EVALUATION OF AN INTERVENTION FOR STUDENT DISAFFECTION USING “MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING” TECHNIQUES.

A dissertation submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MSc in the Faculty of Education

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Thank you to Beth Williamson at Tameside EPS and to Richard Parker from West Suffolk EPS for providing me with an overview of their services’ approaches to Motivational Interviewing. A special thanks to Richard for all the helpful resources.

Finally thanks to Eddie McNamara for his expert help and guidance and for taking an interest in this work.
Abbreviations

The list of abbreviation used in this study is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAMHS</td>
<td>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBT</td>
<td>Cognitive Behavioural Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Discourse Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECP</td>
<td>Division of Educational and Child Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DfEE</td>
<td>Department for Education and Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBD</td>
<td>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Educational Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPiT</td>
<td>Educational Psychologist in Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPS</td>
<td>Educational Psychology Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBP</td>
<td>Individual Behaviour Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALS</td>
<td>Myself as Learner Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MET</td>
<td>Motivational Enhancement Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Motivational Interviewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCP</td>
<td>Personal Construct Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFSSW</td>
<td>Pupil’s Feelings About School and School Work Inventory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIEP</td>
<td>Psychology in Education Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENCO</td>
<td>Special Needs Co-ordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFBT</td>
<td>Solution Focused Brief Therapy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

This study considers the impact of Motivational Interviewing (MI) as an intervention for working with disaffected secondary school pupils. Three mainstream secondary students identified by schools as disaffected were each offered a series of MI sessions. Outcomes were considered through qualitative analysis of discussions and through the use of questionnaires.

Results suggest that in some cases a MI approach may help to promote students’ motivation and a general positive attitude towards school. The question of whether it remains an effective and valuable intervention for schools requires further investigation, possibly in view of a newly defined role for Educational Psychologists (EPs) and the way in which time for such interventions might be allocated.

The implications for the practice of EPs in working with both individual students and at a systems level are deliberated.
CHAPTER ONE - Introduction

1.1 Rationale

1.1.1 Introduction

At this moment in time, the future role of the Educational Psychologist (EP) is a subject of considerable debate and discussion. Among the issues that have been raised is the extent to which EPs currently have the opportunity to practise therapeutic techniques as part of their interventions with individuals and families.

1.1.2 What is a therapeutic intervention?

The term ‘therapy’ is defined in *The Macmillan Dictionary of Psychology* (Sutherland, 1995) as:

> Any treatment for an illness or disorder undertaken with the intention of curing it

While the *Penguin Dictionary of Psychology* (Reber, 1995) presents an equally general definition as:

> An inclusive label for all manner and forms of treatment of disease or disorder

Reber (1995) also defines ‘therapeutic’ as:

> Pertaining to the curative results of treatment

and as:

> Having some curative properties

Indoe (1998a) focuses of the notion of therapy as enhancing a general sense of well being, stating that:

> Therapy is closely bound up in irrational but real notions of happiness, quality of life, healing, making better, making happier.

1.1.3 EPs and therapeutic interventions

Indoe (1998a) states that:

> In educational psychology the term “therapy” is seldom heard.
He also argues that despite the fact that Educational Psychology has its roots in mental health, there is little evidence that EPs today participate in therapeutic work (Indoe 1998b). However, The Professional Practice of Educational Psychologists, a document published by the DECP (DECP, 1998) suggests that the professional practice of EPs should include:

*Intervention work that draws on psychology, when more specialist input is needed, e.g. counselling, cognitive therapies, systemic work with school/family, solution focused brief therapy.*

Within the education system at present, there appear to be conflicting demands. On one hand, there is the continual drive towards standards (as for example detailed in the Government White Paper, *Excellence in Schools* (DfEE, 1997a)) and increasing emphasis on the importance on performance league tables.

At the same time, Government Policy (e.g. DfEE, 1997b, 1998) is promoting inclusive practice, advocating the right of all students to be educated within a mainstream setting. There is also increasing pressure at national level, through the Social Inclusion documentation (DfEE, 1999) to offer support to pupils experiencing a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties and to those who are disaffected with school.

### 1.1.4 Aims of this study

This study aims to consider whether EPs can offer support to disaffected pupils through the use of therapeutic interventions. In contemplating this question, I feel it is important to bear in mind the broader context of the current educational culture discussed above. The priority that LEAs and schools might be able to give to resourcing therapeutic interventions is a matter for consideration. Therapeutic work can be time consuming requiring a substantial amount of EP time. In the pursuit of high educational standards, schools may decide that this type of EP intervention might not be the most profitable option.

### 1.2 Why Motivational Interviewing?

In many adult client-counsellor interactions, the client will have recognised some aspect of their lifestyle that they may perceive to be problematic and may have made a
conscious decision to seek help and advice regarding that particular behaviour. They may have generally actively sought to find someone who they feel will be able to offer them therapeutic support and guidance.

Where referrals are made to EPs, the impetus has often come from the school or occasionally the parents, rather than from the pupil.

The EP’s role here is unusual in that the objective may be focused more on achieving some sort of ‘social control’ than helping the student to address his or her individual needs. The person making the referral may want the student to modify his or her behaviour in some way in order to conform to the expectations and ethos of the school environment.

EPs meet people who haven’t asked to see them. The referral is made where the school raises a concern and the EP allocates time accordingly. Consent is sought from the parents, but at this stage the student usually has little or no involvement in the process.

Where a third party has expressed the concerns, it is questionable whether the pupil will have the motivation to modify their behaviour. They are unlikely to be at the same stage of readiness for change as someone who has made this type of commitment. In the light of this it is debatable how effective therapeutic interventions will be that assume some commitment (or even co-operation) from the client.

The therapeutic technique I aim to consider in this study is Motivational Interviewing (MI). I chose to research MI because unlike some other therapeutic techniques, it doesn’t start from the assumption that the client has a desire to change. I felt that in this respect it might be particularly relevant to working with disaffected pupils in an educational setting where the views the school has about how they would like a particular pupil to modify his or her behaviour might potentially conflict with the personal constructs of the student.

1.3 Overview of dissertation

In researching MI, I will begin by presenting a review of the literature (Chapter 2), discussing the elements of MI that I see as being pertinent to the role of the EP. Out of
this, I will draw what I feel to be the key issues surrounding the use of MI as a therapeutic intervention. I will use these key questions as the basis for planning my methodology, which I will describe fully in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4, 5 and 6 will look at the process and consider the success of the MI interventions in three separate individual cases. Each chapter will contemplate the results from the studies and will discuss the issues arising from these outcomes.

In Chapter 7, I will provide a summary of Chapters 4, 5 and 6, identifying factors of relevance to the MI process across the three cases. Finally, in Chapter 8, I will address these issues in light of the key issues arising from the literature review.
CHAPTER TWO – Review of the literature

2.1 Introduction

In this section, I will provide a brief overview of the background to MI and the other therapeutic interventions. I will then move on to discussing the underlying principles of MI, detailing some of the techniques and strategies that can be used in this approach. Finally, I will consider how this relates to current EP practice, describing some ways in which it is currently being used by Educational Psychology Services (EPSs). I will use this as a basis to outline how I intend to proceed with my MI interventions and to identify the key issues I wish to address during this study.

2.1.1 Background

Rollnick and Miller (1995) describe Motivational Interviewing as:

*a directive, client-centred counselling style for eliciting behaviour change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence*

MI was developed within the field of addictive behaviours for use in medical settings. It was and is based on the premise that clients do not necessarily enter the consultation process in a state of readiness for changing their patterns of drinking, smoking, drug use, exercise or diet.

2.1.2 History

The concept of developing motivation towards change was defined in the Transtheoretical Approach to counseling, pioneered by Prochaska and DiClemente (1982). At this stage they identified that intentional change was a gradual movement through a series of stages and presented a model defining the stages of change. This model is referred to in more detail in Section 2.2.1.

The term *Motivational Interviewing* was first used by Miller (1983) and has since been used mainly in helping clients who are involved in substance abuse or have eating disorders (e.g. Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) and Treasure and Ward (1997)). More
recently, McNamara (1992, 1998) has described how it might be applied in educational settings.

2.1.3 Motivation

Weiner (1992) describes motivation as that which initiates, directs, sustains and stops activity/behaviour. Miller and Rollnick (1991) suggest that in the treatment of addictive behaviours, motivation describes:

*a state of readiness or eagerness to change, which may fluctuate from one time or situation to another*.

Broadley et al (1995) discuss three cognitive constructs, that are particularly relevant to motivation, these being:

- Self-esteem
- Self-efficacy
- Attributional Style

Broadley et al (1995) state that “self esteem relates to an individual’s view of him or herself” although McNamara (1998) suggests caution in such an oversimplified notion, stating that “peoples’ evaluation of themselves can vary according to the frame of reference used”. In other words, an individual’s level of self-esteem is likely to be higher in relation to the activities that he or she is successful at.

Self-efficacy relates to the perceived competence an individual holds about his or her performance in a specific task. Bandura, (1997) states that:

*Perceived self-efficacy is concerned not with the number of skills that you have, but with what you believe you can do with what you have under a variety of circumstances*

It has been suggested that self-efficacy can be more powerful predictor of task performance than actually ability (see for example Pajares and Johnson (1996)).

Attributional theory is closely linked to self-efficacy and relates to the degree of control a person feels he or she has over the outcome of a certain task. Fritz Heider (1958) cited by Myers (1993), who originated attribution theory identified that people tended to
attribute behaviour to either internal causes (e.g., the person’s disposition) or to external causes (e.g., something about the person’s situation).

The extent to which a pupil believes that they are responsible for their own learning is an important in determining what their level of motivation will be. For example Biddle (1997) cites work by DeCharms (1968) who suggests that self determination is a basic human need and that individuals will be “optimally and intrinsically motivated” when they perceive themselves to be in control of their own behaviour.

Motivation can also be ‘intrinsic’ or ‘extrinsic’. Extrinsic motivation involves doing something for some kind of reward or to avoid punishment. Intrinsic motivation relates to doing something because of the value or enjoyment ascribed to a particular task. Myers (1993) describes how people are intrinsically motivated when they do something for no external reward. Miller and Rollnick (1991) cite Deci (1980) in stating that:

\[
\text{Intrinsic motivation is enhanced by the perception that one has freely chosen a course of action, without significant external influence or coercion}
\]

2.1.4 Disaffection

McNamara (1998) defines disaffection in the following way:

\[
\text{This consists of an integrated set of negative attitudes, beliefs and behaviours with respect to the demands of school life generally and with respect to academic domains in particular}
\]

The DfEE guidance on Social Inclusion (DfEE, 1999) identifies that there are many indicators of disaffection from school. These range “from disruptive behaviour to unauthorised absence and prolonged truancy”.

2.1.5 Ambivalence to change

McNamara (1992) highlights how pupils who are the subject of EP referrals may not share the same goals or aspirations as their schools or teachers. He further describes how MI techniques can help to address “the problem of overcoming the lack of pupils’ commitment to change”. This may be achieved by helping to elicit a commitment to address behaviour that is perceived to be causing difficulties.
Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) describe how ambivalence might be addressed in working with people with substance abuse difficulties. They recognise that there is “a conflict between indulgence and restraint” but state that:

The goal of motivational interviewing is to explore this conflict and to encourage patients to express their reasons for concern and arguments for change. The interviewer’s role is simply to elicit this material, thereby building motivation in a more constructive way.

The same notion of ‘conflict’ could be applied to educational settings. Parker (1999) suggests that in some cases pupils might have strong motivation to maintain the behaviour that is considered to be problematic. Examples he provides include:

- Pupils for whom the thought of life without their behaviour (and the peer status it may bring) is unbearable
- Pupils for whom the thought of life ‘alone and unsupported’ – as a ‘boff’ or ‘geek’ or ‘teachers’ pet’ – that is as someone who behaves in class – is appalling, no matter how dreadful the rest of the world considers their behaviour and whatever its likely consequences

He speculates that in such instances, pupils may be in the same position as those, for example, with addictive behaviours. They may maintain their behaviour despite consideration of the longer term impacts to their schooling and ultimately their ‘life chances’.

2.1.6 Individual perspectives

Beaver (1996) highlights how we all have different models of the world, based on our own beliefs, values and sense of personal identity. As we all operate out of our own models of the world our communications will be a reflection of these personal models. These will guide how we behave in different situations.

