Exploring hidden colours: A yearlong ethnographic study of a secondary school's Somali community

Sanad-sannadeedka barashada hiddaha iyo dhaqanka ee bulshada Soomaalida ee dugsiga sare

Annabelle Esme Larsen

Department of Education

May 2022

Abstract

Exploring hidden colours: A yearlong ethnographic study of a secondary school's Somali community

Sanad-sannadeedka barashada hiddaha iyo dhaqanka ee bulshada Soomaalida ee dugsiga sare

Annabelle Esme Larsen

Micklethwait (2013) asserts the Somali community is one of the few refugee groups that has not thrived in Britain. Whilst the amount of research on or with this group is relatively minimal, suggestions of poverty, low educational outcomes, and unemployment are cited as key issues. Also prospects for young people of Somali heritage do not seem to be improving; Somali students as a cohort perform less well at school than their peers. Again, a number of suggestions such as poverty have been put forward to elucidate the issue. Many explanations, both discussing wider societal issues and educational attainment gaps, are from deficit viewpoints, denying the Somali community agency, and not valuing the knowledge and skills they hold.

In this research, the school and wider community of study are in an East Midlands city. Early research highlighted how little was known and how much was assumed. A 'transformative moment' (Mills & Morton, 2013, p.43) shifted the research focus from problem-solving to increasing understanding. Working with a cultural facilitator an ethnographic, strengths-based study was developed which aimed to develop a greater understanding and explore the unknown Funds of Knowledge (FoK) of the school's Somali community.

An illuminating year in the life of the school's Somali students was created with written portraits of forefronted participants. From their analysis a number of themes emerged: the importance of family, the efficacy of community support and the valuing of education. A diverse range of FoK were discussed including religion, language and food. A number of challenges were documented, for example the legacy of the civil war and issues around behaviour, along with the community's mediation strategies. Several recommendations to develop practice have been made as a result of these findings such as the use of teacher advocates and the incorporation of FoK into curricula.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank my school for financially supporting my studies and their encouragement of my work, in particular the headteacher and my line manager.

I would also like to thank the Somali community who have supported my work at every opportunity. In particular I would like to thank the wonderful students at my school and the amazing families of our community. I would like to thank by name Mrs Jama and Mr Hersi and also give a special mention to my year 11 students, 2019/20. Without you this research would not have been possible, I hope you feel it is an appropriate conduit for your voices. Mahadsanid!

My supervisors have been an invaluable support: Dr Emma Pearson, Dr Claudia Capancioni and particularly Dr Phil Wood. They have given their time to inspire and develop my work. A large number of academics have also supported me, many through their work but some through correspondence. To those in particular I would like to thank: Dr Catherine Wallace, Dr Aniko Hattos and Dr Feyisa Demie. A thank you also to my fellow EdD student Elizabeth Farrar, our Teams chats during lockdown helped keep me on track!

I would also like to thank my family, but in particular my husband, my dad and my sister. Thanks for listening to me talk at length about my research for what must have been six very long years!

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my mum Jill and my nan Marjorie, my biggest supporters, who both died unexpectedly during my EdD. I dedicate this to you both.

Contents

ABSTRACT **2**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS **3**

CONTENTS **4**

TABLE OF FIGURES **6**

CHAPTER ONE- INTRODUCTION **7**

1.1 Context *7*
1.2 Origin *9*
1.3 The influence of early research *10*
1.4 This study *11*
1.5 Thesis presentation *13*
1.6 Research questions *14*

CHAPTER TWO- SETTING THE SCENE **15**

2.1 Introduction *15*
2.2 Conflict in Somalia *19*
2.3 The Somali diaspora *22*
2.4 The UK Somali community *25*
2.5 The UK Somali community and education *30*
2.6 The Somali community of study *36*

CHAPTER THREE- CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK **39**

3.1 Introduction to conceptual framework *39*
3.2 Bourdieu *40*
3.3 The Theory of Cultural Reproduction *41*
3.4 Cultural Reproduction Theory in education *43*
3.5 Deficit models *46*
3.6 The Funds of Knowledge approach *48*

CHAPTER FOUR- METHODOLOGY **53**

4.1 PHILOSOPHICAL STANCE AND POSITIONALITY 53
4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN 55
4.2.1 Overview *55*
4.2.2 Ethnography *57*
4.3 METHODS 60
4.3.1 Introduction to ethnographic methods *60*
4.3.2 Working with a cultural facilitator *62*
4.3.3 Fieldnotes *63*
4.3.4 Strand one- seeing *64*
4.3.5 Strand two- sharing *66*
4.3.6 Strand three- studying *71*
4.3.7 Sampling *73*
4.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS 74
4.4.1 Relationships *75*
4.4.2 Voice and perspective *76*
4.4.3 Consent *78*
4.4.4 Anonymity *79*
4.4.5 Wellbeing *80*
4.4.6 Reciprocity and withdrawal *80*
4.5 TRUSTWORTHINESS 81
4.5.1 Triangulation *82*
4.5.2 Claim checking *83*
4.5.3 Journaling *83*

4.5.4 A cultural facilitator *84*
4.6 Adaptions due to COVID-19 84

CHAPTER FIVE- FINDINGS 86

5.1 Introduction 86
5.2 Analytical Framework 88
5.2.1 Overall approach *88*
5.2.2 Preparation of findings for analysis *90*
5.2.3 Thematic Analysis *92*
5.3 A Year in the Life 95
5.3.1 Welcome to the school at the centre of this study *95*
5.3.2 Part one- Exams *97*
5.3.3 Part two- Lessons and learning *105*
5.3.4 Part three- Parents *113*
5.3.5 Part four- Reading *122*
5.3.6 Part five- Behaviour *129*
5.3.7 Part six- Free time *137*
5.3.8 Part seven- School closure *148*
5.4 Portraits 167
5.4.1 Portrait one- Hawa *167*
5.4.2 Portrait two- Insiya *170*
5.4.3 Portrait three- Mrs Jama *173*
5.4.4 Portrait four- Muna *178*
5.4.5 Portrait five- Mr Hersi *181*
5.4.6 Portrait six- Rahma *184*
5.4.7 Portrait seven- Yaqoub *187*
5.5 Thematic Reflections 190
5.5.1 Family and community support *190*
5.5.2 Valuing education and the role of ambition *191*
5.5.3 Funds of Knowledge *192*
5.5.4 The civil war *195*
5.5.5 Identity *196*
5.5.6 Language *198*
5.5.7 Behaviour and race *199*
5.5.8 Academic performance at school *201*

CHAPTER SIX- CONCLUSION 204

6.1 Research question one *204*
6.2 Research question two *212*
6.3 Research question three *223*
6.4 Concluding remarks *229*

CHAPTER SEVEN- PUBLICATIONS 234

REFERENCES 238

APPENDIX 255

Appendix one- Lesson observation template *255*
Appendix two- Consent form for adults *256*
Appendix three- Consent form for students *260*
Appendix four- Pseudonyms *263*
Appendix five- Card of support contacts for interview participants *264*
Appendix six- Literature map *265*

Table of Figures

Figure 1- Table to show selected subject GCSE attainment data, 2015 ..... *10*
Figure 2- Map of the Horn of Africa *21*
Figure 3- Table to show the numbers of Somali students on roll from 2012/13 to 2024 ..... *37*
Figure 4- Graph to show the percentage of Somali (BSOM), Indian (AIND) and all students achieving A-A/9-7 in GCSE English Language from 2013 to 2019* *38*
Figure 5- Table to show a summary of considered research approaches *56*
Figure 6- Table to show details of those interviewed *69*
Figure 7- Table to show examples of informal conversation interviews *71*
Figure 8- Table to show documents used in strand three *72*
Figure 9- Map of the school site *96*
Figure 10- Table to show GCSE exam results data, 2019 ..... *99*
Figure 11- Table to show highest and lowest performing GCSE Somali students, 2019 ..... *100*
Figure 12- Table to show year 10 early entry headline figures *101*
Figure 13- Examples of students' cave art work *106*
Figure 14- Table to show attendance at parents' evenings *113*
Figure 15- Photographs of the school library *126*
Figure 16- Table to show borrowing trends *127*
Figure 17- Behaviour tracker example *130*
Figure 18- Table to show behaviour data for Somali students *136*
Figure 19- A photograph of the rear canopy area and Astroturf *138*
Figure 20- A photograph of the table tennis area *138*
Figure 21- A photograph of the front canopy area *138*
Figure 22- A photograph of the playground, outdoor gym and basketball court *138*
Figure 23- Ibrahim's map *143*
Figure 24- Zubair's map *144*
Figure 25- Yasmeen's map *145*
Figure 26- Saadiya's map *146*
Figure 27- Table to show GCSEpod usage from closure until May 19th *153*
Figure 28- Photographs of students' lockdown hobbies *154*
Figure 29- Samira's day *155*
Figure 30- Photographs of the school showing the COVID-19 secure measures *159*
Figure 31- Table to show GCSE exam results data, 2020 ..... *165*
Figure 32- Table to show highest and lowest performing GCSE Somali students, 2020 ..... *165*
Figure 33- Photo montage of Somali community spaces taken during the walk with Mrs Jama *177*
Figure 34- Graphic to show a summary of findings *228*

Chapter One- Introduction

1.1 Context

Forty years of destabilisation in Somalia has led to mass migration both within, and outside, the country's borders. The Somali diaspora in 2010 was stated by Kenny (2013, p.94) to number over a million people and a later United Nations (2015) estimate gave a figure of two million. The United Kingdom, according to the most recent data from the Office of National Statistics or ONS (2015), has become home to 114,000 Somali-born migrants, a figure not including young Somali adults and children born in Britain or in other EU countries. Current population figures including British born Somalis are inaccurate, but considering the larger than average family size in the Somali community, the total figure is likely to be much higher than that estimated by the ONS. Abdi (2019, p.23) concurs with this view when discussing figures in the American context. The Anti-Tribalism movement (2020, p.1) suggests a figure of 350,000 to 500,000.

Despite the Somali community's presence in Britain since the mid-nineties (with some members pre-dating this), Micklethwait (2013) asserts the community is one of the few refugee groups that has not thrived. Whilst the amount of research on or with this group is relatively minimal, suggestions of poverty, low educational outcomes and unemployment are cited as key issues. Diriye (2006) also postulates that the Somali community believed that their stay in Britain would be temporary, preventing a complete commitment to establishing roots. Prospects for British born Somalis do not seem to be improving, with Somali students as a cohort performing less well at school than their peers (Demie, Lewis and McLean 2008, p.5). National data is not collected for the Somali cohort, their data falling into the wider category of 'Black African', however Sporton, Valentine and Bang Nielson (2006, p.13) assert that 'Somali children have been consistently at the bottom of achievement tables'. Again, a number of suggestions such as poverty have been put forward to elucidate the issue. Many explanations, addressing both wider societal issues and educational attainment gaps, are from deficit viewpoints, denying the Somali community agency, and not valuing the knowledge and skills they hold (e.g., Strand et al. 2010).

Deficit models place the responsibility for marginalisation with individuals or communities rather than on societal structures or with governments. The viewing of the Somali community, as a whole or its members, through a deficit lens because of identifiers such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion or refugee background, has strong links to the work of Bourdieu (1977), and the ideas of capital. Bourdieu (1977), and later theorists such as Coleman (1988, 2007), suggest that the possession of various forms of capital can have a significant influence on the educational outcomes of an individual and their economic success. Without such capital, individuals and by extension communities, can fail to be successful. Such work is a development of Karl Marx's Social Reproduction Theory (1930), first published in 1867, which describes the method by which social inequality is transmitted via the class system. Yosso (2005, p.75) succinctly links deficit models and capital by stating such models have at their 'centre the idea that children and families are to blame for their underachievement because of their lack of cultural capital'. The Bourdieusian model, which is deficit in nature, disregards the strengths of the Somali community, in fact their strengths have largely been ignored in most of the available literature.

Banks (2016, p.139) outlines a history of research with ethnic minority communities, which has acted as a counter-narrative to the deficit model discourse. Particular to the Somali diaspora, the research of Diryie (2006), Kahin and Wallace (2017) and Lewis (2021) has highlighted a rich cultural fabric and community success. One potential approach to strengths-based research is the exploration of Funds of Knowledge (FoK), defined by Moll (1992a, p.133) as:

> the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being.

Essentially Moll is describing the knowledge and skills a family unit has, which in the case of ethnic minority families may be different from the majority population and therefore seen as alternative cultural capital. In addition to the FoK of individual family units, community knowledge can be considered; much of Moll's work took a holistic view of the Mexican community in Arizona, USA.

This wider scale approach led Banks (2016, p.92) to consider FoK to be part of the ‘ethnic revitalisation movement’ as it seeks to acknowledge the cultural wealth of whole communities. Sarroub (2010, p.78) suggests that, by utilising a Funds of Knowledge approach and acknowledging community wealth, schools can broaden the range of valued cultural capital and thus empower more students to achieve. Despite the potential benefits of the approach, it is not widely used. Moll (1992a, p.134) wrote that schools ‘rarely draw on the resources of the funds of knowledge of the child’s world outside the context of the classroom’. A search for studies using the approach, with few results, suggests little has changed since Moll published his work. Many schools continue to view ethnic minority families, indeed any group which lacks cultural capital, through a deficit lens.

1.2 Origin

Mills and Morton (2013, p.131) state that the site for a study is often selected because the researcher is ‘emotionally or politically involved in a solution’ and that this prior connection often provides the resilience to complete the research. This is indeed the case in this research. In my role as Head of Humanities of a Midlands secondary school, I became increasingly concerned about the comparative underachievement of students of Somali heritage in my department, when looking at History GCSE data. Analysis of GCSE results from other departments within the school suggested a wider concern, indeed a range of data sets (e.g., making 3 levels of progress (LoP), A*-C figures and A*-A figures) showed that Somali students underperform compared to their peers. In addition to attainment data, some Somali students demonstrated a lack of engagement with learning, evidenced by lower levels of rewards and more sanctions. This pattern was observed in my first year at the school, 2011, and continues to the time of writing in 2022. The data in figure one is illustrative of my concerns, it shows the school’s 2015 GCSE results and provides a comparison between the performance of the whole cohort, students of Indian heritage (the majority at 54%) and Somali students.

Figure 1- Table to show selected subject GCSE attainment data, 2015

	English Lit. A*-C %	Maths 4+ LoP %	RE A*-A %	Science 3+ LoP %	History A*-G %
All students	60	21	16	77	93
Indian students	67	25	19	81	95
Somali students	51	18	12	62	82

The 2015 GCSE data shows that Somali students underperformed in all the randomly selected measures and thus supports the view of Demie et al. (2008, p.5) that 'the achievement of Somali heritage pupils lags far behind the average achievement of the majority of their peers'. Deficit narratives can offer an explanation but I wanted to delve more deeply to really understand what the data was showing and to explore appropriate interventions.

1.3 The influence of early research

Preliminary research (2015-2017), with the school community highlighted how little was known and how much was assumed. For example, one study involved the proposed use of photo-elicitation techniques to uncover FoK. Photo-elicitation is described by Pink (2013, p.92) as the use of photos in an interview scenario to create new knowledge and understandings with participants. Vigurs and Kara (2017, p.514) state, in their review of relevant literature, it is a method 'thought to be…effective at engaging and retaining the involvement of "hard-to-reach" participants' and therefore seemed likely to yield positive results. Unfortunately, no participants could be recruited to the study and what emerged in follow up interviews was that participants were not comfortable taking part in research which involved photography. I had made assumptions about what would engage participants rather than asking them for their views. This early study has parallels with a research experience of Hatoss (2016, p.153) who

stated that her enthusiasm for the research she had created was not shared by her participants, who saw little value in her initial approach.

The ‘transformative moment’ (Mills & Morton, 2013, p.43), in the early study described above, shifted the research focus from problem-solving school attainment to increasing understanding of the Somali community. Vigurs and Kara (2016, p.513) also conducted research which was ‘disrupted’ by participants in that they shaped the methods used by the researchers. In this research there was also an accompanying methodological shift; the development of a relationship with a cultural facilitator. The cultural facilitator, Mrs Jama, is a member of the community who was involved in developing the methods which were trialled in the later pilot study. The aim was she would act as an advisor throughout the research process. Hatoss (2016), worked with a team of cultural facilitators in research with Sudanese refugees in Australia and found this an invaluable approach.

Whilst collecting information during preliminary studies the title for this research, ‘Exploring hidden colours’, emerged from a reoccurring theme. Many Somali women in the community of study wear abayas, black Islamic dress, which covers their brightly coloured Somali clothing. Mrs Jama and the women met on a community walk stated this was to enable them to blend into the wider Muslim community, rather than stand out as Somali. The fact their African identity is masked by their religious identity seemed to be an emotive issue for the women and a theme which recurred throughout. The title is accompanied by a Somali translation to demonstrate from the outset the participatory nature of the study.

1.4 This study

Following preliminary research, a pilot study and subsequent evaluation with the cultural facilitator, a participatory, strengths-based study was developed which aimed to develop a greater understanding of the school’s Somali community and explore the unknown FoK, with the long-term aim of informing school practice. This research has significant implications in that Cremin (2015, p.3)

suggests that Moll's work, and by extension strengths-based models generally, may 'offset the consequences of pervasive deficit views'. As such this research is framed within a wider social justice agenda.

Moll (1992a and b), who developed the FoK approach, used a qualitative framework with ethnographic observations as the basis for his research. This study adopted an ethnographic approach, as according to Murchison (2010, p.12) the ethnographic process can 'illuminate locally relevant understandings' and so seemed appropriate to the overall aims. LeCompte and Preissle (1993, p.3) state that ethnography is often 'multimodal' with researchers using a range of methods to collect information. This research included three strands of collection termed 'seeing', 'sharing' and 'studying'. Firstly 'seeing' which entailed making observations in the field of study for one academic year to create a year in the life of the Somali students, their school and community. Secondly 'sharing', both informal conversation interviews and a series of ethnographic interviews undertaken with key participants who came to the forefront in the observations. These interviews enhanced the year in the life and also led to the creation of a series of written portraits. Forsey (2008, p.69) suggests creating portraits of participants, enhanced with quotes, as they 'provide a vivid way of demonstrating the cultural influences and the structuring forces on an individual's life'. Thirdly 'studying', the use of documentation produced by the school and/or students, which is illuminative of student life, such as library borrowing and exam data**.**

The work of both Bourdieu and Moll clearly underpin this study through their conceptualisation of the deficit perceptions of marginalised communities and the potential to discover a rich body of community knowledge. This study contributes to the literature by adding to the relatively limited research on or with the UK Somali community through the unique lens of FoK, providing a counter-narrative to the typical discourse of a community with a cultural deficit. This research also addresses the London-centric nature of previous work with the Somali community. The research questions aim to provide the opportunity to

work with the community to explore interactions, community perceptions and FoK.

The 2019/20 academic year was chosen to collect my findings. The first observations were made on GCSE results day in August 2019 and the research ran as planned until March 2020. At this point the school was closed as part of the British government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Travel restrictions and a stay-at-home order also prohibited community access. The school reopened for a week in June to year 10 students but, following a confirmed case of the virus, the school closed for the remainder of the academic year. Throughout closure I continued with my research, and whilst not quite the research I had planned, I collected findings during a unique period in education history adding a further dimension to my research.

1.5 Thesis presentation

This thesis is comprised of seven chapters. The introduction provides a brief overview of the research including motivations for study and the research questions. Chapter two is called Setting the Scene and introduces the reader to the context of this work using the literature. It begins wide in scope looking at the complexities of race and gradually narrows in focus to look at the Somali community of study. Chapter three outlines the conceptual framework, and the methodology is the focus of chapter four. Chapter five presents the findings of the research: the year in the life, the portraits and a discussion of the emergent themes. Approximately 30,000 words of this thesis convey the findings, ensuring they are presented in depth and therefore are the focus. This chapter has its own introduction which gives more detail about how the findings have been presented. The conclusion can be found in chapter six and addresses each of the three research questions in turn. The final chapter, number seven, is an outward facing short chapter which identifies possible avenues for future dissemination of the findings.

The chosen title of this study is reflected in the thesis presentation. Each of the seven portraits are printed on different coloured paper and the whole findings chapter is bookended by black covers, a metaphor of how the abaya covers the bright African print that is traditional to Somalia, in turn representative of the efforts of the community to integrate. Whilst not a traditional thesis presentation, Miles, Huberman & Saldaña (2014, p.334) state there are a range of progressive presentation methods and as long as there is a 'proper balance' between the aesthetic and the academic than it is appropriate. The discussion of progressive presentation methods implies there is a precedent for innovative design.

1.6 Research questions

Q1- What are the lived experiences of Somali members of this school and its wider community?

Q2- What are the challenges facing the Somali members of this school and its wider community and how are they mediated?

Q3- What potential practice developments, to support the school's Somali community, emerge from this research?

The first question looks to explore the lives and FoK of the Somali community. The second will explore any challenges faced by the community, and in particular issues associated with deficit viewpoints or realities, and seeks to elucidate any strategies employed by the community to mitigate them. The third question considers how practice can be developed or amended in light of this research.

Chapter Two- Setting the Scene

2.1 Introduction

Before looking at research written about and with the Somali community, this more wide-scope introduction explores generally what it means to be a minority and the experience of minority communities through a race lens. This chapter then takes an increasingly focused look at the Somali community; firstly, Somalia and the civil war, the diaspora, thirdly Somalis in the UK both generally and in terms of education, and then finally the community of study. It is hoped this will contextualise, or set the scene, for the findings which follow in chapter five. A further discussion about race, in terms of the positionality of this researcher, can be found in chapter four, 4.4.1.

Much of the literature which considers what it means to be a person of colour, uses Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a lens. Ladson-Billings (2007, P.52) describes the early work of Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman as the foundation of the work. Roy and Roxas (2011, p.525) define this approach as one which can be used for 'interrogating practices that marginalise students based on race, culture, gender class or sexuality'. Ladson Billings (2007, P.60) agrees stating that CRT 'can be a powerful explanatory tool'. Ladson-Billings (2007, P.53) also outlines some principles of CRT; racism is normalised and thus needs exposing, CRT sometimes employs storytelling to add 'contextual contours', it critiques liberalism which may not allow for sweeping change and CRT asserts White people have often benefitted from rights legislation. Understanding CRT presents challenges, as Crenshaw et al (1995, p.xiii) state, there is not a 'canonical set of doctrines or methodologies' which all academics use. However, Ladson-Billings (2007, P.54) believes that CRT 'scholars are united by…common interests'.

Much of the literature begins with a consideration of the current position, with a widely used term being White supremacy. The term conjures up images of the KKK and extreme, overt examples of racism. Saad however states (2020, p.13)

that White supremacy is not a fringe movement but rather ‘the dominant paradigm that forms the foundation from which norms, rules, and laws are created’. In practice it is a system which gives advantage to White people, at the structural level, due to their Whiteness, whether they are conscious of it or not, and therefore disadvantages other groups. Saad (2020, p.xii) goes onto describe White Supremacy as ‘arguably the most complex social system of the last several hundred years’. Indeed Diangelo (2021 p.xii) writes our identities are not separate from the White supremacist society in which we are raised’. It is clear to see how White supremacy would have an impact on all people of colour, including migrant communities.

The term White Supremacy is closely linked to White privilege. According to Saad (2020, p.33) it was McIntosh, in a paper written in 1988, who first used the term. McIntosh (1998, p.1) wrote ‘as a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but I had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, White privilege, which puts me at an advantage’. Eddo-Lodge (2022, p.71) elucidates saying ‘white privilege is an absence of the negative consequences of racism’. Eddo-Lodge (2022, p.72) is quick to point out the term is not linked to financial privilege, rather than suggesting that White people have ‘never struggled’, White privilege means that a White person’s race ‘will almost certainly positively impact your life’s trajectory in some way’. Eddo-Lodge (2022, p.92) goes on to say White privilege is ‘a manipulative, suffocating blanket of power that envelops everything we know, like a snowy day’.

Saad (2020, p.35) makes it very clear that ‘race *is* a social concept, but that does not make it imaginary when it comes to the very real consequences’. Such racism may manifest itself in microaggressions. These are defined by Diangelo (2021 p.13) as ‘the everyday slights, indignities and allegations that people of colour experience in their day-to-day interactions with well-intentioned White people’. Diangelo (2021, p.14) also references the work of health researcher Geronimus who developed the term racial weathering to describe the consequences of ‘chronic racial stress’. Diangelo (2021 p.14) also makes the

point that weathering is related to ‘systemic consequences’ such as the disproportional effects of healthcare challenges. Racism may also mean people of colour find it harder to access training courses or gain employment. It may be more challenging to access housing healthcare or a range of other services. Diangelo also asserts, in her work Nice Racism (2021), that as people of colour are more likely to come into contact with ‘regular’ people rather than White supremacists, it is the everyday ‘nice racism’ that has a greater effect. The actions of the many rather than the few. That fact racism also manifests itself in schools in a number of ways is of particular relevance to this research. One example is adultification, which Saad (2020, p.100) explains; ‘how Black children experience “adultifcation”, the experience of being seen and treated as though they are older then they actually are’.

Many writers assert that Britain has seen positive change, particularly in the last 30 years. Akala (2019, p.9) states that Britain’s inner cities ‘are now some of the most successful multi-ethnic experiments in the “Western” world’. In agreement, in the preface to Black and British, Olusoga (2016, p.xix) writes being both Black and British has at times seemed ‘an impossible duality’, unlike today. This positive change has, according to Akala (2019, p.10) been brought about by the ‘resistance of Black and Asian communities’, which have changed how ethnic minorities today ‘experience and understand “race”’. Whilst all of this is certainly true people of colour, including migrant communities, are still experiencing the effects of White Supremacy. As Eddo-Lodge (2022, p.71) asserts ‘the lives of people from ethnic minority communities ‘are hindered and warped at every stage’. This agrees with Akala (2019, p.13) who discusses how the forces of race and class ‘have impacted and continue to shape lives’. In America writers describe a similar situation with Peck (Baldwin and Peck, 2017, p.x), in the introduction to his work, stating ‘for sure, we still have strong winds pummelling us. The present time of discord, ignorance, and confusion is punishing’. Eddo-Lodge (2022, p.65) taking an international view in her work agrees; ‘the picture is grim… racism is weaved into the fabric of our world’.

Change has been and is slow to come for a number of reasons. Some writers talk about the lack of quality in the dialogue about race. Akala (2019, p.11) believes ‘public discourse about racism is still as childish and supine as it ever was’, whilst Eddo-Lodge (2022, p.xv) writes that ‘Britain is still profoundly uncomfortable with race and difference’. This plays itself out in what has been termed White fragility, a defensive overreaction to discussions about race. White fragility has, according to Saad (2020, p.41), two contributing factors: ‘lack of exposure to conversations about race’ and a ‘lack of understanding of what white supremacy actually is’. Diangelo (2021 p.8) agrees asserting that by not thinking critically about race White people do not ‘develop an emotional capacity to withstand the discomfort of conversations [about race]’. In addition, education programs and a generally shifting zeitgeist have failed to ensure young people do not hold racist views. Diangelo (2021 p.10) asserts ‘there are potent examples of younger White people demonstrating a profound lack of both critical racial consciousness and racial compassion’.

Whilst responses to racism from people of colour have come at a cost they have also been empowering and brought change. Responses from White people have however often added to the problem. Akala (2019, p.23) refers to ‘“A very British Brand of Racism”; polite denial, quiet amusement or outright outrage’. He implies that not only does this result in racist acts but also responses to racism from well-meaning White people which are also inherently racist. Once such response is White saviourism. Saad (2020, p.149) defines saviourism as ‘the belief that people with White privilege, have an obligation to “save” BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, and people of colour] from their supposed inferiority and helplessness’. Saad (2020, p.153) believes saviourism is ‘condescending and an attempt to assuage one’s own white guilt… it only serves to empower people with white privilege [and is] actively disempowering to BIPOC’. Dabiri (2021, p.85) agrees and describes saviourism as patronising and with racist origins.

A potentially more appropriate response to racism is allyship and Diangelo (2021 p.xv) ‘believe[s] we [White people] play a necessary part in building

multiracial coalitions'. Saad (2020, p.125) suggests allyship is not based on one action nor is it 'an identity- it is a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability… allyship is not self-defined'. Diangelo (2021 p.50) outlines the difference between niceness; 'fleeting, hollow and performative' with kindness: compassion and support. Diangelo (2021, p.50) is suggesting therefore that 'kindness, because it is active, can be one aspect of White allyship'. In recent years there has been, as highlighted by Dabiri (2021, p.6), 'a proliferation of allyship guides', such as the work of Saad (2020). Despite this allyship is not a term liked by all, Dabiri (2021, p.3) for example, describes the how the 'power dynamic it reproduces makes [her] feel icky', referring to the term and its surrounding discourse being patronising. Dabiri (2021, p.14) prefers the term coalition building which she considers to be about 'identifying shared interests' and looking for 'an intersectionality of issues' (Dabiri, 2021, p.25). Dabiri (2021, p.88) asserts 'we need to move away from thinking about individual "good people" to developing just systems'. This is an approach supported by Diangelo (2021).

In summary the literature very clearly asserts that race is an important factor in the experiences of migrant communities. It is central to the lived experiences of people of colour and dominates many aspects of their lives. It is therefore important to explore societal conditions and the more general experience, as more specific work, with the Somali community for example, will be located in this wider context.

2.2 Conflict in Somalia

Whilst the events of the Somali Civil War may seem disparate from the themes of this research, the war explains the diasporic nature of the Somali community which could in turn aid greater understanding. It is however a complex issue. Hatoss (2016, p.148) suggests the:

> effects of forced migration vary in different political, socio-economic, and cultural contexts, and according to factors such as gender, class, age, race, or ethnicity.

What is more certain however are the links between Somali people collectively, as a refugee community, Bourdieu and deficit models (1977). For example Hatoss (2012, p.398), in her study of refugee languages, suggests forced migrants often do not speak the language of the country in which they seek asylum. This creates a lack of social capital outside their own community which impacts on other forms of capital, particularly economic. The potential challenges of communicating effectively and perhaps contributing, again according to Hatoss (2016, p.150), means refugees:

> are treated as if they are “starting from scratch”, and this denies them agency, which in turn casts them as “victims” to be managed, rather than assets that can be tapped for the knowledge and global connections they bring.

In short Somali diaspora communities are likely to be viewed through a deficit lens, stemming from their refugee status following the civil war. The war is therefore an important aspect of the community experience and should be considered in all research

Somalia is located in the Horn of Africa and shares borders with Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti, as seen in figure two. Boakye (2019, p.26) states that ‘Africa has been a true victim of economic plundering during the Scramble [and] of ideological abuse in its perception as uncivilized and primitive’. This is certainly true of Somalia’s colonial past, whilst more recent events have certainly shaped quite negative perceptions of the country.

Figure 2- Map of the Horn of Africa (P Hermes Furian/Shutterstock.com)

Somalia's recent history has colonial links to Britain from 1884 (the area of British Somaliland) and Italy from 1889 (the area of Italian Somaliland) until 1960. In 1960, according to Rutter (2006, p.176), British and Italian Somaliland were united and a parliamentary democracy was established. A coup in 1969, by Mohamed Siad Barre, installed a military government, with Shirdon (2017, p.191) describing the president as a ruler of contradictions: increasingly autocratic but reforming. One such reform being the literacy drive in 1972, which made Somali a written language for the first time (Kruizenga, 2010, p.11). Somalia moved into a state of war when a failed coup tried to overthrow Barre's regime on the 10th of April 1978. This precipitated a clan-based conflict with three opposition parties by 1982, organising against Barre, supported by clan families (Rutter, 2006, p.176). According to Lewis (2011. p.4) there are six clans: Dir, Issaq, Hawiye and Darod (the majority clans) and Digil and Mirifle (the minority clans, collectively known as Rahanweyn). The start of the civil war however, is often cited as the collapse of Barre's government,13 years later in January 1991, rather than the earlier coup. A power vacuum followed the end of his regime and violence ensued. The region of Somaliland also broke away in 1991 to form an independent state but is not internationally recognised as such.

Bradbury and Healy (2010) suggest there are three phases of the civil war era: cold war to civil war (1988-91); state collapse, clan war and famine (1991-92); and international humanitarian intervention in the 1990s onwards. In 1996, after twenty years of conflict, the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali described how 'Somalia represented one of the most difficult challenges ever faced by the United Nations' (Harper, 2012, p.167). In the decade since Bradbury and Healy's work (2010) conflict still pervades. The rise of al-Shabab, a terrorist group linked to al-Qaeda, has been responsible for a number of high-profile attacks and the country is known as a 'home for the highest-profile pirates of modern times' (Mohamud & Whitburn, 2016, p.120). Indeed, Leonard and Ramsey (2013, p.1) commented on the 'persuasive doubt that the conflict will be resolved'. There have however also been positive moves forward in the last decade, for example Somalia ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2015 (United Nations, 2020). Nonetheless Somalia's recent history, in particular the civil war, has been detrimental to its development in all senses; economic, political, social and cultural. Indeed, Cockburn (2017, p.70) suggests Somalia could be termed a 'failed state'.

2.3 The Somali diaspora

Lewis (2011, p.65) estimated that by 1980, following the failed coup, one in four Somali people were refugees, indeed Smith Ellison (2012, p.5) understands displacement to be the foremost consequence of conflict. In the case of Somalia, Shire (2008, p.95) states that initially most people were displaced internally, with the UN Refugee Agency (2017) estimating that 1.5 million people were affected in this way. The protracted nature of the conflict however prompted many Somalis to cross the border into Kenya and Ethiopia, Somalia's western neighbours, where many people still live in refugee camps today. Dadaab camp in Kenya was set up in 1991 and is home to 300,000 Somalis. It is the largest refugee camp in the world (BBC News, 2016). Women and children make up the majority of those in refugee camps with men often trying to maintain their herds of livestock or other business interests within Somalia's

borders. Indeed Fellin (2015, p.32) states that academics consider ‘displacement and migration’ to be gendered.

From Somalia itself or from neighbouring countries, those with the appropriate means pursued further migration, away from East Africa. Lindley (2008, p.402) postulates that migrants or refugees who are well educated or more highly skilled tend to travel more internationally. Sjovaag Skeje (2012, p.42) sees the international migration from Somalia as tri-phase: between 1988-91 there was the ‘first big wave of displacement’ when 1.5 million people left the country; from the mid-nineties to mid 2000 a period of relative stability but with ‘limited return’; and at the end of 2000 ‘increased, conflict, drought and famine’ led to a ‘considerable number’ of refugees. These refugee movements relate to the aforementioned phases of conflict identified by Bradbury and Healy (2010); clearly periods of violence correspond with increased migration as people try to get to safety. In the last decade migration has continued at a relatively low level, because, even though political and economic instability remain, there is a lack of significant widespread violence.

According to Cockburn (2017, p.66) Somali people are ‘one of the world’s largest diaspora groups’, Shire (2008, p.102) believes Somali people make up 0.57% of the international migrant community. The ethnic Somali international migrant population, is estimated by Shire (2008, p.96) to include an estimated 1,010,000 individuals, with around 150,000 resident in the USA, 100,000 in Canada, 150,000 in the UK, 100,000 in Europe, 10,000 in Oceania, 300,000 in East and South Africa and 200,000 in the Middle East. A more recent global figure is provided by Armila, Kananen and Kontkanen (2019, p.v) who state there are two million Somalis in the diaspora, describing it as ‘one of the most prominent diaspora populations’. This figure, double that of Kenny (20, p.94) and Shire (2008, p.96), takes into account migration in the last decade and also births.

The literature shows that Somali people have gravitated to particular areas, following earlier migrants. Abdi (2019, p.23) refers to this as ‘chain migration’.

For example, in Canada, according to Fellin (2015, p.31), most of the Somali community live in the Ontario Provence, with 75,000 people living in the Greater Toronto area. America's Associated press (2017) report that 57,000 people of Somali heritage live in Minnesota, which they claim, contrary to Fellin's data, is the largest population centre outside of Somalia. Armila et al. (2019, p.1) state that Somali communities across the diaspora share both similarities, for example in ambition, and differences as a result of contextual factors.

Links between the diaspora and Somalia are strong. Shire (2008, p.100) suggests there are three key contributing factors: communications technology, air travel and money transfer companies. Today the array of technology such as phones and internet-based communication allows for regular and cheap contact between those in Somalia and the diaspora. Indeed Shire (2008, p.100) suggests that the internet creates a state whereby 'the migrant, in a way, lives in two countries at the same time'. There are also regularly scheduled flights to Somalia from the UK, with airlines such as Ethiopian airlines, for a reasonable cost; approximately £350 in June 2021. However, the Foreign Office (2021) advises against all travel to the country except for the areas of Hargeisa and Berbera to which it recommends only essential travel. Somali money transfer companies are, according to Shire (2008, p.101), one of the biggest employers in the private sector and enable those in the diaspora to send money, sometimes to be received by relatives on the same day. Remittances, Lindley (2008, p.403) states, are seen as a form of humanitarian aid in addition to NGOs, national civil society and international development agencies. Horst (2008, p.144) calculates those remittances collectively total more than development aid, a claim Shire (2008, p.95) supports asserting that in 2003, remittances through all channels totalled $300 billion whereas as global aid was $68.5 billion. Shire (2008, p.97) refers to the sending of remittances as an 'expectation… a matter of duty, a cultural and humanitarian obligation', perhaps accounting for the sums involved.

2.4 The UK Somali community

Olusoga (2016, p.16) states that there have been Black people living in England since the third century although there is little data as to the origins of these early migrants. Whilst there is evidence that some of these people may have been from Sub-Saharan Africa (the Beachy Head Lady 200-250AD), according to Kahin (1997, p.31), Somali people first settled in Britain in the late nineteenth century. Many migrated to work in shipping or for educational opportunities. Numbers rose dramatically following the escalation of violence in Somalia in the late 1980s. Rutter (2006, p.177) suggests this forced migration occurred via a number of routes: directly from Somalia, via a neighbouring country such as Kenya or via another European country, usually after a protracted stay. Sporton et al. (2007, p.4) state 'the Somali community in the UK is characterised by different arrival scenarios'. This staggered migration perhaps allowed for Somali communities to develop, with families coming to join relatives already settled here. Demie, Lewis and McLean (2007, p.9) write that the largest Somali communities are in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Leicester, Sheffield and Cardiff. The Somali community is part of a wider Black British community which according to the last British census in 2011, is 3.3% (Boakye, 2019, p.19). 86% of the British population were White according to the same census, Black people therefore forming a small portion of the country's ethnic minority groups (Boakye, 2019, p.19).

Somalis arriving directly from the Horn of Africa are asylum seekers and according to Smith Ellison (2012, p.2) are 'covered by a legal framework provided by the 1951 UN convention' which includes rights and entitlements. If a positive decision is made to an asylum claim then 'right to remain' in Britain is granted and refugee status assigned. This entitles the applicant, according to the charity Right to Remain (2019), to 'the right to work and claim benefits, access to mainstream housing, and the possibility of applying for family reunion and a travel document'. After five years, 'indefinite leave to remain' can be applied for and a year after that an applicant can apply for citizenship. The Right to Remain website can be viewed in Somali, reflecting not only inclusivity but also presumably demand. 1999 was the peak year for Somali asylum

applications in Britain with 7,495 being made, by 2010 this had dropped to 590 (OSF, 2014, p.23). In later years Somalis arriving from European countries may have travelled on a passport of that nation, frequently Norwegian, Swedish or Dutch or carrying a travel document that enables movement. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) third country resettlement program also enabled refugee movement away from Somalia's neighbouring countries to the UK (Abdulle, 2019, p.134).

Most British Somalis speak Somali as their first language and are Muslim, the majority of whom are observant of Islamic practices such as eating halal food and wearing Islamic dress (Rutter, 2006, p.183). Kananen (2019a, p.39) refers to a 'strong sense of cultural confidence and pride'. Kahin and Wallace (2017, p. 145) agree and refer to the high levels of cultural knowledge that can be found in the Somali community, through Kahin's research in London. Kahin (1997, p.47) gives oral storytelling and poetry (gabay) as specific examples of a shared body of cultural knowledge. Somalis demonstrate strong community bonds and have worked on a community, family and individual level to reconstruct their lives in Britain. Abdulle (2019, p.138) states that the community are 'immersed in creating opportunities for their children, family and relatives'. Somalis contribute to the British economy in a wide range of roles such as taxi driving or medicine and there are many small business owners, particularly of businesses which serve the Somali community.

Kananen and Haverinen (2019, p.5) suggest there are a number of factors which affect the integration of any migrant: the individual's attributes, their 'desire to commit' and the support of the country of settlement. In Britain there are both barriers, such as institutional racism, and support such as healthcare free at the point of use. Whilst the Somali community remains distinct in many ways, for example language and dress, there is evidence of the Somali community assimilating cultural processes from other groups; Hassan (2018), for example, writes of the methods parents have adopted to support their children at school. School age children, including those of Somali heritage, also adopt the interests of their peers including TV, sports and music preferences.

Whilst the Somali community in Britain makes numerous positive contributions negative portrayals of Somali people in the British media, according to Mohamud and Whitburn (2016, p.117), engender the view they cannot play a constructive role in society. A focus on other Black migrants, such as the Windrush generation, further suggests 'recent arrivals are somehow less worthy of acceptance and incorporation into a Black British story' (Mohamud & Whitburn, 2016, p.117). Whilst such views are seen as erroneous by many, the Somali diaspora in Britain has faced a number of real challenges. According to the Open Society Foundations (OSF) report (2014) there are a large number of single parent Somali families and concerns about unemployment and poverty. Indeed, Hatoss (2016, p.148) suggests refugee communities 'represent the large majority of the poor in every country'. Abdi (2019, p.24) refers to the limited human capital, defined by him as education, held by many members of the Somali community. This, coupled with limited English, Abdi believes has 'great ramifications' (2019, p.24), particularly for further educational opportunity and employment. Fellin (2015, p.36) found that the emotional wellbeing of the women in her study was affected by separation from family members in Somalia or elsewhere in the diaspora. It can be assumed men and children would also be affected by this. Fellin (2015, p.36) also hypothesised that 'the worry over family is amplified during periods of armed conflict in Somalia' such conflict is frequent and often deadly, if small scale. Whilst these issues are significant Abdi (2019, p.30) makes comparisons with earlier migrant groups and suggests that it should not be seen that the Somali community's 'current condition is their destiny'.

The Somali experience of integration, and the sometimes challenging nature of this process, is a reflection of the wider migrant experience in Britain. Parallels can be drawn with a number of other communities; in fact, a small number of researchers have chosen to create comparative studies. Griffiths (2002, p.187) argues that the benefit of comparative approaches is to 'pinpoint those contextual and situational factors'. However, both studies which intend to compare and contrast the Somali experience with other migrant groups and those which focus on a migrant community other than the Somalis, can offer

insights. Furthermore, a greater understanding of the migrant experience and the understanding of common experience may generate solutions to some of the challenges faced specifically by the Somali community. A lot of work has been carried out, both nationally and internationally, with migrant communities. What follows gives a brief but insightful look at some of this research and a consideration of its relevance to the Somali community.

Ward and Spacey (2008) carried out a study with Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Somali women looking at adult education access. The study (2008, p.1) underlines strong commonalities as the women face similar barriers to accessing education. Ward and Spacey (2008, p.1) highlight the 'extreme challenges' the women face and highlighted the lack of inclusion and equality. A particularly interesting commonality between the communities with regards to integration was the likelihood of the women in live in areas populated by members of the same community either to develop positive networks or to avoid racism and other prejudice (Ward and Spacey, 2008, p.5). These positive networks and how they were utilised by the adult education providers gives an interesting insight how support may be offered to the Somali community of study.

Griffiths (2002) worked with the Somali and Kurdish communities in London to create a comparative study, which focussed on the arrival of the two communities and their integration into British society. Early in the work Griffiths (2002, p.82) highlights the 'significant contrast' in terms of the government response towards the two communities. The 'historic ties' (Griffiths, 2002, p.77) between Somalis and the UK and the viewing of the Kurdish community as economic migrants was at the core of government attitudes. Griffiths (2002, p.91) explains however that both communities do share commonalities such as 'the shock of displacement, common language, employment and educational barriers and considerable internal differentiation in terms of class and household characteristics'. Griffiths (2002, p.129), talking about the Kurdish community, asserts 'whilst there are clear divisions…there is also a strong sense of continuity and commonality of experience'. This certainly is also

evident in the Somali community with clan affiliation still providing a source of conflict while physical communities in UK cities pull together. Griffiths (2002, p.140) also draws a parallel between the two communities in terms of language. Both communities experience challenges in communicating across community groups due to language or dialectical difference. Furthermore, both communities have sought to assimilate whilst also ensuring what Griffiths (2002, p.136) calls the ‘preservation of cultural and national identity’. A final example from Griffiths (2002, p.143) well researched study describes in both groups an increasing awareness of rights and freedoms for women. However, I would suggest this is felt more strongly in the Kurdish community where women may not have experienced much freedom or opportunity. Somali women however have for some time been independent, for example as business owners and heads of households. This does however present an interesting aspect for further exploration and highlights a starting point for work with women in the community.

Bhatti (1999) wrote an ethnographic study with an Asian community in the south of England. This study is a particularly insightful piece, full of the rich findings you would expect from such a study. Bhatti’s research unlike this, does not end with next steps and ways to support the community of study, but rather it describes the life experience of the participants. Bhatti’s (1999) insights clearly show commonalities between the Asian community of her research and the Somali community of this. For example, Bhatti (1999, p.236) asserts that ‘their [the community of study’s] socio-economic position plays an important role in their daily lives’. With many people she met ‘employed at the lower end of the job market’ (Bhatti, 1999, p.237). This is reflected in the size and quality of housing which families can access, indeed Bhatti (1999, p.236) asserts nationally that ‘Bangladeshi and Pakistani families live in overcrowded accommodation’. This certainly is referenced in a number of studies about the Somali community, particularly those undertaken in London. It certainly seems a commonality of migrant communities that a lack of prior education, or undervalued previous education, hampers community efforts to be successful.

Unlike Griffiths (2002), Bhatti (1999, p.238) considers the impact of race on the migrant community in detail. She feels that multiple barriers exist stating that the crafting of migrant identity in Britain is 'affected by gender and ethnicity as much as by social class'. Bhatti (1999, p.242) concludes however that whilst she is 'concerned' about 'marginality' she is heartened by a 'spirit of resistance and struggle.' A theme in many pieces of work with migrant communities, and in particular the Somali community. Bhatti (1999, p.238) also explores a point raised in this research about whether the ties to 'home', in the case of her work the Indian Subcontinent, will weaken over time. Ties to Somalia, such as remittances and longing as well as identity and integration feature in this work as does the consideration of their longevity.

2.5 The UK Somali community and education

Knowledge about the education of the UK Somali community is quite minimal, compared to the body of research about other groups in education such as Afro-Caribbean students. It has been limited by the fact, according to Strand et al. (2010, p.67), that 'national data collection does not require the separate identification of ethnic groupings within the overall Black African group'. This makes it difficult to see national trends for the Somali community, in isolation from other Black African communities. Furthermore, much of the research that has been undertaken, according to Rutter (2006, p.178), is 'grey literature' or needs analysis. This is research conducted to support local authorities in their work with the Somali community and therefore is very specific in nature and scope. For example, Demie et al. (2007, 2008) have undertaken a number of focused research studies in Lambeth, London, the foremost examples of needs analysis literature concerning Somali students. Harris (2004, p.10) suggests much of the needs analysis is disjointed and not widely disseminated, because of the purpose for which it is created. She also suggests much of it is written from a deficit perspective, discussing the problems faced by Somali families with little reference to their agency. Notable exceptions are Kahin and Wallace (2017) and Hassan (2018) who have conducted strengths-based research

which gave members of the community a conduit for their voices and moved away from a deficit paradigm.

Demie et al. (2008, p.6) have written extensively about EAL students in the UK and the UK Somali community. They write of:

> a pattern of continuous underachievement of Somali children compared to the national average of White British, African, Caribbean, Indian and other ethnic minority groups.

Micklethwait (2013, p.1), one of the few researchers to make a comparison of students in the Black African group, concurs. His analysis of the 2011 summer examinations shows that '33% of Somali children got five good GCSEs… compared with 59% of Bangladeshi pupils and 78% of Nigerian ones'. To explain this underachievement, a small number of studies (Kahin (1997), Rutter (2006), Demie et al. (2007, 2008)) suggest some Somali students show a lack of engagement at school. Hatoss (2012, p.395) writes that 'African communities are on the unfavourable side of the digital divide', in other words, they have limited access to computer facilities and broadband. Whilst Banks (2016, p. 96) outlines a number of possible explanations which include: values, genetics, cultural deprivation and cultural difference. Of these, a genetic explanation has proven very contentious. Whilst some suggest DNA impacts intelligence, to suggest being of African descent leads to lower intelligence is today rightly deemed racist and without basis.

Ramsden and Taket (2013, p.108) further contribute to the debate, they found that many Somali parents believed that their children's educational difficulties could be attributed to a less rigorous and disciplined teaching model than what they themselves experienced in Somalia. Mohamud and Whitburn (2016, p.118) consider the role of schools, they express concern about how Somali students are viewed and how this is addressed by teachers. They state:

> Somali students in our schools face a double injustice: first, to be unfairly portrayed and, second, to have to disprove the negative portrayals of your community with no help from your teachers.

No research is referenced when making this statement however institutional racism and unconscious bias are certainly recognised issues in the national education system.

Whilst there are concerns about the attainment of Somali students and a tendency to view the community through a deficit lens, there is much to be celebrated with regards to education. Goodall (2013, p.139) emphasises parental investment can be effective in any family, 'regardless of race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status'. Diriye (2006) agrees and with reference to Somali parents says 'undoubtedly [they] want to support their children'. In Ramsden and Taket's research (2013, p.106) younger Somali mothers, who had adapted to their new life and spoke English more fluently, were better able to support their children's education and did so effectively. Ramsden and Taket (2013, p.100) suggest that Somali refugees 'see formal education as a way of regaining a sense of control over their family's fate'. According to their research this leads to high expectations of children in educational settings. The work of Strand et al. (2010) corroborates this, they found that high expectations are evident amongst both Somali students and parents.

Whilst deficit viewpoints generally dominate, it is clear that as a corpus the literature regarding Somali attainment shows a shift in tone. Earlier research tends to be more deficit in nature whilst more recent publications are more likely to be strengths based, reflecting both societal change and developments in the Somali community.

As research with the Somali community in regards to education in Britain is relatively minimal, looking at research with other migrant groups in school settings may offer further insights. As is the case with the more general literature on migrant groups, there is an extensive corpus about the many migrant groups in Britain and their experiences of the education system. Of particular relevance may be work with Black students more generally and in particular Afro-Caribbean students of which there is much literature. Whilst the Somali community has many unique facets it does of course fit into the wider

Black ethnic group. This literature is therefore likely to provide insights which may be applicable to the Somali community. Here I offer a brief insight into such literature focussing on the well-respected work of Feyisa Demie and Tony Sewell.

Demie (2018, 2021) has conducted a significant amount of work with the Afro-Caribbean community, often in the London borough of Lambeth. As with work on the Somali community, work with Afro-Caribbean students is often London-centric in nature. In one piece of research, Demie (2018) explores strategies at a management level, which could improve the experience and attainment of students. The research (Demie, 2018, p.6) opens with an exploration of the factors which may lead to underachievement such as stereotyping, curriculum relevance, low expectations and poverty. There is certainly commonality here with the research on or with the Somali community, suggesting some of the solutions may also have relevance. Demie's findings (2018, p11) naturally focus on leadership and its impact, due to the focus of the research, and highlight approaches to tackle racism and develop a diverse workforce as key factors in raising attainment. He also talks about the valuing of community knowledge. There are clearly commonalities here with Somali community research and are some interesting insights to be gained. Particularly, due to the FoK conceptual framework of this research, the findings about community knowledge and the important role in can play in raising the attainment of Black students more generally.

In other work focussed on closing the attainment gaps between groups of students, Demie (2019, p.121), highlights the essential nature of quality partnerships with the parents of Afro-Caribbean students. Demie (2019, p.123) discusses the fact that 'parents face numerous barriers to engagement, including costs, time and transport' but that their support is essential. This links to the Somali community who are also keen to engage but face challenges in doing so. Of particular interest in this piece of Demie's research were the comments made by a group of Afro-Caribbean students, when discussing identity with the researcher. Demie (2019, p.127) relays the fact that the

students ‘took it for granted they were British’. The literature, and my research, repeatedly show that Somalis living in Britain do not identify as British. This contrast in the literature, between the two groups, may open up opportunities for successful working with Somali students on the issue of identity.

Demie has also carried out research which looks at the exclusion of Afro-Caribbean students (2021). Whilst the entirety of the research is well researched and interesting, one particular facet has particular links with this research. Demie (2021, p.63) refers to the labelling of the students in his study, which may also be termed stereotyping. The research describes the pre-conceived ideas teachers had of their Black students and how this affected the attitudes and actions of the same teachers. This is a theme explored in the findings of this research and shows commonalities across the migrant experience. Demie (2021, p.64) also discusses race when he references the impact of using diagnosis techniques for ADHD, and other like conditions, which use ‘contextually inappropriate assumptions’. This misinterpretation of behaviours, which in this extreme case has potentially led to misdiagnosis, is also explored in my own research and it is therefore useful to see its discussion in work about other communities.

