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**Including the excluded: Exploring perspectives of preventing
disciplinary exclusion from school from the lived experience
of students**

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Abstract

Disciplinary exclusion from school is experienced by some of the most vulnerable young people, and the challenges of preventing it are well documented. The literature on preventing disciplinary exclusion has primarily focused on positive alternatives to it, however there have been no studies in New Zealand that explore the prevention of disciplinary exclusion from the perspective of those with lived experience of it. This research aims to contribute to this gap in the knowledge base about what could work to prevent disciplinary exclusion.

The study focuses on 14 young people from around New Zealand who have experienced disciplinary exclusion. Using a qualitative research design and a preventative approach to establish what could work to prevent disciplinary exclusion, data was collected via focus group interviews with young people attending Youth Guarantee Fees-Free programmes¹ to obtain their perspectives.

Using thematic analysis, participants' lived experiences of disciplinary exclusion were captured through three emergent themes – school factors, classroom factors and personal factors. Themes were interpreted to explore how participants experienced disciplinary exclusion, and how these experiences informed the emergence of insightful possibilities – possibilities for preventing the disciplinary exclusion of other students from schools.

The implications of the findings are discussed in relation to the changes and improvements required to prevent disciplinary exclusion. It is proposed that 'including the excluded' may reveal to us potential avenues for further inquiry.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This was a study of lived experiences – the lived experiences of disciplinary exclusion (DE) from school. The purpose of this study was to explore young people’s lived experiences of DE, to elicit from them their perspectives on how their DE could have been prevented, but also how their learning needs could have been better met. This study aimed to add to the existing literature on preventing DEs from schools by giving a voice to those most directly affected by DE, yet who to date remain voiceless in the relevant debates and discussions. The first-hand experiences of young people aged 16-19 who experienced DE were the focus of this research, and a phenomenological approach was taken to elicit from them their reflections on their experiences of DE and their perspectives on ways to prevent it.

1.1 Disciplinary exclusion

Educational achievement, school qualifications and the learning that comes from the social and relational aspects of school membership are crucial in equipping young people with many of the skills, dispositions and knowledge required for their future. This includes their advancement into further or higher education, sustainable and rewarding employment, and their membership of and inclusion in civic society. Unfortunately, for hundreds of young New Zealanders each year, their advancement in these respects is arrested by their DE from school for behaviour, or conduct, deemed unacceptable by school standards. For these young people, their DE from school is a legally sanctioned form of punishment that serves a number of purposes. These purposes include ensuring the safety of all students and staff, and paves the way for unhindered and uninterrupted teaching and learning (Education Act, 1989; MoE, 2009a; 2009b). Disciplinary exclusions also aim to deter student misconduct or misbehaviour. This punitive approach bears a striking resemblance to that used in the criminal justice system and the deterrence theory that underpins it (Parsons, 2005). And like studies that have determined the ineffectiveness of punitive approaches to remediating criminal behaviour and deterring crime (Dilulio, 1991; Parsons, 2005; Taylor, Walton, & Young, 2008), a growing body of evidence suggests DE from school also does little to remediate, or deter, students’ misconduct or misbehaviour (Partington, 2001).

Concerns arose during the early 1990s regarding the high rates of DE, both in New Zealand (Education and Science Committee, 1995) and abroad (Brodie & Berridge, 1996), and prompted efforts at various levels of educational policy and practice to prevent, or at the very least reduce, rates of DE.

And while observable gains have been made abroad and in New Zealand, as shown in Figure 1, there remain concerns regarding the ongoing use of such punitive forms of discipline. This is especially given the adverse impacts of DE and concerns regarding the persistent over-representation of particular groups of young people in the exclusion statistics, in particular male students and those from disadvantaged backgrounds and some ethnic groups.

Year	Stand-downs	Suspensions	Exclusions	Expulsions	TOTALS
2011	17,552	3,747	1,311	161	22,771
2012	16,708	3,356	1,117	136	21,317
2013	15,509	3,082	1,064	137	19,792
2014	14,437	2,692	900	116	18,145
2015	14,198	2,618	883	156	17,855

Figure 1. New Zealand stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions, 2011-2015

(Source: Ministry of Education, 2016)

1.2 Preventing disciplinary exclusion

A focus on preventing DE in New Zealand has seen a number of changes at various levels of the education system including education policy, school-wide policies and practices, and classroom management strategies. These changes have been underpinned by a government shift towards a more inclusive education system, driven in part by New Zealand’s ratification of international legislation such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons. According the Ministry of Education (MoE) (2104a), inclusive education systems aim to be responsive to the needs of all students and focus on priority learners “identified as historically not experiencing success in the New Zealand education system” (Education Review Office, 2012, p. 4). It is also likely that this emphasis on inclusive education is the result of efforts to achieve public sector performance targets related to the educational achievement of young people and national economic prosperity (Key, 2012; Ministry of Education, 2014b).

But despite the downward trend in the rates of DE between 2011 and 2015, and the changes at various levels of the education system that aim to prevent it, at least 1,000 young New Zealanders continue to be excluded from school each year. This pattern suggests more could be done, and that perhaps the theories, ideals and philosophies that inform current approaches to prevention are ineffective, particularly for some groups of students. A review of the literature concerning the

prevention of DE reveals a number of changes to the policies and practices currently operating in schools. Yet, there was little to suggest that young people, including those who have been excluded or those at risk of exclusion, have been given the opportunity to participate in the discussions and debates regarding the design, development or implementation of those policies and practices. This study ‘included the excluded’, eliciting from them their recollections of their exclusion from school, and given their lived experience of this, how exclusions of at-risk students could be prevented.

1.3 Researcher’s position

I consider education and qualifications to be key to a prosperous and fulfilling life, and an enabler of career options that not only pay the bills, but also give people a sense of enjoyment and pride in what they do and of being a useful and productive member of society. This has certainly been the case for me and for a number of others in my family. However, to access the benefits education has to offer, one must first be at school to learn and achieve. As a parent of a child who was excluded from school, and in my work with adult second chance learners, many of whom were excluded from school, I have questioned the evidence used to inform exclusion (which is used to justify its ongoing use), particularly given its adverse impacts. I have also questioned the extent to which young people who have been excluded, or those at risk of exclusion, have been involved in the design, development and implementation of the policies and practices used in school to prevent exclusions, as I believe they would have useful insights to offer new and existing prevention interventions.

This study was a response to the dearth of evidence on preventing DE from the perspectives of young New Zealanders with lived experience. Of specific interest to me was how prevention of DE was perceived by young people with lived experience of it, their views on preventing DE, and how the learning needs of students at risk of it could be better met. This study aimed to explore how the lived experiences of participants could reveal to us unique insights into preventing exclusions from school that to date remain unexplored. I propose that ‘including the excluded’ may inform insightful possibilities for the prevention of exclusion of other at-risk students.

1.4 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the prevention of DE from school as the topic for this study, based on concerns about the high number of students excluded from education and the imperative to include young people who have experienced it in the debate and discussion about its prevention. The

following chapter presents a more comprehensive review of our current knowledge about the prevention of DE.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This review examines the education literature concerning the prevention of the DE of young people from secondary school. The first section of this review will consider the literature concerning DE, from which a definitive context of the phenomena will be established for the purpose of this study. The second section considers the literature concerning the demographics and impacts of DE. The final section of this review will consider the literature concerning preventative alternatives to DE and, where possible, the effectiveness of those alternatives, as well as the limitations of DE to making school safer and ensuring an environment conducive to the teaching and learning process.

The literature sourced for this review used search terms including: exclusion from school, school exclusion, DE, students' perspectives on school exclusion, students' voices on the prevention of school exclusion, and alternatives to exclusion from school. The literature search used the databases Discover and Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC).

The literature reviewed in this study drew from education research conducted in the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA), Australia and New Zealand (NZ) between 1970 and 2017, as these countries used similar descriptions of DE, and similar policies, processes and practices concerning DE to those used in NZ. The literature period chosen reflects the time that the term exclusion first appeared in the education literature to the present time.

2.1 Inclusion, exclusion and disciplinary exclusion

To understand DE, it is important to understand the broader contexts in which it occurs – that of social inclusion and social exclusion. This is because the phenomena of inclusion and exclusion are mutually constitutive (i.e. inclusion can only occur if individuals have or are being excluded from somewhere or something, and exclusion can only occur if individuals have not or are not being included somewhere or in something). The following is a brief review of the literature on social inclusion and exclusion, which provides a context for the establishment of DE as understood and used in this study.

2.1.1 Social inclusion and inclusion in school

Social inclusion, as advanced in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, solves the problem of social exclusion, particularly the social exclusion of those living with disabilities. Simply put, if there exist barriers to societal activities that exclude individuals, then those barriers are to be minimised or eliminated so those individuals or groups can experience greater levels of social inclusion (McMaster, 2014).

In terms of education, inclusion or inclusive education is not new. Hodkinson (2012) suggests inclusion in education dates back to the 1800s and the aspirations of education pioneers for non-segregated schools. And while the essence of non-segregation remains, more recent definitions of inclusion show how terminology can transform over time. Booth (1999), a proponent of inclusive education, defines inclusion as the purposeful “construction of an education system that recognises and is responsive to learner diversity within common groups” (p. 164). In New Zealand (NZ), the MoE (2014a; 2017a) states that inclusive education is education where all students belong, where students are valued and recognised as developing entities with unique interests and learning requirements, and where they are doing what their peers do. Using the work of Kugelmass (2006) regarding inclusive school culture, McMaster (2012) suggested inclusive education to be a process requiring continuous reflection and improvement based on the elements of relationships, advocacy, shared experiences and transparency. The enormity and complexity of what constitutes inclusion and inclusive education, and what it is required to achieve it, makes it impossible to provide a precise definition. Regardless, state agencies responsible for education continue to advance policy and guidance for practice regarding inclusive education. However, as highlighted by Paliokosta and Blandford (2010), “conceptualising inclusion in the context of secondary education is complex” (p. 181), attributing this difficulty to the vague way government policy uses the term inclusion despite the development of detailed theories by the likes of Booth (1999), Booth and Ainscow (1998), and others (Ainscow, 1999; Clough & Corbett, 2000).

However, definitions like those given above, which infer the problem of exclusion in education can be remedied by simply including students in school, oversimplify the complexities of inclusion and ignore evidence that illuminates that non-compliant students can be the most difficult to include (Prochnow & Johansen, 2013). Critics of inclusion rhetoric in education suggest this oversimplification stems from a lack of clear understanding and established definition of what inclusion means, an issue that Selvaraj (2016) suggests is a hangover of the exclusionary nature of special needs education from which the term inclusion in education was derived. Hodkinson (2012; 2016), in his analysis of teachers’ interpretation of inclusionary rhetoric in education policy, revealed the practice of exclusionary

inclusion, where inclusionary rhetoric masked the continued use of exclusionary practices as inclusion was not considered the responsibility of the school or its teachers. Rather, to be included was perceived as the responsibility of the student through their compliance with school rules and expectations. Hodkinson suggested this perception of teachers in his study and their practice, and as a result suggested inclusion was "not the ideal of social justice and equality, but rather... the politics of sincere deceit" (2012, p. 681).

As highlighted by this brief review of the inclusion literature, ambiguity persists regarding a universal definition of inclusion and inclusive education, as do the issues arising from this ambiguity. However, as emphasised by McMaster (2012; 2014), this ambiguity can also be a positive consequence as it allows meaning to continue to evolve as do the needs, interests and learning aspirations of the students these terms are applied to. Now I will turn to the literature concerning exclusion to help establish a suitable definition for use in this study.

2.1.2 Social exclusion and exclusion from school

Burchardt, Le Grand and Piachaud (1999), and Peace (2001), consider social exclusion to now be a catch-all term used to describe individuals, or groups of individuals, who because they fail to meet predetermined criteria are not able to participate in the 'normal' societal activities of consumption, savings or production as their peers in the same society. This contemporary understanding of the term social exclusion has evolved from its 1974 origins in French social insurance policy, and has gained considerable currency amongst diverse disciplines, professions and institutions (Silver, 1995), including its use in education.

In the literature reviewed, the term 'exclusion' first appeared in education research during the early 1970s, and focused on the exclusion of students considered socially, intellectually and behaviourally maladjusted, but also raised concerns about how exclusion was being practised, and the impacts of this on the approach to practice for particular students (Carter, 1970; Coard, 1971). Carter (1970) was interested in better understanding the factors that contributed to the over-representation of Mexican students in statistics from the USA regarding school dropout. Coard (1971) sought answers to questions regarding disproportionate rates of exclusion of African-Caribbean students in the UK from mainstream schools on the basis they were educationally subnormal. The work of both these researchers suggested the ideals of ethnocentrism and inferiority underpinned exclusionary tactics of the time, and that such tactics were as much about racism and dysfunction within the education system as they were about the maintenance of hegemonic dominance within Western societies. Since the publication of these early works, a notable shift has occurred. Exclusion from school has become

less about exclusion on the grounds of physical and cognitive abnormalities or deficiencies, and instead has become a disciplinary response to problematic or undesirable behaviours, reflecting a societal will to discipline such behaviours (Marshall & Marshall, 1997; Parsons, 2005).

Like the term inclusion, the term exclusion too has diverse applications. Cooper, Drummond, Hart, Lovey and McLaughlin (2000) defined exclusion as “the active process of barring or shutting out the pupil from activities that take place within the premises” (p. 9). Gordon (2001), drawing from English education legislation, stipulated exclusion as the *disciplinary sanctions* used in instances of “serious breaches of a school’s policy on behaviour or of the criminal law” (p. 70). In his work he also referred to voluntary exclusion and unofficial or informal exclusion. And while voluntary or unofficial forms of exclusion are not the focus of this study, there are implications of these forms of exclusion for the reliability and trustworthiness of reports of downward trends in rates of exclusion discussed later in this chapter. Partington (2001), in his research on the effectiveness of suspension as a behaviour modification strategy, took a more simplistic view. He referred to exclusion from school as the *moving on* of students by schools to eliminate their disruptive influence. Munn and Lloyd (2005), in their thematic analysis of students’ perspectives on exclusion from Scottish schools, viewed exclusion as the *rejection* of students by their schools for behaviours that challenged or undermined the authority of the school. Daniels and Cole (2010), in a follow-up study on students who were excluded from English secondary schools, took a broader approach to defining exclusion from school, linking it back to social exclusion. Referred to as *deep exclusion*, exclusion from school is distinguished from social exclusion by the severity of its impacts on excluded students. They also distinguished deep exclusion from social exclusion based on the occurrence of exclusion from school on multiple dimensions of overlapping disadvantage, a finding earlier supported by the work of Levitas et al. (2007).

The literature reviewed shows an evolving meaning of the term exclusion in education, from a covert practice of segregation on the grounds of physical and cognitive ability and ethnicity, to an overt and justified disciplinary sanction for socially unacceptable behaviours. And like the ambiguity that arose from the literature reviewed on the meaning of the terms inclusion and inclusive education, there remains ambiguity regarding the meaning of the term exclusion. Such ambiguity presents challenges for identifying factors that contribute to exclusions from school as well as for designing, developing and implementing prevention-focused policies and practices. This is particularly so when what is to be prevented is not universally agreed upon and understood. Legislative definitions provide some clarity regarding the legal meaning of exclusion from school. As such, I now turn to the legal definition of exclusion from school as determined by the MoE in NZ.

2.1.3 Disciplinary exclusion

In NZ, the Education Act 1989 (the Act) provides citizens aged 5-19 the right to publicly-funded formal education, provided for in public schools, or by alternative means (e.g. alternative education (AE) programmes or Correspondence). Publicly-funded formal schooling is compulsory for citizens aged 6-16, unless an application for early exemption from school is made by the parents of a student of 15 years of age and approved by the MoE (Education Act 1989). The Act also stipulates the role and responsibilities of schools to their enrolled students, including their duty of care responsibilities given their quasi-guardianship or *loco parentis* role between the hours of 9am and 3pm. This role relates to duties centres around teaching and learning, but also duties regarding student safety and wellbeing. As such, schools are required to effectively prevent, manage or eliminate those events or activities that threaten or jeopardise students' safety and the teaching and learning process, including events and activities involving students' misconduct or misbehaviour.

With regards to students' misconduct or misbehaviour, the Act provides schools with the legislative authority to physically remove students from their school or other place of learning as set out in Part 2, Section 13 of the Act. These provisions permit schools to remove students for *gross misconduct* or *continual disobedience* considered *harmful* or *potentially harmful* to them or others in their school, on a temporary or permanent basis. The Act also permits schools to remove students whose behaviour is considered to be a *dangerous example* to other students in the school. The Act makes clear that the removal of a student from school is a punishment for their own misconduct or misbehaviour, and that their removal is in the best interests of all others in the school. The Act sets out who in a school is able to authorise a student's exclusion, the conditions of exclusions, the process to be followed, and expectations regarding alternative education arrangements for excluded students under the age of 16. I note from my review of the Act and the corresponding guidelines the absence of definitions for the terms gross misconduct, continual disobedience, harmful, potentially harmful or dangerous example. This leaves open the interpretation of what these terms mean, and whether a student's behaviour has breached a threshold for justifiable exclusion from school. This also leaves open the discretionary use of exclusionary policies and practices, an issue that is further discussed later in this chapter.

The Act distinguishes four categories of temporary or permanent removal of students from school as a form of discipline for their misconduct or misbehaviour; stand-down, suspension, exclusion and expulsion.ⁱⁱ The former two categories constitute temporary forms of removal, while the latter two constitute permanent forms of removal. Permanent forms of removal are further distinguished by the student's age at the time of their exclusion. For the purpose of clarity, when referring to the

physical removal of a student from their school or place of learning, I have used the term *disciplinary exclusion* (DE). Although perspectives on preventing DE based on the type of DE experienced (i.e. temporary or permanent) is not the focus of this study, where necessary or appropriate I will distinguish between temporary and permanent categories of DE by using the terms *temporary disciplinary exclusion* (TDE) and *permanent disciplinary exclusion* (PDE). For the purpose of brevity, and because DE often results from a student's misconduct or misbehaviour (i.e. gross misconduct, continual disobedience, dangerous example), I will refer to students' misconduct or misbehaviour as *non-compliance*. I will also use the term *school* or *schools* to refer to all secondary schools, as defined by the statistics collected by the MoE, i.e. secondary state or secondary state-integrated schools.

Next this review examines policies and practices concerning DE from New Zealand and from abroad. In particular, this review focuses on the legislative context of DE, demographic trends and the impacts of DE.

2.2 Legislative context of disciplinary exclusion

2.2.1 International context of disciplinary exclusion

In Western nations such as the UK, the USA and Australia, there has been a marked shift in legislation and education policy concerning DE. The exclusionary rhetoric that once dominated the policy landscape vilifying student non-compliance has been replaced by more egalitarian and humanistic ideals, such as 'inclusive education' or 'rights-based' education. The proliferation of inclusive principles and practices in legislation and education policy regarding DEs responded to the resounding moral panic of the 1990s over high rates of DE (Brodie & Berridge, 1996; Gordon, 2001; Munn & Lloyd, 2005). These inclusive principles and practices were also intended to arrest the longer-term adversities of DE for both young people, and for national economies, resulting from the social costs and the loss of productivity created by DE. The emergence of these inclusive ideals can be found in international legislation, particularly in amendments to legislation. They can also be found in subsequent education policies that actively abolished practices such as indefinite exclusion, and that mandated for more fair and just use of DE provisions. International legislation relevant to this study includes UNCRC and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

UNCRC is a human rights treaty that sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children. This declaration was ratified by NZ in 1993. Article 19 of the declaration states that children have the right to protection from all forms of violence. Article 28 stipulates that

all children have the right to a 'primary' education and that this education should be free. And lastly, Article 29 requires that education should develop individual children to their fullest potential where they respect the rights, beliefs, values and interests of other members of society, particularly those of their parents (UNICEF, n.d).

The ICESCR, ratified by NZ in 1978, protects the fundamental needs of citizens (Human Rights Commission, n.d). Article 13 of the covenant states that parties to the present covenant recognise the rights of citizens to education, and that secondary education shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, n.d). This article also highlights how education shall contribute to the full development of human personality, a sense of dignity, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (ibid).

As with the Act in NZ, legislation in Northern Ireland, Scotland and England provides schools with the authority to administer DE. In Northern Ireland, these provisions are set out in the School (Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998 (Department for Education, n.da). In Scotland, provisions are set out in Regulation 4 of the Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975 and its subsequent amendments (Scottish Government, 2006). In England, provisions are set out in Section 52 of the Education Act 2002 and its subsequent amendments (Department for Education, 2012). This legislation and any related guidelines provide in detail who within the school has the authority to administer DE, the conditions of the DE (temporary or permanent), the process of appeal (where one exists), the DE process itself, and expectations regarding the arrangement of alternative education for excluded students where stated responsibilities exist.

Northern Ireland and England have two distinct types of DE; suspension and expulsion in Northern Ireland, and fixed term (suspension) or permanent (expulsion) in England. Scotland only has one type, exclusion. Scotland and England make provisions for appeals of decisions to exclude a student for both TDE and PDE, whereas in Northern Ireland, appeals are only possible in cases of PDE. In Northern Ireland and England PDE means the excluded student will not return to that school, whereas Scottish schools take a more inclusive and restorative approach to DE, where the duration of a student's exclusion should not exceed one year as "it is considered good practice to resolve exclusion and re-admission issues" (Scottish Government, 2006, para 25). Scottish and English regulations emphasise domestic and international legislation regarding anti-discrimination and human rights and urge those involved in the DE process (i.e. principals, boards of governors, educational authorities) to be fair and exercise caution, particularly when looking to impose DE upon a student known to belong to a marginalised or vulnerable group. Legislation from Scotland and England also emphasises

consideration of the broader context in which the student's non-compliance has occurred, a position advanced by proponents of positive alternatives to exclusion as a means to reduce rates of DE (Cooper et al., 2000). Legislation from Northern Ireland makes no reference to any of these points.

