance of the research project now became evident. For a Masters' student, writing a dissertation about a small research project in a local nursery class, the realisation that the results are eagerly awaited by colleagues locally *and* nationally, raised the stakes somewhat. To have selected a research focus, identified research objectives and designed a set of research questions that might now impact on future understandings about emotion-coaching and young children, has created a sense of relevance desired by every student researcher.

This research study has been carefully planned, systematically undertaken, critically analysed and objectively evaluated, with the aim of identifying conclusions, generating recommendations and contributing to the current knowledge base on emotion-coaching. However, what must remain central to this study and not be 'drowned out' by research terminology and design, is the central philosophy of the focus nursery and of this thesis; that young children are experts in their own lives and their voices must be listened to and heard.

Word Count: 14810

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**Appendix A: Whole-Brain Child Strategies**

Whole-Brain Strategies for ages 3 - 6

Integrating the left and right brain	**1 _Connect and Redirect_** When the child is upset, connect first emotionally, Right brain to Right brain. Then, once your child is more in control and receptive, bring in the Left for brain lessons and discipline.	• Hear what's upset the child • Hug and repeat back what you've heard that they feel • Then, direct them towards solving the problem
	2 Name it to tame it When the Right brain is out of control – tell them the story about what's upsetting them. This engages the Left brain to start making sense of the experience	• Recognise the emotion • Start telling the story back to them e.g. "I saw you running, and when your foot hit that slippery spot, you fell. Is that what happened? So, then you started crying and I came over to you…." • If needed, retell upsetting stories with drawings or social stories
Integrating the upstairs and downstairs brain	**_3 Engage, don't enrage_** Engage the upstairs brain by asking the child to consider, plan and choose. Not the downstairs brain, which is more reactive	• Set clear boundaries e.g. "we don't hit. What's another way you can get that toy? • Praise child when they come up with an alternative response. • To avoid a power struggle, you can say "can you think of an idea of how we can both get what we want?
	4 Use it or Lose it Provide lots of opportunities to exercise the upstairs brain so it can be strong and integrated with the downstairs brain.	• Play 'What Would You Do' – giving hypothetical dilemmas such as "what would you do if you were at the park and found a toy that you really wanted but belonged to someone else?" • Read stories and ask children to predict endings • Encourage children to make decisions in tricky situations
	5. Move it or lose it To help a child regain the upstairs/downstairs brain balance, have them move their body	• Moving the body is a powerful way to change mood • When a child is upset and once feelings have been acknowledged – encourage the child to move their body • e.g. throwing a ball, going for a walk, on a bike

Integrating Memory	**6 Use the remote of the mind** Encourage the child to pause, rewind and fast-forward the story to enable them to maintain control over it	• Tell stories about anything that has happened – good or bad • Tell and retell stories of any big moments in their life • This promotes healing and integration
	7 Remember to remember Exercise the child's memory by giving lots of practice at remembering	• Ask questions that exercise the memory • Play memory games like matching pairs or Kim's game • Take turns talking about what happened as you both remember big events
Integrating the Many Parts of Myself	**8 Let the clouds of emotions roll by** Remind the child that feelings come and go.	• Children don't view emotions as temporary so tell them that this feeling will pass • Ask the child "when do you think you will feel better?"
	9 SIFT Help children notice and understand: Sensations Images Feelings Thoughts	• Talk to the child about their inner world • Help the child to notice and talk about what's going on in their mind and body • Ask questions about how they feel or what they are thinking about
	10 Exercise Mindsight Teach the child to calm themselves and focus their attention where they want	• Help child practice taking calm breaths • Help the child to close their eyes and practice imaging calm places – like being at the beach with the sand in their toes
Integrating Self and other	**11 Increase the fun factor** Help child enjoy satisfying and fun experiences with other people	• Spend time playing with the child • Play games, and laugh together • Be silly and have playful, funny moments
	12 Connect through conflict Rather than an obstacle, View conflict as an opportunity to teach essential relationship skills	• Use conflict to teach about sharing, turn taking, asking for forgiveness, saying sorry • Model these concepts to the child • Kneel down with the child when there is conflict and help them understand how to be respectful in a relationship

Adapted from Siegel & Bryson (2012, pp. 157 – 160).