Like Demie, Sewell has written extensively about Black students and, also like Demie, is particularly interested in how students are perceived by their teachers. In his 2007 work Sewell (p.103) writes of the ‘homogenization of black (i.e. Afro-Caribbean) boys into one big lump of rebellious, phallocentric under-achievers’. Here we see the links to the labelling described in Demie’s work (2021, p.63) and also the wider discussions about racism. Sewell (2007, p.193) believes that, because of these racist views, schools make a ‘basic assimilationist offer…to Black boys’. The idea that Black students must assimilate and lose their identity in order to be valued. Sewell (2007, p.105) also describes the response of Black students to these circumstances when he uses the terms ‘acting white’ and ‘survival strategies’. Sewell (2007, p.105) also talks extensively about students being unable to ‘reconcile an ‘innocent cultural expression… with the values and norms of being a good student’. In other

words, a perception that enacted cultural norms are seen as being outside the norms of being a good student, the result of teacher perceptions and the assimilationist offer. This is certainly seen in this research with Somali students talking about their behaviour being misunderstood by their teachers.

Across his published work Sewell (1997, p.189) asserts there are actions schools can take to better support Black students. He suggests school should craft anti-racist policies and that these should be written in a way that include all stakeholders, making them policies for 'social justice'. Sewell (1997, p.190) states any policy should 'relate to the complex and changing notions of race and its interplay with other contingent subject positions'. Any policy should, according to Sewell (1997, p.191) inspire research, review and self-reflection'. My school does not have such a policy and this may be something which would support Somali students. Sewell (2007, p.193) also believes 'curriculum change and adaption would be "wise"'. He makes the case for curriculum development, not off-timetable days or celebratory months, but a diverse curriculum.

Sewell (1997, p.195) also suggests there are actions individual teachers can make. Firstly, he states, they can tackle misunderstandings about Black students. In particular Sewell (2007, p.115) believes 'teachers need to avoid two falsehoods'; stop denying black children are punished disproportionately and stop viewing Black students collectively as underachievers. Sewell (2007, p.115) suggests a range of strategies for teachers including: using friendly not aggressive gestures, listening carefully when students speak, respecting personal space and avoiding negative comments on cultural styles. Sewell (1997, p.195) also asserts 'teachers should be encouraged to engage in action or practitioner research on issues of social justice policy'. This would enable teachers to better understand their students and the issues at play. Such actions and knowledge, as Sewell outlines, would certainly help those teachers who teach students from the Somali community.

2.6 The Somali community of study

The field of this research is a school and its community, which could include homes, local businesses and social spaces. Whilst the research is mostly school-based the field encompasses community spaces as the institution does not operate in isolation; its students are shaped by the area in which they live. As Mills and Morton (2013, p.12) rightly state much of what influences the learning of students happens outside the school. The community of study is in an English city, the most recently available city-wide data concerning the Somali community is from an OSF report (2014, p.15) written about the city. No accurate population data was available at the time of its publication but estimates put the Somali population of the city at 10,000 to 15,000 with the majority living in four wards of the city. The community of study is located within one of these wards although the boundaries did change in 2015. Wider community concerns include housing, employment, health and community participation. The OSF report (2014, p.17) also mentions positives including a range of participants using a 'language of optimism and aspiration'. The documented challenges and community successes in the OSF report (2014) draw parallels with the national research.

The OSF report (2014, p.15) states that 2,076 Somali students were in city schools and are improving in terms of academic performance. The report (2014, p.15) does however identify a range of concerns including 'deprivation, pupil mobility, language difficulties, a lack of support mechanisms, expulsions and cuts to services'. The school of study sees these issues in action. It serves an area of high deprivation, illustrated by the fact that 24% of students are eligible for free school meals, a figure significantly above the national average of 17.3%. Ninety eight percent of the students are Muslim and come from a range of heritage backgrounds including Indian, Bangladeshi and Somali. The staff body is also diverse with staff from a range of ethnic and religious backgrounds, there are three Somali members of staff; one teacher, one learning support assistant and one mentor. The school's last Ofsted inspection was in 2018 when a 'Good' rating was maintained. The Ofsted report (2018, p.1) stated that

‘a culture of ambition and aspiration is developing in the school, which is helping to improve outcomes for pupils’. It also commented on the behaviour of students stating ‘it was evident that most pupils behave respectfully and conduct themselves well’ (Ofsted report, 2018, p.2). The report also spoke of the good pastoral work of the school relaying student voice about ‘the wealth of support that staff offer’ (Ofsted report. 2018, p.2).

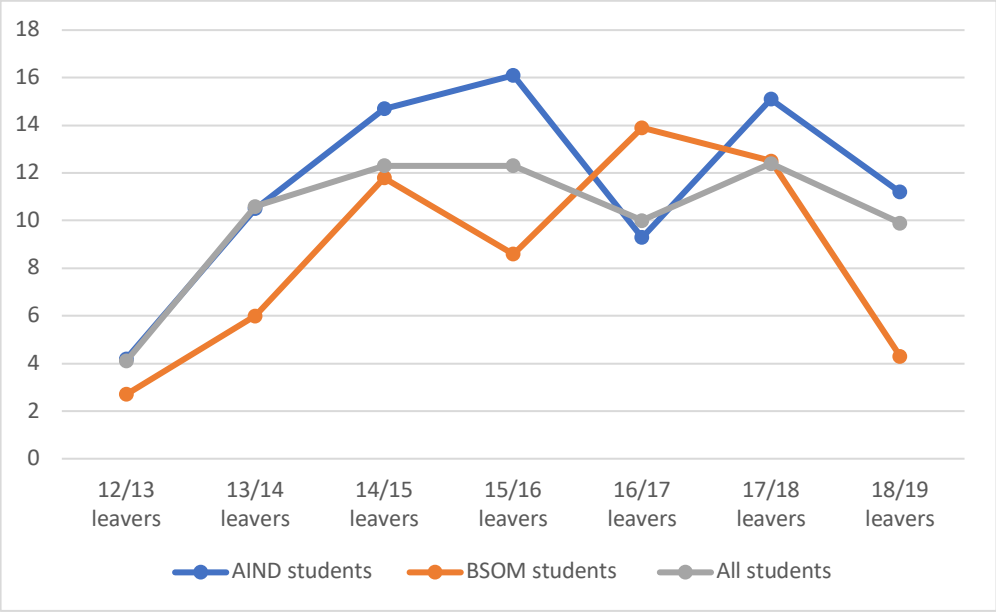
In the academic year 2019-20, the year this research was conducted, there were 1094 students on roll at the school with Somali students making up 13% of the cohort. There were 146 Somali students, 70 boys and 76 girls, from 107 families. 74 families had one child at the school, 28 families had two children, four families had three and one family had four children at the school. The numbers of Somali students attending the school seems to be falling as shown by the data in figure three. The shaded rows indicate the school population in the year of study.

Figure 3- Table to show the numbers of Somali students on roll from 2012/13 to 2024

	Number of Somali students	**Percentage**
12/13 leavers	37/195	19%
13/14 leavers	52/207	25%
14/15 leavers	50/215	23%
15/16 leavers	35/217	16%
16/17 leavers	40/215	19%
17/18 leavers	32/215	15%
18/19 leavers	23/220	10%
19/20 leavers	44/220	20%
20/21 leavers	29/241	12%
21/22 leavers	27/212	13%
22/23 leavers	23/211	11%
23/24 leavers	23/210	11%

Over the last six years in particular, work has been on going at the school to build relationships with the Somali community. The school has a full time Somali mentor, letters are translated into Somali where appropriate and a number of workshops, seminars and events have taken place. Whilst there are a considerable number of successes, there are also concerns about the Somali students as a cohort. A range of data sets, behaviour, exclusions, rewards and exam results, show a correlation with the concerning national trends. The graph in figure four illustrates an example of Somali attainment data which is of concern, also see figure one.

Figure 4- Graph to show the percentage of Somali (BSOM), Indian (AIND) and all students achieving A-A/9-7 in GCSE English Language from 2013 to 2019*



The school data, and to some extent the literature, does not present an even picture of Somali attainment. The data is polarised with a general pattern of high performing girls and lower attaining boys, with few mid-range students who achieve grades 4 and 5.

The participants of this study are primarily the school's Somali students. Other participants include parents, siblings, ex-students and members of staff of Somali heritage.

Chapter Three- Conceptual framework

3.1 Introduction to conceptual framework

According to Imenda (2014, p.185) theoretical and conceptual frameworks are not ‘conceptual synonyms’ but ‘different constructs’. Imenda (2014, p.189) defines a theoretical framework as the application of a single framework to a piece of research whilst a conceptual framework is the synthesis of elements from more than one theoretical approach. This is in contrast to Grant and Osanloo (2013, p.16) who define a theoretical framework as the selected theory and the conceptual framework as the application of it to the research project. Both agree however that a framework gives a study direction, guides the literature review and supports interpretation of the findings (Imenda, 2014, p.190). This research uses Imenda’s definition and a conceptual framework. These are, according to Imenda (2014, p.192), more commonly associated with qualitative research.

This research synthesises Bourdieu’s Cultural Reproduction Theory and Moll’s Funds of Knowledge (FoK) in an attempt to generate new insights. The literature suggests the Somali community is often viewed through a deficit lens, either because of ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status, religion or refugee background. This has strong links to the work of Bourdieu (1977) and the ideas of capital. Theorists, such as Bourdieu (1977) and Coleman (1988, 2007), suggest that the possession or lack of various forms of capital can have a significant influence on the future of individuals. The counter-narrative to this deficit model of the Somali community, as highlighted by Diryie (2006), Kahin and Wallace (2017), and Lewis (2021) is that it has a rich cultural fabric which I assert can be explored using the Moll’s FoK approach (1992a). FoK is part of what Banks (2016, p.92) terms the ‘ethnic revitalisation movement’, which aims to acknowledge the cultural wealth of communities.

3.2 Bourdieu

Silva and Ward (2010, p.1) describe Pierre Bourdieu as one of the most eminent sociologists of the twentieth century. Born in France in 1930 he was, according to Aubrey and Riley (2017, p.78), 'engaged in the fight against social oppression and injustice' throughout his academic career. He published numerous books and articles, with Aubrey and Riley (2017, p.78) stating that he is most famous for his work on cultural reproduction and capital. Indeed Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.3) classifies Bourdieu as a conflict theorist, considering class conflict and struggle. Bourdieu's body of work is almost entirely theoretical with only *The Weight of the World* (2010b) providing the empirical exception. Despite this mainly theoretical corpus Bourdieu advocated, particularly in his earlier work, the active use of his theories and in particular the adaption of them to address sociological problems (Silva & Ward, 2010, p.6). Bourdieu and Waquant stated 'these tools are only visible through the results they yield, and they are not built as such' (1992, p.160).

Many academics have critiqued Bourdieu's work, one example being Levinson and Holland (1996, p.7). They suggest three limitations of his work: the focus on class, 'intersections of class, race, gender and age' were not considered until the 1980s, the focus on Euro-American society and thirdly a reliance on 'highly schematic and deterministic models of structure and culture'. In addition, Bourdieu is often viewed as difficult to read and to fully comprehend. Bourdieu (1990, p.40) himself explained 'if you want to hold the world in all its complexity and at the same time order and articulate it…you have to use heavily articulated sentences'. He also addressed his use of the complex by suggesting it was in part to support the description of new insights, what he called 'metanoia' or new gaze (Bourdieu, 1992, p.251). Sullivan (2002, p.153) is however critical stating that 'clarity makes a theory amenable to testing, whereas obscurity protects it from falsification'. Despite the challenges of reading, understanding and applying Bourdieu, his work is widely read and used in the field of education.

3.3 The Theory of Cultural Reproduction

Karl Marx's Social Reproduction Theory (1930), describes the method by which social inequality is transmitted via the class system. Bourdieu developed this idea to formulate the Theory of Cultural Reproduction (1977, 1992, 2007). Sullivan (2002, p.144) states that the theory is 'concerned with the link between original class membership and ultimate class membership'. Bourdieu (1974, p.32) saw education as a key mediator in this, he wrote education is:

> one of the most effective means of perpetuating the existing social pattern, as it both provides an apparent justification for social inequalities and gives recognition to the cultural heritage, that is, to a social gift treated as a natural one.

Indeed Sullivan (2002, p.144) writes 'for Bourdieu, educational credentials help to reproduce and legitimate social inequalities'. Thus, cultural reproduction is the process by which the dominant class maintains the status quo and the value of their dominant capital, excluding the value of other capitals.

Marx was largely interested in economic capital but according to Aubrey and Riley (2017, p.78) Bourdieu felt the issue had more complexity leading him to identify three capitals: financial, cultural and social. Bourdieu also saw an 'intrinsic link' between the three types (Jones, p.20, 2021), the accessing of cultural capital made easier by the possession of the financial and social forms. Financial capital is the material wealth a person has. Cultural capital is centred on the shared outlook that is passed on from parent/carer to child, and can be subdivided into three states: embodied (ideas), objectified (possessions) and institutionalised (qualifications). Bourdieu (1992, p.119) defined social capital, the third form, as the resources possessed by an individual, which have been acquired by 'possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition'. Essentially any resource generated by an individual which is the result of contact with a support network. Ramsden and Taket (2013, p.100) state that social capital can be categorised into three types: bonding, bridging and linking. Bonding capital exists in closed networks and allows people to 'get by'; bridging capital is the connections between people with more distant relationships such as acquaintances that

could allow people to ‘get ahead’; and linking capital is interactions across ‘authority gradients in society’. According to the Cultural Learning Alliance (2019) more recent work has added further forms of capital: technical (marketable skills), emotional (skills for management e.g., empathy), national (traditions which offer a sense of belonging) and subcultural (cultural specifics for engagement with particular groups). Aubrey and Riley (2017, p.81) state that Bourdieu saw capital, in whatever form, and power as analogous and that there was a gap between those who had it and those who did not. A further consideration, according to Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p.99), is ‘position-taking’, how individuals use their capital.

The Theory of Cultural Reproduction is developed further by the notions of habitus and field. Bourdieu (1990, p.53) states habitus is ‘a system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures’. In other words, the individual conventions which are a product of upbringing and can tie an individual to his or her social class or environment. According to Gewirtz and Cribb (2009, p.47) ‘habitus represents a form of cultural inheritance analogous to genetic inheritance’. Academics have debated the idea of how free will fits into the construct of habitus, an issue referred to by Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.63) as the agency/structure gap. Sullivan (2002, p.152) believes that ‘the notion of habitus is completely deterministic, leaving no place for individual agency or even individual consciousness’. However, Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.63) suggests that Bourdieu’s model does allow for the agency of individuals, once aware of the required social norms an individual can adapt. As Bourdieu suggests those who have such characteristics innately have an advantage but it is clear others have the capacity given the right opportunities. A cultural field is the location or context in which life takes place, in the case of this research an educational setting, and the ‘rules of the game’ of that location (Crozier, 2001, p.334). According to Aubrey and Riley (2017, p.83), Bourdieu suggested that these fields were ‘fluid and dynamic’ but they also state the dominant culture might influence the creation of such fields thus compounding their dominance.

Symbolic violence also has an important part to play in explaining how the Theory of Reproduction can continue to be the process at play. It is defined by Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p.167) as 'the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity'. In other words, marginalised groups allow the process of social reproduction to occur due to their social position. Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.5) believes Bourdieu's work on symbolic power illustrated how the upper classes keep a status quo. It is part of a deficit narrative which blames the actions of marginalised groups, not the social structures which confine them.

Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.5) considers Bourdieu to have developed his Theory of Cultural Reproduction throughout his academic career, making revisions as he refined his thinking. Silva and Ward (2010, p.3) identify one such development- by the late 1980s, Bourdieu began to present the ideas of habitus, cultural capital and field as 'a systematic corpus', bringing the three ideas together as a 'conceptual and theoretical core'. Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.16) depicts this theory mathematically as '[(habitus)(cultural capital)]+ field = practice'. According to Silva and Ward (2010, p.5) there is dispute amongst academics as to whether it is necessary to synthesise all of the aspects of this framework in order to fully explore an aspect of research. Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.7) is particularly vocal on the matter and argues partial use of the theory leads to 'distortions or mistreatment of the theoretical constructs'. For example, Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.88) explains a focus solely on cultural capital is 'essentially meaningless' without mentioning the field to contextualise. This research uses the whole theory but with particular reference to cultural capital.

3.4 Cultural Reproduction Theory in education

Bourdieu saw education as a key factor in perpetuating inequality, as according to Banks (2016, p.91) it 'reinforces the social and economic stratifications'. Bourdieu (1977, p.494) wrote that:

> by doing away with giving explicitly to everyone what it implicitly demands of everyone, the education system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not give.

Cultural capital in particular seems to resonate with the act of schooling and has thus become the most commonly applied aspect of Bourdieu's work, despite objections to researchers extracting aspects to use in isolation. Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.viii) refers to four definitions of cultural capital found in her review of relevant literature: high status knowledge, the culture valued in a particular setting, otherised capital and as part of Cultural Reproduction Theory. According to Jaeger (2010) frequently used measures of cultural capital in qualitative research are: participation in highbrow activities, reading habits, educational resources in the home, extracurricular activities and conversations about culture. Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.86) refers to the 'holy trinity of variables as proxies for cultural capital': parents' education, parents' occupation and family income. Such definitions look at factors that occur or exist outside the school system.

Ofsted have played a significant part in legitimising the focus on cultural capital within schools and of popularising the term in the education sphere. In the most recent education inspection framework (2019a, p.9) cultural capital is recognised as one of its four intents. The Cultural Learning Alliance (2019) postulate that the new framework is the first time that schools have been required to give consideration to cultural capital. The framework states:

> Leaders take on or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or high needs, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

The Ofsted school inspection handbook (2019b) says that the organisation's understanding of 'knowledge and cultural capital' is taken from the national curriculum, section 3.1 (DfE, 2014, p.4) which says:

> The national curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said, and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

'The best that has been thought and said' is actually a quote from Matthew Arnold's 1869 essay, Culture and Anarchy (1978, p.6), rather than Bourdieu. It is interesting that Ofsted have used the national curriculum to define cultural capital when the document is not outlining the meaning of cultural capital.

Amanda Spielman, HM Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills, gave a speech (2019) to clarify Ofsted's position. She referred to 'lucky and unlucky' children, in terms of care but also in terms of the cultural capital they have received. She also refers to cultural capital as 'standard reference points' and states that 'all children are at different points on the same path to building that knowledge'. It is conceivable, but ignored by Ofsted, that children from different backgrounds might have their own paths.

Whilst the term cultural capital has become commonplace in education, its relevance is questioned by some academics. Bourdieu's work was based on observation of the tiered French system of his generation, in particular higher education. Aubrey and Riley (2017, p.85) postulate his observations 'lack applicability to the current system of education in England'. Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.73-4) agrees suggesting its key limitation is that it is a French, class-based theory. However, Grenfell (2010, p.26) suggests that whilst Bourdieu's theoretical work uses his own lens, that of a twentieth century French academic, this can be overcome. Any work that refers to his theories should 'work with Bourdieu, but without Bourdieu', in other words use an adaption of his framework which best explores the issue at hand. Issues which can include attainment, refugee groups and secondary school students. Sullivan (2002, p.155) states that 'Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is not clearly defined' with Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.21) going further suggesting the definition is often 'unclear or even contradictory'. Many studies, for example De Graaf, De Graaf and Kraaykamp (2000), Cook (1997) and Sullivan (2001), define cultural capital in a quite narrow way for example reading rather than story telling. This has led to questions about its use in educational research. Sullivan (2002, p.150) also criticises the concept of habitus as 'too nebulous to be operationalised' and she suggests that 'the main use of habitus is to give a veneer of theoretical sophistication to empirical findings'. On balance however Aubrey and Riley (2017, p.88) conclude Bourdieu's work is 'eminently applicable today'. Indeed, it offers a way to consider the knowledge that students have and its currency in the current education system, an issue at the centre of this work.

3.5 Deficit models

The Bourdieusian framework has been frequently used, by academics and researchers in the field of education, to develop theories about the underachievement of those from socio-economically deprived backgrounds and the study of attainment gaps. According to Yosso (2005, p.76), this research has concluded 'that some communities are culturally wealthy while others are culturally poor'. She believes that this is an epistemological debate centred on whose knowledge is valued and whose is not. Indeed, Aubrey and Riley (2017, p.82) state Bourdieu refers to the dominant capital as 'legitimate culture' suggesting there is conversely a non-legitimate culture. This idea that some capitals are more valued than others, on the grounds of ethnicity or any other factor, is a deficit model, 'at its centre the idea that children and families are to blame for their underachievement because of their lack of cultural capital' (Yosso, 2005, p.75). Hannon, Faas and O'Sullivan (2017, p 1227) agree suggesting:

> the deficit discourse can place the locus of responsibility for progression with the individual, neglecting to acknowledge the role of structure in reproducing social inequalities.

It is generally seen that governments decide what capital is valued, they decide on curricula and exam specifications for example. Fox (2016, p.643) states that 'such policies aim to retain authority over the purpose of education and what counts as knowledge'. Therefore, what seems to be an education system that leads to social change is actually controlled and linked to the needs of the labour market. Freire (2000, p.54) calls this a 'false generosity of paternalism'. Fellin (2015, p.40) feels it is bigger than individual governments but actually 'Western liberal culture…[that] gets to decide the differences that are allowed and the differences that need to be developed, altered, or improved'.

If some capital or community knowledge is seen as less valuable this will have an impact on students in possession of such non-dominant capital. Hannon et al. (2017, p.1227) state that 'there is a clear link between a lack of access to forms of social and cultural capital that are valued by the dominant social

classes' and poorer educational outcomes. Groves and Baumber (2008) concur, finding a clear link between the level of social capital of parents and the academic attainment of children. Gewirtz, Ball and Bowe (1995), share this view, suggesting some parents have the 'wrong currency'. In offering an explanation Reay (1998, p.163) suggests parents with under-valued cultural capital have 'less effective practices' to support their children. Indeed Burke (2005, p.71) surmises that the higher achievement of some students is the result of 'the cultural investment strategies followed by parents, strategies such as giving [their children] classic novels to read or taking them to concerts and museums'. In refugee families such as those of the Somali community, there is a further complexity in that, according to Hatoss and Sheely (2009, p.127), refugees tend to be stigmatised and this vulnerability can lead to the community demonstrating extreme loyalty to their own culture. This could perpetuate stereotypes and lead to what Erel (2018) describes as 'a pervasive discourse that migrants do not fit in'. Such a narrative could result in migrants not integrating into the host culture, preventing the accumulation of wider social and 'valid' cultural capital. It would also prevent the adaption or development of the dominant culture. This has particular resonance for this research as the cultural inheritance of Somali children will potentially be very different from that of the majority population. Bennett et al. (2009, p.235) state that work, from the 1990s onwards, has considered 'the specific effect of ethnicity on the organisation, distribution and transmission of cultural capital relative to that of other variables'. The work however has yet to result in the removal of deficit discourse

The Cultural Learning Alliance (2019) suggest Ofsted have introduced the cultural capital element of the new framework (2019a) to 'level the playing field' and remove the disparities identified by Gewitz, Ball and Bowe (1995), Reay (1998) and Burke (2005). Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.85) however, expressing her view in deficit vocabulary, believes schools were already 'attempt[ing] to compensate for the lack of mainstream or legitimate cultural capital that some students have failed to acquire from their families'. Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.6) sees two issues with education taking on or continuing this role. Firstly, it is difficult to acquire cultural capital only through education and secondly (2010,

p.84) identifying cultural capital as something that should be taught places the onus on those deficient to learn it. The Cultural Learning Alliance (2019) is also concerned that it will lead to 'the entrenchment of one type of culture', validating Bourdieu's concerns about education maintaining the status quo.

Social mobility, often seen as class mobility but defined by Blandford (2017, p,29) as 'life chances for everyone', is often seen as an alternate view to Bourdieu's theory, that education enables social mobility rather than maintaining a status quo. Education can offer all students the opportunity to gain the knowledge needed to succeed or according to Blandford (2017, p.19) 'change the way people think, act and engage'. This statement can however be interpreted as developing the cultural capital of the dominant class. Indeed, Blandford states (2017, p.25) suggesting personal drive is all that is needed to succeed places the onus on the individual to succeed in a system which might be restricted. Furthermore, Boakye (2019, p.205) states that 'social mobility seems like a noble endeavour until you realise it comes attached to rigid notions of hierarchy'. Aubrey and Riley (2017, p.84) discuss Bourdieu himself as an exception to the theory he proposed in that he came from a working-class background to work in the academy demonstrating social mobility in action. However, Sullivan (2002, p.146) suggests that Bourdieu believed his own path strengthened his model as it supported the appearance of a meritocracy when actually those who succeed from outside the legitimate culture are the exception.

3.6 The Funds of Knowledge approach

Banks (2016, p.100) refers to a cultural difference paradigm where students from minority groups are seen to have rich cultures which can enrich the lives of all students. There are many facets to this approach all of which actively seek to engage with and value the cultural capital of ethnic minority communities, moving from the deficit model associated with Bourdieu to a more strengths-based model. Coleman (1988) for example removed the Marxist undertone of Bourdieu's work, and alluded to a more strengths-based model, by suggesting

that all members of society, not just the higher social strata, possess social and cultural capital and that this is converted to what he terms human capital. He describes human capital as qualities which enable children to become better learners, that are passed down from the previous generation, their parents, teachers and other significant adults. Coleman does not define what he means by a better learner but he alludes to knowledge and skills that are helpful in an educational setting. Also, it is not clear whether human capital would be seen as a 'legitimate' form of capital, however it may allow for the development of cultural and social capital.

Another such approach is Funds of Knowledge (FoK) developed by Louis Moll (1992a, p.133). Moll defines the FoK approach as one which not only values the cultural and social capital of families but seeks to incorporate them into school life. In other words, respecting the knowledge and skills a family unit has, which in the case of ethnic minority families may be different from the majority population, and in turn using it to enhance the curriculum offer. Moll (1990b, p.320) believes that every household is an educational setting for its inhabitants and thus, as Gonzalez et al (2008, p.117) assert, this knowledge is often 'abundant and diverse'. Moll (1992b, p.21) believes that communities are potentially at the centre of educational change and improvement because of this latent knowledge. Developing social capital to access this knowledge is key to the FoK approach. Moll (1990, p.344) states that:

> by developing social networks that connect classrooms to outside resources, by mobilizing funds of knowledge, we can transform classrooms into more advanced contexts for teaching and learning.

Sarroub (2010, p.78) writes further about the role of schools in the FoK approach. She suggests that, by utilising a FoK approach and empowering families, schools could broaden the range of valued cultural capital and thus empower more students to achieve, including those of marginalised groups. The Cultural Learning Alliance (2019) suggest that the inclusion of cultural capital in the Ofsted framework could present an opportunity for schools to do just that. Now schools can 'define the cultural capital that their children need and think more widely than existing legitimate culture'. In other words, they

could value local community capital. Indeed, valuing a community's capital may also provide opportunities to generate shared capital.

FoK can also be viewed collectively. Indeed Yosso (2005) suggests that particular groups; ethnic, religious or geographical groups for example, may have a shared set of values or knowledge. This is termed 'community cultural wealth' and may include familial, social, navigational, resistant, linguistic and aspirational capital. Banks (2016, p.139), outlines a history of research, with ethnic minority communities, which has acted as a counter-narrative to the deficit model discourse by exploring FoK. With reference to the Somali community, Kahin (1997), Demie et al. (2007, 2008) and Kahin and Wallace (2017) all highlight cultural wealth. Conversely Funds of Knowledge can be viewed on an individual level through a linked concept called Funds of Identity. Esteban-Guitart and Moll (2014) define this as the interests and skills of students which may be different from those of their household.

Of his 1990 research Moll (p.344) said that 'the student's community, and its FoK, are the most important resource for reorganising instruction in ways that "far exceed" the limits of current schooling'. In 1992, his research had similar aims: to 'develop innovations in teaching that draw upon the knowledge and skills found in local households' (1992a, p.132). According to Moll's later work (2003, p.711), there are two key implications of the FoK approach: the first changes teaching and the second alters teachers' 'perceptions of diversity'. These descriptions of the FoK approach show Moll's development of the approach over time. In 1990/2 he anticipated a change in practice however by 2003 he began to foresee the potential to change the mindset of practitioners, not just their practice.

Despite the potential benefits of the approach, FoK is not widely used, with many schools continuing to view ethnic minority families through a deficit lens. Moll (1990, p.328) states lessons rarely extend beyond the classroom or incorporate ideas, interests, or activities of the students and their families. In explanation Moll (1990, p.327) writes of the difficulties of introducing FoK

approaches in schools although there are differing interpretations of why this may be the case; some practical such as time and money, others perhaps more ideological. Gordon, Holland and Lahelma (2011, p.188) for example refer to the fact that whilst American anthropologists focus on the view that teachers are 'agents of cultural imposition', British sociologists are interested in class and social structures that 'constrain both teachers and pupils'. Both interpretations could be true with teachers being willing or unwilling agents, upholding a structure which constrains and does not legitimise alternative FoK.

The examples of good FoK practice cited in Moll (1990, p.342) and in Jovés, Siqués and Esteban-Guitart (2015) require real flexibility in the curriculum which the current curriculum and exam specifications constrain. Many English schools follow the national curriculum, a largely Eurocentric and knowledge heavy curriculum, and all schools are subject to standardised testing such as GCSEs and A Levels. It is also be challenging to reconcile whose capital could and should be incorporated and how this could this be done. Gang culture for example, whilst offering legitimate capital on the street, would be difficult and contentious to include in an academic curriculum. Adjapong (2017) has tried to navigate such issues with his development of the Hip Hop Curriculum, a strategy to teach Science utilising a shared love of hip hop. However, this could perhaps be exclusory to students not a part of this culture. Gorski (2016, p.225) states that the understanding of barriers, even those that schools or individuals cannot change, allows the possibility to 'develop policy and practice that are responsive to the lived realities' of students. However, where flexibility exists in the curriculum, the range of material included by teachers could and should be diversified.

A further consideration in any research about otherised capital is the changing nature about what is viewed as legitimate and who decides. Since Bourdieu's work was published, the consumption of culture has changed markedly. In Bourdieu's 1979 work 'Distinction', culture was considered to be nationally bounded, the influence of transnational culture minimal. Britain today however sees legitimate culture in many forms and with many influences, including those

of a global nature. This adds value to alternate capital or could indeed push alternate capital to become mainstream or legitimate. Bennett et al. (2009, p.182-3) refer to omnivorousness in culture as, ‘developing a taste for everything’, not indiscriminately but rather ‘an openness to appreciate everything’. Thus, what was once seen as counter culture or non-legitimate capital is now mainstream, hip hop being a prime example. Nasir and Saxe (2003, p.17) refer to these evolving tastes as ‘shifting cultural capital’. Social media, the power of influencers and celebrity culture also changes who might be in a position to determine what is viewed as mainstream. This adds complexity to the question of what is viewed as legitimate capital however, it has limited impact on schools and individual teachers in the short-term who follow prescribed curricula.

The conceptual framework of this research acknowledges the role of education in cultural reproduction as theorised by Bourdieu. It however understands that greater knowledge of the FoK held by the Somali community could enhance their educational experience and perhaps even see improvements in their educational outcomes, whilst considering the constraints of the current educational system. The development of lesson schemes that include FoK could also positively influence all students. Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.79) feels that the examination of cultural capital that is marginalised may ‘breathe new life into Bourdieu’s theoretical apparatus’. This conceptual framework allows the research questions to be explored fully by considering the FoK of the Somali community, the challenges faced by the community, rooted in deficit viewpoints or realities, and the strategies employed to mitigate them.

Chapter Four- Methodology

4.1 Philosophical stance and positionality

Howell (2013, p.88) asserts a constructivist ontology is one underpinned by an understanding of reality that is created or constructed by those involved. This research is constructivist in that it seeks to understand the multiple realities that are created by the Somali community, to explore what Kumar (2014, p.133) calls 'variation and diversity'. Waring (2017b, p.16) states the corresponding epistemological view sees direct knowledge as impossible, knowledge is gained only through an interpretative process. Thus, this research has an interpretivist epistemology relating to contextualised and fluid knowledge claims.

My philosophical positioning is the foundation from which this research was developed. It is inherently coherent as the philosophical stance informed the conceptual framework of Cultural Reproduction Theory and FoK. Creswell (2014, p.14) explains that ethnography was developed from the disciplines of anthropology and sociology and as such aims to enable the researcher to explore the lives of participants, suggesting an ethnographic approach fits well. The methods used fit an ethnographic approach and the study spanned a year as Murchison (2010, p.89) states 'that having access to a full cycle of events can be very important'. The findings of this research were then analysed using an analytical framework which looked to gain an understanding of those involved through the researcher's lens, again an appropriate and coherent approach.

A researcher's positionality, according to Edwards and Holland (2014, p.79), may shape a research project through held biases. Whilst these cannot be removed completely, reflexivity allows the researcher to explore their position within each research scenario. I am a White female in my late thirties, from a non-migrant background and with a similar socio-economic background to my participants. O'Reilly (2012, p.93) suggests that building a rapport can be easier with 'people whom we share characteristics' which is confirmed by Housee

(2016). She suggests insider researchers have wider access to communities and are able to draw higher quality interpretations as they share a cultural background, terming this ‘ethnic affinity’. This seems a development of Sandra Harding’s Standpoint Theory which states knowledge is ‘socially situated’ and therefore members of that social setting are more informed (Bowell, 1995). As a white researcher from a different community to my participants ‘ethnic affinity’ is not present. I also do not have a refugee background, a point of difference shared and highlighted by McMichael (2003, p.189). However, the lived experiences of people have many intersections, which may or may not include ethnicity and refugeeism.

Contrasting the work of O’Reilly (2012), Housee (2016) and Harding (Dowell, 1995), Banks (1998, p.8) describes the position of an external-insider, a researcher who was socialised within another culture and yet because of unique experiences, ‘rejects many of the values, beliefs and knowledge claims within his or her indigenous community and endorses those of the studied community’. At my school for eleven years, I have worked closely with members of the Somali community, this gives me this position of an external-insider. I am not a member of the school’s Somali community however many members know and trust me.

This assertion links to the work of Crozier (2003, p.90) who debates the appropriateness of White researchers portraying Black voices. She concludes that ‘individuals’ stories cannot stand alone if action and change is to be achieved’ thus a researcher may collate such views. Davies (2014, p.56) agrees postulating that researchers only working with participants from the same ethnic background could create ‘an academic apartheid that is counter to the goal of sharing understanding’. With particular reference to the Somali community Roble and Rutledge (2008, p.ix) write that:

> Somali folks don’t really process information about other people through racial paradigms. Instead, they simply respect anyone who treats them with respect.

4.2 Research Design

4.2.1 Overview

As the conceptual framework of this constructivist, interpretivist study is Cultural Reproduction Theory and FoK, ethnography emerged as the clear methodological choice for this research, which in turn suggested particular methods. When working with Cultural Reproduction Theory, Bourdieu recommended (1996, p.22) ‘attempting to situate oneself in the place the interviewee occupies in the social space in order to understand them as necessarily what they are’, endorsing the use of qualitative methods. In their critique of Bourdieu’s theory Levinson and Holland (1996, p.9) state that the use of ethnography as a methodology ‘forced scholars to move beyond the more deterministic formulations’ allowing the agency of participants to be realised. Moll (1992a) in his FoK research used a qualitative framework which fore-fronted interview-questionnaires, as part of ethnographic observation. Moll (1992a, p.132) justified such an approach stating it could ‘fathom the array of cultural and intellectual resources available to students and teachers’. Esteban-Guitart and Moll (2014) explain that ethnography is the traditional methodology when working with FoK and has been used by a range of academics in the field such as Gonzalez et al (2008). The use of an ethnographic approach is also supported by prior research with the Somali community. Demie et al. (2007, 2008), who have carried out the main body of work with the community in the UK, have taken ethnographic approaches. Indeed, many working with refugee groups have done so. Elliott (2017, p.25) describes the study of, or with, members of the diaspora as an ‘anthropological concern’ thus suggesting ethnography would be appropriate. An ethnographic approach also suits the research questions of this study, which are exploratory in nature and look to understand the lived experiences of participants.

Within the interpretivist paradigm, and more specifically in the field of education research, Creswell (2016, p.260) suggests the following five research designs are commonly used: ethnography, narrative research, phenomenology, case studies and grounded theory. Whilst ethnography was the obvious choice for

this research as outline above, the other research designs were considered and later dismissed. The table in figure five briefly outlines the approaches and suggests why each was not seen as appropriate.

Figure 5- Table to show a summary of considered research approaches

Methodology	Focus	Features	Conflict with this research approach
Narrative Research Creswell, 2016, p.261	The story of one, or a small number of individuals.	Biography with a narrative arc. Usually narrative with separate analysis.	The scope is too narrow for this community-based research and a narrative is not the ideal output for a participatory project.
Phenomenology Creswell, 2016, p.261	A phenomenon such as 'being a charismatic leader'.	Range of data collection methods but solely with the people who have experienced the phenomenon.	An underlying phenomenon is not guiding this research, key themes will emerge from the data.
Case Studies Harding, 2013, p.16	On one 'case' which can take a number of forms.	Can be quantitative or qualitative. Context is central to a case study.	Is not as embedded in the community as other research designs and can be less focussed on observation and understanding.
Grounded Theory Waring, 2017a, p.100	Any general area of investigation.	The data shapes the research process.	There are theories and ideas that guide this research rather than allowing them to emerge. However, the analytical methods are consistent and thus being used.

4.2.2 Ethnography

LeCompte and Preissle (1993, p.7) detail the development of ethnography; as anthropologists and sociologists began to adapt to changing research subjects in the twentieth century, so their research interests 'began to converge'. Much of this converging work happened at the university of Chicago and thus LeCompte and Preissle (1993, p.6) believe it was here that the first research was produced which is recognisable as ethnography. Today we refer to the Chicago School of Ethnography (1917-1942) which, according to Deegan (2011, p.11), 'shaped the discipline'. Bronislav Malinowski writer of *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) is cited by Mills and Morton (2013, p.25) as one of the pioneers of the ethnographic movement and Margaret Mead, author of *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928), is identified as possibly the first educational ethnographer. Mills and Morton (2013, p.26) view Paul Willis' *Learning to Labour* (1988) as a seminal work of modern ethnography. Influential ethnographic works for this study include *Guests of the Sheik* by Warnock Fernea (1969), *Educational Failure and Working Class White Children* by Evans (2006) and *Factories for Learning* by Kulz (2017).

There are a number of definitions of ethnography. Creswell (2016, p.264), for example, states the core of an ethnographic study is the description of a cultural group, the shared actions they take and the beliefs and values they hold. This study uses Walford's (2008, p.7) definition, that describes the key features as: a study of culture, multiple methods of data collection, long term engagement, high status of participants and a cycle of hypothesis and theory building. Walford also highlights the role of the researcher as an instrument, meaning the researcher plays an important role within the research, and so may influence its outcome. A further consideration is that ethnography can be seen to be bound to one site, multi-sited or even unbound (Falzon, 2009). This study is best described as specific to one site in that it focusses on one school; however, it recognises the influence of the community in which it is situated.

Behind Walford's (2008, p.7) seemingly clear and concise definition of ethnography is much uncertainty and debate. Hammersley and Atkinson (2003, p.2) state that the rather 'complex' history of ethnography has led to the lack of a 'standard, well-defined meaning'. Mills and Morton (2013, p.3) wrote that there are myriad understandings of the term describing a 'rich smorgasbord of ethnographic traditions and understandings'. This is perhaps a more optimistic interpretation of the situation than that of Hammersley and Atkinson. To add further complication Hammersley (2018, p.6) suggests that ethnography can be seen as more than a research design, as a paradigm which influences all aspects of the research process including ontological and epistemological ideas. In fact, he suggests to view it only as a research strategy could compromise the very nature of the approach. In addition to the complexities around definition there are numerous 'qualifying adjectives' which can be applied to the term ethnography, in this research 'educational', each facet having its own preferences for approach dependent on setting and circumstance (Hammersley, 2018, p.5). Coe, Waring, Hedges and Arthur (2017, p.11) however suggest that there is still a debate around whether educational research is indeed a discipline in its own right, having many similarities with other established fields.

Not only is it quite difficult to define ethnography, Hammersley (2018, p.2-3) suggests its very nature is under threat from a range of concerns including accountability pressures, the preference for quantitative methods, time pressures for research, obstacles to settings and the view of ethics committees that ethnography can be particularly problematic. Furthermore, the research approach presents researchers with a number of challenges. Mills and Morton (2013, p.23) suggest a potential difficulty is maintaining a balance between the familiar and the strange. It is important for new ethnographers to 'see' the familiar and include it in the work rather than a focus on what is new to the observer. Hammersley and Atkinson (2003, p.9) recommend treating the familiar as 'anthropologically strange'. In addition, Van Maanen (2010, p.245) suggests that the creation of an ethnography 'appears almost Herculean', especially the difficulties of trying to 'depict in writing what it is like to be

somebody else'. Van Maanen (2010, p.246) believes the challenge comes from the fact that ethnographers must 'select, defend, blend, stretch and combine' information (data) to suit their research and also the expectations of it. A further challenge to the approach is what Kaplan-Weinger and Ullman (2015, p.19) refer to the 'reflective' or 'postmodernist' turn and its deep impact on ethnography, and indeed many other fields. Essentially an epistemological crisis, it was triggered by a series of essays edited by Clifford and Marcus (2010), in which the authors were sceptical that researchers could produce 'true' knowledge. For these reasons, ethnography may be overlooked for a more accessible research design.

As the nature of ethnography itself is contested, so too are the methods. Whilst Hammersley (2018, p.12) states there is 'only very limited agreement about what ethnography involves', there are key areas of agreement. Mills and Morton (2013, p.13) suggest that the many questions around what is ethnography are actually 'three big unspoken disagreements'. The relationship between observation and participation is one, along with how the notion of 'field' or the ethnographic site is seen and the researcher's emotional attachment to ethnography.

A further consideration for researchers is the development of an ethnographic writing style. Jeffrey (2008, p.141) suggests that writing good research 'requires great skill in weaving descriptions, conversations, fieldnotes and own interpretations into a rich believable descriptive narrative'. Indeed Emerson et al. (2011a, p.46) state there has been a close examination of how ethnographers write. One feature identified by Bhatti (2012, p.81) is the inclusion of 'thick description', a term developed by Geertz (1973). Holliday (2007, p.74) defines thick description as the analysis of the cultural meaning of actions taken, rather than just describing them. Elliott (2017, p.24) states that there are many examples of anthropological work that 'blurs and bends genres', considering not only the inclusion of thick description but the style of writing. Particularly intriguing is Murchison's (2010, p.189) use of the term 'ethnographic storytelling' and similarly Elliott's (2017, p.25) reference to 'imaginative

ethnography' which, he believes, borrows creative writing strategies. This ethnography paid particular attention to this imaginative approach in an attempt to really convey the lives of participants. For example the 'Welcome' section at the end of the Setting the Scene chapter, just before the findings, hoped to bridge the academic style of the former with the more literary style of the latter.

4.3 Methods

4.3.1 Introduction to ethnographic methods

Neve and Unnithan-Kumar (2006, p.19) state that ethnographic research is not subject to one particular approach but can be interpreted in many ways. Thus, this research is my own interpretation developed with Mrs Jama. Mills and Morton (2013, p.9) also question whether ethnographers can actually be prescriptive about their methods when the very nature of ethnography involves the researcher responding to the situations in which they find themselves. Indeed, Mills and Morton (2013, p.43) go as far as to suggest that not having an approach to the research is an approach in itself. However, as a relatively inexperienced researcher with limited time, a more structured approach was necessary in my research but with the option to be guided by the findings.

There is much discussion in the literature about which methods are used in ethnographic approaches. Many academics concur with Iphofen (2013, p.1) who describes ethnography as a 'field-based research method employing observation and interviewing'. Generally, the key method is seen as participant observation although some ethnographers use interviews as their main method of information or data collection. Indeed Wolcott (1999, p.44) identifies a dichotomy between those who view interviews as participant observation and those who see them a separate act. Most ethnographers subscribe to the latter view.

Atkins and Wallace (2012, p.158) stress the essential nature of observation for ethnographic approaches although outline a range of ways in which this may vary across, or even within, a project. In particular they discuss the number of

observations and the levels of participation (Atkins and Wallace, 2012, p.159). Many methodology books, such as those by Atkins and Wallace (2012), Thomas (2013) and Seale (2012) actually give very little detail about ethnographic observation but give rather generic overviews of fieldwork. It is left to the researcher to develop observational approaches which meet the needs of the specific research project.

Ethnographic interviews, according to Atkins and Wallace (2012, p.160) 'provide opportunities to gather rich an illuminative data'. They are not however different to the range of interview types carried out within other methodological approaches; the term ethnographic interview is simply applied to an interview carried out in the context of an ethnographic study. Atkins and Wallace (2012, p.161) however assert that this is significant, bearing in mind that ethnographers are in the field for prolonged period, developing relationships with participants. Thus, ethnographic interviews 'will reflect the relationship in the way they are negotiated, shaped and conducted' (Atkins and Wallace, 2012, p.161).

Culhane (2017, p.9) states there are three, rather than two, core aspects of ethnography: participant observation, interviewing and additionally the analysis of documentary artifacts. This is supported by Seale (2012), and by Murchison (2010, p.41) who outlines the 'mainstays' of ethnography as participant-observation, interviews and maps and charts. Seale (2012, p.255) outlines a large number of potentially relevant documents but insists that ethnographers are looking to understand them 'in terms of their social production rather than their truth'.

The definitions of Seale, Culhane and Murchison, whilst alike, stand out as being slightly different from many other academics as they include the use of documentation. However, this additional aspect could enhance this particular research and so it is these definitions, but Culhane's work in particular, that influenced the methods used in this study. Furthermore Heath (2009, p.101) suggests that many researchers working with young people 'emphasise the

importance of combining observation with other research methods'. This study includes three strands in the collection of findings termed 'seeing', 'sharing' and 'studying', as per Culhane's (2017, p.9) definition. All three strands provide the opportunity to collect information for each of the three research questions. Winkle-Wagner (2010, p.65) wrote of Bourdieu's preference for a mixed methods approach. Whilst not mixed methods, this research uses a range of methods from within the ethnographic paradigm.

4.3.2 Working with a cultural facilitator

Gaventa and Cornwall (2001, p.74) state emphatically that:

> those who are directly affected by the research problem at hand must participate in the research process, thus democratising or recovering the power of experts.

This research has very much aimed to work *with* the Somali students and the wider community. One consideration however was what Ariele, Friedman and Agbaria (2009, p.275) define the 'paradox of participation' in which researchers, in their desire to work within a participatory framework 'unintentionally impose participatory methods upon partners who are either unwilling or unable to act as researchers'. A number of researchers, whilst developing participatory research, have developed a relationship with a key member of the community who is particularly willing, allowing others to make smaller contributions. Davies (2014, p.6) for example worked with 'peer researchers', holding regular discussions about data interpretation and she states they provided 'valuable critical commentary'. Hatoss (2016, p.158) researching with Sudanese refugees in Australia used the term cultural facilitator and explained they can help to build trust with the community and are vital in supporting research projects.

Ariele, Friedman and Agbaria (2009, p.265) state that very few published pieces of research share the relationship building process with research partners or participants. This is certainly true about cultural facilitator relationships. Edwards and Holland (2014, p.40) suggest there are no particular research protocols, just 'caution and provisional judgement are needed'. In this research the pilot study was used as an opportunity to create and develop a relationship

with a cultural facilitator. Four selection criteria were decided upon: a level of English which would allow us to communicate, being the parent of a child/children at the school of study, being someone known to the researcher, and being interested in supporting a study with the Somali community. Mrs Jama, who I felt met all of the criteria, was invited to come into school to discuss the project. In the first meeting the rationale for the project was shared, her views sought about Somali students and conducting research with the Somali community, and Mrs Jama was asked whether she would act as a cultural facilitator. Mrs Jama shared her perceptions of Somali students, thought a piece of research was a good way to support developing understandings, and was very happy to act as a cultural facilitator. Vigurs and Kara (2016, p.520) state discussion with participants about appropriate methods rather than 'assuming the researcher knows best [would] be wise'. Therefore Mrs Jama and I crafted the research together from this point forward, meeting every month or so to reflect, review and plan.

4.3.3 Fieldnotes

Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (2011a, p.86) believe 'there is always more going on than the ethnographer can notice' which suggested an effective system for recording observations was to be vital in all three strands. In ethnographic methodology, the observational records are known as fieldnotes although Emerson et al. (2011b, p.354) suggest ethnographers have varied understandings of the term. The field note corpus of this research consists of written observational notes, interview transcripts, notes about conversations, photos, examples of student work and data. The data used includes library borrowing, attainment and attendance information.

Particular attention was given to how I would make observational fieldnotes as observation is a key element of ethnographic research. Emerson et al. (2011a, p.22) suggest there are two methods of field note creation from observation. The first is to participate fully and take notes later, 'experiential style', and the other is to take notes during the observation, a 'participating-to-write approach'.

The latter is likely to result in more detailed notes but would possibly prevent full participation in what is being observed. Murchison (2010, p.70) states there are a number of influencing factors as to whether fieldnotes are made at the time or later. In this research both approaches were used dependent on the type of observation, for example during a lesson it was easy to take notes but almost impossible at breaktime, especially if I was on duty.

In both approaches Emerson et al's (2011a, p.24) prompts of observation were employed. Firstly, initial impressions such as physical setting and people present. Secondly, looking for what is significant or unexpected. Thirdly, looking at the reactions of those in the setting to what is seen to be significant or important. Fourthly, a focus on the how not the why, the process in the scene not people's motivations for them which would be impossible to glean from observation and fifthly to be open to emerging patterns. Murchison (2010, p.71) states fieldnotes should be taken as close to events as possible so if I could not write contemporaneously, I wrote up the notes as soon as possible. I used Emerson et al's (2011a, p.52) strategies for recall if needed: thinking chronologically, thinking of a key event of the day and focusing on events of specific interest.

I noted any points of analysis that occurred at the time with the observation information but kept it separate from the observational detail itself as I had already chosen to write up my research in this way and so mirrored the format during information collection. Kaplan-Weinger and Ullman (2015, p.77) describe this style as 'double-entry notes' and according to Mills and Morton (2013, p.121) these analytical memos aim to 'distil ones emerging thinking'. Any later analysis was made in my research journal, in which I tried to make weekly entries.

4.3.4 Strand one- seeing

According to O'Reilly (2012, p.86) the central method of ethnography is usually participant observation, through immersion in the community. Creswell (2016,

p.265) suggests a period of six months or longer although Bryman (2016, p.461) believes a key measure for a true piece of ethnographic research is how immersive it is, rather than the time span. He concludes however that researchers can interpret how much time and immersion is appropriate to meet their particular research objectives. Evans (2012, p.100) suggests a year to 18 months to develop a 'deepening affinity for and with the people being studied'.

This study included participant observation over one academic year, to incorporate the full breadth of events that take place over this pre-determined time span. I have a full teaching timetable so whilst I was immersed in school life for the academic year the observations, outside my own classroom, took place alongside my teaching commitments. Furthermore, the year selected to collect my findings was my nineth year at the school; a long period of immersion. The observations focused on both critical incidences and more typical events which give an insight into the Somali community. 21 'formal' lesson observations were conducted as well as numerous participant observations of break and lunch times, library use, the canteen, corridor movement and parents' evenings.

Creswell (2016, p.119) outlines a series of processes for participant observation which were used in this research. These are to: develop the observational protocol (what to look for doing the observation), to focus the observation (zooming in on the relevant aspects of the scene being observed) and to record fieldnotes. This process allowed for each observational opportunity to be purposeful and for the things observed to be retained.

My observational protocol took two forms. Firstly, I had a list of possible scenarios to observe which I worked though over the course of the year including repeated events such as assemblies, corridor movement and breaktimes. The repeated events were sampled throughout the year, in between my teaching and pastoral responsibilities. There was no particular pattern or process; I did observations as frequently as my teaching commitments would allow. For example, during heavy marking periods I

observed less than at times when I was more available. I did however ensure that each week I made at least four observations in some form in addition to those I could make as part of my teaching role. The list of possible scenarios also included calendared school events such as results day and parent's evenings, all of which I attended. I did not have a set list of things to look for, because I did not want to limit my observations, I just noted of anything of interest and I participated where possible, mainly by interreacting with participants to seek their view of events. Emond (2006, p.125) suggests finding a balance between only observing and only participating which meets the needs of the research, as it can be 'problematic' to work on extreme ends of the scale.

The second aspect of my observation protocol was lessons and tutor sessions, which were approached more systematically. I arranged the observation in advance with the member of staff and completed a template I had created (see appendix one). As these observational opportunities were more time consuming and therefore harder to repeat, I did not want to miss anything. I engaged with students in the lessons if appropriate and I followed the observations with any clarifying questions for the class teacher e.g., seating plan choices, or the students e.g., queries about their work.