Guidelines from the UK, the USA and NZ that operationalise legislation regarding DE emphasise it as a school's most serious sanction for student non-compliance, and that it is only to be used as a last resort once every other possible avenue has been exhausted (Department for Education, 2012; Department of Education, n.d; MoE, 2009a; 2009b; Scottish Government, 2006). However, the interpretation of DE guidelines and the way in which school policies are designed, developed and implemented is largely at the discretion of the senior school leadership, in particular the principal and the school's board of trustees (MoE, 2009a) or boards of governors and educational authorities (Department for Education, 2012; Department of Education, n.d; MoE, 2009a; 2009b; Scottish Government, 2006). Discretion has been shown to result in variation in DE practices and outcomes across schools that have led to recommendations for change in NZ (Youthlaw, 2012) and abroad (Gazeley, 2013; Shabazian, 2015). Shabazian (2015) argued that differential interpretation of the guidelines and the discretionary practices of individual schools in the USA also lacked consistency and transparency that could lead to the unlawful use of DE provisions. Youthlaw (2012), in response to increased requests for advice from parents of excluded students, challenged the ethical and legal conduct of some schools regarding their DE practices. They recommended the implementation of an independent appeals tribunal to improve the consistency and transparency of DE practices. Their report noted that the implementation of a tribunal was not intended to prevent DE, however as a consequence of the closer scrutiny of the tribunal, it was likely that rates of DE would decrease.

2.2.2 Legislative context of disciplinary exclusion in NZ

As with schools abroad, schools in NZ are also bound by international legislation such as UNCROc and the ICESCR. NZ schools are also bound by a number of domestic legislative provisions concerning students' access to education, the standard of education students can expect to receive, and expectations regarding student safety whilst they are at school. These include, but are not limited to, the National Education Guidelines (NEGs), the New Zealand Teachers Council Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession, the Ministry of Youth Development's (MYD's) Youth Development Aotearoa Strategy, the Children's Commissioner Act 2003, the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and the Treaty of Waitangi. The following is a brief outline of each of these in turn.

2.2.2.1 The National Education Guidelines

The NEGs were issued by the MoE in 1993 and establish a common direction for state education in NZ. The common direction centres around education and curriculum that enable all students to realise their full potential and develop the values necessary for full participation in NZ society. The NEGs seek to do this by identifying and removing barriers to achievement, by upholding the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and by promoting inclusive practices, both through the curriculum (MoE, 2007) and the provision of tools for monitoring and evaluating schools' progress towards these ends (MoE, n.d). The National Administration Guidelines, part of the NEGs, concern school administration and set out statements of desirable principles of conduct or administration for specified personnel or bodies, for example, the school board of trustees. Guideline 5, in particular, states that each school board of trustee is required to provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students, and comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of all students and employees (MoE, 2015b).

2.2.2.2 The New Zealand Teachers Council Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession

The Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession sets out in a number of 'commitments' for the standards of ethical behaviour expected of every certified teacher (Education Council, 2017). These commitments centre round the well-being of students, ethical and professional relationships with learners, trust, respect for diversity, inclusive practice, to be fair and to manage assumptions and personal beliefs. These commitments also require that teachers recognise the importance of their role in shaping the lives of students, and their roles as advocates for students' human rights and their rights to social justice.

2.2.2.3 The Ministry of Youth Development's principles of Youth Development

In 2004, the MYD developed and published their Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa that is based on six fundamental principles. These principles aim to guide government and society in how to support young men and women aged 12-24 years of age. The principles focus on positive youth development, i.e. well-informed by relevant research, relevant to the young people of the day, strengths-based, and focused on connecting young people and fostering quality relationships, where young people are considered agentic in determining their future pathways, and where their participation in conversations about their futures and that of their society is crucial (MYD, 2004).

2.2.2.4 The Children's Commissioner Act 2003

The Children's Commissioner has a statutory obligation to advocate for children and young people in NZ, and to investigate any matters affecting them (Carroll-Lind, 2010). The Children's Commissioner Act 2003 sets out these obligations and provides the Commissioner with the authority to acquire the information necessary to any investigation underway, provided the matter of investigation is not already before a court of law. UNCROc was implemented as part of this Act.

2.2.2.5 Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

School boards of trustees are recognised legal entities, and as such are obligated by law to take all reasonably practical steps to keep workers and others (i.e. students) safe (MoE, 2017b). Safety encompasses the prevention of hazards. The behaviour of one person or a group of people who may cause physical, emotional or psychological harm to another may be considered a hazard. For example, Carroll-Lind (2010) suggests that the failure of a school to manage or address bullying amongst students, and where a student suffers harm, may result in a breach of duty of care of students. As a result, the board of trustees could be culpable and could potentially be prosecuted under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

2.2.2.6 The Treaty of Waitangi

The three principles of the Treaty of Waitangi – partnership, protection and participation – underpin the relationship between Māori and the government. The principles inform education policy and practice at the legislative level (i.e. Education Act 1989), but also at the level of national education strategies (i.e. Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success: The Māori Education Strategy 2013 – 2017) and the national school curriculum (i.e. NZ Curriculum). Partnership involves the sharing of power between Māori and the government. In education this involves the design and development of education strategies, and for Māori to be involved at all levels of education. Protection refers to the active protection of Māori knowledge interest, values and other taonga (gifts, treasures). In education protection is evident in the MoE's notion of 'culture counts', where Māori students and the knowledge they possess is recognised and valued, and is considered an important foundation for their further learning. Participation emphasises the involvement of Māori at all levels of education for equitable educational experiences and outcomes. In education the promotion of participation is evident in NEG 9, where the increased participation and success of Māori in education initiatives is consistent with

the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. As highlighted by Carroll-Lind (2010), articles within the Treaty of Waitangi also highlight the concept of turangawaewae (a place to stand) which concerns the right to belong. Carroll-Lind suggests this perspective is consistent with the philosophy of inclusive education as espoused in education policy.

2.2.3 Summary

The legislative environment in which education operates in NZ aims to ensure the protection of students' legal rights to ethical and moral treatment at school, and that their educational needs and interests are effectively met. This encompasses what they are taught and how they are taught, and any safety considerations around this. It also encompasses the requirement of schools and teachers to recognise the unique and individual circumstances, preferences and experiences of all their students, and to respond accordingly. Aside from the Act, legislation clearly places the burden of responsibility for successful teaching and learning experiences for students onto schools and teachers, but there is a covert normative assumption inherent in the legislation. That is, aside from the Act, at no point does any of the legislation mention how teachers are to respond to or manage student conduct or behaviour considered non-normative or socially unacceptable. Legislative oversight on this matter is problematic as it renders non-normative or non-compliant behaviours invisible and, as such, does not need to provide definitive guidance on what constitutes student non-compliance or how to effectively respond to or manage it in a manner that could prevent DE.

2.4 Disciplinary exclusion: The demographics

This section of the review looks at demographic information concerning DE in Northern Ireland, Scotland, England and NZ for the period 2011-2015. Data for schools in Northern Ireland is sourced from the Department of Education (n.db). Data for schools from Scotland is sourced from the Scottish Government (2015). Data for schools in England is sourced from the Department for Education (2016). Data for schools in NZ is sourced from the MoE (2015a). All data reviewed is from state-funded schools. All four countries included here collect and report on data related to DE in slightly different ways and, as such, defensible conclusions cannot be drawn. However, the data does reveal some interesting patterns concerning DEs.

2.4.1 Who experiences disciplinary exclusion?

For the period 2011-2015, data on DE from Northern Ireland, England and Scotland indicates a general downward trend for all school students and mirrors reports of a downward trend on DEs in NZ. Despite these positive reports, English schools continue to report the second highest rate of TDE in the UK, and the highest rate of PDE, patterns that have persisted since data on DE in the UK became available in the 1990s (Keung, 2016). Scottish schools, however, report the lowest rate of DE in the UK, a pattern Keung (2016) found has also persisted since the 1990s. Explanations for the lower rates of DE from Scottish schools have been attributed to Scotland's more inclusive and restorative approach to DE (Barr, Kilpatrick & Lundy, 2000; Lloyd, Stead & Kendrick, 2001), and its more collectivised civil society (Paterson, 1998).

However, across all data reviewed there remain a number of persistent and concerning patterns. For example, regardless of whether the data is from Northern Ireland, Scotland or England, male students continue to experience DE at rates up to four times higher than female students, and students from ethnic minorities feature disproportionately, as do students attending schools in areas of high deprivation. Again these patterns mirror data from NZ where male students, Māori students followed closely by Pasifika students, and students from low decileⁱⁱⁱ schools feature disproportionately.

Closer analysis of data on DE for NZ schools for the period 2011-2015 reveals that Māori students under the age of 16 experience TDE and PDE at rates two times higher than their Pasifika counterparts, and up to three times higher than their European/Pakeha counterparts. Pasifika students over the age of 16 experience PDE at slightly higher rates than Māori students. Male students under and over 16 years of age experience both TDE and PDE at rates nearly four times higher than their female counterparts. Male Māori students 16 years of age or under experienced PDE at rates nearly double that of male Pasifika students, and at rates nearly three times higher than male European/Pakeha students. Male Pasifika students over the age of 16 experienced DE at rates slightly higher than male Māori students, however male Māori students over the age of 16 experienced DE at rates three times higher than male European/Pakeha students. Data on DE by decile showed higher rates of DE for Māori under the age of 16 across all five quintiles than that of non-Māori students, with the highest rate reported in the lowest quintile (4.0 exclusions per 1,000 for Māori; 1.7, 0.6 and 3.5 exclusions per 1,000 for Pasifika, Asian and European/Pakeha students respectively). This pattern was largely mirrored in data concerning DE for students over the age of 16 by decile, particularly in the lowest quintile (3.0, 4.7, 1.2 and 2.2 expulsions per 1,000 for Māori, Pasifika, Asian, and European/Pakeha respectively) (MoE, 2015a).

2.4.2 Non-compliance resulting in disciplinary exclusion

Analysis of data from Northern Ireland, Scotland and England on student non-compliance resulting in DE also revealed some interesting patterns. For example, verbal abuse or threatening behaviours towards staff and students, persistent infringement of school rules, disruptive behaviour in class, persistent disobedience, and physical assaults on students featured as some of the main reasons for DE from schools in these countries for the period 2011-2015. The fourth most common reason for TDE from English schools was for the category of 'other', and this increased significantly for the year 2014/2015 after several years of trending downwards (Department for Education, 2016).

In NZ, there are 10 categories for which a student may experience DE: *continual disobedience*, *drugs* (including substance abuse), *physical assaults on other students*, *physical assaults on staff*, *verbal assaults on other students*, *verbal assaults on staff*, *smoking or alcohol*, *theft*, *vandalism or arson*, and *other*. For brevity, the following analysis will focus on PDE for the period 2001-2015 as this form of DE is of most relevance to the participants involved in this study. All data to follow is sourced from the MoE (2015a).

For students under the age of 16, continual disobedience was reported as the main reason (33.7%) for PDE in 2015. There was also a reported decrease in drugs, including substance abuse for these students for the period, however there was an increase in PDE of these students for assaults on staff. In terms of students over the age of 16, drugs including substance abuse, was reported as the main reason for PDE in 2015 (32.7%), and PDE for this reason increased over the period. There was a reported decrease in the PDE of these students for continual disobedience for the period 2001-2015. All other categories for which PDEs were recorded (assaults on other students, verbal assaults on other students, verbal assaults on staff, smoking or alcohol, and theft, vandalism or arson) fluctuated slightly, but were essentially consistent over the 16 years from 2001-2015, apart from the category of 'other'. This category showed PDEs for students under the age of 16 doubled during this period from 6.9% in 2001 to 13.7% in 2015, and trebled for students 16 years of age or over from 8.7% in 2001 to 23.1% in 2015. This increase in PDEs for the category of 'other' is similar to the increase in TDEs reported by English schools during the 2014/2015 period.

In NZ and abroad, guidelines regarding DE emphasise that it is to be used only in the most serious of cases, and as a last resort after all other possible avenues have been exhausted (Department for Education, 2012; Department of Education, n.d; MoE, 2009a; 2009b; Scottish Government, 2006). However, my analysis of student non-compliance resulting in DE reveals the persistent and increased use of continual disobedience for which there is no clear definition (Dharan, Meyer & Mincher, 2012),

and the persistent and increased use of 'other' as a reason for the PDE of students both under and over 16 years of age. These results raise questions about how schools interpret the term 'most serious'. The persistence of, or increases in, DE for all other classifications analysed also raises concerns about its effectiveness in deterring non-compliant students from future non-compliance, or its effectiveness in deterring other students from being non-compliant.

Explanations for behaviours that lead to DE, both in NZ and abroad, are diverse, ranging from theories of individual student pathology (Parsons, 2005), to the social class and socioeconomic status of the excluded student and their family (Gordon, 2001, Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Petersen, 2002), to the failure of schools to socialise students about acceptable social norms (Partington, 2001). Gazeley (2010) and Jenkin (2006), however, found explanations that focused on individual pathology and difficulties in students' homes as the cause of their non-compliance, and neglected those factors within the school itself, and the significance those factors played in the events and circumstances that gave rise to DE. For example, Prochnow (2006) found teacher-related factors, amongst other things, contributed to student non-compliance that had the potential to result in DE.

2.4.3 Issues of data validity and accuracy

While data helps to understand patterns and trends concerning who experiences DE and why, there are some educational researchers who question the accuracy of official results published by state agencies regarding the numbers and rates of DE, particularly reports of decreases or downward trends (Blyth and Milner, 1996; Daniels & Cole, 2010; Gordon, 2001; Raffaele Mendez and Knoff, 2003; Skiba and Rausch, 2006). These researchers are of the view that such reports neglect concerns regarding the 'unofficial' or 'grey' exclusions from school as these forms of DE, known in NZ as kiwi suspensions (Carroll-Lind, 2016; Starr & Janah, 2016), are not reported, thereby rendering official statistics on DE from schools imprecise. Imprecise figures concerning DE are problematic as this reduces the level of confidence one can have in reports of downward trends and can also undermine claims of effectiveness of policies and practices implemented to reduce rates of DE.

2.4.4 Summary

A review of the international and NZ demographic data concerning DE revealed a general downward trend in rates of DE. However, analysis of the data also revealed a persistent over-representation of students already known to experience marginalisation and disadvantage, and of male students. Closer analysis of the data also revealed high rates of DE for the behavioural

classifications of disobedience, disruptive behaviours and 'other', raising questions about whether DE is being practised ethically, morally and legally, and in accordance with official guidelines.

It is not the intention of this study to explain these similarities or differences, nor the over-representation of particular students in statistics regarding DE, other than to point out that such demographic trends are known and have been known for some time (Gordon, 2001, Munn & Lloyd, 2005). And while some education researchers caution our reliance on the validity and accuracy of data reported by state agencies, available data does highlight some areas for concern and perhaps where to target limited resources to reduce rates of DE.

Next this review considers the impacts of DE for both students and parents alike, from both the international and NZ literature.

2.5 Impacts of disciplinary exclusion

While the physical removal of some students from the school is necessary, particularly in instances of serious non-compliance, the literature concerning the impacts of DE highlight some concerning effects. The impacts of DE are well-documented and can be broadly categorised into psychosocial impacts, educational impacts and family impacts.

Before presenting the literature reviewed regarding the impacts of DE abroad, I offer a brief review of the literature regarding the intent of DE and the effectiveness of DE in realising that intent as a context for better understanding the impacts of DE.

2.5.1 The intent and effectiveness of disciplinary exclusion

As espoused in the legislation regarding DE, the powers afforded to schools to implement it are underpinned by the responsibility of the school to ensure the safety of both students and school staff, and to ensure an uninterrupted teaching and learning process (Department for Education, 2012; Department of Education, n.d; Scottish Government, 2006). However, a review of the literature finds neither strong support for the contention that excluding students who misbehave makes schools safer (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Bickel & Qualls, 1980; Skiba & Rausch, 2006), nor that DE ensures a school environment is more conducive to learning (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Davis & Jordon, 1994; Skiba & Rausch, 2006). In fact, it has been found that schools with high rates of DE have low rates of student satisfaction concerning the school climate (Bickel & Qualls, 1980; Skiba & Rausch, 2006), that DEs

impacted negatively on school-wide learning achievement (Davis & Jordon, 1994; Pearce & Hillman, 1998; Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Skiba & Rausch, 2006), and that they contributed to poor rates of school completion (Skiba & Rausch, 2006). Furthermore, a growing body of literature implicates school staff in the events and circumstances preceding DEs, and raises concerns about the safety and learning of these students prior to, during and after the DE process (Condon, 1995; Firth, 1993; Herr & Anderson, 2003; Hyman & Perone, 1998; Hyman & Snook, 1999; Partington, 2001; Prochnow, 2006; Snook, 2001). As noncompliance is considered by some a problem of learning (Prochnow & Johansen, 2013), schools are well positioned to teach students the skills necessary to increase compliance and prevent DE, particularly in light of the evidence regarding its ineffectiveness.

2.5.2 Psychosocial impacts of disciplinary exclusion

The psychosocial impacts of DE concern the devaluation or dehumanisation of students, and the subsequent effects of these impacts on an excluded student's ability and desire to interact with and relate to others in society. In research from abroad DE has been found to contribute to a student's feelings of isolation (Wright, Weeks and McGlaughlin, 2000), a diminished sense of value and self-worth, a diminished sense of belongingness or connectedness to their school, and to society in general (Falvey and Givner, 2005). DE has also been found to be harmful to students' emotional wellbeing (Hemphill and Hargreaves, 2009b). Work by Hemphill and Hargreaves (2009), Chin, Dowdy, Jimerson, and Rime (2012), and Fenning et al. (2012), highlighted how the stigma of DE and the label of deviant imposed on excluded students contributed to further non-compliance in school. Further non-compliance of students upon their return to school after TDE was also raised by Partington (2001) and Collin (2001). Both researchers suggested further non-compliance would likely result from DE exacerbating a pre-existing resentment of excluded students and their families towards their school. Firth (1993), Condon (1995), Parsons (2005), Skiba and Rausch (2006), Hemphill and Hargreaves (2009b), Meyer and Evans (2012), and Michail (2012), have attributed the stigma of DE and the label of deviant as contributory to criminal behaviours of excluded students, a phenomenon referred to by Skiba and Rausch (2006) as the *school-to-prison-pipeline*.

Several studies reviewed found some students felt that their exclusion had no impact on them at all, or that their unorthodox absence from school was considered an 'early holiday' from school (Partington, 2001). Explanations for participant ambivalence regarding the ramifications of DE can be found in work by Griffins and Rees (2007), and Strathdee (2013), who posit that the type of students who are at risk of DE are often those who have pre-existing experiences of social exclusion. Their exclusion from other places in their life, including school, is unavoidable, even expected, and will

naturally follow. An explanation is also provided in the literature that suggests young people do not possess the cognitive dispositions to understand the ramifications of DE, and the consequence of this for their educational or their future employment prospects (American Psychological Association, 2008). And lastly, explanations for this ambivalence can be found in work regarding psychological self-preservation or 'cool pose', where students attempt to conceal or ignore feelings about their DE from school that they are ill-equipped to process or understand (Harris & Parsons, 2001). Interestingly, where behaviour change was found among young people who experienced DE, the changes were seldom attributed to the threat or experience of DE, and was instead considered to be the result of young people maturing with age (Munn & Lloyd, 2005) and the establishment of personal goals in life (Rondon et al., 2014), not because of their experiences of DE.

In NZ, the psychosocial impacts of DE can be found in work by O'Brien, Thesing, and Herbert (2001), Brooking, Gardiner, & Calvert (2009), and Dharan, Meyer and Mincher (2012), where the alienation from their school community was found to contribute to decreased levels of students' self-esteem, and educational achievement, and increased levels of disruptive or deviant behaviours. DE was also found to separate and isolate students from the school environs and peer group networks they know, effecting what Towl (2014) referred to as their 'school membership'. Towl (2014) suggested that this loss of access to school membership through DE, and the stigma of DE, jeopardises a student's membership in existing peer groups or networks within their current school. She also suggested that re-establishing membership at a new school would present insurmountable challenges for students, particularly those lacking the skills necessary to re-establish themselves successfully. The psychosocial impacts of DE in NZ have also been noted in the youth justice system. Beacroft (2006) once exclaimed that the bulk of young people turning up in his court room had been excluded from school, reinforcing connections from abroad between DE, crime and the criminal justice system (Condon, 1995; Firth, 1993; Hemphill and Hargreaves, 2009b; Ludbrook, 2012; Meyer and Evans, 2012; Michail, 2012; Parsons, 2001; Skiba and Rausch, 2006).

2.5.3. Educational impacts of disciplinary exclusion

The educational impacts of DE concern the effects of DE on a student's ability to learn and on their educational achievement. If a student is not in school, their ability to acquire the learning, skills, knowledge and qualifications schooling provides access to is significantly diminished (Brown, 2007). Furthermore, the lesser the level of education and the fewer the qualifications held by young people, the more difficult it is for them to avoid many of the social ills known to result from a lack of education and qualifications, such as unemployment (Ball, McGuire & Macrae, 2000), welfare dependency

(Hayton, 1999) and alcohol and drug addiction (McCrystal, Higgins, & Percy, 2006). Cope (1995). Jenkin (1996) also considered DE to be counterproductive and lead to missed opportunities for schools to support non-compliant students to learn the problem-solving and self-management skills necessary to prevent those behaviours. In terms of alternative education arrangements for excluded students in the UK, Gazeley (2010) found that arrangements made were often inconsistent or inadequate to meet the learning needs and interests of excluded students. So not only was the education of these students interrupted by their DE, it was also hindered by the poor quality of education provided to them after their DE. Further to the adverse effects of DE, it has also been established as a precursor to further experiences of DE, or a complete disengagement from education altogether (Bowditch, 1993; Constenbader & Markson, 1998; Ekstron, Goertz, Pollack & Rock, 1986; Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Tobin, Sugai & Colvin, 1996; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). Rondon, Campbell, Galway, and Leavey (2014) also found that the earlier young people experienced DE in their school lives, and the longer they spent out of school, the less motivated they felt to re-engage in education.