This idea was central to the work of Kelly (1955) who believed that people are proactive in making sense of the world in which they live in accordance with their own world view.
This relates to the notion of motivation to change described by Parker (1999) (see Section 2.1.4). In a pupil’s world view, it may make sense to maintain a particular behaviour. If this is the case, it will affect their propensity to change.

2.1.7 Counselling skills

Beaver (1996) suggests that rapport-building skills are particularly important in circumstances where psychologists are working with a client who doesn’t ‘own’ the initial concern. McNamara (1998) cites the importance of effective relationship building and advocates the importance of ‘warmth’, ‘empathy’ and ‘genuineness’ central to Rogerian based approaches (Rogers, 1965).

2.1.8 Summary

Motivational Interviewing takes into consideration all these aspects: the possibility that in order to effect a behavioural change, the client needs an opportunity to explore their ambivalence; a non-judgemental approach; the importance of an effective client-counsellor relationship and an appreciation of the student’s world view.

The next section will begin by exploring the theory underpinning MI. It will then move to discussing some of the techniques and approaches that may be used by therapists practising MI.

2.2 The Structure of Motivational Interviewing

McNamara (1998) presents a description of Motivational Interviewing in three sections. These are:

- The Model of the Stages of Change
- The Theory and Goals of Motivational Interviewing
- The Strategies and Techniques used in MI

I will now discuss each of these aspects in turn.
2.2.1 The Model of the Stages of Change

Prochaska and DiClemente (1982) following an analysis of over 150 different psychotherapies proposed a Model of the Stages of Change. The authors describe a series of stages through which people pass when addressing problematic behaviour. The stages are as follows

1. Precontemplation
2. Contemplation
3. Determinism
4. Active Change
5. Maintenance
6. Relapse

These are described slightly more fully in the diagram presented by McNamara (1998) shown overleaf:
2.2.11 Stage One - Precontemplation

At the precontemplative stage the client will very likely have never thought about change. Prochaska and DiClemente (1982) suggest that at this point, that the counsellor should negotiate with, rather than confront the client and that they should exhibit patience because the client may not want to take action. Instead the counsellor should allow the client to explore his or her beliefs about the (in this case drinking) behaviour.

DiClemente (1991) outlines four types of precontemplators. McNamara (1998) also describes these in relation to the educational context.

Reluctant precontemplators do not want to change, through reluctance rather than resistance. They may not be fully aware of the impact of or the facts about the problem. Counselling strategies may focus on raising knowledge, awareness and concern about the problem.
Resigned precontemplators have given up on the prospect of change and may feel overwhelmed by their problem or think that it is too late to do anything about it. The suggested counselling strategy in this case is to heighten feelings of self-efficacy and internal attribution and to explore the barriers to change.

Rationalising precontemplators are able to identify reasons why the problem is not a problem or not a problem for them. The individual may feel they have the answers and the resistance is in the thinking rather than the emotion.

Finally rebellious precontemplators usually come across as hostile and resistant to change. McNamara (1998) suggests that such pupils may be experiencing low esteem incorporating external attributions and low feelings of self-efficacy. DiClemente (1991) suggests that providing choices may be the best way of working with this client group. He also suggests that paradoxical strategies might be helpful, as described by Miller and Rollnick (1991) as part of their chapter on Dealing with Resistance (pages 100-112).

2.2.12 Stage Two - Contemplation

Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) suggest that ambivalence is central to the contemplation phase. McNamara (1998) details how at this stage students may be willing to consider the possibility of change and whether this may be advantageous. DiClemente (1991) suggests that the contemplative stage involves a “risk reward analysis”. He describes how during this phase, clients may be open to receiving information, but may procrastinate over making a decision which will compel them to change.

DiClemente (1991) advises that the contemplation phase might prove to be very frustrating for the counsellor. He advocates that the therapist should recognise that contemplation does not mean commitment and that clients need to have adequate motivational strategies to assist them to move from the contemplation to the determination stage.

Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) suggest that contemplators should be given the opportunity to explore their beliefs about the future and to be able to construct a balance
sheet regarding action they might take. During this phase, they also suggest that the counsellor should regularly summarise the beliefs of the client.

2.2.13 Stage Three – Determinism

At this stage (which may also be referred to as the determination phase) the client is in a position to make a decision about whether he or she wishes to change his or her behaviour. Miller and Rollnick (1991) describe this stage in the following way:

“We think of the determination stage as something like the window of opportunity, which opens for a period of time. If during this time, the person enters into action, the change process continues. If not, the person slips back into contemplation”

McNamara (1998) demonstrates how at this stage a student might choose to exit the model if he or she makes an informed decision to carry on as before. This is considered further in Section 2.5.

DiClemente (1991) suggests that a commitment to change does not mean that change is automatic or that attempts to change will be successful in the long term and stresses that being determined or prepared for action does not mean that all ambivalence is resolved.

Miller and Rollnick (1991) describe ways in which the counsellor might assess the client’s readiness for change (see Chapter 9 on Phase II: Strengthening Commitment to Change). These include setting goals, considering change options and making a plan for change. At this stage the counsellor should also try and elicit commitment from the client. Miller and Rollnick (1991) suggest that dedication to a plan may be enhanced by making it public and that in a medical setting, sharing a plan with staff in the clinic helps to strengthen resolve. They further suggest that the more a client verbalises a plan to others, the more the commitment to change is strengthened.

2.2.14 Stage Four – Action

McNamara (1998) describes the action phase as ‘Implementing the Plan’ suggesting that the strategy for achieving change should be put in place between the end of the session at which the change was agreed and the beginning of the first stage of the action phase.
DiClemente (1991) suggests that helping clients to increase their sense of self-efficacy is important at this stage. This can be achieved by “focusing on their successful activity, reaffirming their decisions and helping them to make intrinsic attributions of success.” These thoughts are echoed by McNamara (1998) who in addition proposes that the student should have an opportunity to make a public commitment to change, ought to receive confirmation and support for their plan and should be given external feedback on how they are progressing. Positive reinforcement and feedback may help to back up commitment to change.

McNamara (1998) advocates the use of an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) at Phase 4 of the Model of Stages of Change.

Within a clinical setting, DiClemente (1991) observes that clients tend to use therapy appointments only as a monitor and may regularly cancel appointments when they realise they are making changes on their own.

**2.2.15 Stage Five – Maintenance**

DiClemente (1991) reports that during the maintenance phase, new behaviour patterns are becoming firmly established and the threat of relapse diminishes over time. McNamara (1998) suggests that during this time the student should have specific active support from the counsellor. He also suggests that programmes for monitoring successful behavioural change are useful at this stage.

McNamara (1998) proposes that this phase might be considered to be a ‘test’ of the success of the intervention programme.

**2.2.16 Stage Six – Relapse**

DiClemente (1991) notes that relapse is possible in both the action and maintenance phases of change and can occur for a variety of reasons. One theory is that this can be due to the idea that the costs of changing the behaviour are not fully realised at the time of determinism to change, and later commitment or self-efficacy wane. He suggests that most relapse does not occur automatically, but takes place gradually after an initial ‘slip’.
In outlining their Menu of Strategies, Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) state:

*Resolutions to change often break down. Make sure the student understands this and does not avoid contact if things go wrong.*

McNamara (1998) supports this idea, suggesting that:

*A major strength of the model is the inclusion of the relapse phase since this is an explicit recognition that clients may relapse and it constitutes a positive and optimistic message that relapse should not be interpreted as “the problem cannot be overcome” but the message that “sometimes a tough problem is not completely overcome at the first attempt”*

### 2.2.17 Assessing the student according to the Model of Stages of Change

In *The Theory and Practice of Eliciting Pupil Motivation: Motivational Interviewing* McNamara (1998) provides in depth guidance about how to make an assessment of where the student would be on the stages of change model according to statements made in discussions (see pages 32 – 34).

### 2.3 The Values, Principles and Goals of Motivational Interviewing

As well as the Model of Stages of Change, there are a series of values and principles that underpin the practice of MI. These will now be outlined briefly.

Treasure and Ward (1997) describe their work in which they use the concept of Motivational Interviewing in the context of anorexia nervosa. They identify the effective elements into a brief intervention, Motivational Enhancement Therapy (MET) which incorporates elements of motivational psychology and behaviour change. These elements can be summarised using the acronym FRAMES

#### Figure 2.3 (i) The elements of MI, summarised by the acronym FRAMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of Personal Responsibility for Change</td>
<td>Direct Advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a Menu of Alternative Treatment Strategies</td>
<td>Rogerian Empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
McNamara (1992, 1998) describes the ‘goals’ of MI within an educational setting. These are shown in Figure 2.3 (ii) below:

**Figure 2.3 (ii) The goals of MI, as described by McNamara (1998)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To increase</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To increase</td>
<td>Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote</td>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote</td>
<td>Internal Attribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote</td>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a great deal of parity between the two models. The importance of Rogerian Empathy (Rogers, 1965) is highlighted by McNamara (1998) in his section on MI techniques.

McNamara (1992) describes the attitudes that need to be demonstrated by the therapist in order to practice MI:

..namely unconditional positive regard, empathy, a non-moralizing attitude and positive expectations

Rollnick and Miller (1995) outline some key points of MI that are again central to the underlying principles. These are listed below:

1. *Motivation to change is elicited from the client, and not imposed from without* – The counsellor shouldn’t rely on coercion, persuasion, constructive confrontation or threats of possible implications (for example, within the school context, exclusion, etc.)

2. *It is the client’s task not the counsellors to resolve his or her ambivalence* – The counsellor should allow client the opportunity to express the contradictory elements of the pros and cons associated with the behaviour.
3. *Direct persuasion is not an effective method for resolving ambivalence* – The counsellor shouldn’t try to be ‘helpful’ by persuading the client about the urgency of the problem and the benefits of change.

4. *The counselling style is generally a quiet and eliciting one* – confrontation and argumentation should be avoided.

5. *The counsellor is directive in helping the client to examine and resolve ambivalence* – MI does not involve training clients in behavioural coping skills although this type of specific skill training can be provided where appropriate. The assumption is that the lack of resolve is the principal obstacle to change.

6. *Readiness to change is not a client trait, but a fluctuating product of interpersonal interaction* - The counsellor should be very responsive to the client’s motivational signs and resistance and denial are seen as feedback to therapist behaviour rather than client traits.

Rollnick and Miller (1995) suggest that “*the therapeutic relationship is more like a partnership or companionship than expert/recipient roles*”. It is important that the counsellor respects the client’s freedom of choice regarding his or her behaviour.

### 2.4 The Strategies and Techniques used in Motivational Interviewing

Within the interview situation, a number of techniques have been described that might be useful in allowing the client to consider the impact of his or her behaviour and to resolve ambivalence. These are described in the following sections.

#### 2.4.1 The Menu of Strategies

Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) provide a ‘Menu of Strategies’ that can be used in a motivational interview. This is shown below in Figure 2.4 (i)

**Figure 2.4 (i) The Menu of Strategies, as described by Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Menu of Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Opening Strategy: lifestyle stresses and substance use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Opening Strategy: health and substance use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. A typical day/session
4. The good things and the bad things
5. Providing information
6. The future and the present
7. Exploring concerns
8. Helping with decision making

Items 1 and 2, relating to the Opening Strategy provide the client with an opportunity to talk about current lifestyle and stresses. The second item relates specifically to the client’s substance use and may involve questions such as “Tell me about your use of...” or “What sort of drinker are you?” (Rollnick and Bell, 1991).

The next item A typical day/session provides the client to provide an account of specific experiences. These can be related to times at which the problem behaviour did or did not happen. For example, a typical questions might be “Can we spend the next ten minutes going through a day in which.... happened/didn’t happen?” (Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992).

The good things and the less good things allows the client to examine some of the pros and cons of maintaining their behaviour. Rollnick and Miller (1995) highlight the importance of allowing the client to express the “contradictory elements of the pros and cons associated with the behaviour”. Rollnick and Bell (1991) suggest that this process allows the interviewer to assess whether the behaviour is then of cause for concern for the client.

Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) point out the importance of describing the “less good things” rather than the “concerns”. They suggest that this allows the client to identify problem areas without feeling that these behaviours are being labelled as problematic.

They further suggest that the next stage of providing information should be dealt with in a sensitive manner, where the counsellor considers the readiness of the client to receive information. Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) advocate asking the permission of the client before offering information to the client. The providing information stage of the
process links to the idea of ‘direct advice’ described by Miller and Rollnick (1991) and to the goal ‘to increase knowledge’ explained by McNamara (1998).