When appropriate, during the information collection phase, I took photos as Tinkler (2013, p.124) suggests photos can play a key role in research, acting as an 'aide memoir'. I also wanted to illustrate key aspects of my research. I did not take any photos of staff or students but instead photographed places and student work. All of the observation findings formed the basis for the year in the life and some of the photos were included to illustrate appropriate aspects.

4.3.5 Strand two- sharing

Ethnographic interviews, according to Forsey (2008, p.59), are qualitative interviews placed within a wider ethnographic study which provide a key tool in exploring further that which has been observed. In this study they were used in exactly that way with adaptions to incorporate the FoK lens. In the FoK

approach a ‘Family History and Culture Interview Protocol’ (Moll, 2003) is created, to conduct a semi-structured interview to explore the FoK held. This protocol, or guide, is central to the FoK approach; Moll (2003, p.703) believes that ‘entering the household with questions, rather than answers’ has the effect of creating a partnership, with the researcher looking to learn from the family. Bryman (2016, p.468) suggests an ‘interview guide’ provides a structure to an interview without restricting the flexibility, important here as I wanted to both ask specific questions and also allow participants the space to share what they believed to be important. Indeed, it was hoped the interviews would allow the participants to show how they ‘understand and explain themselves and others’. (Trondman, 2008, p.118).

Mrs Jama, the cultural facilitator, and I worked to create an interview protocol, based on those used in FoK research but also tailored to our community context. The main difference being parents would be invited for interview rather than I would undertake home visits. I was advised not to do home visits by my school for my own safety and once I shared this with my supervisor I was told I would not gain ethical clarence for such visits. The protocol included sections on Somalia, life in the city of study, education and community knowledge (see appendix two). Together Mrs Jama and I then tested the protocol in the pilot, the information gained from that interview has been used in this study to avoid duplication (see portrait of Mrs Jama). Yin (2016, p.160) states a pilot is important to see how participants interpret the questions and following the interview we did amend the protocol together. As I do not speak Somali the interviews were conducted in English, Mrs Jama agreed to attend interviews and translate should this be necessary. Like myself, Fellin (2015, p.35) wondered if participants would speak as freely with a community member in the room, however Fellin felt that the presence of an interpreter ‘in some contexts’ allowed her to gain insights she would otherwise have been unable to. In this research however it did not become necessary to use a translator as those interviewed chose to converse in English.

Throughout the year I conducted numerous observations and at times key participants emerged; for example a student making an interesting comment in a lesson. This highlighted them as a person of interest in the research and I later approached them to give a brief overview of my research and to share the interview protocol. By the end of the first term, it became apparent that, as parents are not in school regularly, the opportunities to include them were limited. Mrs Jama suggested we held a parents' meeting to share the research aims and to gauge parental interest in being interviewed for this research; this we did. Figure six shows those interviewed in this research.

Figure 6- Table to show details of those interviewed

Name	Details	How approached	How information was used
Miss Yaryare	Sister of a year seven student	Signed up at parents' meeting	For year in the life
Miss Usman	Learning support assistant	Asked directly	For year in the life
Mrs Barreh	Parent	Signed up at parents' meeting	For year in the life
Zainab	Year 11 student	Asked directly	For year in the life
Yasmeen	Year nine student	Asked directly	For year in the life
Hawa	Ex- student now year 12	Asked directly	Portrait and the year in the life
Insiya	Ex- student just completed university	Letter sent to home address	Portrait and the year in the life
Mrs Jama	Parent and cultural facilitator	Asked at parents evening	Portrait and the year in the life
Muna	Year 11 student	Asked directly	Portrait and the year in the life
Mr Hersi	School's Somali mentor and parent	Asked directly	Portrait and the year in the life
Rahma	Year 9 student	Asked directly	Portrait and the year in the life
Yaqoub	Year 11 student	Asked directly	Portrait and the year in the life

Byrne (2012, p.208) suggests there are a number of variables which may influence an interview, therefore a range of strategies were used to gain the best results. Murchison (2010, p.101) suggests conducting formal interviews later in a study when previous observations may guide the interview questions

asked. Evans (2012, p.101) agrees suggesting this would enable questions to be asked that are ‘of importance to informants’. This was viewed as essential and thus the interviews were intended to be conducted in terms two and three. Participants were welcomed and I made sure that the room was comfortable and water was available. The interviews were recorded on a digital dictation machine and then fully transcribed with the support of the Otter.ai website. Fieldnotes were also taken during the interviews to note posture, gestures, dress, expressions, meanings etc. Kaplan-Weinger and Ullman (2015, p.83) discuss using active listening strategies during an interview including the use of ‘backchanneling’- saying ‘hmm’ etc. After the pilot, when I realised such backchannelling had to be transcribed, equally effective facial expressions were adopted to indicate interest e.g., smiling, nodding etc. The formal interview findings were used to create seven portraits and also to supplement the year in the life.

In addition to formal interviews, informal ones were also conducted which Yin (2016, p.160) refers to as ‘informal conversation interviews’. Murchison (2010, p.104) suggests that formal interviews may produce an idealised picture and so the addition of informal discussions could provide a more balanced view. This method was used during any observations undertaken e.g., in a lesson observation or at breaktime; questions were asked or students were engaged in conversations. The strategy was also used in my own lessons increasing the amount of active research time. As Swain (2018, p.13) states ‘researchers have to take opportunities when they arise’. This informal interviewing supplemented the year in the life. As this was done ad hoc it is difficult to document but figure seven gives some examples.

Figure 7- Table to show examples of informal conversation interviews

Interviewee	Outline of Conversation	Opportunity
Yasmeen	Her grandad and his heart	Conversation just before a lesson
Adna	Somali pirates and hand sanitiser	Conversation during a lesson
Ibrahim	Somali teenagers needing sleep	Conversation at breaktime

4.3.6 Strand three- studying

Schools and their students create vast amounts of data and documentation, for example pieces of work and library borrowing data, all of which can yield valuable insights. Yin (2016, p.171) classifies documents into two categories- documentation including letters, minutes, and archival resources such as maps, budgets etc. There does not seem to be a real difference between these categories other than the time in which the document was written but it does indicate the scope of useful information. I decided to incorporate any documentation that presented itself over the year, which would illuminate an aspect of school life, and which did not breach GDPR. The types of documentation used were very varied in nature and yielded both a breadth and depth of information. The table in figure eight shows which documents were used and my reason for interest.

Figure 8- Table to show documents used in strand three

Document	Reason for interest
GCSE exam results (2019 and 2020)	Exam results data showed Somali student attainment in 2019 and 2020.
Mock exam results (2019)	Mock exams results data showed Somali student attainment in 2019.
My own emails	Emails are the main method of communication in school. They contain information about students and events.
Microsoft Teams messages	Teams was the online platform used during closure. Staff and students communicated with each other using the messaging platform. I also used Teams to contact students over lockdown about this research.
Behaviour data	Behaviour data gave an insight into how well students functioned in school and actions taken to support them.
Pieces of work	Student work allows you to see their ideas and to gauge how well they understand the tasks set.
Library data	Library data, including number of books borrowed and type of books borrowed, gave an insight into the reading habits of students.
Parents' evening attendance data	Parents' evening attendance data shows who attended the events.
Reading age data for year seven	Reading age data showed if students could read as well as their chronological age suggests. It is a useful measure for gauging how a student can access lesson materials.
Principal's award information	The Principal's award log showed which students were recommended for a reward certificate over the lockdown period.
GCSEpod use during lockdown	GCSEpod use showed which students were engaged with the site over lockdown.

Kara (2015, p.90) states that the use of maps and mapping can 'enable researchers to gain insights into the ways participants see their world'. Murchison (2010, p.141) concurs suggesting they can be a 'powerful addition' to an ethnographic study. Thus, a map of the school became the only document created to generate findings, enabling students to show their movements around the school in their free time. The map was created by Stephen Himson,

a biostratigrapher, on Adobe Illustrator software using an aerial photograph I labelled as a guide. See figure five.

4.3.7 Sampling

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.153) state there are two main methods of sampling, probability or random sampling and non-probability or purposive sampling. Probability sampling is defined by Cohen et al (2011, p.153) as 'inclusion or exclusion from the sample [as being a] matter of chance' whereas in non-probability sampling 'some members… definitely will be excluded and others definitely included.' According to Cohen et al (2011, p.153) probability samples are helpful to represent wider populations and support the making of generalisation. Conversely non-probability sampling 'deliberately avoids representing the wider population.' Cohen et al (2011, p.229) also outline a number of specific sampling strategies which have been identified by ethnographic researchers as particularly suited to ethnographic research such as convenience sampling, critical-case sampling and snowball sampling. This study used sampling methods from the probability sampling group (Chohen et al (2011, p.153) and also the use of no sampling.

LeCompte and Preissle (1993, p.56) state that a common misconception is that ethnographers do not use sampling as they study whole groups. To a certain extent a whole group was being studied in this research, Somali students bounded by the chosen site of study. Throughout the research a register was kept of all Somali students on roll and it was noted when an interaction with a student occurred, this list was monitored for a spread of ages and genders. 96 of the 146 Somali students on roll (66%) were observed or interviewed. This approach is termed convenience sampling by Cohen et al (2011, p.229) and opportunistic sampling by Yin (2016, p.158), it allowed me to 'capture and inquire into…naturally occurring incidents'. In addition, all students in years seven to 10 were emailed or messaged on Microsoft Teams, at various points during lockdown, for their views and so no sampling was used. 26 students engaged with this, 18% of the cohort.

In terms of interview participants, I allowed possible candidates to emerge from the participant observations, such as those participating in a lesson particularly fully or from an interesting conversation. I was unsure as to how this would work as a sampling strategy but I was pleased with the results as it provided the opportunity to delve deeper into interesting insights made during observations. Throughout the year I kept a log of interviewed participants and monitored it for a spread of ages and genders. As a strategy it also allowed me to be creative, for example Muhammed interrupted my assembly, and remembering I taught his sister six years ago I wrote to her to request an interview to which she replied positively. More interviews were conducted than could be written up into portraits (seven portraits were written up) so a range of genders, stakeholder types and ages was sought in those that were written up. Those interviews not written into portraits still provided valuable insights which contributed to the year in the life. This is a method referred to by Hatoss (2013, p.47) as 'non-probability purposeful sampling' a method she used in a similar research project and felt to be successful. Hatoss (2013, p.47) explains it allows the collection of '"cultural" data' whilst considering ethics, validity, accuracy and the need to gain a range of responses.

4.4 Ethical Considerations

Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.339) suggest that the ethical issues ethnographers should consider are similar to the wider questions society poses about how we should treat each other. Such a view aligns with the participatory nature of this research. Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.339) also outline two potential ethical approaches. Consequentialist approaches consider whether participants have been harmed in the reaching of outcomes, whilst deontological approaches focus on the rights of the participants and whether the study design, and how it is conducted, respects them. Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.340) state however that the application of ethics in ethnography is more contentious than its theoretical underpinning suggests. Thus, whilst the BERA ethical guidelines (2018) provided a starting point, what follows is a clear link between ethical considerations and this particular study rather than a

lengthy theoretical discussion. I have tried to develop what Kara (2015, p.48) refers to as a bottom-up approach, the creation of ethical principles specific to this research. This is opposed to a top-down approach whereby a generic ethics code is applied. Furthermore, Kara (2015, p.39) postulates that it is not possible to plan for all ethical eventualities in a research project so constant reviewing is vital. This occurred throughout the course of the study, using my journal to work through any ethical considerations as they arose.

4.4.1 Relationships

Taking a deontological approach and focusing on respecting the participants (Murphy & Dingwall, 2011, p.340), the foremost ethical concern was how to work respectfully with members of the Somali community. Indeed Iphofen (2013, p.2) states that 'managing the "trust" relationship between researchers and researched is vital'. A fully participatory approach was developed to engender positive working relationships, engage the community and build trust. A similar approach was taken by Hatoss (2016, p.158) who found that community-based projects are best done 'when researchers work with the community and not just on the community'. I also considered the work of Creswell (2016, p.142) who reminds researchers of the basics of relationship building such as saying, 'thank you'. He also suggests learning a few words of the participant's language such as 'hello' and 'thank you' which demonstrate commitment and understanding. In this research all consent forms were translated into Somali and opening the parents' meeting to share details of my research I greeted participants in Somali, *soo dhawow*. Mrs Jama then translated my presentation in full.

Another consideration was the imbalance of power in the relationships of the research stakeholders. I am a teacher at the school of study, a position of authority with students and a generally respected position with parents. Wolf (1996, p.217) asserts that:

> exploitation doesn't necessarily occur because of a power imbalance but because of a researcher using her advantage to achieve the aims of their research at the cost of the participants of the study.

Additionally, Crozier (2003, p.81) refers to ‘studying down’ when White researchers ‘through the white gaze portray Black people as different, with associated negative, stereotypical connotations’. The awareness of deficit narratives, the participatory nature of the research and working with a cultural facilitator were used to mitigate concerns of a power imbalance and studying down. I also was explicit about what participation involved and provided clear options to withdraw. Taking appropriate approaches to mitigate such concerns is supported by Kearney (2016, p.148) who suggests they would ‘disrupt power balances, prioritise equality and encourage the exchange of resources’.

4.4.2 Voice and perspective

As the collection of findings began, an unexpected ethical dilemma presented itself. One of my White British colleagues asked to be interviewed, wanting to contribute to the research by giving his views. This research was designed to focus on Somali voice and when this was shared with my colleague, he insisted the research should offer a balanced portrayal. This led me to consider whose perspectives should be forefronted and if any could be ethically excluded, should the whole school community, as the field of research have a voice. I decided that the focus would remain with the Somali community with the view to giving a ‘conduit’ (Crozier, 2003, p.90) for those voices not normally heard. Mills and Morton (2013, p.38) suggest full objectivity should not be the goal of ethnographers, therefore there is no requirement to present the views of all stakeholders in a particular setting. Davies (2014, p.48) for example also chose to focus her study on her participants, not all of the stakeholders that intersected with her research. The involvement of other voices within the setting perhaps presents an avenue of further research.

In terms of my own voice, I took the view of Chase (2005, p.666) who postulated that a researcher may adopt different voices in the varying aspects of research; the 'authoritative', 'supportive' and 'interactive' voice. In the first mode the researcher presents their own views, in the second the voice of participants is fore-fronted and in the latter the researcher reflects on their own

position 'through the refracted medium of narrators' voices' (Chase, 2005, p.666). My voice can be seen in all three modes in this research. What is key however, according to Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.347), is the right of the researcher to speak on behalf of the participants other than by self-appointment. The work of the researcher to further the educational opportunities of Somali students of the school community and the support of the cultural facilitator and participants have provided this mandate.

Another ethical aspect concerning voice was how I would portray the voices of the participants faithfully. Kara (2015, p.49) suggests that using direct quotes from participants presents some ethnical difficulties around how the quote is framed. She identifies a number of important questions: why has a quote been included? Should the person be ‘introduced to give context to the quote’? Should readers be led in their interpretation of what has been said? Exploring these questions is, in Kara’s view (2015, p.173), good practice but that there is no single way to proceed. I have briefly introduced the speaker of each longer quote to allow the reader the opportunity to gain context but I have not offered my own interpretations, preferring to allow the participants to be at the forefront. Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.341) agree with Kara in that the write up of ethnographic observation and interviews brings ethical concerns as participants may be upset by what has been included, or indeed by what has been left out. Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.342) suggest that reports should be co-produced and indeed the role of the cultural facilitator was to be very important here, in firmly rooting the research in the Somali community.

In terms of perspective Mills and Morton (2013, p.150) state that a common approach is to use the present tense as pioneered by Malinowski (1922). I have also opted to write in this tense, particularly as Murchison (2010, p.207) advocates writing in the ‘ethnographic present’ as it gives a sense of immediacy and shows that the events under observation are ongoing. Writing in the present tense also fitted neatly with the cyclical nature of the school year and it allowed me to move the reader through the year. Kaplan-Weinger and Ullman (2015, p.165) suggest writing in first person for data presentation. I have opted

for the first person in all sections apart from when discussing literature. This is because, as Murchison (2010, p.206) states, ethnographic writing is often quite informal, a product of the methods of information or data collection. I also feel it locates my positionality in the research more clearly. Elliott (2017, p.36) states ethnographic work is often accessible to many audiences not just academics and the use of first person could be a part of this broader accessibility. This is important if my work is to be shared with my school community.

4.4.3 Consent

Consent is highlighted by Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.342) as difficult in ethnographic research as the researcher has little control over who may come into an observed setting. Thus, it is difficult to seek consent from everyone involved. In this study consent was sought from the headteacher for the participant observations to take place in school. Individual consent was not sought as the observations were to be general in nature, not focusing on any particular person. The observations involved making fieldnotes, which were used to write the year in the life. The notes were quite general in nature and did not identify particular students or staff members as they were anonymised from the outset. Once the notes were digitised, shortly after writing, they were uploaded to my university OneDrive space. Consent was sought directly from the participants of the interviews. Adults were given an information sheet and a consent form to sign. The research process was detailed on the forms, in both English and Somali and it stressed participants could withdraw anytime up to July 2020 when I intended to begin writing up my research. The information sheets and consent forms were written by Mrs Jama and I, and translated by a teacher of Somali heritage at school (see appendix two). In the case of student participants similar forms were used, the only difference being the seeking of parental as well as participant consent (see appendix three).

4.4.4 Anonymity

Walford (2008, p.34) suggests that it is almost impossible to offer complete anonymity as the researcher is known to a large number of people within the setting. It is also relatively easy for an interested party to find out the location of the research, often simply with a Google search. Despite the difficulties, offering anonymity is the preferred approach of ethnographers according to Walford (2008, p.36). Indeed, prior research with Somali students and communities has offered anonymity to varying degrees: Demie et al. (2007) named schools but protected participants and Kahin and Wallace (2017) provided full anonymity. Strategies to maintain anonymity, suggested by Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.341), include removing identifying information as soon as possible, using pseudonyms and altering any non-essential or revealing details.

This study strived to keep the location and participants anonymous. Identifying data has been removed: e.g., when referring to the school's Ofsted report, the school name was removed from the report's title. Pseudonyms have also been used for all participants. Kara (2015, p.123) discusses the attribution of pseudonyms and poses a range of questions such as should they reflect age and gender? Should they be chosen or attributed? The questions are posed but not answered, suggesting the researcher can choose an appropriate solution for their own research. In this research all participants have either chosen, or if they preferred, been given a pseudonym. I asked a Somali student, Saara, to write a list of names which she thought student participants would be happy to be referred to in the research. She chose to write a list sorted by gender and selected names, mostly associated with those of Somali heritage (see appendix four). I allocated the pseudonyms by gender randomly and without reference to age, adding Somali names when more were needed. I allocated aliases to teaching staff, with reference to gender and cultural background, and to parents if they did not select their own.

4.4.5 Wellbeing

An important ethical consideration is the wellbeing of those involved in the research. Kvale and Brinkmann (2015, p.96) suggest it is fine to proceed with a study should the potential benefits to the participants, and the knowledge gained, outweigh the risk of harm. I believe this is the case in this study. There is one area that could have caused distress, the discussion of the Somali Civil War in the interviews. Both Mrs Jama and I felt discussing the civil war had great value, however it proved a difficult topic for her to discuss in the pilot study interview. Despite this she was insistent it should be included. When working with Sudanese refugees, Hatoss (2016, p.152) also realised the need for care when discussing issues which may reference prior experience of conflict. Murchison (2010, p.111) advises sharing the content of the interview in advance to prepare participants for any distressing themes, thus a copy of the interview protocol in both English and Somali was shared beforehand which clearly referenced the civil war. Boeije (2010, p.53) adds that a researcher should be well prepared to field questions around difficult topics and give information on where to access support. As such a card with relevant numbers was prepared which could be shared with participants should the need arise (see appendix five). Refreshments and breaks were also offered during the interviews.

Kara (2015, p.53) states that ‘rather less attention has been paid to the potential vulnerability of researchers’. Kara (2015, p.54) also makes some suggestions for how this could be considered: ‘advance preparation, peer support, working reflexively and seeking counselling when necessary’. These strategies became embedded in my way of working which was helpful because, like McMichael (2003, p.196), I found some of the information I heard quite distressing. The seeking of counselling was not however necessary.

4.4.6 Reciprocity and withdrawal

Reciprocity in research, according to Mills and Morton (2013, p.135), can take a number of forms such as materials: for example, charitable donations, or

sharing the research findings with the community in an appropriate form e.g., a briefing or summary paper. It is hoped that the Somali community will benefit from this study as the practices or policies of the school may be adapted based on its findings. I will also create a summary report for participants and the community, although Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.344) do suggest that in some circumstances the participants may not be interested in partaking in any follow up with the finished research project. In a conversation with Feyisa Demie, a key academic in the field (September 2018), he shared the view that the motivation of the study, to better support Somali students, has a form of reciprocity at its core through its key purpose.

Iversen (2009, p.9) writes of the increased attention being paid to 'getting out' or withdrawing from the field of study. Iversen (2009, p.11) conducted research into what she calls the 'disengagement processes' and found there to be four influencing factors on how it was done. These include the researcher's epistemological viewpoint, researcher and participant traits, participant role perceptions and the source of research funding. These factors may also influence the level of withdrawal. Iversen (2009, p.14) also describes three scenarios of withdrawal: a complete disengagement, disengagement but 'keeping the door open for future enquiry' and staying in the research environment. As I remain a teacher at the school post-research, and in contact with students and parents, the latter option is clearly applicable to this research. However, my current role no longer includes as much direct contact with the Somali community. Mills and Morton (2013, p.134) suggest that the connections and relationships built up over the course of fieldwork will not just suddenly end. This is the case in this research although the nature of some of the relationships has changed, especially with Mrs Jama, the cultural facilitator.

4.5 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness has been defined in many, often similar ways, by a number of researchers e.g., Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1989), Seale (2012), Yin (2016) and

Coe et al. (2017). For example, Coe et al. (2017, p.44) suggest there are four aspects: strength, applicability, interpretation and inference. The work of Yin (2016, p.173) also identifies four aspects of trustworthiness: credibility (how believable the claims of research are), transferability (the application of the research to other contexts), dependability (will the findings apply at other times?) and confirmability (the extent of the influence of researchers' values). I employed several strategies, outlined below and developed from the literature, to maximise the trustworthiness of this research.

4.5.1 Triangulation

Greene and Hogan (2006, p.16) state triangulation is a practice, not a 'methodical practice' therefore the methods chosen were to suit the research not merely to triangulate data. The methods selected did however allow effective triangulation to take place. Atkins and Wallace (2012, p.111) define two types of triangulation: 'methodological triangulation' which involves using data from two or more methods and 'within method triangulation', the use of the same method but with different sources. In addition, Yin (2016, p.173) identifies two further types 'triangulation of investigators' which involves comparing data from different researchers and 'triangulation of theories', applying different theories to the same phenomenon. This research employed methodological triangulation as a number of collection strategies were used, namely observation, interviews, photographs, maps and data analysis. It also used within method triangulation as multiple observations and interviews took place. Within the range of collected material, I looked for what Atkins and Wallace (2012, p.111) refer to as the 'convergence of data'. O'Reilly (2012, p.195) states that convergence develops credibility as a range of sources support the interpretations of the researcher. In addition, Coe et al. (2017, p.47) view the constant comparative analytical method as a form of triangulation and, as this is a strategy I have employed, it involves further opportunities for assessing convergence.

4.5.2 Claim checking

Yin (2016, p.173) understands credibility to refer to the believability of the claims made. Lincoln and Guba (1989, p.237) agree, defining credibility as the match between what participants have shared and the interpretations extrapolated by the researcher. Both Seale (2012, p.535) and Lincoln and Guba (1989, p.238) suggest that credibility in research occurs following a prolonged period in the field, persistent observation and triangulation; all strategies employed in this research. Coe et al. (2017, p.51) suggest two errors are made when making transfer claims: either they can be too general, suggesting a finding applicable to all contexts, or too specific with no learning for other contexts. A careful balance should therefore be achieved; however, Emond (2006, p.124) states that 'ethnographers do not aim to construct generalisable theories' and whilst this is usually true that is not to say that an ethnography cannot have relevance to another setting. Indeed, Edwards and Holland (2014, p.43) state that the actual opinions or information may not be the same as a sample of participants in another setting, however the researcher's explanation might apply to other locales. This study has a unique perspective and aims to be illuminative rather than generalisable. However, I believe the interesting perspectives this study presents, and the interpretations and recommendations I have made, could have importance for other settings.

4.5.3 Journaling

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.327) propose the use of a reflexive journal as another tool to develop trustworthiness in research, particularly in the analytical phase. They state a journal should comprise: a daily schedule, a personal diary and a methodological schedule which together are a key part of a process of self-auditing as they allow a researcher to record and reflect on the process. Yin (2016, p.170) refers to such journals as both reflexive and reflective. A research journal was kept from the commencement of EdD study in 2016. This has allowed for the exploration of aspects of confirmability in particular by

questioning the researcher's role in the project, but also considering issues of credibility, transferability and dependability.

4.5.4 A cultural facilitator

Creswell (2016, p.141) suggests that collaborating with community members can enhance the trustworthiness of data through greater community understanding. Hatoss (2016) worked closely with a cultural facilitator, a community member, on all aspects of her research, which contributed to the trustworthiness by close co-operation. For this research I also planned to work closely with a cultural facilitator, Mrs Jama, at each stage to achieve the same outcomes.

4.6 Adaptions due to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic required a number of adaptions to be made to this research, particularly as school closed unexpectedly on the 20th of March 2020. The flexibility to respond to the demands of the research, which Mills and Morton discussed (2013, p.9), was certainly required as the pandemic developed. Less observations were carried out than planned and I had intended to interview the majority of participants in terms two and three. It was pleasing that a large number of in-person interviews and observations had already been carried out before closure. Unfortunately however, a number of parents who signed up at the parents' morning were not interviewed before closure. Short interviews were instead conducted via email in term three and there was a move to remote ethnography, as I added more documentary analysis to compensate. An unexpected issue was that more female students responded to my emails during lockdown than males. Thus, there is a slight gender imbalance in my participants which I could not mitigate due to the remote nature of this aspect of the research.

Observations were carried out in the week the school re-opened in June for year 10 students. The COVID-19 restrictions made these interactions quite difficult, Grant (2021) outlines the challenges of working in 'COVID-era schools'.

She concludes ‘the Covid-mitigating practices have thwarted any attempt to interact with children’. These challenges were short lived, following a COVID-19 case amongst one of the teaching staff, the school closed and did not reopen again in the 2019/20 academic year.

Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.346) suggest that the participants’ contributions in interpretation are valuable, as the researcher’s interpretations are not authoritative. It was therefore my intention for Mrs Jama to be very involved in the whole research process. Due to the pandemic, we were however unable to meet to collaborate on the later stages of the project including analysis. Bourdieu (1996, p.30) stated that ‘even the most literal form of writing up represents a translation or even an interpretation’. Throughout the analysis process I was therefore very aware of my presence in the findings. Indeed, Murphy and Dingwall (2011, p.345) describe how some postmodernists suggest that any attempts to analyse and interpret data can be seen as a new form of colonisation, whereby the researcher asserts his/her or their own interpretations on the voices of participants. Thus, Mrs Jama’s input would have been important. The adjustments in the research, which brought the focus on the school rather than the community, in some ways mitigated this issue as the school is the aspect of the field of which I am most familiar.

Chapter Five- Findings

5.1 Introduction

Murchison (2010, p.8) states there is a 'rich history of ethnographers experimenting with… styles of presentation'. Mills and Morton (2013, p.145) agree stating 'there are many ways to write an ethnography'. I have decided to take advantage of this creative freedom to take an approach which I believe showcases the findings and allows the reader to become close to the lives of the participants.

My findings chapter is comprised of five sections. This first is this introduction which aims to provide the reader with an outline of how the findings are structured and why this approach was the most appropriate. The second section is my analytical framework, located within this chapter rather than in the methodology, to clearly link how my findings were analysed with the findings themselves. Sections three and four are the findings themselves and five is a more analytical look at the findings, entitled thematic reflections.

I have chosen to present my findings as a year in the life, a logical presentation mode for an in-depth study over an academic year, and this can be found in the third section of the chapter. Nathan (2006), who covertly investigated student experiences of their first year at university, also chose to write in a year in the life format. In fact, a number of authors have chosen such an approach but there is variation in the format of presentation selected. Owen (2017) for example wrote a year in the life on her farm by including 12 chapters, one for each month. Shapiro (2005, p.xxi) wrote about the life of William Shakespeare in 1599, a year which was 'perhaps the decisive one, in Shakespeare's development as a writer'. This year, divided by the four seasons and further divided by themes, provided the author with the opportunity to write both chronologically and thematically: this is an approach I like. In these referenced works, and others, the year in the life format provides a format which conveys a set period of time well. This research presents findings from one academic year, 2019-20, written in a chronological year in the life format. This linear narrative is

split into seven areas which emerged from the findings. These areas are: exams, lessons and learning, parents, reading, behaviour, free time and school closure.

The fourth section of the findings chapter contains a series of portraits of participants who came to the fore during the collection of my findings. Murchison (2010, p.10) asserts that modern ethnographies seek to uncover different perspectives rather than present a holistic view. Whilst this ethnography shows the community as a whole, with all its distinctions, the inclusion of the portraits of seven forefronted participants demonstrates the individuality of its members. The portraits are presented together to provide an opportunity to compare and contrast the findings. Murchison (2010, p.200) states such case studies can highlight variation within a piece of research and here they play an important role in avoiding a singular narrative, or essentialisation of the Somali community. Hernández-Hernández and Sancho-Gil (2015, p.658) refer to them as 'biographical narratives' but I have chosen the term portrait to indicate their illustrative nature. This research aims to provide a conduit for the voices of the Somali community, to illuminate their views, therefore voices of other stakeholders have largely not been included.

The fifth section of the findings chapter, is the thematic reflections section (5.5). A key strategy adopted to ensure a focus on the findings is Emerson, Fretz and Shaw's (2011b, p.364) 'excerpt strategy' which keeps observation and analysis separate, as Elliott states (2017, p.36), to avoid over theorising and allowing the stories to speak for themselves as 'felt theories'. Whilst the research is through my lens, such an approach attempts to separate my voice from those of the participants. Thus, this chapter synthesises and analyses the findings from the year in the life and the portraits. It presents and discussed the themes which emerged from the Thematic Analysis. These themes include family and community support and responses to COVID19. As such this chapter is an integrated discussion of the findings. Other researchers have used similar presentation methods. Creswell (2016, p.265) for example describes the

findings of ethnographic research as ‘a detailed description about the culture, followed by themes that have emerged over time with the group’.

Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001, p.59) assert a key frustration of ethnographic research is the expectation for findings to be presented solely in written form. This study, whilst not a visual ethnography, incorporates selected photos and map work to highlight important elements of the seeing strand. Another aspect combining the written word and visual style is the use of epigraphs. An epigraph is a short quotation at the start of a chapter which is not written by the author and intends to give an idea about the theme of the text to come. According to Robbins (2019), Bourdieu used epigraphs and I emulated his work by beginning each chapter in the findings section and the portraits with a relevant quote from the participants, further fronting participant voices and making consistent links with the theoretical framework.

5.2 Analytical Framework

5.2.1 Overall approach

According to Mills and Morton (2013, p.123) the language used with regards to analysis helps to define the researcher’s ethnographic identity. Pink (2010, p.8) for example does not use the term ‘data’ and instead refers to findings or ‘ways of knowing’. Mills and Morton (2013, p.115) suggest more anthropological approaches would probably not refer to fieldnotes as data and would not formally code whereas, at the other end of the spectrum, data would be subject to analysis possibly using a grounded theory approach. This research aimed to find a mid-point on the analytical spectrum, one that is in keeping with the epistemological and ontological approach and the research design chosen. Any ‘data’ are referred to as findings or information and the analytical process kept the findings at its centre.

In an ethnography, according to Miles et al (2014, p.8), ‘the analysis task is to reach across multiple data sources and condense them’. In this study, there are indeed multiple information sources however the analytical methods were

largely the same for each of them, to draw common themes across all aspects. O'Reilly (2012, p.187) states that whilst the data will have been collected chronologically, it is unlikely that a researcher would wish to present it in such a way, thus the findings would need sorting and analysing. Thematic Analysis (TA), and in particular the six-phase approach detailed by Braun and Clarke (2022, p.35), was used as the analytical framework for this research. According to Braun and Clarke (2022, p.4) TA is an 'accessible and robust' method for analysing qualitative data. It is defined by Seale (p.587) as an 'analysis based on the identification of themes… often identified by means of a coding system'. It seemed particularly suitable for this ethnographic study as at its core is the search for themes which emerge from the data. The process of in-built reviewing also seemed suitable for a large information corpus with a range of sources. Braun and Clarke's (2022, p.35) six phase approach includes the following steps: familiarising yourself with the dataset, coding, generating initial themes, developing and reviewing themes, refining, defining and naming themes and writing up.

A large data set and actually starting the comparative process are significant challenges in TA but Silverman (2004, p.239) suggests these can be overcome by focusing on a small area of the data and gradually widening the scope to include the whole data set. By the end of the academic year the fieldnote corpus was significant. The themes I identified however drew attention to particular aspects, in this way the findings were reduced and synthesised through my own lens.

There are a number of analytical biases which can affect the credibility of research in the analytical process. Miles et al (2014, p.294) identify four key problems: the holistic fallacy (seeing patterns not actually evident), elite bias (overweighting data from well informed participants), personal bias (allowing the researchers agenda to affect the data), and going native (losing perspective). Gibbs (2013, p.96) implies TA can actually mitigate against these problems as it supports rigour through a process of constant comparing and checking. Furthermore, Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.301) suggest a number of techniques

to address such concerns and ensure the trustworthiness of research. These are: external checks, refining working hypothesise, checking early interpretations against raw data and member checking. These techniques were regularly used throughout the analysis phase where possible.

5.2.2 Preparation of findings for analysis

In all three strands of information collection, seeing, sharing and studying, there were paper based findings to analyse. In the 'seeing' aspect there were ethnographic fieldnotes, from the 'sharing' aspect interview transcripts and from 'studying' there was a whole range of information in different forms such as exam results and library data. The interview recordings needed to be prepared before analysis but the other aspects were ready in their 'raw' form.

The transcription of the interview findings was vitally important as, according to Wray and Bloomer (2006, p.185), for an analysis to be valid the transcription from which it is derived must be accurate. Wellard and McKenna (2001, p.181) agree but state that the literature lacks practical detail about how to convert audio materials into a form that enables effective data analysis and aligns with the 'underlying philosophical orientation' of the research. Wellard and McKenna (2001, p.185) themselves do not prescribe how transcription should occur but do suggest transparency of the methods chosen by the researcher. Further complexity is added because, as Gee (1991, p.27) explains, there is also an element of interpretation in transcription 'because hearers and readers hear and read differently from each other, and differently from what speakers and writers may intend'. Such concerns may be offset by a familiarity with the information. Halcomb and Davidson (2006, p.40) state such familiarity is essential in an ethnographic approach as a 'closeness between researchers and the text is critical to the research design and philosophical tenants of the methodology'. In terms of transcription this suggested a verbatim approach was the most appropriate for this study, allowing a closeness with the words of the participants, and thus was the approach taken.

The recordings of the interviews were uploaded to a secure site, Otter.ai, which provides a digital transcription service. I then manually checked the transcript correcting any transcription errors. I used Poland's (1995, p.302) abbreviated codes (e.g., using a hyphen for overlapping speech) to give an accurate a picture as possible. Halcomb and Davidson (2006, p.40) state it is important to take fieldnotes during transcription to record thoughts and early analyses which I did. Whilst editing I also tried to be aware of potential transcription challenges and mitigate for them by repeated checking. Poland (1995, p.296) asserts these are deliberate alterations of the data and accidental alterations (namely incorrect sentence structure, the absence of quotation marks to identify when participants are paraphrasing others, omissions and mistaking words).

A further issue identified by Poland (1995, p.300) is poor quality sound recordings to work from, which can include the 'clarity, speed, and accent of speech' of the participants. A number of my participants were EAL speakers and so the latter is of particular relevance to this study. The transcripts of a small number of participants proved to be challenging as their spoken words transcribed verbatim often did not convey the intended meaning. There appears to be very little in the literature regarding methods to transcribe interviews with EAL speakers, possibly because Kvale and Brinkmann (2015, p.207) state, there are no 'standard rules but rather a series of choices to be made'. Hatoss and Huijser (2010, 2016), who have worked extensively with the Sudanese community, do not discuss their methods in their published work but they do describe the use of verbatim transcripts. In personal correspondence, Hatoss (13 August 2018) suggested 'taking notes during and after the interview to record attitudes etc'. This was done and I used the notes to annotate the transcripts. Halcomb and Davidson (2006, p.40) agree with such an approach, deducing from a number of studies, that recording participants nonverbal behaviour is 'central to the reliability, validity, and veracity of qualitative data collection'. Participants were also given the option to check the transcripts and one chose to do so.

5.2.3 Thematic Analysis

Phase one of Braun and Clarke's (2022, p.35) six phase approach to TA suggests researchers should become very familiar with their findings. Braun and Clarke (2022, p.43) refer to this as immersion. In this research, the process of transcribing the interview recordings allowed a real closeness with the words of participants. In particular those of EAL speakers as the transcripts took a lot of work to accurately reflect what was said. Thus, in terms of the interviews, phase one occurred as part of the preparation of findings as outlined above. For the other information sources, such as lesson observations and emails, I read and re-read the information and also noted down any points of interest in my research journal. I intended to code using color and so I also underlined points of interest at this stage, to ensure I returned to them during phase two.
Phase Two of Braun and Clarke's (2022, p.35) approach is coding. This phase, took place throughout the year and findings were collected. Analysis during the collection of findings is a method advocated by Miles et al (2014, p.70), which they term 'interweaving', as it allows data to be collected to fill any gaps or to test developing hypothesise. Becker (1971, p.27) calls the process 'sequential analysis'.

Braun and Clarke (2022, p.52) state codes 'capture specific and particular meanings within the dataset'. Braun and Clarke (2022, p.53) also outline the steps for coding: reading the information, highlighting relevant or interesting aspects and assigning a suitable code. As I read my fieldwork corpus I colour coded various aspects e.g., 'breaktime' and 'books'. I kept a central key which I added to over time. Blumer (1954, p.7) refers to the coded aspects as sensitising concepts and states they give the researcher an idea of what might be pertinent to their research. Blumer (1954, p.7) suggests however caution should be used with this approach and states researchers should not accept any idea that emerges without question, because it could become a 'vague stereotype'. Kara, (2015, p.111) states that the practice of combining data and findings from different data sets is known by a number of terms, such as data synthesis and meta-synthesis; terms clearly appropriate to this study.

Throughout the process I kept the findings in their original form, not reducing them to tables or mind maps. Emerson et al. (2011b, p.363) state that some ethnographers use their notes as the basis for their written ethnography, selecting passages to incorporate, trusting in the words used at the time to describe what they saw and experienced. This is the approach I took so as I began to write up sections, the original information was at hand to be included as faithfully as possible.

According to Miles et al (2014, p.72) there is a debate in the literature about whether coding is merely a technical process before analysis can begin or whether it is actually the starting point for analysis. He believes it begins the analytical process because it signals the start of reflecting upon the data. Braun and Clarke (2022, p.37) agree with this assertion and it was certainly the case in this research, indeed the constant re-reading of the findings and comparison of them triggered, as Miles et al (2014, p.73) suggest, a deeper reflection. It acted as a method of discovery and it allowed me to look for recurring patterns.

By October half term it was felt sufficient information had been collected and coded to begin phases three, four and five of Braun and Clarke's (2022, p.35) approach- creating the themes. Their approach to creating themes is not entirely new, it draws upon the Constant Comparative Method developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967, p.104) as part of their Grounded Theory approach. Whilst formed in Grounded Theory many researchers see the Constant Comparative method as an analytical method in its own right and, according to Barbour (2013, p.170), 'it is at the heart of all qualitative data analysis'. Harding (2013, p.66) believes there are three key steps to the process: making a list of similarities and differences, amending as more data is collected, and identifying findings once all data has been collected. Dey (2004, p.88) suggests the key reason for using this method is to 'generate insights by comparing the data collected'.

In Braun and Clarke's approach (2022, p.35) the process of generating themes is tri-phase and a similar method was used in this research. Firstly, I engaged

with the codes from phase two and looked for patterns, particularly codes which were numerous and illuminating. Braun and Clarke (2022, p.85) recommend the use of thematic maps but I found tables to be more useful to show groups of codes, their frequency and relationships. As Creswell (2016, p.155) identifies the process began with a large number of similarities but the more findings that were analysed the more these were reduced. Secondly, once all of my findings had been collected and coded and organised into initial themes, I conducted a review (phase four). I looked at all of my themes and ensured I was happy with those that had been generated. I used Braun and Clarke's (2022, p.35) fifth phase, refining, defining and naming themes, to check my themes, consider how the findings would tell a cohesive story and I also refined the names of my themes. The key emerging themes became the chapters in the ethnography.

The sixth and final phase of Braun and Clarke's approach (2022, p.35) is the writing up of the research in such a way to still be open to further analysis. As I wrote I regularly referred to the original information ensuring that 'deep, refining analytic work to shape the flow of the analysis' could occur.

5.3 A Year in the Life

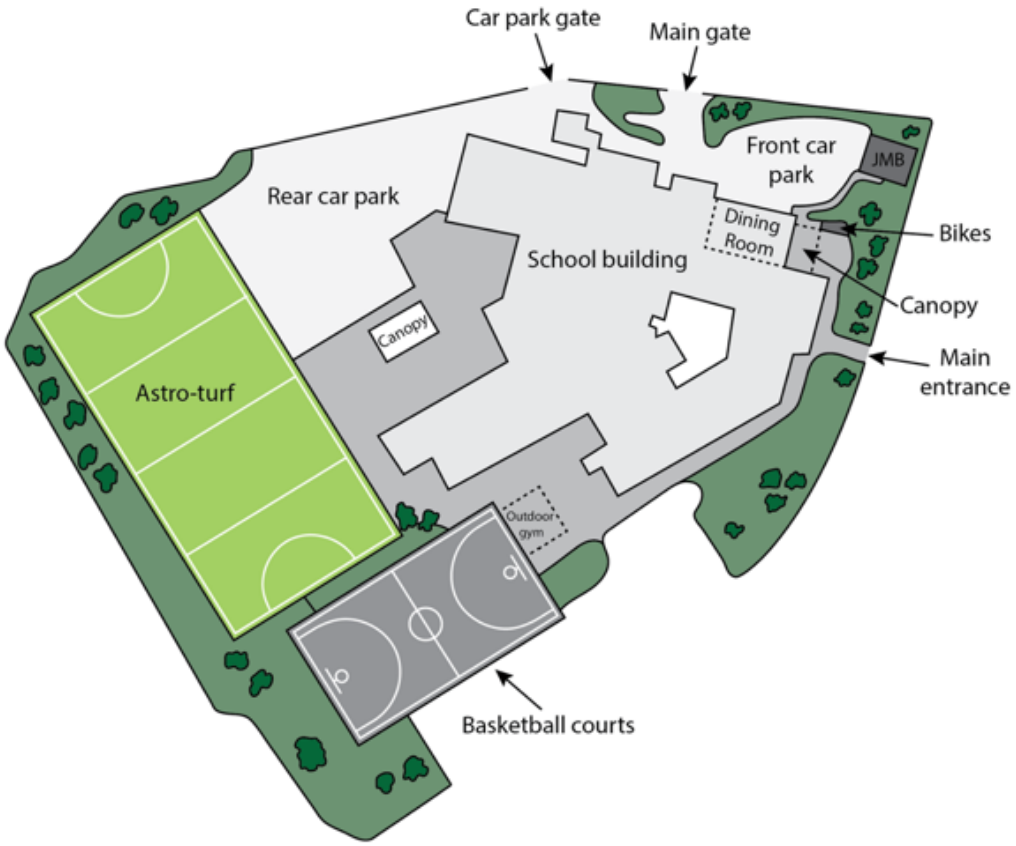
5.3.1 Welcome to the school at the centre of this study

Let's imagine you have come to the city by train. You exit the station, perhaps glancing back at the Victorian façade before you turn right and follow the road round, the city centre on your left. A steep climb over the railway bridge allows you to look down onto the railway lines on which you have just arrived. The railway yard is unseen, but you can hear the trains with their engines running and you notice the air is tinged with the metallic smell of diesel fuel. You cross the road, the Victorian railings of the old workhouse now run on your left, just beyond which you can see the modern school now occupying its site. Ahead is a housing estate, one which the school serves, a mix of small Victorian terraces and larger palisade villas, usually converted to flats or houses of multiple occupancy. The high-density nature of the housing means cars fill every available space and the streets are busy with pedestrians. On your right is a mosque, unusual for the area in that it is purpose built, adjacent to which is the Afro-Caribbean centre. Its service users generally no longer reside in the area but travel to access its services. You turn left, walking the edge of the school site to the entrance. Through the now modern, green metal, fence you can clearly see the school, its contemporary frontage seeming to clash with the sixties maisonettes and tower blocks opposite, built following slum clearance in the mid-twentieth century. At the high metal gate of the main entrance you 'buzz' to be let in using a metal keypad on your right.

Welcome to my school, my place of work for the last 11 years.

Figure nine shows a map of the school site.

Figure 9- Map of the school site



5.3.2 Part one- Exams

‘Honestly, the whole ordeal has me dreading real exams…’

In some ways GCSE results day is the end of one school year and the start of the next. Students collect their results and say goodbye to school friends, teachers and their school. The results collected, the one thing that ties them to school long after leavers day in June is done. For teachers the new school year beckons, beginning with the analysis of the previous academic year’s exam outcomes. Results day on the 22nd of August 2019 is no exception, the day starts for many teachers at 6am when results go live and teachers across the country, not in senior leadership positions, finally get to look at exam results online. The 2019 headline figures for our school are positive and continue the upward trajectory staff and students have been working towards. Not having access to this information, I imagine a number of our students might already be awake and wondering what the day ahead might bring.

Students begin to arrive at school at 10am to collect their results from the theatre, a sizeable room which opens out onto a paved canopied area at the front of the school. The green tired seating dominates the room, more eye-catching than the displays on blue backed boards. Six exam desks are arranged in an ‘L’ shape on the remaining floor space, each displaying a small range of letters on a white card, the closest to the door being A-D. The brown results envelopes sit in piles and a member of senior or admin staff sits at each desk ready to note which students arrive to collect their results. The envelopes contain a print out of results. Later, once the appeals process has concluded, the students will come to collect their certificates from the school office. When the time comes 49 students do not collect their certificates of whom four are Somali, 17% of the cohort compared to 23% from other ethnic groups.

There is no rush or queue at 10am but rather a steady stream of students arriving over the course of an hour. There are approximately 25 teachers milling around chatting to students, sharing their delight, offering advice on college admittance and consoling those who are disappointed. Mr Maxwell, the

headteacher, tries to speak to every member of staff and student, congratulating and consoling as appropriate. By 10.30 the theatre and canopy area are busy as students stay to chat with their friends. The reactions to the results are varied; Raaliyo, calm and measured, collects her envelope and goes outside to open them in private whilst Hibbo opens the results immediately and then heads to a chair to sit down, her emotions unclear. I look out for my students, in particular those who I want to congratulate, Hawa is one such student (see Figure 6). She is the first History student to achieve a grade 9 and I am delighted! I watch her open her envelope and she is both shocked and thrilled at her results. When I go over to congratulate her, she hugs me and explains her surprise and happiness at achieving the top history grade. I look over her results for all her subjects and I am delighted for her, this moment is captured on camera by the school photographer!

Zakeriye looks less pleased as he looks at his grades and so shortly after results day, I ask him to reflect on the day and his feelings about his results.

> Looking back on that day, I didn't exactly feel any sort of anxiety or a sense of nervousness about getting the results. I just felt like getting it over and done with to be fair, and before I walked into school to get my results, I had to reassure myself that you've been revising for the past year prior to your exams, so if you get a good result then all your efforts have been rewarded in a sense, and if they're not what you're looking for, then that past revision can be useful in the event of a resit. So, I was surprisingly calm on results day, as I was for a large portion of most of my exams. I got great results in Maths and RE, which I saw as a bit of a success story, considering I didn't do particularly well in the latter for the mocks in November, and I recall getting a three in an assessment a few months before the RE exams in May. But I didn't do as well in subjects which I did really well in prior to the exams, such as English Language, which I only got a five in, after getting sevens and a few eights in assessments for a large part of year 11. History as well was a bit disappointing, as I was doing quite well in assessments prior to the exams, but the key thing was that I passed, so I didn't feel too bad about the results.

There are 202 students in the 2018-19 cohort, 23 of whom are of Somali heritage (11%). Figure ten shows the GCSE results of Somali students in a

selection of subjects. Their results are compared to all students in the cohort and the majority group which are students of Indian heritage.

Figure 10- Table to show GCSE exam results data, 2019

		% 9-7	% 9-4	% 9-1	% met target 9-4	Residual	Subject Progress Index
Citizenship	All students	17%	61%	96%	-30%	0.3	-0.54
	Majority group	21%	64%	100%	-21%	0.28	-0.14
	Somali students	0%	33%	100%	-67%	0.33	-1.86
Combined Science	All students	12%	65%	98%	-10%	0.42	0.31
	Majority group	13%	67%	100%	-12%	0.54	0.54
	Somali students	18%	60%	100%	-24%	0.63	0.24
English Language	All students	10%	65%	98%	-20%	0.04	-0.18
	Majority group	11%	70%	100%	-17%	0.03	-0.02
	Somali students	4%	56%	100%	-38.70%	0.35	-0.18
English Literature	All students	16%	70%	99%	-13%	0.38	0.12
	Majority group	16%	74%	100%	-12%	0.33	0.26
	Somali students	17%	57%	100%	-34%	0.48	-0.01
Geography	All students	19%	61%	99%	-17%	0.16	0.18
	Majority group	24%	59%	100%	-23%	-0.13	0.35
	Somali students	0%	50%	100%	-50%	-0.72	-1.27
History	All students	10%	49%	95%	-32%	-0.75	-0.76
	Majority group	4%	58%	100%	-24%	-0.82	-0.61
	Somali students	18%	35%	82%	-52%	-0.84	-1.06
ICT	All students	8%	67%	98%	-26%	-0.67	-0.6
	Majority group	6%	66%	97%	-28%	-0.67	-0.42
	Somali students	0%	40%	100%	-27%	-0.99	-1.08
Mathematics	All students	16%	64%	96%	-21%	0.14	-0.03
	Majority group	16%	68%	98%	-17%	0.1	0.11
	Somali students	17%	57%	100%	-39%	0.57	0.13
Media Studies	All students	8%	38%	88%	-45%	-0.66	-1.02
	Majority group	9%	41%	96%	-44%	-0.7	-0.77
	Somali students	0%	10%	80%	-79%	-0.89	-1.67
Psychology	All students	23%	64%	100%	-21%	-0.1	0.69
	Majority group	33%	68%	100%	-14%	0.02	0.93
	Somali students	17%	33%	100%	-67%	-0.37	0
Religious Studies	All students	27.00%	71%	98%	-14%	0.8	0.45
	Majority group	28%	74%	99%	-3.50%	0.81	0.69
	Somali students	26%	57%	100%	-39%	1	0.39

The results for the Somali cohort show some areas of concern. For example, in all subjects, students of Somali heritage are outperformed by their peers in the grade 9-4 measure. In Maths, 64% of the whole cohort achieve a grade 9-4 whereas only 57% of Somali students do. This attainment gap is more evident in History, 58% of students of Indian heritage achieve a grade 9-4 whereas only 35% of Somali students do so. In seven of the subjects Somali students perform less well than their peers at grades 9-7. In some subjects such as English the gap is marginal at one percent, but in other subjects the gap is more significant,

in Citizenship for example. Looking at the percentage of students achieving grades 9-1 the picture is more positive with Somali students performing as well or better than their peers in all subjects apart from Media. Looking at the highest attaining students, in four subjects, Maths, History, English Literature and Combined Science, Somali students outperform their peers, sometimes significantly. In History 10% of the cohort achieved grades 9-7 whereas 18% of Somali students do so.

There is also variance within the Somali community itself, gender for example, a key factor part in the varying results. Of the 60 individual measures outlined in figure 6, girls outperform boys in 37 of them and they perform equally well in 12 of them. Boys outperform girls in just 11: they are particularly successful in Science, Geography, ICT and Psychology. Figure 11 shows the top five ranking and lowest five ranking Somali students in terms of GCSE points. This further illustrates the diversity within the community in terms of performance.

Figure 11- Table to show highest and lowest performing GCSE Somali students, 2019

Student	Gender	Year group ranking /202	Somali ranking /23	Total GCSE points	Number of grades 7-9
Hawa	F	2	1	97	11
B	F	11	2	81.5	7
C	F	27	3	71	6
D	M	28	4	69	1
E	F	30	5	68.5	4
					Number of grade 4s
F	M	175	19	24	0
G	M	176	20	24	1
H	M	186	21	20	2
I	M	188	22	19	1
J	M	194	23	12.74	0

In addition to the year 11 students in school there are also some year 10s collecting results for their early entry GCSE English Literature exam. The two top sets of the 2019 cohort are the first to spend their six lessons a week in year

10 studying for the literature paper before sitting the exam. Thus, leaving the five lessons a week allocated to year 11 to focus on the language paper. The cohort was made up of 50 students of whom 13 were Somali, six boys and seven girls. The students feel the early entry is a positive change, Idris for example thought it 'made me grow closer to my peers'. The aim of the early entry strategy was to improve results and it worked; the results are a real success. As figure 12 shows, all students achieve grades 4-9, and whilst more of the whole cohort achieve the top grades (7-9), a greater percentage of the Somali students achieve their target grades.