The educational impacts of exclusion in NZ are similar to those impacts discussed above, including lower levels of educational achievement and the consequences of DE for young people's future employment and career prospects. Freeman (2011) also highlighted the difficulties for some students of returning to school from a period of exclusion and the task of re-engaging with their learning. This was particularly so when they felt lost or behind, feelings Freeman suggested would lead to further disruptive behaviours, and more than likely lead to further DE. Smith (2009) also found that the time required for the DE process and a student's absence during this process impacted on their ability to keep up with school syllabus requirements in the event they were able to return to school.

2.5.4 Family impacts of disciplinary exclusion

The impacts of DE were, however, not limited to the excluded student. Parents, caregivers and members of student's families were also found to experience adverse impacts from their child's or family member's DE. Brantlinger (1991), Partington (2001), Sheets (1996) and Thorson (1996), all found that the process of DE for the parents or caregivers was intimidating, demoralising and invoked feelings of invisibility. Family members reported feeling powerless, a sense of injustice, and feelings of resentment towards their child's teacher or school. Parents from these studies also expressed concerns about the time away from work to attend disciplinary meetings, the threat this time posed to their job security and livelihood, the effects of DE on their child's education, and the impacts of DE on other members of the student's family (i.e. siblings).

The impacts on the caregivers and families of the exclusion of a family member from school has also been found in the NZ literature to be profoundly negative, and to have serious repercussions (Overton, 1995). The findings of Overton were also found in more recent works by Smith (2009), Meyer and Evans (2012), and Towl (2014). Smith (2009) found that not only did DE leave caregivers and parents of excluded students feeling disempowered and powerless, it also made them feel like they were being excluded too. Participants in Smith's research also expressed concerns about the lack of pastoral care offered or provided to their child during the DE process, which tended to exacerbate parents' feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. Meyer and Evans (2012) revealed that the families of excluded students were often ill-equipped to supervise and support their child who had been excluded, which only added to the stress of the exclusion experience. Towl (2014) discovered that parents of participants involved in her study found navigating the process of TDE difficult, and they also expressed concerns about how the TDE of their child negatively influenced how their child was perceived and treated by other students and staff upon their return to school.

2.5.5 Conclusion

The literature reviewed on the intent and effectiveness of DE in making schools safe, in ensuring an unhindered, uninterrupted teaching and learning process, and in deterring or remediating non-compliance has found DE to be ineffectual. The literature reviewed also suggests that the negative impacts of DE far outweigh any benefits. As such, a focus on positive alternatives and the prevention of DE may prove to be a more productive endeavour. I now turn to the literature concerning preventative alternatives to DE.

2.6 Preventing disciplinary exclusion: Some alternatives

As suggested by Smith, Bicard, Bicard, Baylot, and Casey (2012), preventative measures can be more effective in changing behaviours than discipline and punishment, and will have less negative consequences too. Alternatives to prevent DE may also better utilise limited school resources to support students at risk of DE and potentially retain them longer in school. A review of the literature revealed a number of alternative policies and practices that seek to prevent DE, or recommendations that are yet to be implemented. The following is a review of some of the alternatives to prevent DE and, where available, the effects of those alternatives on rates of DE.

2.6.1 Guidelines for disciplinary exclusion

A review of the guidance to schools on DE issued in 2009 (MoE, 2009a; 2009b) saw a notable shift from an earlier version issued in 2003 (MoE, 2003). First, the 2009 guidelines are separated into two documents, one for principals and boards of trustees concerning their legal options and duties (MoE, 2009a), and the second document is pitched as a guide to good practice for managing student behaviour that 'may or may not' lead to exclusion (MoE, 2009b). The second notable difference between the two versions is the tone and language used. The 2003 guidelines were technical and devoid of emphasis on inclusive practices as part of DE practices and processes. Conversely, the 2009 guidelines frequently emphasise the need for fairness, justice and inclusiveness, and good investigation practices (MoE, 2009a). Also notable in the 2009 guidelines was an emphasis on contingency planning for managing student behaviours (MoE, 2009b). Given the general downward trend in rates of DE from NZ schools, it is possible that the shift in focus of legislation and guidance has contributed to this trend, although there was no empirical evidence found in this review to confirm this.

2.6.2 Pre-service teacher training

As found by Stoll, Fink, and Earl (2003), teachers play a significant role in enhancing or threatening a student's sense of self through the way in which they teach, engage and manage their classrooms. However, a teacher's ability to engage and manage all students effectively is not a given, and for many teachers-in-training they are reliant on their initial teacher education (ITE) to prepare them for the often diverse and challenging classrooms they are yet to face. A review of evidence concerning ITE programme content from the UK, the USA and NZ suggests that pre-service teachers are not receiving adequate training on how to respond to and effectively manage non-compliance in ways that could avoid a student's DE (Arthur-Kelly, Sutherland, Lyons, MacFarlane and Foreman, 2013; Gazeley & Dunne, 2013; Flower, McKenna, & Haring, 2017). Arthur-Kelly et al. (2013) argued that ITE programme content that is more culturally responsive, evidence-based and underpinned by a philosophy of inclusive education would be programme content that would better equip pre-service teachers to more confidently meet the needs of diverse student populations, and better respond to and manage non-compliance in ways that avoid the need for DE.

2.6.3 Behaviour crisis response service

Derived from the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) Action Plan, the MoE's Behaviour Crisis Response Service (BCRS) involves support for schools from the MoE to stabilise crisis situations in schools (Crosby, Mallins, & Carter, 2016). Criteria for what constitutes a crisis situation varies, however the situation must meet the threshold of high, where the school is ill-equipped to address the level of disruption caused by the crisis, and where the normal level of functioning of those disrupted by the event is considered significant (Crosby et al., 2016). The effectiveness of the BCRS in preventing DE was not established in this review, however Crosby et al. (2016) found that many of the students in their study engaged by the BCRS remained in education two to three years after the study was completed. However, it was not clear as to whether this was in their place of learning during their participation in the study or a different place of learning.

2.6.4 Home-schooling

Home-schooling or Correspondence are not typically considered a preventative alternative to DE and, as such, I was not able to locate literature regarding the efficacy of home-schooling in the context of preventing DE. This is despite the fact in the UK many young people participating in this form of education do so due to their voluntary exclusion from school (Fortune-Wood, 2005), or as a result of their disengagement from schooling, which may occur as a result of TDE or PDE (Kiwi Families, 2017). Smith (2009) did find that home-schooling required the support and supervision of a parent or caregiver of the excluded student, which some felt ill-equipped or unable to provide. Furthermore, the isolation of young people from their school and peers inherent in home-schooling runs counter to the rhetoric of inclusive education and may make home-schooling a less desirable alternative to prevent DE than some others reviewed here.

2.6.5 School-wide Positive Behaviour for Learning

In NZ, the School-wide Positive Behaviour for Learning (SW-PB4L) aims to increase the learning and achievement of students. This is achieved through the un-learning of difficult or disruptive behaviours, and through changes to school culture to promote multiculturalism, collectivism and respect for difference, similar to the culture of care advanced by Cavanagh, MacFarlane, Glynn, and MacFarlane (2012) several years later. This initiative was based on research evidence that suggested that the earlier in life challenging student behaviours were addressed, the better their levels of educational achievement, and an increased likelihood that DE could be avoided (Church, 2003). This

initiative was also underpinned by state recognition of the ineffectiveness of punitive, compliance-focused and deterrence-based approaches for long-term and sustainable behaviour change in students (Sugai, Horner, Lewis-Palmer & Todd, 2005). Evaluation of SW-PB4L found that schools in which SW-PB4L had been implemented showed improvements in student retention and decreases in TDE (Boyd, Dingle & Herdina, 2014).

2.6.6 Restorative practices

The use of restorative practices (RPs) in schools serves purposes similar to those regarding its use in the criminal justice system (Kehoe, Hemphill, & Broderick, 2016; Liebmann, 2007), but aims to restore relationships so those involved in the RP can resume their daily school lives together once the restorative process is complete (Drewery & Windslade, 2005; Kehoe et al., 2016). Evidence from NZ and abroad has shown RPs to have positive effects on rates of DEs, and on student relationships with their teachers (Drewery, 2007; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011, McCluskey et al., 2008). Cavanagh (2007), Shaw (2007), Drewery and Kecskemeti (2010), and Gray and Drewery (2011) also found RPs to produce additional positive benefits for students, including increased levels of confidence in contributing to classroom discussions, more ownership of non-compliant behaviours, less disruptive behaviours in class, and improvements in understanding and managing conflict.

2.6.7 Managed moves

Managed moves (MMs) are used in the UK education system and involve the moving of a student at risk of PDE from one school to another as part of a collectivised approach to preventing PDEs (Abdelnoor, 2007; Harris, Vincent, Thomson, & Toalster, 2006; 2007). MMs provide opportunities for at-risk students to establish a new identity, and reflect upon their previous non-compliance (Bagley & Hallam, 2016; Harris et al., 2006; 2007). And while MMs show promise as an alternative to prevent DE, Parffrey (1994), a critic of this practice, considered MMs as the moving on of a student from one school to another which positioned the student as the problem. This problematising of the student, Parffrey argued, fails to identify or address other factors that may have contributed to a student becoming at risk of DE. Without addressing this, it would likely remain and place other students at risk of DE.

2.6.8 Alternative education

AE was introduced in NZ in 1998 to accommodate young people aged 13-15 who have become alienated from compulsory schooling, typically as a result of excessive truancy, or their DE from mainstream schools (Brooking, Gardiner & Calvert, 2008). AE centres are typically much smaller than a school and operate in a much more intimate style, where students have a core group of teaching and welfare staff who work closely with them in a sustained fashion. AE in NZ and abroad has shown promising results in terms of the educational achievement and retention of students (Charlton, 2006). Evidence on AE abroad has also shown the effectiveness of AE in improving student well-being and, by implication, modified student behaviours (Nichols & Steffy, 1999; Nichols & Utesch, 2010; Te Riele, 2012; 2017). As such, AE demonstrates the potential for positive effects on rates of DE. However, as with MMs, students referred to AE centres by their schools are positioned as the problem that needs to be moved on, instead of identifying and addressing the other factors that contributed to the student's referral to AE in unison or in a more holistic fashion.

2.6.9 Improved relationships between teachers, students and their families

There exists a body of evidence which makes clear that strong relationships between students, their teachers and the students' families can be crucial to not only students' achievement at school, but also to keeping them in school (Alton-Lee, 2003; Bishop et al., 2007; Chiu & Tulley, 1997; Cavanagh, 2007; Cavanagh, 2009; Cavanagh, MacFarlane, Glynn, & MacFarlane, 2012; Hill & Brown, 2013; McManus, 1995; Pomeroy, 2002; Turner et al., 2015). The culturally responsive pedagogy of relationships developed by Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, and Teddy (2009) is derived from the seminal work of Geneva Gay (2010), but emphasises the building of relationships between students, their teachers and their families to improve classroom climate, and students' levels of learning and achievement. A small-scale evaluation of the effectiveness of their pedagogy found improvements in academic achievement, a shift in attitudes of some students towards their school, their learning and their ability to achieve, and an observable improvement in relationships between students, teachers and their families (Bishop et al., 2009). Strong, meaningful and mutually reciprocal relationships between students, their teachers, and their families show promise not only in improved student learning and achievement, but also in reducing the likelihood of student non-compliance that could lead to their DE.

2.6.10 Engaging and invigorating curriculum

In their study on student voice in curriculum design, Jagersma and Parsons (2011), drawing on work by Rudduck and Flutter (2000), advocated for the inclusion of a student voice in the design and development of the school curriculum. They were of the view that a curriculum informed by student voices on the things they were interested in, the things they wanted to learn about, and in ways they found engaging, had the potential to reduce the student non-compliance that results from student disaffection, and thus prevent the need for DE. Rogers, Hallam, Shaw, and Rhamie (2009), also found Skill Force, an alternative curriculum approach for students at risk of disaffection with education in the UK, to be effective in improving student attendance to school, thus reducing DEs. They attributed this to the development of a curriculum that was more relevant, responsive and student-centric.

Why student voice remains absent from curriculum development is largely due to what Jagersma and Parsons (2011) refer to as a “lack of buy-in by the educational system and poor communication of expectations” (p. 118), and because of the perception that to ask students what they wanted to learn was “not at all normal practice” (McIntyre, Pedder, & Rudduck, 2005, p. 150). Others, however, point to the normalisation and internalisation of the subservient role of students in their own education, where students have become so accustomed to being told what they can learn when, and they have been reduced to empty vessels awaiting adult knowledge (Albers, 2009; Thompson, 2009).

2.6.11 Student voice

Student voice, also known as “pupil participation, active citizenship, youth leadership and youth empowerment” (Mitra & Gross, 2009, p. 523), civic participation (Herr & Anderson, 2003), and pupil voice (McIntyre, Pedder, & Rudduck, 2005), concerns the meaningful inclusion of students in the discussion and decision-making process regarding matters of interest to them (Fielding, 2001; Levin, 2000; Mitra & Gross, 2009). According to proponents of student voice and educational researchers seeking changes to prevent DE (Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Partington, 2001), student voice enables “youth [to] have opportunities to share in school decisions that will shape their lives and the lives of their peers” (Mitra & Gross, 2009, p. 523). Student voice has been shown to have a positive effect on student engagement in their learning (Rudduck & Flutter, 2000), classroom behaviours (Herr & Anderson, 2003), student-teacher relationships (McIntyre, Pedder & Rudduck 2005; Rudduck, Day & Wallace, 1997), and students’ sense of belonging at school (Rudduck & Flutter, 2000). These effects have been shown to impact positively on preventing non-compliance, and thus on preventing DE (Munn & Lloyd, 2005). However, Bolstad (2011), Fielding (2009), Lundy (2007), and Mitra (2009), all

caution the naïve use of student voice as a democratic means by which to include students in discussions and decision-making on matters of education such as DE, as this naivety renders opaque the power imbalance inherent in the student-teacher relationship required to facilitate meaningful discussion and decision-making.

2.6.12 Summary

Alternatives that are or have the potential to prevent DE have been examined and the results presented here. And while there are a number of alternatives that have or have the potential to positively effect rates of DE, the presence of student voice in the debate and discussions informing many of these alternatives is notably absent. The inclusion of student voice in discussions and debates concerning the design, development and implementation of positive alternatives is important, as they likely have insightful perspectives to share that may improve the relevance and effectiveness of existing alternatives.

2.7 Limitations of disciplinary exclusion

As previously mentioned, there are circumstances where the physical removal of a student from the immediate situation may be the only appropriate course of action for a teacher or school to take. However, evidence suggests that the DE of a non-compliant student is extremely limited in realising its intent of safer schools and an uninterrupted teaching and learning process (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Bickel & Qualls, 1980; Skiba & Rausch, 2006). Nor is there a strong case to support the ongoing use of DE as a discipline to deter or remediate non-compliance, particularly given its failure within the criminal justice system from whence it came (Parsons, 2005; Taylor, Walton, & Young, 2008). As such, the ongoing use of DE by schools is intriguing, especially given the adverse and far-reaching consequences of DE for both students and their families. Moreover, DE is seen by some researchers as counter-productive and leads to missed opportunities for schools to play a key role in supporting students to acquire self-management and conflict resolution skills. The ability of schools to facilitate such learning is understandably constrained by the availability of school resources to do so, or the willingness to do so. However, given the role and responsibility of schools to provide teaching and learning that meets the needs of all its students (MoE, 2014a; 2017a), the resources expended on DE, the ineffectiveness and adverse impacts of DE, and legislative aspirations for safe schools, schools may want to consider a re-orientation of their roles and

responsibilities in this regard as suggested by Gillborn, Nixon, and Rudduck (1993), and McKeivitt, and Braaksma (2008). Student voice has been shown in this review as a means to engage students in discussions and decision-making regarding matters of interest to them. I advance that this could be extended to discussions and decision-making regarding the prevention of DE and, in particular, the voices of excluded students or students at risk of DE. A preventative approach that draws on student voices based on lived experience may reveal to us avenues of further investigation not yet explored.

2.9 Rationale for this study

Evident from this review of the education literature regarding the prevention of DE is a gap in the knowledge base of what works, particularly from the perspective of young people with lived experience of it. As such, this study aims to explore the perspectives of young people with lived experience of DE, for their perspectives on preventing it. Additionally, this study aims to explore the perspectives of excluded young people on how they thought their learning needs could have been better met. It is my intention that the perspectives of the young people involved in this study informs further research on the prevention of DE and how to better meet the learning needs of students at risk of DE as informed by lived experience.

2.10 Research questions

The purpose of this study was to include the excluded; to explore the lived experiences of young people who have been excluded from school, and to include their voices in the debate and discussion on 'what works' to prevent DE. This study looked to position these young people as agentic and expert in the phenomena of DE, and as knowledgeable on possible ways to prevent it. This study sought to encourage more research on DE that considers the views of young people who have experienced it as central to the design, development and implementation of policies and practices that seek to prevent it. This study also aimed to normalise the inclusion of young people with lived experience of DE in the research and literature concerning the prevention of DE. The research questions proposed to achieve these aims were:

1. How do young people who have experienced DE think their DE could have been prevented?
 - 1.1 What factors do they think contributed to their DE?
 - 1.2 How do they think those factors can be mitigated to prevent DE?
 - 1.3 Who do they think should be involved in the prevention of DE and how should they be involved?

2. How do young people who have experienced DE think their learning needs could have been better met?

2.11 Conclusion

The literature reviewed has revealed a growing knowledge base regarding who experiences DE and why, the factors known to contribute to DE, the impacts of DE, changes required to prevent DE, and evidence regarding what works to prevent DE. And while these findings are positive, very little evidence was found of the inclusion of the voices of young people with lived experience of DE about the prevention of DE. This study aims to give centre stage to young people with lived experience of DE in a study focused on their perspectives of how DE could be prevented. How this will be done and who will be involved is detailed in Chapter Three: Methodology.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This study explored the perspectives of young people who have experienced DE. The aim of this study was to better understand young people's perceptions of how DE could be prevented and how their learning needs could be better met by schools. This chapter elaborates on the research design, methodology, methods and ethical considerations considered appropriate to achieve the study's intended aims.

3.1 Methodology

Elaboration of the theoretical perspective used in designing and proposing a social inquiry study enables researchers to explicitly state the assumptions brought to the research work. Elaboration also enables demonstration, through the methodology, of the researcher's understanding of those perspectives, and how the researcher envisages their employment as the research proceeds (Crotty, 1998). This study used a qualitative, focus group interview methodology involving young people with experience of DE. This study's design was guided by the epistemological tradition of social constructionism, and the theoretical perspective of interpretivism, in particular phenomenology.

3.1.1 Social constructionism

Constructionism is thought by Crotty (1998) to concern meaning that is constructed within the minds of the subject, and which comes into "existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world" (p. 8). Crotty also suggests that social constructionism concerns the "social origin of meaning and the social character with which it is inevitably stamped" (p. 54). As such, the construction and interpretation of meaning in one's mind regarding a particular phenomenon is perspectival and shaped by factors that are time and context bound (Burr, 1995).

The study sought to understand how young people from NZ with experience of DE interpret and socially construct their experiences of this phenomenon, and the prevention of this phenomenon, given their experiences of DE. This study also sought to better understand how excluded young people interpret and socially construct how their learning needs could have been better met.

Social constructionism afforded to this study a way to identify and distinguish the ways these young people constructed, interpreted and gave meaning to their lived experiences of DE, and how those meanings could inform efforts to prevent DE.

3.1.2 Qualitative research

Qualitative research is an approach to, or a process of, social inquiry that given a particular phenomenon enables observers to locate themselves within the world of the observed, and gain valuable, non-statistical insights into participants' unique constructions and lived realities (Creswell, 2007; 2009; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; 2003). Qualitative research attempts to reveal participants' often dynamic and evolving beliefs, thoughts and feelings, given their experiences and understandings of the phenomena of interest (Johnson & Christensen, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). As such, the task of the qualitative researcher is to interpret and transform "routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals' lives" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 2), into holistic and comprehensive descriptions for consumption by academics, practitioners, scholars and policy-makers. Qualitative exploration enables researchers to build an all-encompassing and comprehensive description of the complexities involved in participant constructions of a phenomena, and the meaning they give to that phenomena (Black, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

DE and its prevention are complex issues that arise within complex contexts where there is no one solution or 'silver bullet'. A qualitative approach to research concerning the prevention of DE from the perspectives of young people with lived experience provides a unique and deep insight into some of these complexities from a perspective not yet explored. And where studies involve variables that are not easy to control and measure, yet where rigour is still paramount, Trainor and Graue (2014) suggest these are studies that are "well-suited to qualitative methods of investigation" (p. 268).

3.1.3 Interpretivism and phenomenology

Researchers of an interpretivist vein concern themselves with understanding and interpreting others' realities in-depth by inferring meaning from participants' experiences of and encounters with a phenomenon of interest (Crotty, 1998; Denzin, 2001; Wolff, 1989). Interpretivist researchers reject positivist approaches to social research where meaning is said to exist independently of one's consciousness of it, and the notion that social research is objective science (Denzin, 2001; Patton, 2002). Instead, the interpretivist research paradigm acknowledges and embraces the subjectivity brought to a study through the researcher's involvement and interactions with research participants,

and their interpretation of participants' realities (MacKenzie & Knipe, 2006). Interpretivist research appreciates that for participants their realities are multiple, and that they are "culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). MacDonald et al. (2000) suggest that these characteristics of interpretivist research facilitate more accurate inferences of participant realities. However, it is these same characteristics that can limit the reliability and representativeness of results produced by interpretivist research, particularly when factors that influence the researcher's interpretation of the meaning made by participants (i.e. values, virtues and beliefs) are diametrically different to those of participants.