Appendix B: Emotion-Coaching Visual Strategy Chart

count	quiet	deep breath	outdoors	nap	hug

Quiet time

listen to music

walk
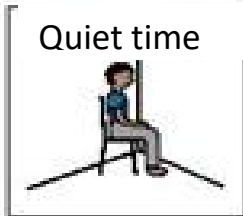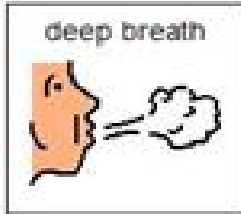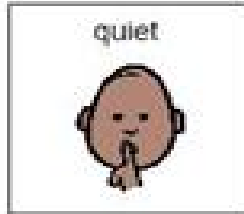
I am feeling…

sad angry scared

lights off

Stretch

drink of water

talk to a friend
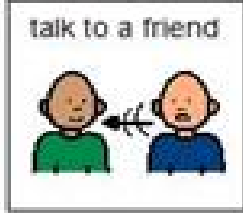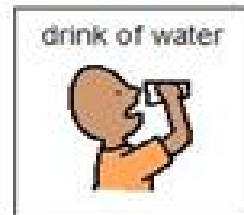
I need [ ] to help me calm down.

squeeze ball
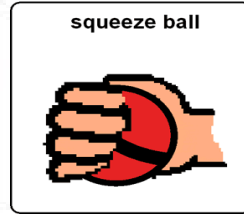
Appendix C: The Box Full of Feelings

FG1: Box Full of Feelings Story Illustrations	
Story 1: Angry	Story 2: Scared
Story 3: Happy	Story 4: Sad
Story 5: Scared	Story 6: Happy
Story 7: Sad	Story 8: Angry

Adapted from Kogs, Moons and Depondt (2004, K4a, K4b, K4c, K4d)

Appendix D: Nursery Focus Groups

Focus Group 1

- Box Full of Feelings Task
- 8 picture story-prompts, semi-structured interview schedule.
- Open-ended questions about the emotions within story-picture prompts to be noted within observational diary
- Focus group of newest children in EC nursery
- Baseline measures then repeat to check for evidence of developing understanding of emotion

All started attending EC nursery in January 2018										
	John	Eva	Daniel	Ann	Lewis	Joe	Robert	Gail	Frances	Liam
Age	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Stage	pre	ante	ante	ante	ante	ante	ante	ante	ante	ante

Focus Group 2

- Mosaic Approach – offer opportunities for children to communicate their thoughts and emotions
- Using children's own words, drawings, photographs and actions to share their views on meta-emotion and understanding of the social environment.
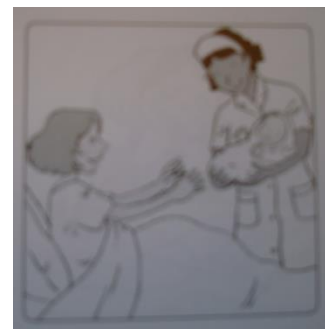- Event-Contingent diary with snapshot observations
- Unstructured, narrative approach noting verbal and physical responses
- Noting – responses to emotion-coaching from staff, use of self-calming techniques, use of physical calming resources, use of emotional language to identify feelings in self/other person, displays of empathy towards others
- Cross sectional study of different groups of participants – based on the period of time they have spent in the nursery exposed to these strategies.

	Dylan	David	Thomas	Hannah	Cara	Susan	Clare
Age	3	3	4	4	4	4	5
Stage	ante	ante	pre	pre	pre	pre	deferred
Months in EC nursery	6	6	6	6	15	18	24
Code	A1	A1	P1	P1	P2	P2	P3

Appendix E: FG1 Semi-Structured Interview

FG1: Box Full of Feelings Semi-Structured Interview

Item	Response Options	Researcher's Input	Story 1: ANGRY	Story 2: SCARED	Story 3: HAPPY	Story 4: SAD	Story 5: SCARED	Story 6: HAPPY	Story 7: SAD	Story 8: ANGRY
1. Show picture on story card	Open-ended If necessary, offer multiple-choice (MC) (happy, sad, angry, scared)	Look at this person's face. How do you think they might be feeling? Why do you think they might they be feeling that?								
2. Read story	Listen to this story and think about how the person might be feeling.									
3. Show picture again	Open-ended If necessary, offer multiple-choice (MC) (happy, sad, angry, scared)	Now you have heard the story, how do you think this person is feeling?								
4. Show picture again	Open-ended	Can you tell me why you think this person might feel like that? What do you think the person could do next?								
5. Give card to child	4 picture boxes to choose from	Can you put this story into the matching feelings box?								