Figure 12- Table to show year 10 early entry headline figures

Grade	Whole cohort	Somali Students
1-9	50 (100%)	13 (100%)
4-9	50 (100%)	13 (100%)
7-9	28 (56%)	4 (31%)
Met or exceeded target	42 (84%)	12 (92%)

Some students did find the process of taking a GCSE exam early quite a challenge however, Idris said:

> It was very tense. It felt like I forgot everything under the intense stares from the invigilators and Mr Tomlinson [the deputy head] shouting instructions. I had to arrive early to prepare as well, the school demanding I arrive at eight or earlier. Honestly, the whole ordeal has me dreading real exams.

Following results day, it is only a few days before school begins, our school returning this year on the 27th of August. In the first few days of term there is an air of excitement in the building as students share news of the holiday and meet their new teachers. Most students are pleased to be back. The relatively new introduction of blazers, ties, school shoes and lanyards ensure that all students look smart. The new year seven students spend the first few days bewildered with the size of building and their new timetables. I catch up with a few of them in the first few weeks and they seem to be settling in well although lengthy conversation seems hard to come by; 'good' and 'ok, thanks' seem to be the typical responses. Idil, one of 23 new Somali students and only slightly more

loquaciously adds: ‘my favourite lessons are English, Maths and Art’. Indeed, the taking of discreet subjects, in different rooms and taught by different staff, is probably the biggest change for the new year seven students.

In mid-September, I attend a year 11 English lesson of an established teacher. The room is inspiringly decorated with famous literary quotes and displays of set texts, the students sit at rows of desks facing their teacher. There are nine Somali students in the class, the girls are keen to contribute, to answer questions and show interest whilst the two boys sit very quietly. Farah, Iman and Zainab are particularly keen to participate, especially when it comes to reading aloud. What stands out is not the lesson, which engages and inspires many of the students with a reading activity designed to develop better creative writing openers for the exam, but the homework which is returned from the previous week. The piece is entitled ‘My Hero’ and as I leaf through examples, some are so engaging I actually forget I am here to observe the lesson! Maryam writes that her hero is her mother who she explains is ‘an admirable human being’. Farah, giving an interesting insight into the potential impact of Somali role models, writes about Hana:

> a pan-Somali warrior whose story still resonates with me to this day… Perhaps her story can bring back the spirit many young Somalis should be demonstrating at this time as she has become a symbol for Somali nationalism so she represents courage, pride and hope.

Whilst schools play many roles, supporting students through exams is a key aspect and the school year is punctuated with exam activity: intervention sessions, practice exam questions, exams skills lessons etc. The first key exam date is the year 11 mock exams, which take place towards the end of the first term, so they can inform predicted grades for college applications which are to be submitted in December. The exams run for two weeks and give students the opportunity to sit all of their exams similar to how they will do so in May and June. They are important because they provide an opportunity for students to reflect on many aspects of the examination process, such as revision, timing, stress levels, and consider how they can make improvements. A general issue for a number of students was committing time to revision, comments such as

‘15 minutes on the morning of the exam’ and ‘one hour the night before’ were answers given when I asked some students in the lunch queue how much revision they had done! Mushtaq made better use of the mock period to perfect her revision strategies:

> I revised in numerous ways as I wasn’t sure what was the most effective way of revising. At first, I tried flash cards which was not helpful for me as I spent more time doing them then actually revising them. After this I tried making notes and reading over them multiple time which did help however this was far too time consuming and I needed to revise actively e.g., writing, practice questions. Eventually came across this YouTube video about this method called blurting. I began using this method for subjects like History, English Lit, Science, subjects with a lot of content to cover. This method was amazing.

Normally the mocks run relatively smoothly with only a few students causing minor disruptions to the process. This year however there are a number of issues and the year 11 pastoral team decide to run a day of internal isolation for a number of students who did not follow exam regulations. Of the 12 students, seven were Somali. Many of these students were involved in a water and paper fight in the school theatre whilst waiting to be taken to the exam hall. This behaviour in fact changed the exam procedure and all students went straight to the exam hall for future exams rather than waiting in the theatre beforehand. This led to some persistent lateness, from four Somali students in particular, but was seen as a preferred alternative to poor behaviour.

Following the mocks the school organises a mock results day for the students, it begins with brief presentations from the Deputy and the Head of Year 11 before students collect envelopes which contain their mock results. Once the envelopes are opened the students are allowed to mingle and chat about their results. Mushtaq explains ‘I am very happy as the grades I got mean I am on target’. Whilst Nuwaal is ‘a bit luke warm about it!’. Iman later reflected:

> I didn't revise as much I would like to because I had a lot of business and health and social care coursework to submit. I only revised for two weeks for Science, Maths and History. I wish I’d had more time for science because I got sevens when I wanted eights but was happy with most my results because I was a little ill in the first week so I was happy that I came out with okay grades even though I wasn't feeling 100 percent.

The fact that a number of Somali students did not do as well as they might was reflected on by a number of students. Farah, a year 11 student herself, suggested it was all about expectation:

> I have high expectations for myself. And I think they don't have high expectations for themselves, they don’t think that they can reach those goals. That's why they never try to reach them. And it is like, like what people expect them to be right?

Aside from exams school also plays an important role in supporting students and their wider interests. Just before the October half term break, we hear of a great example; Isa, one of our year seven students, has been chosen to train with the local premier league football club, something his Assistant Head of Year describes as a ‘fantastic opportunity for him’. It is good to end the first half term on a positive note! Of his training Isa said:

> I’ve been playing for four years now and the coaching has been really good…I go four days a week now. We train for three days then a match on the weekend. When you become 16 you start getting paid and they give you a scholarship but if you're not good enough you get released.

5.3.3 Part two- Lessons and learning

‘I feel like I’m doing a disservice to her like to not do well in school’

When we return to school after the October half term break, the students soon settle back into their studies and adjust well to the demands of their particular school year. Year seven are more confident and year 11 are beginning to appreciate the demands of their approaching final examinations. Students experience a six-period day beginning with a 20-minute registration and then three blocks of two lessons, separated in the morning by a break and in the afternoon by lunch. Things are slightly different on a Friday when the day’s lessons are shortened so a tutorial session can be held until 9.20.

This half term year seven History students are learning about Prehistoric Britain; I drop in on a higher attaining class to see what they are studying. The lesson is about cave art and the British examples at Creswell Crags. The class are interested and enjoy the tasks planned for them, particularly the opportunity to create their own cave art. Isa (the premiership football player) is bright, lively and keen to contribute at each stage of the lesson; he volunteers to read at every opportunity! I ask him if he enjoys history which he does but states that his favourite lesson is PE. Amina, sitting at the front of the room, triggers a discussion about global examples of cave art and I make a note to include the beautiful caves at Las Geel in Somaliland into the scheme of learning. I am impressed by her links to, and knowledge of, global civilisations. Hannah has an interesting take on her cave art, an aurochs with glasses and muscles, apparently ‘he goes to the gym’. Mr Rai says her work is ‘ridiculous’ but his grin takes the edge of his insult and Hannah carries on unperturbed! She has a real flair for art and is clearly enjoying the task. Figure 13 shows some examples of the classes’ work, Hannah’s drawing is the first one.

Figure 13- Examples of students' cave art work

My own year 11 History class have less time for creativity and are focusing on exam technique. A lesson in early November sees us discussing the demands of section A of the Medicine paper, an environment study which focuses on the Western Front. Students then began a mock paper comprised of three questions which the students are keen to complete. Malik, Hawa's brother, settles to write quickly although yawns continually whilst tackling question one. Yaqoub does the same but with less yawning! Harun takes a long time to settle today, it takes a trip to the toilet and a mix of praise and firm instruction to get him to settle. Just when the class is working well Abdi is brought to the room from his Geography lesson, he has been disrupting other students in his class. He sits at the only empty desk and promptly puts his head on the table whilst the others work. Interestingly the behaviour of Yaqoub and Harun changes with Abdi in the room. Harun immediately loses focus and begins making faces across the room. Yaqoub, usually chatty but focused, begins to involve himself in the silliness and a highlighter is thrown between himself and Abdi. I shut

down this behaviour and work on the exam paper continues although the level of focus I usually see is not evident.

The following week I attend a GCSE Maths lesson taught by Colin Navier. Colin's room is wonderfully decorated with Math formulas and other supportive information on every display board. There are motivational quotes under the whiteboard which hangs next to the TV and also above the windows which run the whole length of the room. The desks are in two banks of eight and the seating plan is boy/girl. The class are working on cumulative frequency, which is apparently grade six work. Abdi, sent to my room last week, clearly understands the challenging tasks as he is praised for his answer about finding an upper quartile. Colin's strategies of praise and high expectations work well and it is clear Abdi is a decent mathematician. Many Somali students seem to enjoy Maths, Mushtaq explains:

> My favourite lessons will have to be Maths, History and Science. Not only because most of friends are in my classes but because all these subjects I thoroughly enjoy. I love Maths because I like the fact that there is only one answer.

Mid-way through the lesson Harun walks by and makes several strange noises, it appears he has been sent out of his own lesson. The class, and in particular three Somali boys, find this incident very amusing. Mr Navier makes a quip which further amuses the class and then he refocuses them. Harun clearly has not started the year well; he is a challenging student who spent some time during year 10 in a pupil referral unit. At this point in the year, I am very hopeful that the school can support him through year 11 and ensure he gets his qualifications. Unfortunately, the decision is made for him to be educated offsite in mid-November and we do not see him again.

In the lessons I have observed so far this year the teachers demonstrate a good rapport with their classes, I decide to ask some year 11 students what they think makes a good teacher. Mushtaq thought 'a good teacher is a teacher who pushes their students to do their best'. Idris believes that:

> A good teacher must be able to be seen as chill (for a lack of better words) but still maintain authority at the same time. A good teacher I feel

> should know what a student is like generally (e.g., loud, quiet or shy etc) so they know when a student has a problem. I believe teachers here do have these kinds of relationships with their students.

Iman, touching on some of the same facets, said:

> I believe a good teacher is someone who is able to understand each students' needs and recognise how to push a student to help them reach their potential and they should be able to provide students with what they need whether it be resources or support.

Zainab also has clear ideas about what makes a good teacher, mentioning similar aspects to Iman and Idris, but she is undecided about whether it is important for Somali students to see Somalis in the teaching population as role models:

> I think it's sort of important if we see someone from our community, because they'll sometimes give some people a chance, they'll be like "oh this person turned out like this, maybe I can actually achieve something and do this". So, it's kind of like motivational as well. Sometimes it's not as important, I really don't mind it actually. Cause like, I see Somalis everywhere (laughing) it's kind of like, "oh I'm just seeing you again, you're just a normal person to me".

As you would perhaps expect our Somali students view a wide range of subjects as their personal favourites. Halima chooses PE, Adam: History, English and Science; and Aliyah says 'my favourite lesson is RE'. Umar seems to enjoy a number of subjects on his timetable, 'my favourite activities are PE, Design Technology, Art, Geography, Maths and Science', likewise Amira enjoys Maths, P.E, R.E, Geography, French, Business, Health & Social Care. Ahmed selects one subject as his favourite, Science, and Asha singles out English although she does say she likes all her lessons. Yaqoub adds 'my favourite lessons are PE, History and English'. Ismail, a year 10 student states, 'I don't really have a favourite lesson or activity, but if I saw myself faulting in one of those lessons, I would have the obligation to try harder'. Iman explains her choices, she says:

> My favourite lessons are Science and History because they are the subjects I am most interested in. I really enjoy the different topics we learn about in science and how some topics overlap and I really enjoy the topics we learnt about in History and the different types of revision techniques we do in History like bingo and mind mapping.

Yasmeen, in year nine, likes English:

> It's just that it's not like, hard. And like, I understand it... I like reading the text and then writing about it… we did about Dracula. We had to like go through the play and write, Miss asked us questions about it and we wrote the answers down.

Remembering Hannah's drawing skills, in her example of cave art, in mid-November I attend a year eight Art lesson. I am a few minutes late after packing up my own lesson and students are already seated around large group tables. The room looks out over the playground and smells strongly of paint! Easels are dotted around the edges of the room, ready for use with GCSE students, and there are displays of their work on the walls. The students are midway through a unit on Islamic art. Sabirin and Laila sit together and are probably the most hardworking students in the class during this lesson. They are constantly writing, sketching or discussing their work, neither directly contribute to the lesson but they seem to make good progress. The classes' homework is to search for some examples of Islamic Art in preparation for a composition task next week.

It is a common occurrence to see homework being set but, whilst independent learning is important for all students, particular emphasis is placed on year 11. Revision and examination preparation at home forms a big part of the work that is set. Zainab explains the revision she completes each week:

> After school I revise, so I have a timetable. So then when I get home, I eat and then I rest for a little bit and then I revise and usually when it comes to me revise until I get tired, so when I get tired, I just stop revising. But then I have like different slots for each subject. So, say on Wednesday after school when I come home, I relax for a little bit, I'll do Psychology cause I've just had that lesson go over what we did. And then I'll move on to another subject. Since the beginning of year 11.

Form time also provides opportunities for learning, each week a department head or form class puts forward a talking point, a short presentation and a key question to be considered one morning a week. I drop in on a number of such sessions throughout the half term. Mr Field's year nine group were debating 'Is playing computer games a good thing?' Although instead of considering this

question Ayaan, Amira and Saadiya talk about their hair! Despite the lack of preparation, the girls are very dominant in the following debate, Amira opens the discussion by suggesting gaming is bad for mental health. They are however less keen to listen to the boy's contributions and have to be reminded to listen. Miss Patel's year 10 form are working on a session on illegal drugs, Mohamed reads a section of text fluently and the form discuss. Ms Swaley's form, also year 10, are discussing racism in football, a topic that the Somali students are very vocal about. Zain said 'they should find the people who were writing the racist comments', referring to racist abuse posted on social media platforms. Saara was concerned that any progress made within football would not have an impact on the real world and everyday experiences of racism. Sayeed thought the footballers 'should ignore it'. Miss Pulling's year 11 form were discussing role models, somewhat reluctantly. Ali, Summaya, Zaheera and Yahya were quiet during the debate letting other students lead the discussion. When asked Malik proffers the opinion that not all role models have a positive influence. I also visit a year seven form in the same week who are much keener to tackle the topic. Suleyman suggests neighbours could be role models but his is Ronaldo because 'he is hardworking'. Hannah suggests 'youtubers as they are good at what they do', Ilhan agrees they are her role models too. Ahmed, who is finding it hard to stop reading his manga book, agrees youtubers are entertaining. He also queries how family members could be role models, answering his own question saying 'maybe their grandad fought in the war?', seemingly blurring hero and role model.

Another morning a week is allocated to independent reading. Miss Bogal's year eight form are reading quietly the morning I drop in mid-November, Farhiya has selected Horrid Henry from the book box although she does not seem very engrossed. Midway through the session a group of year 10 students come to give a presentation about selecting GCSE Sociology. The options process is about to start and year eight students choose the subjects they would like to study for their GCSEs which commence in year nine. Students listen politely to the presentation but do not ask any questions when invited to do so. When the options choices are finalised, it shows that, for Somali students, popular

subjects include Health and Social Care (15 students), Business studies, (10 students) and ICT (12). Less popular subjects are Sports studies (no students), Food (one student) and Design and Technology (one student). Students choose either Geography or History and even numbers of Somali students choose these subjects. This year students in the top two sets take the language they opted to study in year seven and eight after a taster week, three students will study Spanish and 12 French. Students who study a language choose two other option subjects, those not doing a language choose three.

I have observed many positive learning experiences since we returned to school after the summer holiday, with Somali students appearing to be learning as effectively as their peers. Farah, in year 11, offers a potential explanation for this commitment to hard work.

> I feel like because my mum's like was a refugee and she went through all this hardship just to come to this country. I feel like I'm doing a disservice to her like to not do well in school... It's a very small community as well. Our siblings are like, like if you have older siblings, your siblings are like your parents as well.

This commitment to learning and to working well also applies to Madrassah, with many Somali students attending religious instruction classes every week-day evening. Saadiya shares the practicalities of her madrassah attendance and some of the things she has learnt:

> I have been going to mosque school since I was five years old. I have been to three different mosques through the years. I used to go a Somali mosque and I went Monday to Wednesday, 5pm until 7pm and Saturday and Sunday 9am until 12pm but now I go to another Asian mosque. So, I go Monday to Friday, five until seven. In my old mosque there were 99% Somali's as it was a Somali mosque. However, the mosque I go now is an Asian mosque so there's only like four Somali girls out of 50. In mosque we learn about the Quran which the words of our lord, we also read and memorise the Quran in mosque. We also read and learn about Islamic studies, the academic study of Islam and also hadiths… and lots more.

Yasmeen shares her learning experiences too. 'I pray Koran and I then learn about the religion… Just lots of stories like, they tell us stories of like the prophets and stuff like that…' On the whole students enjoy attendance, Safa says 'I enjoy learning about my religion and I still have a lot to learn'.

In the second week of November the school marks Remembrance Day by the selling of poppies, the holding of the two-minute silence and an assembly for each year group. The weekly assemblies provide further opportunities for learning. As Head of Humanities the remembrance assembly are part of my role. This year I talk about the value of remembrance in the modern age and its potential impact on the future. I have done assemblies for the last eight years, this year I am surprised I have to pause my Y11 assembly to request that Shuayb should stop talking, he was chatting to two other Somali students. I do not teach Shuayb but I taught his older siblings, Insiya and Ibrahim. I also speak to year eight, nine and 10, these run smoothly although I do spot Adna whispering once during the year nine assembly. I hope it was on topic! A number of my students apparently enjoyed the assembly, when I see Yaqoub in the corridor, he makes a point of telling me he found it interesting.

5.3.4 Part three- Parents

‘But if you are from a war-torn country... it's kind of like, “yeah, I want my kids to do what I couldn't do”.’

Late November sees the first parents’ evening of six calendared through the year, one for each year group with an additional evening for year 11. Parents’ evenings at our school are well attended; parents are keen to come and the pastoral teams call or text many parents in the run up to events to discuss attendance. Mr Hersi, the Somali student mentor, also calls many of the Somali parents. Figure 14 shows the attendance for each evening. The attendance of Somali parents is in line with or higher than, sometimes significantly so, other parents as a whole.

Figure 14- Table to show attendance at parents’ evenings

Year group	Date	Parent attendance	Somali parent attendance
8	28th November 2019	80%	96%
11	12th December 2019	69%	73%
10	23rd January 2020	78%	90%
9	6th February 2020	93%	93%
7	27th February 2020	91%	91%
11	12th March 2020	81%	80%

Parents’ evenings give teachers the opportunity to share the progress of students and discuss any concerns. They are also a good chance for parents to ask questions and for positive teacher parent relationships to develop. They are held in the sports hall, a very large space with light blue walls, a dark blue ceiling and a wooden floor. It is always cold and is slightly echoey. Single exam desks line the walls with two further rows down the middle of the room. Each desk has a chair on one side for the teacher and two on the other side for parents and students. There are also rows of chairs for parents to use as they wait.

At the year eight parents’ evening, on the 28th of November, the parents and siblings of our Somali students greet each other as they move between

appointments, the women clasping hands with each other or embracing. Whilst most of the women at the event are wearing different coloured or patterned headscarves, the Somali mothers are generally also wearing black abayas, a long usually black religious garment worn over their clothing. Many of the fathers are also wearing Islamic dress although older siblings, here to accompany or represent their parents, are mostly dressed in Western clothes. This evening Mrs Omar stands out as she has paired her traditional abaya with an LV scarf, beige faux-fur coat, long false nails and very striking makeup. I no longer teach any of her children, following Harun's move to alternative provision, but Mrs Omar greets me like an old friend with a hug. She shows me pictures of her baby son Abdirizaak, not with her this evening, unlike when he was a new-born. I ask how the evening is going; she is pleased with the feedback about her daughter Farhiya. I also greet Mrs Hassan, accompanied by a daughter in her early twenties, who says she is very pleased with the reports of her son's progress this year. She also stands out; she is tall despite wearing flat shoes, her hijab is ochre and it matches a maroon and ochre dress of African wax print. The dress is visible as she is not wearing an abaya although she is wearing a long black coat with a slightly incongruous red tartan scarf. Miss Usman, a learning support assistant of Somali heritage, has her own views on the clothing of the community:

> When I go to visit my family elsewhere, like, they're very a lot more, like they're very different. Like they're a lot more liberal than Somalis in our city would be. That's what I have noticed, in terms of dress and like, just general attitude towards everything. They are a lot more, I'd say relaxed than Somalis here. I think it's because there is a stronger Muslim community here.

Often it is mothers who attend school events for a variety of reasons including work commitments, being a single parent or the division of household labour. Farah however has her own ideas about why mums are more visible at such events: 'Mums are like head of the house. Like literally my dad, everyone's dad is just like, "Yeah, okay".' Regardless, the attendance figures are high. This high attendance reflects the very supportive nature of our Somali parents, students

often comment on the many ways their parents support them in their school life. Idris says:

> My parents have been helpful in my school career, providing tuition in my primary years and helping me find out what I wanted to do for GCSE when I was picking options, the key word is helped.

Mushtaq also speaks positively about the role her mum has played in supporting her:

> My mother has always pushed me to do the best in school. She is very supportive and wants the best of us. She has paid for tuition and extra revision guides which has been very helpful as my older sister was able to get two grade nines because of this.

Muna talks about the careers guidance that her parents have given her, implicit is their high expectations of her. When asked what she wanted to do as a career she said:

> I really don't know. Like, I really don't know. I have no idea because I first wanted to do marine biology. And my parents said, “no, don't do that”. And I want to do something to do with animals, like a zoologist or something or like testing for diseases. My parents were like, no. Like, they weren't didn't necessarily know but they were like, do something more. My Dad wants me to be a teacher, which I really don't want to do and my mom wants me to just be a doctor. But I was like, no, because I don't want to go into medicine, that’s long. But maybe something to do with health care but I'm never doing medicine, like actual medicine degree that's horrible. I probably have like grey hairs, by the first time I get a pay check.

Iman says:

> My parents have provided me with the tools I need when it comes to my schoolwork. They have bought me books and a desk when I asked and they also let me partake in any extracurricular activities that will help me take a break from school work. For example, I did the outward bound residential twice, went to France and I also applied to go on NCS [National Citizen Service].

Insiya, whose parents have supported her through college and university, speculated about why the community was so committed to education:

> I think it's probably because they never got to finish their education. And there's a sense of like… what could have happened if I finished school? I want my kids to do this. Somali parents, they sacrificed a lot to be here and they are very focused on their kids because for them it's kind of like “okay, my chance is gone”. Like it was ruined “like I never got to finish school, I want my kids to do the best” like that. And that makes a lot of

> sense. But if you are from a war-torn country... it's kind of like, “yeah, I want my kids to do what I couldn't do”.

Unlike the students Miss Usman, from learning support, also acknowledges there are some barriers to parents supporting their children, firstly, to do with language:

> If a parent wanted to speak to a teacher what they want to say they can't really say it properly and the teacher might not understand exactly what they're saying. There'd be a communication barrier.

Secondly, she describes issues due to the community being holders of alternative cultural capital:

> I've noticed with a lot of Somali parents, they do take their kids to tuitions, because I think they feel they can't help their child so that they'd be willing to pay for somebody else to help their child. I think also, there's a huge like, cultural gap as well because say for example, a parent generally wouldn't know what happens inside schools. They don't know the best way to give their children advice they'd based on like, what would be useful advice for them move back home, but like, is not really relevant in the society, or in today's time so then maybe their child feels like they can't really relate to the parents or the parents don't understand them. And they might be less willing to ask for advice about certain things.

Mr Abshir is the only teacher at the school of Somali heritage. He also acknowledges there are barriers to the support parents could offer their children:

> Somali parents, they are extremely supportive. The issue still at hand with this is the language barrier. Somali parents value education highly. However, you will find parental involvement could be improved, and I believe this is mostly because of the language barrier and lack of education. Consequently, parents cannot help their children with their schoolwork. Nonetheless, they spend a lot of money on tuition to address this issue. Most Somali parents graduated from university in Somalia, and you will find many of them had successful careers back home. The civil war suddenly changed that they had to start life from scratch again, mostly in different European countries.

Considering the supportive and involved nature of the Somali community Mrs Jama, the cultural facilitator, and I decide it would be good to host a meeting to share an overview of my research with parents, to gain feedback and gauge

interest in interviews. Thus far in the school year I have had little opportunity to meet parents and hear their views. The 74 Somali families of the school community are invited by letter and a text is sent as a reminder the day prior to the meeting. I was hopeful for good attendance and Mr Hersi, the school's Somali mentor, assures me that some parents will also come as representatives for others.

At 11.05 on a cold winter morning the first parents arrive, I have not met either of the two women before: Mrs Abdalla has two children at the school and Mrs Barreh is the parent of a boy I teach in year eight, Adam. Mrs Barreh is in her early thirties, her white sports trainers only just covered by a black embroidered abaya, her face framed by an indigo scarf. As I guide them to the theatre, the location of the meeting, we talk about her son, the good progress he is making and his enthusiasm for History. Mrs Barreh also says she is very interested to hear my presentation and pleased that research is being done with the school's Somali community.

I walk the short distance between the theatre and reception several times greeting parents and showing them to the theatre. Mr Mohamud greets me in the reception area wearing a black knitted jumper, dark trousers and coat and a Bluetooth earpiece in his right ear. His eyes sparkle as he talks of his children, his voice slightly high and with an interesting tone. I ask after his daughter Hawa who did so well on results day. He tells me of her good grades and how proud he is, she has settled well into college. More women enter the theatre at this point, guided by Mr Hersi and greet each other with calls of "salaam alaikum", an Islamic greeting meaning peace be upon you. They call enthusiastically when greeting friends and politely to those with whom they are presumably less familiar. Mrs Omar greets me as usual with a hug, today her black abaya is offset with a blue Gucci hijab and matching long scarf in beige, draped over her shoulder. Her face is made up perfectly finished with bright pink lipstick, a contrast to the natural faces or muted palettes of the other women. The women join Mrs Barreh and Mrs Abdalla who are sat on the left of the walkway. The men, four in total, self-segregate by sitting on the right,

accompanied by Mr Hersi, also a parent of two children at the school and Mr Maxwell, the headteacher, who has come to offer his support.

After counting 21 attendees, at which I'm delighted, I take Mrs Jama's cue to begin. I introduce myself and share the starting point for my research, the school's attainment data. Mrs Jama then stands to translate. She speaks quickly and with surprising determination, standing in front of the women but occasionally glancing over at the men. I deliver the rest of the presentation outlining my methods and what I hope to achieve with my research. Mrs Jama translates and gives out the dual language handouts. The parents thank me for my interest in their community and I take questions. Rather than ask about the research they query the data, why are there disparities between subjects? Why are Somali students not achieving in line with their peers? The discussion quite quickly becomes a little heated with Mrs Barreh emerging as a spokesperson for the women. She speaks confidently, holding eye contact and with an expectation of being listened to, outlining concerns of structural racism within school. The focus of the attention turns to Mr Maxwell, they ask him challenging and direct questions and press for answers. They want to know why teachers are unfair, why student behaviour deteriorates in year nine and why their children are not treated like their Asian counterparts.

Conscious of the time, at 12.05, I make a formal close to the meeting, I thank the parents for attending and invite them to have tea or coffee and cake. Slowly the group gravitates towards the refreshments and many continue their conversations as they drink. The question-and-answer portion of the meeting felt like we had gone back five years, back to a time when relationships with the Somali community were much more strained. Mrs Omar was quite vocal in the meeting and at one point said 'the teachers pick on our children'. I speak to her over coffee and explain I am surprised and upset by her comments. Harun, her son, was recently moved to alternative provision, but I have always worked hard to help him do his best. As I speak, she pats my arm and annoyingly I well up at this. Mrs Omar thanks me for being there for Harun, she says he saw the message about my meeting and encouraged her to come as it would help me.

Despite my discomfort the meeting has clearly shown some parents are concerned about the provision for their children that our school provides.

After the meeting Mrs Jama and I chat, she also seems upset and a little shaken by the turn the meeting took. She, like a number of parents, did not actively participate in the question-and-answer session. She suggests that a view held by a minority was presented but, her voice quavering, says we have to investigate, to listen and support these families. I agree. I had left a sheet next to the coffee cups for parents to leave their contact details if they wished to be interviewed. I look at the sheet, 14 parents have agreed to be contacted, I am pleased to have so many opportunities to learn more about their views.

Whilst most lessons do not match the drama of this parent meeting, one of my own in the final weeks of term does. Six Somali girls in my Y11 set one class begin to discuss a new Netflix program called ‘Messiah’. Quickly the discussion becomes quite hysterical with real concerns being shared about the fear of temptation by a false prophet, the theme of the show and an aspect of Islamic belief. Indeed, Muna says as a child she had night terrors about such temptations when she was in primary school. The girls look to Farah and Muna to explain the links to Islam and some of the other students in the class also contribute to the discussion. Mushtaq suddenly becomes distressed and insist they should pray for me as a non-Muslim. In three minutes or so the discussion has got quite out of hand and I bring it to a swift close, refocusing the student’s attention on the role of the church in Nazi Germany, the lesson theme, from which the tenuous link to this TV program was made. Muna stays behind after the lesson to collect a book I have agreed to loan her and asks if her religious arguments where convincing. I query her meaning and she states that she is secretly a non-believer and part of her cover is to take a leading role in religious discussion! I am shocked! In my ten years at the school, I have never heard a student renounce their faith, she was indeed convincing.

In mid-December, as the term draws to a close, the English department take year 11 students to a local playhouse to see their Christmas production, a spin

on Romeo and Juliet set in Manhattan. This visit aims to support the year 11s study of Shakespeare but also to introduce many of them to the theatre and encourage a lifelong habit of theatre going. Muna and Iman write a review of this visit in the school newsletter, produced at the end of the academic year to review the year's successes. Perhaps two theatre critics in the making, in their summary they say:

> A captivating show featuring talented actors with amazing stage presence and charisma. It was a truly memorable night and I believe everyone there can say it was an outstanding, breath-taking and phenomenal production.

On the last day of term, a non-uniform day is always held to raise money for a charity selected by the school council. Five of the current 16 council members are Somali, all year 11 girls. This year the chosen charity is a local one that aims to provide accommodation, support and advice to the homeless, refugees, asylum seekers and the vulnerably housed. Students who have more than six late marks cannot take part in the non-uniform day, this applies to 28 students of the 1100 on roll. Seven of these students are Somali, four of whom have been late 11 of the 75 school days this term. For those wearing non-unform often great care goes into the selection of an outfit and Yunus in year 11 is no exception on the last school day of 2019. He is wearing a red cap and a black and red dog tooth tracksuit; I overhear several students commenting on his style!

The final day also sees the 'school revue' a series of songs, sketches and dances by students and staff. The Deputy Head, Mr Tomlinson, comperes the show and announces the second performance by saying 'please contain your indifference for our next act'! Onto the stage walk four teachers, including Mr Abshir the schools only teacher of Somali heritage, all wearing silver cowboy hats! Their act is a rap parody about our school and the importance of learning. The students absolutely love it and the cheers and applause are almost deafening! I am watching the show with year 11 and the Somali boys sitting near me are on their feet cheering their teachers enthusiastically. All the acts go down well including a year 11 student singing 'Dance Monkey' by Tones and I.

Mushtaq and Asiyah, friends of the singer film the performance on their phones whilst singing and clapping along. They jump up and clap when the song is complete.

At 12.35 staff and students depart, the first term completed.

5.3.5 Part four- Reading

'Not so much but I would say *Mr Stink* and *Good Burger'*

The new school term begins with a training day on the 6th of January and then students return on the 7th. It's always great to get back to school, catch up with students and hear how they have spent their time off. As our Somali students are Muslim, they do not celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday although a small number enjoyed a family dinner, and all spent time with their families over the school holiday. Saadiya explains her experience of Christmas:

> We don't celebrate Christmas at all… as it's haram [forbidden] to imitate the kuffaar [commonly used to mean non-believers]. Sometimes we go to family members houses and eat together not because of Christmas but because no one is at work that day as it's a holiday.

I begin the academic year in a year 10 Personal Development Education (PDE) lesson which is focused on careers, the main task is for students to research local university provision. The class is set six of six; the students are very focused and use the laptops competently to conduct their research. Fatima is researching Health and Social Care options and is interested in a career in care. She finds navigating the website difficult but is ably supported by a learning support assistant. Omar and Abdirizak are looking at medicine courses as they would both like to be doctors. I ask them about the qualifications needed to access a medicine course but they are not sure which they would need or what university courses are available. Both students are very focused and Abdirizak in particular works well in the lesson. They are likely to achieve grades two and three at GCSE and so the careers team are supporting the boys by offering realistic advice and alternatives to medicine they may be interested in. The school's program of career's advice is seen as excellent by students, particularly those in year 11. Iman spoke very highly of the process:

> When I had my careers interview, I rated History a nine out of 10 and Science an eight out of 10 which was surprising because I always thought to myself, I didn't have a favourite subject… it was only until I had to apply for A level courses that I really thought about it and my careers interview really helped my pick my A Level choices.

The new year also sees a follow up to the year seven whole cohort reading intervention program which was completed in September. This program is centred around an in-house resource called 'The Kid in the Ten Shirt' which covers all of the required key stage two vocabulary. When students' reading ages were tested on entry in early September, only 60% had reading ages in line with their chronological age. Of the 18 Somali students for whom reading data is available, six students had a reading age lower than their chronological age, 66%, compared to 60% of the whole cohort. Those reading ages were 6.2, 8.6, 8.10, 10.3, 10.7 and 10.11. Following the above intervention program, the students' reading ages were again tested and the figure rose to 76%. Towards the end of the first term the English team then focused on the remaining 24% of students who had still not achieved a reading age of 11. In groups of five, students worked on a five-week program every Friday morning with a higher-level teaching assistant. This term they will read to a Head of Department once a week for five weeks during form time, to further develop their skills.

In January, I meet Isra in the library to see what book she is interested in reading. She is very quiet but as I teach her elder sister Saara, I engage her in conversation about her siblings. Advised by the school librarian, she chooses a book called *Shadow Girl* by Sally Nicholls and we are both interested in the plot as the story unfolds. We read together once a week for the next five weeks. Isra reads well, answering comprehension questions competently, but lacks a little expression and punctuation. Her participation in the program improves her reading age from 10.7 to 13.3.

Many Somali students seem to enjoy reading and have clear ideas about their book choices. Umar for example states 'I love reading, I go to the library every day and read manga books or *Tom Gates* and *Diary of the Wimpy Kid*', and Salma: 'I like reading books and my favourite book is *The Hate you Give*'. Adam says 'I like adventure books, comics, football books and spy books' and Fardowsa adds 'I like reading comics, manga and books like *Dork Diaries* and *Diary of the Wimpy Kid*. I also like reading horror books'. Iman in year 11 also enthuses about her love of reading:

> I love to read! I have bought around 50 books from Waterstones and WH Smith from the age of 11 until now. I have borrowed over 200 books from the school library and right now I am reading *7 habits of highly effective peopl*e by Stephan Covey which is really interesting because it explores different ways to help improve your character, I recommend you read it if you haven't. I am interested in all sorts of genres except Anime. I think that reading really helps with your English because it widens your vocabulary and it helps your creativity when it comes to the story writing section in your English exam.

Muna another year 11 student says:

> I do like fiction and my dad gives me a lot of autobiographies. Like he tries to get me to read a lot of autobiographies, but I do try to put like, stress that I am younger because younger people like fiction more, but yeah I want to read like a diverse range of books, so I know what I like properly, I'm still like kind of discovering what I like. But I hate classics, I'm just going to say that! I also like to go central [library] cause there's like a variety of books there, I've been getting back into reading because, you know, it opens your vocabulary and it expands it. And you know, I feel like my vocabulary was a lot better in primary school, to be honest, because once I came to secondary school, I feel like I've adapted to how everyone speaks. And that's not necessarily good, like if I go out in the real world and talk to a lot of people say, I don't want to be sounding like a chav.

Samira in year eight also discusses her love of reading:

> I like to read as often as I can, whenever I can because ever since I was younger my mum would get me into reading and take me to the local library a lot but I really have a fondness of manga and fantasy books. I like the feeling of being sucked into another world through someone's writing and my favourite manga series is *A Silent Voice* because I actually watched it and it really was an incredible story.

Zainab, a keen historian, enjoys reading historical fiction. The two books she shares as examples of recent reads are also connected to her family's war and refugee experience.

> I'm not a fan of non-fiction so I usually read fiction books. So, then there's like *The Orchard of Lost Souls*, so that type of book based on Somalia, and it's kind of like a fiction type of book. So, it's based off of four females and their life and their life in Hargeisa which is a city. So, then it's just based off of that and then there's *1000 Splendid Suns*, which is like based in Afghanistan I think, so it's just basically when the war broke out there and that kind of thing. I'd say [I read] three books a month. So, it depends if I have time. Yeah, if I have time, and I'm not revising that much, then I'll read a book.

A number of students seemed to the see the value in reading but did not read frequently. Amira says ‘I like reading books but I don't read a lot. Books I read are like Horrid Henry Books or books that look interesting’. Idil states, ‘I do kinda enjoy reading and my favourite book is Harry Potter’ and Halima adds, ‘I don’t read that much, I like a bit of non-fiction books and also some comics’. Ismail has a clear idea why he does not read that regularly:

> I used to read a lot, but nowadays, I enjoy doing other activities. I mean, I understand that books are a privileged medium which allows one to understand the literature and writing in detail. However, I'm normally for the literature medium which holds subtly inside other genres. My reading habits have changed because I fail to see the difference between the medium of books and the medium of gaming or shows. What I mean is that, books are surface level entertainment, but above level, a narrative medium to tell a message to the viewers, and books will do this through English techniques, which can help you in other studies, but I don't see the true significance when other mediums can do parts of this, and also tell a fantastic story, with thought provoking ideas and themes, a good book can also be a good game, and a good game can also be a good book.

There are also students, like Asha, who do not read for pleasure at all. She says ‘I’m not a fan of reading’. Isa who, when asked if he liked reading and what books he had enjoyed the most, explained ‘not so much but I would say *Mr Stink* and *Good Burger’*. There are also those whose reading habits have declined. Mushtaq says ‘my favourite books are *The Hate You Give* and *Private Peaceful* but I don’t really read as much as I used to’. Idris also explains how his reading habits have changed:

> I used to like reading, though not so much now. I used to read in year seven and a bit of year eight, largely due to my friendship group then and the library period that was allocated. When I did read it was a mixture of fiction and mythology alongside books about animals and life.

Our school has a large, well-stocked library and a full-time librarian Elizabeth Zoller, a qualified English teacher whose role also includes literacy support. The photographs in figure 15 show the welcoming library space that she has created. Elizabeth also delivers the year seven library lessons; all year seven students have a library or literacy lesson once a week for the whole academic year in addition to three, more traditional English lessons. Half of the class stay

with their English teacher and are taught literacy explicitly and the other half go to the library and they are taught how to use the space for reading and research. Elizabeth also recommends books and encourages the students to read for pleasure. The halves then swap the following week, so all year seven students have two lessons in the library a month, and two lessons of literacy. In the case of Idris, this library lesson had a clear impact on his reading habits, if only in the short term.

Figure 15- Photographs of the school library

Elizabeth frequently runs competitions to encourage reading, the first of the year being Read Quest for year eight students. The school newsletter describes Umar as one of the most notable of this year's competition entrants! Ahmed in year seven was very keen to tell me about the competition he is taking part in, as well as his love of reading:

> I do like to read I am in a book competition, read 20 different books and get a certificate. I think I am in the lead! I love mystery and action books, this year I read about 87 books, I am the third person in my year that reads so much.

25 students had read 25 books in the first 11 weeks of the school year, of these four students were Somali. 16 Somali students had read at least one book a week since the start of term. Sundus, in year seven had borrowed 55! 437 students had borrowed at least one book in the same period, of these 60 were Somali students or 14%. These 60 students borrowed 587 books between them, 16% of books issued. Figure 16 shows Somali student preference for fiction or non-fiction with trends in particular year groups and gender.

Figure 16- Table to show borrowing trends

Year group	Non-fiction	Fiction	Total	Male	Female
7	51	248	299	131	154
8	23	71	94	68	26
9	6	30	36	32	4
10	3	29	32	15	17
11	14	105	119	24	95

When I spoke to Insiya, the recently graduated former student, she also highlighted the value of reading at home:

> In my household personally, like, we were pushed to read like that one thing that when I first moved to Leicester, like, my first week, my dad took me to the library, made me a card... I used to go to the library all the time, it's called a bibliotheek in Holland. I used to go to the bibliotheek all the time when I was younger. And literally the first thing I remember doing was like reading like I always had a book. I remember crying when Tracy Beaker came out and my dad refused to buy it for me. I know that that's one thing that my parents pushed. And that made me more inclined to study like history or want to study English. But yeah, I think reading is something that was pushed in my family. Yeah. I don't know if that's the same with everybody else [Somalis]. But that's one thing that I know that my, my parents definitely valued. And they make sure to like, take us to the library every weekend and always change your books and stuff.

Zainab, an avid reader herself, talks about literature as a real strength of the Somali community and in particular verbal storytelling, something her community is known for.

> We're good with our literature, all Somalis are good with their literature; reading and like poems and things like that, because most of our songs it's like poetry. So, it’s kinda like oh all the words all the words go into it, like it's sort of like telling a story, it’s like we're good storytellers and things like that. Like we have a lot of stories that we tell. Kids nag their parents to tell them a story or like when you're sitting around you just tell a story. And some Somali parents they used to like scare their children into going to sleep. So, they’d be like different figures that would be afraid of they'd be like, one lady there is like a scary lady if she sees the light on then she'll come to your home and take you! A story like that.

In an addition to the usual lessons, the end of January sees a knife crime awareness workshop being hosted by the school. 32 year eight students have been selected based on their vulnerability, eight are Somali students (25%).

The English department also takes year nine to a local theatre to watch a play about the Trojan Horse Scandal in Birmingham in 2014. Saadiya was asked to write a review for the school newsletter. Her review was a mature look at the scandal itself and also the play which she enjoyed very much, despite she and her peers having little prior knowledge. She closed her review by writing:

> We were very lucky that our school had been offered this award-winning play, free of charge, because it was sold out. I think it's a good idea that theatres are trying to do more to encourage young people to connect with the theatre. The best part was that we had an opportunity to have a Q&A session at the end of the play with the actors, the writer and a witness directly connected with these events. This was a memorable trip!

5.3.6 Part five- Behaviour

‘You, kind of you don't grow up meek… It's survival of the fittest.’

February, cold and crisp this year, sees a renewed focus on year 11 as the GCSE exams loom. Intervention sessions have already begun in some subjects, particularly in Maths and English, and other subjects come on board as the weeks progress. The Head of Year 11 sends an email about two Somali boys who have been banned from all after school activities, including any intervention sessions, following a series of problems. One of the students had recently attended an English revision lecture, of a text he did not study, to disrupt it, along with three other Somali boys. The behaviour of some of our Somali students, particularly some of the boys, is of concern to the school and is closely monitored by their head of year and linked senior leader. The tracker in figure 17 is an example of such monitoring for students in year 11. This example tracks Y11 Somali boys. It monitors the number of negative behaviour events each student has been involved in, the number of negative points allocated, their overall points once positive points have been allocated (which offset the negative) and any other issues. A PSP is a personal support plan, the last step before exclusion and EWO signifies involvement from the Education Welfare Officer for poor attendance.

Figure 17- Behaviour tracker example

Forename	Neg events	Neg Points	Overall Points	Issues
1	80	-199	-109	PSP
Harun	33	-161	-105	Alternative provision
2	72	-154	-78	PSP
3	52	-141	-55	PSP- EWO
4	41	-138	-42	PSP
5	66	-132	-38	Constant behaviour issues
6	36	-116	-48	PSP
Abdi	43	-108	-24	Constant behaviour issues
7	32	-95	25	Low level issue
8	72	-78	-6	Attendance issue
Yunus	29	-73	93	No major issues
9	36	-38	60	Low level issue
10	19	-27	83	No issues
Shuayb	22	-26	82	No issues
11	21	-24	156	No issues
12	18	-24	88	No issues
Ibrahim	9	-20	90	No issues
13	10	-15	91	No issues
Yaqoub	13	-14	118	No issues
14	8	-12	80	No issues
15	10	-11	89	No issues
Malik	1	-2	184	No issues
16	0	0	102	No issues

Interestingly the extensive observations I've done in school have not shown significant behaviour differences between different ethnic groups but they have captured some of the students coloured red on the tracker above exhibiting challenging behaviours such as Harun during the Maths lesson. This was supported by Miss Usman, from learning support, who said:

> I'd say I don't think they [Somali students] do behave differently... for example... I'm in a business studies class. I'm specifically there to support two students, one is an Asian student, and one is a Somali student. And there are a few other like Somali students there, and I don't think they behave any differently to the rest of the class.

The behaviour and perceived behaviours of Somali students in school is an emotive issue and students are very keen to share their views. Year 11 students in particular were keen to have their voices heard. Some students feel

there are Somali students who behave inappropriately and offer a multitude of explanations. Many students acknowledged homelife as a key factor. The female students I spoke too felt that boys were treated differently than girls by the Somali community. Farah was particularly vocal about this, ‘Somali boys are a different breed like our parents like baby them like I've never ever seen anything like that!’ This treatment, being spoilt, may have a negative influence on behaviour. However, for some families, boys have been treated more strictly as concerns about male behaviour grow. Muna talks about her own family. Her use of the term ‘Somali stereotype’ is particularly interesting.

> I think Mom's just different case, she's more strict on my brother because she's so scared that he'll become a Somali stereotype. Like, she's always like, “Oh my god, you smell of smoke”. Like if his friends have been doing stuff. “Oh my god, where have you been?” Two of my cousins have been arrested as well so my mum doesn't want him [her brother] to go down the same route. One of them got arrested for that GBH and the other got arrested for armed robbery.

There was some discussion about the potential for discord between tribal groups or clans which could lead to poor behaviour. Whilst almost everyone I spoke to stated that clan affiliation did not influence behaviour in the UK and parents were keen not to discuss it with their children, Zainab hinted at a different picture:

> Me and my friends, we don't really care, we don't say, “our tribe’s better than this one, our tribe’s better than that one” but some of the boys in our year, they, they don't really like Isaaqs, which are like Somaliland, which is kind of stupid.

Indeed, Mr Abshir had picked up some traces of tribal affiliation too: ‘you'll often see some of our Somali students wear bracelets representing the region their 'tribe' is from’.

A number of students considered the role that developing and maintaining a particular reputation might play, an explanation which places the reasons for misbehaviour on the students themselves. Zainab gave her view:

> So maybe it's kind of like, “oh, we're gonna uphold this reputation, my brothers like this oh I'm gonna like make him proud” or something like that. So, it's just kind of like that. But I think sometimes it's just like, they're trying to show off to their friends, cuz some of them that they act

> a different way when they're not with their friends… And they're like, oh, if I act like this [well behaved] I might just look like a weirdo or something like that.

Farah was quite keen to also assert the responsibility of the individual whilst acknowledging them as a product of their environment:

> I think is the individual student where they got their environment where they come from, that's what I feel like it is. It's not the school's fault, it's not the school's fault. I feel like it's just them like they just don't care about their parents' feelings, like they just don't care or their parents are not like disciplining them.

Hawa also spoke about the influence of Somali homelife and how it affects behaviour:

> I think the way we were brought up, with having the mum who's quite a hands on and the father who either works a lot or not doesn't work at all. You, kind of you don't grow up meek… It's survival of the fittest. Yeah. I mean if you want something you've got to speak up for it.

Muna, picking up on the theme of the school's culpability, said she felt the school faced real challenges when students reported to parents they had been in trouble at school and to avoid further trouble stated they were the victims of racism. She thought this was damaging to the school and to families and said students should not 'play the race card that easily'.

Like Farah, Muna also hinted at a multicausal explanation for poor behaviour linking family life, societal influence and the potentially negative influences of peers.

> So other boys... especially because such a large Somali families, they live in families, like with 12 children, like the mums don't really know where they are all the time and because of the older brothers are in like, I'm not gonna say anything like bad, but like, you know, gangs and all that stuff. I feel like, like, you know, social influence and all that all those factors. And like, I don't know why this is trend but like, you know... [they] don't want to do well, because their friends aren't doing well and they make fun of them. But you don't have to lower like, like jeopardise education just because you know, you want to fit in with the crowd and I think that's quite toxic.

Whilst condemning bad behaviour, Farah did feel that two key aspects of Somali behaviour, being vocal and supporting each other, were misinterpreted by their teachers.

> I feel like our customs like kind of like sometimes are... misunderstood. You know Somalis like... I can't explain wait like when we all get together is like fun, like loud and you know, it's like normal for us to come home and then our mum's friends are there like, they're all having a chat and it's like really loud... it's normal to us but like in school it's like seen as like being disruptive. So, I don't think so, where it's normal to us but we don't realise it's like, being disruptive to others, so it's a bit weird. Also, Somali people are like naturally outspoken so like if something happens to like another Somali person is getting something done to them, like other Somali people will feel obligated to do something about it. That's why I feel like some problems in like school with how they understand us…

All students, whether they perceive themselves as students who misbehave or not, felt that the Somali cohort as a whole is treated somewhat unfairly because of a minority of students. All of the students I spoke to could give an example where they had been present when Somali students were misbehaving and they were also disciplined for, as they saw it, being present and being Somali. In these circumstances Muna says 'I found that a bit, you know, upset by it kinda'. Yaqoub gives his view:

> If you're not quiet in school, you're probably going to be treated all the same. Because we're [Somalis] so small [in terms of numbers]. So, if one of us does something that speaks for all of us, that's why I don't like it. Okay, if Asian were to do something a Somali would do, like just say I don't know actually I can't give an example, something stupid, right? A Somali does it that, their action will speak louder because they're actually Somali. In society racism is always going to be there. It's never going to go away. No matter how much people scream about it, it's going to stay.

Zainab, a very quiet student with an excellent behaviour and academic record, agrees:

> The way that one person acts, it might have an impact on how all of us are seen, it's like, most people think Somalis are rowdy and things like that. But some of us actually aren't, some of us can be a bit quiet, and we can like do actually do what we want and things like that.

For some students being treated as part of a homogenous group was actually quite distressing and was seen as a prejudiced or even racist view. Whilst acknowledging she was talking about a minority of teachers Farah, quite heatedly, said:

> I feel there's definitely prejudice and I feel like some… teachers actually add to the prejudice … actually take action to like their views about us… I

> think the school expects us to fail... I have to prove something... it's not a clean slate like other races they don't have to prove that their like capable students but we have to prove like, “oh, you're Somali wow, you got an A, your Somali though”, I don’t understand why that's issue, like, why that's even a conversation.

Muna agreed and highlighted the fact that teachers showing surprise at her Somali heritage because she is a ‘good student’ was of real concern to her.

> So obviously there's a stereotype of Somali students being loudy, I'm sorry, rowdy and loud. That was made evident when I started by teachers. So um, when I first started a lot of teachers were like 'you're not Somali, you're Yemeni', cause you know how I'm not like the stereotype Somali I guess so... I was kind of quiet. A lot of teachers have said that to me and my brother as well. So, I feel like that is kind of not racist but hmmmm.

Mr Abshir did also consider the fact there was a Somali stereotype. Linking more challenging behaviour at the school in the past with how behaviour is dealt with today:

> Historically speaking, when the first generation of Somali students arrived at our school, late nineties early 2000s - there were a lot of issues then. Whether our current Somali students are suffering the collateral damage of previous generation's behaviour, I would not be too sure about; although I have heard parents complain about this before.

Farah, trying to reconcile her ideas of structural racism and individual students being responsible, talked about the behaviour of some Somali students being something of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

> Maybe cuz like when they got in trouble the teachers would have probably like expected it like yeah, and then they were like that's what you would expect for me so it's okay.

Yaqoub was the only student I spoke to who, whilst acknowledging his peers have sometimes acted in an inappropriate way, did not wish to link this to their Somali heritage. He very firmly and passionately stated:

> It is a student thing is well, it's not always a race thing. A lot of stuff you can't just bring race into it, like behaviour as well. Behaviour, you can't put race on behaviour because behaviour has no race. There is not one race that's more err more quiet than another, there is not another race is less quiet than that it's just them being them, it's a student being a student, it's boy being a boy. Ten of them are boys, none of them are girls, the girls end up fixing up, the boys just fix up late, it’s a coincidence. It's really not a race thing, I can't agree with the idea that it's just “okay

> Somalis are badly behaved". It's just a coincidence the loudest ones [students] are Somali.