Phenomenology is the "study or inquiry into how things appear, are given, or present themselves to us in pre-reflective or lived experience" (van Manen & van Manen, 2012, p. 1), and is an "endeavour to go 'back to things themselves'" (Crotty, 1998, p. 12). Phenomenology is "expressly interested in people's experiences and in particular the experience of those people who are usually ignored" (Levering, 2006, p. 457), and "does not aim for technicalities and instrumentalities – rather it serves to foster and strengthen an embodied ontology, epistemology and axiology of thoughtful and tactful action" (van Manen, 2014, p. 15). Phenomenology achieves this by gathering and studying the structures and properties of lived experience and consciousness of participants to better understand the meaning they give to those experiences (Crotty, 1998; Husserl, 1931; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1990; van Manen, 2014). Phenomenology as a research approach now has several branches, all of which stemmed from Husserlian or transcendental phenomenology, of which Heideggerian phenomenology is one.

Heideggerian or existential phenomenology is considered the fusion or joint creation of knowledge by the researcher and the researched (Gadamer, 1975). Unlike Husserlian phenomenology, Heideggerian phenomenology concerns the study of lived experience of human existence or *being* as a phenomenon independent of one's consciousness or knowledge of existence, and the ways subjects relate to the objective world around them (Heidegger, 1962; 1995). Heideggerian phenomenology does, however, require the researcher to have prior understanding or fore structure of the phenomenon under study (Gadamer, 1975). Fore structure better ensures research questions that elicit from participants' hidden meaning and possibilities embedded in their recollections of their lived experiences, but it also ensures the researcher is better able to identify hidden features when interpreting participants' recollections of their lived experiences (Heidegger, 1962; Marcel, 1952; Spiegelberg, 1981).

An existential phenomenological approach to this study allowed me as the researcher to draw on my own experiences of DE, and formulate research questions that elicited from participants valuable insights about preventing DE from lived experience. An existential approach also enabled me

to better grasp, describe and interpret the meaning given by participants to their experiences of DE, and gain valuable insights into how DE could be prevented, and how the learning needs of at-risk students could be better met. Participants' experiences will inform future research endeavours regarding the prevention of DE and how to better meet the learning needs of students at risk of DE.

3.2 Methods

3.2.1 Focus group interviews

Semi-structured FG interviews are considered by Kruger and Casey (2015) as opportunities for researchers to practice the art and science of listening in a group setting. The group processes and structures of FGs promoted "retrospective introspection" (Merton & Kendall, 1946, p. 550), communal dialogue, indigenous coding systems (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) and "self-discourse among participants" (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 4) regarding their lived experiences of DE. This revealed to me the multivocality or collective normative understandings of participants (Fontana & Frey, 1994, 2000; Madriz, 2003). Normative understandings revealed by FG research are important and have contributed to the rise in FG research over recent decades (Kruger & Casey, 2015). This is because despite modern day discourses concerning agency and choice, and the ambiguity surrounding sources of normative influences, "human behaviour is still normative" (Bloor et al., 2001, p. 5). Better understanding participants' inner thoughts and feelings that underpin their normative understandings has enabled me to acquire rich and descriptive data concerning the collective consciousness and meaning-making of participants' lived experiences of DE, and revealed "trends and patterns in perceptions" (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 2) amongst participants' experiences that other interview approaches may have missed. In addition, FGs have better enabled me to interact with participants, as well as listen and observe. This achieved what Madriz (2003) referred to as "the most important sociological process – collective human interaction" (p. 365), and what Gadamer (1975) referred to as a fusion of horizons in the creation of knowledge between myself and the participants.

Further to the advantages of FG research already discussed, evidence suggests that research participants often find FGs less intimidating than individual one-on-one interviews, they enjoy the social nature of the FG setting, they find the communal dialogue stimulating, and some participants reported a sense of gratification gained from the exercise of self-disclosure, particularly when amongst those from similar backgrounds or with similar experiences (Bloor et al., 2001; Krueger & Casey, 2015; Madriz, 2003; Morgan, 1988).

FG interviews do, however, have several disadvantages. These include the silencing of marginalised and disadvantaged individuals when interviewing groups of participants (Michell, 1999; Michell & Amos, 1997), neutrality of location for the FG, researcher effect, under-disclosure, over-disclosure, participant attrition, challenging group dynamics, and the level of group facilitation skills required of the researcher (Bloor et al., 2001; Kruger & Casey, 2015). These disadvantages were addressed or managed by careful planning and organisation of the FGs, and my previous experience in group facilitation and training.

Given the compatibility of FGs with a study of this nature, its appropriateness for research involving young marginalised and disadvantaged young people, and the use of FG research found in the literature on preventing DE from the perspective of young people (Knipe, Reynolds, & Milner, 2007), FG interviews were identified as the most appropriate interview approach to employ in this study.

3.2.2 Participants

Careful and considered selection of participants for FGs is crucial to the successful execution of the FG method, and the richness and utility of the data generated (Babbie, 2013; Bloor et al., 2001; Krueger & Casey, 2015; Madriz, 1998; 2003; Patton, 2002). If participants do not share common characteristics or a common experience, communal dialogue is unlikely to occur and any data collected will unlikely provide sufficient depth or insight for meaningful analysis (Bloor et al., 2001; Palys, 2008). Purposive criterion sampling made explicit the criteria for participation in this study, and ensured the generation of rich and relevant data for meaningful analysis.

Sample participants for this study were drawn from young people aged 16-19 years of age who had experienced DE in the two years prior to their recruitment to this study, as this increased the likelihood of more accurate participant recall. Sample participants were also drawn from YGFF programmes, as they are specifically designed for young people in the desired participant age range. The sampling procedure also included participants from across each of the six YGFF Vocational Pathways (YGFFVPs) (creative industries, primary industries, service industries, social and community services, manufacturing and technology, and construction and infrastructure) in each of the three locations mentioned above. This enabled me to determine any within-group and across-group divergence or convergence in perceptions, given the YGFFVP as a point of interest in the analysis of FG data. I drew sample participants from Hamilton, Palmerston North and Christchurch to determine any within-group and across-group divergence or convergence based on geographical location. Ethnicity of participants was not a core concern of this particular study, nor was the gender of

participants, and I sought participants who had been attending their YGFF programme for at least three months prior to the FGs to keep the disruption to their engagement in a new learning environment to a minimum.

Study participants were recruited through negotiation and agreement with their YGFF providers in accordance with the sampling criteria noted earlier. The project documentation (e.g. project information including my contact details, confidentiality agreements and participant consent forms) was sent to YGFF providers who expressed an interest in recruiting participants to this study. Frequent communications with me and the project documentation helped the YGFF providers to identify YGFF students they felt would be suitable for recruitment to this study, and informed discussions they held with their students about their participation in the FGs. At the suggestion of one YGFF provider, and in light of recommendations from Ram Lee, and Horsley (2015), I set up a Facebook page for the purpose of communicating with research participants prior to, during and after the FG interview. This approach also ensured I was accessible to research participants by more than those methods provided to them in project documentation (i.e. phone, email).

Collaborating with YGFF providers regarding participant recruitment simplified the recruitment process, and also provided a degree of emotional safety for YGFF students, as their involvement was negotiated through someone with whom they were already familiar and had already formed trusting relationships. This was particularly important given the age range of the desired participants, and their experiences of marginalisation and disadvantage. The issue raised by Bloor et al. (2001) of using an intermediary like YGFF providers to recruit participants, and the screening of participants by intermediaries to ensure favourable results, was mitigated by the fact this study was not concerned with participants' current study experiences. It was also mitigated through my clear and frequent communications with YGFF providers to ensure their understanding of and adherence to project documentation prior to, during and after the FGs was complete.

Poor participant attendance to FGs is considered by a number of authors to be a common source of FG failure (Madriz, 1998; Morgan, 1998). As such, I negotiated the transportation of participants to respective FG venues with respective YGFF providers to increase the likelihood of expected participant attendance. I also offered a financial contribution in kind to YGFF providers who transported participants to and from the FG venues. As participants had my contact details, they were advised to let me know if for whatever reason they were not able to attend. As a result of my planning and organisation of participant transport, the participants expected at each FG were present on the day.

As these FGs sought to involve young people who attended different YGFF programmes, and programmes possibly delivered by different YGFF providers, a location that was easily accessible and familiar to research participants was required. One YGFF provider had in place student safety policies, which meant that their students were not able to leave their training site, but they offered their training venue as the site for this particular FG. Successful negotiations with the other YGFF providers from whom I had recruited participants for this particular FG saw them travel to the negotiated training venue. The second FG was conducted at a local community centre, the third at a local library. No issues were experienced at any of the three FG interview venues.

3.2.3 Data collection

The collection of data from FG participants was preceded by a reading of the FG outline (Appendix 1) so I could introduce myself to the FG participants, and to set the scene for the FG proceedings as suggested by Krueger (2002). This outline ensured that participants in each of the three FGs were provided consistent information about what the FG was for, and to resolve queries or concerns participants had about the intent of the FG, or the FG process. This step in the FG process also allowed me to share my first-hand experiences of DE with participants, a requirement of existential phenomenological research practice (Wrathall, 2006).

Data collected during the FG interviews included both participant demographic data (Appendix 2) and participant FG question responses. Demographic data was required to determine correlations with FG findings and included questions about participants' age, gender, ethnicity and the YGFFPV of the course they attended at the time of their FG interview.

Participant responses to the FG interview research questions followed a question route (Appendix 3) that included questions that were easy for participants to answer, a logical sequence, and that moved from broad general questions to questions more specific and pertinent to the research aims and objectives, as suggested by Kruger and Casey (2015). The question route allowed enough structure for me to keep the FG discussion focused on data relevant to the study aims and objectives, but also allowed me enough flexibility to respond to the direction of the discussion as guided by participants. This flexibility also allowed for the exploration of emergent topics relevant to the study, it increased the ability and propensity of participants to contribute to the discussion, and it gave the FGs a forward-moving feel, leading the discussion to the data required (Babbie, 2013; Patton, 2002).

Participant responses to the broad FG research questions were captured using strategies suggested by Krueger and Casey (2015). This included the use of audio recording, flip charts and field notes from memory. Audio recording was the primary strategy of data collection. Audio recording

enabled me to focus on my role as the facilitator, and reduced the inaccuracy and selectiveness of manual transcriptions and my recall (Bloor et al., 2001). Audio recordings also provided a degree of quality assurance as the recording remains available should the findings of the research require verification for accuracy. The use of flip charts during FG discussion is advanced by Krueger and Casey (2015) as an effective way to visually capture pertinent ideas and concepts articulated by participants during FG discussions. The information recorded on the flip charts helped to remind participants of ideas articulated during the discussion so they could build on them and avoid repetition. The flip charts also helped me to summarise the discussion upon conclusion of the FG prior to the administration of the question route-ending questions. Field notes from each FG emphasised observations I made during the group discussions that were not apparent in the audio recordings, and emphasised recurring quotes, noting the participants who made them.

As suggested by Bloor et al. (2001), the FG interviews proposed lasted no longer than 90 minutes as this was considered the optimal time for sufficient data collection in a group setting, and this duration is understood to not impose too much on participants' time (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Furthermore, each FG involved between six to eight participants as this is considered to be the optimal FG size (Bloor et al. 2001; Moustakas, 1994), but as noted by Madriz (1998) this was wholly dictated by the number of participants who showed up on the day.

As an aid to recruitment (Bloor et al., 2001), and to recognise the value of participant involvement in the FG interviews and their valuable insights, they were offered light refreshments prior to the commencement of each FG interview. Each participant was also offered a gift voucher to the value of \$10 upon conclusion of the FG interviews as a token of my gratitude for their participation (Bloor et al., 2001; Krueger & Casey, 2015). Participants were not aware of the refreshments or the gift voucher prior to the commencement of the FG.

3.2.4 Data analysis

Analysis of FG data generated during a study concerning a phenomenon not yet studied, from a socially constructed perspective not yet explored, must take an inductive or 'bottom up' approach involving systematic thematic analysis of participant data (Krueger & Casey, 2015). This includes the "macro and micro examination of the data and identification of emergent patterns and themes" (Bamberger et al., 2012, p. 314). Thematic analysis must also go "beyond the semantic content of the data, and start to identify or examine the underlying ideas, assumptions, conceptualizations and ideologies that are theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). This collaborative co-construction of meaningful interpretations of phenomena

of interest between the researcher and the researched aimed to “generate plausible accounts of the world” (p. 343), and focused on the latent themes across the entirety of the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) also consider this to be an appropriate approach to data analysis that “seeks to theorise the socio-cultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are provided” (p. 85). It is also in keeping with studies of a social constructionism framework, such as that proposed in this study. Braun and Clarke (2006) go on to say that this approach to data analysis facilitates the production of a rich overall thematic description of all participant data collected, and as it relates to the data, a view also held by Patton (2002).

The focus of this study on participant perspectives on the prevention of DE, and how to better meet the learning needs of those who have experienced DE, required an approach to data analysis that focused on socially constructed narratives of participant experiences. As such, thematic data analysis, as suggested by Braun, and Clark (2006), and others (Gubrium, 1993; Holstein and Gubrium, 1995; 1997; Krueger and Casey, 2015; Springer, 2010; Voysey, 1975) was determined the most appropriate data analysis approach to use in this study.

3.3 Ethical and cross-cultural considerations

The experience of DE is understood to have adverse and far-reaching effects on young people, and in many cases compounds the pre-existing marginalisation and disadvantage already present in their lives (Pitts & Smith, 2007). This study set out to explore a time and experience that for some participants may have been emotionally and psychologically traumatic. However, Farquhar and Das (1999) note “all research topics have the potential to be sensitive” (as cited in Bloor et al., 2001, p. 21), but this must not deter researchers from inquiring into such phenomena. As such, steps must be taken to ensure a study of this nature is conducted in accordance with the appropriate codes of conduct, and the principles of ethical research concerning human subjects as espoused by those codes.

Massey University provides a comprehensive and in-depth Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (2015) (the Code). The Code provides eight principles that, if strictly adhered to, ensures a research study is undertaken in a highly ethical manner at all times during the research process, with all parties to the study, and in a manner that demonstrates cultural and contextual competence. The principles stipulated in the Code include: respect for persons, minimisation of risk of harm, informed and voluntary consent, respect for privacy and confidentiality, avoidance of unnecessary deception, avoidance of conflict of role/interest, social

and cultural sensitivity, and justice (Massey University, 2015, p. 4). A copy of the ethics approval for this study is attached as Appendix 4.

Respect for persons is achieved through fair and equal treatment of study participants that recognises each participant as a unique and knowledgeable human being, who freely and willingly participated in a study that may one day benefit the lives of other young people at risk of DE. To ensure respect for participants, I advised them of their right to refuse participation in the study at any time, with no explanation or justification for their withdrawal required as per their consent form (see Appendix 5). Participants were also required to complete a confidentiality agreement (Appendix 6) to emphasise to them the importance of keeping the FG discussion and the identity of other participants confidential.

Risk of harm to participants was minimised through advice to participants on their right to ask me questions about the study, and their participation in or withdrawal from the research process at any time. They were also advised of their right to negotiate with me the attendance of a support person (see the Information Sheet for Participants attached as Appendix 7). One participant did bring a support person whose attendance was not negotiated prior to the FG interview. Other participants were queried about the attendance of the support person, and agreed they were happy for them to remain present for the duration of the FG interview. The support person was required to sign a confidentiality agreement (Appendix 8) which was included in the project documentation. Throughout each FG, I frequently checked the participants' physical and psychological levels of comfort and, where necessary, made adjustments to return them to an acceptable state of comfort (i.e. opened windows, spoke louder or quieter, allowed participants to take quick breaks). Participants were advised of all health and safety requirements and considerations pertinent to the FG venue, including any hazards, the locations of venue toilets and emergency exits. I negotiated with each YGFF provider the availability a staff member to provide pastoral care if the participants required this after the FG interviews were complete. All YGFF providers agreed to this prior to each FG taking place.

Risk of harm to myself was minimised by the development of a safety plan for use in the event of unseen or unavoidable threats to my physical or emotional safety (verbal violence, physical violence, natural disaster, or the threat of any of these events). I discussed the safety plan with each venue provider, and observed the location of all exits, phones and staff in the event I required the use of any of these.

Risk of harm to groups/communities/institutions was minimised by assigning unique codes to each FG participant that anonymised them, and by deleting any identifying information concerning participants, their previous schools, and their current YGFF providers from all interview transcripts.

Dissemination of the final research report to interested parties, including participants, will ensure particular attention is paid to ensuring participant and YGFF provider privacy and anonymity, including screening of the interview transcripts, draft reports and the final research report.

Risk of harm to Massey University was minimised through my ethical and professional conduct as per the Code at all times, and through the production of a robust, integral and defensible research product. Mechanisms such as the supervision provided by Massey University for this research study also ensured a process and product befitting an academic study at this level.

The information sheet about the study and the process of informed and voluntary consent was provided to YGFF providers, as well as a specific information sheet for YGFF providers (Appendix 9), and a confidentiality agreement for YGFF providers (Appendix 10). These documents served to nurture the relationship and build trust with YGFF providers, which was crucial to the success of the FG interviews. I worked alongside each YGFF provider to ensure they were accurate in their interpretations and communication of the study information to the study participants.

A confidentiality agreement was provided to the transcriber (Appendix 11). Participant responsibilities concerning privacy and confidentiality were specified in the study information sheet. These responsibilities were reiterated before the commencement of the FG interviews, and again upon completion of the FG.

3.4 Conclusion

This was a qualitative study that used FG interviews to gather participants' recollections of their lived experiences of DE and their perspective of the prevention of DE given these experiences. This study was guided by the epistemological tradition of social constructionism, and the theoretical perspective of interpretivism, in particular phenomenology. Thematic analysis was undertaken to elicit the rich, thick and descriptive FG data. The emergent findings are explained in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Findings

4.0 Introduction

This chapter reports on the identification and interpretation of themes found within transcripts of participants' FG discussions regarding participants' experiences of DE, and their perspectives on preventing such exclusions. This process followed an inductive, latent level thematic analysis approach. An inductive approach identified themes within the data and latent level analysis, which examined the underlying ideas, patterns and assumptions of the themes (Braun & Clark, 2006).

FG interview transcripts from three focus groups involving 14 YGFF students from both the North and South Islands with lived experience of DE were analysed using Braun and Clark's (2006) six phases of thematic analysis. Although these young adults were products of school alienation, their responses reflect on factors that contributed to their DE which are presented under the three themes of personal, classroom and school factors.

Appendix 12 presents an overview of the themes and subthemes that were identified in the initial responses. An ellipsis (...) represents the removal of words, and square brackets ([]) identify the word(s) within that have been added by me. Participant responses are indicated by the number assigned as their pseudonym.

4.1 Reflections on factors that contributed to their exclusion from school

This section presents the participants' reflections on factors that existed at school that they felt impacted on their desire, or ability, to attend school, and how they managed themselves while there. These reflections provide the basis for understanding possibilities for preventing DE as discussed in the next chapter. The findings are reported under the three themes of reflections on personal factors, reflections on classroom factors and reflections on school factors.

4.1.1 Theme 1: Reflections on personal factors

There were three main personal factors that participants felt contributed to their DE: environmental influences, interpersonal difficulties and intrapersonal difficulties.

4.1.1.1 Environmental influences

Participants discussed difficulties they experienced in their lives outside school that impacted on their attendance and their behaviour at school. One of the difficulties involved was the use of drugs and drug abuse, both of which were common features amongst the participants.

I used to get stoned every day pretty much... I was just wagging every single day, and yeah doing drugs and that sort of shit (Participant 7).

I was a little shit back in school, never listened, never gave a toss, always stoned (Participant 9).

I thought it would be a good idea to sit on the back field with the old fellas and drink and smoke weed, we all got caught and I got stood down (Participant 10).

Another personal difficulty from outside school that impacted on their attendance and behaviour at school concerned family finances. The challenges for some families in meeting the costs of schooling was apparent, particularly for those participants who came from a family with a single parent, as highlighted in this exchange:

School is so hard though even the wrong shoes aye like it's a big deal about shoes (Participant 7).

Especially if you've got a solo mother (Participant 9).

Yeah I was going to say, especially if you've got a solo parent, even if they had no job and just on a *benny* that's even harder... it was just my step dad looking after me for most of the years... he found it pretty hard to pay for our uniforms and shit, and then I'm not even going to school, which made it even worse (Participant 7).

For one participant, a breakdown in her family led to the withdrawal of financial support for her schooling, which in turn threatened her ability to remain in school. Her situation was then exacerbated by the response of school staff to her situation:

She [the mother] stopped paying [school fees] so without even telling me she [the mother] went to the school and drew out all the school fees, so I could have no books I could have nothing, because I had no school fees, I couldn't do my subjects and then the ladies from the office came and had a go at me... they're [like] well you can't be here because you've not paid school fees, I said well what do you want me to do about it, go home now?... they said "oh that will be the best option" (Participant 14).

Domestic violence in the home was another out of school factor faced by one participant in particular. This participant had experienced violence at the hands of her own family members over a prolonged period of time, which influenced her own violent behaviour towards others at school:

Because I grew up with violence my whole life, and whenever something went wrong they [family members] just punched me... that's why like they think that's why I turn to violence because that's all I've learned... my parents never taught me, you can sit down and talk to them, they just stressed into me and my brother you have to fight, you have to fight... you have to hit them (Participant 14).