The next item on the ‘Menu of Strategies’, the future and the present is relevant to clients who have expressed some degree of concern about the behaviour in question. This technique allows the client to explore his or her present circumstances as well as eliciting any desire for change. Typically, this could be done through a question such as “How would you like things to be different in the future?”

Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) describe the stage of exploring concerns as the most important of all. This stage involves listening to what the student is saying and intervening at appropriate times to ‘nudge’ the discussions forward and in doing so to raise concerns about behavioural change.

In terms of the final item, Helping with decision making, Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) list the following key principles (see Figure 2.4.(iii)):

**Figure 2.4.(iii) Key principles at the ‘Helping with decision making’ stage**

- Do not rush patients into decision making
- Present options for the future rather than a single course of action
- Describe what other students have done in a similar situation
- Emphasise that “you are the best judge of what will be best for you”
- Provide information in a neutral, non-personal manner
- Failure to reach a decision is not a failed consultation
- Resolutions to change often break down. Make sure the student understands this and does not avoid contact if things go wrong.
- Commitment to change is likely to fluctuate. Expect this to happen and empathise with the student’s predicament.

2.4.2 Active Listening Techniques

McNamara (1992, 1998) draws on active listening techniques in defining strategies for use in MI. He describes how components of humanistic, Rogerian and behavioural counselling techniques have been amalgamated to construct these approaches. As I will
be referring to these techniques when describing the cases, I will now provide a brief
description of the methods, as outlined in The Theory and Practice of Eliciting Pupil
Motivation: Motivational Interviewing (McNamara, 1998).

Both McNamara (1992, 1998) and Parker (1999) provide examples to illustrate how
each of these techniques might be used during discussions with students. As I will be
drawing on examples from the interviews with the individual students in the results
chapters, I will not go into the same amount of detail here.

**Parroting or repeating** involves the counsellor repeating the exact words the client says
whereas **rewording** entails rephrasing their responses using statements not questions.
When **paraphrasing**, the counsellor provides a reply that is meant to establish the
intention and the underlying meaning of the client’s statement. It can be used as a
means of reflecting the client’s thoughts, or of hypothesis testing.

**Summarising** involves the counsellor drawing together remarks from the client into a
concise summary while **structuring** prompts clients to volunteer more information about
the situation they are in.

McNamara (1992, 1998) then moves on to describing what he calls ‘Advanced
Techniques’. These are as follows

- positive restructuring
- special reflections
- provoking
- Columbo technique

**Positive restructuring** refers to the positive interpretation of negative information, for
example, were the client to state: “I skived off two lessons yesterday”, the counsellor
might respond “You went to four lessons yesterday”.

McNamara (1998) discusses four types of special reflections.

1. Reflections of feelings
2. Reflections of conflict
3. Overshooting – exaggerating a client’s statement
4. Undershooting – playing down comments

Reflections of feelings describes a process by which the counsellor attempts to reflect the feelings that underlie statements made by the client. By contrast, reflections of conflict helps the client to identify some of the pros and cons of the behaviour they are describing.

With overshooting the counsellor tries to exaggerate statements made by the client. The aim of this is to enable the client to ‘refine’ their initial statement or possibly to give some indication of the extent to which the area described by the client is a concern. The opposite of this is undershooting when the counsellor deliberately attempts to play down the remarks made by the student in order to elicit a response that more accurately reflects the client’s intensity of feeling towards the issue they have raised.

The technique of provoking involves the counsellor reflecting to the student that he or she has no problems, with the objective being that he or she will actually respond that he or she does have problems. This could be one method that might be considered for moving the pupil from the precontemplative to the contemplative phase in the model of stages described by Prochaska and DiClemente (1982)

The final method, the Columbo Technique, derives its name from the television series ‘Columbo’ starring Peter Falk. Here the counsellor assumes a demeanour of incompetence, which McNamara (1998) suggests might help to counteract client perceptions that the counsellor holds a dominant role in the counsellor-client relationship. A typical prompt would be “I know I’m supposed to help you but I’m not sure what to suggest”.

2.5 Difficulties with Motivational Interviewing

In planning an intervention based on MI techniques, I discovered that entire process did not appear to be clearly defined as a holistic process in any of the literature.
In terms of the actual strategies suggested, the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather, Bell, 1992) provides a clear format for an initial MI interview, but is specifically designed for working with clients who are substance abusers.

Without a background in counselling, I found the range of techniques defined by McNamara (1998) as somewhat difficult to grasp. I also felt that while these provided ways of responding to the student and reflecting their views that I needed to have a process that told me where to start, what questions to ask and what approaches might be suitable.

Cheshire EPS (2000) (see also Section 2.6) identified what they considered to be the Weaknesses of Motivational Interviewing which were as follows:

- Concerns about the “cycle of motivation” and the need to improve on this and consider specific examples
- The assessment tool needs to be extended
- The weakest part of the model appeared to be in the proposed interventions

I also felt that the work of McNamara (1998) and of Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) related predominantly to the early stages of the MI process, in particular, where the client was at the precontemplative or contemplative stage. I was not entirely clear about the EP’s role in the latter stages of the process, working at the action and maintenance phases.

Another question related to how relapse might be dealt with or indeed what might happen at Stage 3 where the client ‘exits’ the model (McNamara, 1998). I wondered about what the outcomes would be for a student who appears to make an active choice in ‘exiting the model’.

2.6 Motivational Interviewing Practices within Educational Psychology Services

As part of my first placement in Cheshire, EPs within the service were given the opportunity to research therapeutic methods for use in schools. Teams of EPs researched Personal Construct Psychology (PCP), Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) and Motivational Interviewing (MI)
respectively. The eventual aim was that they would produce a training pack that would assist members of the team in using the approaches within school settings.

It is perhaps significant that whilst the three other packs were written by March 2000, work on the MI pack was ongoing at the time I began this study. This is despite a big commitment in terms of time and application on the part of the EPs involved in producing the MI information. In terms of a process or even as something that EPs can just ‘pick up and use’ MI appears to be far less defined than the other areas (PCP, CBT, SFBT). The outcomes of the work carried out by Cheshire EPS are considered further in Section 2.7.

Tameside EPS (1999) have incorporated MI techniques into the service approach. The outline of their Structure for Assessment of Stage in Change Cycle describes a process that draws on SFBT techniques including, problem free talk, scaling questions and goal setting. The service also has included a section in some individual assessment reports that details ‘Motivational Interviewing Outcomes’. This again draws on the principles of solution focused approaches, within written communication. (see for example Johal-Smith and Stephenson (2000)).

Suffolk EPS (see Parker, 1999) have incorporated MI techniques (based largely on the work of McNamara, 1998) into a range of cognitive approaches to behavioural management that can be offered to help support schools, teachers and individual pupils.

2.7 The Role of the EP and Motivational Interviewing

The difficulties that Cheshire EPS experienced in producing such a ‘guide’ for EPs mirrored my own difficulties in trying to establish just how I could conduct an MI session in procedural terms. I felt that there was a lack of clarity surrounding the use of MI in schools, particularly for the inexperienced practitioner.

I felt that the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell) was an interesting approach, but one that had its roots firmly in working with clients with addictive behaviours. I found no literature detailing how effective it might be for working in an educational, rather than a clinical setting. I felt that most of the behaviours it was
considering were very much ‘within client’. In the light of the DECP framework of assessment (DECP, 1998), I recognised the need to investigate how systems and/or environmental factors also affected pupils’ reactions to school.

I felt that the MI booklet produced by McNamara (1998) provided comprehensive guidance on describing the Stages of Changes model (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982) and in detailing how professionals might use the statements made by pupils to assess at what stage of the model pupils were at. I was less comfortable about how I might use the MI techniques described by McNamara (1998). I felt that the active listening and selective active listening techniques described would require an opportunity for practice and familiarisation. In order to use many of the strategies outlined, the EP would have to be relatively confident in understanding the ideas, because they would have to very much think on their feet.

In trying to address the issue of how EPs might use an MI approach in schools the following ‘Intervention Cycle, (Figure 2.7(i) overleaf) was developed by Cheshire EPS (Cheshire EPS, 2000). The aim of this model is to ‘map’ techniques and procedures used by EPs onto the model described by Prochaska and DiClemente (1982). For example, at the precontemplative stage in addition to the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992) and the MI Strategies detailed by McNamara (1998) it was felt that it would be appropriate for EPs to draw on other methods. These include Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), SFBT and PCP techniques.
Figure 2.7 (i) Intervention Cycle for MI produced by Cheshire EPS

It was felt that EP intervention would be key at the first three phases of the model of change: precontemplative, contemplative and determination. After that, it was likely that the school would assume ownership of the intervention and that the Action and
Maintenance phases (Stages 4 and 5) would incorporate some sort of behaviour monitoring programme. There would be an assumption at this point that the role of ‘counsellor’ or ‘mentor’ would be handed over to a key member of staff, who would take responsibility for providing the specific active support described by McNamara (1998).

In the event of relapse (Stage 6) Cheshire EPS suggested that once again the EP might become involved with the student.

The Cheshire model suggests incorporating the use of approaches from other paradigms, predominantly PCP and SFBT. I will briefly outline the use of some of these other techniques which will later be referred to during the course of the study.

2.8 Additional techniques from other paradigms

2.8.1 PCP techniques

2.8.11 Building rapport

Rollnick and Bell (1991) suggest that spending 5-10 minutes rapport building not only serves to build up trust and empathy but can provide a “way in” to discussing areas of difficulty. While they suggest choosing an area of interest to the client (possibly linked, in this case, to their substance abuse). I felt PCP techniques might be an appropriate (and non-threatening) way to build rapport during early conversations with the students.

The three techniques I chose are described in Section 2.8.12 – 2.8.14.

2.8.12 Self-characterisation

The self-characterisation technique is described by Kelly (1955). This method asks the person to provide a perspective of their own life from the point of view of a third party. I adapted the original script provided by Kelly (1955) in order to try and make it more pertinent to the students in this study. The wording I used was as follows:

I want you to describe [student’s name] just as if he/she were the leading character in a film. Describe [student’s name] as if the film script had been written by someone who knew him/her very well, perhaps better than anyone ever could really know him/her and
who was fond of him/her. Talk about [student’s name] in the third person. For example, start by saying, ‘[student’s name] is…’

2.8.13 Triadic method of eliciting bipolar constructs

This activity provides the student with the opportunity to produce a number of bipolar constructs. These are elicited using the triadic method, as follows.

To begin with the pupil is asked to write down on separate pieces of paper, the name of a person know to them who matches each of the following descriptions.

1. Someone you trust
2. Someone you don’t trust
3. Someone who has supported you
4. Someone who has not supported you
5. Someone you like
6. Someone you do not like
7. Someone who is like you
8. Someone who is not like you
9. Someone you would like to be
10. Someone you would not like to be

Three of the names are then selected at random. The student is asked:

“How are two of these alike and the other not alike?”

The bipolar responses are then recorded and the activity is then repeated until several sets of constructs have been elicited.

2.8.14 The self-description grid

Beaver (1996) describes this technique. It involves transferring the constructs elicited using the triadic method and plotting them on to a self-description grid (refer to Beaver, 1996. Page 97). In this way, the student is describing him or herself in relation to these constructs. Individuals known to the student (e.g. family and friends) can also be plotted onto this matrix.
2.8.2 Solution Focused Brief Therapy techniques

The technique of Solution Focused Brief Therapy was pioneered by Steve de Shazer (de Shazer, 1985).

George, Iveson and Ratner (1999) describe SFBT as:

..a shift from problem-dominated talk, thinking and description to solution-orientated talk, thinking and description

While Redpath and Harker (1998) note that it constitutes

The move away from problem description and specification towards the identification of goals and the generation of solution patterns could be seen as another fruitful paradigm shift with educational psychology

I will now provide a brief description of some of the SFBT techniques that I felt would be most applicable to an MI framework.

2.8.21 Goal Setting

George, Iveson and Ratner (1990) describe the setting of goals as part of a SFBT approach. I felt that this was a particular helpful technique to use at Phases 2 and 3 of the Model for Change described by Prochaska and DiClemente (1982). The method I used involved getting to the students to consider all the ways in which a particular behaviour could be modified and then to decide whether or not these statements could form ‘realistic’ or ‘unrealistic’ goals.