What came out of the discussions at this time was a series of tensions the students could articulate but not fully explain, around stereotyping, racism, personal accountability, community influence and blame. The school, aware of some of these tensions, have employed a number of strategies to work effectively with the Somali students and the community. These include the translation of school documentation into Somali, workshops for parents and the recent appointment of a Somali governor. A key strategy is the employment of a Somali mentor who supports students in school and provides a home school link. Mr Hersi is the only mentor assigned to a group of students other than by year group and has been in post for over 20 years. Zainab outlines his role from her perspective:

> He's like, oh, if you guys need anything or she's struggling, or anything like that come to me and I'll help you out with anything. And because then some Somali parents, they can't, like speak English properly. Like he's there in meetings when you're with when you're having a meeting with other teachers. Like if you're acting a certain way, sometimes he'll step in because he doesn't want you to get in trouble. So, he'll step in, he'll warn you about it. He's helpful as well, he's really helpful. I think all Somali parents are happy with what Mr. Hersi does.

Although Zainab suggests the fact they have an advocate is not seen as a positive by all in school:

> Some Asian students seeing as how we have Mr Hersi with us to like support sometimes. It's like, they sometimes feel offended by that as well. So, like "oh they have this teacher to support them" and things like that. And then for us, it's kind of like the only teacher who actually is for us, like who, he actually spends time like working with us as well.

Following the holiday, the behaviour and reward data for the previous half term is published, the table in figure 18 gives a summary of the data for Somali students compared with the whole cohort. Its shows a number of interesting aspects to Somali behaviour. For example, challenging behaviour is generally more evident in the older years, rewards are largely in line with the percentages of Somali students, unlike behaviour, and external and internal exclusions are low in the Somali community. The numbers of negative behaviour points being

awarded and incidences of removal from lessons are slightly higher than the proportion of Somali students in the year.

Figure 18- Table to show behaviour data for Somali students

	External exclusions		Internal exclusions		Negative behaviour points		Removal from lessons		Reward points	
	Whole cohort	Somali Students	Whole cohort	Somali Students	Whole cohort	Somali Students	Whole cohort	Somali Students	Whole cohort	Somali Students
Y7	3	0	17	1	299	67 (18%)	13	2 (13%)	3218	344 (10%)
Y8	1	0	14	0	656	145 (18%)	48	13 (21%)	3086	341 (10%)
Y9	2	0	10	2	269	47 (15%)	14	2 (13%)	2340	310 (12%)
Y10	3	1	18	2	351	104 (23%)	36	11 (23%)	2491	352 (12%)
Y11	0	0	21	10	223	77 (26%)	32	21 (40%)	1896	378 (17%)

The behaviour data is not the only data examined at this point in the school year; the pastoral team also use the half term's academic data to focus on a number of students who are underperforming. After the half term holiday 23 students will be placed on an academic report. Unlike behaviour reports these reports focus on effort and attainment in lessons with students marked out of five by each class teacher. Of the 23 students four are Somali, three girls and one boy.

5.3.7 Part six- Free time

‘I don't really do or like anything dramatic’

Following the half-term break, school returns on Monday the 24th of February. For several weeks there have been news stories about a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in China although this has not caused anyone in school to be particularly concerned thus far. What has drawn the community’s attention to the virus is a prank social media message which told our parents and students that school would not be reopening following the half term break due to the virus. Many conversations in this first week centred on the virus and also the far-fetched nature of this prank! Some students focus more on international events however; a discussion initiates between three year nine students in my History class when Adna announces she has heard on the ‘Somali news’ that a group of Somali pirates had hijacked a ship and stolen a cargo of hand sanitiser. The other students involved in the conversation, Saara in particular, are very sceptical about such a story!

On the 3rd of March the Prime Minster, Boris Johnson, launches the government’s action plan for COVID-19 but as the BBC (2020a) writes later ‘however seriously anyone took the warning, it was still difficult to visualise’. The announcement of the action plan leads to hand sanitiser appearing in school and the installation of signs in the toilets requesting students wash their hands thoroughly. Mr Maxwell, the headteacher, states he wants the message about increased hygiene sharing ‘without causing any worry or panic’ and this was duly done. Although, as the virus spreads across Europe, students begin asking questions in lessons and both staff and students begin to wonder if our school and community might be affected.

Despite growing concerns about the virus, the weather is beginning to get warmer and brighter in the first weeks of March. Increasing numbers of students are choosing to spend their free time in the school’s outdoor spaces. The school, whilst city based, has a relatively large amount of outdoor space: two basketball courts, a large AstroTurf pitch, an outdoor gym and some playground

space. On one of the playgrounds is a large canopy with picnic tables and table football tables underneath, table tennis tables also line the school building on this playground. The school has very little green space however, just some trees and a strip of grass near the main entrance. The photos in figures 19, 20, 21 and 22 show some of the school's outdoor spaces.

Figure 19- A photograph of the rear canopy area and Astroturf

Figure 20- A photograph of the table tennis area

Figure 19- A photograph of the front canopy area

Figure 20- A photograph of the playground, outdoor gym and basketball court

Over the winter months the school's two dining rooms, the indoor spaces open to students at break and lunch time, are very crowded. In October I spent a series of breaktimes in dining room one; the queues for food were long and quite disorderly and students were stood and sat in every available space. Even though no individual was shouting the noise was enough to give you a headache! Maryama, in year ten, was chatting to a group of Somali boys until her friend who had been paying for her food dragged her away. Muhammad

was stood drinking a bottle of juice chatting to friends, his shoe laces both undone. He and his friends had congregated near a radiator to keep warm. His friends are a mixed group of Asian and Somali students and they chatted animatedly to each other, pushing and shoving each other as the banter escalates. I could hear them over the crowd teasing each other. Near the tills another group of students including Yaqoub were all eating chocolate pastries and complaining very loudly about an incident in a recent lesson.

The seating areas were mostly occupied by female students sat chatting or working. Zainab and Nuwaal were working on some Science revision whilst Iman looked through her revision notes. Sayeed, a year nine boy, was talking to a group of year 11 girls near the door about not wearing headscarves and madrassah attendance. In the last few months Siham had chosen not to wear her hijab. She is the only Somali girl in year 11 to do so and only the second in the school, the other being Rahma, a year nine student. The group were teasing Siham about being less Muslim although it seemed good natured and they were all laughing, including Siham. Sayeed was talking very loudly and I heard him saying 'your mum goes to church on Sunday'. The conversation continued despite the bell for the end of break ringing and the supervisor blowing her whistle. As we headed to lessons a queue formed due to the number of students in the corridor, Sayeed and a few friends began pushing to move the queue along. They were asked to stop by Miss Jackson which they did reasonably quickly.

The morning of the 4th of March, is sunny and warm so, along with a large number of students, I make my way downstairs and to the playground near the outdoor gym. As I leave the building, I hold the door open for Abdi. He says 'Thank you very much Miss' so sincerely it was charming. Unlike the crowded canteen there are a wide range of activities open to students outdoors. Table tennis, basketball and football are popular break and lunchtime activities which, almost without exception, only boys are involved in. Adam, in year eight, says he enjoys playing football at break as does Yaqoub in year 11 who says 'I do football or basketball at break and at lunch'. Idris in year 10 says:

> For lunch I go to the pasta shack, grab some food and play table tennis with other people. There was a period of time where I would grab lunch at break to avoid the lunch queues but they have died down.

I see Ibrahim, one of my year 11 students, and I ask what he is doing. He says he would like to play basketball at break but no one brings a ball because they don't want to carry it. Although, since the year 10 mocks, he claims he and his friends feel too tired to play, at break they mostly just chat. I ask if he is getting enough sleep, it seems unlikely he hasn't got enough energy for a 10-minute game! His reply is 'Somali teenagers sleep a lot', I ask 'just Somalis?', he laughs and says 'no, all teenagers but you are researching Somalis!'

Playing games also provides opportunities to converse with friends and many students mention this as an important part of their breaktime. Isa explains he spends his break and lunchtimes 'talking with my friends and playing football' as does Umar who says 'I just hang around with my friends and play football'. Mohmed prefers to play games or chat, 'I like playing football or basketball with my friends or just hang around, walking around the school'. Many boys prefer to spend time with their friends and not play sport; Ismail for example says:

> At lunch, I usually go home or stay in school, and while I'm at school, I would hang around people of the same group year. I don't really do or like anything dramatic, but I think I enjoy taking walks around the school, it allows me to think.

Abdullahi stands chatting most breaks on the basketball courts with a group of friends, six are Asian and one other is Somali. Lower down the school there are more mixed ethnicity friendships as there are less Somali students. In year 11 particularly, the Somali students are more likely to spend time with other Somali students but Abdullahi is the only Somali student in his tutor group and one of a small number in the whole year.

Sometimes the chatting on the playground turns to loud banter and play fighting. One morning in mid-March, Mushtaq and Farah and one of their friends, walk across the playground and onto the Astroturf. They turn around and walk towards me, as they walk by Mushtaq stops and asks me about an applique rhubarb brooch pinned to my coat which used to belong to my mum.

They notice I am holding a notebook and ask if I am taking notes for my research, I reply that I am and Mushtaq then asks ‘why are you researching Somalis, we are nothing special?’. Mushtaq has asked me this several times before but I explain again, she then says she would like to help and points out a group of Somali boys stood together in a circle talking loudly and pushing each other. She says ‘they are acting like gangsters; they would never behave like that if their mums were here!’.

The girls generally spend their break and lunch times chatting rather than playing sport, there seems to be very few mixed gender friendship groups. Yasmeen says ‘I like talking to my friends and hanging out with them. It's a lot of fun’. Year-seven students Asha, Aliyah and Idil all agree. Salma says ‘I usually just hang around with my friends and listen to music’. Mushtaq, in year 11, says:

> At lunch time and break times I usually spend time with my friends. We talk and catch up. First, we sit and eat [in the canteen] then just go to the playground and just chill.

A number of students can be seen snacking whilst chatting, Maryam for example opts for a packet of M&M’s and an energy drink whilst Farah, whom she is chatting with, is munching her way through a whole packet of Maryland cookies! Iman also uses her breaktime to socialise with her friends and snack:

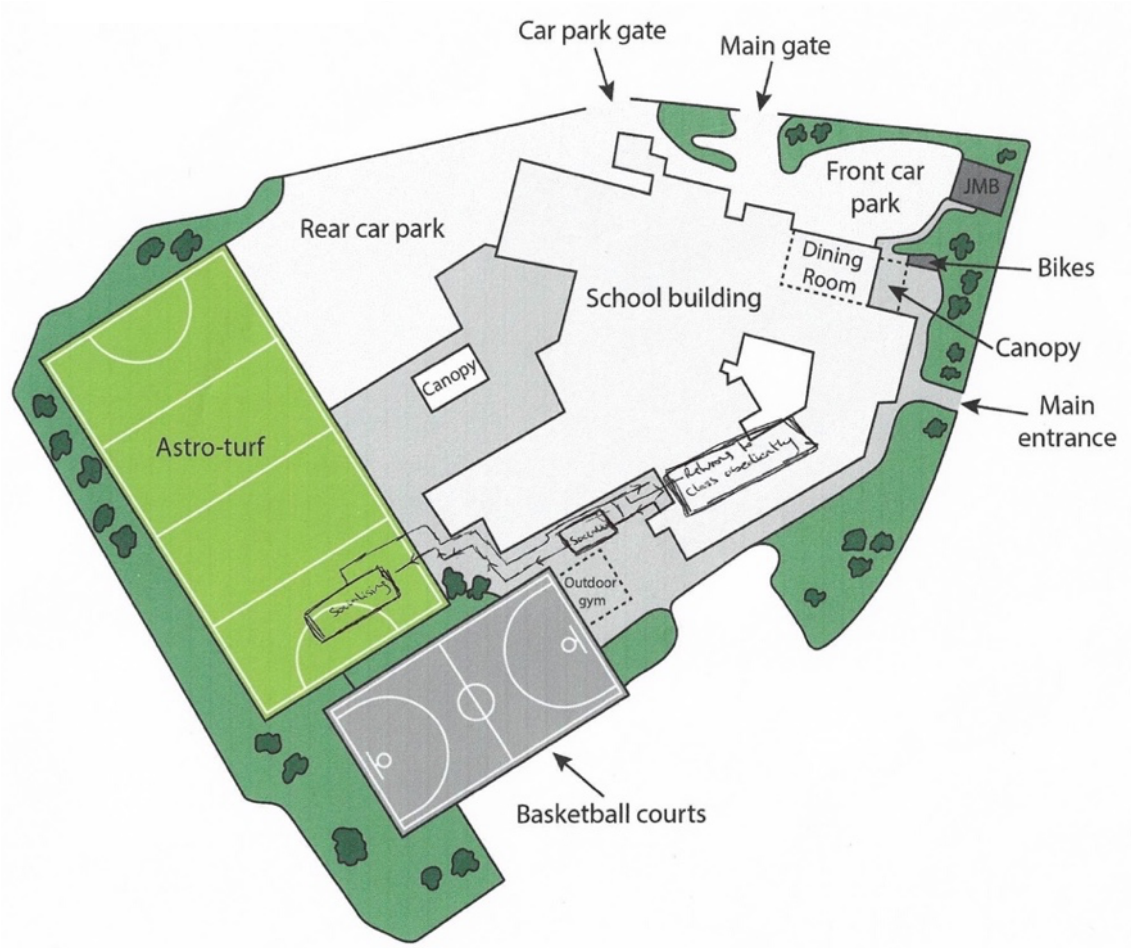
> I usually spend my breaktimes by eating a belVita [a cereal bar] to help me get through period 3 and 4 and I always have a packed lunch that my mum makes at lunchtimes. I prefer to spend break and lunch with a small group of people no more than four including me because it’s easier to converse and I enjoy it more. I like to spend breaktime and lunchtime the most with Kruti, Fatiima and Afifa [three Asian year 11 students] because we always have something to talk and laugh about and we can have fun easily. We usually eat our lunch then walk around the school until the bell goes. I don't like spending lunchtimes with a massive group of people because it can get too noisy and it isn't much fun.

Zainab also talks at length about her friendship group and the activities she does at breaktime. Interestingly she mentions enjoying slightly differing activities with her Somali and Asian social circles.

> I have a mix [of friends] so its Somali and Asian... we just hang out together. Oh, we just sit and talk... usually with the Somalis we will usually sit and talk and throughout break, we just laugh a lot. So, we'll just say whatever comes into our mind and we will just laugh. And we make fun of each other as well. So, it's just kind of like banter and things like that. And with my Asian friends we talk about a lot of factual things and we joke around as well. We sit inside in the canteen, in the canteen or in the hub. I think it's just because we're lazy. When it comes to lunchtime, we'll eat our food then we'll just stay seated in the canteen until lunch finishes. I sometimes get a packed lunch or I get school food. So, it depends on whether I'm running late or something like that.

I ask a number of students to plot their free time on a map I have commissioned for this purpose. I particularly like Ibrahim's map (figure 23) as he has added additional annotations such as, 'returns to class obediently' and, as he is often late for my lesson, I decide to put this annotation to the test one breaktime! Towards the end of break I see Ibrahim stood against the side of the design and technology part of the building with four Somali boys and a student of dual heritage. The area indicated on the map for 'socialising', so far, so accurate! They are chatting and play fighting now and then. Ibrahim has a rucksack on his back with a black 'puffa' style jacket over the bag with his hood up giving him a hunchback appearance. When the bell goes the boys carry on their talk as if nothing has happened and all the other students file past them and into school. The boys bring up the rear and continue chatting and play fighting all the way to the door. Whilst Ibrahim does go into school as required it is perhaps not in the obedient and timely manner his map may have suggested!

Figure 21- Ibrahim's map



Zubair, a year nine student, can often be seen playing football with a group of friends on the Astroturf. I ask him to draw a typical lunchtime on the map in figure 24. It includes going to the canteen for his lunch, walking to the Astroturf to play football and then going back into school via the canopy. I like the zig zags he has used to indicate his game of football.

Figure 22- Zubair's map

Even though it is certainly beginning to feel a little warmer Yasmeen, another year nine student, thinks that it is too cold to sit and chat outside at this time of year so she and her friends walk and chat. Her friends are Asian students in her year group. The route shown on her map, figure 25, is one loop of the school, including walking in one door and out again via the canteen. Yasmeen explains, they may do two or three loops in a break depending on how long it takes to get their snack from the canteen. She thinks breaktime is a bit boring ‘I don’t want to play at breaktime, I’m not a kid anymore’.

Figure 23- Yasmeen's map

The map in figure 26 shows Saadiya's breaktime activity. She is a year nine student. I often see her at breaktime with her friends, two Somali girls, Safa and Rahma. She explains her map:

> At break I normally talk to my friends, get a snack from the canteen, usually I would get a cheese and onion pasty or a pain au chocolat. Me and my friends would then walk around outside and talk to others.

Figure 24- Saadiya's map

As well as sunny weather, March 6th also sees the history department host a talk by a local university lecturer to share insights into what it is like to study history at university and possible career options. The lecturer, and the first-year undergraduate student who accompanies him, are both of African heritage. Another purpose of the talk is to encourage our students to consider History as a degree choice as Black and Asian students are underrepresented groups in History courses at British universities. The talk goes well and I reinforce the message in my History lessons. Later Zainab talks about her career ideas and the effect of the talk on her post-16 choices:

I’m going to do what you spoke about; I'm going to go into history lecturing. So then, I have two different college options. One college option I did modern history because they didn't do ancient history and my other college option does Ancient History because, who wouldn’t want to learn about Greeks and the Romans?! When I get my results, I will decide which college to go to.

5.3.8 Part seven- School closure

‘We hadn't prepared to say goodbye properly’

The increased hygiene measures continue throughout the first weeks of March both within school and across the country. Whilst there have been no COVID-19 cases in school, the number of cases nationally continues to rise. Three girls in my year 11 class, Mushtaq, Farah and Muna, are getting increasingly concerned about what will happen in the event of closure. They speculate at length about the possibility of resits at college and the use of predicted grades. All three feel they could do better in their exams than any predicted grades would reflect. The nervousness is heightened by the college interviews which are taking place this week. Places at the best colleges in the area are competitive and the grades students receive in their GCSE exams are important. The college interviews also bring drama for another reason: a group of our Somali boys arrive for their interviews in surgical masks and refuse to remove them. The thought of protecting oneself in such a way seems bizarre, although the boys’ attitudes when asked to remove the masks is the issue, rather than their decision to wear them. The students were disciplined on their return to school following a complaint from the college.

On the 12th of March, as global cases of COVID-19 continue to rise exponentially, the WHO or World Health Organisation (2020), declares a pandemic. The following evening it is the second year 11 parents’ evening of the academic year. Signs were put up asking parents not to shake our hands but we sit face to face less than one metre apart. There are murmurings from some staff that perhaps the event should be cancelled, especially as we heard that afternoon the schools in the Republic of Ireland were to close in the coming days. Many staff however attend without giving the situation too much thought.

It seems that our parents are not overly concerned as attendance at the evening was in line with the prior evenings of the year, and few parents mention the virus. Mr Hussein, Muna’s father does, he jovially remarks to me about the lack of handshaking, quite unusual in itself as many Muslim men do not shake

women's hands. The following day the BBC (2020b) ran an article quoting Geoff Barton, Head of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), who 'anticipated absences would be small in scale and similar to "snow days"' in the coming weeks. Staff and students are not reassured. The questions from students are increasing in frequency and year 11 students continue to be concerned for their exams. On the 16th of March the school is closed to all but essential visitors, meaning I have to cancel a planned interview with a Somali parent for this research. On the same day Saadiya tells me she had worn a face mask to school that morning but that it had been confiscated. We discuss the WHO advice to avoid the wearing of masks and she seems reassured. Other students begin to talk of missing their extended families, Yasmeen says she wouldn't be seeing her grandad because 'he is vulnerable, he had an operation on his heart last year'.

On the 10th of March, planning had begun in the event of school closure, what Mr Maxwell termed 'a worst-case scenario' but by the 15th planning began in earnest to make sure we would be ready for an increasingly likely closure. As schools in Europe began to close there was talk of schools in the UK following suit. It seemed so unlikely, but by Monday the 16th of March, it appeared inevitable. The week, which turned out to be the last week in school, became very challenging. Student attendance drops to 87% on the Tuesday and 18 staff are self-isolating. On the evening of the 17th of March, the Prime Minister holds the first of what would become daily press conferences. Many staff and students, not just from our school but across the country, watch the second daily briefing in which it is announced that schools in England will close at the end of the week. At school the next day it is the only topic of conversation and the words 'unbelievable' and 'unprecedented' are heard frequently. In our local authority there is still a fortnight until the two-week Easter break, many staff and students hope that we will return after the holiday but there is an increasing sense we may not. Partial closures were organised by Mr Maxwell in the latter part of the week 'to sustain education for years 10 and 11 and protect the wellbeing of staff in school'. Lengthy emails sent by Mr Maxwell every day keep us up-to-date as the situation changes. These emails were supportive and

urged us to prepare for closure as best we could, highlighting how, 'if the closure drags on for several months it will do real harm to their [the students] education and we need to do everything in our power to mitigate this'.

On the 18th of March, Gavin Williamson the Education Secretary, sent a statement to schools stating:

> We can confirm that we will not go ahead with assessments or exams, and that we will not be publishing performance tables for this academic year. We will work with the sector and Ofqual to ensure children get the qualifications they need.

Many year 11s are concerned by this improbable news. Summaya said, 'I'm very anxious and nervous, I feel like I could've done better by sitting my actual GCSEs'. Iman mirrors this comment saying, 'I am sad that my exams have been cancelled because I wanted to get much better grades than my mock exams but now it is out of my control'. Latiifa also agrees:

> I'm a bit worried about my GCSE results as I know I would have done better than my mock and predicted grades in the real exam. Although I feel like I could have gotten better I'm not too fussed about them and just hope and wish I pass all subjects… so it's just a bit of mixed emotions.

Muna reflected on the announcement a few weeks later and explained her view:

> I was really ecstatic at first, not to have to go through the stress of exams, but then again… I feel like I wanted to do GCSEs because like, I wanted to prove myself, and I know if I did GCSEs, I could have got at least like five nines, you know, but now I won't get those grades, but it's not the end of the world because there are people dying and there are more like important situations, so I don't really care that much anymore. I'm just glad I never started revision. I'm so glad like I've always been thinking, it has been gnawing on my mind like "stop procrastinating, revise, revise" but I haven't revised yet and I'm glad I didn't waste my time.

On Thursday morning, the 19th of March, the Year 11 pastoral team gather in the sports hall for an assembly. Unusually a large number of year 11 teachers are also present, talking quietly as the students file in. Those present know the decision has been made that today will be their last day as tomorrow year seven and nine, currently at home, will be in school collecting work for the period of closure. The room is unusually hot and an unidentifiable buzzing noise means those present must strain to hear. Mr Lockley, the Head of Key Stage

Four, outlines the general situation in relation to the pandemic before handing over to the headteacher. Mr Maxwell opens by saying ‘I am sorry that this has happened, it is no one’s fault but I am sorry… we are asking you to be adults because of the state the country is in’. The atmosphere seems tense, the room silent. Yaqoub sits with his whole body turned towards Mr Maxwell and listening carefully. Zaheera looks a little sad, pensive perhaps. Finally, the headteacher says:

> we’ve got today to get through, be positive we want the day to be as nice as it can be in terms of relationships, we will do our best to support you. Tomorrow you will not be in school, I apologise about that… Good luck year 11.

A murmur goes around, gaining quickly in volume, and many students exchange glances. The staff seem to move forward wanting to offer support at what we know is a difficult time.

The decision is made to delay the start of period one, to allow the impromptu goodbyes that have begun to continue. A group of Somali boys want to play basketball and are not allowed. Some staff are disparaging of this but perhaps their need for normality and togetherness is a reaction to the news they have just heard. Najma is in tears but her friends gather round and comfort her. Mushtaq, Muna, Farah all stand chatting. They come over and we talk about this unexpectedly abrupt end. Looking back on the day Iman said ‘I expected the exams to be cancelled but I didn't expect Thursday to be the last day of school which was quite sad and we hadn't prepared to say goodbye properly’. Mushtaq later agreed, ‘I was really upset about the Thursday assembly as the end of our five whole years at school had such a rushed ending’.

On Monday the 23rd of March, the first day of school closure, a national lockdown is announced by the Prime Minster, according to the BBC (2020a) it involves ‘some of the most draconian restrictions on individual liberty the UK has ever seen’. The whole school community, along with the rest of the country and many other parts of the world now begin a very different life.

Students begin the task of working more independently from home. Each day teachers email work to their timetabled classes and duplicate the message on the school's online platform and homework app. Two weeks into this new way of working, I ask students to share their views and experiences of online learning. Sabirin, a year eight student, confidently stated:

> I've been doing online homework for different lessons such as Science, French and Maths and much more. I have been reading books and writing reviews on it for my English homework.

Not all were enjoying the experience however, for example, Summaya in year 11 explained, 'It's quite boring as in school you get more social interactions and you're guaranteed to learn something'. Safa in year nine was also finding it a challenge, 'it is quite difficult to do school work but I am trying'. Iqra in year 10 said:

> I am missing going to school seeing my friends and classmates. I also really miss the guidance from the teachers, although they send me emails it is much more difficult than speaking in person.

Zaheera, who seemed somewhat irritated about her experience, wrote:

> Since school shut down my mum still makes me do work like I am at school, I wake up at nine and work till three, I get two breaks. However, doing work at home isn't the same as working in school I miss being surrounded by my classmates, from this experience I'm learning that I learn better in school then at home because there are too many distractions.

Teachers are also adapting to teaching online, getting to grips with the new tools at our disposal, in particular the school's online platform. Our school also signs up to GCSEpod, a subscription website which gives summaries of key aspects of content, in a range of subjects, accompanied by recall tests. Figure 27 shows the numbers of children who accessed this site in the early weeks of school closure. The numbers of Somali students using the site is largely in line with their peers although the number of uses per student does seem to be lower.

Figure 25- Table to show GCSEpod usage from closure until May 19th

	Used GCSEpod		Number of pods seen by top 5 users		Created a login but not viewed any pods		No login created	
	All	**Somali**	**All**	**Somali**	**All**	**Somali**	**All**	**Somali**
Year 7 (210 students, 23 Somali)	128 (61%)	13 (57%)	112, 76, 75, 74, 67	67, 43, 25, 24, 23	15 (7%)	1 (4%)	67 (32%)	9 (39%)
Year 8 (211/23)	97 (46%)	14 (60%)	185, 130, 130, 120, 118	56, 52, 36, 29, 24	12 (6%)	2 (9%)	102 (48%)	7 (30%)
Year 9 (212/27)	161 (76%)	19 (70%)	285, 255, 236, 217, 174	223, 115, 87, 71, 56	15 (7%)	4 (15%)	36 (17%)	4 (15%)
Year 10 (241/29)	180 (75%)	26 (90%)	365, 269, 230, 227, 225	663, 478, 137, 87, 51	19 (8%)	1 (3%)	42 (17%)	2 (7%)

As well as completing school work students also take advantage of the additional free time brought about the closure of school to enjoy their hobbies. Asma explained ‘I have been spending time with my family and pets and watching TV. I have one Lionhead rabbit, this is her. Then, I just watch videos on my phone’. Her email included the photo in figure 28 of her rabbit. Yusuf said ‘the activities I have been doing is drawing, playing indoor games or spending some time with my family’. Safa, like Yusuf said, ‘the activities I have been doing are trying to work on drawing since I enjoy it very much’ and she attached a photo of her most recent project, see figure 28.

Figure 26- Photographs of students' lockdown hobbies

Summaya in year 11 says:

> I've been mainly on my phone, I've just been scrolling through social media, e.g., Instagram and messaging my friends. I'm trying to learn a language, Italian, and I play PS4 sometimes.

Other students are also trying to improve their language skills, Samira explains 'I have been learning a new language, Dutch, on duolingo' and Saara writes 'I've also been learning Dutch, het is moeilijk- it is hard'. The families of both girls lived in Holland before coming to the UK so some Dutch is spoken at home. Ismail, also keeping busy, says that:

> I've either been playing, watching, or learning. The information I learn normally holds within personal preferences, which is why it may not seen as largely school related. I enjoy watching anime from time to time, but I usually watch a lot from YouTube. And through playing, I've recently got a whole host of games that I had not played throughout last year and this year, like Dark souls or Terraria, so I'm looking to complete them.

Samira includes a typical day, shown in figure 29, to illustrate what she had been doing each day.

Figure 27- Samira's day

- 8.30-9.00 brush teeth, had a bath, woken up, have breakfast, get dressed
- 9.00-10.00 help my little sister with her homework
- 10.00-12.00 do my homework
- 12.00-13.00 have lunch
- 13.00-14.30 relax
- 14.30-15.00 try to finish off left over homework
- 15.00-1700 talk to family on face time and play with my sisters
- 17.00-18.00 do madrassah work, eat dinner and pray Quran
- 18.00-23.00 relax again until bed

Almost all students mention family time in their messages to me, Zaheera says 'I play card games with my family' whilst Siham plays 'videogames with my siblings'. Samira explains 'to keep off the boredom I enjoy baking with my mum and sisters'. Some students are more active, Hamdi in year 10 said 'I play volleyball and football with my siblings' whilst Latiifa stated 'I've also been going on bike rides with my sister here and there to the local park just to get some fresh air'. Iqra in year 10 explains how the lockdown has brought about some positive change with regards to her family:

> I have been blessed with a large family which I appreciate being able to spend quality time, before quarantine everyone was too busy. As well as finally being able to contact my family abroad seeing as now everyone from all different time zones are nearly always free.

Students also seem to be keeping abreast of the situation with regards to the COVID-19 by engaging with the news. Sabirin says she has 'been reading online news and on the television about coronavirus and the impact it has on UK'. Asma, a year nine student, agrees saying her 'family always check for updates on Coronavirus every day on BBC and the other main news shows'. Zaheera in year 11 enjoys exploring further saying 'I also like to watch conspiracy theories on the Coronavirus because I find it interesting'. Of the sixteen students who share their experiences of this first two weeks all but two had watched or read the news. Some students explain how they have been affected by the extensive news coverage. Siham said 'I see many people

announcing their loved ones' death due to the virus, which really upsets me'. Zainab in year 11, stated that:

> I sometimes look at what is going on with the Coronavirus and the death toll but not a lot as I don't want it to cloud my thoughts and create negative thoughts. I believe that in this time you just have to be positive so that is what I'm trying to do.

In late March and early April, we watch as the number of infections, hospital admissions and daily deaths rise. For many the lockdown is a time of anxiety and for some terrible grief. I check in with students in mid-May to find out how they are coping at this time, the general feeling is one of boredom. Najma in year 11 agrees that 'week eight of quarantine is starting to get boring'. Saadiya in year nine says 'I am fed up to be honest. First I was excited to go on lockdown because we won't have school but now, I'd rather go school then stay home'. Not all students are fed up however, Sundus says 'lockdown is like a literal heaven for me'. Latiifa was a little more philosophical about it:

> I did not realise it's already been eight weeks of this lockdown which is so long. I'm not that irritated about it as I know it's for a good cause and its helping prevent this virus from getting any worse. But it is starting to get a bit boring now so I do hope this lockdown ends soon. However, I have gotten a few things done and have tried to make the most of it.

Ramadan is a month-long period of fasting observed by Muslims worldwide, the end of which is marked by Eid al-Fitr. Both events fall this year during the lockdown period, fasting begins on the 23rd of April with Eid being celebrated on the 23rd of May. Summaya prefers being off school at this time, she says 'It's easier, I can pray on time and I don't really waste a lot of energy by going to school etc... I'm probably gonna dress up and eat some food [for Eid]'. Iqra agrees, she says the lockdown 'has given me more free time to engage in religious activities for example praying and reciting the Quran which has made me feel closer with my religion'. Hannah is looking forward to her Eid plans 'I plan to have a movie night with my family'. Latiifa however thought the changes were not so positive:

> Ramadan in lockdown is very different to all the other years the vibe is different and overall, just does not feel the same. Usually, we would break our fast with other family members and enjoy each other's company however this year that isn't an option. All the mosques have

> been closed so everyone can't really come together and pray the nightly prayer. Nevertheless, I'm still enjoying spending Ramadan at home with my family and just trying to make the most of it. We're still thinking about what to do for this Eid as most places are closed.

Saadiya in year nine writes of the challenges of being separated from family, echoing the comments made by Latiifa:

> Ramadan in lockdown is very different to our usual ones as we would usually see family, friends, also break fast together in each other's houses. This Ramadan has really opened ours eyes by showing that we take lots of things for granted like see family and friends, going out to parks, places also going mosque to pray taraweeh, an additional ritual prayer us Muslims perform after isha prayer during the holy month of Ramadan. Our Eid plans are quite boring as we can't visit family members and friends but we are going to stay home watch things as a family, eat cakes and junk food and facetime family and friends. Hopefully it won't be that boring!

Iman also shared her views of Ramadan and being apart from her family:

> Ramadan is certainly a lot easier and peaceful at home because we have all the time in the world to pray and after we have our meal at sunrise, we don't have to wake up to go to school really tired since we always stay up. As far as I know the plan is to stay at home [for Eid] maybe order some food or desserts since we haven't bought any outfits this year but if the lockdown is eased and we can go meet our cousins, fingers crossed. However, we know there is no way we can meet our grandparents which makes us so sad since we always go to them every Eid. But if lockdown is eased then we might wear masks and stay on the floor and since they live on the second floor of the flat, we can just communicate from the window which would be better than not seeing them.

In May, Ofqual, the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (2020), release guidance for the awarding of centre assessed grades (CAGs) to replace the GCSE exams. Essentially teachers are to award grades to students. These grades are to be a teacher's judgement of what students would have been capable of had they sat the exam, and in line with the prior attainment of the year group and the historic results of each subject. An algorithm will be used by the exam boards to ensure results are not inflated. Upon the exam cancellation many students are nervous that their mock or predicated grades may be used. In light of the announcement of the CAG process Iman said:

> I guess everyone is kinda on edge for their GCSE results because we thought the process of it would be a lot easier than what it is. I guess I am nervous since I know it is out of my control but it just means that I will have to work ten times harder at college.

Some students were not pleased about the announcement because they feel the CAG system will disadvantage them compared to sitting the exams. Mushtaq elaborated:

> The thing that upsets me the most is the fact we are not able to sit our GCSE exams. At first, I was happy because this meant not only was I able to pass but I was lucky enough to get a good pass and have the requirements to sit my A Level courses. But this also meant my revision and hard work went to waste and I was not able to achieve a grade nine in any of my subjects which I really wanted. I believe my predicted grades did not reflect what I am capable of at all.

After a peak in May, infections, deaths and hospital admissions begin to fall and on the 15th of June, it is deemed safe for year 10 students to return to school, following some primary students in the first weeks of the month. Teachers return to school on Thursday the 11th of June and see the preparations that have been made to keep staff and students safe, see figure 30. It had been decided by the senior leadership team that 60 students would come in each day for four lessons in the morning and then go home at lunch. Four groups of 60 are created, each coming in on a different morning, meaning school will be open Monday to Thursday. Thus, over the four remaining weeks of term, each student will have 16 lessons: three Maths, four English, three Science, one RE, one PE and one of each of their four option subjects. School looks very different, both physically, as shown in figure 30, and in terms of what students will do each day.

Figure 28- Photographs of the school showing the COVID-19 secure measures

On Monday morning the students of group A arrive looking slightly anxious but on the whole pleased to be back. Although school looks very different, they take it in their stride as they make their way to their core room where most of their

lessons will be taught. They receive an induction via conference call to the television in the room and then lessons begin at 9am, break is taken outside and they go home before lunch. Fatima said ‘I was looking forward to coming back to school and it looks different to normally’. Hamdi agreed saying:

> I had no problem coming back to school but it is a bit bizarre after all this time...the school looks different because of all the social distancing markings. I was fine with everything. It was different to what I usually experience.

The attendance for the week was 60% with 64% of Somali students attending, 18 of the 28 on roll.

I teach four Humanities lessons in the first week. On Monday I teach Yasmiin who works quietly in her seat near the door, listening and working but not contributing to the lesson. On Tuesday there were only two students in the class. Dahir, who had chosen a seat at the front, was keen to answer questions and show what he knew. On Wednesday I take an induction session for group C, Fadumo in the back corner seemed excited to be back and pleased to chat to other girls in the room. On Thursday I teach Salma who sits on the back row, she is quiet but seems focused on her work and keen to get on. Of the first week back Fadumo said:

> I actually did enjoy last week as it had been a long time since being in a school environment. School did look different but I don't think it was an extreme difference but what surprised me was the amount of teachers stationed around the corridor like that was a lot. However, I do think the changes that were made like the lines on the floor was to benefit everyone so that was good. I liked how the teachers were understanding that the working from home could be challenging for us and how they made it known to us that our wellbeing came first. And how the teachers were a bit laid back like not as strict.

On Saturday morning of the first week back, Mr Maxwell emails to say that a teacher has tested positive for COVID-19 and we would close for the rest of the term. A number of the year 10 students were disappointed not to be completing the last three weeks, Fadumo said ‘I was sort of looking forward to it as it would've been nice to be back at school but I don't mind that much’. We continue with our online provision.

Principal's awards are given to students who do exceptional work, during term time these are given out quite rarely. During closure however staff give more awards than usual to encourage students and acknowledge their hard work in challenging circumstances. Following a request for nominations from Mr Maxwell, in the week commencing the 22nd of June, 232 principal's awards were given to students. Of these 27 were awarded to Somali students. 12 subjects gave awards, seven of which gave awards to Somali students: one from Citizenship, one from English, seven from French, two from History, nine from Maths, three from Science, three from Spanish and one from a form tutor. These awards were in approximate proportions to those given out to the whole cohort. Fatima was given an award from her English teacher with the comment 'Perseverance, resilience and work of a high standard on *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Well done Fatima'. Isra's Maths award was for 'Continued fantastic effort on MathsWatch. Well done'. Abdirizak received an award from Science 'For starting to complete all the work set and asking for more work'.

By the beginning of July, the students have been off school for 12 weeks and are beginning to show some signs of struggling with their work. Amira explains:

> during lockdown I've been…doing my homework and trying to catch up in the work I've missed even though I struggle because of the amount of work we are given.

Isa experiences an improvement in work rate but little enjoyment:

> At first no, I did very little work, but now I'm doing more than I was at the start of the lockdown, the work is worse than in school work.

Idris adds:

> I feel working from home and not being in school has somewhat affected my motivation to do work since in school you would get detentions, sanctions etc. but this isn't feasible at home.

Halima also has difficulties, connected to technology, she explains: 'it is kind of difficult because sometimes the work doesn't come in properly and also there is just system issues half of the time'. Adam also has technology issues but of a different kind:

> I have to share a computer with my two brothers so I can't get to do every single [school] task because of that. I have mosque from 4:30-7pm, Monday to Thursday, and I have to learn my work for mosque so I usually do my school work from 9:30-13:00. I do my prayers then learn my work for mosque. I either have to catch up with work until my bed time, 7:20-10:40, or do work and then relax.

Iman is not enjoying the lockdown but understands the purpose 'I just keep telling myself that it's way better to be at home and bored out of my mind then to be catching COVID-19 and unknowingly infecting other people'. Iqra also acknowledges the challenges of the situation but sees opportunities for personal growth. She says:

> Although it is quite difficult, it's allowing me develop independently and take charge of my own education. The first few weeks of quarantine were tough, especially trying to keeping track of all my work but I may have gotten the hang of it as of now. The more difficult aspect of lockdown, personally, is not being able to be with your friends and family.

Other students seemed to have taken work out of the equation, Asha explains that she had been going on walks whilst Salma said 'I have been practicing my boxing skills and I have been practicing my football and basketball skills'.

At the end of the academic year, I ask students how they are feeling about September and the fact we would probably be returning to school full time. Many students are looking forward to returning. Samira said 'I'm pretty excited going back to school again', Idil agreed with the sentiment: 'I can't wait till September because I miss school'. Amira was more effusive, she said:

> Yes, I'm looking forward to coming back to school because I miss my friends and my lessons. Like right now if I had to choose to go to school or stay at home. I would literally go to school.

Salma agrees:

> Yes, I am looking forward to go back to school because I would rather do work at school and I miss seeing my friends. Also, I can't wait to start year eight and show the new year seven around. I am also looking forward to after school activities like football and basketball.

Adam explains he is also looking forward to the return:

> because online work you can't do partner work or be able to write revision notes to retain your work. I miss playing football on the Astroturf and being with my friends.

Like Saara and Adam, Iqra said 'I am looking forward to coming back to school because I want to see my friends and also want to do work in school'. Similarly, Yusuf explains 'Yes I am looking forward to getting back to school because it's great to see my classmates and my teachers again and I'm ready to learn'.

Some students however had more mixed views. Halima explains:

> I don't want to go back school if I tell the truth, I want to have more time with my family and talk to friends and teachers online so I can be safe and also catch up with them.

Ismail said:

> I have mixed feelings. I enjoy it here at home because I can organise a lot of things without having a third magical party, creating a routine for myself. I also enjoy it here at home because I'm not stuck in awkward situations anymore... and I can study by myself. However, I think most of the reasons to stay at home are selfish, and do not contribute much to my education. This leads me to the other side, I'm looking forward to coming back in September because I need a push, to elevate me to study a bit more, and I don't think that there is any other place that can push me as well as school can.

The school year 2019/20 seems to just fizzle out. Over the course of the final week as we 'teach' classes for the last time we sign off for the year giving students work to do over the summer and wishing them well. A final staff meeting is held on the last Thursday of term to say goodbye to staff who are leaving and to reflect on the year just completed. The 2019-20 academic year comes to a close, a most extraordinary year.

A Level results day on the 13th of August, the week before the GCSE results are released, sees major issues with the algorithm designed to avoid grade inflation. Controversially the algorithm appears to penalise students from less affluent backgrounds as able students in lower performing schools appeared

anomalous. Thus, it is not used for the GCSE exam results unless it was of benefit to the student's grades. So, on GCSE results day, students are awarded the grades their teachers gave them. Unlike previous years there was no GCSE results day in the theatre, students are simply contacted electronically with their results. The natural end of one school year, and the start of the next, absent due to the pandemic.

The majority of students are happy with their grades although some, 39 of the 215 in the cohort, contact school to query or appeal their Centre Assessed Grades. This is for a range of subjects including Maths, English and History. Of the 39, 10 or 26% are Somali students. The detailed analysis of results that usually takes place, and took place in 2019, does not happen this year; the results do not feel 'real', being awarded by such a different process. The results analysis that is undertaken shows improvement in the performance of Somali students, compared to the 2019 results. Although it is unclear whether this is because these students would have actually done better had exams been sat or did better because of the alternate assessment method. The prior attainment of the year was in fact lower than in 2018/19. Figure 31 shows good Somali performance in Science and History particularly and poorer performance compared to peers in Geography. The 'comparison to target' measure shows that, whatever their attainment level, Somali students did not achieve in line with their peers. Figure 32 shows the highest and lowest performing Somali students.

Figure 29- Table to show GCSE exam results data, 2020

		% 9-7	% 9-4	% 9-1	% met target 9-4	Residual
Combined Science	All students	12%	62%	96%	-5%	0.14
	Somali students	18%	66%	97%	-9%	0.57
English Language	All students	12%	89%	100%	2%	0.43
	Somali students	5%	95%	100%	5.50%	0.29
English Literature	All students	25%	79%	100%	-2%	0.49
	Somali students	14%	77%	100%	-7%	0.38
Geography	All students	16%	65%	97%	-3%	-0.18
	Somali students	13%	47%	93%	-15%	-0.22
History	All students	11%	48%	94%	-29%	-0.44
	Somali students	17%	59%	100%	-29%	-0.1
Mathematics	All students	16%	67%	98%	-12%	0.03
	Somali students	9%	71%	100%	-11%	0.04
Religious Studies	All students	25.00%	73%	99%	-10%	0.48
	Somali students	25%	68%	96%	-19%	0.43

Figure 30- Table to show highest and lowest performing GCSE Somali students, 2020

Student	Gender	Year group ranking /215	Somali ranking /44	Total points	Number of grades 7-9
Muna	F	2	1	90.50	11
Iman	F	5	2	86.00	11
C	M	17	3	76.00	10
Farrah	F	20	4	74.00	8
Malik	M	26	5	69.50	6
					Number of grade 4s
Zain	M	189	40	20.00	1
Harun	M	190	41	18.00	0
H	M	193	42	17.00	0
I	M	203	43	10.00	0
J	M	205	44	9.00	0

The academic year 2019/20 began much as any other with results day and a busy start to term. Our Somali students experienced a typical school year in the first term and a half, unique in many ways but following a set rhythm. The year ended with a results day of sorts but it will always be remembered for the remarkable and devastating global events that overtook the school community

in March. Muna summed it up well when she recalled the announcement that our school would be closing:

> Yesterday was like a movie to me. I was like, is this really real? Because I didn't believe it for a second but you know we are living in unprecedented times.

And we really were.

5.4 Portraits

5.4.1 Portrait one- Hawa

‘He's definitely in a friendly clan or else they wouldn’t have married’

Hawa was the best performing Somali student, in terms of attainment, in the 2019 GCSE exams. I’m used to seeing her in school uniform so today (29th August 2019) she looks much older, she is wearing a pale blue hijab or headscarf with an orange pin on the right and a beige trench coat over a black abaya. As we walk through school, her first visit since leaving three months ago, she is confident and relaxed. When we get to my classroom, I turn on my Dictaphone. We both laugh in a slightly embarrassed way but we are soon chatting animatedly about her life.

Hawa is 16, the eldest of five children, she has two brothers aged 15 and 11 and non-identical twin sisters who are eight. The elder brother, Malik, is now in year 11, and her younger brother has started at our school today. Her parents, as is the case for many people of Somali heritage in the diaspora, came to the UK because of the civil war in Somalia. Hawa explains their journey:

> My mom came on her own, and she had a bit of an adventure actually (laughs). So, she went to like Sudan, she went to different places in Africa and then she went to Italy. She worked as a nanny for someone and then she has like a small family there as in friends. She came on her own to England and then what happened was my father came as well… and then after that it was just you know the normal arranged marriage.

The family do discuss the civil war at home although Hawa understands this is painful for her parents to discuss:

> Yeah, mum told me about my my err my uncles so my mum's brothers. One got shot because he got mistaken for being another dude on his way to the Masjid… And erm I asked my mum oh do you feel sad about it and stuff. Cause obviously she's like put on a strong front and she says “yeah I'm OK... It happened I'm still sad about it but it happened isn't it and it was a long time ago” and I'm sure she's seen a lot more deaths that she may not be telling me actually… And now that I'm older I can see in my mum's eyes if she has tears and stuff and I'm like “okay change the subject”.

Hawa's parents have explained that clan conflict was at the heart of the civil war and that such attitudes should not continue here in the UK:

> My mum has made it very clear to me that you shouldn't worry about that. You shouldn't because if you do it's gonna be like a repeat of what happened in the civil war and the fight that's still kind of going on to this day. I know that there are different clans, I forgot the name because we don't talk about it a lot. My Mom's in the certain clan, my father's in... What's my father in? I think... He's definitely in a friendly clan or else they wouldn't have married (laughs).

Hawa's mum is a housewife and her dad works in a warehouse:

> he originally started went to uni for eight months but then once he realised our mom was pregnant, he dropped everything and he was like he didn't want us to go through benefits or going through hardships.

The family live in a flat across the road from the school, rather than the estate nearby where many Somalis live. They like the area and the fact it is close to many services. At times the flat can seem quite small for the family:

> Yeah, I have a shared bedroom my younger sister Susan, one of the twins…The other twin she's with my mom. She sleeps with my mum. My dad sleeps in a room with my brothers. But if he wanted to be with my mum, he could be but he doesn't (laughs). I think erm TMI [to much information] but my mum definitely doesn't want any more children so this arrangement works (laughs).

Hawa talks about her family and home life with real warmth, she also acknowledges the typical gender roles sometimes seen in the community are not evident at her house. She says:

> My home life is really cosy, really cosy! I'm not obligated to do anything but my mum gives me the eye if I'm not helping her… My dad helps out in the house a lot. Yeah, I am lucky because it shows a really good example to my brothers when they're older like your dad did it so why don't you.

Hawa has family in the UK, she talks about aunts and cousins, she also mentions relatives in many other countries, including some of her father's family who are still in Somalia. She describes this wider family as an 'internet connected network'. She also spoke of meeting her grandfather for the first time almost two years ago:

> I got to meet him when I went to Kenya with my mom in err year ten. Winter. Christmas holidays. Yeah, like erm we had to get permission

> from school to say he's a bit sick but my mom she had to go see him cause she hasn't seen him for 20, 23, 25 years and my father hasn't seen his parents for 30 years.

She also reflects on her life and her views and how they may compare to her family network and in particular her parents:

> So, like my life is very westernised, compared to what it might be in I don't know, the country of Saudi Arabia I guess. Errmm I also I probably have a lot more Westernised views than my parents ever would like I would admit things like I would say like (laughs) our family is kind of old fashioned thinking sometimes. You might find homosexual people disgusting or rude but I would be perfectly fine with hugging a homosexual person like you're human! What you care about is nothing what I have, what I care about you know? And I might find it annoying or mean I might get angry if my father would say anything mean about it.

Finally, Hawa talks about her future and starting college next week. It is her ambition to work in the medical field:

> I think I've got it specified now so Chemistry, Biology and Sociology [A Levels] … I'm avoiding Maths but I'm still doing something that would help with medicine… Like I'm the oldest kid in the family and I kind of feel I should set a good example.

5.4.2 Portrait two- Insiya

'I think here we just kind of like blending in with everyone'

When I paused during assembly to indicate I wanted Shuayb to stop talking it prompted thoughts of his elder sister who had taught five years previously. I contacted Insiya via letter, eager to hear about her life since she left our school.

When we meet in the school reception, Insiya is the first Somali women I have seen in a while not wearing an abaya. She is wearing a black and white stripy top, a stylish brown dress and a rust coloured 'teddy bear' jacket. Her black hijab is pinned so about 5cm of her hair is showing at the front. She explains her choice not to wear an abaya:

> I just don't like wearing it… obviously there's levels, levels of how religious you are. And I don't think I'm that religious enough to like, wear an abaya or juba or anything. I did wear it in school but that's only because everybody else did. But when I went to college… when I was around people that weren't Somali, I don't want to wear it so I just stopped wearing it. And I don't think I ever will because I just don't enjoy it. When we lived in Holland, my mum didn't wear like an abaya, but when we moved to England she did. And I think here we just kind of like blending in with everyone wanting to be like you're together with people and like there's a sense of community.

Insiya is keen to share what she has been doing since she left school. She has just graduated from Queen Mary University in London, where she studied History and Politics. Insiya and a close friend were the only two Somalis on the course as Somalis 'doing history is a bit out there. It's a bit weird'. She joined a creative mentoring scheme whilst at university and through this secured an internship in a creative advertising agency. This has inspired her to begin pursuing a career in TV or film production. Her parents have been a little 'reluctant' about her study and career choices preferring she study medicine. According to Insiya they thought:

> If you apply for medicine, you're guaranteed a job at the end of the day because they need doctors but if you do something that's a bit like competitive then you have a disadvantage on you and we don't want you to like feel that pressure. When you're working class, Black and Muslim, then you just have like, loads of different barriers.

Insiya did not actually begin her schooling in the UK. Her parents married in Somalia and left the country as a result of a civil war, emigrating to Holland. Insiya and her siblings were born in Holland before moving to the UK when Insiya was eight. Her youngest brother, now six, was born in the UK. Of the move she feels:

> It wasn't a big change… I think it wasn't hard for me to integrate at all, and I think cause I was so young as well. And because the area that I grew up in Holland and area that I live in here are very similar, in terms of, it's very diverse… so I never felt left out or anything.

Her family also seems to have settled into life in Britain well.

> So, my dad works… in IT erm at this clothing factory, he just does all the orders and stuff like that fixes computers and things. And my mom used to work in school, but then she got pregnant, and then now she does cleaning. And then my siblings, I'm the eldest. So, my brother is a uni he's studying finance, my sister is in her gap year, she's gonna apply for pharmacy. And then my little brother [Shuayb] is going to college. And my other little brother is just in primary school right now.

The fact the family has lived in three countries has shaped their homelife, language being an interesting example. It provides opportunities in that the family are multilingual:

> We speak a mixture of Somali and English. It's just like certain words I'll say in English certain words I say in Somali. I think that's tends to be a lot like people that come from multilingual households tend to do that thing where they mix the different words. I can speak Dutch but yeah, it will only be like if I'm talking to my mum so my youngest siblings don't understand…

However, the multilingual nature of the family can also be a barrier to effective communication:

> We learn conversational Somali so when I watch Somali TV with my family, I don't know what's happening if I listen to a Somali song, because it's obviously going fast, I don't know what they're saying. But I can talk to my grandparents, I can talk to my family… It's really funny watching my little brother grow up because he does not speak Somali at all... My parents have kind of just given up on him. Like, my mom will speak to him in Somali, he would respond in English. He would stutter, he can't even count to 10 and it's not because they're not teaching him it's because he just doesn't want to learn it. Like he just wants to speak English. That's it. He doesn't want to learn anything else. And I always say to him, like, why do you not want to learn Somali?