Although participants did not elaborate on the difficult situations at home that contributed to their DE, the effects of it on their behaviour at school was acknowledged by all of them:

When shits going down on the outside of school... it affects you when you're at school (Participant 6).

4.1.1.2 Interpersonal difficulties

Participants also discussed interpersonal difficulties they experienced at school that impacted on their desire or ability to attend school, and their behaviour at school. The most common difficulty they experienced at school was the impact? of being bullied:

Yeah I always had to watch my back, I just got over having to watch my back constantly too when I was there... I used to get bullied a bit as well so, picked on and shit (Participant 7).

I was getting bullied a lot (Participant 14).

Avoiding bullies and ignoring antagonists by walking away, or telling a teacher, was not an option for participants because it would have only placed them at risk of further retribution:

It makes you vulnerable (Participant 8).

You can't ignore [them or you'll] get your head kicked in and shit after school... teachers say just ignore it or just walk away or something, you can't just walk away from a fight... and you go and tell the teacher sort of thing, then you're considered a snitch sort of thing, you're going to get a massive hiding, or you know a worse hiding (Participant 7).

Well that's what I got for walking away, scars all over (Participant 11).

You walk away you're just going to get a hiding anyway regardless (Participant 9).

Avoiding violence, or triggers to their violent behaviour, at school was also difficult for participants:

A lot of girls I got in fights with, especially the one who I was strangling, she was in my class and I asked her to be moved, or [for] me to be moved and they refused to move either of us, and I said "well it's just going to keep on happening" (Participant 14).

However, several participants confessed that they too could be violent at school and they had bullied other students themselves:

Well for me at school I was a little shit, [I] was a bully (Participant 9).

The only time I got suspended was for fights, I think that's half the reason why they kicked me out too was just basically every single school day that I was attending it was just to fight (Participant 7).

One participant used a weapon against another fellow student that led to an arrest:

I baseball batted a kid in the face because he called my mum a bitch and a slut, for no reason, so I just walked up to him and smacked him with my baseball bat. He went down and I got arrested... got into handcuffs just left in a cop car, and then they [the school] suspended me and then doesn't [sic] want me back (Participant 13).

This same participant who inflicted violence against another fellow student stated he had done so whilst trying to intervene in a sexual assault on a female student:

One girl at our school got molested by one of the other kids in the computer room, and she was screaming and I went in there just to help her... I didn't know what to do so I just walked in and smacked him [the abuser] in the mouth (Participant 13).

For two participants, in particular, their violence against others at school involved violence against teachers or other school staff:

Teachers always trying to fight teachers wasn't good (Participant 5).

I went to the office you know, she was yelling at me, so I just grabbed a chair... I smacked it over her [the principal's] head and walked out, then she got a trespassing order (Participant 9).

Managing the influence of peers and the difficulties for participants in managing peer relationships and interactions also featured prominently in discussions concerning personal factors and difficulties at school. Several participants discussed the difficulties in resisting negative peer influences, combined with a yearning to not be left out, as reasons for their non-compliance at school:

Sometimes it's just the whole [thing] someone you know you want to be big tough guy at school, someone's egging you on to do it you know, you know everyone is going to stand there and watch you... you don't want to be left out... I used to go to school to hang out with my friends, to go smoke cigarettes, I went to school basically to eat my lunch I didn't go to school to learn (Participant 15).

When you're in school you think that you're really cool because you're misbehaving (Participant 1).

Yeah I was class clown (Participant 8).

Negative peer influence contributed to one participant's truancy from school and her eventual DE from two different schools:

I got kicked out because of my attendance and like I ended up hanging with the wrong crowd and then I went to another high school and the same thing happened (Participant 2).

Their behaviours and actions resulting from negative peer influences stemmed from the fact many of the participants had difficulties with engaging and interacting appropriately with their classroom peers:

At high school you get treated like shit by the students (Participant 1).

I didn't like school because... [I] didn't like certain people who were at my school... I didn't really talk to people I just didn't like people (Participant 6).

[I] didn't really get along with any of the students or any of the teachers... I was too shy back in school days, I was just used to sticking by myself... I... just always kept to myself as well sort of thing... I was just getting worse because I didn't get along with anyone sort of thing, everyone judged me for how I was and stuff (Participant 7).

Several participants spoke of learning and behavioural difficulties that contributed to their non-compliance, hindering their ability to engage fully with school work:

I was a bit of a mental case at school, had some anger problems (Participant 7).

I've got learning difficulties, and I've got anger disabilities and stuff like this... and I've been in CYFS and stuff because of it (Participant 13).

Yeah I've got Irlens syndrome... Basically I'm dyslexic and I never had a teacher aide, I didn't know what I was doing in my work, instead of doing my work I would just muck around, be the class clown, swear at teachers, throw shit around, they would put me in the withdraw room, I would run away from school stuff like that, after that some CYFS stuff happened (Participant 10).

4.1.1.3 Intrapersonal difficulties

Lastly, participants discussed intrapersonal difficulties that impacted negatively on their behaviour and decision-making, and often contributed to their DE. For many participants their ability to make socially acceptable decisions related to their schooling and their behaviour at school was difficult for them:

It's a bit hard to not to play up in class though (Participant 7).

I just got caught doing things that I shouldn't have been doing (Participant 1).

[I was] doing inappropriate things in the school grounds (Participant 3).

This difficulty for participants was apparent in their discussions concerning truancy from school, particularly for those for whom truancy was a significant factor in their DE:

I got kicked out because of my attendance (Participant 2).

[I was excluded] because of my attendance and everything (Participant 3).

I was Year 9... I was just wagging every single day... I'd always just be wagging... always got kicked out of class and suspended ... I was only at school for like about two weeks and then I just never went back there ... didn't even bother going, so basically only went like a few days like the whole year... (Participant 7).

Two participants discussed the involvement of the authorities due to their truancy from school, and the legal ramifications of their truancy for them and their parents. However, even this was not enough to deter them from being truant:

I just felt bad cos my parents would've got done if I definitely didn't show up at all... but I still didn't go most of the time (Participant 1).

After you've had a go with the truancy officer, you kind of just give up and go to the cops (Participant 4).

For several participants, their school years for various reasons were a difficult time for them and led to a general dislike of school:

I was going through so much shit at school (Participant 9).

My school days are probably... the worst days of my life (Participant 7).

Yeah, that's why I left, I just didn't like it (Participant 4).

One participant revealed that her attitude towards her schooling and her disruptive behaviour at school was brought on by the death of a significant family member and the upheaval that followed:

It [getting in trouble at school] all started when my dad passed away... [my family] had to move around [name of city] a lot, go to different schools (Participant 9).

Negative self-perception and self-worth also arose as intrapersonal difficulties experienced by participants during their time at school:

I didn't like school because I was too dumb... I was too stupid (Participant 6).

[I] just really wasn't fitting in, didn't make many friends (Participant 14).

[I was] getting in trouble I just wasn't happy (Participant 5).

One participant disclosed that negative comments made by a teacher detrimentally affected her self-esteem and her attitude towards remaining in school:

The reason why I left school was because my whole life I've wanted to be an orthodontist... my teacher told me that I would never be able to become an orthodontist because I would never be smart enough to be able to pass and do it... they just didn't encourage you at all (Participant 1).

Difficulties with authority at home and in the school also arose during participants' discussions regarding personal difficulties, which they felt contributed to their behaviours at school:

I just basically didn't listen to a word they [the parents] said... I used to just snap at anyone that used to try and tell me what's good or what to do, or anything, I basically never listened to anyone, not even my own parents (Participant 7).

Participant responses regarding intrapersonal factors that existed for them during their time at school, and that they felt contributed to their exclusion from school, included environmental influences, interpersonal difficulties and intrapersonal difficulties. These aspects served to form and strengthen the theme of personal factors as a valid interpretation of the meaning participants made of their lived experiences of DE. I will now turn to the classroom factors participants identified as contributing to their DE.

4.1.2 Reflections on classroom factors

Three categories of classroom factors emerged from participants' discussions about their experiences of DE. They include classroom environment, classroom learning and teacher engagement.

4.1.2.1 Classroom environment

Classroom environment concerned both the physical aspects of a classroom that impacted on participants' behaviours, and intangible aspects such as the management of other students in the class, and classroom rules. Participants felt that some of the rules used to manage them and their peers in class were too strict and made it difficult for them to attend and remain in class. This was exemplified through one participant's experience:

Can't even wear your jersey or stuff inside a classroom, [teachers] always make you take [it] off... even when you're freezing cold and stuff... it's like "I'm cold" ... If you didn't come with a pen he'll [the teacher] send you out of the class... Pretty much if you did one thing wrong... you made one wrong move, like you swear at her or anything she [the teacher] would just

pick up the phone and you were expelled straight away on the spot, she was like the strictest (Participant 7).

For two participants, in particular their unwillingness to adhere to classroom rules with which they disagreed impacted on their attendance and their learning:

The toilet thing, when they say, “no” to you going to the toilet... Like, how do they have the right to say, “no” to you going to take a piss? I got like kicked out of class for going to the toilet when I wasn’t supposed to and so I just left that classroom altogether. Like, they kicked me out for the whole year. So, I didn’t complete Year 11 when I was supposed to so that was sort of like, “what was the point?” (Participant 4).

My Dean tried to tell me to take my jacket off when it was raining... [he] stood me down from there and I just never went back... (Participant 8).

Difficulties of concentrating in class as a result of classroom noise and other distractions arose as a factor that influenced participants’ behaviour in class and their ability to engage fully in their learning:

I could just never ever concentrate around other people aye (Participant 6).

Couldn't focus too much (Participant 12).

Too many people in the class at school isn't working for me, too much noise and everything (Participant 14).

Class size or the ratio of teachers to students was discussed as a factor that exacerbated participants’ difficulties related to concentrating in class. However, class size was also seen as a factor that impeded their teacher’s ability to manage their classrooms and effectively meet the learning and behavioural needs of all the students in their class:

You have one teacher for 30-something students and then you have a time limit or a frame when you have to finish your work (Participant 5).

I never used to get help from the teachers, they were just [there for] the really good students they wouldn't help everyone else (Participant 9).

One participant was of the view that the difficulties they observed regarding a teacher's management of the classroom and their students was the result of a lack of appropriate training:

[Teachers] go through so much training before they can become a teacher, and that's just the learning side of it... [they] are alright with the learning part, but when it comes to a problem they like don't know what to do (Participant 14).

4.1.2.2 Classroom learning

Classroom learning concerns participants' experiences of learning in the classroom that influenced their desire to learn and the perceived benefits to be gained from their learning. What they were learning, how it was being taught, and the relevancy of what they were learning for later in their lives influenced participants' perceptions of the importance of their learning and the importance of school qualifications:

You don't wanna like make it boring. Like, school's so boring (Participant 4).

Like in English, most of the words that we're learning, I'm never going to use. Most of them I don't remember (Participant 1).

Like... NCEA, the teachers make you think that NCEA, not having it is the end of your life... when you apply for a job they [employers] look at what you're doing now. The qualifications that you have, not your NCEA... like [name of sector], you don't need any NCEA for it (Participant 1).

The pressure felt by participants to 'pass', despite the personal and learning difficulties many of them faced, presented challenges that influenced their behaviours towards their learning:

And they're [the teachers] like you've got to pass at school (Participant 8).

At school they like put it on... you [to pass], it's like not even a can't or maybe sort of thing just have to (Participant 7).

Workloads, or the pace at which participants were required to complete school work, was also cited as a challenge for some participants. One participant cited her workload from school and the lack of support for her to complete her work as a factor that made classroom life difficult for her:

I can't handle too much work, and like they would always be like finishing something, and I'd go through it and they'd be like oh and do this, and then I want this done by this date and this date, and I couldn't handle that because it was too much work... I had so much other homework as well from all the other classes, they'd give you a big lecture about how you have to do it, and [I'd] say well I've got this all other homework they'd [the teachers] say well that's not my problem I'm not in that class (Participant 14).

For one participant with dyslexia, the difficulty he experienced trying to keep up with his peers and not being able to do so was frustrating, impacting negatively on his behaviour in class:

The biggest thing that gets me at school, is they all sit down and they do all work together, some people aren't as fast as each other... everyone would have finished and they already moved onto the next thing, I was only finished half way there, I only had half the words down because I didn't match it up, I could never do it yeah it was always too fast for me because I'm dyslexic... I was always too slow, I never ever done all the work and I always got in trouble for always being behind, it wasn't my fault they were moving too fast (Participant 10).

This participant felt he was capable of doing the work, but if and when he needed help to progress his work, he did not feel he was supported:

I could easily do the work but it was just that if I was stuck on it [the work] they refused to help, and they'd say "no you've got to figure it out yourself" (Participant 10).

4.1.2.3 Teacher engagement

Teacher engagement concerns the ways teachers interacted with participants in the classroom that influenced participants' desire to attend class, and the level of engagement in classroom learning activities while they were there. Several participants felt that the authoritarian nature of teachers and the child-like way in which teachers treated them adversely affected their classroom experiences:

They just treat you like you're a little kid even when you're like you know Year 13 and when you're like 17 or 16 or whatever (Participant 7).

She [the teacher] tried to treat you like kids (Participant 9).

They think they deserve your respect when really you have to [earn it]... They [the teachers] don't treat you like you should be treated. It's like they're superior to you (Participant 4).

That's the one thing that gets me when they say, "I'm an adult. I'm above you. You have to respect me" (Participant 1).

One participant was of the view that respect in any relationship, including that between a teacher and their students, should be mutually reciprocal and not just one way:

Just because they're older than you, does not mean you have to respect them whatsoever. Cos, if they can't then why should you respect someone that's treating you like shit? (Participant 4).

The propensity of teachers to spend more time with some students in class and not others, and the effects of such differential treatment in class, was observed by participants:

So they go to the good students, and help them won't even bother helping us that's why we play up in class, because they won't help us, we'll just get detention... and anything wrong in the class it was my fault, I was you know the loud one, always talking not doing my work because he wouldn't [help] me, so I used to do something to piss him off because he was pissing me off... I know some students aye, some that play up because they're not getting the help they need from the teacher, I mean isn't that why the teachers get paid to help everyone not just certain students (Participant 9).

Such differential treatment was not limited to learning tasks, but was also prevalent in the ways teachers dealt with conflicts and physical altercations between students in the classroom:

They come and then they only hear one side of the story because someone's already gone and told them first, so then they come here and then they're like well I've heard this story so... there's no proof, we haven't seen it so, we only seen you hit this person (Participant 11).

Like say someone hit you, and then you hit them back... they [the teachers] don't believe what you're saying... that fella would get away with it but I'd be the bad guy... if they did something and I did the exact same something, they would get away with it but I wouldn't because it's me (Participant 10).

One participant felt that this differential treatment stemmed from their initial misbehaviours that had a lasting impact on teachers:

Say you do something once wrong... my second week of college I got into a fight, and I got stood down but after that... anyone that hit me or done anything, they [the teachers] wouldn't believe me because you know, I've already done something wrong (Participant 10).

Differential treatment of participants extended beyond the classroom into other aspects of school life, such as break times, or when they were in what was referred to as the 'withdrawal room':

There'd be a group of us and we would all go down, walk down to Maccas every lunchtime whatever get our lunch, no one ever got stood down, they walked in but when I did I got stood down... they didn't get kicked out nothing I got a stand-down for it... And they get away with everything but say if they did something and I did the exact same something, they would get away with it but I wouldn't because it's me (Participant 10).

Yeah because like when they used to send me to the withdrawal room, the teachers in there they'll like talk down to you all the time... [or] they wouldn't even like talk to you [at all] (Participant 14).

For one participant, differential treatment extended even into her personal life at home:

Everything that went wrong in that area was our fault, she'd blame us or come pay a visit [to] us [at home] just around the corner [from the school] (Participant 9).

Despite the frequency with which participants spoke of negative experiences in the classroom, several participants were quick to point out positive experiences with teachers too:

I'm dyslexic and my teacher was like dyslexic when he was younger... he said to me I was exactly like him, so he purposefully like he would sit down, my desk was right next to him and he would help me because he knew, he knew what it was like... there are some good teachers (Participant 10).

Don't get me wrong there are some pretty good teachers out there, like some awesome as teachers (Participant 11).

Participant responses regarding classroom factors that existed for them during their time at school, and that contributed to their DE included the classroom environment, classroom learning and student engagement. These aspects served to form and strengthen the theme of classroom factors, as a valid interpretation of the meaning participants made of their lived experiences of DE. I will now turn to the school factors participants identified as contributing to their DE.

4.1.3 Reflections on school factors

The participants' reflections on school factors that contributed to their DE were to do with the school culture, practices and processes.

4.1.3.1 School culture

School culture concerns the way in which schools perceive, respond to and manage students' non-compliance, which then informs the ways in which schools approach the discipline of student non-compliance. The reactions of staff to their behaviours and actions discussed by participants were similar, regardless of them being from different schools:

School didn't want me... and that's the end of it... when I got stood down... I didn't know what to do [or] where to go... I had nothing (Participant 10).

They fully just told me to get the fuck out. They were just like "nah, leave" (Participant 4).

I just got caught doing things I shouldn't have been doing... they encouraged me to leave and showed me every single opportunity that I had to leave and ways that I could leave (Participant 1).

A culture of exclusion for non-compliance was also evident in one participant's experience of missing important assessments, as a result of her isolation to in-school stand-down:

I missed out on three of my assessments because I was on in-school stand-down (Participant 4).

When asked why this participant could not do her assessments, particularly given she was physically at school, her reply further evidenced her school's culture towards non-compliance, despite the lasting impacts of such inflexibility on a student's learning and achievement:

Because they're punishing you because you're stood down. You were doing nothing in that room (Participant 4).

One participant expressed how he thought excluding students was easier for schools than addressing the incident or behaviour that led to their DE. He felt that schools did not really care:

It's easier for them [the school] to stand you down, they don't want to sit there and talk about it, they reject, it's easier, if you do something wrong maybe if you got into a fight and you didn't even start it, you were just defending yourself they would still stand you down, they don't care, they don't want to hear the story they just want to stand you down, they can't be bothered [dealing] with it (Participant 10).

Several participants discussed how they made attempts to return to school after they were permanently excluded, only to experience further rejection:

You've got exclusion, you can't come into the school (Participant 8).

I tried to get back into [name of school], they wouldn't let me back (Participant 7).

If I could go back to school I would... most schools won't take me now (Participant 4).

School rules were also seen as problematic for participants. Participants did not have an issue with the presence of school rules, rather their issue was with the values and beliefs the rules attempted to uphold, which were often in conflict with participants' values and beliefs:

[You have] got to have your tats covered ... that's pretty hard those sort of rules trying to make you change (Participant 8).

Yeah, I just don't get like teachers' standards and school standards. Like, having your hair a different colour isn't going to change your grade... they [the school] said "If God wanted you to have pink hair then you would have it"... If I believed in God I would really put these things into consideration (Participant 1).

[You] get detention for the wrong socks (Participant 6).

For PE you have to take the correct shorts... can't have more than two piercings (Participant 9).

Piercings... I got told I was not allowed to flip this [nose piercing] up, I had to take it out completely... when you flip it up you can't see it whatsoever... and my tongue bar, I had to take that out (Participant 4).

School rules about items of uniform, piercings and hair colour seemed somewhat contradictory, given schools were willing to make concessions for other physical alterations:

But you're allowed to wear makeup and its stupid (Participant 5).

Personal support that was provided to participants tended to centre on counselling which some participants felt was helpful. However, others felt counselling could be unhelpful, particularly if the counsellor was ill-equipped to manage the situation, if the support provided seemed disingenuous, or if participants' experiences of counselling seemed fragmented:

They tried the counsellor but she could only do so much, it was kind of not for her to take on... she got CYFS involved... they [the school] made me go back [home], and then when they [school staff] left, she [the mother] started beating me up because she [the mother] said it was my fault that CYFS got involved (Participant 14).

Counsellors piss me off... I had one counsellor right, and then you get referred to so many, and it's like you're telling your problems to so many people, are they even going to keep it confidential? (Participant 8).

It's like they [the counsellor] don't even bother listening... but they're getting paid (Participant 9).

One participant, for whom truancy, drug abuse, bullying and violence at school were reoccurring problems, discussed how one school had tried to set up support for him, which he resisted, although he was not sure why:

I may have had like them send in different people and stuff like that that talked to me to do with all the fighting and stuff, and why I'm having so bad troubles at school, I just never really listened... everything was set up for me basically (Participant 7).

One participant who did receive learning support in the form of a teacher's aide felt that the support was not as helpful as she thought it would be, which exacerbated the difficulties she was already experiencing at school:

They gave me a teacher aide but she was always on my case about oh you shouldn't be looking at that person... oh you need to do the work, you have to hurry up and finish it, you need to do this and I would say well I don't understand or something like that, and she'll go "why [are] you not doing your work", I'd say "because I don't understand it"... she was there to be helpful but she was just nagging me, nagging me she was going to help (Participant 14).

Two participants involved in this study spoke of their learning disabilities, one of whom received a formal diagnosis of dyslexia and Irlen Syndrome, and the other a self-proclaimed non-reader. Neither were provided supplementary learning support by the schools they were attending at the time, even though one participant had asked:

I went to a hospital and had it all done [formal diagnostic assessment], the schools knew about it and they wouldn't give me a teacher aide, they refused to give me a teacher aide (Participant 10).

Participants shared some aspects of their schools that they had found helpful. These included support from someone safe they could go to, or support through the provision of a safe place, both of which helped them to feel safe from the the bullying behaviours of other students, or that helped keep other students safe from them:

There was this green room that we all got to sit in like when we couldn't handle situations (Participant 4).