2.8.22 Miracle question

Berg (1991) describes the use of the ‘miracle question’ technique. Here the client is asked to imagine that a miracle has happened and the problems in his or her life have been solved.

Berg (1991) suggests that this enables the client to form a powerful vision of what life might be like without the problem and might also see that there is potential for lifestyle change.

2.8.23 Scaling questions
George, Iveson and Ratner (1999) suggest that these may be used to assess the student’s wish to change and commitment to change.

The questions are as follows:

“Wish to change (motivation) scale

On a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 representing you, being truthful, not being at all bothered about the way that things are and 10 representing you knowing that this is the most significant thing facing you at the moment which has got to change, where are you at the moment?

Commitment scale

On a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 representing you knowing that you not be willing to do anything different to resolve this situation and 10 knowing that you would do whatever it takes to sort this out, where do you see yourself right now?

2.9 Summary of literature

The underpinning principle of MI is that it doesn’t assume the client has a desire to change, but instead tries to enhance his or her motivation to effect a change in a behaviour that may seen by other parties as problematic. This might make it an appropriate technique for EPs working with pupils who have not asked to see them and have not expressed or demonstrated a desire to change.

The literature details a variety of supporting values, goals and techniques and strategies that can be used when using a MI approach. The diversity of approaches appears to be due to the fact that MI has its roots in medical and clinical settings and has since been practised in different environments, including educational contexts, using a range of different methods.

There seems to be no available case based research to show how MI approaches might be used in schools or to indicate how successful the method might be. As a result, EPs are interpreting the concept of MI in different ways and there is considerable variation in the way MI is used by Educational Psychology Services. At this stage it does not seem to be a process that can easily be accessed by practising EPs.

Consideration of some of the issues has given rise to five key questions:
• Can Motivational Interviewing effect a change in disaffected secondary students’ views of school?
• Can Motivational Interviewing enhance the self-esteem, self-efficacy and internal attribution of these students?
• Which Motivational Interviewing strategies and techniques are particularly useful in working with secondary age students?
• To what extent do schools see Motivational Interviewing techniques as of appropriate responses to some kinds of case referrals for individual students?
• How realistic an approach for EPs is Motivational Interviewing?
CHAPTER THREE - Methodology

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Aims of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate the use of MI techniques in working with upper secondary age pupils experiencing disaffection with their schooling.

In considering this question, this study will attempt to assess whether or not MI techniques are helpful to EPs working with disaffected students. I intend to investigate this question by gathering both quantitative and qualitative information.

3.1.2 Research questions

The experimental design will attempt to address the key questions arising from the review of literature that were presented and the end of Section 2.9. It will first consider how successful a MI intervention might be in effecting a change in the views held about school by disaffected secondary school pupils. At the same time, it will aim to investigate whether such an intervention can help to promote self-esteem, self-efficacy and the internal attribution of these students – all key factors in determining their level of motivation (See Section 2.1.3).

During the process, I will be using a variety of MI techniques and strategies in order to investigate which might be the most useful methods in working with disaffected secondary school pupils.

I will also include within my methodology procedures that will help me to assess to what extent MI interventions have been successful in addressing the needs of the school’s referral. Finally I will take a broad overview of the data collected when considering the final question “How realistic an approach for EPs is Motivational Interviewing?”.
3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Rationale

Robson (1995) describes how in conducting ‘real world’ research, two models of enquiry may be used. The positivist or quantitative approach says that you should collect all the data and then analyse it. The second approach, is qualitative and has been described as interpretative, ethnographic and also constructivist. This line of enquiry has data collection and analysis intertwined. Within the field of educational psychology these approaches have been referred to as ‘old paradigm’ and new paradigm’ respectively (e.g Lunt, 1998).

This study will draw on both qualitative and quantitative methods. This is in line with the thinking of Norwich (1998) who argues that EPs should be open to a range of different methodologies.

In considering my methodological approach to researching the Evaluation of an Intervention for Student Disaffection using “Motivational Interviewing” techniques I intend to begin by discussing how I might proceed in considering the key questions outlined above.

3.2.2 A description of the study

This study was based on the collection of the following data:

- Pre and post intervention semi-structured interviews with the teacher making the referral (not transcripted)
- Pre and post intervention administration of the The Myself-As-Learner-Scale (MALS) and Pupils’ Feelings about School Work Inventory (PFSSW) see (Section 3.2.5)
- Fifteen individual interviews which yielded about 9 hours of taped discussion
- Two joint consultation interviews which yielded about one hour of taped discussion
- A final evaluation form completed by the teacher making the referral which asked for comments regarding to what extent the intervention had helped the students and for their comments regarding the MI process
3.2.3 Subjects

The study involved four Year 10 pupils from two high schools. Both of the schools were situated within areas of high socio-economic status.

One male and one female student were selected by each of the schools. The criteria was that the students were pupils experiencing disaffection from school and that this was seen to be their most significant area of difficulty as perceived by the schools.

Initially I asked that schools might select pupils perceived to be of average ability where possible. This was chiefly because my intention was to investigate how appropriate the model was for pupils with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) rather than Learning Difficulties. However, the students selected by the schools actually represented a wide ability range.

3.2.4 Seeking parental consent

The students and their families were contacted via a letter (shown in Appendix 3.1). This told them that the intervention work would form part of a research project and that the techniques used “may help students to identify any areas of difficulty which they might be experiencing in school and to assist them to find ways of overcoming these worries and concerns”. The term ‘Motivational Interviewing’ was not used during this correspondence, as it I felt the term might create expectations surrounding the process that could impact on the eventual outcomes.

3.2.5 Baseline assessment

In order to establish a baseline representation of the students’ views in relation to their general attitude towards school and school work as well as their overall motivation, self-efficacy and self-image, two scales were administered from the Psychology in Education Portfolio (Frederickson and Cameron, 1999). These were intended to assess the students’ motivation and general attitude to school at the beginning of the process. The inventories used to measure these characteristics had been designed and standardised for use with pupils of the appropriate age group.
The Myself-As-Learner-Scale (MALS), devised by Burden (1998) is a self-administered inventory that considers the pupil’s academic self-concept. It consists of 20 items that are rated by students using a Likert scale. The questionnaire is suitable for children in the 9-16 years age range, although it should be noted that most of the standardisation sample involved pupils in Years 7 and 8.

The Pupils’ Feelings about School Work Inventory (PFSSW) was compiled by Entwistle and Kozeki and Tait (1985). It consists of 120 items rated on a five-point scale that enable the administrator to develop an understanding of the student’s motivation. The inventory consists of two sections, Part A and Part B, that the authors suggest should be administered at different times. Part A measures the pupil’s motivational style, using three motivational domains while Part B considers the child’s study orientation.

The answers given by the students were not used to inform the approach used in future Motivational Interviewing sessions. However, it is possible that they could be used prior to an initial session to provide an EP with important information about the student’s attitudes and levels of motivation and to help them to identify potential areas of difficulty.

At the end of the MI sessions, the same inventory was administered to the pupils (see Section 3.2.10). The purpose of administering these measures was to provide a pre and post Motivational Interviewing measure of the students’ academic self-concept and motivation and to investigate any shift in attitude.

It was hoped that the two sets of questionnaires might provide data that could be analysed quantitatively in order to assess whether or not MI techniques had been successful in effecting a change in the pupils’ views of school.

3.2.6 Teacher Interviews
Prior to the first Motivational Interviewing session I conducted interviews with the member of staff making the referral. Cohen and Manion (1994) illustrate the relative advantages and disadvantages of interview techniques compared to the questionnaire suggesting that while they allow for greater depth of enquiry they are more prone to bias and subjectivity. In view of this, I chose to use a semi-structured interviewing technique in these meetings. The interview was based on a format described by Robson (1995) and the structure used in the interview is attached as Appendix 3.2.

### 3.2.7 Monitoring behaviour

At the end of the teacher interview, I asked the member of staff concerned to identify an area or areas that were seen by the student or school as problematic. During the study, I hoped that the teacher bringing the referral might make informal notes regarding the pupil’s behaviour, specific to these expressed concerns.

Although areas of concern for each of the students were identified, this method wasn’t actually successful in providing useful information about the pupil. The reasons for this are discussed further in Section 3.3.26.

### 3.2.8 Final evaluation forms

Partly because of the lack of information offered by the process of monitoring behaviour (Section 3.2.7), a final evaluation form was constructed and this is attached as Appendix 3.3. The person who had initially made the referral completed a form for each individual student.

The purpose of this form was to assess the views of the teachers who had made the referral, regarding the extent to which they felt that the MI intervention had been beneficial to the student. The questionnaire focused particularly on the effect it might have had on their general attitude to school, self-esteem, self-efficacy and level of internal attribution.
It also asked for feedback relating to what extent MI techniques might be successful in meeting the needs of the school’s referral and to whether schools felt this approach might be an effective use of EP time.

3.2.9 Motivational Interviewing Sessions

Each student was offered five MI sessions and was told that these would each last approximately one hour. The meetings were conducted over a five-week period, with the intention being that the first and last meetings would be introductory and closing sessions, respectively. Each of the sessions was transcripted and following each meeting, a plan was drawn up to outline the structure of the next session.

During the interviews, I used the Model of Stages of Change (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982) to enable a qualitative assessment of how the students’ views towards school might be shifting. In drawing conclusions it would be expected that movement between phases of change, determined by the statements made by pupils during MI sessions, would be representative of some sort of change in perception with regard to specific aspects of school life. Confirmation of a change in attitude or views towards school would be suggested through the pupil demonstrating an observable behavioural change.

3.2.10 Motivational Interviewing Techniques used

In approaching the sessions, my frame of reference was the Model of the Stages of Change (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982) incorporating ideas from the Cheshire model (see Section 2.7) as well as the goals of MI described by McNamara (1998). I used ideas from the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992) and from the MI techniques applied to an educational context described by McNamara (1998) as well as the PCP and SBFT methods described in the literature review.

3.2.11 Final questionnaires and teacher interviews

At the end of the five sessions, the pupils were given the chance to complete the Myself-As-Learner-Scale (MALS) and the Pupils' Feelings about School Work
Inventory (PFSSW), the inventories provided prior to the Motivational Interviewing sessions. Quantitative analysis of the before and after responses was conducted to find out if there had been a shift in the students’ attitude towards school, academic self-concept and motivation.

At this point, the teachers involved were also asked for their general view of both the pupil’s current behaviour and of the overall process and presented with the evaluation forms for completion.

3.3 Critique of the method

3.3.1 Foreseen difficulties

3.3.11 Action research

Robson (1995) cites Rapoport (1970) who highlighted the dual nature of action research, which:

> aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science

Stoker and Figg (1998) advocate that because education is a social right, ‘good’ professional educational psychology practice must support a continued commitment to dedicated action through this type of research.

However, action research has come in for some strong criticism. Robson (1995) cites the views of a number of authors who express scepticism about the contribution and validity of action research. For example, Adelman (1989) considers much of educational research to be ‘inward looking and ahistorical’ and of poor quality. Atkinson and Delamont (1985) criticise its “atheorectical approach and denial of the need for systematic methods” (Robson, 1995. Page. 440).

Burden (1998) highlights the subjectivity that is inevitable in evaluating qualitative research. He suggests than this can never be a neutral process and that “Every evaluator, just like every educational psychologist, brings her/his values to bear on all that she/he does”
Burt and Oldfield (1999) suggest that qualitative methods can systemise and give structure to the process of hypothesis generation through close examination of qualitative data that is of direct relevance to the questions posed by the researcher.

3.3.12 Ethical considerations

Burt and Oldfield (1999) provide an example into a study of helping people who have suffered from child sexual abuse and note:

...there is no ethically sound way to construct the relevant unbiased sample

The same questions could be raised in this instance. For example, were a control group were to be used, this would present ethical issues concerning which disaffected pupils would and wouldn’t be offered MI sessions.

Stoker and Figg (1998) suggest the need for critical appraisal in order for educational psychology practice to produce validated practice knowledge.

It might be suggested than any EP intervention brings with it an ethical dilemma. While the DECP Framework for Psychological Assessment and Intervention (DECP 1998a) advocates that EP involvement should be a positive experience for the child, the impact on the child and family is not quantifiable. For example, the notion of the child being asked to see a psychologist might hold certain connotations for the parents of the student involved and this may in itself have an effect that is not easily verified.