Appendix F: The Mosaic Approach

The Mosaic Approach

Stage 1: Children and Adults Co-Constructing

Observation	Event-contingent diary: snapshot *and* event-specific narrative observations
Book-making	Child makes a 'feelings book' in which to record all their ideas and thoughts
Interview	Provide 4 picture cues (Happy, Sad, Angry, Afraid) Provide feelings book for child to illustrate their ideas Child talks about these emotions: - what their body does when they feel these emotions - how these emotions feel in their body - what things make them feel the emotion - what they do when they feel the emotion - how they respond to other people who feel this emotion
Tour and Photography	Child takes adult on a tour of the nursery, photographing and identifying - areas which impact on their emotions - areas where they have felt anger/sadness/fear/happiness - areas where they can go to self-calm - resources they can use to self-calm - people who help them to manage their emotion Researcher writes notes on child's choices and comments
Mind-mapping	Provide child with their printed photos and pens - Child selects which photos to stick into their feelings book - Child may wish to add drawings - Researcher scribes the child's words
Role Play	Using a 'story stem' approach (Platteuw, 2011) - Researcher starts a story with dolls - Child asked to complete the story to show how the person (doll) could manage the emotions i.e. self-regulation

Stage 2: Piecing together information for dialogue, reflection and interpretation

Snapshot Observations	Children's Drawings	Story Stems
Photograph Tour	EMOTION	Interview Answers
Mind-mapping	Photograph Tour	

Adapted from Clark, A. (2017). *Listening to Young Children: A Guide to Understanding and Using the Mosaic Approach, 3rd ed*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Platteuw, C. (2011). 'Narrative Play with Adopted Children' in Taylor de Faoite, A. (ed.) *Narrative Play Therapy and Practice*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Appendix G: Event Contingent Diary

Event-Contingent Diary: a narrative approach to note verbal and physical responses	Events				
FG2 Child: _____ Stage: P3 P2 P1 A1 Date & Time: _____ Location: _____ Narrative observation (noting verbal and physical responses)	response to emotion-coaching from staff member	use of self-calming techniques	use of the physical calming resources	use of emotional language to identify feelings in self/other	display of empathy towards others

Appendix H: FG1 Changes in Emotional Identification and Understanding

FG1 Results: Children's Changing *Identification of Emotions* (Box Full of Feelings)

Multiple Choice: 4 emotions stated MC

Inappropriate or No Response ☐   Emotionally Aware Response ☐

HAPPY	Session 1			Session 2	
Child & Story number	Pre-read	Post-read	6 weeks Emotion coaching experience	Pre-read	Post-read
Ann 3	Laughing	Happy		Happy	Happy
Ann 6	Happy	Happy		Happy	Happy
Daniel 3	Bad	No response		Happy	Happy
Daniel 6	Baby	Cries		Happy	Happy
Eva 3	Sad (MC)	Sad (MC)		Happy (MC)	Happy
Eva 6	Happy (MC)	Happy		Happy	Happy
Frances 3	Happy	Happy		Happy	Happy
Frances 6	Happy	Happy		Happy	Happy
Gail 3	Tickly	Happy (MC)		Happy	Happy
Gail 6	Happy	Happy		Lovely	Happy
Joe 3	Happy	Laughing		Happy	Happy
Joe 6	Mummy	Scared		Happy	Happy
John 3	Happy	Happy		Happy	Happy
John 6	Happy	Happy		Happy	Happy
Lewis 3	Tickles	Angry		Happy	Happy
Lewis 6	Happy	Happy…sad		Happy	Happy
Liam 3	Happy	Happy		Happy	Happy
Liam 6	He's got his baby	Happy		Happy	Happy
Robert 3	Happy	Good		Happy	Happy
Robert 6	Angry	Angry		Happy	Happy

SAD	Session 1			Session 2	
Child & Story Number	Pre-read	Post-read	6 weeks Emotion coaching experience	Pre-read	Post-read
Ann 4	Happy	Happy (MC)		Sad	Sad
Ann 7	Angry	Sad		Sad	Sad
Daniel 4	Crying	Crying		Sad	Sad
Daniel 7	No response	No response		Sad	Sad
Eva 4	Happy (MC)	Scared		Sad (MC)	Sad (MC)
Eva 7	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Frances 4	Sad (MC)	Sad		Sad	Sad
Frances 7	Crying	Crying		Sad	Sad
Gail 4	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Gail 7	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Joe 4	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Joe 7	Sad	Sad		Sad (MC)	Sad (MC)
John 4	Sad (MC)	Sad		Sad	Sad
John 7	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Lewis 4	Sad	Scared (MC)		Sad	Sad
Lewis 7	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Liam 4	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Liam 7	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Robert 4	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Robert 7	Sad	Don't know		Sad	Sad