Whilst Insiya's family came to the UK via Holland, her extended family settled elsewhere in the UK, in London and also in Sweden and in Malaysia. As her parents have been away from their homeland for a long time, according to Insiya:

> they always want to talk about [Somalia] and stuff, so we watch documentaries, and we have like discussions and stuff about like cultural things that we agree with or don't agree with. We always watch… Integration TV on YouTube.

However, her parents show no desire to return, either to visit or to live, in the short term 'neither of them have this desire to go back because they've got friends that went and never came back'. Insiya refers to 'dhaqan celis…when Somali kids go back and to like, regain their culture'. However, like her parents, Insiya herself has no desire to return to Somalia at present:

> I'm very vocal about the fact I don't have any desire to go. I think it's because it's just like, I'm so scared of what can happen… I would love to go to Somalia but it's like I don't want to because it's too scary, it's too dangerous. Like, it would be fun, but there will be fear the whole time…

Insiya's relationship with her Somali heritage is seemingly complex:

> I'd say I'm Somali. But obviously I'm British as well… My generation weren't born here we're all from Holland or Sweden and we all moved here. And I think that's probably just made us all confused… British born Somalis, they have two identities, we have three... I'm very jealous of my like British born Somali friends because they're less confused. But I don't really describe myself as British because I don't have a British passport. Even though I have an accent and I've grown up here, spent most of my life here, I don't even have the citizenship so I feel like I'm not even basically allowed to call myself British because I'm not British, I'm Dutch. But then when I go to Holland I feel really left out because my language is not like it's not snappy enough. So obviously, they always treat me like I'm a foreigner.

Insiya seems to feel her home and place is here, concluding a lengthy discussion with 'I'm definitely gonna apply for British citizenship'.

5.4.3 Portrait three- Mrs Jama
'If you have children, lots of children, it needs organised'

Mrs Jama very kindly agreed to support this research as a cultural facilitator. The interview from which this portrait was written, was conducted as part of the pilot study to test the FoK protocol we had created.

Mrs Jama, now 38, was born in Mogadishu but left Somalia when she was six or seven due to the civil war. She and her parents walked across the border into Ethiopia whilst her elder siblings, four sisters and five brothers, remained behind. Of this time, she says 'you know that we are children and suddenly everything has changed'. The family were quite badly treated in Ethiopia, being taunted by local people:

> Another place yeah, the Africans when you when you go there they say your country called, your country do this. You doesn't like it, I doesn't like, if people tell you your country like, you do like this, like this, but it's not who the fault? It's not the people's fault, it's not the people's fault init?

The three then flew to Britain and settled in London where members of her extended family still live. Her parents then tried to bring their other children to Britain but it was not possible as her siblings were now classed as adults:

> That time we came just my dad, mum and me and after that we we when we apply for them they age over age cause when they in this country should be under age. They are grow up.

Mrs Jama did not see her siblings again until 2016 as regular visits to Somalia are difficult, not just because of the cost. 'It's difficult, long long journey and I've got small children. I can't risk myself. I can't risk my children'.

Mrs Jama does not remember too much of the Civil War but she finds it a difficult topic to talk about. She explains 'it is very is very it's very difficult now to see when you see that everything's changed my dad my mom all the time say everything's changed'. She continues:

> It was dangerous because... It was most people a lot of people died there and then when you see the house is broke, everything's you know the wars that go on now for every country that one has been in my country. This is little what I remember, I can't remember what happened but I

> don't want to (whispers, almost inaudible) really because it is not good time' (cries quietly).

Despite the memories being difficult Mrs Jama often reflects on the civil war and the tribalism which she sees as the key factor in the conflict:

> Some people they think something they say maybe that clan is big tribe and this is small tribe and this it is not good. They waste a whole country like that and then no future for the other people, the adults, the children. I think all the time why did it happen?

Mrs Jama grew up in London and married in 2002, moving north to join her husband in the city his family had settled in following their departure from Somalia. Her parents followed her north in 2009 to be close to their only child in the UK. She thinks the city is a 'nice place' although she considers the Somali people are different, suggesting it is because they came via Europe to the UK, whereas the people she knew in London came direct from Somalia. Otherwise, they are 'the same sort of people'.

Mrs Jama is a housewife and her husband works for the Royal Mail. The couple have four children; two at secondary school (Iman and Yasmeen) and two at primary school. The family live close to the school rather than on the nearby estate where many Somali families live. Mrs Jama explains:

> You know the one I applied the house I get it and then I don't want to change because I know there is is is is near the what I needed. This school- primary, high school, madrassah, mosque, it's everything close. Its good house, nice house. And then I said OK I will stay here. And then we have got the neighbour is nice next door and next door, they are good.

Mrs Jama spoke a small amount of English when she arrived in the UK and learned more during her school years. She then went to college for two years after her third child was born to improve her English further. Explaining her decision, she said 'when you need something you have to do it'. When her children were younger, they were taught English and Somali and the family now speak a mix of both languages at home. It is important to Mrs Jama that her children are bilingual to ensure they can communicate effectively and learn new words. Her parents do not speak English.

Mrs Jama also has firm views about the importance of education and about supporting her children through their school years so they can be ‘what they like’. She talks about some of the challenges:

> It's hard, you have to deal with them. If you say go do your homework and then one playing game, one doing something else, one that is need concentration for something and other children make noisy they can't do it. If you have children, lots of children, it needs organised.

The children have Maths and English tutors but Mrs Jama also talks about the active role she takes in checking which of her children has homework and supporting them, particularly the younger ones, with it. With four children Mrs Jama also ensures she prioritises the use of the family computer:

> We have got a system to follow. But you have to know which one you're going to deal with. Oldest daughter, do your work for computer area. Because maybe you have got more homework than others. That one was she started in high school, and then in other in other children, they were in primary school. When she done her homework, I'll give the chance for another one instead. What do you have got show me this one, this one it needs a computer, right? It's writing in it or reading go the table.

Mrs Jama also speaks of supporting her children with their Madrassah studies and of her faith more generally:

> We are Muslims since we are my parents is Muslim, my grand grand grand they are Muslim and then it’s not nothing unusual for religion, just see we have to learn the Koran, to pray, fasting, go to Meccah.

Today Mrs Jama is wearing a stylish and bright African wax print outfit which she bought from Somalia, unusually it is not covered with a long black abaya. This is for my benefit she says! Mrs Jama explains most women she knows wear African rather than western clothes and remove their abaya when they get to their destinations. She is also wearing a hijab, she says ‘if we do, without the scarf go without, we think there is something missing we have to cover ourselves innit. I feel a little bit of shame’. Her children usually wear western clothes although at home they wear a dirac, ‘they is soft and nice when are you in the home’. Her husband wears a macawiss, a sarong type garment, or trousers with a shirt when not in his work uniform. Their clothes are an important part of their Somali identity.

The next time I see Mrs Jama we meet on a Saturday and she gives me a tour of the Somali community. We take the photographs shown in figure 33 as we walk. They show general shots of the community and the inside of Somali owned businesses.

Figure 31- Photo montage of Somali community spaces taken during the walk with Mrs Jama

5.4.4 Portrait four- Muna

‘I know there's no God… I don't believe in religion at all’

I am keen to talk to Muna with whom I had a very interesting conversation about faith, whilst I was lending her a book after a lesson. Today, as usual, she is softly spoken but assertive in her views. She summarises her earlier comments by stating ‘I know there's no God… I don't believe in religion at all’. Her father is also an atheist along with her siblings although her mother is very observant and the children have kept their move away from Islam from her. She explains:

> My sister, my brothers would never tell our mum like I don't think I'd ever tell my mum because, like, what's the point of making her so like, because she’d probably think I’m going to hell right? There is no point making her depressed or worrying her that I’m on the wrong path... because I feel like Somalis or Muslims in general associate... non-religious people being evil and atheists killing people, having no morals.

Despite Muna’s certainty of her beliefs she does have some regrets about the fact she is no longer religious:

> Sometimes I do envy how like how people can hold onto to something because like in hard times people hold on to religion and it makes them feel better… And people are like “it is written” and I’m just like “yeah, yeah”. And I think oh I wish I had something like that but then I'm like not really because I would rather not be like indoctrinated, brainwashed.

Muna currently wears a hijab although she has spoken to her mother about not wearing it in college. This is not without risk however from her ‘Habayars’, a Somali term used to describe female relatives and close family friends, similar to the British term ‘auntie’. She feels they would pass judgement on her mother and make comments like ‘that woman is not raising her daughter right, she has no morals, she’s a whore’. Muna has a close Somali friend who has recently removed her scarf and she and her mother were treated in this way.

The renouncing of faith has already had an impact on Muna’s family, her father and mother separated due to religious incompatibility. The couple, who are from the same tribal group or clan, met in Finland through family friends. Muna believes ‘at that point in their lives they just really wanted to have kids and settle’. Reflecting on the breakdown of her parent’s marriage Muna wonders

whether it was ‘a rush decision’ but as she goes on to say ‘they were on good terms so that's why they decided to get married I guess’.

Muna’s father had come to the UK prior to the civil war, when he was 20 to take up a medical scholarship. He intended to return to Somalia once his studies were over but was unable to do so as the civil war broke out in his absence. After a stay in Finland, Muna’s father returned to the UK with a new wife and started a family, the couple have five children who live with their mother. They are all currently in education. According to Muna the couple are ‘on good terms. So, he [her father] lives quite near, he always visits anyways. It's not like he's out of my life, he's there basically’. Muna’s father currently works as a doctor whilst her mother is a cleaner.

Muna feels many aspects of her family’s home life are rooted in her Somali heritage. For example, all members of the household wear Somali dress in the house, the women a gown called a baati, whilst her mother wears a long scarf and abaya whilst she is out. The family also wears Somali clothes for weddings, Muna opts for a dress called a dirac which has a diaphanous glittery fabric overlay. The family loves Somali food which Muna describes as ‘beautiful’. Her favourite is malawax, which is a crepe with chocolate and honey filling. She also describes her favourite savoury dish, banana rice, a Somali specialty:

> You cook very like seasoned rice and chicken or meat like lamb… and then you put the banana aside or you have the choice to cut it up and sprinkle it, not sprinkle it but like distribute… and a bit of a spicy chili that is like a huge part of my diet. It’s beautiful, the balance of sweet and savoury…

Muna is knowledgeable about the civil war and its impact on her family having discussed it with both her parents although more so with her father. She tells me:

> My dad is a lot more open but I feel like, that my dad never like experienced it first-hand so my dad especially because my dad's very fluent in English so it's a lot easier to speak to him. My mum I don't try and ask too much. I feel like she’s still kind of romanticising Somalia because that is the place that she grew up, right… She always talks about childhood stories about what she did and she doesn't really like to touch on like the civil war. Do you get me? It was traumatising because

> um, she had to go to Kenya, that's like a bit of information I know, she had to go to Kenya but her sister was sick and they also had to live in camps right? And then that's when she went to Finland.

A particular point of interest to Muna is the clan or tribal system and its role in the war, conflict between warring clans led and has contributed in part, to difficulties in finding peace. Muna thinks that:

> In Somalia tribalism is a huge thing… my mum actually hates it when I talk about tribes like I can't talk to her about tribes at all, my dad is the one who's like taught that told me about them. My mum thinks that I'll be like hateful to other tribes. Like that's why she says “first of all you are Somali”, then she said “then you are Muslim”, just don't match your tribe basically. I feel like in the old community tribalism is a thing.

Muna also feels that if the civil war came to a peaceful conclusion that she would like emigrate to Somalia. That she is, as her mum suggests, a Somali first.

> If there is like a world where Somalia is a beautiful developed country with law and order and no tribalism, of course I’d go live there because it’s my country, and at the end of the day like I'm not gonna stay here… why would you not go to a country where everyone is the same ethnicity as you? And you have a lot of common interests? Maybe because of romanticism and like your parents talk about it... I feel like it's because at the end of the day, we're not we're not, we're not white.

5.4.5 Portrait five- Mr Hersi

‘Then I liked the city, oh yeah... more multicultural city compared to Liverpool’

Mr Hersi, the school’s Somali mentor is tall and welcoming. He speaks loudly, gesticulates a lot and often does impressions as he talks; an engaging speaker. I ask him to tell me about his life and he captivates me for almost an hour. He focused much of his talk on his schooling beginning with when he was young:

> I born in North East, in Somalia, and where I born, education ends in year eight and then I went to the Mogadishu, Somali capital, and I did my secondary school… My uncle, the brother of my mum was MP. That's why his house we have a lot of boys from other cities. That's why one engineering, geology, medical students, so he gave us big house big room, so he say, "boys take the opportunity". So, we use the opportunity. But he was killed in 91 he and another 13 people, because civil war, they killed because of the part of the fighting. That's what happened.

Mr Hersi then went on to explain what happened after he finished his secondary education:

> Normally when you finish secondary school [A Level equivalents], you have to do six months for teaching. They sent you to the schools to teach. And then, after one year, you can apply to university, but from my year government extended this for six months to two years and they say military service. I don't know what they wanted… I don't know what the government motive might be… I was the first group who got two years, just because otherwise you cannot go to university, unless you do the two years.

Mr Hersi remembers the first year as being difficult:

> Tough life, tough life. Oh, three o'clock you have to get up running... They teach us how to guns, how to clean, how to practice, the night we have to walk like real military life like walking part of the thing. One night, have to walk till, how many five hours is part of our assignment.

After a year the recruits were distributed for work in the military, in the police and other similar services. Mr Hersi worked for the police unit at the court house in Mogadishu, where he was paid 900 Somali shillings. He recalls ‘It was a good life, we’d get the weekend together… you know we socialise’. Mr Hersi finished his service in 1986:

> So, when I came back, then I couldn't get find university Somali because of lack of resources, we were around 10,000 my group, and only 1000 can take places in universities. So, in 1987 and a half of 88 I was in Mogadishu, and so students who did national service they have options. You can apply job, government, or they give you your passport and certificates you can go if you want to go anywhere you want to go, which is good. You know, because if they cannot, the government cannot give you university.

Committed to his studies Mr Hersi went to India, to Aurangabad University, to gain his degree in accounting and auditing because he liked Maths. India and Somalia have long been connected, according to Mr Hersi ‘we are connected through the coast’. His plan was to go back to Somalia and work in the Somali Commercial Bank but more generally ‘my target was be educated person. Get a educated wife, have educated kiddies. That's what my target was’. Mr Hersi left Somalia on Wednesday the 29th of November 1988, he remembers the date distinctly, he was not to know it then but that was the last day he would be in his home country. Despite being in India the unrest in Somalia affected his studies:

> The civil war disturbed my income because of the first one, and Kuwait War 1991 disturbs us because some of our students did they getting money from their brothers used to work there. When my family has to leave from Mogadishu to Kenya. So, two years I don't get proper money, but I got supported my, my friends.

Mr Hersi finished his degree in 1992, he got the highest marks of all Somali heritage students in his cohort. Due to his high marks the embassy was supposed to provide him with a place on an MBA. The Indian government however doubled the course fees to $2000 dollars. His family, now refugees, could not afford to send the money for fees and living expenses. In 1993, Mr Hersi moved to Ras Al Khaimah, Dubai, to stay with his aunt. He passed the entrance exam for a pharmaceutical company and another company but he only had a tourist visa and it was due to expire before he started his employment. By this point his family had settled in Liverpool and requested he joined them. Mr Hersi moved to England thinking it was his only option. ‘I cannot go back then [to Somalia]. Where are you going then?’

Once in England a marriage was arranged. Mr Hersi knew his wife in Somalia, he was her Maths tutor when they were both students, however it was not until 1999 that they met in London to be married. ‘So, I understand, you know what the family believes that I can I mean, look after her, and I can be good, good husband (laughs). So far so good though!’ The couple have three children: a son who left our school last year, a second son in year 11 and daughter called Saadiya who is in year 10.

Mr Hersi moved to his current city of residence in 1999. He explained:

> my [Somali] friends from India, they are here so I came December 1998 to visit them. Then I liked the city, oh yeah... more multicultural city compared to Liverpool.

Almost immediately he started to informally help parents of students at our school and was then asked to apply for a Somali mentor role in 2000. Mr Hersi was offered the job and became the second Somali working in schools in the city. 'I'm one of the, the architects of Somali education in the city, to be honest.’

To close, Mr Hersi said he feels that his place is here, serving the people of his community:

> People ask me, “do you go back to Somalia” and I say no. I say I don’t want to. I don’t like. You know why, they killing themselves each other. There's no human rights there. My background and family and education allows me to help others… If I go now [die] I’m happy because I have done what I can for my community. If I say “me only” which I can do in my case, what about these people? I know their needs.

5.4.6 Portrait six- Rahma

‘We would steal money from her purse for food’

I thought it would be interesting to talk to Rahma, one of the two Somali students who do not wear a scarf, ironically however she is doing so today. I open by asking her about it the wearing of the hijab. Rahma thinks wearing a scarf does not mean you are a good Muslim, she says someone could be wearing a scarf but be ‘sinning’. Other things, such as prayer, are more important. Rahma explains her grandma wants her to wear a hijab because ‘it's just like the culture and society that we live in’. She continues:

> So right now, the scarf I don't wear it. My grandma hates that, she hates it so much, I don't wear it and she be like but you have to wear the scarf. But what the beauty behind the scarf? What's the reason? Why did it come down to be one?

I ask if she is wearing a scarf today because of her grandma, her reply makes me laugh out loud which in turn makes Rahma laugh a lot!

> I'm wearing it today because my hair was messy and I didn't know what hairstyle I wanted to do! (laughs) So my sister said it looks not even gelled, because my grandma said that if you keep putting gel in your hair like you will get hair loss, so I get scared sometimes and put oil and put down like try to put it down. My hair says no, and goes up so now like we have an issue. So, I'm trying to like find a way like to not put gel and style my hair every day.

Rahma and her younger sister live with their grandma following intervention from social services four years ago. Rahma talks about what happened candidly and at length, she says of her mum:

> She caught up with the wrong life lifestyle. So, she left her two kids with her mum until the age of seven. And after the age of seven, I lived with mum for three years… So much people started coming to the house, doing drugs. We would steal money from her purse for food, mum would beat us up for no reason, this is why I have bumps on my forehead because she got the drawer open and just smashed my head right in the drawer one time and she just left me there. And then after that, I had to like just stand up and just go to my sister to check if she was alright… And then one day, my sister I think she took money off my mom, and then my mom found out. And then she got a high heeled shoe and hit her right here, here like a whole bruise happened there and then got like a wire and hit her here. That's why she has marks here on her face. And then after that, like the [primary] school saw it. And then she told a lie, I

> told a lie, but the lie was not matching so they knew something was wrong. So social services got involved… She [my mum] couldn't cope so we went back to my grandma. That's how life went.

Rahma's face lights up when she talks of her grandma and her determination to care for Rahma and her sister. Rahma thinks her grandma is 'a hard-working woman because she had to leave her home country by herself at a young age'. Her grandma grew up in rural Somalia with her own grandma after her parents separated, she has told Rahma it was a tough life. She then moved to Saudi Arabia where she worked as a maid before moving to Italy and later to England. Rahma describes the journey her grandma made to Europe:

> But then she's telling us how scary because they have to be on boat. So, there's people dying every day on the boat. And she's like it's seven days in a row, we're looking for people in the sea. There was no one in the sea. I was looking looking every day like this when did they had to dash the bodies in the water and it was so traumatic.

Rahma says her grandma is very supportive of her schooling:

> She takes us to tuition, Maths, Science, English, all three of them. And basically, the way she would do it from year six we were two years behind from all the missing so I was behind from everyone else in my class… She says, do your homework, open your books, even though she wouldn't understand she'll sit down, watch us like because then she would see if we were playing on the laptop…

Rahma's grandma would not understand the work because she does not speak English, at home the family speak Arabic. Rahma also speaks conversational Somali, short phrases like 'how are you'. Her grandma is having English lessons at the minute which Rahma helps her with. At home Rahma also likes texting her friends or watching Netflix in her spare time, she has recently enjoyed 'Good Girls'. Rahma is not so keen on school, 'I don't feel like I have a favourite subject at all. I don't think I'm good at any subject'. She has ambitions; she is not however sure her Maths and Science grades will be good enough. 'I want to be a midwife, but I don't know. I want to do an apprenticeship and earn and do college at the same time… I need grade 4s and above'.

Rahma shares a story which illustrates what she does love about school: being social and spending time with her friends, particularly her best friend Ayaan. She says:

> I just chill with my friend, just hang around with her. She is Somali but she is a Lander [from Somaliland], quite opposite. Sometimes like us and the mali boys, the Somali boys, like we joke around like "shut it you're a Lander babes, like your country don't exist". Her dialect will be so different like…sometime we say certain words in Somali or we violate her in Somali and then she says something right back in Somali and we all stop and just look at her and say 'don't you speak again please" cause it will be so weird!

This anecdote leads to an interesting conversation about language and Rahma proves to be very knowledgeable about numerous Somali and Arabic dialects. Reflecting on her lack of fluency Rahma says she would like to go 'back home', to Somalia, or perhaps to Kenya, as there is a big Somali community there to improve her Somali and also to 'improve my culture wise, as that is how you interact with the elder generation'. Her Grandma is also going to arrange for Arabic tuition for her as sometimes she has to search for a word before speaking, 'it can be a challenge sometimes' although she can understand more Arabic than she can speak. Rahma can read Arabic but does not write it so would like to learn that with her tutor as well. She would also like to learn Amharic, the language of Ethiopia, as that is where she was born.

5.4.7 Portrait seven- Yaqoub

‘My Somali is tragic so I need to learn it more’

Yaqoub is 16, short and a little stocky with a cheeky grin and cropped hair. He talks about his life confidently and with consideration, starting with his family. His parents have been married a long time as they are ‘elderly’ (in their sixties) and have a ‘nice relationship’. His father is from Gedo, southern Somalia, where his family owned a farm. Yaqoub states ‘Dad used to study law in Somalia but you would get into trouble’ during the war. The couple initially moved to Sweden, when the civil war began, before relocating to the UK. Yaqoub’s mother and five children came to England whilst his father stayed in Sweden to work, although he joined shortly after, wanting to be with his children. Both parents are cleaners with Yaqoub’s father currently employed by a local mosque and his mother is retired. Yaqoub considers his father’s level of income and explains that his parents ‘are living alright now because my siblings have jobs so my siblings kind of provide’.

Yaqoub is the youngest of six children, three boys and three girls, the eldest sibling being a brother in his early thirties. His elder siblings were all born in Sweden but he was born in the UK. Three of his siblings are now married and live in their own homes with their spouses who are also of Somali heritage. Considering his own marriage prospects, and whether he may also marry someone of Somali heritage, Yaqoub says:

> I used to think about it all the time, but now it's like if you're Muslim, err I don't really care but I’ll probably most realistically marry a Somali. My siblings are married to Somalis... Yeah this is a Somali family kinda so I'm probably going to be married to a Somali as well… so that's it. That's, that's my love life!! (laughs)

Yaqoub shows a sense of pride as he describes the successful careers of his siblings: a software developer, a commission engineer, a medical statistician working in cancer research, an English teacher and a medical student. He adds that all of his siblings attended our school. Yaqoub explains that ‘I used to [feel under pressure because of their success] but now I know that as if I put my

head down, I can do well'. Tutors are common in the community but Yaqoub doesn't have one, 'I have five siblings so I just use all them'.

For his own career Yaqoub explains that he was inspired by the 'History of Medicine' Unit in his GCSE history course to work in the field of medicine, in particular in microbiology which he wants to opt for at degree level. He once considered a career in the arts however had a change of heart:

> I felt like for a kid I want to do designing and stuff like the but then as I grew up I got more like realistic and I was like, I can't get a degree in Art, you know what I mean, like, that it's kind of stupid so I just thought here let me just do my Sciences.

Yaqoub and his family speak Somali at home but he feels his siblings have a better grasp of the language than he does. His father's English is good and Yaqoub asks his Dad to translate words into Somali that he is unsure of. He wants to be fluent before he gets married. Yaqoub's Somali heritage is very important to him and he identifies as Somali. Yaqoub holds a Swedish passport but never thinks of himself as Swedish although he did say so when he was younger because he thought 'it was cool'. In describing his current view on his identity Yaqoub said:

> I would say I'm Somali cuz like, I stand with Somalia you know what I mean, like, I'm British by birth, Swedish by nationality but end of the day I'm Somali like, that's what I am... My parents tell me "you're Somali".

Yaqoub is familiar with the history of Somalia although he has not spoken at length with his parents about their experiences in the civil war. He has discussed some aspects with his sister but admits he 'needs to ask more'. The family have plans to visit Somalia in the near future because:

> Everyone wants to connect with their roots. We need to strengthen our culture so we can pass it down. Because I want my kids to speak Somali because my Somali is tragic so I need to learn it more because I can't have my kids speaking English when you have this rich culture behind you.

Yaqoub's family have maintained close links with their relatives in Somalia. His father for example visited his own mother last year, his first visit in a decade, and according to Yaqoub 'he had a nice time'. His parents intend to return to Somalia to live once Yaqoub goes to university and is more self-sufficient. Yaqoub wouldn't like to live in Somalia himself but would certainly like to visit. To support their family Yaqoub's parents send remittances, as do many in the community, on a regular basis:

> My parents are nice they usually always send money out to family members, like when they save up money. They'll save it and send it to family members in Somalia.

Like the majority of Somalis, Yaqoub is a Muslim and has been practicing his faith since he was a child. He considers himself to have a good understanding of his religion and feels he is ahead of his peers in terms of knowledge. He believes this is the result of his father working in the mosque. His religion is important to him because it makes him feel 'more happy'.

At school Yaqoub has seen a change in his social circle, in years seven to nine his friends were mostly Asian, but in year 10 and 11 his friends are now mostly Somali. He speaks English with his friends although 'a benefit of speaking Somali' with his Somali friends is being able to discuss things you don't want others to understand! He has three close friends but socialises with a large group although this is:

> kind of annoying cause when you're with a group of Somali's [at school] you kind of get stares… there'll be like a herd of teachers just staring at you because they think something's gonna happen.

Yaqoub has some concerns about how he and his Somali peers are viewed at school, he feels they are viewed as a group who misbehave:

> Teachers are always gonna have that image of that one Somali kid and then believe it for all of us… There's some teachers that have that don't care and have a positive like image of Somalis and there's some are just think "eurgghh".

Yaqoub does however assert that 'it's not always a blame on the school. Sometimes [Somali students] just need to fix up'.

5.5 Thematic Reflections

The information collected and presented as a year in the life and seven portraits, provides a selective chronological account of Somali experience. The findings allow the reader to experience the school year as the Somali community did in this particular period, through my lens. It sheds light on key areas such as examinations, learning in the classroom and the impact of COVID-19. In this chapter I discuss and analyse the themes which have emerged from the findings narrative which relate to the research questions posed and also the conceptual framework of deficit narratives, cultural capital and FoK. The themes are family and community support, valuing education and the role of ambition, FoK, the civil war, identity, language, behaviour and race, academic performance and responses to COVID-19.

5.5.1 Family and community support

All participants highlighted the essential role of the family as a support network. Students mentioned the key role that their mothers, siblings, close family friends known as habayars (aunties), and sometimes fathers, can play in supporting their education and development. Even Rahma in her moving portrait highlighted the supportive role key family members can play. Sibling relationships are also important within school with students seeing and speaking to their brothers and or sisters at break and lunch times. When our school closed and the country went into lockdown many students spoke of being with their families and supporting each other through the period.
The Somali community has clearly also developed effective social capital, building relationships outside the family home. All participants highlighted the support networks that extend to the wider Somali community. These bonds of community seem to come from a shared language, dress, culture, religion and experience. Such bonds are also evident in school with students, particularly in older year groups, having Somali friendship circles. Mushtaq summed it up when she said ‘I love the Somali community as everyone is close to each other’. Farah explained further:

> Like we're all like brothers and sisters, like even like everyone in the community is like siblings, like, everyone knows each other. Even in funerals and everything like even if it's like somebody you don't know you go to their funeral or like go to the house you help out in the house, you clean the house for them, you do so much stuff for them. Everyone is there for them the community is like really close.

These community relationships even extend to financial capital with women saving together for larger purchases or unexpected bills. A number of students commented on this but Zainab talked about it at length as a real strength of the community support available:

> So, there's something called ayuuto, that means like to help… It's like, oh, we're helping each other, we're of the same blood we're the same people, we're of the same blood we'll help each other out like that.

The community links observed also reach across the diaspora and to those in Somalia, most participants talked about remittances or money being sent to relatives and friends in Somalia. Mr Hersi has two paternal half-brothers in Somalia, whom he has not seen since he left the country, but to whom he regularly sends money. Unlike Mr Hersi, Farah was quite resentful of the practice. She described her mother, a single parent also supporting an elderly family friend who Farah refers to as her grandma, working additional hours to support family in Somalia. Farah was unsure if she would choose to send money to Somali when she starts work.

5.5.2 Valuing education and the role of ambition

The lesson observations certainly seem to suggest that students valued their education. With a small number of exceptions, students were well behaved and focussed on their lesson tasks. For a number of reasons (such as changing demographics, a stable staff and a new headteacher) behaviour at the school has improved significantly over the last five or six years. Almost every lesson I saw was purposeful with Somali students fully engaged. It was also evident in this research that the Somali community as a whole place a high value on education; demonstrated by the passion displayed at my parents' meeting as parents advocated for their children, the attendance at parents' evenings and

the many comments made by members of the community. Mrs Jama for example said:

> I work hard, I never rest… All the time I do my children close with them. I don't want them to miss what I missed. A lot of Somali people they miss education, they miss good life. I don't want them my children to miss anything.

Very few of the families I spoke with would consider themselves affluent and yet almost every child had or has had private tuition, usually in core subjects. Those students that did not, had tutoring with elder siblings. This financial sacrifice, often associated with middle class families, is commonplace in our school's Somali community. Insiya said:

> One thing that Somali parents definitely do is tutoring and like my friends…they all experienced having a tutor. And I think that's something that's very important to Somalis and always want to go out the way to, like, get further help. Because we definitely did that. Like what I was doing my GCSEs my dad got me a tutor for, I think one of the Sciences because I was struggling in it. And Maths because I just was struggling with Math.

It is unusual to hear students speaking of a visit to a museum or theatre production with their families but they are always keen to participate in such activities when offered by the school to further their knowledge. This is particularly evidenced by the students who wrote reviews of the plays they had seen for the school newsletter.

Many participants referred to their high aspirations, particularly for future employment, with many having ambitious careers in mind for themselves or the young people to whom they referred. Careers advice, in the form of one-to one interviews, was highly valued by students and those I observed in their PDE lesson were researching highly aspirational careers.

5.5.3 Funds of Knowledge

Within the school's Somali community, a range of key knowledge or skill areas emerged. A number of participants talked about skills in business which were developed in Somalia, such as animal husbandry and book keeping. Hawa said,

‘like my family had a farm, a really big farm… I know they have knowledge about businesses’. Zainab agreed she said ‘the older generation, they're good with like businesses and things like that’. Some students also spoke of family members who own small businesses in the UK that serve the Somali community or who work for larger corporations. Many participants talk of a love of Maths with many linking this to family backgrounds in business. Mrs Jama for example said ‘the Somali people are clever in the Maths, they like Maths’. This was corroborated by student participation in the Maths lessons I observed and by student comments about the subject; Idil and Mushtaq for example.

Large numbers of Somali students use the school library and are avid readers, reading for pleasure. A culture of reading is important in that it can play a vital role in enhancing mainstream cultural capital for our students and supporting literacy development. Many participants also talked about storytelling and its value in their lives. Mrs Jama for example described how sharing stories is a key part of Somali life, especially now as it allows children to understand the lives of their grandparents in Somalia. Poetry was also mentioned by a number of participants. These are important aspects of the community’s FoK, as it allows the continuation of a tradition which links UK Somalis to their heritage and to others in the diaspora, developing social capital. It can also help accrue institutionalised capital as it supports students in succeeding in their English studies and at GCSE level in particular.

Food was mentioned almost as often as storytelling with traditional Somali dishes such as banana rice and malawax being firm favourites. Mushtaq exclaimed ‘I love being Somali, the food is beautiful, you really need to try banana and rice!’. Many students described their mums as excellent cooks whose food they enjoy eating. For some mothers, cooking takes on additional importance when their other capital is not valued. Hawa said its ‘the one thing that my mum knows that she can really do for us’. When attending events in the community, parents were often keen to share their traditional food with me and used it as a talking point to engage me in conversation. Some families also sell food as a way of converting their community knowledge into financial capital.

Languages are a real strength of the community with many languages being spoken at home. The speaking of Somali may be seen as alternate capital with limited application in the world of work, but FoK and capital blur here as a number of students speak other languages fluently at home which in certain contexts may be valuable. Rahma for example speaks Arabic competently at home with her grandma whom she lives with. Other students speak a number of languages including European languages such as Norwegian, Dutch, German and Swedish. Insiya speaks a mix of English, Somali and Dutch depending on whom she is addressing. She also respects her parents who 'both speak four languages, it's really cool actually'.

Not only does the community speak a range of languages but many individuals possess global connections, all of whom see these as a positive in their lives. Many students have knowledge of the daily life of their families in other countries such as their schooling, foods and local customs. Some students had visited these countries, such as Hawa who travelled to Kenya. Such visits allow students to learn about other cultures first hand and enrich their travel experiences. Muna explains:

> My family is quite spread out, to be honest. Like a lot of them are in European countries like, I like I keep contact with the ones from Norway, and Sweden, Finland and I have ones in America I've visited before as well. And just like erm Australia, a lot of places Canada as well. But that's like an advantage because I get to visit them all init.

The Somali community's adherence to, and understanding and valuing of, their Muslim faith was very evident in this research. For example, almost all female Somali students wear a hijab and some of the boys attend the communal daily prayers held in school. Many participants also talked about the importance of their Muslim faith. Iman said 'my religion is a big part of my identity as it helps me get through everyday life'. Many participants felt their religion allowed them to make links, or build social capital, with the wider community in mosques, shops and at school. Religion also plays a part in strengthening community bonds, Hawa said 'you know Juaz, prayers? They [our families] kinda pray for each other'. Muna also thought that religion was a positive influence on attainment. She said 'a lot of more religious families like their children do well, I

don't know if there's a sort of correlation, but I've seen that myself'. Whilst knowledge of Islam could be seen as FoK it is also more mainstream knowledge, extending outside the community to other Muslim groups. The knowledge also allows for the possession of institutionalised capital as students can pass exams at Madrassah and also the GCSE RE examination (with modules about Islam). There seems to be a growing number of students, such as Yaqoub and Rahma, who are asking questions of their faith to deepen their understanding and commitment. Muna also shared her views on the decline of Islam in some quarters of the community as people develop more agnostic or atheist perspectives:

> I feel like Somali ex-Muslims are on a rise… especially as there are two of my sisters and that's just one family, of course there's closeted ex-Muslims, but it's like they're scared to come out.

5.5.4 The civil war

The civil war has impacted every Somali family in our community, their refugee identity stemming from the conflict. All participants made reference to the conflict in some way, with the portraits being particularly illuminating, and each reference alluded to a story of great challenge if not trauma. Insiya for example said:

> I think that's a thing that is very common… within the diaspora, like nobody really knows how their parents got there. They tell them a very fabricated story. We don't know the real story. And I think it's because it's super traumatic, and like a lot of dangerous stuff happened and a lot of sad stuff happened. Like, it was probably really like, it's probably really traumatic for them to relive it when they tell it.

The legacy of the civil war is the diasporic nature of the community and the lasting effects of conflict on its members; trauma can affect the actions of people as they struggle to rebuild their lives. Some clan-based conflict also remains in the community. Rahma, for example, spoke of a strained relationship between her grandma and a neighbour from a different clan:

> She's [my grandma] outgoing, she loves speaking about politics, she loves speaking about her tribe and she loves defending her tribe as well,

> she loves it! Then we have a neighbour that is opposite tribe, and then they clash every day.

This clash however was described in a good-natured way, more lively debate than real conflict, and one of the few mentions of disagreement in the community. The strong family and community links seem to be the main mediator of the civil war's legacy, a support network developed to ensure that lives can be rebuilt. The members of the community support each other very effectively to face some of the challenges they are confronted with and to meet them head on, to make a success of their lives in Britain. A related facet according to Insiya is the newness of the community to the UK, 'I think that's probably why we're struggling a lot more than, when you compare us to other people that have obviously been here longer'. Essentially the community has not had time to develop wider social and cultural capital that will ensure success. Many participants were however very hopeful about the community in the way that they spoke about younger people and their ambitions for the future.

5.5.5 Identity

The Somali identity is a complex, multi-faceted one; Black, refugee, Muslim, Somali, British, sometimes with influences from other European cultures and from Black American culture. There are also clan affiliations with some students wearing bracelets representing the region their clan is from. Despite the complexity, all participants saw themselves first and foremost as Somalis. Insiya said 'we will lean to 'Somali' because that's one thing that no one can kind of dispute or anything'. Those born in the country see Somalia as home and many first-generation Somalis in this study saw returning as an option in the near future or when they retire. There was however additional complexity for those who are 1.5 or second generation Somalis. Iman for example talked about her Somali heritage being in part learned from her family rather than being born of direct experience:

> I believe being Somali is being able to connect to your roots and heritage and learn the history of your family and country. I enjoy hearing stories about the olden day in Somalia about my ancestors because I learn many new things I didn't know; like my grandfather was a poet which is super cool.

First generation Somalis, such as Mr Abshir, agreed about the more abstract nature of Somali identity for younger people. He explained:

> Most of them [the students] have not only not ever been to Somalia, but neither can they speak the language and nor can they tell you anything about Somalia as a country. When you look at it from a standpoint - they are actually more British than Somali. They know more about the British culture - pop music, royal family, cultural sites, norms, and beliefs etc… My theory is that the current generation of Somali youths will be the last generation to hold on to their cultural heritage as their parents and elder siblings are first generation Somalis, so that influence is still largely present at home at the moment.

Whilst it is certainly true that many Somali students have indeed adopted or acculturated aspects of British culture, few self-identified as British and instead forefronted their Somali identity. In fact, student participants often referred to White British people as 'British British', suggesting to be British is to be White. Yaqoub was very clear when he said 'I stand with Somalia'. Miss Usman, herself second generation, said:

> I've never heard somebody that's Somali saying they're British. Now I'm thinking about it. I never have, like they say they're Somali because they think oh, well, I'm not like, I'm not English. So, I'm Somali they wouldn't say they were British. No.

Miss Usman did however talk about a sense of trying to belong even if the label of 'British' is not used. She said, with particular reference to wearing Muslim clothing:

> I think not just in Somali culture in a lot of cultures, is they don't want to be judged and seen as like an outcast or anything like they'd wanna be seen as like, what they would deem as like "Oh, good, you're doing what everybody else is doing"....

Indeed, a greater proportion of Somali students wear headscarves than their Asian peers and almost all Somali mothers wear a black abaya covering their own clothes. Mrs Jama certainly felt Islamic dress allowed Somali women not only to express their Islamic identity but to also claim membership of the wider community. A number of participants mentioned their mothers did not wear an abaya when they lived in Denmark, Holland or Sweden as no one else did in their largely White communities. Hawa added that the wearing of Islamic dress allowed her mother 'to look inconspicuous… yeah mostly we have predominantly Asian neighbours. Which is why the whole dress code thing, we

try to fit in.' Younger Somali mothers such as Mrs Omar, whilst still opting to wear an abaya, were customising their visible clothing, whilst even younger women such as Insiya were opting not to wear the abaya at all. Hawa, reasonably close in age to Insiya, did however wear one; younger women it seems have the freedom to choose what suited them. However, that same freedom did not always extend to those who wanted to move away from covering their hair, such as Rahma and Muna.

5.5.6 Language

Whilst the multilingual nature of many Somali households is positive, it also presents challenges. Somali is often spoken at home, sometimes because parents are not fluent in English. Insiya for example said 'My parents both speak English. Yeah. But they're not confident enough to speak all the time so when we're at home, they tend to speak in Somali'. Many young people do not speak fluent Somali but what Mrs Jama describes as 'broken sentences'. This presents real challenges for intergenerational communication. Hawa explains her own lack of fluency:

> My father he said to me "before when you were a kid I used to speak English to you because I was worried that we would put you at a disadvantage". And he goes like "now I regret it because you're a bit too good at English and you're absolute crap at Somali" (laughs).

The loss of the Somali language could lead to scenarios where children and their families are unable to communicate effectively, as in some families in this community. Parents not speaking English also presents other issues such as challenges in supporting their children with their homework. Mrs Jama said 'If you don't understand English that is a problem, a big problem. You don't know what they [children] are learning.' There may also be issues communicating with teachers due to the language barrier. Mrs Jama speaks with her children's primary teacher every day and thinks those with weaker English are 'too shy' but she says:

> If you don't speak English don't hide for yourself, bring your friends if I bring one your relatives to talk the teacher to ask… But if you hide or say

> “I don't want to do this” will be difficult for the child and difficult for the moms and dads. And this child is not going forward.

To mediate these challenges some adult members of the community have been very proactive in developing their English, Insiya for example said ‘my mom and dad both went to ESOL classes just to improve it’. Mrs Jama has also attended classes. She said it was very important to develop her English in order to support her children with their school work. Parents also work with Mr Hersi, the Somali mentor, to support their communication with the school. Conversely students have worked to develop their Somali although Zainab explained it can be difficult to speak and practice with friends as they may have different dialects.

Many community languages can be studied in school at GCSE level including Persian (Farsi), Polish and Hindi. Somali however is not a GCSE option, undervaluing this particular community language which has a large number of UK speakers. Being able to opt for a Somali GCSE would allow students to become more fluent in the language of their parents and also gain an academic qualification. It would also value their FoK in the area of language. Despite the efforts of the community, issues of language are still a significant challenge for Somalis, particularly those who are first and second generation.

5.5.7 Behaviour and race

This study shows that the behaviour of some Somali students in school is an issue of great complexity, and concern, to both students and parents. Whilst very little challenging behaviour was seen during observations, it is clear negotiating through school and navigating cultural norms is met with varying degrees of success by students. The behaviour data, views of some parents and year 11 students certainly suggest this, as well as the behaviour of some students during the mocks and the attitude of the mask wearers at the college interviews. This research would support the view that the behaviour of Somali students was generally good in lessons, certainly in line with their peers, but in less controlled environments, such as the playground or corridor, was not

always appropriate. The issue of race and how it is linked to instances of poor behaviour, and reactions to them, was also discussed by some Y11 students. This is a highly complex and challenging issue, one which this research has not fully resolved. Some students and parents feel that there is institutional racism at the school and whilst others feel that behaviour is misinterpreted because their culture is not valued and therefore their behaviour mistaken because of a lack of understanding and unconscious cultural biases. The school often feels students are well supported but there are those that do not conform to behaviour expectations.

There are also concerns about outside influences on student behaviour in terms of street or gang culture. At the time of writing this chapter the older brother of a year seven Somali student was tragically murdered in a gang related stabbing. Former students have also been involved in such serious crimes. Hawa touched on the influence of gang culture. She said:

> You know Black culture? It's very normalised in media now and I think the whole gangsta thing from America and the whole ghetto thing. In my errrr, I'm speaking from like a 16-year-old viewpoint who's been on the Internet a lot, they might be quite influenced by that. You know the whole tough act 'I'd smack them out' (laughs)… Like it's OK to have your own identity crisis and to want to be cool but when you get to a point where you're stressing out your mom I just wanna throw you in the dustbin!

Mrs Jama is surprised at some of the more challenging behaviour she has heard about from women in the community. She also cannot understand why the efforts of the community do not always lead to positive outcomes:

> The Somali parents they work hard for the children, but I don't know. It may be that maybe the children themselves are doing that. If I saw the Somali people, they not let that behaviour, is good behaviour for them in community.

Behavioural challenges are mediated in a number of ways by the school, in particular by Mr Hersi and the pastoral team, by the students themselves and by parents. Students also adapt their behaviour, particularly as they get older; Farah for example feels she has developed an understanding of how to behave in different spaces. 'There's a place and a time for everything' she said.

Perhaps evidence of students gaining an understanding of the habitus required for the field in which they operate during school hours. In terms of the role of the community, a number of participants talked about the support from families for students to develop good learning behaviours. The close-knit nature of the community also allows parents to support each other and to share their views on the strategies the school employs. This is helpful in holding the school to account but can also spread misinformation, Mrs Jama's comments following the parents meeting suggests the views of the more vocal parents were not fully representative.

A community option to mediate the issue of poor behaviour is Dhaqan Celis (Cultural Rehabilitation) which refers to sending children to stay with relatives in Somalia. The idea being to immerse at risk young people in Somali culture and to keep them away from damaging influences. Insiya acknowledged this is discussed within the community as a possible option, an extreme parental intervention and a way of meeting the challenge of the most difficult behaviours. The practice is not used regularly, no students returned to Somalia this academic year. Farah did however joke about it after I told her off for swearing in a lesson, she said 'please don't tell my mum, I'll be sent home to Somalia!'. In 2005 a year 11 leaver from our school returned to Somalia after his mother became increasingly concerned about his behaviour. Tragically he was shot and killed the day before his return to the UK.

5.5.8 Academic performance at school

Academic performance is a challenge for the community as shown by prior attainment in public examinations. The school results from the period of research, 2019 and 2020, are part of a wider national pattern of underperformance. The observations however showed students generally working very well in lessons, with similar standards of behaviour and engagement to their peers. Subjects observed included Maths, English, Art, History, Science and Citizenship. Poor behaviour outside of lessons does seem to be more of a concern with a small number of students prompting sanctions.

Such behaviour may have an impact on the amount or quality of homework completed. A digital divide was also evident with parents such as Mrs Jama ensuring her children shared the one family computer and Adam talking of the difficulties of computer access at home during lockdown. The GCSEpod usage over the lockdown period could also indicate issues of access with Somali students generally accessing the site less frequently than their peers. The outcomes of this research however do little to really elucidate why Somali attainment is lower than other groups. However, the greater community understandings have certainly begun to contextualise student outcomes.

It was also noticeable, in student post-16 option choices, that many Somali students choose STEM options, despite showing an interest in, and enjoyment of, a range of school subjects. Parents and the wider community seem to place greater value on STEM subjects and their associated careers such as medicine or accountancy. Insiya, who had just completed a history degree, said:

> I mean my family members make fun of me for it. They're like yeah, you're studying a white course! Like yeah, yeah, yeah. They literally say that to me all the time.

Despite the lack of clarity of explanation for the lower attainment of some students, the community has done a great deal to mediate the challenge. Many students for example spoke of tuition in a range of subjects or their parents purchasing resources such as revision guides. Hawa for example said ‘they're really supportive and they'll get me anything I need especially for education like any textbooks I need they'll get it’. High levels of attendance at school parents’ evenings and communication throughout the year is evident from most families suggesting the development of social capital with schools and teachers. Supplementary schools were also running in the community prior to COVID-19 which supported students, particularly with Maths and English.

5.5.7 Responses to COVID-19

The Somali community, like many others, experienced the pandemic in various ways. Many students spoke of the opportunities to spend time with their families, particularly siblings, and how much they enjoyed this. They also spoke of more time to do hobbies such as drawing, gaming and learning languages. There were significant challenges in keeping motivated and working independently, as for many across the country. Amira for example said ‘the lockdown is quite boring because there's nothing to do really other than stay at home’. Some students like Iman however used the time very well:

> Me and my family watch the 5pm update from the government every day and we have all been in quarantine since school closed (except for work and shopping). I have begun preparing for my theory test to get my provisional licence in my spare time and I am also planning to get a head start on my A Level courses too. I’ve been helping my mum cook which has become a hobby of mine during this lockdown and helping my brother with his schoolwork.

Families adjusted to a Ramadan in lockdown with many students commenting on the greater opportunities for prayer and reflection. Eid was however difficult for many families in 2020 and students mentioned it was a significant loss to not be able to spend it with friends and family. The return to school in June was short lived but generally enjoyed with students also positive about the 2020/21 academic year.

Chapter Six- Conclusion

This study created a window on a community's experience of a school year. Working closely with the Somali community, through the use of a cultural facilitator, ethnographic interviews and observations, a year in the life was written with illustrative portraits. It highlighted some key strengths of the Somali community such as the valuing of education and the strong internal support networks. A series of challenges also became apparent along with a number of strategies used by the community to mitigate them. This research challenges deficit narratives of the Somali community and more general simplistic narratives of hard-to-reach families who lack cultural capital. Davies (2017, p.1) writes that 'the voices of young Muslims themselves are largely unheard' and this research offered a conduit for such voices. From the research findings I have also been able to draw out some important implications for practice.

6.1 Research question one

What are the lived experiences of Somali members of this school and its wider community?

As hoped the year in the life explored many aspects of the lived experiences of the school's Somali students and gave tantalising insights into the wider community. Students tackled the year with enthusiasm and energy, taking advantage of the many opportunities that our school offered. A number of key areas emerged from the findings though their repeated observation or discussion. Some of these, along with the chronology of the school year, shaped the structure of the findings chapter. Perhaps, as expected, learning and exams featured quite significantly because they are the constants in a school year. Reading, the supportive role of parents, free time and student behaviour are the other notable areas. Themes, discussed in the thematic reflections chapter, also emerged which seemed to further encapsulate the Somali lived experience. These include the influence of the civil war, FoK and language, more specifically multilingualism and the challenges of intergenerational communication and interaction outside the Somali community.

The findings seem to be oxymoronic in that they reflect the unique nature of the community and also highlight the many similarities with other communities, as Yaqoub explained Somalis 'are just normal kids'. Individuality between members of the community was also highlighted and explored. McMichael (2003, p.193) also found the nature of findings to be multi-layered, she states that participant 'narratives entailed both the coherence of shared themes, and diversity with individual narratives'.

A Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS) backgrounder report (2012, p.2) said that 'strong social networks are an important strength of Somali culture [which] provide support, social identity and a source of security'. This community support was evident in the Somali community of study, it was mentioned by almost all of the participants. For example, Farah spoke of the support for people in the community who had suffered a bereavement. Zainab mentioned the financial support in place in the community, the Ayuuto or Shaloongo, also reflected in the work of Chambers (2019, p.99). These groups, where women pool financial resources to make essential purchases or pay bills, prove particularly useful in the community. Especially as, Roble and Rutledge (2008, p.4) explain, Somalis are not always comfortable borrowing from British banks, who usually charge interest which is haram or forbidden. It was unclear from this research whether the close social ties of the community were a positive choice by the community, choosing to help and support each other, or one of necessity in that the community lack the social capital to seek support from outside their currently existing social networks.

Whilst much of the literature talks of community support, Ramsden and Taket (2013, p.113) state that:

> since migrating from Somalia to escape the civil war, tensions and fragmentation amongst Somali families have impacted on the development of bonding social capital.

This certainly does not seem to be the case in the community studied in this research. Whilst Ramsden and Taket (2013) discuss the challenges to community ties they do not makes links to clan affiliation. This research, and other examples in the literature, show that some conflict exists in the UK Somali

community and that it is often based on clan lines. It is possible that the issues that are being descried by Ramsden and Taket (2013) are not evident in communities, such as the one in this research, where most members are from the same clan or are committed to ending clan-based conflict.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 brought new and unexpected challenges which the Somali community faced collectively, as discussed by a number of participants. The community support networks and social capital of the community proved vital during the succession of lockdowns experienced by the country (Omar, 2020, p.2). A number of participants talked about the support they had received from neighbours, friends and relatives during the national lockdown which support them or their families. The pandemic did however exacerbate existing problems in the community such as access to digital devices, poor housing and food poverty (Anti-Tribalism movement, 2020, p.1).

Community and parental support are essential to students in their school life and a key feature of the Somali community of study. Parental support features heavily in the literature although for minority communities it can be grounded in deficit views. Goodall and Montgomery (2014, p.400) state it is often assumed many ethnic minority parents invest very little in their child's educational life, especially if families have minimal contact with school settings. Such views are generally erroneous, particularly when applied to the Somali community. This research has shown Somali parents are usually at the forefront of their child's education; attending parents' evening, organising tuition and communicating with the school. Elder siblings, who may speak English more fluently and have a greater knowledge of British educational systems, also play an important part. Yacoub for example described the professional roles of his siblings and the fact they provided tuition to support his studies. This was seen in the research of Shah, Dwyer and Modood (2010, p.1118); 'older siblings generated cultural capital and social capital to help younger siblings'.

Another aspect of community support is described by Shah et al. (2010, p.1119) in a study of Asian communities. They suggest that working class members of

the community use their social capital to gain support from middle class members. This is evident in the Somali community, illustrated by the work of Mr Hersi and the supplementary schools many students attend. In addition, the purchasing of revision guides and hiring of tutors demonstrates the use of sometimes limited economic capital to support children in their studies. These are all examples of what Roxas (2008, p.5) describes as 'creative coping and networking strategies…to improve their [Somali parents] children's access to educational support'. These progression strategies could be considered both examples of cultural assimilation and community resistance. The purchasing of revision guides for example allows students to assimilate into the wider school community by having the same, or better, resources than other students. What Sewell (2007, p.104) may term 'conforming', ensuring students are gaining the same educational capital as their peers. This may also be seen as community resistance; resistance to low expectations, to structural racism and to the challenges of being from a refugee background. Whilst the outcome is the same may students gave the impression of conformity of wanting to fit in with the peers and the school system of which they are a part.