3.3.13 Discourse Analysis

The qualitative data collected through the teacher and pupil interviews was evaluated using a process known as Discourse Analysis (DA). Bozic, Leadbetter and Stringer (1998) cite Potter and Wetherell (1987), who describe discourse as:

all forms of spoken interaction, formal and informal, and written texts of all kinds. So when we talk of “discourse analysis” we mean analysis of all these forms of discourse.

Bozic, Leadbetter and Stringer (1998) give special consideration to the importance of discourse in therapeutic interactions.

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3.3.14 Coding and Theming

Because DA yields a large amount of data, it is necessary to theme or code this information in order to make sense of it. How information is coded and handled will depend on the hypothesis generation and personal constructs of the individual EP. In including all of the transcripts from the interviews held in the appendices, I hope that this will allow for others to form alternative perspectives and constructions of the students’ responses thereby framing the validity and maximising the utility of the study.

3.3.15 The effect of other factors

During the course of this intervention, it should be recognised that there are potentially a whole range of other educational, social and familial factors that could influence the students’ levels of motivation. The effect of such influences and their impact on the study cannot be quantified.

3.3.16 Comparative samples

Black and Champion (1976) describe how the term control; ....is used to refer to a group or an individual not exposed to an experimental variable

In this case, this would describe a group of students, matched to those who participated in the experiment who were not offered the MI sessions.

In the light of the number of unknown variables, described in Section 3.3.15, as well as the fact that any EP involvement is likely to have some impact (see also Section 3.3.12) it was decided that the use of a control group would not be appropriate in this instance.

Ethical issues surrounding the use of control groups are discussed in Section 3.3.12.

3.3.17 The use of questionnaires

The potential for bias and subjectivity when using questionnaires is discussed in Section 3.2.6

3.3.18 Validity of the sample
The study involves a very small sample group of only three students (one student did not participate in the MI sessions (see Section 3.3.24). Any generalisations made should be considered in the light of this.

It should also be noted that the MI interventions were ‘offered’ to the schools and the students were selected accordingly. My intervention work did not encroach on the school’s resources (except in terms of staff time) and did not have to be offset against allocated time or have financial implications. Additionally none of the pupils had been formally referred to see an EP. This could suggest that the pupil sample might not necessary be reflective of the group of pupils an EP would normally be asked to see.

### 3.3.2 Unforeseen difficulties

#### 3.3.21 Work experience

Two pupils (R and D) undertook work experience placements during the course of the MI sessions. It is possible that these might have had an impact on their overall levels of motivation and their attitude towards school.

#### 3.3.22 Exams

The initial questionnaires were conducted in the fortnight following Year 10 exams. The impact of this in relation to the students’ responses particularly regarding motivation and academic self-concept should be considered.

#### 3.3.23 Time provided by staff in the schools

Within the study, there was some variance between the amount of time that the members of staff making the referral were able to give, particularly in the initial interview phase. This meant that the amount of information I had about the individual pupils prior to the beginning of the intervention process differed.

During the intervention, there was no formalised time set aside for meetings to review progress or to raise issues with the member of staff making the referral. However, a number of ‘ad hoc’ face-to-face and telephone conversations did take place during this time. Again these varied between the three pupils involved in the study.
3.3.24 Pupil non-attendance

In the Section 3.2.3 I detail how I intended this study to involve two male and two female students. Four students were initially referred: a male and a female student from each school. However, only three students undertook MI sessions.

S, one of the female students was initially referred for low attendance. She wasn’t in school at any of the times designated for the MI sessions even where meetings were rescheduled. During this time she also missed key appointments with the careers advisor and with a link person from a local college it was hoped she might attend.

Towards the end of the sessions, the SENCO at S’s school informed me that Social Services had become involved in working with S’s family and that there appeared to be home difficulties that were contributing to her low attendance.

The issue of working with disaffected students who are absent from school for prolonged periods of time is discussed in Section 8.2.46.

3.3.25 Completion of questionnaires

The MI interventions were completed in the week before the end of term. Unfortunately student M (described in Chapter 6) did not complete the final questionnaires, due to competing pressures and because of the fact that he did not visit the learning support department after the intervention was complete. As a result there is no quantitative data relating to the outcomes of the intervention and the effect that it might have had on his self-esteem, self-efficacy and levels of internal attribution.

Similarly, I had a note from D’s head of year (see Chapter 5) to say that he had been absent during the last week of term and that he too had not completed the final questionnaires. At her suggestion, the questionnaires were sent to D’s home address, but were not returned.

3.3.26 Monitoring behaviour
As I described in Section 3.2.7 it was originally intended to identify a particular behaviour or behaviours that had been considered problematic by the person making the referral that could be monitored over the course of the intervention. This was not a successful strategy for the following reasons:

Firstly the two pupils at School X, R and D had a two-week work experience placement during the course of the MI intervention. The school therefore felt retrospectively that the information collected was not of relevance because it had not been gathered consistently over a period of times, due to the interruptions in timetable.

Monitoring homework proved to be problematic because at School X the assignments generally related to GCSE coursework requirements and were therefore ongoing.

At School Y, M’s referral was with regard to his general attitude to school. The school felt that it would be most appropriate to monitor this aspect of his behaviour. Although at the end of the assessment M’s form tutor was able to provide some useful information about attitude shifts during the intervention, this did not produce any quantifiable data.

The final evaluation form (see Section 3.2.8) was designed in an attempt to provide additional information about to what extent the school felt that some of the issues that had prompted the need for a referral had been addressed and how they viewed the MI process.

### 3.3.27 Number and time allocation of sessions

In planning the methodology, I allocated five MI sessions of approximately one hour to each of the students. In practice, the length of sessions varied between individual students. The students R and D in school X had up to an hour for the sessions whereas M in School Y had a maximum of 45 minutes, due to timetable constraints. This make have impacted on the way in which the sessions emerged. The latter sessions in School X were considerably shorter, than in School Y possibly because many of the additional opportunity to address the issues raised.

The eventual outcome was that each of the students was offered six sessions. The fifth session was originally meant to consist of a short briefing with the student, followed by
a joint consultation meeting with a key member of staff. However, due to logistical factors, there was a time delay between the fifth and sixth meetings.

R and M both attended all of the six meetings. D was absent for the final joint consultation meeting (see Section 5.12)

3.4 Analysis and presentation of results

I intend to present the results by case. A summary of these are detailed in Figure 3.4 (i) below:

Figure 3.4 (i) Students involved in the MI sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case 1</th>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case 1</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 2</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results for the second female, S who attended School Y are not presented as no MI sessions were attended (See Section 3.2.24)

For each student, I will begin by providing a brief outline of the student, detailing the reasons for the referral. These summaries are based on information from the teacher interviews

I will then provide a brief one-page summary of the plan, content and outcomes of each of the interviews. Following this, I will move on to discussing the issues that I see as arising from each of the interviews. I will address these on two levels. Firstly I will refer to ‘process issues’ that will focus specifically on working with the particular student concerned. I will then move on to considering ‘practitioner issues’. These will focus more broadly on the implications for EPs of using an MI approach
3.4.1 Transcriptions and quotes

The full transcripts from each of the interviews are attached (see Appendices list for full details). In the case of the write up of results and also in the transcripts, dialogue is coded as follows:

*Bold italics*  My responses

*Normal italics*  Student’s responses

*Blue italics*  Teacher’s responses during the consultation meeting
CHAPTER 4 - Case 1 – R – Results and Discussions

4.1 Background Information

R was identified as a pupil who had special educational needs and who was at Stage Two of the Code of Practice. She had reading and spelling levels at around the ten and eight-year levels respectively.

R’s head of year reported that she did not like school and that she did not want to come to school. In the past she had “gone wandering” and missed odd lessons, but in general her mum had brought her back to school and her attendance was not now considered to be a major concern.

R’s parents had separated and her Dad now lived in another part of the country. She had two elder sisters, both of who were described as “very different from R”. R was described as a very attractive girl, who was very concerned about her looks and appearance. Her head of year had serious concerns about the people she socialised with out of school time who were a lot older. The head of year felt that R was “easily led”

R’s head of year described her as “bone idle”, “lazy” and “disorganised”; that she had difficulties concentrating in lessons and was a “dreamer”. She felt that R gave up easily and was an “extremely frustrating” pupil. She reported that R had a poor homework record and that her behaviour in class affected her peers.

When asked what she hoped to achieve from the referral, the head of year said that she would like R to have the skills that would enable her to do what she wanted to do in the future. Also that R would be able to improve her attendance and commitment so that the school would be able to provide her with a good reference.

During the intervention, it was agreed that homework and R’s commitment to her individual spelling programme would be monitored.
4.2 Record of Session One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Interview no.</th>
<th>One</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>7.6.00</td>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>9.30am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**
Initial chat rapport building
Use of questions:
*Do you know why I might be here to see you?*
*Is there anything you would like to tell me about yourself or anything you think I should know before we start?*

Use PCP techniques, self-characterisation task (Kelly, 1955) and triadic method of eliciting bipolar constructs. Use self-description grid to appraise self-perception in relation to these constructs.

*Selected ideas from the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992) and from SFBT (George, Iveson and Ratner (1999)).*

**Key areas covered and processes used**

**PCP work**
R indicated that she felt herself to be: “not bright” and somebody who “didn’t care much about school”, was “sociable”, “friendly” and liked to “hang round the village”. In terms of school work she felt that she “did what she can” and “listens most of the time when she’s got something to listen to”.

**Processes and techniques used:**
- Menu of strategies – a typical day (in relation to a good lesson and a bad lesson). The good things and the less good things (in relation to going out). The future and the past.
- Active listening techniques – parroting, paraphrasing, summarising, reflections of conflict, Columbo technique
- Solution Focused problem free talk – what would life be like without problem
- Scaling questions (George, Iveson and Ratner, 1999)

**Areas covered**
- Relationship with teachers, particularly in lessons
- Career goals
- Homework
- Going out (evenings), peer pressure

**Outcomes and plans for next session**
R likely to be at precontemplative/contemplative stage in model of phases of change (see Section 4.3.25)

For next session - try to find ways to promote internal attribution (see McNamara, 1998) in terms of taking emphasis away from the behaviour of the teachers and talking about what R could do to improve her motivation and attitude towards school work.

Investigate areas raised in first session: homework; English, reading and spelling; ‘difficult’ lessons; going out (in terms of doing things you don’t really want to and in being well prepared for school) in terms of what R herself could do to address these. Use SFBT Technique of ‘goal setting’ (George, Iveson and Ratner (1990))
4.3  Issues from Session 1

4.3.1  Background Information

The first session with R took place during the first week back in school after half term. R appeared to be relatively at ease with the MI session and was communicative and co-operative throughout.

4.3.2  Process issues

This was the first opportunity I had had to use some of the MI techniques described in the literature. I will begin by providing a brief overview of some of the strategies I explored, giving examples from the dialogue with the student and summarising my thoughts and feeling on the use of these techniques.

4.3.2.1  Building rapport using PCP techniques

In Section 2.8.11, I discuss the use of PCP techniques in building rapport with the student. I felt that in this instance that using Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) approaches might be a structured and non judgmental way of building rapport and eliciting information at the start of the interview process.

I used the self-characterisation, method of eliciting triadic constructs and the self description grid techniques with R (see Sections 2.8.12 – 2.8.14).

I felt that the task did provide an interesting and enjoyable open activity. R had not given a reason why she thought I had come to see her and this could potentially have made conversation difficult from the outset. However, the issues raised in the PCP work meant that afterwards we seemed to have almost a shared agenda of issues that we could discuss. The constructs that R had presented (see Section 4.2) also gave me a good insight into how R perceived herself in relation to school.
4.3.22 “Typical day” exercise, also using summarising and paraphrasing

I used the typical day technique (described by Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) as part of the Menu of Strategies) asking R to describe a good lesson and a bad lesson. Her responses are detailed below. At the same time, I used the paraphrasing technique described by McNamara (1992, 1998). I have highlighted examples.

A good lesson

OK, so could you take me through what would happen in a good lesson, like Art?

The teacher would ask how you are and help you and give advice….ask you like what you've been up to

So they'd be friendly and they'd be interested in you [paraphrasing]

Yes and they'd make sure they'd help you and make you work better.. and they'd tell you ..they'd say “Oh I don't like that!