SCARED	Session 1		6 weeks Emotion coaching experience	Session 2	
Child & Story Number	Pre-read	Post-read		Pre-read	Post-read
Ann 2	The dog gonna bite her	Scared (MC)		Scared (MC)	Scared
Ann 5	Sad (MC)	Sad		Angry (MC)	Sad
Daniel 2	Don't want one dog	No dog		Scared	Scared
Daniel 5	Help to see mummy	Sad		Scared (MC)	Scared
Eva 2	Scared (MC)	Scared		Scared (MC)	Scared (MC)
Eva 5	Sad (MC)	No response		Scared (MC)	Scared
Frances 2	Scared	Angry…scared		Scared	Scared
Frances 5	Scared (MC)	Scared		Scared	Scared
Gail 2	Doesn't like the dog	Scared (MC)		Scared	Scared
Gail 5	No response	Scared (MC)		Scared	Scared
Joe 2	Scared (MC)	Scared		Scared (MC)	Scared (MC)
Joe 5	Scared (MC)	Scared (MC)		Scared (MC)	Scared (MC)
John 2	Scared	Scared		Scared	Scared
John 5	Don't know	Scared		Scared	Scared
Lewis 2	Running	Running		Scared (MC)	Scared (MC)
Lewis 5	Happy (MC)	Sad		Scared (MC)	Scared
Liam 2	Doggy run about	Oh!		Scared	Scared
Liam 5	Looking his mum and dad	Scared		Scared	Scared
Robert 2	Scared (MC)	Scared (MC)		Scared	Scared
Robert 5	Worried (MC)	Worried (MC)		Worried	Scared

ANGRY	Session 1		6 weeks Emotion coaching experience	Session 2	
Child & Story Number	Pre-read	Post-read		Pre-read	Post-read
Ann 1	Grumpy	Grumpy		Angry(MC)	Angry
Ann 8	Cross	Angry		Angry	Angry
Daniel 1	Happy (MC)	Bad		Angry	Angry
Daniel 8	Bad	Bad		Angry (MC)	Angry
Eva 1	Angry (MC)	Angry		Angry	Angry
Eva 8	Angry (MC)	Angry		Angry	Angry
Frances 1	Sad (MC)	Scooping		Angry	Angry
Frances 8	Angry	Angry		Angry	Angry
Gail 1	Grumpy	Grumpy		Grumpy	Grumpy
Gail 8	Sad (MC)	Sad (MC)		Sad (MC)	Angry
Joe 1	Sad (MC)	Sad		Angry	Angry
Joe 8	Sad	Sad (MC)		Sad (MC)	Happy (MC)
John 1	Angry	Angry		Angry	Angry
John 8	Angry	Angry		Angry	Angry
Lewis 2	Hungry	Sad		Scared (MC)	Scared (MC)
Lewis 8	Sad	Sad		Angry (MC)	Angry
Liam 1	Angry (MC)	dindins away		Angry	Angry
Liam 8	Naughty	Angry (MC)		Angry	Angry
Robert 1	Sad	Sad		Sad	Sad
Robert 8	The boy laughed	Angry		Sad	Sad

FG1 Results: Children's Changing *Emotional Understanding* within The Box Full of Feelings Task

	Inappropriate or No Response	Emotionally Aware Response

HAPPY	Session 1			Session 2	
	Pre-read	Post-read		Pre-read	Post-read
Ann 3	**Playing** on the couch	On the couch		He is **tickling**	He is **playing tickling**
Ann 6	She's happy	She is smiling		Her got a **baby**	Her **love to see her baby**
Daniel 3	Bad boys	Bad boys		They **cuddle**	They **tickle**
Daniel 6	No response	**Baby**, mummy		**Baby** all better	She **wants the baby**
Eva 3	No response	No response		**He's tickling him**	**He's tickling him**
Eva 6	No response	No response		Her feeling better…**wee baby and wee mummy.** Mummies are happy.	Her the **baby**
Frances 3	**Tickling**	**They're tickling**		They're **tickling**	They're **laughing and tickling**
Frances 6	Because of **the baby**	She **likes the baby**		Her have a **new baby**	**She loves her baby**
Gail 3	No response	**Tickles**		They're **tickling** and they're happy	**Tickling it makes you so fun**
Gail 6	Her **loves the baby**	She **loves her baby**		She **loves the baby**	She **really loves the baby**
Joe 3	Two	Happy		**Tickles**…couch	**Tickles**
Joe 6	**Baby**	Scared		Her **baby**	**Cuddle baby**
John 3	Him **tickle** him	**Tickles**		He likes to **tickle** tummies	Cause **tickle** them tummies!
John 6	Her **baby** is there	Her happy **new baby**		Her got a **baby**	That **baby 'cause she love it**
Lewis 3	No response	No tickles		**Tickles**	Happy box
Lewis 6	No sad	(Scared box)		A **baby!**	Because of the **baby**
Liam 3	He gets boys	Like two boys		They getting all the **tickles**	They like the **tickles**
Liam 6	Happy	Its **baby**		She's with the **baby**	She with the **baby**
Robert 3	Maybe he wants friend	He wants friend		…they want to tickle tickle	They want to go outside together and be friends
Robert 6	She hurt herself	Don't know		She likes to get the **baby**	She wants to stay with the **baby** forever and ever