He [the counsellor] was a hard supporter. He used to take me out every Wednesday and get me Maccas. He was the hard bro (Participant 4).

I wouldn't have gotten kicked out of that class because I went to my counsellor... on Friday's I'd go for... lunch. They'd pull me in and ask how my week was going (Participant 8).

4.1.3.2 School practices and processes

School practices and processes concern the ways in which schools responded to and managed participants' behaviours and actions, and the decision-making process that preceded their DE. Participants' experiences of DE practices and processes varied according to their schools, but the themes of isolation and punitive retribution were common to all schools. For some participants this involved menial tasks such as picking up rubbish during breaks, or when their peers had returned to class, for others it meant their removal from their regular classroom:

In [name of school] you've got in-school stand-downs. You're often in the contract room... you don't even get a lunch time. You weren't allowed out of that room. You weren't allowed to use your phone. You couldn't speak. But, you'd spend days there in school stand-down... they gave you [the same] work to do over and over again (Participant 4).

They chuck you in a room and you write lines all day (Participant 10).

I was in the naughtiest class in high school, they called it an opportunity room (Participant 7).

During their time in isolation from their peers and day-to-day school life, participants were required to sit in silence and often complete work, which they had refused to do in class, which for several participants seemed nonsensical:

So they [the teacher in the withdrawal room] would make you sit down and do the work, that's the reason why you're in there because you don't [want to do the work] (Participant 14).

Especially if they're [the students] being naughty in class they obviously don't want to do work (Participant 5).

Sending them to the withdrawal room to do the work, they're still not going to do it [the work] (Participant 12).

For one participant, the room to which she was often sent for in-school stand-down was cold during the winter. Knowledge of her inevitable removal from class to this room meant she would turn on the heater every morning anticipating that she would be sent there for her non-compliance:

Yeah, every morning I'd go, in winter, I'd turn the heaters on cos I'd know I'd end up in that room every day. So we were freezing... It was like on the top of a second storey building, in the very corner. It was freezing at lunch times (Participant 4).

The visual appearance of the withdrawal room was also mentioned by another participant:

It was like always cold in the rooms... heaps of tagging around the walls (Participant 11).

For one participant, his first experience of TDE led directly to his withdrawal from school altogether:

Already been stood down once, I just signed out myself (Participant 12).

Participants' experiences of DE involved their first and only encounters with the school board of trustees, and introduced them to systems of punitive retribution:

Yeah I think I did go up to the board of trustees a few times, and I was quite bad still... I went up to the board of trustees a few times with my parents and stuff (Participant 7).

I went up to the board of trustees, [they] told me to stand-down and it wasn't even a stand-down... [I got] excluded (Participant 8).

The way in which incidences were investigated by the school was also discussed by participants. It was important to participants that if a school was to exclude a student for alleged non-

compliance, that the school was sure they had the right person and the full story before disciplinary decisions were made and punishment administered:

The amount of times that I would be blamed for something, it was the other person that started it... that fella would get away with it but I'd be the bad guy (Participant 10).

They [the teachers] come and then they only hear one side of the story because someone's already gone and told them first, so then they come here and then they're like "well I've heard this story" (Participant 11).

Despite their experiences of DE for non-compliance and truancy, participants did not see DE as effective in changing or deterring these behaviours:

They [the students] grow up to be worse and they get to adulthood and they just don't learn (Participant 11).

For some, being excluded from school and sent home was unfortunately preferable to being at school:

Like you [the school] sending me home is not gonna do anything cos all I'm gonna do is go back to bed... Like suspending you, what's the point in that? Cos, you go home and you just stay home... Yeah [you] think about what you've done but then you think, "Fuck yeah, I'm just getting free holidays from acting naughty"... I'd rather be at home (Participant 4).

One participant disclosed how his DE led to his involvement with both the Police and the criminal justice system:

After I got kicked out of school nothing to look forward to there... after that I had nothing to do so I just started doing some illegal stuff, and got put on the bracelet (Participant 8).

Despite feeling like DE was ineffective, one participant did express a deep remorse for the non-compliance that had led to her DE, and how it left her feeling like her time at school was not much to be proud of:

I feel like getting kicked out now it's kind of like, you're cool and your bad arse because you're doing it. That's not the way it should be because you're not [bad arse]... Cringe. Yeah, like, I don't have much to look back on (Participant 1).

4.2 Summary

Thematic analysis of the three focus group interviews explored participants' reflections on their DE experiences. This analysis revealed that a combination of personal factors, classroom factors and school factors had contributed to their DE.

Personal factors such as drug use and abuse, the challenges of meeting the costs of schooling, violence, peer pressure and the difficulties of engaging with others, their learning and behavioural difficulties had contributed to their DE. The impacts of these personal factors were exacerbated by their difficulties in making socially acceptable decisions and behaving in socially acceptable ways, feelings of remorse and negative self-perception, and resistance to help even when it was offered. Classroom factors related to the challenges faced by participants in the classroom and in their engagements and interactions with teachers and their peers. Classroom factors that contributed to participants' DE included their resistance to school authority and those who worked for them, the difficulties in concentrating and learning in overcrowded and poorly-managed classrooms, boredom with their learning, the pressure to pass, and the challenges in managing their learning workloads. How they were perceived and treated by their teachers was also seen as contributing factor, particularly when they were perceived and treated differently to their well-behaving peers. School factors that contributed to participants' DE included rigid and inflexible school rules, ineffective or absent school support systems, negative attitudes of schools towards non-compliant students, poor investigation processes, and the ineffectiveness of DE in remediating or deterring non-compliant behaviours.

The seldom heard voices of young people with lived experience of DE reveals unique insights into their experiences and perceptions of DE. Their voices highlight factors that they felt influenced their behaviours and actions at school, and allow a better understanding of how participants felt those

factors contributed to their DE. Further interpretation and understanding of the meaning of these factors are detailed in the following discussion in the context of retroactive reflections, revealing insights into possibilities for the prevention of DE.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.0 Introduction

Research regarding the prevention of DE has increased over the last few decades, but there is a dearth of research that considers the prevention of DE from the perspective of young people with lived experience of DE. Taking the view that to understand the meaning given to conscious experiences of participants emerges from an interpretation of their recollections of those experiences (Crotty, 1998), and that we cannot understand the experiences of others without collecting and interpreting them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003), the current study sought to explore the perceptions of young people with lived experience of DE to better understand how they perceived the prevention of DE. Specifically, this study sought to better understand the factors participants felt contributed to their DE, and how they thought those factors could be mitigated to prevent DE. This study also sought to determine who participants thought should be involved in the prevention of DE, and how they should be involved. Lastly, this study aimed to understand how the learning needs of students at risk of DE from school could be better met.

Participants' reflections revealed school, classroom and personal factors that influenced their desire and ability to attend school and their behaviour whilst there. However, the lapse in time since their DE meant that they were able to reflect retrospectively on their lived experiences of DE (van Manen, Higgins, van der Riet, 2016). And while retrospective reflection is complex and cannot be attributed to a discrete source or set of sources, (Gurwitsch, 1973) it enabled the emergence of insightful possibilities – possibilities that could have prevented their DE as well as possibilities for preventing DE of other at-risk students. The knowledge gained from participants in this study provides potential areas of focus for schools, teachers and policy-makers interested in developing innovative approaches to preventing DE. In the following sections the theme of *possibility* is briefly defined followed by discussions of each sub-theme for insights into: possibilities for school culture and systems, and possibilities for classrooms, pedagogy and teaching. This chapter concludes with implications, future directions, and limitations of the study.

5.1 Insights into possibilities

The definition of *possibility* used in the discussion that follows relies on what Langer (2009) defines as a psychological state where individuals focus more on what might be, rather than a description of what is, where “we search for the answer to how to improve, not merely to adjust” (p. 15). This definition fits well with the intent of this study. Participants' experiences of DE (what is) and

factors they considered had the potential to prevent their DE (what could be) enables a better understanding of potential changes or improvements that could prevent the DE of other at-risk students in future. As human beings, possibility or ‘what could be’ requires that we “place our mind in a different context” (Langer, 1989, p. 177), and we make changes to the way we think, talk and behave, but also that we make a choice to realise our potential (Langer, 2009). The discussion that follows highlights how when young people with lived experience of DE are asked a prevention-focused research question about their lived experiences it re-contextualises how they think, talk and behave regarding that experience. A prevention-focused question also enables participants to reconceptualise the value of their voice in the discussion about phenomena such as preventing DE. In essence, including the voices of those who have been excluded from school transforms participants’ stories about *what was* into powerful narratives about *what could be*, facilitating their realisation of their own potential to inform the prevention of DE.

5.1.1 Possibilities for school culture and systems

Participants’ reflections on school factors (what was) revealed insights into possibilities (what could be) for school culture and school systems that could contribute to the prevention of DE and better meet the learning needs of at-risk students. These insights included changes or improvements to how schools include at-risk students and how schools support them.

5.1.1.1 Including at-risk students

School culture concerns the ‘reality’ of a social organisation such as a school (Stoll, 1999). Stoll (1999) is of the view that how that reality is constructed, embodied, expressed and affirmed is what contributes to the complexities of school culture. However, this complexity, or what makes schools “situationally unique” (Beare, Caldwell, Millikan, 1989), also provides schools with opportunities to construct, embody, express and affirm a school culture unique to the core values, beliefs and principles important to the school. It also provides schools with opportunities to ensure the culture, core values, beliefs and principles better reflect the needs of all its students, including those at risk of DE. As such, school culture, particularly that concerning how student non-compliance is perceived, responded to and managed, has a crucial role to play in minimising non-compliance, and in preventing DE (Munn, Lloyd, & Cullen, 2000; Osler, 2000; Parsons, 2005). School culture was considered important to participants’ sense of belonging and connectedness to their school. Despite acknowledgement of their non-compliance, it was important to participants that they felt wanted and welcomed by their schools, and that their school membership was valued by those around them.

Participants felt that a school culture that was non-judgmental and embracing of the challenges they faced, and those they brought with them to school, was a school culture that could contribute to the prevention of DE: “maybe my school could have listened more instead of just saying ‘oh the trouble kid’” (Participant 14). Listening to the voices of students and not judging them negatively are some of the fundamental qualities of inclusive schools (McMaster, 2012; 2014). It is also a quality of schools that understand the importance of a student’s sense of membership in their school (Towl, 2014). Schools that adopt and promote philosophies of inclusion, belongingness and school membership are schools that have been shown to respond to and manage challenging students in ways that promote positive and sustainable behaviour change amongst at-risk students (Munn, Lloyd, & Cullen, 2000; Towl, 2014). Some suggest, however, that the shift in school culture required to improve the inclusion, belongingness and school membership of at-risk students will be radical (Ekstrand, 2015; Osterman, 2000), or beyond the will or capacity of many schools (Basic, Balaz, Uzelac and Jugovac, 1997). However, participants’ insights suggest that schools that choose not to make changes to school culture to improve the inclusion, belongingness and membership of at-risk students are schools that will likely perpetuate school factors that have been identified as problematic in reducing disruptive behaviours and in preventing DE (Munn, Lloyd, & Cullen, 2000; Towl, 2014).

Culture was also considered important in the investigations of incidents at school. Guidelines produced by the MoE (2009a; 2009b) clearly emphasise the need for investigations that are fair and thorough, that involve the student in question, and that all investigations are well documented to ensure a well-informed and justifiable decision to exclude a student. However, participants repeatedly mentioned that they were often reprimanded or excluded for things they had not done, or for incidents in which they were not the only perpetrators. Participants felt this was because they were seen by school staff as problematic, and often as a result of previous non-compliance. This perceived injustice negatively influenced participants’ attitudes towards the investigation process in general, but as argued by Partington (2001), also negatively influenced subsequent behaviours at school. Participants emphasised the importance of those responsible for investigating incidents doing so in a way that was non-judgemental and fair before a decision was made to discipline or exclude a student for that incident: “don’t jump to conclusions, I swear like the amount of times that I would be blamed for something [and] it was the other person that started it” (Participant 10). This highlights the importance of pursuing a more considerate approach where students’ voices are included and not ignored prior to taking disciplinary action to ensure the right students are reprimanded for the right reasons, and to avoid further non-compliance as a result of feeling unfairly reprimanded (Munn and Lloyd, 2005, Partington, 2001; Towl, 2014).

Having schools that better reflected the demographics of at-risk students was also advanced by participants as important for preventing DE and for better meeting the learning needs of at-risk students. Participants were of the view this could be achieved through better diversification amongst school staff. As previously stated, statistics show that Māori students in New Zealand schools experience DE at rates twice that of their Pasifika counterparts, and more than three times that of their European/Pakeha counterparts (MoE, 2015a). Statistics also show that 79% of secondary school teachers in New Zealand identify as European/Pakeha, while only 8% identify as Māori (MoE, 2005). This study does not attempt to draw inferences between the ethnicity of teachers, the ethnicity of the students who experience DE and the over-representation of Māori in statistics regarding DE. However, the response of one Māori participant, and the unanimous agreement of other Māori participants in the same FG, suggests that some participants saw increased numbers of Māori teachers in schools as a potential way that DE of Māori students could be prevented: “[Schools] need more Māori teachers... because all my schools I went to it was all other races, but not Māori” (Participant 9). This finding suggests that for Māori students, in particular, DE may be seen as racially driven. This finding is consistent with research regarding deficit perceptions of some teachers towards Māori students and the negative impacts of these perceptions on Māori student achievement and Māori student perceptions of self-worth (Alton-Lee, 2003; Bishop, Berryman, Powell & Teddy, 2007; Turner, Rubie-Davies, & Webber, 2015), as well as student behaviours and decision-making processes (Hill & Brown, 2013). Conversely, the benefits of teachers of minority ethnicity for minority student achievement and well-being is consistent with work by Ladson-Billings (1994), Gordon (2002), and Dee (2005). The effects of teachers of minority ethnicity as a means to prevent the DE of minority students were not identified in the literature reviewed in this study, pointing to a need for research in this area. Given statistics concerning the ethnicities of teachers in NZ schools, the challenges in recruiting more Māori teachers as a means by which to prevent the DE of at-risk students as suggested by participant 9 are immense. However, the promise shown by improvements to the cultural responsiveness of non-Māori teachers to their Māori students for Māori student retention and achievement (Bishop et al., 2009; Cavanagh, 2007; 2009; Cavanagh et al., 2012; Macfarlane, Glynn, Cavanagh and Bateman, 2007; Sleeter, 2011), and pre-service and in-service teacher training in culturally responsive pedagogy, may provide benefits for preventing the DE of Māori students. Further research is required to understand the impacts of culturally responsive pedagogy on rates of DE, and perhaps not just for Māori students, but also Pasifika students who are also over-represented in statistics concerning DE.

School culture also significantly influences the school environment (Munn, Cullen, Johnstone & Lloyd, 2001). Jull (2008) posited that a school environment should be responsive and reflexive to all students to improve the compatibility of schools to their student population. A school with a culture where all students, irrespective of the challenges they face and those they bring with them to school, are welcomed and included is more likely to provide a school environment conducive to the culture described by Jull (Munn et al., 2001). Participants considered the school environment as central to preventing many of the behaviours and actions of students that led to their DE, and thus as key to preventing DE. In terms of school environment, participants discussed extensively the issues of bullying and violence during their time at school, and the relationship between their experiences of these phenomena and their eventual DE. Contrary to the high rates of DE for violence against other students, or staff, both in NZ (MoE 2015a) and abroad (Department of Education, n.d; Department of Education, 2013; Scottish Government, 2015), participants revealed the extent to which they themselves were victims of violence and bullying at school. Many of the violent acts for which participants experienced DE resulted from what they viewed as self-defence or as retaliatory to other students' violence towards them. Participants also felt some of their violent behaviour at school arose from negative peer pressure to behave in a violent manner. Several participants also reported the threat of violence to them if they complained to school staff about being bullied and physically attacked. And while participants recognised their role in violence at school, both as victims and perpetrators, they identified that having a safer school environment would have been helpful for them: "someone in school like maybe like one classroom where there's a teacher and he sits there, and like the students are not doing well at school they should sit in that classroom and work in that classroom with that person... if they're getting bullied they should have their own area where they can go and work with a teacher" (Participant 10). The benefits of safe places or 'sanctuaries' within a school as a means to prevent DE is consistent with the work of Hallam and Castle (2001) and more recently Spiegel (2017). However, participants' responses suggest that the provision of such sanctuaries for students at risk of DE should be a systemic support system, with which at-risk students can engage as and when the need arises, and not because they have been directed or referred there by school staff. Participants' responses also suggested that these sanctuaries be provided for as part of the regular school community, and not as units or centres that are physically or structurally separate from their regular school environment, like the sanctuaries studied by Hallam and Castle (2001) and Spiegel (2017).

5.1.1.2 Supporting at-risk students

While a welcoming school culture and school environment were seen by participants as vital to preventing DE by these participants, the focus of FG discussions on *support* as a form of prevention suggests that school support systems could also have a key role to play. School-based support systems that are more responsive, sustainable and designed specifically to meet the unique needs of at-risk students have been shown to reduce DEs (Hallam and Castle, 2001; Hill and Brown, 2013; Lloyd, Stead and Kendrick, 2003). Support that was relevant to their circumstances, practical, meaningful and sustained is support participants thought could have helped to prevent their DE: “truancy officers, they make sure that you’re going to school, like they’ll pick you up” (Participant 4), “If they cared they’d constantly come back and you know catch up with you” (Participant 9). These findings also support work by Ekstrand (2015), and Jacob and Ludwig (2009), regarding the need for effective school support systems and support personnel capable of responding to the unique needs of students, particularly those already living with the adverse effects of marginalisation and disadvantage. Furthermore participants’ responses also suggest that school support systems may also need to help them address some of the practical day-to-day challenges they face, such as physically getting to and from school, in addition to addressing immediate behavioural issues to retain them in school.

The literature concerning DE and the prevention of DE tends to focus on addressing the behaviours and actions of students that lead to DE such as truancy, violence and disruption to others (Ekstrand, 2015). Several participants in this study, however, talked specifically about the support that was needed to address learning difficulties that often led to disruptive behaviours or disengagement from their learning: “I’ve got shit eyes [from Irlen Syndrome]. If I had glasses I probably would concentrate more” (Participant 10). The insight that glasses, particularly those with coloured overlays designed for those with vision impairments, can benefit the learning of those with both dyslexia and Irlen Syndrome is consistent with work by Evans et al. (1999). However, for students, particularly those who require financial support to pay for specialist equipment to improve their learning, and for those already challenged by truancy, disruptive behaviours and DE, meeting the eligibility criteria and completing the application process for assistive technologies (MoE, 2017c) may present immense barriers. Regardless, participants’ responses demonstrate an awareness of what they think is necessary to support their learning. Listening to the voices of at-risk students concerning their unique and specific learning needs could enable schools to better understand the learning support requirements of these students, which may in turn help to target limited resources to these ends. Such targeting of resources and efforts for at-risk students may prove to be more efficient and more effective in meeting their self-identified or formally diagnosed learning support needs, which may in turn prevent behaviours that contribute to their DE.

As part of school support systems, participants felt that schools have a responsibility to assist in providing well-planned transition support to those at-risk students by being proactive and positive, rather than punitive and excluding them. “If colleges know and teachers know you’re not doing good at college, they should refer you, they should help you to push you into something, into a course... they should at least have something [planned]” (Participant 10). Participants also offered up alternatives they thought would be suitable which ranged from moving to a new school: “start afresh when you go to a new school, you start fresh, no one knows you, [and] you’re in a different place” (Participant 10), to home-schooling: “home school would have probably worked...” (Participant 11), to leaving school altogether: “the [YGFF] course that I’ve done” (Participant 13), “straight up [YGFF] courses” (Participant 7). Using alternative learning options as a way to prevent DE is consistent with work concerning MMs or re-enrolment of at-risk students in a different school (Harris, Vincent, Thomson, & Toalster, 2006; 2007; Bagley & Hallam, 2016), and that concerning the engagement of at-risk students in post-compulsory education and training schemes (Gordon et al., 2014; Higgins, 2013). However, the perceived benefits of MMs and post-compulsory education and training must be considered in light of criticisms of these alternatives that problematise students and do not address school-related factors (Parffrey, 1994), and ignore the difficulties for these students of re-establishing themselves in a new learning environment (Towl, 2014). The literature concerning the merits of home-schooling as a means by which to prevent DE was not evident in the literature reviewed during this study, and highlights an opportunity for further investigation. Notwithstanding the dearth of evidence regarding the efficacy of home-schooling for preventing DE, the studies identified here supported participants’ perspectives that alternative learning options are viable alternatives to DE. This is of course as long as those alternatives are not created in the image of the school from which students at risk of DE have, for whatever reason, already left behind (Higgins, 2013).

It is to be noted that none of the participant’s suggestions for preventing DE referred to the current prevention interventions reviewed in this study (e.g. PB4L, Alternative Education, restorative justice). The reasons for this were not determined in this study, however if students at risk of DE are not engaged in interventions to prevent DE, it is impossible for them to benefit from those interventions. Determining why at-risk students are not engaging with existing provisions may help us to better understand the changes or improvements necessary to increase their engagement. It is also to be noted that all of the participants’ suggestions for preventing DE involved leaving school, even if only to start at another school. This finding is significant as this fatalistic thinking suggests that many young people at risk of DE for reasons evident in this study (e.g. school culture and environment, less positive relationships with school staff, school management policies and classroom practices), may as argued by Strathdee (2013) feel psychologically excluded much earlier than their DE.