So they'd be honest about what they thought about your work [paraphrasing]

Yeah and what they thought about you

A bad lesson

Can you think of a lesson that you don’t like at all, where you don’t get on with the teacher?

Probably IT

So what would the teacher be like in IT?

She just wants you to do all the work that she’s asked you to. Say if you're lagging behind because like you can't work as fast as the other people she'd say “You've been at this school for you know how long now so you should be able to do it

I found the typical day method a straightforward technique from both a student and practitioner perspective. I also felt it provided a useful insight into R’s relationship with her teachers in the two different lessons and felt it possibly highlighted some of the issues to do with the school environment that might be contributing to her disaffection.
Paraphrasing gave me the opportunity to clarify R’s perspectives on how teachers might behave towards her in a ‘good lesson’. I was also able to engage in some basic hypothesis testing (as described by McNamara, 1998).

4.3.23 Columbo Technique

At this early stage in the MI process, I didn’t feel entirely comfortable in adopting the ‘feigned incompetence’ suggested by McNamara (1998). I wasn’t sure how R would perceive it and what sort of message I might be providing in suggesting that I didn’t quite know how to help her. However, I was very keen to elicit from R ways in which she felt she could improve her schoolwork.

I therefore adapted the technique slightly so that I asked R what she thought her teachers might be able to do.

So if I was your teacher, what sort of things could I do, say if I was going to help you with English

You could explain what things are for. Say if you had a question mark, you could explain why it’s there and its purposes

So would it be fair to say that you would like more information about the work you are doing?

Instead of saying “put more sentences and columns” I’d rather they said why and that. If it was just columns or whatever sentences, I would have done it in the first place if I’d have known why they were there

Although these questions and responses were focused on the role of the teacher, rather than promoting internal attribution, I did feel that they were important in helping me to understand what R’s needs were. Perhaps more importantly I felt that this information could provide a useful insight for R’s teacher.

4.3.24 The future and the past

A number of R’s responses had indicated that she might be at the precontemplative stage (I will discuss this further in Section 4.3.25). Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) suggest the question “How would you like things to be different in the future?” is appropriate only when the client has expressed concern about his or her behaviour.
However, this is with reference to working with clients with addictive behaviours and in that respect addressing one very specific aspect of their lifestyle. I felt that in terms of a more general school referral it could be viewed as almost a solution focused ‘miracle’ question and that therefore to ask it was justifiable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you like things to be different in the future?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’d like it if all the teachers were the same not like different, like I’ve got to change totally now because this teacher’s coming in… a lot more freedom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anything about yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All my grades would go up higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you think that might happen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I got more help and if I put more effort into it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What sort of things could you do to put more effort in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening harder in lessons.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I felt that R’s responses were very important here in that she recognised that her grades might go up if she put in more effort. I would suggest that this particular statement would put her at the contemplative stage in the model in that she appeared to be acknowledging that a problem did exist and that she could do something to address it.

4.3.25 Using the Model of Stages of Change

I would suggest that R would be somewhere around the precontemplative/contemplative phases of the Model of Stages of Change. Evidence for this is shown in the table overleaf (Figure 4.3 (i)), which details some of R’s statements and my interpretation of them.
### Figure 4.3 (i) Mapping R’s statements from Session One onto the Model for Stages of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil Statement</th>
<th>Phase of Change</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If I didn’t know what I was doing I wouldn’t ask her because I don’t like her so I just don’t bother asking [approach to lessons]</td>
<td>Precontemplation</td>
<td>Expresses no desire for help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[How could grades be improved] If I got more help and if I put more effort into it</td>
<td>Precontemplation/Contemplation</td>
<td>External attribution (needing more help) at the precontemplative level and acknowledgement that a problem (lack of effort) may exist (contemplation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would want to change but I’m not really bothered.</td>
<td>Precontemplation/Contemplation</td>
<td>Expresses a desire but not the motivation to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And say like I said “I’ll come in early” but when you’re having a good time you think “oh it won’t matter”[going out]</td>
<td>Precontemplation/Contemplation</td>
<td>Initially recognises potential area of concern but then dismisses it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This deduction might not seem to provide a clear definition of R’s motivation to change, but I chose to remain open minded because some of R’s responses provided evidence that was not always consistent.

#### 4.3.3 Practitioner Issues

**4.3.3.1 Using the techniques and strategies**

I felt that using the ‘version’ of the Columbo technique described in Section 4.3.23 might be an appropriate alternative to the ‘feigned incompetence’ suggested by McNamara (1998), particularly at an early stage in the student-EP relationship, when rapport is still being built.
4.3.32 The Model of Stages of Change – variance in relation to different behaviours

Because MI has its roots in helping people to overcome addictive behaviours, motivation to change in this instance would generally be specific to considering the client’s substance use. In a school referral however, the difficulties might be multifaceted and refer to more than one pattern of behaviour (as in R’s case). The student’s motivation to change might vary in relation to the different areas of concern identified.

4.3.33 Attribution regarding problematic behaviour

For the large part of the interview, R appeared to be attributing the cause of her behaviour to the role played by her teachers. This is evident in both the ‘typical day’ and ‘Columbo technique’ examples cited above. This represents an external attribution regarding the cause of R’s difficulties.

McNamara (1998) suggests that external attribution may be indicative that the pupil is at the precontemplative stage. He advocates promoting internal attribution as one of the goals of MI, suggesting that this can help the student to believe that they are in a position to influence the causes of the problem. He also suggests that it increases the likelihood that failure will be attributed to a lack of effort rather than to external factors. I felt that trying to enhance R’s internal attribution would be an important focus for me in future meetings.

It is also worth considering that R’s responses could have been influenced by the way I had phrased my initial prompt. Because R had not presented me with a reason for why she thought I might be there, I suggested to her that maybe she was someone who didn’t like school particularly. In doing so, I might have been implying that school posed the problem, rather than the behaviours she was presenting.

With reference to the typical day exercise described above: on reflection I feel I would have kept the emphasis more on R and how she behaved in the two different lessons. R’s responses hinted that she felt that the teachers were to some degree ‘responsible’ for her behaviour in class.
4.3.34 Use of PCP techniques in rapport building

I felt that in working with R, the use of the PCP techniques had been a successful approach. It provided an opportunity to build rapport through a structured activity, which I propose might be less threatening than direct conversation.

4.3.35 Time allowances

I felt that an initial MI session involving the use of the PCP techniques warranted an hour. At this point I felt that subsequent sessions, where goals have been identified or targets are being reviewed could be shorter.

4.3.36 MI as an assessment technique?

In the light of this initial interview, I pondered whether or not MI techniques could be used where EPs are asked to see students for one-off assessments. I would expect that in many cases, at the end of the initial session, the EP would be in a position to identify approximately where the student would be on the Model of Stages of Change Prochaska and DiClemente (1982). This might provide very useful information to the school.

However, if the intervention was to be facilitated by the school, where the student was at the precontemplative, contemplative or determinism stage, the person involved would need very clear guidelines on how to proceed using an MI perspective. They would need some degree of expertise and more importantly sufficient time, in order to continue the intervention.
4.4 Record of Session Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>12.6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>35 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview no.</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>8.45am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**

Promote internal attribution – focus on what R might be prepared to commit to. Think about maybe devising a plan that can be presented to teachers about how R might address areas of concern.

Look at the areas of homework; English, reading and spelling; ‘difficult’ lessons; going out (in terms of doing things you don’t really want to and in being well prepared for school) using a SFBT approach

Bear in mind the following key principles form the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992)

- Do not rush students into decision making
- Emphasise that “you are the best judge of what will be the best for you”
- Present options for the future rather than a single course of action

**Key areas covered and processes used**

Processes and techniques used:
Promoting Internal Attribution using Solution Focused brief therapy techniques–
- Realistic and Unrealistic Goals (George, Iveson and Ratner, 1990)
- SFBT – exception
Active listening techniques – parroting, overshooting, Socratic questioning

**Areas covered**

- Homework
- Reading
- Listening to teachers
- How to cope it more ‘difficult’ lessons

**Outcomes and plans for next session**

Using the realistic and unrealistic goals technique (see Section 2.8.21) R was able to identify a number of strategies in relation to homework, reading, English and spelling and ‘difficult lessons’. I speculated about how easy these would be for R to see through without support in school.

Consider a need to share goals with a member of staff at a later stage

Continue with work on realistic and Unrealistic goals. Focus more on out of school behaviour – pros and cons – impact on school work

Consider how R might reframe her attitude to school – what she needs in her final year
4.5 Issues from Session 2

4.5.1 Background Information

I had originally scheduled an appointment to see R on 9.6.00. However, she did not appear at the appointed time and I wondered if she was absent. A member of the learning support staff went to find R and it transpired that she was actually in the middle of a drama exam. R was keen to schedule a second session with me (the third session had to be fitted in on 15.6.00 due to the time constraints imposed by R’s work experience placement). The only time I had available was 8.30am on Monday 12 June. R said that she would like to meet at this time, even though it would be at least partly in her own time, before school started.

I felt that this showed a commitment to the counselling process on R’s part and wondered if this was another indication that she was at the contemplation phase on the model of change.

4.5.2 Process issues

4.5.21 Promoting Internal Attribution

My main aim for session two was to address the fourth of McNamara’s (1998) ‘Goals of Motivational Interviewing’ – to ‘Promote Internal Attribution’. This was in view of the fact that R seemed to be attributing the cause of her behaviour to her teachers (see Section 5.3.32)

McNamara (1998) describes the reasons for addressing this concept. He states that promoting internal attribution

\[ i) \, \text{increases belief that causes of “the problem” can be influenced and} \]
\[ ii) \, \text{increases the probability that “failure” will be attributed to lack of effort not to} \]
\[ \text{external factors} \]

4.5.22 Solution Focused Brief Therapy – unrealistic and realistic goals

I chose to use the method of goal setting, described by George, Iveson and Ratner (1990). Specifically I wanted R to identify ways of addressing some of the behaviours
she had described in Session One and to consider ways in which these might be overcome. She could then decide whether or not these strategies could be set as realistic goals, or if there were for her at that particular point in time ‘unrealistic’. I felt that by identifying ways of helping herself in these situations, and formalising them into goals in the form of statements, this would be one way of increasing R’s belief that the causes of her difficulties could be influenced.

I decided to investigate R’s feelings towards five issues that had come up in the first interview. The school based items were homework, “reading, spelling and English to be better” and “difficult lessons”. I also wanted to broach two matters to do with R’s “going out” behaviour – “doing things I don’t really want to do” and “being well prepared for school”.

The goals we were able to detail are attached as Appendix 4.4. The first three items reflect the outcomes of our discussions from Session Two, the latter two from Session Three.

In terms of the process, this technique worked relatively well with R. She was able to identify ways in which the areas of ‘concern’ could be addressed. I felt it also provided R with some clearly stated suggestions. This would enable her to make a choice about whether or not she wished to continue with the behaviour which might have been ‘problematic’ or consider an alternative. I will discuss the use of this technique further under the section on ‘Practitioner Issues’.

I felt to some extent that R was being a little ambitious with some of her ‘realistic’ goals. For example to help her in ‘difficult lessons’ I asked her if she could make notes. R reported that no-one else in her class did this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I could make notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>But would that mean you were the only person making notes or do others do it too?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d be on my own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And how would that make you feel?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I wouldn’t care

I felt that within a class situation, this might be quite hard for R to see through. I felt that it would appropriate to begin the next session to review some of the goals and discuss whether or not R still felt that they were realistic.

I wondered whether or not R was providing the responses she thought I would want to hear and whether or not this would translate into an actual change in her behaviour.

4.5.23 Other Solution Focused techniques

I tried to use a Solution Focused approach to investigate the times at which R was successful in already meeting some of the school’s goals, for example, she said that she was better at getting her English homework done. She felt that English class work was often a continuation of the homework assignment and she would feel awkward in the lesson if it weren’t complete.

OK, so when you’ve got English to do, you do it. You’ve got lots of things to do and you want to chill out, but you still manage to do your English. I’m interested in how you manage to get it done.

It’s just on my mind all the time.

So when you get home…..how do you get it done?

I just sit down and do it

As soon as you get in

Yes

So that would be a good time for you

Because normally I just forget..you know if we went out then I just forget what it was even about

4.5.24 Parroting
I was able to use the parroting technique described by McNamara (1992, 1998) to help R to identify some of the ways she might help herself in reading, spelling and English.

\begin{quote}
Shall we move on to Reading, English and Spelling to be better. Can you tell me a bit about that?
I could like help myself as well by like reading and writing more.