This study also found close links with the community and members of the diaspora, which is a theme discussed at length in the literature; these wider networks are an important aspect of life as a UK Somali. Abdulle (2019, p.133) refers to these connections as 'cosmopolitanism' suggesting that, whilst once this was a term to described travel and experience for pleasure, it could also include the migrant experience of cultures and languages. Armila and Kontkanen (2019) use the term transnational cultural capital, which was found by participants to be 'dominant and mind-opening'. In this research participants spoke a range of languages, shared experiences of foreign travel to see relatives and discussed the global conversations they have online or by phone. The fact that such knowledge and skills are not always valued by wider British society links back to the tension between cultural capital and FoK and also racism.

Remittances also play a key part in the diaspora connection and feature in this research; most interview participants discussed sending money to Somalia. Shire (2008) refers to the practice in his research, both he and Lindley (2008) consider the sending of remittances to be an important aspect of community life and very common. Abdi (2019, p.24) sees the sending of remittances a positive, a chance to help those who may be struggling. Almost all participants framed the sending of remittances in a positive way. From younger participants there was however some divergence from this view suggesting that as direct links to Somalia and people in the country weaken, the act of sending remittances may decrease.

As well as extensive family and community support, high aspirations are also evident in the community which mirrors the work of Goodall (2013). She found high levels of support in ethnic minority families for students' studies to actualise the high aspirations held. Ramsden and Taket (2013, p.105), who have worked with the Somali community, describe how many Somali parents have high aspirations for their children; for example, they like their children to pursue professions in the public health sector, because these are careers that are valued and well paid in Somalia. The year 11 students in this research, who had already applied for their college places, spoke at length about the support from their families to apply for demanding A Level options with a view to university study. Such aspirations, according to Ramsden and Taket (2013, p.114), actually allow for the development of social capital, more specifically linking capital, as teachers and parents work for common goals. They write:

> While parents and teachers may share different cultural values and beliefs, their shared belief in the value of education and their mutual aspirations to enhance the education outcomes for Somali children was sufficient to foster positive social interaction. This interaction was then mobilised into social capital.

The processes described by Ramsden and Taket (2013, p.114), is evident in this research, with positive home/school relationships being fostered which support students.

A key aspect of this research question was to explore the Funds of Knowledge (FoK) of the Somali community. Kahin and Wallace (2017) and Gonzalez et al. (2008, p.117), found FoK in their research with minority communities, the latter writing FoK were 'abundant and diverse'. High levels of what could be described as FoK were highlighted in this research, with families having skills in a range of areas, many of which are also reflected in the literature. For example, reading and storytelling were discussed at length by participants which is reflected in Kahin's work (1997, p.47), work which also underlined the importance of storytelling in the Somali community. One Somali mother in Roy and Roxas' research (2011, p.534) said 'telling stories about the hardships of life helps children develop strong values and understand the value of education'. The cooking of Somali recipes and the importance of food in families was mentioned by many participants. Hawa felt there was a particular importance to the food in her home, linking it to the value and purpose her mother felt she gained by cooking it. An interest in business skills and maths was also mentioned on several occasions, which links to respected roles in Somalia and also the aspirational jobs students, and their parents, look to.

Language skills were also discussed, with many students speaking at least two languages and stating that their parents were also multilingual. Languages spoken included Arabic, Dutch, English, Norwegian, Somali and Swedish. Sporton et al. (2007, p.14) found that 'many children described different intrafamilial linguistic competencies and preferences'. This is true in this research with a variety of languages being spoken at home and in other community settings. A number of students also further developed foreign language skills during lockdown, showing a real interest in this area. The community language experience is linked to the transnational capital identified by Armila and Kontkanen (2019).

Religion was significant to many participants and is seen in this research as a further aspect of FoK. It is also a feature in the literature, Rutter (2006, p.183) for example asserts Somalis are observant Muslims. In this research students spoke of their faith on numerous occasions, especially during Ramadan and Eid

which occurred during the lockdown. The literature also makes positive connections between faith and academic progress which was mentioned by participants in this research. Davies (2014, p.10) found in her research that her participants felt their Muslim faith was a 'positive influence on their educational progress' whilst Shah et al. (2010, p.1122) found Islam 'oriented them [students] strongly towards normative patterns of study and work'. Whilst almost all students felt their religion was a positive factor in their lives, there were a few comments about madrassah attendance during exam time being a challenge. Strand (2007, p10) asserted that madrassah attendance had an adverse impact on attainment for the KS3 students in his study. Perhaps inadvisably he asserted this deficit viewpoint whilst acknowledging 'this finding needs further investigation' due to small numbers.

Interestingly what did emerge in this research, and is not widely written about, is the decline in religious belief or the desire for freedom to express religious observance in other ways, for example by not wearing a hijab. These views were particularly evident in the portraits of Muna and Rahma. This phenomenon potentially shows the increasing assimilation of the Somali community into British life with fewer students wishing to wear the more traditional Islamic dress worn by their parents and older relatives. Many young Somalis were aware that in other UK cities, and also in Somalia itself, that Islamic dress was worn less frequently. It could be argued that moving away from Islamic dress is an act of community resistance, a way of separating from the wider Muslim community which older generations have sought to integrate with. The lack of religiosity seems to be explained by opportunities to question faith more, and time spent with non-Muslims.

Fellin (2015, p.33) highlights the fact that Canadian studies have shown 'immigrant women are responsible for transmitting racial, cultural, and national difference onto their children'. Whilst 'difference' potentially has deficit connotations, our students spoke warmly of storytelling, food and Somali pride being shared at home creating bonds between family members. Some students spoke of the key role that fathers, or elder siblings both male and female, also

play in developing Somali identity and FoK. The development of Somali identity at home, viewed through the lens of FoK, suggests clear links to ethnic capital, the work of Shah, Dwyer and Modood (2010, p.112). Ethnic capital is defined as the interplay of familial relationships, aspirations and attitudes of members of an ethnic minority group, which have a positive influence on ethnic minority children. Whilst Erel (2010) recommends caution using a term which homogenises, the Somali community do seem to be using ethnic capital to access more accepted or mainstream capital for their children. Whilst many Somali parents work in unskilled employment their focus on education is converting their family capital into positive outcomes for their children. The support of elder siblings is also important. Many students with elder siblings talk of their careers in medicine, finance and healthcare highlighting how they have successfully navigated the school system. These siblings support by attending parents' evenings, translating for their parents and providing tuition. The lower attainment of some Somali students at our school, compared to their peers, is potentially due to the varying successes of families to utilise their resources, develop understanding of the field and its habitus, and convert capital. This mirrors the work of Roxas (2008, p.7) who conducted research with Somali Bantu refugees in America.

An interesting possibility is that, not only are Somali families converting FoK to mainstream capital, but that Somali values and capital are becoming more mainstream. Yaqoub, a year 11 student, can identify with this, he explained that in 2014/15 he would be teased about eating banana rice but he feels now in 2020 things have changed 'we [Somalis] are more mainstream now'. Such views are reflected in the literature, Boakye (2019, p.206) for example, describes how 'we've seen ghetto values creep into the mainstream'. Peterson (1996, pg.905) agrees writing about cultural 'omnivores', those who partake in cultural activity that is seen as legitimate and also emergent forms such as rap music, widening the accepted capital and validating that of previously marginalised groups. Erel (2010, p.651), with specific reference to migrant communities, states they are 'engaged in creating mechanisms of validation for their cultural capital'. This certainly seems to apply to the Somali community.

Such validation has a significant effect on society and, the Cultural Learning Alliance (2019) suggest, potential implications for Bourdieu's work. They state the validation of FoK requires the term cultural capital to be seen 'in a new sense', pushing Bourdieu's theory to include the FoK of marginalised communities. This therefore suggests that the ways in which migrant communities are accepted could be changing. Fellin (2015, p.31) writes that 'migrants will only be accepted when they emphasise their similarities and hide their differences'. In contrast, the Somali community could be seen to be seeking to value their existing capital, including emerging forms such as transnational, whilst also developing more mainstream cultural capital. This suggests links to Bourdieu and Wacquant's work (1992, p. 99) on how individuals opt to use their capital or their 'position-taking'. Gradually this shift in the development of capital is allowing for educational success within the community, for positive impacts on neighbouring communities and the redefining of our understandings of the term cultural capital.

6.2 Research question two

What are the challenges facing the Somali members of this school and its wider community and how are they mediated?

There are a number of challenges facing the Somali community which are mediated in a number of ways and with varying degrees of success. Indeed in 2011, Roy and Roxas (p.536) suggested the Somali community were 'still on the periphery in their understanding of how to accomplish their goals'. In the years since this was written there has been significant progress but, as Abdi states (2019, p.30), the current position of the community is not their final one. Some of the challenges facing the community are significant issues such as the legacy of the civil war, others are relatively minor, and others are rooted in deficit narratives of the community.

Mohamed (2021) uses the term 'conflict affected' to refer to the Somali community. The civil war is indeed a significant and long-lasting issue for diaspora Somalis, including those of this study. It led to a plethora of issues in

Somalia and forced the migration of many, sometimes to experience poverty and racism. Continuing violence can also prevent a return home, Kananen (2019b, p. 61) states that her participants did not see repatriation 'as a viable option'. In contrast many older participants in this research were keen to return to Somalia, some are planning to do so when their children complete their education and are self-sufficient in their careers. The Somali Civil War features heavily in the literature as does its effect on the diaspora. Besteman (2016, p.4) for example questions 'how do people whose entire way of life has been destroyed… construct a new future? How do people who have survived the ravages of war and displacement rebuild…?'

Some academics have written about the civil war with specific reference to UK Somalis, Mohamud and Whitburn (2016) for example discuss the effect of the civil war on those of Somali heritage born after the conflict in the UK. Thus widening the impact from those who experienced the war directly, to their descendants. Mohamud and Whitburn (2016, p.121) state 'many of the diaspora's members are too young to recall a national narrative that didn't have at its core tribal conflict and sustained lawlessness'.

The civil war in Somalia was a clan-based conflict and thus clan-based issues have affected the UK Somali community. Rutter (2006, p.175) discusses issues around clan identity and clan-based conflict in the UK. She states 'despite strong ethnic, linguistic and cultural unity, clan affiliation remains a divisive factor in Somali society. As a contrast in this research, whilst a few examples of clan divison were mentioned, many younger participants spoke of their parents actively discouraging the discussion of clan identity and conflict. Other residual issues from the war for the UK Somali community include trauma and separation from family members. These issues, whilst featuring heavily in some of the earlier literature are increasingly less applicable to young Somalis who were often born and raised in the UK. The trauma for older community members is still evident but little discussed in the literature.

The legacy of the civil war has been mediated in a number of ways although the severity of consequence has proved it a challenging task. Social networking and the valuing of education are key aspects of the many at play. In fact, the first research question, exploring the lived experiences of the community, essentially outlines the many strategies which mediate the challenge of the civil war. The very act of everyday living is part of the rebuilding of lives and the addressing of the myriad challenges that the civil war presents. Whilst many participants of this research acknowledged the steps taken to support their families and start new lives, they remained humble. They were shy in recognising the efforts they had made, often against significant odds, to start again.

In the school and wider community, the behaviour of some Somali young people is a significant concern. Both national and school data suggests that Somali students are often over represented in negative behaviour measures such as exclusions and permanent exclusions. In her research Humpage (2009, p.80) linked this behaviour to the civil war and the refugee experience. She also considers the loss of Somali national service, housing concerns and single parent families which she believes have exacerbated issues initially caused by the war. The BRYCS backgrounder (2012, p.3) hypothesises that young people ‘may not have models of home-based discipline’, due to the Civil war or other societal factors. Whilst the civil war and behaviour were discussed by participants none made a link between the two, especially not to the extent in the literature which discusses a causal relationship.

The literature also contains extensive debate about other contributing factors for the challenging behaviours in the community, aside from conflict. Shirdon (2017, p.220) states ‘parenting has been a great challenge for our [Somali] diasporic community’ and there is certainly supporting evidence for this claim in this research. Some participants for example referred to absent fathers and the difficulties of mothers being the heads of large families. Rutter (2006, p.179) states that exact figures are not available but she asserts it is a ‘disproportionate number’. Rutter (2006, p.179) writes of ‘unemployment and extreme poverty’ in the community, at the time of writing she suggested an

unemployment figure in excess of 75%. The larger than average family sizes in the community may put additional pressure on strained resources. Rutter (2006, p.179) goes on to link poverty with challenging behaviours in the community and also challenges for students to do well in school.

My findings also show that behaviour could actually be misinterpreted as poor, enforcing stereotypes and playing on unconscious bias. A number of participants explained that behaviours they considered acceptable at home and in the community, such as talking loudly and talking when they choose too, were not acceptable in school. Hemming (2010, p.11) found similar views in her research stating that Somali boys found that sometimes:

> their behaviour was misinterpreted as threatening or anti-social, whereas they saw it as a manifestation of their social/cultural life…

The work of Hemming (2020) very closely links with the work of Demie (2019), and particularly Sewell (1997), who express significant concerns about teacher responses to student behaviour.

This research clearly shows that challenging behaviour is a gendered issue. Both the behaviour data and participant voice expressed concern for boys and young men. The literature presents a number of reasons for this situation. Hemming (2010, p.72) found that ‘there are clear gendered differences in behavioural norms’, with boys being given more freedom and thus opportunity to get in trouble. Hemming (2010, p.85) also expresses a well-documented view that boys, particularly those from ethnic minority backgrounds, ‘face a conflict between living up to a version of masculinity which is not compatible with success at school’ and academic success. This is a theme echoed by Sporton et al. (2007, p.18) who refer to a ‘crisis of masculinity’ in the Somali community. Humpage (2009, p.80) believes that the ‘greater leeway for ambiguity in the young men’s cultural identity had severe consequences’, meaning the loss of defined roles and a crisis of identity has led to challenging behaviours.

Whilst challenging behaviour is well documented, it is not ubiquitous. This research has actually shown a real variation in behaviour across the community

which Shah et al. (2010, p.1110) partially explain. In their research they found 'variations between and within families in terms of how norms and values are operationalised and enforced', including behaviour. There is a link here to capital and possessing information about social norms and available support. In writing about Black boys generally Sewell (2007, p.104) also proffers an explanation. He outlines four ways in which students 'negotiated their schooling'. Firstly, there are 'conformists' who have, as the category suggests, conformed to the 'means and goals' of their schools (Sewell, 2007, p.104). Secondly there are the 'innovators' who accept the 'goals of school but reject the means'. Sewell's (2007, p.109) third category are the 'retreatists' who 'reject the goals and means of school but for whom these are not replaced with a subculture'. The final group, according to Sewell (2007, p.110), are the 'rebels' [who] replaced the goals and means of school with their own agenda'. Sewell's (2007) work allows us to see that Black students respond in different ways to the demands of schooling and other societal pressures, they do not behave in a collective manner.

There have been significant collective efforts to mediate the concerns around poor behaviour in this community. Shah et al. (2010, p.1112) state:

> the presence of dense co-ethnic networks in immigrant communities forms a closed structure and creates a protective barrier for second generation youth in inner-city neighbourhoods.

The Somali community have certainly attempted this and it has been successful for many students, particularly girls; almost all female participants talked of relatives monitoring and supporting them. Somali parents are excellent advocates for their children and are often in dialogue with teachers to support and reinforce positive behaviours. The parents evening attendances are high at our school, with parents keen to build relationships with the school. Some students have however been pulled into gang culture or problematic behaviours, indeed the research of Shah et al. (2010, p.1121) 'highlighted the role of peer groups in creating forms of social capital that work against academic achievement'. Shirdon (2017, p.220) talks of concerns in the community that growing up in the diaspora could be problematic. To address this young people are sent to Somalia in an attempt to control their behaviour.

Dhaqan celis is mentioned by a number of participants of this study including Insiya.

Boakye (2019, p.87) states ‘race is a construct, but the construct is real, and its effects are binding and blinding in equal measure’. This research revealed some very complex issues about race and how Somali students are collectively viewed and supported in school. Indeed, Mohamud and Whitburn (2016, p.118) believe deficit views of Somali students are a real challenge to the community especially as they compound issues with behaviour. The concerns of some students validate this concern, particularly the comments of Yaqoub and Muna. Crozier (2001, p.330) believes:

> the “one size fits all” approach used by schools in their dealings with families mask the complexity of needs, the roles that ethnic minority parents are playing, or the constraints that impede their involvement, and at the heart of this is structural racism.

A view shared by some of the attendees of my parents’ meeting. Whilst students discussed what can be described as structural racism and unconscious bias, there was little mention of direct or overt racism. Mrs Jama felt this was not an issue for the community. This is similar to the research of Hemming (2010, p.80), whose Somali participants did not share anecdotes of overt racism, but structural racism was part of their lived experience. It does however contrast with the work of Rutter (2006, p.179) who ‘cites racial harassment as being a universal experience’ for the Somali community.

In terms of mediation the Somali community are active in school life ensuring that their views are heard and they work closely with Mr Hersi to support their children. As Boakye (2019, p.87) points out however structural racism can be binding and requires greater change than the community can enact on their own. The Somali community, school community and wider society must work collaboratively to address racism in all its forms. The murder of George Floyd occurred in May 2020, during the course of this research in the period of school closure due to the pandemic. This horrific murder, by an American police officer in Minneapolis, incidentally the home of America’s largest Somali community, triggered worldwide protest. Much of the literature in my introduction about race

(Dabiri, 2021, Diangelo 202,1 Eddo- Lodge, 2022, Saad, 2020) was published in the wake of the renewed demands for racial equality. It is hoped that such continued demands bring very real change.

Ramsden and Taket's (2013, p.105) study with Somali refugees in Australia found that 'the feelings of belonging and connection that the Somali community associate with their homeland do not extend to their new community'. To a certain extent that is also true of this study's participants. The complexities of identity were found to be very challenging to many participants, with many fore fronting their Somali identity and discussing feelings of not being British. Berns McGown (1999, p.197) reframes this challenge as a 'renegotiation' of identity. In many ways parallels can be drawn between the Somali community and other minority groups in the UK, for example between Somali boys and those of Afro-Caribbean heritage. In terms of identity however, the Somali community face very unique challenges. They are at once refugees, often passport holders of other European countries, speakers of a language spoken only in their home country, part of a wider Black community, British and Muslim.

Kananen (2019b, p.55) suggests the relationship to Somalia is even more complex for second generation Somalis, than for their parents, and that they are more likely to experience what he terms 'multiple belongings'. This describes feelings of belonging to more than one place and numerous students including Yaqoub and Hawa expressed such views. For second generation young people in the community, whilst they identified as Somali, this identity is learnt rather than developed from growing up in the country. Sporton et al. (2007, p.1) also found Somali children in the diaspora often 'gain their understanding of what it means to be Somali from their families and communities'. They found that 'young people are wary of claiming a British identity'. In this research, the 'British British' comments reflect similar concerns. Abdi (2019, p.28) also defines the '1.5 generation', children who arrived in the UK between the ages of eight and 12 and suggests they face similar challenges. Insiya, who came to the UK aged eight, shared her views of such challenges eloquently in her portrait.

An aspect of mediation to the challenges of belonging and identity seems to be the widespread wearing of Islamic clothing. A number of female participants made links between Somali identity, Islamic identity, clothing and acceptance into the wider Muslim community. Sporton et al. (2007, p.8) wrote that 'following migration to Europe… their [Somalis] faith became an important focus of their lives and identities'. The authors do not however discuss the role Islamic clothing plays in Somali identity, in fact it does not feature in the available literature. This could be explained by the fact a number of participants believed, both abroad and in other UK cities, that the wearing of Islamic dress is not so widespread in the Somali community as members aim to integrate with their non-Muslim neighbours. Older participants often felt compelled to wear an abaya, with a number of participants citing acceptance rather than religious observance, although this is changing for the 1.5 and second generation. A number of younger participants, such as Rahma and Muna, talked of the pressure to wear head scarves. The wearing of Islamic clothing is therefore both a mediator to the challenge of identity and for some a source of further challenge.

Other mediation strategies, to develop feelings of belonging, described by the participants of this research include developing language skills, seeking education and employment outside the community and accessing activities such as karate which allow young people to mix with people from other communities. Students at school often had mixed friendship groups, particularly in the younger years, and some students talked about friendships outside of schools with Asian and White children. Moving away from operating solely in the community space was easier for younger people who had better language skills and often the potential for employment in workspaces in the city centre or further afield. All of these strategies allowed participants to feel part of wider society and to feel they belonged, not only to the Somali community but to Britain. However, this was not to the extent that they would self-identify as British.

Abdi (2019, p.21) states that assimilation takes generations and refers to research which suggests three to four generations. This would explain the degrees to which participants feel part of a wider British community and the experiences of the community in negotiating or mediating the challenges of identity. The first generation seems to have integrated with the Muslim culture of the area, the second is adapting to the culture of wider British society. Both groups holding onto important aspects of their Somali heritage; food, clothing, community and storytelling. The situation is complex, indeed Besteman (2016, p.284), in her extensive work with the Somali community, suggests the Somali identity 'is not a barricaded diaspora identity… rather, it is a constantly evolving identity that morphs and shifts in dialogue with encounters'. Furthermore Kahin (1997, p.63) postulates that the values and cultural norms acquired by young Somalis in school can conflict with what they learn at home and in the community, suggesting aspects of acculturation have been difficult, linking to concerns about behaviour in the community. This is supported by Kruizenga (2010, p.10) who describes a process by which:

> Somali youths are reconstructing national and religious identities that challenge traditional versions of what it means to be a Somali Muslim teen.

Whilst many Somali students and their families speak several languages, the lack of a shared, fluent language presents a challenge for the community, particularly for intergenerational communication and communication outside the community. Many parents are not fluent in English, the Anti-Tribalism Movement estimate 60-70%, and their children are not usually fluent Somali speakers (Anti-Tribalism movement, 2020, p.5). Hatoss (2016, p.152) suggests that the loss of a community's mother tongue can widen the generational gap as families cannot effectively communicate with each other. There is some evidence of this in this research. Language issues are compounded by the fact, as Rutter (2006, p.176) explains, 'the Somali language is highly dialectised, with not all dialects being mutually intelligible'. This therefore presents challenges for communication within the community, as discussed by Rahma in the anecdote about talking to her friends. The Somali dialects, more like distinct languages, also reduce the potential opportunities for groups of friends to chat with each

other at school and practice their Somali. In her research Berns Mcgown (1999, p.204) found that the literary FoK of the Somali community assisted in rapid language acquisition. This does not seem to have been the case in this community with a lack of English language skills still a significant barrier after 30 years in the UK.

Language issues in the community are tackled by education. Many parents have attended English language classes and students practice their Somali at home. Social networks outside the community are sometimes limited however, particularly for women who often do not work, and so opportunities to practice are also limited. Thus, language and verbal communication remain challenges for the community, challenges with significant consequences in terms of accessing training, employment and supporting children.

The poor attainment of some Somali students is a theme frequently written about in the literature, for example in the work of Micklethwait (2013) and Demie et al. (2008). The polarisation seen at my school, where Somali students are often some of the worst performing students but also some of the best, features much less in the literature, if at all; particularly in the needs analysis which focuses on problem solving and therefore is usually deficit in nature. This research has not identified a clear explanation for this pattern, nor did it intend to, but it has revealed a number of pertinent factors. The lack of mainstream capital, the challenges of behaviour, the masculinity crisis, a digital divide, racism (perceived and actual), and the difficulties of language and identity seem significant. In fact, all of the challenges faced by the community, which are currently being mediated with varying degrees of success, culminate in poorer outcomes for some students.

The reasons for under achievement are always complex and multicausal and are especially so in the Somali community. The families which can mediate the challenges more successfully have children who tend to perform better at school. However, some of the factors for underachievement may be out of the control of individual families, for example poor housing or low paid employment.

As mentioned, Abdi (2019, p.30) believes the current position of the community is not their final one and the determination of many in the community to support their young people suggests this is likely to be true. Indeed Besteman (1999, p.236) wrote that the ‘next chapter of Somali cultural production and political history is, of course, unfolding’. As true today as when it was written.

There are parallels between the challenges being faced by this Somali community, other Somali communities nationally and Somali communities globally. Some of the research referenced has described communities in London (Demie, Lewis & McLean, 2007), in Finland (Armila & Kontkanen, 2019), and in the USA (Berns McGown, 1999). The fact that there are a number of commonalties, such as the challenges of language, racism and accessing education, suggests that the refugee experience is not unique to any particular country. The work of Hatoss can be used to demonstrate that the challenges of refugeeism are not unique to the Somali community. Hatoss (2012, 2013, 2016) describes the Sudanese experience in Australia, which in my view shares a number of commonalities with the Somali community. Issues of identity, belonging, racism, language and accessing employment are all mentioned in her research. Commonalties can also be drawn between the Somali community and the global Muslim community living in the West, especially in matters of faith. Islamophobia is still on the rise, according Alajaeera (2022) ‘hate crimes against Muslims in the United States skyrocketed immediately after September 11, 2001, and are still on an upward trend’. All Muslim communities, including Somali ones, share this challenge. There are also commonalities with challenges faced by other groups such as other Black communities, other African communities and other working-class communities. What I think this demonstrates is the intersectional nature of society and the shared challenges experienced by groups at any one time.

6.3 Research question three

What potential practice developments, to support the school's Somali community, emerge from this research?

As Hunter et al. (2013, p.2) also found in their ethnographic work, my findings did 'not lead easily to neat recommendations'. However I have explored a number of possible practice developments which have emerged from the findings. The recommendations which follow are broader in scope than I expected, with the findings suggesting practice developments which would support not only the Somali community but also other minority communities.

This research has been successful in illuminating aspects of my school's Somali community, giving a conduit for student voice and to a lesser extent for parents and staff. This research has also allowed for the exploration of the unknown, developing understandings of practices and challenges within a sector of the school community. Such an approach, ethnographic rather than data based, to interrogate deeply issues in schools could be helpful in enacting long-term change. Qualitative data is rarely collected to explore issues or problem solve, with bodies like the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) promoting randomised controlled trials which do not illuminate complexity in the same way. Schools may also enact change without referring to research or without collecting any evidence or data from that particular setting. Acting on what seems to be the correct approach rather than on evidence. O'Neill and Harindranath (2006, p.45) agree qualitative approaches may be useful for schools to use as starting points for understanding or change. They state:

> research methodologies that create spaces for the voices and images of the subaltern - refugees and asylum seekers - through narrative methods can…produce critical text that may mobilise and create "real" change.

It would be interesting to further explore the potential effectiveness of ethnographic approaches in informing school practice, to determine if such research would yield more usable data for schools. It would be useful to take a current, and quite small-scale school-based issue, such as low attendance from a particular group. A plan to tackle the issue could be created from the available

data. An ethnographic study could then be designed, the idea being to explore and fully understand the issue and see if this would yield a different approach.

The positive role of Mr Hersi was commented on by both students and parents. Having teacher advocates for minority groups within school settings could be beneficial for all such groups, to support and guide students and to liaise with families. One point of contact would enable long term relationships to be developed. Such advocates could work in a similar way to the cultural facilitator in this research, acting to represent a group of students or families. They could also ensure students views are represented in school and be present when policy decisions are being made. Sook (2017, p.48) discusses curriculum, but her writing could equally apply to pastoral work when she states ‘teachers can make efforts to accommodate the differences children bring’. If teacher advocates were local authority-wide, used across MATs or nationally, than collaborative work could be done, sharing good practice across schools to best support groups of students. To help with this it would also be helpful if data were available for all groups as a starting point, as has been mentioned, limited data on Somali students because they fit into the wider Black African group presents challenges.

Community views and knowledge could also be more easily collated to better inform school and classroom practice, if led by teacher advocates. In addition, advocates could lead qualitative research projects with the communities they represent, exploring relevant aspects of community cultural norms and FoK and share these with staff. One method of dissemination is modelled by BRYCS (2013, p.1). They create what they call a ‘backgrounder’ which ‘provides general cultural information, while recognising that every family is unique’. Sections which make up the information include background, culture and religion and family and community. There are also further resources for reading and practice tips. The creation of ‘backgrounders’, as created by BRYCS (2013), to give staff contextual information about the students in their care could be very useful. They could be created jointly by teacher advocates and the communities with which they collaborate. The use of backgrounders could play an important part

in overcoming the ‘disjunction between home and school’ (Crozier, 2001, p.337).

The key practice development emerging from this research is the valuing of FoK in schools. Giovanelli and Mason (2016, p.34) write of such an approach, they state good classroom practice ‘involves the accrual of knowledge and “cultural capital”, and attending to the wealth of knowledge that students bring to the classroom’. Fox (2016, p.642) talks of a move ‘from a deficit to an asset-based paradigm, which recognises a broader range of attributes constituting social and cultural capital’. He suggests work by schools could not only value the FoK of students but also be part of the process of legitimising the FoK of minority groups. A greater understanding and acknowledgement of the skills and knowledge Somali students bring to the classroom would be of great benefit to these students and classrooms more generally. A celebration of their love of reading and/or story-telling, their favourite foods, active global connections and their language skills could be embedded into the curriculum. Fox (2016, p.642) states not only would it be beneficial but in fact ‘necessary to recognise and credentialise the capital’ of all students and by extension their families. Fox is making a key point here about social justice, about treating all students fairly in the classroom.

When developing the FoK approach Esteban-Guitart and Moll (2014, p.43) write that FoK not only ‘capitalises on building on the students’ and the families’ knowledge and experiences’ but uses them as resources in schools or educational settings. There are however significant challenges to valuing alternate capital, particularly balancing this with the demands of public examinations and integrating the FoK of all communities. This is somewhat overlooked in the literature. There are ways to address these challenges. Moll and Gonzalez (2003, p.711) propose teachers could adapt their lessons by choosing literature or case study material which represents a range of student groups. This is a key strategy, one which is fairly straightforward and could be dovetailed with the existing curriculum. An example from my own practice is when teaching British cave art, I share images of prehistoric art from

Somaliland. Moll and Gonzalez (2003, p.711) also suggest using parents as ‘intellectual sources’ for lessons, using the skills and knowledge of parents to enhance lessons. Cremin (2015, p1) states another barrier is that ‘despite the reality of living in this technological age, school and societal conceptions of literacy remain somewhat print-oriented and book bound’. This suggests that teachers should not only consider what they teach in terms of FoK but how they teach it. For Somali students, and others from backgrounds with traditions of oral storytelling, the use of audio books, reading aloud and other similar strategies may play to students’ strengths. Banks (2016, p.100) calls such approaches to teaching ‘equity pedagogy’.

In conjunction with the valuing of capital, work should be done to ‘deconstruct the deficit discourses’ (Roy and Roxas, 2011, p.524) centred on race, community, behaviour and identity. Roy and Roxas (2011, p.521) found in their research that ‘the discourse employed by educators was grounded in a deficit-based paradigm that created missed opportunities for connecting’. More opportunities to build trust with minority groups would help to address such narratives. Opportunities such as parents’ evenings, social events and information evenings would allow staff and parents to meet and build relationships. During the COVID-19 all face to face contact with families and communities stopped. Whilst many schools moved to online conferencing options for parents’ evenings, opportunities to build meaningful relationships stopped. Post COVID it would be really helpful for schools to begin rebuilding the bridges with the communities their schools serve.

There was some evidence of the use of deficit vocabulary in this research, staff using language which perpetuates Somali student stereotypes. Schools should consider more carefully the vocabulary used to describe students and work with staff to ensure deficit comments such as those mentioned by students in this research are avoided. In addition, terms used across the educational landscape could be reviewed for deficit connotations, for example, the term EAL (English as an additional language) could be replaced with ‘multilingual’. Connelly (2020, p.32) suggests this particular exchange, she believes such terms are becoming

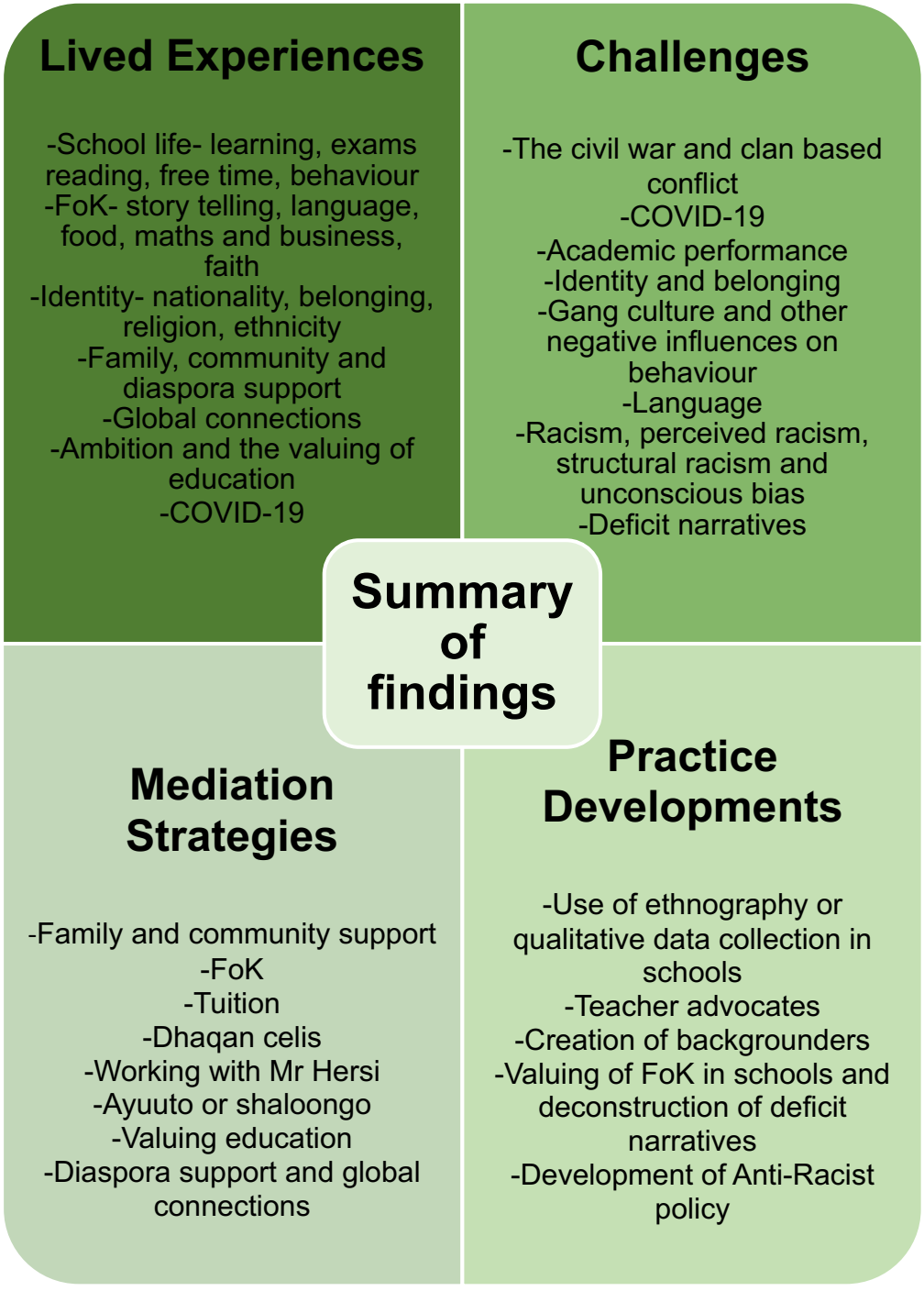
more widespread as they ‘better celebrate diversity and raise the kudos of speaking another language’ and avoid reinforcing a deficit narrative.

Finally, this research highlights the need for the development of anti-racist approaches and policies in schools. Whilst the participants of this study did not share examples of overt racism, the findings suggest structural racism at play, both in community experiences and at school. This is not surprising considering the work of Eddo-Lodge (2022), Diangelo (2021) and Akala (2019) referenced in the setting the scene chapter. It is crucial for schools to be developing or to have this work in place as the effects of any kind of racism in schools can affect both the wellbeing of students and also their attainment.

There is a lot of guidance available to support schools in developing anti-racist approaches but particularly good guidance comes from the National Education Union (NEU, 2021). The NEU (2021, p.5) assert that an anti-racist approach is required as schools should be inclusive, because racism is growing, because ideas about race should be explored and challenged with young people and because schools should be a place for open discussion. The NEU’s (2021) approach provides a clear multi step framework for developing anti racist approaches. Schools should be encouraged to take part in this work and more support should come from local authorities and MAT leadership teams to ensure the work is given due diligence.

Figure 34 shows a summary of the research findings.

Figure 32- Graphic to show a summary of findings



6.4 Concluding remarks

O'Neill and Harindranath (2006, p.43) claim that 'representational failures and injustices inherent in the status quo largely stem from the marginalisation of subaltern voices and alternative biographies and histories'. This research aimed to forefront the voices of my school's Somali community and illuminate their lives. In doing so I think a unique contribution to the literature has been created. There are a limited number of ethnographies written each year, particularly ones which are based on work with ethnic minority groups and written by a serving teacher. None have been published which were created with the Somali community using FoK as a lens, to challenge deficit discourses, and which collected information during a global pandemic. Furthermore, this research contributes to a body of work which is largely London-centric.

The approach taken, a conceptual framework of FoK and Cultural Reproduction Theory with an ethnographic methodology, allowed me to successfully explore my research questions, despite the COVID-19 pandemic restricting the field. The conceptual framework was particularly helpful to explore deficit views and to understand community knowledge. In terms of the methodological approach, Levison and Holland in their research (1996, p.9), found that ethnography:

> problematised the reproductionist formula by showing that students created cultural forms which resisted ideological interpellation, and that schools were not monolithic purveyors of dominant ideologies.

Whilst ethnography did prove to be the correct methodology, I do not think that my findings support the view of Levison and Holland. Dominant capital was for the most part evident in lessons with FoK rarely referred to. Forsey (2006, p.10) agrees and, referencing the work of Levison and Holland (1996, p.9), writes that 'the idea that schools reproduce rather than ameliorate iniquitous social structures offers an important corrective'.

Van Maanen (2010, p.251) states that 'convincing ethnography will always be something of a mess, a mystery, and a miracle'. The COVID-19 pandemic certainly brought some mess to this work. The adaptions I made to the study reflect the complexity of research and in particular the challenges of undertaking

research during a pandemic. The ethnography became more school based and the interviews took a more remote approach. Researching a year in the life in 2019/20 however did allow for a unique event to be charted from a unique perspective, that of the Somali community in a secondary school. This research has also brought about a change in my own understanding, looking at the underperformance of Somali students was a deficit perspective. I now view the academic results of Somali students in the wider context of a community mid-change, a community working to convert their social capital to more mainstream variants and contributing to the wider valuing of their own FoK.

There are three key limitations of this study; the brevity of the thick description due to the word count, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the year in the life and the school centric nature of the research and resulting limited opportunities to work with the cultural facilitator, both due to COVID-19. Whist the research was adapted and amended to meet these challenges they did impact the final piece.

The word count restrictions affected the depth of the thick description (Geertz, 1973) and what could be included; the volume of information collected was significant. Several portraits have therefore been omitted as well as numerous events and anecdotes. The adaptions I made due to the pandemic also increased the word count; the chapter about term three was significantly longer than expected to fully reflect the experiences of students during lockdown. Murchison (2010, p.188) advises assessing the relevant significance of details to know what to include, which is the approach I took. I could have altered the approach to focus on one student or family to reduce the word count, but saw value in the year in the life/portrait approach which gave an overall picture of the school community. I thought more appropriate practice developments could be gleaned from a whole school study. Therefore, I feel that whilst the thesis gives an accurate representation of the year in the life of my school's Somali community, the ethnographic nature of the work required deeper detail in the form of thick description. I underestimated the amount of information that would be collected and how many words it would take to develop my narrative. This

work could be improved by a larger word count to fully include and explore all of the relevant findings. If I were to repeat the work I would ensure that enough space were available to share all that I had found.

This thesis was intended to share a ‘typical’ year which would give insights into the Somali community at key points during the school year. The COVID-19 pandemic prevented the year from running its course and therefore the students typical experience of the summer term was not seen. Key events happen in the summer term such as revision lessons and exams, and seeing students participate in these events would have been insightful. It is true to say that this research captured a challenging and very different summer term but this was not the intention of the work. Key insights which may have supported future students at this time of year were not gained. This work could therefore be improved by repeating the study in another school year, where the students experience the final term.

The COVID-19 pandemic also refocussed the research to be more school centric. This is because I was unable to interview as many parents as I had planned or engage with the community more generally. I thought it was important to place school life within its community context but this was not possible with the restrictions due to the pandemic. The limitations placed on public contact by the pandemic also meant I was unable to fully co-author the research with the cultural facilitator. Mrs Jama played a crucial role in the planning of this research and I was looking forward to her contributions during the analysis of the findings. This meant a reliance on my own interpretations, and whilst the school is my place of work and I know it well, I would have valued her contribution. Whilst I successfully adapted to the challenges of the time the participatory nature of the work was affected. The work could therefore be improved by including more parental interviews and community insights and also by ensuring the cultural facilitator is included in all aspects including the analysis of the findings. If I were to repeat the work the cultural facilitator would play a central role in all aspects.

My third research question focussed on the practical developments or recommendations that schools, teachers and other stakeholders could engage with. As this thesis is the result of a professional doctorate, I felt that offering recommendations was one of the most important aspects of the work. To ensure this was central to the research, not simply something discussed briefly in the conclusion it was the focus of one of my research questions (see chapter six, 6.3). Here I shall provide a brief summary of those recommendations.

An ethnographic approach proved very illuminating in finding out about a group of students in this research, I suggest that more qualitative methods, including ethnographic approaches are used in schools to generate understandings. I also asserted that, as the role of Mr Hersi was acknowledged by many participants as effective, the use of teacher advocates could be useful for minority groups of students within school. Such advocates could advocate for students and lead research with communities. I also believe that curriculum development is essential, especially using FoK to enhance the learning experiences of all students. Finally, I wrote about the need for all schools to develop anti-racism policies in the pursuit of social justice for all students.

This study has opened up a host of further research opportunities because of its original nature and important contribution. There are however a number of further avenues that are of particular interest to me. Issues of racism were not identified as an element to be explored in this research but the comments from parents at the parents' meeting and the year 11 students when discussing behaviour showed their relevance. It would be interesting to change the lens from Bourdieu and FoK to Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995) to explore the issue further. My third research question suggested some potential practice developments and it would be interesting to trial and then evaluate these suggestions, either within my school or in others nationally. Some of the practice developments may have applicability to other communities, such as the use of teacher advocates, and it would be interesting to explore their effect with such communities, for example the Roma community or those of Pakistani heritage. Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the

planned work with the community including the interviewing of more parents and working more closely with the cultural facilitator. It would be interesting to explore this aspect of the research further. I would also like the opportunity to work with additional stakeholders, outside the Somali community but within the field, to understand their views of some of the aspects explored in this research.

Chapter Seven- Publications

Considering the originality and importance of this research, dissemination and publication have been carefully considered. I have ambitions to share several aspects of the research in a number of formats and to several audiences. Funds of Knowledge, an aspect of my conceptual framework, is a generally unknown and therefore underapplied theory in the UK, particularly within education spaces. It would be of great benefit for teachers and academics to have a good understanding of the approach and some practical support for its use in schools. Such knowledge would give schools additional strategies to further social justice. I have a contract of agreement with John Catt Books to write such a book about FoK. My intention is to discuss: FoK as an alternative to deficit paradigms, practical strategies which can be used in schools and examples from my own research to illustrate. Hopefully there will be opportunities to offer CPD sessions to schools once the book has been published.

A key methodological strength of this research is the development of a working relationship with the cultural facilitator to support the research process. There was very little literature to reference when developing this aspect of my work, Hatoss (2012, 2013, 2016) and her work with the Sudanese refugee community in Australia makes up a significant part of the literature. I think an article outlining my work in this area would make an important contribute to this gap in the literature, offering details on the process and providing a UK perspective. I am therefore intending to write a paper about how these relationships are crafted and the benefits which they may bring to researchers. I think this would be of both interest and use. A journal such as the *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* would be an ideal platform for such a piece.

In terms of the findings and the implications for practice I am very keen to share these widely. I have presented aspects of this research at BERA on three previous occasions and would like to present a paper on the complete project. The 2023 BERA conference is being held in Birmingham and I intend to submit an abstract. I am also in contact with other researchers and so there is the

potential for some collaborative work; perhaps a symposium at BERA 2023. I would also like to find a specialist ethnographic publisher who may be interested in publishing my findings. Most publishers seem to be interested in the what has been learnt, the ‘so what?’, rather than the findings themselves. Ethnographies however focus on the findings and so I am hopeful that a publisher with experience with this methodological approach may be interested in publication.

Thus far I have not had much opportunity to network with other ethnographers. I had submitted an abstract to speak at a conference in Gothenburg but it was cancelled due to the COVID19 pandemic. I would like to prepare an abstract for the 2023 Oxford ethnography and Education Conference (OEEC) which is held annually. It would be a good opportunity to focus on the ethnographic aspects of my research. The conference is also linked to the Ethnography and Education Journal and so I am hopeful there may be the opportunity to publish more formally after the conference, should I be accepted to speak.

I would like to ensure that my findings are also accessible to a teacher audience and so intend to submit an abstract to *Impact,* the journal of the Chartered College of Teaching. *Impact* is a monthly journal with each edition focusing on a theme, I think an article describing my research would fit well into an issue about raising attainment, working with ethnic minority groups or working with communities. The *Times Educational Supplement* (TES) also has a teacher readership and publishes a whole range of articles, both academic research-based articles but also more informal and ‘school life’ type pieces. I am currently drafting an article which shares some of the aspects of the year in the life which I think would appeal to the publication’s readership. I am particularly excited about this project as I think, whilst the year in the life can be effectively analysed for meaning, it is actually a great opportunity just to read and enjoy the daily life of a secondary school. In addition, ResearchEd conferences offer teachers the opportunity to share classroom-based research with their peers. I intend to submit an abstract for a forthcoming conference.

As a History teacher, whose initial interest in this research was supporting the attainment of Somali students in History, I am keen to share the applicability of my research with History colleagues. I am a member of the Historical Association and intend to apply to present at their 2023 conference in Harrogate. I would particularly like to focus on FoK in the History classroom. There may also be an opportunity to publish an article in their journal *Teaching History.* The conference would be a particularly interesting platform as it would be appropriate to discuss the historical context of the research, the relatively recent history of East Africa and the Somali diaspora, as well as the results and practical implications of my research.

In recent years History teachers have begun to look for more opportunities to teach aspects of colonialism and to engage with diverse histories in their classrooms. GCSE and A level exam specifications have also been developing to further meet this need, for example all GCSE History boards now offer the option to study Migration as a thematic study. I would very much like to publish some resources for students, studying the GCSE Migration unit, which centre on the Somalia and the Somali community in the UK. The unit runs from circa 800CE to the present day so any resources could look at East Africa, the colonial experience, the civil war and Somali migration and contribution to the UK. Such resources would help busy teachers and help to enhance the current curriculum offer for many schools.

I am particularly keen to engage with the wider Somali community. I am a member of the Anglo-Somali Society, I intend to approach the editor of their journal to publish a piece. I have published in this journal in the initial stages of my research but would be keen to write a summary piece including my findings. The annual AGM also usually includes one or two guest speakers so I will also be enquiring about the possibility of presenting next year.

I also intend to submit an abstract to Bildhaan, an annual, multi-disciplinary journal which publishes articles about Somalia and Somali people. This would present an opportunity to explore the historical nature of my research, allowing

a social history to be presented which is rich in oral histories. It would allow the opportunity to explore colonialism, the events of the civil war and give insights into the complex and impactful experiences of the diaspora.

References

Abdi, C. (2019). The Newest African-Americans?: Somali struggles for belonging. In P. Armila, M. Kananen & Y. Kontkanen (Eds.), *The contexts of diaspora citizenship: Somali communities in Finland and the United States* (pp.19-32). Cham: Springer.

Abdulle, H. (2019). Somali diaspora women and sense of identity and belonging. In P. Armila, M. Kananen & Y. Kontkanen (Eds.), *The contexts of diaspora citizenship: Somali communities in Finland and the United States* (pp.129-149). Cham: Springer.

Adjapong, E. (2017). *Bridging theory and practice: Using Hip-Hop pedagogy as a culturally relevant approach in the urban science classroom.* (Doctoral thesis). Columbia University.

Akala. (2019). Natives: Race and class in the ruins of empire. London: Two Roads.

Aljazeera News. (2022). Decades after 9/11, Muslims battle Islamaphobia in US. Retrieved from https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/11/decades-after-9-11-muslims-battle-islamophobia-in.

The Anti-Tribalism Movement. (2020). *COVID-19 in the Somali community: Urgent briefing for policy makers in the UK.* London: ATM.

Ariele, D., Friedman, V. and Agbaria, K. (2009). The paradox of participation in action research. *Action Research.* 7(3), 263-290.

Armila, P., Kananen, M. & Kontkanen, Y. (2019). *The contexts of diaspora citizenship: Somali communities in Finland and the United States.* Cham: Springer.

Armila, P., & Kontkanen, Y. (2019) Diaspora citizenship: silenced, stigmatized, outlying and campaigning. In P. Armila, M. Kananen and Y. Kontkanen. *The contexts of diaspora citizenship: Somali communities in Finland and the United States*. (pp.151-165). Cham: Springer.

Arnold, M. (1978). *Culture and anarchy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Associated Press. (2017). *Ellison calls on Trump to condemn Minnesota mosque bombing.* Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20170811012356/https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2017/08/09/us/ap-us-minnesota-mosque-explosion-ellison.html

Atkins, L. & Wallace, S. (2012). *Qualitative research in education*. London: SAGE.

Aubrey, K. & Riley, A. (2017). *Understanding and using challenging educational theories.* London: SAGE.

Baldwin, J & Peck, R. (2017). *I am not your Negro.* London: Penguin.

Banks, J. A. (1998). The lives and values of researchers: Implications for educating citizens in a multicultural society. *Educational Researcher, 27(* 7), 4-17.

Banks, J. A. (2016). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and teaching*. New York: Routledge.

Barbour, R. S. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research: A student's guide*. London: SAGE.

BBC News. (2016). *Kenya refugee camps: Somalia president warns against closure.* Retrieved from https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-36380221

BBC News. (2020a). *Coronavirus: The month everything changed*. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/stories-52066956.

BBC News. (2020b). *Coronavirus: Government insists schools should stay open.* Retrieved from https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-51835486.

Becker, H. S. (1971). *Sociological work: Method and substance*. London: Allen Lane/Penguin Press.

Bennett, T., Savage, M., Silva, E., Warde, A., Gayo-Cal, M., & Wright, D. (2009). *Culture, class, distinction.* Oxon: Routledge.

Berns McGown, R. (1999). *Muslims in the diaspora: The Somali communities of London and Toronto.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Besteman, C. (1999). *Unravelling Somalia: Race, violence and the legacy of slavery.* Philadelphia: PENN.

Besteman, C. (2016). *Making refuge: Somali Bantu refugees and Lewistown, Maine.* Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Bhatti, G. (1999). Asian children at home and at school: An ethnographic study. London: Routledge.

Bhatti, G. (2012). Ethnographic and representational styles. In J. Arthur, M. Waring, R. Coe, & L. Hedges (Eds.), *Research methods and methodologies in education* (pp. 80-84). London: SAGE.

Blandford, S. (2017). *Born to fail? Social mobility: A working class view.* Woodbridge: John Catt Educational.

Blumer, H. (1954). What is wrong with social theory? *American Sociological Review, 19*, 3-10.

Boakye, J. (2019). *Black, listed: Black British culture explored.* London: Dialogue Books.

Boeije, H. (2010). *Analysis in qualitative research*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Bourdieu, P. (1974). The school as a conservative force: scholastic and cultural inequalities. In J. Eggleston (Ed.), *Contemporary research in the sociology of education (*pp. 32-46). London: Methuen.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction. In J. Karabel & A.H Halsey (Eds.), *Power and ideology in education* (pp.187-511). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *In other words.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). Understanding. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 13(2), 17-37.

Bourdieu, P. (2007). The forms of capital. In A.R. Sadovnik (Ed.), *Sociology of education: A critical reader* (pp 83-95). New York: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (2010). *The weight of the world: Social suffering in contemporary society.* Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. D. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bowell, T. (1995). *Feminist standpoint theory.* Retrieved from https://iep.utm.edu/fem-stan/

Bradbury, M., & Healy, S. (2010). Endless war: A brief history of the Somali conflict. *Accord: an international review of peace initiatives*, 21, 10-14. Retrieved from https://www.c-r.org/accord/somalia/endless-war-brief-history-somali-conflict

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Thematic analysis: A practical guide. London: SAGE.

British Educational Research Association [BERA]. (2018). *Ethical guidelines for educational research* (4th ed.). London: BERA.

BRYCS (Bridging refugee youth and children's services). (2012). *Refugee families from Somalia.* Washington, DC: Office of Head Start (OHS).

Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods 95th ed.).* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Burke, P. (2005). *History and social theory* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Byrne, B. (2012). Qualitative interviewing. In C. Seale (Ed.), *Researching society and culture*. (pp. 206-226). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Chambers, S. (2019). Somalis in America's heartland: Columbus, Ohio. In P. Armila, M. Kananen & Y. Kontkanen (Eds.), *The contexts of diaspora citizenship: Somali communities in Finland and the United States*. (pp. 89-110). Cham: Springer.

Chase, S. (2005.) Narrative inquiry. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln, (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). London: SAGE.

Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. (Eds). (2010). *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cockburn, C. (2017). *Looking to London: Stories of war, escape and asylum.* London: Pluto Press.

Coe, R., Waring, M., Hedges, L., & Arthur, J. (2017). *Research methods and methodologies in education.* London: SAGE.

Coleman, J.S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology,* 94, 95-120.

Coleman, J.S. (2007). Social capital in the creation of human capital. In A.R. Sadovnik (Ed.), *Sociology of education: A critical reader* (pp. 97-113). New York: Routledge.

Connelly, C. (2020, November 13). How I… help schools to get EAL right. *Times Educational Supplement*, p.32.

Cook, C.J. (1997). *Cultural practices and socioeconomic attainment: the Australian experience.* Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

Cremin, T. (2015). *Researching literacy lives: Building communities between home and school*. Oxon: Routledge.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Creswell, J. W. (2016). *30 essential skills for the qualitative researcher*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Crenshaw, K., Gotanda, N., Peller, G. and Thomas, K. (1995). *Critical Race Theory: The key writings that formed the movement.* New York: Free Press.

Crozier, G. (2001). Excluded parents: The deracialisation of parental involvement. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 4(4), 329-341.

Crozier, G. (2003). Researching Black parents: making sense of the role of research and the researcher. *Qualitative Research*, 3(1), 79-94.

Culhane, D. (2017). Imaging: An introduction. In D. Elliott & D. Culhane (Eds.), *A different kind of ethnography: Imaginative practices and creative methodologies* (pp. 1-22). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Cultural Learning Alliance. (2019). *What is cultural capital?* Retrieved from https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/what-is-cultural-capital/

Dabiri, E. (2021). *What White people can do next: From allyship to coalition.* London: Penguin Books.

Davies, A. (2014). *The Bull and the Red Van: Pakistani-heritage young people in a small city explore the influences upon their educational progress* (Doctoral thesis). The Open University.

Davies, A. (2017). Tradition and transformation: Pakistani-heritage young people explore the influences upon their educational progress. *Race Ethnicity and Education.* DOI:10.1080/13613324.2017.1395320.

Deegan, M. (2011). The Chicago School of Ethnography. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 11-25). London: SAGE.

De Graaf, N.D., De Graaf, P., & Kraaykamp, G. (2000). Parental cultural capital and educational attainment in the Netherlands: A refinement of the cultural capital perspective. *Sociology of Education.* 73 (April), 92-111.

Demie, (2017). *Raising achievement of English as an additional language pupils in schools: Good practice.* London: Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit.

Demie, F. (2018). Raising achievement of black Caribbean pupils: Good practice for developing leadership capacity and workforce diversity in schools. *School Leadership and Management.* 39:1, 5-25.

Demie, F. (2019). Educational inequality: Closing the gap. London: UCL IOE Press.

Demie, F. (2021). The experience of Black Caribbean pupils in school exclusion in England. *Educational Review.* 73:1, 55-70.

Demie, F., Lewis, K., & McLean, C., (2007). *Raising achievement of Somali pupils: Challenges and school responses.* London: Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit.

Demie, F., Lewis, K., & McLean, C., (2008). *Raising achievement of Somali pupils: Good practice in London schools.* London: Lambeth Research and Statistics.

Department for Education. (2014). *The national curriculum in England: framework for key stages 1 to 4.* London: HMSO.

Dey, I. (2004). Grounded theory. In C. Seale, G. Gobo, J. F. Gubrium, & D. Silverman (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice* (pp. 80–93). London: Sage.

Diangelo, R. (2021). Nice Racism: How progressive White people perpetuate racial harm. London: allen lane.

Diriye, A. (2006). *The ticking time bomb: The educational underachievement of Somali children in British schools.* Retrieved from: http://www.hiiraan.com/op/2006/feb/Abdull_Diriye190206_1.htm.

Eddo-Lodge, R. (2022). *Why I'm no longer talking to White people about race.* London: Bloomsbury.

Edwards, R., & Holland, J. (2014). *What is qualitative interviewing?* London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Elliott, D. (2017). Writing. In D. Elliott & D. Culhane (Eds.), *A different kind of ethnography: Imaginative practices and creative methodologies.* (pp. 23-44). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Emerson, R.M., Fretz, R.I. & Shaw, L.L. (2011a). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes* (2nd Ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Emerson, R., Fretz, R, & Shaw, L. (2011b). Participant observation and fieldnotes. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography* (pp.352-368). London: SAGE.

Emond, R. (2006). Ethnographic research methods with children and young people. In S. Greene & D. Hogan (Eds.), *Researching children's experience: Approaches and methods.* London: SAGE.

Erel, U. (2010). Migrating cultural capital: Bourdieu in migration studies. *Sociology*, 44(4): 642-660.

Erel, U. (2018). Day 24, Year of #Mygration: Migrants' creative place making. Retrieved from https://www.open.ac.uk/research/news/migrants-creative-place-making

Esteban-Guitart, M. & Moll, L. C. (2014). Funds of Identity: A new concept based on the Funds of Knowledge approach. *Culture & Psychology, 20(1),* 31-48.

Evans, G. (2006). *Educational failure and working class white children in Britain.* Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Evans, G. (2012). Practising participant observation: an anthropologist's account. *Journal of Organisational Ethnography*, 1(1), 96-106.

Falzon, M. (2009). *Multi-sited ethnography: Theory, praxis and locality in contemporary research.* Farnham: Ashgate.

Fellin, M. (2015). Raising citizens: Parenting education classes and Somali mothers' experiences of childrearing in Canada. *Journal of Social Science Education,* 14(3), 31-42.

The Foreign Office. (2021). *Foreign travel advice: Somalia.* Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/somalia

Forsey, M. (2006). *Challenging the system?: A dramatic tale of neoliberal reform in an Australian high school.* Charlotte: Information Age Publishing.

Forsey, M. (2008). Ethnographic interviewing: from conversation to published text. In G. Walford (Ed.), *How to do educational ethnography (pp. 57-75)*. London: Tufnell Press.

Fox, M. (2016). Challenging the concept of cultural deficit, through a framework of critical based education. *Pedagogy,* 88(5), 638-647.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed: 30th anniversary ed.* New York: Continuum.

Gaventa, J. & Cornwall, A. (2001). Power and knowledge. In P. Reason and H. Bradbuury (Eds.), *Handbook of action research* (pp. 70-80). London: SAGE.

Gee, J. P. (1991). A Linguistic approach to narrative. *Journal of Narrative and Life History,* 1(1), 15-39.

Geertz, C. (1973). *Interpretation of cultures: selected essays.* New York: Basic Books.

Gewirtz, S., Ball, S. J., & Bowe, R. (1995). *Markets, choice, and equity in education.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Gewirtz, S., & Cribb, A. (2009). *Understanding education: A sociological perspective.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gibbs, G. (2013). *Analyzing qualitative data.* Los Angeles: SAGE.

Giovanelli, M. & Mason, J. (2016, December 16). Why you should ditch the canon. *The Times Education Supplement,* p.34-35.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New Brunswick: Aldine Transaction.

Gonzalez, N., Moll, L., Tenery, M., Rivera, A., Rendon, P., Gonzalez, R., & Amanti, C. (2008). In K. Hall, P. Murphy, & J. Soler (Eds.), *Pedagogy and practice: Culture and identities* (pp.115-129). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Goodall, J. (2013). Parental engagement to support children's learning: a six-point model. *School Leadership and Management,* 33(2), 133-150.

Goodall, J., & Montgomery, C. (2014). Parental involvement to parental engagement: a continuum. *Educational Review*, 66(4), 399-410.

Gordon, T., Holland, J., & Lahelma, E. (2011). In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of Ethnography* (pp.188-203). London: SAGE.

Gorski, P. (2016). Rethinking the role of "culture" in educational equity: from cultural competence to equity literacy. *Multicultural Perspectives,* 18(4), 221-226.

Grant, C., & Osanloo, A. (2014). Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research: Creating the blueprint for your house. *Administrative Issues Journal*. 2(4), 12-26.

Grant, R. (2021, May 6). Researching in Covid-era schools. *BERA Blog*. Retrieved from https://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/researching-in-covid-era-schools.

Greene, S. & Hogan, D. (2006). *Researching children's experience: Approaches and methods.* London: SAGE.

Grenfell, M. (2010). Working with habitus and field: the logic of Bourdieu's practice. In E. Silva, & A. Warde (Eds.), *Cultural analysis and Bourdieu's legacy: Settling accounts and developing alternatives.* (pp. 14-27). Oxon: Routledge.

Griffiths, D. (2002). *Somali and Kurdish refugees in London: New identities in the diaspora.* Chippenham: Ashgate.

Groves, M., & Baumber, J. (2008). *Regenerating schools: Leading the transformation of standards and services through community engagement.* London: Network Continuum.

Halcomb, E., & Davidson, P. (2006). Is verbatim transcription of interview data always necessary? *Applied Nursing Research,* 19, 38-42.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2003). *Ethnography: Principles in practice*. London: Routledge.

Hammersley, M. (2018). What is ethnography? Can it survive? Should it? *Ethnography and Education.* 13(1), 1-17.

Hannon, C., Faas, D., & O'Sullivan, K. (2017). Widening the educational capabilities of socio-economically disadvantaged students through a model of social and cultural capital development. *British Educational Research Journal*. 4(6), 1225-1245.

Harding, J. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis from start to finish*. London: SAGE.

Harper, M. (2012). *Getting Somalia Wrong?: Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State (African Arguments)*. London: Zed Books.

Harris, H. (2004). *The Somali Community in the UK: What we know and how we know it.* London: ICAR.

Hassan, N. (2018). *The role of Somali parents in their children's education*. Tolworth: Grosvenor House Publishing.

Hatoss, A. (2012). Multilingualism as Social Capital in the Sudanese-Australian Diaspora: Implications for Policy. In C. Gitsaki & R. Baldauf (Eds.), *The Future of Applied Linguistics: Local and Global Perspectives* (pp. 390-408). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Hatoss, A. (2013). *Displacement, language maintenance and identity: Sudanese refugees in Australia*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin's Publishing.

Hatoss, A. (2016). Capturing the voice of the community. In K. Taylor-Leech & D. Starks (Eds.), *Doing research within communities: Stories and lessons from language and education field research* (pp. 151-159). Oxon: Routledge.

Hatoss, A., & Huijser, H. (2010). Gendered barriers to educational opportunities: Resettlement of Sudanese refugees in Australia. *Gender and Education, 22(*2), 147-160.

Hatoss, A., & Sheely, T. (2009). Language maintenance and identity among Sudanese-Australian refugee-background youth. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 30(2), 127-144.

Heath, S. (2009). *Researching young people's lives*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Hemming, J. (2010). *Understanding East London's Somali communities.* London: Options UK.

Hernández-Hernández, F., & Sancho-Gil, J. M. (2015). A learning process within an education research group: an approach to learning qualitative research methods. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 18(*6), 651-667.

Holliday, A. (2007). *Doing and writing qualitative research.* London: SAGE.

Horst, C. (2008). *Transnational nomads: How Somalis cope with refugee life in the Dadaab camps of Kenya*. New York: Berghahn.

Housee, S. (2016, November). *Speaking from the inside: ethnicity does matter in education.* Paper presented at Researching Diversity in Education Conference, University of Suffolk.

Howell, K. E. (2013). *An introduction to the philosophy of methodology*. London: SAGE.

Humpage, L. (2009). A ‘culturally unsafe’ space? The Somali experience of Christchurch secondary schools. *New Zealand Geographer*, 65, 73-82.

Hunter, G., et al. (2013). An ethnographic portrait of international students. *ISU Ethnography of the University Initiative*, 8, 1-23. Retrieved from https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/eui/8

Imenda, S. (2014). Is there a conceptual difference between theoretical and conceptual frameworks? *Journal of Social Sciences,* 38(2), 185-195.

Iphofen, R. (2013). *Research ethics in ethnography/anthropology*. Brussels: The European Commission.

Iversen, R. (2009). ‘Getting Out’ in Ethnography. *Qualitative Social Work,* 8(1), 9-26.

Jaeger, M. (2010). *Does cultural capital really affect academic achievement?* Aarhus: Centre for Strategic Research in Education.

Jeffrey, B. (2008). Characterising social settings as the basis for qualitative researching ethnography. In G. Walford (Ed.), *How to do educational ethnography (pp.141-164)*. London: Tufnell Press.

Jones, D. (2021, February 26). Capital Punishment. *Times Educational Supplement*, p.26.

Jovés, P., Siqués, C. & Esteban-Guitart, M. (2015). The incorporation of funds of knowledge and funds of identity of students and their families into educational practice. A case study from Catalonia, Spain. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 49, 68-77.

Kahin, M. (1997). *Educating Somali children in Britain.* London: Trentham Books.

Kahin, M., & Wallace, C. (2017). *Somali parents and Schooling in Britain.* London: UCL Press.

Kananen, M. (2019a). Mainstream or margins? How Somalis perceive their status and possibilities in Finnish and American societies. In P. Armila, M. Kananen & Y. Kontkanen (Eds.), *The contexts of diaspora citizenship: Somali communities in Finland and the United States* (pp. 33-51). Cham: Springer.

Kananen, M. (2019b). The call of the homeland: “my relationship to Somalia is difficult to explain”. In P. Armila, M. Kananen & Y. Kontkanen (Eds.), *The contexts of diaspora citizenship: Somali communities in Finland and the United States* (pp. 53-65). Cham: Springer.

Kananen, M., & Haverinen, V. (2019). Facts and figures: Somalis in Finland and in the United States. In P. Armila, M. Kananen & Y. Kontkanen (Eds.), *The contexts of diaspora citizenship: Somali communities in Finland and the United States* (pp. 3-18). Cham: Springer.

Kaplan-Weinger, J., & Ullman, C. (2015). *Methods for the ethnography of communication*. Oxon: Routledge.

Kara, H. (2015). *Creative research methods in the social sciences.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Kearney, J. (2016). Becoming an adopted insider. In K. Taylor-Leech & D. Starks (Eds.), *Doing research within communities: Stories and lessons from language and education field research.* (pp. 142-150). Oxon: Routledge.

Kenny, K. (2013). *Diaspora: A very short introduction.* Oxford: OUP.

Kruizenga, T. (2010). Teaching Somali children: What perceived challenges do Somali students face in the public school system? *International Journal of Education,* 1(1), 2-17.

Kulz, C. (2017). *Factories for learning: Making race, class and inequality in the neoliberal academy.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Kumar, R. (2014). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners (4th ed.).* London: SAGE.

Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2015). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is Critical Race Theory and what's it doing in a *nice* field like education. In G Ladson-Billings and D Gillborn (Eds.), *The RoutledgeFalmer reader in multicultural education* (pp. 49-67). London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate IV, W.F. (1995). Towards a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record,* 97(1), 4-68.

LeCompte, M., & Preissle, J. (1993). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research.* London: Academic Press.

Leonard, E., & Ramsay, G. (2013). *Globalizing Somalia: Multilateral, international, and transnational repercussions of conflict (New directions in terrorism studies)*. London: Bloomsbury.

Levinson, B., and Holland, D. (1996). The cultural production of the educated person: An introduction. In B. Levinson, D. Foley and D. Holland (Eds.), *The cultural production of the educated person: Critical ethnographies of schooling and local practice* (pp. 1-54). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Lewis, I. M. (2011). *Understanding Somalia and Somaliland: Culture, history, society*. London: C Hurst and Co.

Lewis, J. (2021). *Women of the Somali diaspora: Refugees, resilience and rebuilding after conflict.* London: C Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1989). *Fourth Generation Evaluation.* Newbury Park: SAGE.

Lindley, A. (2008). Transnational connections and education in the Somali context. *Journal of East African Studies*. 2 (3), 401-414.

Malinowski, B. (1922). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagos of Melanesian New Guinea.* Oxford: Benediction classics.

Marx, K. (1930). *Capital. Volume 1*. London: J.M. Dent and sons.

McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in women's studies. Retrieved from https://www.collegeart.org/pdf/diversity/white-privilege-and-male-privilege.pdf

McMichael, C. (2003). Narratives of forced migration: Conducting ethnographic research with Somali refugees in Australia. In P. Allotey (Ed.), *The health of refugees: Public health perspectives from crisis to settlement* (pp.185-199). Melbourne: OUP.

Mead, M. (1928). *Coming of age in Samoa.* New York: W Morrow and Co.

Micklethwait, J. (2013, August 17). The road is long. *The Economist. Retrieved from* http://www.economist.com/news/britain/21583710-somalis-fare-much-worse-other-immigrants-what-holds-them-back-road-long.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Mills, D., & Morton, M. (2013). *Ethnography in education*. London: SAGE.

Mohamed, S. (2021, February). *On Things we left behind.* Paper presented at the Anglo-Somali Society AGM, online zoom meeting.

Mohamud, A. & Whitburn, R. (2016). *Doing justice to history: Transforming Black history in secondary schools.* London: IOE Press.

Moll, L. C. (1990). *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Moll, L. C. (1992a). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice,* 31(1), 132-41.

Moll, L. (1992b). Bilingual classroom studies and community analysis: some recent trends. *Educational Researcher, 21*(2), 20-24.

Moll, L. C & Gonzalez, N. (2003). Engaging Life: A funds of knowledge approach to multicultural education. In J.A. Banks, & C.A. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (pp.699-715). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Murchison, J. (2010). *Ethnography essentials.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Murphy, E. & Dingwall, R. (2007). The ethics of ethnography. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of Ethnography* (pp. 339- 351). London: SAGE.

Nasir, N.S., & Saxe, G.G. (2003). Ethnic and academic identities: A cultural practice perspective on emerging tensions and their management in the lives of minority students. *Educational Researcher*, 5(32), 14-18.

Nathan, R. (2006). *My freshman year: What a professor learned by becoming a student.* London: Penguin.

Neve, G., & Unnithan-Kumar, M. (2006) *Critical journeys: The making of anthropologists.* Maidenhead: Ashgate.

Office for National Statistics, ONS. (2015). *Table 1.3: Overseas-born population in the United Kingdom, excluding some residents in communal establishments, by sex, by country of birth, January 2014 to December 2014.* Retrieved from https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration

Ofsted. (2018). *School inspection report.* London: Ofsted.

Ofsted. (2019a). *Ofsted education inspection framework.* Manchester: Ofsted.

Ofsted. (2019b). *School inspection handbook.* Manchester: Ofsted.

Ofqual. (2020). *Exceptional arrangements for exam grading and assessment in 2020: Consultation on specified general qualifications.* London: Ofqual.

Olusoga, D. (2016). *Black and British: A forgotten history.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Omar, Y.S. (2020). Why is the Somali diaspora so badly hit by COVID19? *Journal of the Anglo-Somali Society*, 68, 2-6.

O'Neill, M., & Harindranath, R. (2006) Theorising narratives of exile and belonging: The importance of biography and ethno-mimesis in "understanding" asylum. *Qualitative Sociology Review*. 2(1), 39-53.

Open Society Foundations (OSF). (2014). *Somalis in [a city in the Midlands]; Somalis in European Cities.* New York: Open Society Foundations.

O'Reilly, K. (2012). *Ethnographic methods*. London: Routledge.

Owen, A. (2017). *A year in the life of the Yorkshire shepherdess: 1 husband, 8 children, 1000 sheep...* London: Pan Macmillan.

Peterson, R. (1996). Changing highbrow taste: From snob to omnivore. *American Sociological Review*, 61(5), 900-907.

Pink, S. (2010). *Doing sensory ethnography.* London: SAGE

Pink, S. (2013). *Doing visual ethnography* (3rd ed.). London: SAGE.

Poland, B. (1995). Transcription quality as an aspect of rigor in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*. 1(3), 290-310.

Ramsden, R., & Taket, A. (2013). Social capital and Somali families in Australia. *International Migration and Integration*, 14, 99-117.

Reay, D. (1998). *Class work: Mothers' involvement in their children's primary schooling.* London: UCL Press.

Right to Remain. (2019). *Right to Remain toolkit.* Retrieved from https://righttoremain.org.uk/toolkit/asylumdecision/

Robbins, D. (2019, September). *The Bourdieu paradigm: the origins and evolution of an intellectual social project.* Book launch presentation at Building on Bourdieu in national and international spaces conference, Sheffield Hallam University.

Roble, A., & Rutledge, D. F. (2008). *The Somali diaspora: A journey away*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Roxas, K. (2008). Who dares to dream the American dream? *Multicultural Education*, winter 2008, 2-9.

Roy, L., & Roxas, K. (2011). Whose deficit is this anyhow? Exploring counter-stories of Somali Bantu refugees' experiences in "doing school". *Harvard Educational Review*, 81(3), 521-541.

Rutter, J. (2006). *Refugee children in the UK*. Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press.

Saad, L. (2020). *Me and White supremacy: How to recognise your privilege, combat racism and change the world.* London: Quercus.

Sarroub, L.K. (2010). Discontinuities and differences among Muslim Arab-Americans: Making it at home and school. In M. L. Dantas, & P. C. Manyak, (Eds.), *Home-school connections in a multicultural society: Learning from and with culturally and linguistically diverse families* (pp.76-93). New York: Routledge.

Seale, C. (2012). *Researching society and culture* (3rd ed.). London: SAGE.

Sewell, T. (1997). Black masculinities and schooling: How Black boys survive modern schooling. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Sewell, T. (2007). Loose canons: Exploding the myth of the 'black macho' lad. In G Ladson-Billings and D Gillborn (Eds.), *The RoutledgeFalmer reader in multicultural education* (pp. 103-116). London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Shah, B., Dwyer, C., & Modood, T. (2010). Explaining educational achievement and career aspirations among young British Pakistanis: Mobilizing 'ethnic capital'? *Sociology,* 44(6), 1109-1127.

Shapiro, J. (2005). *1599: A year in the life of William Shakespeare.* London: Faber and Faber.

Shirdon, S. (2017). From Mogadishu to Minneapolis: Raising Somali children in an age of displacement. In A. Gottlieb & J. DeLoache (Eds.), *A world of babies: Imagined childcare guides for eight societies* (2nd ed.). (pp. 191-224). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shire, S. (2008). Transactions with homeland: Remittance. *Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies*, 4, 92-103.

Silva, E. & Warde, A. (2010). *Cultural analysis and Bourdieu's legacy: Settling accounts and developing alternatives.* Oxon: Routledge.

Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analysing talk, text, and interaction*. London: SAGE.

Sjovaag Skeie, S. (2012). Alternative approaches to education for displaced children in Puntland and Somalia. In C. Smith Ellison & A. Smith (Eds.), *Education and internally displaced persons* (pp. 41-60). London: Bloomsbury.

Smith Ellison, C. (2012). Introduction: A global overview of education and IDPs. In C. Smith Ellison and A. Smith (Eds.), *Education and internally displaced persons* (pp. 1-23). London: Bloomsbury.

Sook, J. (2017, September 15) TES talks to… Jung-Sook Lee. *Times Educational Supplement*, p.46.

Spielman, A. (2019). Amanda Spielman at the National Day Nurseries Association. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/amanda-spielman-at-the-national-day-nurseries-association.

Sporton, D., Valentine, G., & Bang Nielsen, K. (2006). Post conflict identities: affiliations and practices of Somali asylum seeker children. *Children's Geographies,* 4(2), 203-217.

Strand, S., et al. (2010). *Drivers and challenges in raising the achievement of pupils from Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish backgrounds.* London: GfK NOP Social Research.

Sullivan, A. (2001). Cultural capital and educational attainment. *Sociology*, 34(4), 893-912.

Sullivan, A. (2002). Bourdieu and education: How useful is Bourdieu for educators? *The Netherlands' Journal of Social Sciences,* 38(2), 144-66.

Swain, J. (2018). The role of informal conversations during fieldwork: Where do the ethical boundaries lie? *Research Intelligence*, 136, 12-13.

Thomas, G. (2013). How to do your research project: A guide for students in education and applied social sciences. London: SAGE.

Tinkler, P. (2013). *Using photographs in social and historical research*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Trondman, M. (2008). Bypass surgery: Rerouting theory to ethnographic study. In G. Walford (Ed.), *How to do educational ethnography (pp.115-140)*. London: Tufnell Press.

The United Nations. (2015). *Table 16: Total migrant stock at mid-year by origin and by major area, region, country or area of destination, 2015. Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin.* California: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The United Nations. (2020). *United Nations assistance mission in Somalia-Human rights.* Retrieved from https://unsom.unmissions.org/human-rights.

The UN Refugee Agency. (2017). *Somalia Situation 2017: Supplementary appeal.* Geneva: UNHCR. Retrieved from: http://www.unhcr.org/591ae0e17.pdf

Van Leeuwen. T., & Jewitt, C. (2001). *Handbook of visual analysis*. London: SAGE.

Van Maanen, J. (2010) A song for my supper: more tales of the field. *Organisational Research Methods.* 13(2), 240-255.

Vigurs, K., & Kara, H. (2016). Participants' productive disruption of a community photo-elicitation project: Improvised methodologies in practice. *International journal of social research methodology*. 20(5), 513-523.

Walford, G. (2008). *How to do educational ethnography*. London: Tufnell Press.

Ward, J., & Spacey, R. (2008). Dare to dream: Learning journeys of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Somali women. Leicester: NIACE.

Waring, M. (2017a). Grounded Theory. In R. Coe, M. Waring, L.V. Hedges, & J Arthur (Eds.), *Research methods & methodologies in education* (pp.100-111*)*. London: SAGE.

Waring, M. (2017b). Finding your theoretical position. In R. Coe, M. Waring, L.V. Hedges, & J Arthur (Eds.), *Research methods & methodologies in education* (pp.100-111). London: SAGE.

Warnock Fernea, E. (1969). *Guests of the sheik: An ethnography of an Iraqi village.* New York: Anchor Books.

Wellard, S., & McKenna, L. (2001). Turning tapes into text: issues surrounding the transcription of interviews. *Contemporary Nurse*, 11(2-3), 180-186.

Willis, P. (1988). *Learning to labour*. Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company.

Winkle-Wagner, R. (2010). *Cultural capital: The promises and pitfalls in educational research.* California: Wiley.

Wolcott, H. (1999). *Ethnography: A way of seeing.* Walnut Creek: Altamira Press.

Wolf, D. (1996). *Feminist dilemmas in fieldwork.* Oxford: Westview.

World Health Organisation (WHO). (2020). *Rolling updates on Coronavirus disease (COVID19).* Retrieved from https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/events-as-they-happen

Wray, A., & Bloomer, A. (2006). *Projects in linguistics: A practical guide to researching language*. London: Hodder Education.

Yin, R. (2016). *Qualitative research from start to finish.* New York: The Guildford Press.

Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A Critical Race Theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity and Education,* 8(1), 69-91.

Appendix

Appendix one- Lesson observation template

Participant Observation Sheet _____

Initial impressions- Physical setting (appearance, sounds, smells)	
Initial impressions- People in the setting	
The lesson activities	
Anything significant or unexpected	
Student descriptions	Student interactions
Other aspects	

Appendix two- Consent form for adults

Dear _____,

As you may know I am the Head of Humanities at Moat Community College where I have worked for 8 years. I am also a research student at Bishop Grosseteste University completing a doctorate (EdD). My university supervisor's name is Dr Phil Wood and his contact email address is philip.wood@bishopg.ac.uk.

I am carrying out some research, independent from my teaching duties, focussed on learning more about the Somali community, so that our school can understand and support your child(ren) better. Thank you for showing an interest in the research.

I would like to meet with you to talk about the foci listed on the next page. The first interview will take approximately 1 hour. In part 5 I would like you to show me some of the key places of importance to you and/or your family in your community e.g. community centre, mosque, shops etc. I will be taking photographs of these spaces, but none of these photographs will include people in them. This will take approximately 45 minutes. The second interview will take approximately 1 hour. This interviews will take place at a time and place that is mutually agreeable to us both and will be conducted in English. I would suggest the meeting room at Moat Community College within school hours.

I will record our conversation and then use what you have told me to write a written portrait of you. This will form part of my thesis which I will submit to my university for marking and feedback.

You and your family will be anonymised when I write up the research and you may choose to withdraw at any time. You can do this by contacting me at alarsen@moat.leicester.sch.uk or by telephoning the school on 0116 262 570.

Thank you, Mrs Annabelle Larsen

Gacaliye _____,

Salaan ka dib,

Waxaa laga yaabaa inaad ogtahey inaan ahey madaxa Tacliinta Isnaanka ee Moat Community College, xagaas oo aan ka shaqeeye muddo 8 sanno ah. Waxaan kale oo aan ahey arday cilmi baaris ah xagga Bishop Grosseteste University, oo aan ka qaadan doono shahaadada Daqtarnimada Waxbarashada (EdD). Kormeeraha Jaamaceyda magaciisa waa Dr Phil Wood, waxaana laga helaa emaailkiisa philip.wood@bishopg.ac.uk.

Waxaan sameynayaa cilmi baaris, oo gaar ka ah shaqadeyda macalimnimada. Cilmi baarista waxey ku saabsan tahey bulshada Soomaaliyeed, sida aan u fahanno, oo aan u taageerno ubadkiina. Waad ku mahadsantahey sidaad u daneysey cilmi baaristaan.

Waxaan jeclaanlahaa inaan kula kulmo sidaan uga hadalno arimaha bartilmaameedka oo aan ku soo koobey bogga tan ku xigta. Wareysiga 1aad waxaay qaadan ilaa iyo 1 saacad. Qabta 5naad waxaan jeclaan lahaa inaad i tustid meelaha muuhim u ah adiga iyo cidaada, sida xarun bulsheed, masaajid, dukaamo, iwm. Meelahaad i tustid sawiro ayaan ka qaadaan, lakiin qof sawir kama qaadi doono. Qeybtaan waxey qaadan ilaa iyo 45 daqiiqo. Wareysiga labaad waxey qaadan ilaa iyo 1 saacad. Wareysiyadaan waxey ka dhici meel iyo wakhti aan labadeena ku heshiino, waxaana kugu wareysan doonaa af Ingiriis. Aniga waxaa ila quman inaan ku kulanno qolka kulansiga (meeting room) ee ku yaalaa Moat Community College, xilliyada ay furanyihiin dugsiyada.

Wareysiga waan duubi, waxaad ii sheegtidna waxaan kaa qori doonaa qeyb qoraal ah oo adiga kugu saabsan. Wareysiga naga dhaxeeyo waxeey qeyb ka noqon qoraalaha cilmi baarista aan jaamacadda u dhiibo, oo aan shaadadaha ku qaato.

Adiga iyo cidaada magacihiina iyo waxa kale ee la idin ku garan karo waan ka qarinaa qoraalka ugu dambeeyo ee cilmi baaristeeda. Xilliga aad rabtid waad ka noqon kartaa cilmibaarista, haddii aadan rabin inaad ka qeyb qaadatid, waxaad ii qortaa fariin alarsen@moat.leicester.sch.uk ama waxaad wici kartaa dugsiga 0116 262 570.

Waad mahadsantahey,

Mrs Annabelle Larsen

Research Schedule- adults			
Part			
1	**Introduction to the research** Explanation of the research, opportunities for questions, permission/ethics forms signed	**1**	**Horudhaca cilmi-baarista (Wareysiga 1)** Sharaxaadda cilmibaarista, fursadaha su'aalaha, foomamka oggolaanshaha / anshaxa ayaa la saxeexay / foomamka anshaxa ayaa la saxeexay
2	**Biographical Details** Name, age, family, employment, education, home, religion, language, hobbies etc.	**2**	**Faahfaahinta taariikh nololeed (Wareysi 1)** Magaca, da'da, qoyska, shaqada, waxbarashada, guriga, diinta, luqadda, hiwaayadaha iwm.
3	**Somalia** Life in Somalia- home, family, childhood, the civil war, cultural values, language	**3**	**Soomaaliya (Wareysiga 1)** Nolosha Soomaaliya- guriga, qoyska, carruurnimada, dagaalka sokeeye, qiyamka dhaqanka, luqadda
4	**Leicester** Life in Leicester- community, work, integration, difficulties/successes, networks	**4**	**Leicester (Wareysiga 1)** Nolosha Leicester - bulshada, shaqada, is dhexgalka, dhibaatooyinka / guulaha, shabakadaha
6	**Funds of Knowledge** Key skills and knowledge in the community	**6**	**Lacagaha Aqoonta (Wareysiga 2)** Xirfadaha muhiimka ah iyo aqoonta bulshada dhexdeeda
7	**Education** Children and schooling, support, barriers, further actions	**7**	**Waxbarashada (Wareysiga 2)** Caruurta iyo iskuulka, taakuleynta, carqalada, talaabooyin dheeri ah

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Title of research project: Exploring hidden colours: A yearlong ethnographic study of a secondary school's Somali community

Cinwaanka sahaminta midabada qarsoon: Sanad-sannadeedka barashada hiddaha iyo dhaqanka ee bulshada Soomaalida ee dugsiga sare

Name of researcher: Mrs Annabelle Larsen

	Yes	No
1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.		

Waxaan xaqiijinayaa inaan aqriyay oo aan fahmay xaashida macluumaadka mashruuca cilmi baarista ee kore isla markaana aan fursad u helay inaan su'aalo weydiiyo.

	Yes	No
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw, without giving any reason.		

Waxaan macno u sameeyaa xaqiiqda ah in kaqeybgalkeygu uu yahay mid iskaa ah oo aan xor u ahay inaan ka baxo, aniga oo aan bixinin wax sabab ah.

	Yes	No
3. I agree to take part in this research project and for the data to be used as the researcher sees fit, including publication and other forms of dissemination as appropriate.		

Waan ku faraxsanahay in aan kaqeyb qaato mashruucan cilmi baarista iyo in xogta loo isticmaalo sida borofisarku u arko mid ku habboon, oo ay ka mid yihiin daabacaad iyo qaabab kale oo faafin sida ku habboon.

Please note that your confidentiality and anonymity cannot be assured if, during the research, it comes to light you are involved in illegal or harmful behaviours which I must disclose to the school safeguarding officer.

Fadlan la soco in sirtaada iyo qarsoonimnaba aan la xaqiijin karin haddii, inta lagu gudajiro cilmi baarista, waxaa kuu soo ifbaxaya inaad ku lug leedahay sharci darro ama dabeecado waxyeelo leh oo ay tahay inaan u shaaciyo sarkaalka ilaalinta dugsiga.

Name:
_____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Researcher:
Mrs Annabelle Larsen
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Appendix three- Consent form for students

Dear Parent/guardian,

As you may know I am the Head of Humanities at Moat Community College where I have worked for 10 years. I am also a research student at Bishop Grosseteste University completing a doctorate (EdD). My university supervisor's name is Dr Phil Wood and his contact email address is philip.wood@bishopg.ac.uk.

I am carrying out some research, independent from my teaching duties, focussed on learning more about the Somali community, so that our school can understand and support your child(ren) better. Thank you for showing an interest in the research.

I would like to meet with your child to talk about the things listed.

The meeting will not take longer than 1 lesson and will take place in H8. I will record the conversation and then use what your child tells me to write a written portrait of them. This will form part of my thesis which I will submit to my university for marking and feedback.

Any information that your child tells me will be anonymised when I write up the research, so that your family will not be identifiable.

You or your child may choose to withdraw from the study by July 2021. You can do this by contacting me at alarsen@moat.leicester.sch.uk
or your child can come and see me in H3.

Thank you, Mrs Annabelle Larsen

Salaan ka dib,

Waxaa laga yaabaa inaad ogtahey inaan ahey madaxa Tacliinta Isnaanka ee Moat Community College, xagaas oo aan ka shaqeeye muddo 10 sanno ah. Waxaan kale oo aan ahey arday cilmi baaris ah xagga Bishop Grosseteste University, oo aan ka qaadan doono shahaadada Daqtarnimada Waxbarashada (EdD). Kormeeraha Jaamaceyda magaciisa waa Dr Phil Wood, waxaana laga helaa emaailkiisa philip.wood@bishopg.ac.uk.

Waxaan sameynayaa cilmi baaris, oo gaar ka ah shaqadeyda macalimnimada. Cilmi baarista waxey ku saabsan tahey bulshada Soomaaliyeed, sida aan u fahanno, oo aan u taageerno ubadkiina. Waad ku mahadsantahey sidaad u daneysey cilmi baaristaan.

Waxaan jeclaan lahaa inaan la kulmo cunuggaaga si aan ugala hadlo waxyaabaha ku qoran.

Kulanku ma qaadan doono wax ka badan 1 cashar wuxuuna ka dhici doonaa H8, qol ku yaal iskuulka. Waan duubi doonaa wadahadalka ka dibna waxaan u adeegsadaa waxa ilmahaagu igu yiraahdo inaan qoro sawir sawir ah oo ka mid ah. Tani waxay qayb ka noqon doontaa waxbarashadayda oo aan u gudbin doono jaamacadeyda si aan u helo calaamad iyo jawaab celin.

Faahfaahin kasta oo ilmahaagu ii sheego waxay noqon doontaa mid sir ah markaan qoro cilmi-baarista, si aan qoyskaaga loo ogaan.
Adiga iyo ilmahaaguba waxaad dooran kartaan inaad ka noqotaan daraasadda Julaay 2021 alarsen@moat.leicester.sch.uk ama ilmahaagu wuu imaan karaa oo i arki karaa H3, qol ku yaal dugsiga.

Waad mahadsantahey, Mrs Annabelle Larsen.

Part	Research Schedule- students
1	**Introduction to the research** Explanation of the research, opportunities for questions, permission/ethics forms signed **Horudhaca cilmi-baarista** Sharaxaadda cilmibaarista, fursadaha su'aalaha, foomamka oggolaanshaha / anshaxa ayaa la saxeexay / foomamka anshaxa ayaa la saxeexay
2	**Biographical Details** Name, age, family, education, home, religion, language, hobbies etc. **Faahfaahinta taariikh nololeed** Magaca, da'da, qoyska, shaqada, waxbarashada, guriga, diinta, luqadda, hiwaayadaha iwm.
3	**Somalia** Knowledge about life in Somalia- food, the civil war, cultural values, customs **Soomaaliya** Nolosha Soomaaliya- guriga, qoyska, carruurnimada, dagaalka sokeeye, qiyamka dhaqanka, luqadda
4	**Leicester** Life in Leicester- community, work, integration, difficulties/successes, networks **Leicester** Nolosha Leicester - bulshada, shaqada, is dhexgalka, dhibaatooyinka / guulaha, shabakadaha
5	**Funds of Knowledge** Key skills and knowledge in the community **Lacagaha Aqoonta** Xirfadaha muhiimka ah iyo aqoonta bulshada dhexdeeda
6	**Education** Experiences at school, support, barriers, further actions **Waxbarashada** Caruurta iyo iskuulka, taakuleynta, carqalada, talaabooyin dheeri ah

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Title of research project: Exploring hidden colours: A yearlong ethnographic study of a secondary school's Somali community

Cinwaanka sahaminta midabada qarsoon: Sanad-sannadeedka barashada hiddaha iyo dhaqanka ee bulshada Soomaalida ee dugsiga sare

Name of researcher: Mrs Annabelle Larsen

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions. Waxaan xaqiijinayaa inaan aqriyay oo aan fahmay xaashida macluumaadka mashruuca cilmi baarista ee kore isla markaana aan fursad u helay inaan su'aalo weydiiyo.

Yes	No

2. I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that they are free withdraw, or I am free to withdraw them without giving any reason. Waxaan macno u sameeyaa xaqiiqda ah in kaqeybgalkeygu uu yahay mid iskaa ah oo aan xor u ahay inaan ka baxo, aniga oo aan bixinin wax sabab ah.

Yes	No

3. I agree for my child to take part in this research project and for the data to be used as the researcher sees fit, including publication and other forms of dissemination as appropriate. Waan ku faraxsanahay in aan kaqeyb qaato mashruucan cilmi baarista iyo in xogta loo isticmaalo sida borofisarku u arko mid ku habboon, oo ay ka mid yihiin daabacaad iyo qaabab kale oo faafin sida ku habboon.

Yes	No

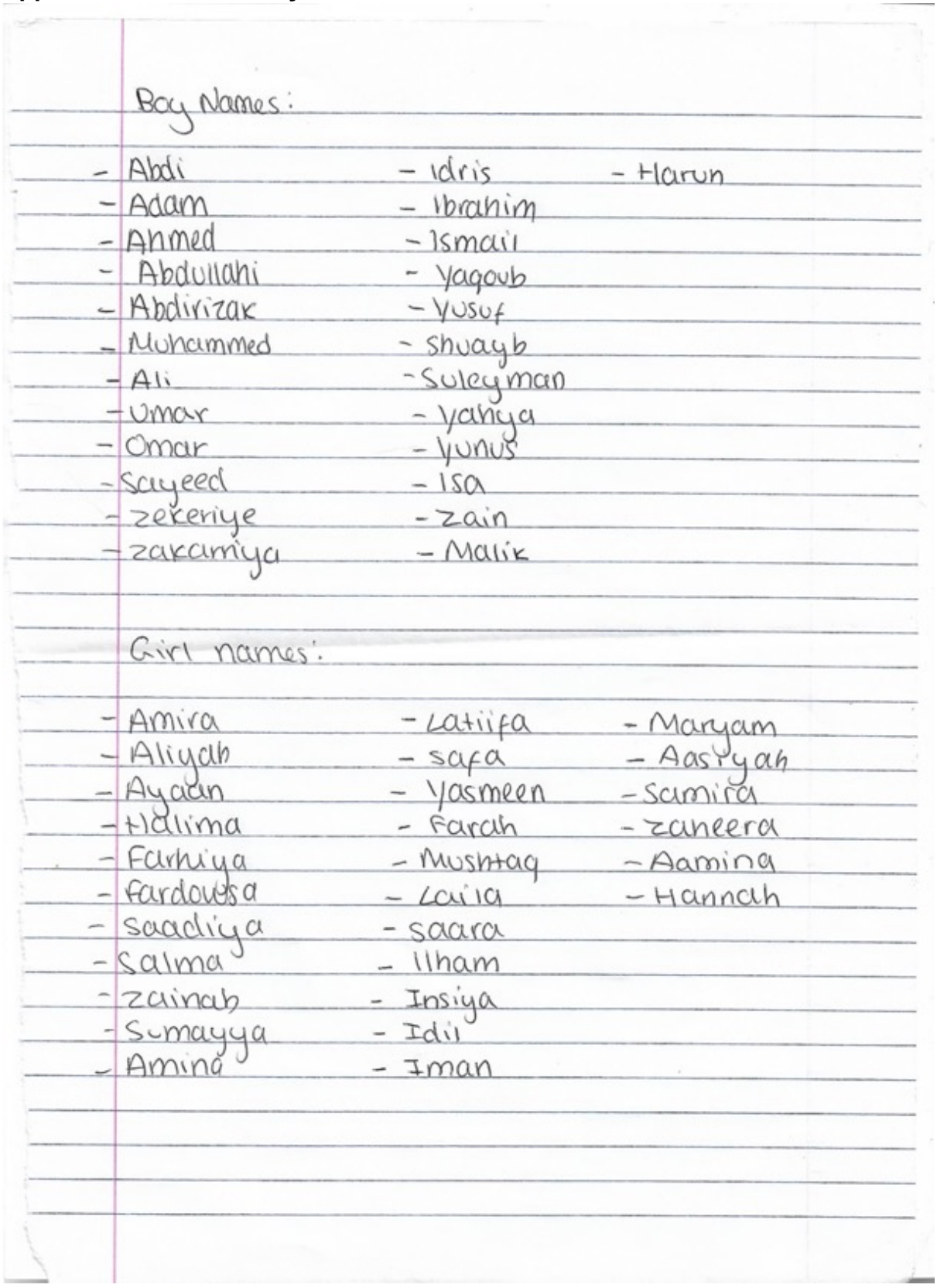
Please note that you child's confidentiality and anonymity cannot be assured if, during theresearch, it comes to light they are involved in illegal or harmful behaviours which I must disclose to the school safeguarding officer.

Fadlan la soco in sirtaada iyo qarsoonimnaba aan la xaqiijin karin haddii, inta lagu gudajiro cilmi baarista, waxaa kuu soo ifbaxaya inaad ku lug leedahay sharci darro ama dabeecado waxyeelo leh oo ay tahay inaan u shaaciyo sarkaalka ilaalinta du

Name of parent: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____
Signature of student: _____

Researcher:
Mrs Annabelle Larsen
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Appendix four- Pseudonyms



Boy Names:

- Abdi
- Adam
- Ahmed
- Abdullahi
- Abdirizak
- Muhammed
- Ali
- Umar
- Omar
- Sayeed
- zekeriye
- zakariya
- Idris
- Ibrahim
- Ismail
- Yaqoub
- Yusuf
- Shuayb
- Suleyman
- Yahya
- Yunus
- Isa
- Zain
- Malik
- Harun

Girl names:

- Amira
- Aliyah
- Ayaan
- Halima
- Farhiya
- Fardousa
- Saadiya
- Salma
- Zainab
- Sumayya
- Amina
- Latiifa
- Safa
- Yasmeen
- Farah
- Mushtaq
- Laila
- Saara
- Ilham
- Insiya
- Idil
- Iman
- Maryam
- Aasiyah
- Samira
- Zaneera
- Aamina
- Hannah

Appendix five- Card of support contacts for interview participants

Contact numbers of support organisations

The Samaritans
Phone: 116 123 (24 hours)
Jo@samaritans.org

Anxiety UK
Phone: 08444 775 774 (Mon-Fri 9:30-17:30)

Shout
Text: 85258

NHS
Your GP

NHS 111
Phone: 111 (24 hours)

Appendix six- Literature map

This literature map, inspired by the work of Creswell (2016), outlines the literature referenced in this study, providing an opportunity at a glance to understand the research which influenced this work. At the top of the map (this page), influencing all aspects, are the two elements of the conceptual framework; cultural capital, deficit models and FoK. There are also more general texts on working with diverse communities. On the second page is literature about the Somali community, texts about methodology and methods and on the third page analytical frameworks, COVID-19 and miscellaneous literature. The most influential texts are underlined.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Literature Map</th></tr>
<tr><td>Cultural capital and deficit models

Arnold- 1978
Aubrey & Riley- 2017
Bennet et al- 2009
Blandford- 2017
<u>Bourdieu- 1974, 1977, 1990, 1996, 2007, 2010</u>
<u>Bourdieu & Wacquant- 1992</u>
Burke- 2005
Coleman- 1988, 2007
Cook- 1997
Cultural Learning Alliance- 2019
De Graaf, De Graaf, Kraaykamp- 2000
Gewirtz, Ball & Bowe- 1995
Gewirtz & Cribb- 2009
Giovanelli & Mason- 2016
Gorski- 2016
Grenfell- 2010
Groves & Baumber- 2008
Hannon, Faas & O'Sullivan- 2017
Jaegar- 2010
Jones- 2021
Levinson & Holland- 1996
Marx- 1930
Nasir & Saxe- 2003
Ofsted- 2019a, 2019b
Reay- 1998
Shah, Dwer & Modood- 2010
Silva & Warde- 2010
Sook- 2017
Spielman -2019
Sullivan- 2001, 2002
Winkle-Wagner- 2010
<u>Yosso- 2005</u></td><td>Funds of Knowledge and strengths-based models

Adjapong- 2017
Connelly- 2020
Cremin- 2015
Esteban-Guitart & Moll- 2014
Fox- 2016
Gonzalez et al- 2008
<u>Moll- 1990, 1992a, 1992b</u>
Moll & Gonzalez- 2003
Peterson- 1996

Working with diverse communities

<u>Banks- 1998, 2016</u>
<u>Bhatti-1999</u>
Crozier- 2001, 2003
Davies- 2014, 2017
Demie- 2018, 2017, 2019, 2021
Erel- 2010, 2018
Freire- 2000
Goodall- 2013
Goodall and Montgomery- 2014
<u>Hatoss- 2012, 2013, 2016</u>
<u>Hatoss & Huijser- 2010</u>
<u>Hatoss & Sheely- 2009</u>
Housee- 2016
Kearney- 2016
O'Neill & Harindranath- 2006
Sarroub- 2010
Sewell- 1997, 2007</td></tr>
</table>

Somalia and the Somali community

Abdi- 2019
Abdulle- 2019
Anti-Tribalism Movement- 2020
Armila, Kananen & Kontkanen- 2019
Armila & Kontkanen- 2019
Associated press- 2017
BBC News- 2016
Berns McGown- 1999
Besteman- 1999, 2016
Bradbury & Healy- 2010
BRYCS- 2012
Chambers- 2019
Cockburn- 2017
Demie, Lewis & McLean- 2007, 2008
Diriye- 2006
Fellin- 2015
Griffiths- 2002
The Foreign Office- 2021
Harper- 2012
Harris- 2004
Hassan- 2018
Hemming- 2010
Horst- 2008
Humpage- 2009
Kahin- 1997
Kahin & Wallace- 2017
Kananen- 2019a and b
Kananen & Haverinen- 2019
Kenny- 2013
Kruizenga- 2010
Leonard & Ramsey- 2013
I. Lewis- 2011
J. Lewis- 2021
Lindley- 2008
McMichael- 2003
Micklethwait- 2013
Mohamed- 2021
Mohamud & Whitburn- 2016
OSF report- 2014
Ramsden & Taket- 2013
Robel & Rutledge- 2008
Roy & Roxas- 2011
Rutter- 2006
Shirdon- 2017
Sjovagg Skeie- 2012
Sporton, Valentine & Bang Nielsen- 2006
Shire- 2008
Strand et al. - 2010
UN Refugee Agency- 2017
Ward & Spacey- 2008

Methodology and methods

Ariele, Friedman and Agbaria- 2009
Atkins & Wallace- 2012
Bhatti- 2012
Boeije- 2010
Bowell- 1995
Bryman- 2016
Byrne- 2012
Chase- 2005
Clifford & Marcus-2010
Coe, Waring, Hedges & Arthur- 2017
Creswell- 2014, 2016
Culhane- 2017
Deegan-2011
Edwards & Holland- 2014
Elliot- 2017
Emerson, Fretz & Shaw- 2011a, 2011b
Emond- 2006
Evans- 2006, 2012
Falzon- 2009
Forsey- 2006, 2008
Gaventa & Cornwall- 2001
Geertz- 1973
Grant & Osanloo- 2014
Gordon, Holland & Lahelma- 2011
Greene & Hogan- 2006
Halcomb & Davidson- 2006
Hammersley- 2018
Hammersley & Atkinson- 2003
Harding- 2013
Heath- 2009
Hernández-Hernández & Sancho-Gil- 2015
Holliday- 2007
Howell- 2013
Hunter et al- 2013
Imenda- 2014
Iphofen- 2009
Iverson- 2009
Jeffrey- 2008
Kaplan-Weinger & Ullman- 2015
Kara- 2015
Kulz- 2017
Kumar- 2005
Kvale & Brinkmann- 2015
LeCompte & Preissle- 1993 Malinowski- 1922
Mead- 1928
Miles, Huberman & Saldaña- 2014
Mills & Morton- 2013
Murchison- 2010
Murphy & Dingwall- 2007
Nathan- 2006
Neve & Unnithan- Kumar- 2006
O'Reilly- 2012
Owen- 2017
Pink- 2010, 2013
Poland- 1995
Robbins- 2019
Seale- 2012
Shapiro- 2005
Swain- 2018
Tinkler- 2013
Thomas- 2013
Trondman- 2008
Van Leeuwen & Jewitt- 2001
Van Maanen- 2010
Vigurs & Kara- 2016
Walford- 2008
Waring- 2017a, 2017b
Warnock Fernea- 1969
Wellard and McKenna- 2001
Willis- 1988
Wolcott- 1999
Wolf- 1996
Yin- 2016

<table>
<tr><td>Miscellaneous

Black History- Olusoga- 2016
Ethical guidelines- BERA- 2018
Exams- Ofqual- 2020
Overseas born population figures- ONS- 2015
National curriculum- DFE- 2014
Refugee statistics- UN- 2015
Refugee status- Right to Remain- 2019
Refugees- Smith Ellison- 2012
School information- Ofsted- 2018</td><td colspan="2">Analytical framework

Barbour- 2013
Becker- 1971
Blumer- 1954
Braun & Clarke- 2022
Dey- 2016
Gee- 1991
Gibbs- 2013
Glaser & Strauss- 1967
Lincoln & Guba- 1985, 1989
Silverman- 2006
Wray & Bloomer- 2006

COVID-19 pandemic

BBC News- 2020a & 2020b
Grant- 2021
Omar- 2020
WHO- 2020</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Race

Akala- 2019
Baldwin and Peck- 2017
Boakye- 2019
Crenshaw et al- 1995
Dabiri- 2021
Diangelo- 2021
Eddo-Lodge- 2022
Ladson-Billings- 2007
Ladson-Billings & Tate- 1995
McIntosh- 1988
Saad- 2020</td></tr>
</table>