The planned and supported exit of students from school is consistent with the literature that highlights the benefits of school-based career advice for positive post-schooling transitions (Higgins & Nairn, 2006; Furlong & Cartmel, 2007; Leach & Zepke, 2005; White & Wyn, 2013), but contrasts with prevention literature that is preoccupied with the retention or re-engagement of students in mainstream schools (Ekstrand, 2015; Hill & Brown, 2013; Sanders, Munford & Thimasarn-Anwar, 2015; Slee, 2011). This finding also contrasts with education policy which positions schools and compulsory schooling as the main means by which young people are to be educated (at least until the age of 16) (Education Act, 1989; Ministry of Education, 2009a).

Participants' reflections on personal factors that existed for them during their time at school revealed numerous complex and multi-faceted challenges and difficulties for them that impacted on their desire and ability to attend school, and that negatively affected their behaviour and actions while they were there. Despite the challenges they faced, participants also advanced changes or improvements they could have made to prevent their DE. They included attendance: "attendance [to school]" (Participant 1), "just showing up [to school] basically" (Participant 4), better management of negative peer influences: "don't just join in stuff because your friends will... because they can also bring you down... do something that is better for you and like that goes with your interests" (Participant 12), and avoiding drug use: "stop smoking drugs, stop smoking the crack" (Participant 12). However, participants were unable to transform their awareness into actions that could have prevented their DE. Elkind (1967; 1985) suggested this inability could be due to egocentrism or a young person's failure to "differentiate between the objects toward which the thoughts of others are directed and those which are the focus of his own concern" (Elkind, 1967, p. 1029), or because of what Fischhoff (1995) referred to as their lack of skills and dispositions required to make optimal decisions. However, there also exists evidence to suggest that young people are able to reflect upon their shortcomings, and that they do possess the aptitude for change and improvement (Gibbons, et al., 1985; Higgins, 1990; Moorefield, 2005; Peterson & Skiba, 2001; Singh, 2015; Wicklund, 1975). This is evident particularly in research concerning adolescent developmental psychology (Steinberg, Cauffman, Woolard, Graham & Banich, 2009), adolescent self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and student voice (Levin, 2000; Mitra, 2008; Mitra & Gross, 2009; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Rudduck, Day & Wallace, 1997; Thorkildsen, 1994). Regardless, Peterson and Skiba (2001) and Moorefield (2005) have highlighted how students who better understand the reasons for their non-compliance are better placed to avoid re-occurrences of similar non-compliance in future. With adequate support from schools to achieve such understanding, students at risk will be better placed to recognise triggers to non-compliance and take proactive steps to resist non-compliant behaviours.

5.1.1.3 Summary

Participants' insights into possibilities for the prevention of DE and better meeting the learning needs of at-risk students (what could be) for school culture and school systems revealed a number of changes or improvements required to how schools include at-risk students and how schools support them. Changes or improvements to how schools include at-risk students concern school policies and practices that: promote inclusion, belongingness and school membership; ensure fair and non-judgemental investigation of allegations of non-compliance; strive for diversification of staff to better reflect the at-risk student population; and provide safe places or sanctuaries for use by at-risk students. Changes or improvements to how schools support at-risk students concern school support systems that are more responsive, relevant to need, sustained and meaningful.

5.1.2 Possibilities for classrooms, teachers and pedagogy

Participants' reflections on classroom factors (what was) revealed insights into possibilities (what could be) for classrooms, teachers and pedagogy that could contribute to the prevention of DE and better meet the learning needs of at-risk students. These insights included changes or improvements to how teachers respond to, manage and engage with at-risk students, and how and what they are taught.

5.1.2.1 Responding to, managing and engaging with at-risk students

The skill of teachers in effectively managing the classroom in ways that de-escalate disruption or conflict was considered important in preventing DE. However, participants discussed teacher conduct to the contrary, and attributed this to a lack of adequate training of teachers to do so: "I think they need to have a side of it [teacher training] where they can learn to deal with the different problems and different students before they can go into schools" (Participant 14). Arthur-Kelly, et al. (2013), and Gazeley and Dunne (2013), observe that training on inclusive and reflective practice is where pre-service teachers acquire the skills and dispositions required to shift pre-existing negative perceptions of some students (particularly of students who are different from themselves) as disruptive and problematic to perceptions of those same students as co-collaborators in active problem solving in class. These researchers posit that if this content is absent from their pre-service training, as was found in their respective studies, new teachers are not as well equipped to respond

to and manage disruptive and challenging student behaviours in the classroom as they could be. Professional development programmes for in-service teachers on culturally responsive pedagogy has also shown to improve classroom management and improve achievement outcomes for vulnerable students (Alton-Lee, 2003; Hynds et al., 2016). The presence of culturally responsive training content in pre-service teacher training programmes was not established during this study, but may have the potential to provide pre-service teachers with the skills and dispositions necessary to effectively manage their pending classrooms, and prevent the DE of at-risk students.

However, participants did not solely attribute their observations of ineffective classroom management to a lack of teacher training, as they also felt class size was also a contributing factor: “I reckon if they had more teachers in the one class that would’ve helped because you’ve got one teacher for 30-something students” (Participant 5), “more teachers, more support, better outcome, there’ll be a better outcome if there’s more people to help... it’s not all their [the teachers] fault because there’s only one of them and there’s like 30 odd [students]” (Participant 11). These insights from participants clearly indicate they did not feel their classroom learning needs were being met, which often led to non-compliance and DE. This is consistent with work by Finn and Achilles (1990; 1999) and Blatchford, Baines, Kutnick, and Martin (2001), who suggest more teachers in a classroom or smaller class size supports better classroom management of student behaviours and improved student learning. However, Englehart (2011) is of the view that more effective and engaging pedagogy and more regular positive interactions between teachers and all students in their class can offset some of the negative effects of large class size. For schools where improving capacity is unrealistic, gains could be made through increasing the capability of existing staff. Investigation may be required to determine the effect of class size on rates of DE. Findings from such an investigation may help to inform classroom strategies to better support at-risk students to prevent their disengagement from and disaffection with their learning, and to reduce disruptive classroom behaviours.

Teacher willingness and desire to engage positively with participants was also discussed. While participants did recall positive engagements with some of their teachers, their reports of negative engagements were overwhelming, if their teachers engaged with them at all. Teachers play a crucial role in the development of a student’s sense of self and their learner identity (Bandura, 1993; Stoll, Fink, & Earl, 2003). As such, it is important teachers engage with at-risk students in ways that recognise them as willing and able learners, where they are treated with the dignity and respect expected of them, and where they are perceived as important and valued members of the classroom: “If they respect you then you respect them. It’s a two-way thing” (Participant 4), “yeah, the teachers need to be engaged with the students, not just the good students, they [teachers] have to get engaged... with the bad ones as well, we all want to learn you know” (Participant 9). Reasons why

teachers refrained from engaging with participants, or why actual engagements were often negative, requires investigation to identify barriers to positive teacher engagement with at-risk students. Evidence regarding the benefits of positive teacher engagements with at-risk students for increased student compliance and improved educational achievement are profound (Bishop et al., 2009; Cavanagh, 2007; Cavanagh, 2009; Cavanagh et al., 2012; Drewery, 2007; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; McCluskey et al., 2008; Pomeroy, 2002), as are the benefits of positive teacher engagements with at-risk students for preventing DE (McManus, 1995).

5.1.2.2 Teaching at-risk students

Pedagogy and learning activities that consider and reflect the interests, values and world views of all students has also been shown to positively influence student retention, student engagement and student achievement (Jagersma & Parsons, 2011; MacDonald and Marsh, 2004; Macfarlane, 2010; Rudduck & Flutter, 2000; Savage et al., 2011), and was echoed by these participants. Participants advanced that if what they learnt and how it was taught was relevant and engaging, the effects on their attendance to class and increased compliance while there could have been positive: “make school more hands on. Like instead of like write at a desk, like... not games, like activities that will actually improve your learning” (Participant 4), “ask what their interests are and then maybe work around [the things] that they’re interested in” (Participant 12). It was clear from this study that the traditional one-size-fits-all approaches to teaching and learning is no longer sufficient to meet the learning needs of all students, particularly those with more vocational proclivities and those at risk of DE. Changes to the curriculum that better reflects the interests, aspirations and ambitions of at-risk students is needed as curriculum and pedagogy can play a key role in preventing DEs.

5.1.2.3 Summary

Participants’ insights into possibilities for the prevention of DE and better meeting the learning needs of at-risk students (what could be) for classrooms, teachers and pedagogy revealed a number of changes or improvements required to how teachers respond to, manage and engage with at-risk students, and how and what they are taught. Changes or improvements to how teachers respond to, manage and engage with at-risk students requires improved classroom management skills and strengths-based perceptions of all students in their class. Changes or improvements to how and what at-risk students are taught concerns more relevant and engaging learning content and learning activities.

5.1.4 Conclusions

Participants' insights into possibilities for the prevention of DE have, and to better meet the learning needs of at-risk students in the main, agreed with much of the current literature regarding the prevention of DE. And while this is largely positive, this congruence highlights how insightful those with first-hand experience of a phenomena can be. The current state of DE in NZ may have looked very different today if someone several decades ago had asked young people at risk of, or with lived experience of, DE for their perspectives on preventing DE. Where participants' perspectives diverged from current knowledge about preventing DE, their insights revealed a number of interesting and unique avenues for further investigation for those interested in developing new ways of preventing DE. Further investigations would benefit greatly from an approach similar to that used in this study involving those with lived experience of the phenomenon of interest, as shown by the results of this study.

5.2 Implications of findings

NZ and international research relating to the prevention of DE from the perspective of young people with lived experience is sparse. Existing research on DE from the perspective of lived experience tends to focus on students' experiences of DE as a process, or DE as an outcome, from which preventative strategies are derived (Partington, 2001; Knipe et al., 2007). The implications of this preoccupation with participants' experience of the process or the outcome has meant missed opportunities to gather their unique insights into the prevention of DE, or how to better meet the learning needs of students at risk of DE. Several educational researchers have pointed to a need for prevention-focused research that includes the voices of young people with lived experience of DE to better understand their perspectives of DE, and for their insights to inform the development of innovative prevention-focused interventions (Gordon, 2001; Knipe et al., 2007; Munn & Lloyd, 2005). Te Riele (2007) has also argued that preventative efforts to reduce rates of DE should focus less on at-risk students as the problem of DE requiring address, and focus more on the school-wide promotion of diversity and inclusiveness to prevent DE. The results of this study concur with Te Riele and found that with changes or improvements to how schools include and support at-risk students, and how teachers respond to, manage, engage and teach at-risk students, the prevention of DE and schools better meeting the learning needs of at-risk students is possible. The following section discusses the

implications of these findings for preventing DE and concludes with a brief discussion of the complexities involved in preventing DE.

5.2.1 Implications for schools.

Inclusive education as advanced in education and education-related policy is education that is responsive, embraces diversity, values uniqueness, and that contributes to the full development of human personality (Ainscow, 1999; Booth, 1999; Booth & Ainscow, 1998; Clough & Corbett, 2000; Human Rights Commission, n.d; McMaster, 2012; 2014; MoE, 2014a; 2017a; UNICEF, n.d). Education policy also aims to ensure schools are safe places to teach and learn (Education Act 1989; MoE, 2009a; 2009b). An implication for schools under the current approach to ensuring schools are safe places to teach and learn is DE. Participants' perspectives on the need for schools to improve inclusiveness of at-risk students to prevent DE illuminates the difficulty for schools of prioritising and meeting the competing objectives of inclusive education and DE, and how for more than 1000 students excluded from NZ schools each year, DE prevails. However the safety, teaching and learning of at-risk students should be a priority for schools too, and as such, schools may need to re-prioritise their objectives to better include at-risk students in ways that prevents their DE.

Participants' perspectives on the need for schools to improve school support systems to prevent DE also reflects how the competing objectives of inclusive education and DE influences how schools choose to support at-risk students, if they choose to at all. Students at-risk of DE are students in need of effective support to address or manage factors that place them at-risk of DE. And while it is not the sole responsibility of schools to provide such support to at-risk students, nor to address factors that place them at-risk of DE, inclusive education is education that identifies and removes barriers to student achievement (MoE, 2015a), which I would argue includes supporting them, even if this means connecting them with support external to the school. The implications for schools to better meet the support needs of at-risk students involves the leadership, skills, relationships and resources required to effectively meet those needs. Without these, better meeting the support needs of at-risk students to prevent their DE will continue to allude many schools.

5.2.2 Implications for teachers and pedagogy.

Education and schooling, particularly for marginalised and disadvantaged students, is crucial for equipping them with the skills, dispositions and knowledge required for a more advantageous future. Teachers play a critical role in the teaching and learning process, not just by delivering

curriculum that reflects the values and interests of all students, but also through the way they relate to, interact with, advocate for and include students (Education Council, 2017). Participants' perspectives on the need for teachers to improve how they respond to, manage, engage and teach at-risk students suggests that for some, meeting the learning needs of at-risk students is challenging, particularly when those needs fall outside what they are trained to do, or what they feel confident to do. An implication of this is the perception of teachers that at-risk students are 'too hard' to teach, and consequently, teacher conduct and behaviour that reflects this perception. Strengths-based perceptions, conduct and behaviour of teachers regarding at-risk students are required to better meet the learning needs of at-risk students, and contribute to the prevention of DE.

5.2.3 The complexities involved in preventing disciplinary exclusions.

DE is a complex matter and so is its prevention. As highlighted in this study, there are numerous factors involved in the events that contribute to student non-compliance (i.e. difficulties at home, difficulties at school and intrapersonal difficulties), and there are just as many factors that contribute to the way in which non-compliance is perceived, responded to and managed by schools (i.e. school culture, teacher attitudes towards non-compliance, the efficacy and accessibility of school-based prevention policies and practices). To complicate matters further, consideration is required regarding the broader social, cultural, temporal, and spatial contexts in which DE occurs, and our inclination as a society to punish and discipline non-compliance, both in schools and in society. Consideration of these complexities is required when thinking and talking about ways to prevent DE so as to inspire vigorous debate regarding the efficacy and fidelity of DE in its current form, and the changes or improvements to school policies and practices required to prevent it. However, this is not a discussion or debate just for schools, but also one for students, parents and caregivers, teachers, community groups and policy makers. Discussing and debating the complexities of preventing DE will be challenging, however this cannot be a barrier to the advancement of this important work. Preventing the DE of at-risk students relies on these challenges being overcome.

5.2.4 Conclusions

The implications of the findings in this study are numerous and complex. Participants have pointed to changes or improvements that could possibly prevent DEs, all of which would require significant shifts in perception and purposeful action to achieve. Continuing to perceive at-risk students as problematic, and DE as a viable and appropriate solution, does little to prevent DE. Continuing to position at-risk students as defiant and non-conformist ignores broader social,

structural, systemic, cultural, economic and political factors at play. Continuing to ignore that vulnerable students are either still acquiring, or not able to acquire, the skills and knowledge to participate fully in school life in a socially acceptable manner also does nothing to help prevent DEs. Continuing to ignore the mis-match of values, beliefs and traditions of at-risk students' personal lives with that of the school is also unhelpful. Continuing to exclude the voices of vulnerable young people from discussions and debates concerning the prevention of their DE does little to promote inclusivity and inclusive education, nor does it contribute positively to the agency of those young people. And, finally, continuing to exclude the voices of at-risk students from work to prevent DE denies them the opportunity to share their unique perspectives from their unique position of lived experience, and for their insights to enhance the knowledge base about what works to prevent DE.

5.3 Future directions

This study explored the perspectives of young people with lived experience of DE regarding the prevention of DE. Given the uniqueness of considering student voices in the prevention of DE, this study revealed many avenues for further research. Many of these were a direct result of deficiencies of, or recommendations made, in the literature concerning the prevention of DE, and the rest resulted from the discussion and implications arising from this study.

One avenue of potential research revealed during this study was the need to examine how schools can better support student voice in the design, development and implementation of school policies and practices as a systemic and systematic part of school operations and school administration. As school policies and practices operationalise and put into effect the process of DE, these may serve as a good starting point for a review and redevelopment with a preventative focus. School policies and practices also reflect school culture, so if these are focused on prevention, they are then likely to influence a prevention-focused or more inclusive school culture.

Further research is also needed on the perspectives of young people with lived experience of DE from different contexts. Such research could provide points of convergence or divergence regarding how prevention of DE is perceived by young people with lived experience. Different contexts for consideration could include young people who have not engaged in post-compulsory education and training like those involved in this study, those excluded from kura kaupapa Māori or private schools, children of primary or intermediate school age, those from rural schools, and perhaps comparative research regarding the perspectives of young people excluded from high decile schools versus low decile schools. There may also be benefits to establishing perspectives on the prevention

of DE by the type of DE experienced (i.e. temporary and permanent) or by the specific categories of DE (i.e. stand-down, suspension, exclusion and expulsion).

Other research that may complement perspectives on the prevention of DE from young people and children may include the perspectives of parents, teachers, school leaders and community-based groups and agencies in the prevention of DE. If preventing DE is to be truly holistic and inclusive, the perspectives of everyone involved in the DE experience are necessary to expand the knowledge base about what works to prevent DE, to better inform the design, development and implementation of effective preventative interventions.

Gaps in existing the literature were revealed during this study. First, research is required to better understand what students at risk of DE require from an intervention regarding a planned and supported exit from school to prevent their DE. Second, research is required to determine the viability and effectiveness of home-schooling to prevent DE, and those factors that enable or inhibit the educational success of at-risk students who are home-schooled. Other gaps identified in the research include determining the effects of more Māori teachers on rates of Māori student DE, the effects of cultural responsiveness training for pre-service teachers on rates of DE from school, and barriers to at-risk students' access to school-based behaviour change programmes.

Other research this study highlighted as necessary was the need to better understand what the exclusion category of *other* encapsulates, and gaining an understanding as to why rates of DE recorded under this category have more than doubled in the last 15 years. Research on how schools investigate incidents at school, how they practice exhausting all other possible avenues, and how they only use DE as a last resort could provide insight into how the guidelines produced by the MoE are being interpreted and enacted by schools and teachers. This would help to establish patterns of DE for future analysis. In addition, research to establish the rates of informal DE, and the experiences of students and their families of this practice, would help to quantify the extent to which this is occurring and its effects. This research could provide robust evidence to support allegations of informal or unofficial DE practices in schools, and to inform policy and practice minimise or eliminate the practice of informal or unofficial DE.

5.4 Limitations

The current study has several limitations. The first limitation of this study was the small number of participants recruited for this study (n = 14). The study originally sought to recruit 25-30 participants in total. The decision for this number was guided by advice on the ideal focus group size

of six to eight participants to allow opportunities for varied input, and to counter unexpected participant attrition prior to or on the day of the focus group interview (Kruger & Casey, 2015). However, the exploratory nature of this research (i.e. the first of its kind looking at the prevention of DE from lived experience) mitigates some of the problems associated with a small sample size.

Secondly, the research design, specifically the purposive sampling of participants attending YGFF courses, and the DE of young people with lived experience who were not attending a YGFF course, may have biased the findings. This may have resulted in a bias due to participants' inclinations towards participation in education, evident by their exclusion from school but their attendance at a YGFF course at the time of the focus group interviews.

Finally, the perspectives on the prevention of DE were not sought from participants' peers, schools, teachers, parents or community agencies known to support at-risk and excluded students. Without this information it is not possible to authenticate participants' responses, particularly those concerning the details of participants' DE and the number of DEs for each participant. My inability to triangulate findings also reduces the validity of the findings from this study. However, as the aim and intent of this study was to give centre stage to the participants, to elicit their perspectives about an experience they had first-hand, this study has achieved that. Furthermore, the future directions previously stated will go some way to extending the findings of this study and will help to build up the knowledge base about what works to prevent DE.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

This research has endeavoured to contribute to gaps in the knowledge base about what works to prevent DE identified in the literature by providing insights into prevention from the perspective of lived experience. By adopting a phenomenological approach to capturing perspectives this research aimed to extend the understanding of the factors that contribute to DE, and therefore the factors that could contribute to its prevention.

A number of possibilities for the prevention of DE were identified within three interacting themes of possibilities for school culture and schools systems, possibilities for classrooms, teachers and pedagogy, and possibilities for supporting vulnerable students. This research conceptualised prevention within a possibility framework that shifted implications for preventative interventions away from what was towards what could be, primarily through the lived experiences of participants.

NZ education policy and practice that aims to be responsive to the needs of all students (Ministry of Education, 2014a), and that has a focus on priority learners “identified as historically not experiencing success in the New Zealand education system” (Education Review Office, 2012, p. 4), and where “all students will be able to participate at school and achieve their potential; importantly, it means all students will feel they ‘belong’ at their school doing what their peers do” (MoE, 2014b, p. 3), would benefit from ‘including the excluded’. It is the voices of excluded students or those students at risk of DE that offer to us unique perspectives on preventing DE and better meeting the needs of students at risk. It is these unique perspectives that may help better inform policy and practice that could further contribute to the prevention of DE.

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Appendix 1: Focus Group Outline

Welcome

My name is Leanne Romana and I am currently a full time study at Massey University in Palmerston North.

Our topic is preventing DE

The results will be used for my research report on preventing DE from the perspective of young people who have experienced DE, and how you think you're learning needs could be better met.

You were selected to participate in this study as you may have experienced DE, and so will possess unique insights into the events that gave rise to your DE, what was done to prevent your exclusion, what you think could be improved in schools to prevent DE, and what you think students would benefit from knowing about the contribution they could possibly make towards preventing their DE.