Reading and writing more
And like listening

Listening
Listening to the teachers more and like take their advice and that
\end{quote}

4.5.3 Practitioner Issues

4.5.31 Solution Focused Techniques

I was very conscious in this interview that in adopting Solution Focused techniques, that I was actually doing a great deal of the talking and relatively little active listening. I was conscious that I was taking a very active role in the counselling process.

4.5.32 Drawing up goals

I felt that the technique of using realistic and unrealistic goals fitted in with the suggestion that setting goals can be used to assess readiness for change (Miller and Rollnick, 1991). They further report that verbalising a plan to others strengthens commitment to change. I felt that having formalised goals that were written down represented an even more prescribed way of presenting targets.

4.5.33 Key principles of MI

In relation to the MI principles suggested by Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) in their ‘Helping with Decision Making’ section, I wondered whether I was adhering to the first objective which states:

“Do not rush patients into decision making”
However, in planning to review the goals with R at the start of the next session, I did feel that I would be addressing some of the other principles:

- Resolutions to change often break down. Make sure the student understands this and does not avoid contact if things go wrong
- Commitment to change is likely to fluctuate. Expect this to happen and empathise with the student’s predicament

This also fits in with the principle described by Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) who suggest that during the contemplative stage, the counsellor should regularly summarise the beliefs of the client.
4.6 Record of Session Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>15.6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview no.</td>
<td>Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>11.15am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**
- Recap on realistic and unrealistic goals
- Consider realistic and unrealistic goals for Going out (doing things you don’t really want to do and being well prepared for school) and putting in more effort
- Consider ways forward in terms of making a plan using the realistic and unrealistic goals
- Consider having a meeting with a member of staff to discuss R’s needs in the light of these targets

**Key areas covered and processes used**

**Processes and techniques used:**
- Solution Focused brief therapy techniques
- Realistic and Unrealistic Goals (George, Iveson and Ratner, 1990) – reviewing goals previously agreed and drawing up new ones
- Active listening techniques – parroting, overshooting, reflections of feelings, Socratic questioning
- The good things and the less good things (from Menu of Strategies) in relation to meeting curfew deadlines set by her mum

**Areas covered**
- Out of school issues
  - Assertiveness in saying no to peer group pressure
  - Relationship with mother – adhering to deadlines
  - The impact of going out on approach to school

Raised the issue of whether it would be appropriate to share some of the information that R had presented with staff at the school

**Outcomes and plans for next session**
- Two-week work experience placement before the next session. Aim to help build on motivation from that. Look at career aspirations. Be aware of gap between sessions
- Shift focus back to school based issues in preparation for final meeting – last session
- Try to arriving at a plan (as proposed by Miller and Rollnick (1991) Consider questions from a solution focused perspective such as ‘What do the teachers to need know about how your behaviour will change’ ‘How might they be able to support you?’
4.7  Issues from Session 3

4.7.1  Background to session

In approaching the third session, I wanted to focus on some of the out of school activities about which R’s head of year had initially expressed concern. Prior to this I decided to recap on the realistic and unrealistic goals we had discussed and to consider how feasible R thought these might be in the longer term.

I also wanted to talk about ‘making a plan’ with R. I hoped it would be possible for R to set down some targets for herself with regard to her behaviour in school. I felt this would provide us for a more solid basis from which to negotiate how she might be best supported by the teachers about whom she had raised concerns.

4.7.2  Process issues

4.7.21  Reviewing the realistic goals

The session began with a discussion of the realistic goals we had set during the previous session. R’s responses are detailed below:

[How have you got on with] Find out what I have to do so I can do homework in special needs”

I’ve like found out more. I’ve been bringing in my books and stuff, normally I just do it on a piece of paper.

So you’ve already made a start with that? That’s great, excellent. And did you feel you could do a bit more homework before you went out?

Yes, but I’ve had no homework.

OK so this would be on some days….when you’ve got homework. Reading, English and Spelling – you felt you might be able to make notes.

I haven’t done that.

Is that something you feel comfortable with, or…

No I feel comfortable with it. That’s OK.

You don’t mind doing that.

No
What about listening to the teachers more?

No I don’t reckon I’ve done that.

Any way in which you think you might be able to

I don’t really know

Ok – we’ll leave that for now. What about to get interesting books and read them?

No I haven’t done that. I’ve got no books really

Does it have to be books or can it be…..magazines?

Magazines….I like magazines more

OK so if I put books/magazines. We’ve talked about difficult lessons and you felt it was unrealistic to sit on your own, but possibly to sit next to a friend who wouldn’t distract you. How would you feel about that?

OK. I’d do that

You’d do that. What about asking the teacher for more help and guidance

I don’t know….I haven’t done

In some respects, this might seem a rather negative start. However, R had only had three days to think about Monday’s discussions and therefore little time to make any changes to her behaviour. I felt that it was helpful to revisit all the areas we had discussed and check out with R how realistic these could be. I also felt that it enabled a bit of ‘tweaking’ of goals that did not seem to be realisable and adopting alternative ideas where necessary.

I was conscious also that R had many targets and was concerned about ‘overloading’ her. However, I feel that the benefit of having all the areas for change detailed provides the student with a broad picture of some of the ways in which they might help themselves. It also enables the student to prioritise areas for development and to consider how one area impinges on another.

The third session focused almost solely on R’s out of school behaviour. I felt it was the most successful session so far in that it seemed that rapport had been established between us. As a result R seemed relaxed, open and honest and the session was an enjoyable one.
4.7.22 Overshooting

I tried to use the technique of ‘overshooting’ as described by McNamara (1998). During the following interaction we were discussing whether or not R was able to get out of doing things she did not feel comfortable doing once her and her friends had left the village.

**So you wouldn’t have choice**

Well I would have a choice but I’d prefer to actually go with them, rather than walking home

**But if you chose not to go with them, you’d be in a situation where maybe you wouldn’t feel safe.**

Yes, so in a way I’d have to go

**There’s that then. The fact that you don’t want to miss out then and they’re that bit older. What else is good about staying out late**

I like doing things like what all my other mates at school don’t really do. They all do things that are totally different…they like…I don’t know…well all the lads I hang around with used to be like all the lads who used to come here and all this lot used to look up to them and they think I’m like different cos I hang around with all these people who they used to look up

**So people in the school now look up to you**

They don’t actually look up to me it’s just “Oh you hang around with [pupil’s name] and all them lot”

In one instance, I felt that R’s responses served to ‘confirm the overshoot’, as described by McNamara (1998) in that it did appear that in choosing to walk away from difficult situations, R’s personal safety might be put at risk. In the other instance R appear to reject the overshoot, when presented with my hypothesis that other pupils in the school might look up to her because of the company she kept.

4.7.23 The good things and the less good things

We talked at some length about situations where R got into conflict with her mum, because she didn’t come home by 10.30pm, the deadline set by her mum during the week. I began by using the ‘good things and the less good things’ technique from the
Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992) to investigate the reasons why R might stay out after the ‘curfew’. R’s responses are detailed in the table below:

### 4.7.24 Reflections of feelings

I also used the reflections of feelings technique described by McNamara (1998) to enable R to test my hypothesis that her mum was trying to be as flexible as possible and to enable R to clarify her ideas about her relationship with her mum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What would make you want to go home?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing that my mum’s going to be there… But it’s not as if I’m never allowed out. I’m quite lucky really because all my friends aren’t really allowed out</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>So you think your mum’s quite reasonable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes she is. She lets me do a lot of stuff I know she does. Like at weekends she lets me go…. I know all the bouncers at a nightclub and she lets me go there. She lets me get a minibus home at like 3 o’clock in the morning sometimes but she knows that I’m alright because I’m with them…they’ll look after me. Things like that. She used to not let me go on my own but now she does</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>So she gives you a lot of space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes she lets me do a lot of things … say if I wanted to go to [name of town] last minute, I wouldn’t have to ask her</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I felt that R’s statements here indicate a slightly ‘reframed’ attitude towards her mum. R showed during the interview that she was able to emphasise with her mum in understanding about why she would be concerned about R coming in late.

### 4.7.3 Practitioner Issues

#### 4.7.31 Procedural issues

I felt it relevant to use draw on the good things and the less good things technique (as described in section 5.7.23). In this respect, I was not working through the menu of strategies sequentially, but drawing on a aspect of MI that seemed to me to be a pertinent way of dealing with R's ambivalence about being in on time.
4.7.32 Should an EP have been doing this type of work?

This session was focused very much on R’s social and family life and actually had practically nothing to do with school. One could raise questions about whether a session focused on these issues actually falls within the role of the EP.

For me, it was very important to find out more about this other side of R. It helped me to gain a fuller understanding of the factors impacting on the reasons for her disaffection.
4.8 Record of Session Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>R</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>4.7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>25 minutes</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Four</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>11.45am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**
- Discuss successful work experience placement (See Section 4.9.1) – consider in terms of long term career outcomes, look to see if positive experiences might be used as a motivating factor
- Recap on discussions so far – present updated realistic and unrealistic goals and review
- Consider realistic and unrealistic goals for Going out (doing things you don’t really want to do and being well prepared for school) and putting in more effort
- Using Miller and Rollnick (1991) – try to use realistic and unrealistic goals to elicit commitment. Miller and Rollnick (1991) suggest that the more a client verbalises a plan to others, the more the commitment to change is strengthened.

**Key areas covered and processes used**

**Processes and techniques used:**
Solution Focused brief therapy techniques–
How will things be different now that you’re back in school? What would it take to make [IT] better? What would you have hoped to achieve by the end of Year 11?
Review of realistic and unrealistic goals – goal setting
Eliciting verbal commitment – Do you think you will be able to ….?

**Areas covered**
- Work experience placement
- Homework
- Investigation of specific resources/techniques that might be useful to R
- Discussion about long term career aims and qualifications required to achieve them

**Outcomes and plans for next session**
R agreed to a joint consultation meeting with her head of year to discuss the issues that had arisen from our discussions

Meeting four was considerably shorter than our previous meetings and after the two-week break, I felt that to some extent, rapport had been lost slightly. I also felt on balance that I was talking more than I had done in previous sessions. It also seemed to have a more practical focus in terms of addressing R’s needs in school.

**Actions**
- Present summary of the main issues arising from our discussions in memo format
- Arrange consultation meeting and brief head of year
- Discuss R’s intention to pursue a career as a beautician and the qualifications needed for this

4.9 Issues from Session 4

4.9.1 Background Information
Prior to the fourth session, I had a telephone conversation with R’s head of year. She informed me that R had had a very successful work experience placement in a local beautician’s and that she had enjoyed this immensely.

Following session four I left a note for R’s head of year in which I detailed R’s expressed desire to follow a career as a beautician. I asked her if it would be possible to offer R some advice about what qualifications she might need to achieve in order to pursue such a career. R thought that she needed to get Cs at GCSE and that she would not be capable of achieving these results. I wasn’t sure this would be the case, and felt that if R had a realistic target in terms of her qualifications that this might help to enhance her motivation.

4.9.2 Process Issues

4.9.21 Using Solution-Focused questions

I once again found the technique of Solution-Focused questions a useful one, for eliciting information and for helping R to generate a vision of the future.

In one instance, this technique provided me with some useful information that I could pass on to the school with regard to catering for R’s educational needs in IT lessons.

How could IT be more bearable for you ....more enjoyable. What would it take to make it better

I don’t know really. If they split like the slow ones and the fast ones

In another, it helped me to gain an insight into R’s goals for her educational career.

What would you have hoped to have achieved by the time you leave [name of school] at the end of year 11

I’d like to have got my GCSEs and hopefully good ones…that’s it really

4.9.22 Arranging a joint meeting

At the end of the session, R agreed to participate in a joint meeting with her head of year and myself. This approach is discussed in Section 4.9.31
4.9.3 Practitioner Issues

4.9.31 Using a consultative approach

Wagner (1995) advocates the use of a consultative approach in working with schools and with individual pupils. She suggests that in doing so it is important to work with the person most concerned because that person is most motivated towards change. She further suggests that this person is likely to be the individual with the professional responsibility for the individual concerned (in this case, the head of year).

Wagner (1995) suggests that EP work at an individual level may lead to work at group or organisational levels. She proposes that in such cases, group and organisational level interventions can more effective and make more of a difference.