Center vertical band: 6 weeks Emotion coaching experience

SAD	Session 1		6 weeks Emotion-coaching experience	Session 2	
	Pre-read	Post-read		Pre-read	Post-read
Ann 4	She's wiping her face	Don't know		Her **don't want to play** with him anymore	Her **shouted** at her
Ann 7	She's **pointing**	**Because of her socks**		Her **laughing at her**	**Her got the wrong socks on**
Daniel 4	(points to box)	Crying		The lost ball, gone in tree	**Her friend says "I don't like to play"**
Daniel 7	No response	No response		She wants to go to her house	**Girl laughing at her socks**
Eva 4	No response	No response		**The wee boy not playing the ball with her**	**Her crying for the ball**
Eva 7	No response	No response		He's **laughing at her** shoes	The **wee boy is looking at her pink socks not got spots**
Frances 4	**Want to play the ball**	**Her wants to play the ball**		She **wants to play with her friends**	**Her want to play**
Frances 7	**He's laughing at her**	She's **laughing at her**		She's on the roof.	**The boy is laughing at the wrong socks**
Gail 4	Mummy wants her to sit down	Needs to go in the crying box		She **doesn't like her because she says, "I don't like you."**	**The girl gets the ball and say "You're not being nice"**
Gail 7	Is her mummy in the house?	Changing her **socks**		She's **wearing the wrong socks and she's laughing at her**	Her sad cause **she's laughing at her**
Joe 4	UP!	Tree		The ball is high. Her watch it	**Wants the ball**
Joe 7	Sad	No response		**Him laughing**	**Stripes, socks, green one, pointing**
John 4	**Her not playing with him**	**Sad not playing with him**		**Him not playing with her**	**Not playing with him**
John 7	Don't know	Her have **wrong socks on**		Her **point to her wrong socks**	**Pointing to her socks and laughing**
Lewis 4	Happy	Dog		Sun, tree, crying, mummy	Mummy
Lewis 7	Happy	Sad		**Because the socks**	**He laughing (points at boy)**
Liam 4	Throwing the ball in the sky	Sad		The balls gone up in the sky	**Her friend made sad, not want to play anymore**
Liam 7	**Boy laughing** at his trousers	Its little socks		She pee pee her pants	She not happy **she got stripy and spotty**
Robert 4	**Him is laughing**	I don't know		The boy is happy and the girl is sad	She **got the wrong socks on and he's pointing at her**
Robert 7	Don't know	She got hurt		The **boy got the ball and didn't give her the ball back**	She **wants to play with the ball**

SCARED	Session 1		6 weeks Emotion coaching experience	Session 2	
	Pre-read	Post-read		Pre-read	Post-read
Ann 2	He's **chasing her**	She **doesn't like the dog**		Her is scared to **the dog chasing her**	The **dog is to bite her!**
Ann 5	Too many people	**Mummy is gone away**		Her **can't find her daddy**	Her **can't find her mummy**
Daniel 2	No response	No response		She run away	The daddy says **bad dog! He bite her head!**
Daniel 5	Boy	Mummy, boy		**Her lost to her mummy**	**She's got no mummy!**
Eva 2	No response	No response		**Her dog chasing her, gonna get her shoes!**	**That dog is gonna bite her!**
Eva 5	No response	No response		**Her lost her mummy**	**Her mummy gonna get her back**
Frances 2	Of **the dog**	The **dog bite down**		**Doggy go woof and chase him**	**Doggy chasing her and bite her shoe!**
Frances 5	**Scared to people**	**She wants her mummy**		**She's lost her friend**	**She wants her mum. She wants to go home**
Gail 2	Her feeling aargh!	Scared		**The dog wants to bite her leg**	**The dog wants to bite her**
Gail 5	No response	**Her lost at shops**		**She's lost her mummy**	**Getting her mummy lost**
Joe 2	Dog	No response		**The dog eat him!**	**The doggy will bite him**
Joe 5	(Points to people)	(Points to man)		**She's no mum!**	**Find her mum!**
John 2	**Dog trying to catch her**	**Dog**		**That dog chase her, eat her!**	**That dog is chase her!**
John 5	Don't know	**No mummy**		**Lost her mum**	**Lost her mum**
Lewis 2	No response	**Biting**		**Doggy gonna eat his shoes!**	**Doggy eat her shoe**
Lewis 5	No response	(Puts in box)		**No mummy!**	**No mummy. Mummy at shops!**
Liam 2	Good	**Bite!**		**That doggy is gonna bite her foot!**	**The dog is gonna bite her**
Liam 5	He's scared	Her mum and dad		Scared of mans and ladies	**Can't find his mum**
Robert 2	No response	Don't know		**The dog run after her…maybe bite her**	**She wants to go home so the doggy can't get her**
Robert 5	That blue thing…a shark	Don't know		**She wants to go with her mum but her mum is still in the house**	**She doesn't know where mummy is!**