Guidelines

- No right or wrong answers, only differing points of view
- We're tape recording, one person speaking at a time
- We're on a first name basis
- You don't need to agree with others, but you must listen respectfully as others
- Share your views
- Rules for cellular phones and pagers if applicable. For example: We ask that you turn off your phones or pagers. If you cannot and if you must respond to a call, please do so as quietly as possible and re-join us as quickly as you can.
- My role as researcher will be to guide the discussion
- Talk to each other

Opening question

Appendix 2: Demographic Information Questionnaire



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PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Date:	Time:	Place:
What is your YGFFPV?	What is your age?	What is your gender?
Creative industries	16 years old	Male
Primary industries	17 years old	Female
Service industries	18 years old	
Social & Community Services	19 years old	
Manufacturing & Technology	20+ years old	
Construction & Infrastructure		
What is your ethnicity?		
NZ Maori	NZ European	Pacific Island
Asian	European	Indian
Other	Please indicate Other Ethnicity: _____	

If you ticked NZ Maori, what are your tribal affiliations? Please list as many as applies

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Appendix 3: Focus Group Questioning Route

Opening	1. Tell us the name of your partner (from the icebreaker activity), where they came from, and the one word they think describes them best?
Introduction	2. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the words preventing DE?
Transition	3. Think back to your last few days at school. What do you recall?
Key	4. What was the experience of DE like for you? 5. What do you recall was done to prevent your DE? 6. Who was involved in trying to prevent your DE? 7. What did you find helpful during this time? 8. What did you find frustrating during this time? 9. Is your life different since your DE? If so, how?
Ending	10. If you had a chance to give advice to your school on how to prevent DE, what advice would you give? 11. If you had a chance to give advice to other students on how to prevent their DE, what advice would you give? 12. I want you to help me to help prevent the DE of other students. What have I missed? Is there anything you think we should have talked about but didn't?

Appendix 4: Ethics approval



Date: 12 September 2016

Dear Leanne Romana

Re: Ethics Notification - **4000016688** - **Including the excluded: Exploring young peoples' perspectives on preventing exclusion from education.**

Thank you for your notification which you have assessed as Low Risk.

Your project has been recorded in our system which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

If situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your ethical analysis, please go to <http://rims.massey.ac.nz> and register the changes in order that they be assessed as safe to proceed.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Dr Brian Finch, Director - Ethics, telephone 06 3569099 ext 86015, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz."

Please note, if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to complete the application form again, answering "yes" to the publication question to provide more information for one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise

Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442, New Zealand **T** 06 350 5573; 06 350 5575 **F** 06 355 7973
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz **W** <http://humanethics.massey.ac.nz>

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B Finch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Dr Brian Finch
Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and Director (Research Ethics)

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442, New Zealand **T** 06 350 5573; 06 350 5575 **F** 06 355 7973
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz **W** <http://humanethics.massey.ac.nz>

Appendix 5: Participant Informed Consent



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PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me.
My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I wish/do not wish to have data placed in an official archive.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Participant Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

Appendix 6: Participant Confidentiality Agreement



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FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me.
My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree not to disclose anything discussed in the Focus Group.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Participant Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

Appendix 7: Participant Information Sheet



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Including the excluded: Young people's perspectives on preventing disciplinary exclusion

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher Introduction

Researcher name: Leanne Romana

Type of research project: Qualitative focus group interviews

Purpose of project: A review of educational literature regarding disciplinary exclusion has exposed a dearth of research concerning the prevention of disciplinary exclusion from the perspective of young people who have experienced disciplinary exclusion, and also a dearth of evidence concerning how to better meet the learning needs of young people at risk of disciplinary exclusion.

Project Description and Invitation

- *Summary of the project*
 - *Education and qualifications are crucial in equipping young people with the skills and knowledge required to make them attractive to potential employers, to advance in to higher learning, and to enable them to make useful contributions to the economy and civic society. Unfortunately for many young people, in particular, those of Maori and Pasifika descent, such advancement is interrupted by their exclusion from education. And while there is little evidence to suggest exclusion of some students makes schools safer, more conducive to learning, nor that it is an effective means by which to remediate student misconduct and misbehaviour, there is much to suggest that exclusion from school produces and reproduces social and educational inequalities, and that exclusion places these young people at risk of further exclusion from education. This threatens their disengagement from education long-term, or altogether. As such, the policies and practices that eventuate in disciplinary exclusion require a re-think if they are to truly promote the principles of educational inclusion, and provide young people known to be at-risk of disciplinary exclusion, with a better chance of remaining in school and acquiring learning that is crucial to positive life-course trajectories. New knowledge regarding the prevention of exclusion from education from the perspective of those who have experienced it first-hand may go some way to better understanding this phenomena, with the potentiality to inform the design, development and implementation of prevention policies and practices. This study proposes to acquire this new knowledge through focus group interviews with young people attending Youth Guarantee Fees-free programmes, as these programmes are specifically designed for young people who have disengaged from education, often as a result of exclusion from school, and through constant comparison of interview transcripts to identify thematic groupings of reoccurring themes, ideas, and perspectives.*

- *An invitation to participate in the research*
 - *I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to participate in this study as I believe you will bring unique and informative insights to the prevention of disciplinary exclusion, as an expert of the experience, and knowledgeable on how disciplinary exclusion could be prevented.*

Participant Identification and Recruitment

- *Recruitment method.*
 - *Participants to this study will be recruited through a process called purposive sampling. This will involve the researcher contacting Youth Guarantee Tutors' from Institutes of Technology & Polytechnics and Private Tertiary Establishments who provide courses across all six of the Youth Guarantee Fees Free Vocational Pathways to recruit Youth Guarantee students willing to participate in the study.*
- *Method of obtaining participant names*
 - *Participant names will be provided to the researcher by Youth Guarantee Fees Free Tutors. Once obtained the researcher will forward to the Tutor, named invitations to participate to be handed on to potential candidates for recruitment to participate in the study. Details of those students willing to participate will be collected by the Youth Guarantee tutor and forwarded to the researcher to enable future communications regarding the project.*
- *Selection criteria*
 - *Youth Guarantee students selected for recruitment to the study must be over 16 years of age, they must be currently attending a Youth Guarantee Fees Free Vocational Pathway programme in Auckland, Palmerston North, or Christchurch.*
- *Number of participants to be involved and the reason for this number.*
 - *The number of students required for involvement in this study is between 6 – 8 students per focus group maximum. This number is recommended by Focus Group research experts as the most optimum number for successful focus groups, and will allow for optimal input from each focus group participant.*
- *Details of compensation/reimbursement of expenses/payments offered for participation (where relevant).*
 - *Youth Guarantee students who commit to participating in this study will be offered a token of appreciation in the form of a \$10 gift voucher from the Warehouse. This voucher will be given to participants upon conclusion of the focus group discussion.*
 - *The researcher is willing where necessary to make a contribution in kind to Youth Guarantee Tutors as reimbursement for any petrol costs associated with transporting participants to and from the focus group venue to the value of \$10 per Tutor.*
 - *Youth Guarantee students who participate in the focus group interview will be offered light refreshments upon conclusion of the focus group interviews, prior to their departure from the focus group venue. The costs of these refreshments will be covered by the researcher.*
- *Description of discomforts or risks to participants as a result of participation.*
 - *As focus group participants will likely be unfamiliar to one another, this may cause some participants to lack confidence to participate in the group discussion. This will be*

mitigated somewhat during contact with the Youth Guarantee Tutors' and when identifying students appropriate for recruitment to the study. Any discomfort or risk will also be mitigated by a number of group activities preceding the focus group discussion (i.e. ice breaker activities) to minimise any pre-existing communication barriers between focus group participants.

Project Procedures

- *The procedures in which participants will be involved.*
 - *Focus group participants will need to travel to the focus group interview venue. They will need to participate in focus group discussions.*
- *The time involved.*
 - *As recommended by experts in the use of focus group research, the focus group interview will go no longer than 1.5 hours. It is anticipated by the researcher that the consumption of light refreshments upon conclusion of the focus group interview will take no longer than 30 minutes. Including approximate travel times, it is the expectation of the researcher that students will be in attendance for a maximum of 2 hours and 15 minutes.*
- *Any support processes in place to deal with adverse physical or psychological risks*
 - *It is possible that discussion concerning experiences of disciplinary exclusion may give rise to unresolved issues for students, for which they may require additional pastoral care support to manage and/or address. The researcher will negotiate the provision of such services, either with the Youth Guarantee Tutors', or with local Youth Service staff. The details of these arrangements will be provided to participants upon commencement of each focus group, with the contact details for these staff, provided to students upon conclusion of the focus group discussion.*

Data Management

- *Use of data.*
 - *The data generated in this study will include the audio files on which the focus group discussions will be electronically recorded during the focus group discussions, flip charts that will be used during the interviews to help track discussion topics and inform the summary of the data collected prior to completion of the focus group interview, and lastly, field notes of the researcher, which will likely be a combination of hand-written notes and those typed on computer.*
- *What will happen to the data when it is obtained.*
 - *Once the recorded data has been transcribed, the researcher will re-visit the students involved in the research where feasible, to provide them a summary of the research findings, and to seek feedback on the accuracy of the transcriptions. Feedback will be incorporated into the transcripts prior to their analysis by the researcher.*
- *Storage and disposal of data.*
 - *Data produced as part of this study will be kept within a secure desk at the private residence of the researcher. This data will be disposed of by professional document disposal services 7 years from the commencement of the study.*

- *Method for accessing a summary of the project findings.*
 - *Research participants, as per legislative regulations, will be able to access information held about them as part of this project, upon reasonable requests to the researcher.*
- *Method for preserving confidentiality of identity*
 - *The identify of study participants, their Youth Guarantee Tutor, or Youth Guarantee Provider will be systematically removed from the interview transcriptions to ensure anonymity of research participants. Students will be allocated a student number which will be generated prior to the commencement of the first focus group interview. These codes will be utilised during the data collection and data analysis processes. No names or other identifying information will be used before, during or after the completion of the focus group research interviews.*

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- *decline to answer any particular question;*
- *withdraw from the study at any time before, during, or after the focus group interviews, up to 31 March 2017;*
- *ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;*
- *provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher; and*
- *be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.*

Project Contacts

- *Include the names and contact details of the researcher and supervisor.*
 - *The researchers contact details are:*
 - *Email - [REDACTED]*
 - *Phone - [REDACTED]*
 - *The researchers supervisors contact details are:*
 - *Name - Vijaya Dharan*
 - *Email - v.m.dharan@massey.ac.nz*
 - *Phone – 06 356 9099 extension 84315*
 - *The researchers supervisors contact details are:*
 - *Name: Tony Carusi*
 - *Email – f.a.carusi@massey.ac.nz*
 - *Phone – 06 356 9099 extension 84316*
- *Participants are invited to contact the researcher and/or supervisors at any time during the project if they have any questions about the project.*

MUHEC APPLICATIONS

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 4000016688. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Rochelle Stewart-Withers, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 356 9099 x 83657, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

LOW RISK NOTIFICATIONS

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Dr Brian Finch, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 356 9099 x 86015, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Compensation for Injury

If physical injury results from your participation in this study, you should visit a treatment provider to make a claim to ACC as soon as possible. ACC cover and entitlements are not automatic and your claim will be assessed by ACC in accordance with the Accident Compensation Act 2001. If your claim is accepted, ACC must inform you of your entitlements, and must help you access those entitlements. Entitlements may include, but not be limited to, treatment costs, travel costs for rehabilitation, loss of earnings, and/or lump sum for permanent impairment. Compensation for mental trauma may also be included, but only if this is incurred as a result of physical injury.

If your ACC claim is not accepted you should immediately contact the researcher. The researcher will initiate processes to ensure you receive compensation equivalent to that to which you would have been entitled had ACC accepted your claim.

Appendix 8: Support Person Confidentiality Agreement



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SUPPORT PERSON'S CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (Full Name - printed) agree to attend the focus group interview to provide moral support to a participant involved in the project.

I agree to keep confidential all the information discussed during the focus group interview.

Signature: Date:

Appendix 9: Youth Guarantee Provider Information Sheet



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YOUTH GUARANTEE PROVIDER INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher Introduction

Researcher name: Leanne Romana

Type of research project: Qualitative focus group interviews

Purpose of project: A review of educational literature regarding disciplinary exclusion has exposed a dearth of research concerning the prevention of disciplinary exclusion from the perspective of young people who have experienced disciplinary exclusion, and also a dearth of evidence concerning how to better met the learning needs of young people at risk of disciplinary exclusion.

Project Description and Invitation

- *Summary of the project*
 - *Education and qualifications are crucial in equipping young people with the skills and knowledge required to make them attractive to potential employers, to advance in to higher learning, and to enable them to make useful contributions to the economy and civic society. Unfortunately for many young people, in particular, those of Maori and Pasifika descent, such advancement is interrupted by their exclusion from education. And while there is little evidence to suggest exclusion of some students makes schools safer, more conducive to learning, nor that it is an effective means by which to remediate student misconduct and misbehaviour, there is much to suggest that exclusion from school produces and reproduces social and educational inequalities, and that exclusion places these young people at risk of further exclusion from education. This threatens their disengagement from education long-term, or altogether. As such, the policies and practices that eventuate in disciplinary exclusion require a re-think if they are to truly promote the principles of educational inclusion, and provide young people known to be at-risk of disciplinary exclusion, with a better chance of remaining in school and acquiring learning that is crucial to positive life-course trajectories. New knowledge regarding the prevention of exclusion from education from the perspective of those who have experienced it first-hand may go some way to better understanding this phenomena, with the potentiality to inform the design, development and implementation of prevention policies and practices. This study proposes to acquire this new knowledge through focus group interviews with young people attending Youth Guarantee Fees-free programmes, as these programmes are specifically designed for young people who have disengaged from education, often as a result of exclusion from school, and through constant comparison of interview transcripts to identify thematic groupings of reoccurring themes, ideas, and perspectives.*

- *An invitation to participate in the research*
 - *I would like to take this opportunity to invite students from your Youth Guarantee Fees Free programmes to participate in this study as I believe they will bring unique and informative insights to the prevention of disciplinary exclusion, as an expert of the experience, and knowledgeable on how disciplinary exclusion could be prevented.*

Participant Identification and Recruitment

- *Recruitment method.*
 - *Participants to this study will be recruited through a process called purposive sampling. This will involve the researcher contacting Youth Guarantee Tutors' from Institutes of Technology & Polytechnics and Private Tertiary Establishments who provide courses across all six of the Youth Guarantee Fees Free Vocational Pathways to recruit Youth Guarantee students willing to participate in the study.*
- *Method of obtaining participant names*
 - *Participant names will be provided to the researcher by Youth Guarantee Fees Free Tutors. Once obtained the researcher will forward to the Tutor, named invitations to participate to be handed on to potential candidates for recruitment to participate in the study. Details of those students willing to participate will be collected by the Youth Guarantee tutor and forwarded to the researcher to enable future communications regarding the project.*
- *Selection criteria*
 - *Youth Guarantee students selected for recruitment to the study must be over 16 years of age, they and must be currently attending a Youth Guarantee Fees Free Vocational Pathway programme in Auckland, Palmerston North, or Christchurch.*
- *Number of participants to be involved and the reason for this number.*
 - *The number of students required for involvement in this study is between 6 – 8 students per focus group maximum. This number is recommended by Focus Group research experts as the most optimum number for successful focus groups, and will allow for optimal input from each focus group participant.*
- *Details of compensation/reimbursement of expenses/payments offered for participation (where relevant).*
 - *Youth Guarantee students who commit to participating in this study will be offered a token of appreciation in the form of a \$10 gift voucher from the Warehouse. This voucher will be given to participants upon conclusion of the focus group discussion.*
 - *The researcher is willing where necessary to make a contribution in kind to Youth Guarantee Tutors as reimbursement for any petrol costs associated with transporting participants to and from the focus group venue to the value of \$10 per Tutor.*
 - *Youth Guarantee students who participate in the focus group interview will be offered light refreshments upon conclusion of the focus group interviews, prior to their departure from the focus group venue. The costs of these refreshments will be covered by the researcher.*
- *Description of discomforts or risks to participants as a result of participation.*
 - *As focus group participants will likely be unfamiliar to one another, this may cause some participants to lack confidence to participate in the group discussion. This will be*

mitigated somewhat during contact with the Youth Guarantee Tutors' and when identifying students appropriate for recruitment to the study. Any discomfort or risk to participants will also be mitigated by group activities that will precede focus group discussion (i.e. ice breaker activities) to minimise any pre-existing communication barriers between focus group participants.

Project Procedures

- *The procedures in which participants will be involved.*
 - *Focus group participants will need to travel to the focus group interview venue. They will need to participate in focus group discussions.*
- *The time involved.*
 - *As recommended by experts in the use of focus group research, the focus group interview will go no longer than 1.5 hours. It is anticipated by the researcher that the consumption of light refreshments upon conclusion of the focus group interview will take no longer than 30 minutes. Including approximate travel times, it is the expectation of the researcher that students will be in attendance for a maximum of 2 hours and 15 minutes.*
- *Any support processes in place to deal with adverse physical or psychological risks*
 - *It is possible that discussion concerning experiences of disciplinary exclusion may give rise to unresolved issues for students, for which they may require additional pastoral care support to manage and/or address. The researcher will negotiate the provision of such services, either with the Youth Guarantee Tutors', or with local youth service staff. The details of these arrangements will be provided to participants upon commencement of each focus group, with the contact details for these staff, provided to students upon conclusion of the focus group discussion.*

Data Management

- *Use of data.*
 - *The data generated in this study will include the audio files on which the focus group discussions will be electronically recorded during the focus group discussions, flip charts that will be used during the interviews to help track discussion topics and inform the summary of the data collected prior to completion of the focus group interview, and lastly, field notes of the researcher, which will likely be a combination of hand-written notes and those typed on computer.*
- *What will happen to the data when it is obtained.*
 - *Once the recorded data has been transcribed, the researcher will re-visit the students involved in the research where feasible, to provide them a summary of the research findings, and to seek feedback on the accuracy of the transcriptions. Feedback will be incorporated into the transcripts prior to their analysis by the researcher.*
- *Storage and disposal of data.*
 - *Data produced as part of this study will be kept within a secure desk at the private residence of the researcher. This data will be disposed of by professional document disposal services 7 years from the commencement of the study.*

- *Method for accessing a summary of the project findings.*
 - *Research participants, as per legislative regulations, will be able to access information held about them as part of this project, upon reasonable requests to the researcher.*
- *Method for preserving confidentiality of identity*
 - *The identify of study participants, their Youth Guarantee Tutor, or Youth Guarantee Provider will be systematically removed from the interview transcriptions to ensure anonymity of research participants. Students will be allocated a student number which will be generated prior to the commencement of the focus group interview. These codes will be utilised to be used during the data collection and data analysis processes. No names or other identifying information will be used before, during or after the completion of the focus group research interviews.*

Participant's Rights

The Youth Guarantee students you refer for recruitment to this study are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If they decide to participate, they will have the right to:

- *decline to answer any particular question;*
- *withdraw from the study at any time prior to, during, and after the focus group interviews, up to 31 March 2017;*
- *ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;*
- *provide information on the understanding that their name will not be used unless they give permission to the researcher; and*
- *be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.*

Project Contacts

- *Include the names and contact details of the researcher and supervisor.*
 - *The researchers contact details are:*
 - *Email - [REDACTED]*
 - *Phone - [REDACTED]*
 - *The researchers supervisors contact details are:*
 - *Name - Vijaya Dharan*
 - *Email - v.m.dharan@massey.ac.nz*
 - *Phone – 06 356 9099 extension 84315*
 - *The researchers supervisors contact details are:*
 - *Name: Tony Carusi*
 - *Email – f.a.carusi@massey.ac.nz*
 - *Phone – 06 356 9099 extension 84316*
- *Participants are invited to contact the researcher and/or supervisors at any time during the project if they have any questions about the project.*

MUHEC APPLICATIONS

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 4000016688. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Rochelle Stewart-Withers, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 356 9099 x 83657, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

LOW RISK NOTIFICATIONS

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Dr Brian Finch, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 356 9099 x 86015, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Compensation for Injury

If physical injury results from your participation in this study, you should visit a treatment provider to make a claim to ACC as soon as possible. ACC cover and entitlements are not automatic and your claim will be assessed by ACC in accordance with the Accident Compensation Act 2001. If your claim is accepted, ACC must inform you of your entitlements, and must help you access those entitlements. Entitlements may include, but not be limited to, treatment costs, travel costs for rehabilitation, loss of earnings, and/or lump sum for permanent impairment. Compensation for mental trauma may also be included, but only if this is incurred as a result of physical injury.

If your ACC claim is not accepted you should immediately contact the researcher. The researcher will initiate processes to ensure you receive compensation equivalent to that to which you would have been entitled had ACC accepted your claim.

Appendix 10: Youth Guarantee Provider Confidentiality Agreement



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
TE KURA O TE MĀTAURANGA

Including the excluded: Young people's perspectives on preventing disciplinary exclusion

YOUTH GUARANTEE PROVIDER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (Full Name -
printed)

agree to keep confidential all information concerning the project

.....

.....

..... (Title of
Project).

I will not retain or copy any information involving the project.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 11: Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
TE KURA O TE MĀTAURANGA

Including the excluded: Young people's perspectives on preventing disciplinary exclusion

TRANSCRIBER'S CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (Full Name - printed) agree to transcribe the recordings provided to me.

I agree to keep confidential all the information provided to me.

I will not make any copies of the transcripts or keep any record of them, other than those required for the project.

Signature: Date:

Appendix 12: Example of thematic analysis coding process

Question	Responses	Key theme	Sub theme
How do you think disciplinary exclusion could be prevented?	“attendance”	Possibility	Personal factor
	“If they [teachers] respect you then you respect them. It’s a two way thing”		Classroom factor
	“yeah, maybe my school could have listened more instead of just saying “oh the trouble kid”, and didn’t actually help”		School factor

Endnotes

ⁱ Youth Guarantee Fees Free <http://www.youthguarantee.net.nz/start-your-journey/>

ⁱⁱ Education Act 1989 <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1989/0080/latest/DLM175959.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ School deciles relate to how schools in New Zealand are funded.
<https://www.education.govt.nz/school/running-a-school/resourcing/operational-funding/school-decile-ratings/>