Note: The vertical divider column between Session 1 and Session 2 reads "6 weeks Emotion coaching experience".

ANGRY	Session 1		6 weeks Emotion coaching experience	Session 2	
	Pre-read	Post-read		Pre-read	Post-read
Ann 1	Spilled his dinner	**Wants to get out to play**		**Wants to go and play**	**Angry to mummy. He wants to play**
Ann 8	He's **dropped the pen**	**He is throwing all her pens**		**He knocked down all the pens**	**He did throw the pens of the floor**
Daniel 1	No response	Bad boy		**Doesn't like the food**	**He want to go and play**
Daniel 8	No response	No response		She says, "Stop it bad boy!"	**All pencils onto the floor!**
Eva 1	No response	No response		**His mummy telling him to eat all his dinner up**	**He go in the room. He want to play stuff**
Eva 8	No response	No response		**Her baby dropping pens and her saying no to the baby**	**Cause her baby drop the pens**
Frances 1	He **doesn't like his breakfast**	Don't know		He scooping out potatoes	**He won't want to eat potatoes. He wants to play**
Frances 8	**The baby is throwing pencils**	**He is dropping the pencils**		**Dropping the pencils**	**He burst her pencils throwing them on the floor!**
Gail 1	Don't know	He wants a sweetie		**He doesn't want potatoes**	**He's getting lunch but he wants to play!**
Gail 8	**Her dropping the pens**	**Dropping her pencils**		**She's throwing him pens**	**She wants to draw and he's dropping her pens**
Joe 1	Spilling	Angry		Messed it up!	Messed up the baby!
Joe 8	Mess it up	**Dropped pens**		He happy	**Pencils on floor (points)**
John 1	Don't know	**He just wants to play**		**He want to play**	**Mummy said eat potatoes!**
John 8	Don't know	I don't know		**The baby throws pencils everywhere**	**He threw every single pencil!**
Lewis 1	No response	Sad…happy		**I want to play! (clenches fists)**	**He want to play**
Lewis 8	Sad	(Puts card into box)		**He throw the pencils. Don't throw my pencils! (shouts)**	**Laughing, throw pencils on the floor!**
Liam 1	Putted all the food on	No response		**He got food on the carpet. He has to eat his dinners!**	**He got all his potatoes, he wants to play**
Liam 8	He is laughing at her	**He's laughing about the throw pens**		**This baby is dropping pencils**	**He's throwing pencils. She says, "you don't throw my toys!"**
Robert 1	Don't know	I don't know		He wants his mummy	**He wants to go outside**
Robert 8	Don't know	It's in the angry box		**The boy has flinged milk and pens all over her**	**He put the pencils on the floor. He flinged them on the floor!**

(Middle column spanning vertically: "6 weeks Emotion coaching experience")

Appendix I: Mosaic Approach Themes

FG2 INTERVIEW Themes: Children's Identification of their Emotion Regulation Strategies

Childs Name	Age in months	Months in focus nursery	Co-Regulation			Self-Regulation										
			With staff	With Friends	Hugs and Cuddles	Take-a-Break Space	Likes Quiet	Calm Toys and Cushions	Deep Breaths	Drink or Snack	Draw or Paint	Read a Book	Listen to Music	Walk	Toys and Play	Go to Toilet
Dylan (A)	41	6														
David (A)	47	6	X													
Thomas (P1)	49	6	XX	XX											XX	
Hannah (P1)	52	6	XXX XXX	XXX X	XX						XX					
Cara (P2)	53	15	X	X X	XXX	XX		XX	X				X		XXX	X
Susan (P2)	54	18			XXX	X	X	X	X	X		XX				
Clare (P3)	60	24	XX		XXX XX		XX		XX	XXX			XX	X		

A = Ante preschool P1 = Preschool (1st year in EC nursery) P2 = Preschool (2nd year in EC nursery) P3 = (3rd year in EC nursery)

FG2 SNAPSHOT OBSERVATION Themes: Identification of Children's Emotion Regulation Strategies

Child Name	Age in months	Months in focus nursery	Co-Regulation of Self						Self-Regulation										Co-Regulation of Others	
			with Staff	with Friends	Quiet time	Calming Resources	Sharing		Emotional gestures	Emotional Language	Likes Quiet	Calming Resources	Sharing techniques	Snack or Drink	Take-a-Break Space	Deep Breath	Hugs / Touch		Empathic gestures	Empathic language
Dylan (A)	41	6	XXX XXX XXX	XX			XX		XXX XXX XXX XXX	X		X							X	XXX
David (A)	47	6	XXX X	XX	X	X	XX		XXX XXX	XXX XXX XXX									XX	XX
Thomas (P1)	49	6	XXX XX	XXX	XX		XX		XX	XX	XXX X	X	XXX X				X		X	X
Hannah (P1)	52	6	XXX	XXX					XXX X	XXX XXX XX	XXX		XXX			XX			XX	XXX
Cara (P2)	53	15	X	XX					XXX	XXX		X	XXX XXX		X		X		XXX XXX XXX	XXX XXX XXX
Susan (P2)	54	18	XXX X						XXX XXX	XXX XXX XXX X				XX			XXX X		XXX XXX	XXX XX
Clare (P3)	60	24	XXX	XX					XXX XXX XXX X	XXX XXX XXX		XX	X	X	XX	X	X		XXX XXX	XXX

FG2 PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR Themes: Children's Identification of their Emotion Regulation Strategies

Childs Name	Age in months	Months in focus nursery	Co-Regulation			Self-Regulation										
			With Staff	With Friends	Hugs and Cuddles	Take-a-Break Space	Likes Quiet	Calm Toys and Cushions	Deep Breaths	Snack or Drink	Emotion Picture Cards	Draw or Paint	Sand Tray	Read a Book	Water Tray	Go to Toilet
Dylan (A)	41	6				XXXX	XX	X					X			
David (A)	47	6	XX	X	XX	XXXX			XX		X		X			
Thomas (P1)	49	6	XXX	XXXX		X	X			X						X
Hannah (P1)	52	6	XXX	XXX	XXX			X						X		
Cara (P2)	53	15		XXX		XXX	XX	X	X		X	XX	X			
Susan (P2)	54	18	XXX		XXXX	XXX	XX	XXX			X			X	X	
Clare (P3)	60	24	XXX		XX	X	XX			X		X				

FG2 MINDMAPPING Themes: Children's Identification of their Emotion Regulation Strategies
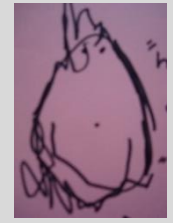
Child's Name	Age in months	Months in focus nursery	Co-Regulation			Self-Regulation										
			With Staff	With Friends	Hugs and Cuddles	Take-a-Break Space	Likes Quiet	Calm Toys and Cushions	Deep Breaths	Have Drink	Draw or Paint	Emotion Picture Cards	Sand Tray	Read a Book	Water Tray	Go to Toilet
Dylan (A)	41	6	X				XX	X					X			
David (A)	47	6	XX	X	XX	XXXX		X	X	XX		XX	X			
Thomas (P1)	49	6	XXX	XXXX		X				X		X				X
Hannah (P1)	52	6	XXX	XXXXX	XX									X		
Cara (P2)	53	15	X	XXX	X	XXX	X	X	XX	X	XXX	X	X			
Susan (P2)	54	18	XXX		X	XXX	XX	X	X	X	X	XXX		X	X	
Clare (P3)	60	24	XXX		XXX	X	XXXX	X		XX						

FG2 STORY STEM Themes: Children's Stories
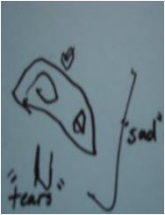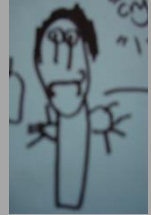
Child's Name	Age in months	Months in focus nursery	Emotion Recognition				Strategies to Resolve Story Situations							
			Happy	Sad	Scared	Angry	Apologise	Play Together	Hugs and Cuddles	Drink or Snack	Deep Breaths	Take-a-Break	Adults Help	Emotional Resolution for all characters
Dylan (A)	41	6	X											X
David (A)	47	6	X	X	X		XXX	XX	XX				XX	XXX X
Thomas (P1)	49	6	X	X	X		XXX X	XX					XX	XXX
Hannah (P1)	52	6		X	X								XXX	X
Cara (P2)	53	15	X	X	X	X	XX	XXX	XXX	X	X	X	XXX	XXX X
Susan (P2)	54	18	X	X	X	X	XX	XX	XXX X				XX	XXX X
Clare (P3)	60	24	X	X	X	X	XXX X	XX	X	X			X	XXX X

Appendix J: Children's Initial Drawings and Discussion
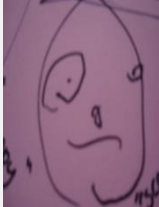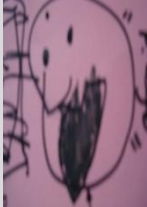
FG2 Children's Initial Representation and Description of Emotion (Happy)

HAPPY							
Name	Dylan	David	Thomas	Hannah	Cara	Susan	Clare
Age	41 months	47 months	49 months	52 months	53 months	54 months	60 months
Time in EC nursery	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	15 months	18 months	24 months
Child's Drawing of Happy							
Child's Description of Happy	*Smile* (Points to mouth)	*I'm happy at mum and dad's*	*I play*	*I smile*	*Happy, smile, mouth goes up, eyes open, I laughing, dancing is good.*	*You dance, you smile, I like happy, its good, smiling.*	*I make fun. When my friend is over she gives big happy smiles. Mummy makes me so, so happy. I love to get happy.*

Increasingly detailed verbal description of the emotion
Increasingly detailed visual representations of the emotion
Increasing awareness of possible causes of the emotion

FG2 Children's Initial Representation and Description of Emotion (Sad)

SAD							
Name	Dylan	David	Thomas	Hannah	Cara	Susan	Clare
Age	41 months	47 months	49 months	52 months	53 months	54 months	60 months
Time in EC nursery	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	15 months	18 months	24 months
Child's Drawing of Sad							
Child's Description of Sad	*Sad, tears*	*Sad, my brother makes me sad. He hit me.*	*It just tells mummy or daddy.*	*Sad* (Makes her mouth go down)	Crying, tears, sad, sad eyes, mouth down the sides.	Mouth is down, you cry, down eyes, I don't like feeling sad.	Cry, tears, mouth is down, I take a little drink and I feel better. I get sad when I fall down.

Increasingly detailed verbal description of the emotion
Increasingly detailed visual representation of the emotion
Increasing awareness of possible causes of the emotion
Increasing awareness of possible emotion regulation strategies

FG2 Children's Initial Representation and Description of Emotion (Scared)

SCARED							
Name	Dylan	David	Thomas	Hannah	Cara	Susan	Clare
Age	41 months	47 months	49 months	52 months	53 months	54 months	60 months
Time in EC nursery	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	15 months	18 months	24 months
Child's Drawing of Scared							
Child's Description of Scared	*Scared* (Puts hands up and mouth open)	*Scared, get scared of monster!*	*No Response*	*No response*	*Afraid, eyes open big, mouth open, go aaaargh, maybe a big spider!*	*Scared people are wee, you hide, if it's dark you get a torch, you go aaargh!* (mouth open wide)	*Open mouth, very, very not nice when something jumps out! You feel aaaargh!*

Increasingly detailed verbal description of the emotion
Increasingly detailed visual representation of the emotion
Increasing awareness of possible causes of the emotion
Increasing awareness of possible emotion regulation strategies

FG2 Children's Initial Representation and Description of Emotion (Angry)

ANGRY							
Name	Dylan	David	Thomas	Hannah	Cara	Susan	Clare
Age	41 months	47 months	49 months	52 months	53 months	54 months	60 months
Time in EC nursery	6 months	6 months	6 months	6 months	15 months	18 months	24 months
Child's Drawing of Angry							
Child's Description of Angry	*Teeth, grrr! (bares teeth)*	*Angry eyes, grrr!*	*Sometimes my sister just goes and smashes my toys!*	*Stomp your feet*	*Angry eyes, eyes down, angry teeth, stomp, stomp. (clenches fists)*	*Angry hair, your hair stands up, angry people are big, eyes go down, eyes are cross, you show your teeth, grrr!*	*Your eyes go angry, you stomp your leg out, your mouth goes grrr, just take a drink and feel happy again.*

Increasingly detailed verbal description of the emotion
Increasingly detailed visual representation of the emotion
Increasing awareness of possible causes of the emotion
Increasing awareness of possible emotion regulation strategies