Wagner (1995) notes that pupils’ difficulties in school are relative to the school context and that EPs work most effectively on school-based problems when they work collaboratively with teachers. I felt that in R’s case, there were issues – for example, how to address her specific needs in English - which were school-based and needed to be addressed through discussions with the school.

4.9.32 The Nature of the Meeting

Session Four did not feel like a Motivational Interview. It was far more summative than the other meetings, probably in view of the fact that the end of the MI process was near. It was much more directed and seemed to have a more practical focus in terms of addressing R’s needs in school.

While not typical of a Motivational Interview, I did feel that this type of session was important within an MI process, particularly where the outcome is a consultation meeting.

4.9.33 Eliciting commitment through verbalisation
Miller and Rollnick (1991) highlight the importance of the client verbalising a plan suggesting that the more a client to is able tell others of his or her intentions, the more the commitment to change is strengthened.

In this respect, the consultation process described above would serve the additional benefit of offering the student the opportunity to make public their intention to change their behaviour.

4.9.34 Re-establishing rapport

After the third session, after which I felt that R had really begun to establish an effective therapeutic relationship, I couldn’t help feeling slightly disappointed after the fourth session. After a two week absence, I felt that some of the rapport we had built up had been lost and that there was a need to re-establish it. I noted that the length of R’s utterances during the session were considerably shorter than they had been during Session Three.

4.9.35 Taking a active role in the counselling process

Part of the reason for the R’s shorter responses was that I was both consciously and subconsciously taking a far more active role in this interview. This was largely because I had the intention that the final meeting would involve some sort of consultation process with a member of staff and I wanted to guide R towards this. I certainly felt that it was I as the EP who was setting the agenda. In terms of an MI approach, I wondered to what extent I was fitting in with two of the criteria on the ‘Helping with decision making’ item on the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992) namely:

- Do not rush patients into decision making
- Emphasise that “you are the best judge of what will be best for you”

I was aware that I was driving the process towards a consultation meeting and in that way I was making a decision about what I felt would be the best way forward for R because of the time scale.

The nature of the EPs role differs here from therapists who might use MI in clinical settings. In the latter case, interventions can be ongoing. In the current climate, where
there are competing demands for EP time, this is unlikely to practical. As a result, it may be necessary for an EP to direct a process more actively.

4.9.36 The time allocation of meetings

Session Four was notably shorter than all the other sessions I had had with R. Interestingly the same was true of the fourth session I had with D (Sections 5.8 and 5.9) on the same day.

This might have been to do with the fact that the students felt at this point that many of there needs had been discussed and that there was not a lot more they could tell the EP. The other hypothesis is that some degree of rapport had been lost during the intervening two-week period when the students were out on their work experience placement.

If the former is true, this has important implications for the caseload of the EP. It suggests that in some cases, while initially meetings might be of say an hours duration after the initial concerns have been raised and discussed, progress can be reviewed relatively quickly.

4.10 Record of Session Five

Session Five was a very short meeting. It involved me presenting R with the memo describing the main points and issues that we had addressed during the course of our sessions (see Section 4.11.21). The memo I wrote to R is attached as Appendix 4.6 and is discussed further in Sections 4.11.31. It also involved me providing R with a brief overview of the aims of the consultation meeting (see Section 4.13.3)

4.11 Issues from Session Five

4.11.1 Background Information

Following Session Four, I had had a telephone conversation with R’s head of year. In response to my note, she had presented R with some information for a local college to which R might apply in order to pursue a career as a beautician. She felt that the entry requirements for such a course were within R’s capabilities. She expressed that R was delighted with the information and was “really buzzing”.
However, when I had the opportunity to meet briefly with the Head of Year, after session, she said that staff did not know what to do with R. There was a genuine concern about how the school could help her in Year 11 and the head of year felt that she would need to give some serious consideration to whether or not she was disapplied from the National Curriculum. She felt that R had been “worse” since she had been back at school and that the MI intervention work did not seem to be having an impact.

I explained that during our sessions R had expressed a desire to address some of the areas of her behaviour that were considered to be problematic and that it would be helpful to discuss these via the consultation meeting we had planned.

4.11.2 Process Issues

4.11.21 Summarising the points in memo form

I decided to summarise the main point and issues from our discussions in a memo (as described in Section 4.10). My rationale for doing so is described in Section 4.11.31.

4.11.3 Practitioner Issues

4.11.31 Using Solution focused memos

Johal-Smith and Stephenson (2000) advocate the use of letter writing as a useful way of summarising discussions and dealing with issues in a Solution Focused way. I decided that writing a Solution Focused memo to R that summarised the points of our discussion would be helpful for a number of reasons.

Firstly, I felt that it would provide R with a succinct summary of what might be described as ‘change options’ by Miller and Rollnick (1991). I thought it would enable her to have a clear picture of the choices open to her and the positive reasons for making these choices.

Secondly, I felt that such a memo would be useful to the school in helping them to gain a better awareness of R’s educational needs from her own perspective and to enable them to consider her ongoing educational provision in the light of this.
Thirdly I felt that such a memo would provide a useful framework to a consultation meeting in providing a clear agenda for items to be discussed and addressed.

Finally, Miller and Rollnick (1991) cite the importance of the client verbalising change in order to elicit commitment. I felt that in writing and agreeing bullet pointed statements of intent, this would actually go one step further. Written statements that were agreed on by the students and shared with the teacher would represent a formalised commitment on the student’s part.
4.12 Record of Session Six

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>13/7/00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interview no.** Six  
**Time of interview** 1.05pm

**Plan of session**
Joint consultation involving, R, head of year and myself

Go through memo – address issues that arise. Aim to use memo to assist R to elicit commitment through verbalising intent to support written document

Discuss with head of year the kind of support that might be available to help R – e.g. help with homework, use of a computer, specific teaching to address needs in English

Provide satisfactory end point for the intervention

**Key areas covered and processes used**

**Processes and techniques used:**
Solution Focused memo writing (Johal-Smith and Stephenson, 2000)  
Consultation approach

**Areas covered**
Issues from the memo, specifically:
- R’s general attitude to school and how it might change in the future
- Re-establishing/reframing relationships with teachers
- Discussing R’s involvement in future planning of her educational needs

End sessions – goodbyes

**Outcomes and plans**
R’s responses appeared to have given her head of year some fresh insight into some for the reasons for her disaffection and I felt that there was more of a shared understanding of R’s difficulties

R to contribute to discussions regarding her educational provision in Year 11.

Review change in attitudes through responses to questionnaires

Would be helpful to find out more about the response to the MI intervention in the longer term – e.g. at the end of Year 11.

4.13 Issues from Session Six

4.13.1 Background Information

Session Six was a joint consultation meeting held at lunchtime between R, R’s head of year and myself. It was a short meeting, at which we were able to discuss the memo I had presented to R during Session Five to her head of year. This type of meeting is consistent with a consultative approach, as described in Section 4.9.31.
At the end of the session R’s Head of Year reported that the split up of R’s parents had affected her deeply. It occurred to me at this point that R had not raised this as an issue during the course of the discussions.

4.13.2 Process Issues

4.13.21 Mentoring

During the interview, R’s head of year informed her that she would have a mentor in Year 11.

...and next academic year as well, you will also have a mentor. What we set in place in Year 11. The students who we feel need some support and who are underachieving, for all sorts of different reasons, we actually offer some of our students a mentor, who’s a teacher in school and they will actually make time to sit down with you and make sure you’re up to date with your course work. It will be like a little gentle conscience sitting on your shoulder who’ll keep nagging you into doing things and keep reminding you

When you’re in class?

No. Not in class. They’ll set aside times at lunchtimes and breaktimes and after school. But you will actually come within the category of being appointed a mentor in September

Is it just a member of staff?

It could be. It depends who volunteers to do the mentoring. But it could be for instance in your case someone mentors you specifically from the special needs team

While I felt that the idea of a mentor for R was an excellent one, I wondered how the way in which the idea had been presented to her fitted in with the overall ethos of Motivational Interviewing. I was reminded of one of the key points described by Miller and Rollnick (1995) (see Section 2.3) which states:

Motivation to change is elicited from the client and not imposed from without

I wondered whether R might have been more committed to working with a mentor had the idea been presented to her (for example in the Providing Information stage of the Menu Strategies as something that might be beneficial) and that was negotiated and agreed on. This might have enabled R to feel more in control of the mentoring process.
This raised questions for me in terms of a shared MI approach, where the member of staff is party to the underlying principles. This is discussed further in Section 4.13.21.

4.13.22 A positive experience?

The DECP Framework for Psychological Assessment and Intervention (DECP, 1998a) advocates that any assessment and intervention work carried out by EPs should be a positive experience for the pupil involved. R’s attitude and comments throughout the sessions indicated to me that she had found the process to be an enjoyable one. This is supported by her comments at the final meeting:

Well thanks very much R

Yes you’ve been very co-operative

It’s been great

4.13.23 Reframing perspectives

I felt that the following conversation helped to reframe R’s head of year’s perceptions of her behaviour during IT lessons.

And how do you feel about starting by approaching [IT teacher] to catch up with all that coursework you’re missing?

I don’t want to

You’re not feeling to hot about that are you, so I think that’s something we need to work through, isn’t it?

I don’t really like IT at all

No

I can’t keep up at all in it

You don’t do Office Applications do you?

Yes, that’s what I do

The Office Applications is the one that you’re doing?

Yes

So which bit of it do you struggle with particularly?
In this way, a consultation approach can be invaluable in enabling school-based staff to consider some of the systems level issues that may be contributing to the student’s behaviour.

4.13.24 Referring back to the Model of Stages of Change

The final interview was not a Motivational Interview and as a result did not particularly enable R to make statements that could be indicative of where she would be on the Model of Stages of Change after Session Six. However, there were some statements made that would seem to suggest some sort of commitment to change from R. Some of these are detailed below:

The following example suggests that R’s general attitude towards school may have shifted (see overleaf).
I would certainly say R, that in terms of the attitude when you’ve been in with me before, when we’ve been discussing instances of truancy and the various things and you’ve been very anti school. Not felt that there’s any point in school for you. Certainly there is a bit of a change in your sort of attitude and you are motivated to come to school. We haven’t had any repeat of your truancy and have you felt the need to go out of any lessons or to truant from school or are you more accepting of…

It’s all right. I think I understand more now why I do need to come in

These comments seem to be indicative of a pupil at the determinism stage on the Model of Stages for Change. However, the dialogue from Section 4.13.23 suggests that R would not be prepared to modify her behaviour unless she felt that she was being offered the right sort of support from her teachers. This maybe raises a question regarding the ongoing need to promote R’s internal attribution.

4.13.3 Practitioner Issues

4.13.31 Holding a consultation meeting

This type of meeting is consistent with the interactionist and systemic approach promoted by Wagner (1995). It provides an opportunity for the EP, teacher bringing the referral and the student to work together in order to address the areas of concern. Wagner (1995) suggests teachers’ perceptions of pupils and pupils’ perceptions of teachers are very significant and can have a major influence on behaviour and achievement at school.

Wagner (1995) describes some of the key notions underlying such an approach. She advocates that problems are not located in individuals and that student behaviour will vary according to the context and the situation. From an EP’s perspective, having a school-based member of staff involved in discussions means that these systems issues can be broached and addressed.

4.13.32 MI - A shared approach?

Prior to the meeting I suggested to R’s head of year that we used a Solution Focused type approach that focused on the positive aspects of R’s commitment to change and how she might achieve this change in the future. We had only a short time together and
as a result, I did not have the opportunities to discussing the underlying rationale and the procedures used when practising this approach.

Wagner (1995) talks about the importance of clear communication with the school about ways of working, in terms of the principles as well as the aims and means of the consultation process. She also suggests that change is usually quicker when there is a focus on finding solutions.

This made me think about what the best way would be of maximising the potential of MI and SFBT approaches, within a consultation model. I felt that the most beneficial situation would be one in which both EP and the member of staff bringing the referral had shared ownership of the processes involved in a MI intervention.

This has clear implications for INSET and furthermore for training of EPs. There are also time and resourcing implications, relating back to the issues raise in Section 1.1.3. However, my belief is that the most effective way for EPs to work within a consultation model is to ‘impart’ psychology to those who are involved with the students on a day-to-day basis and are likely to have an important role in bringing about and maintaining behavioural change.

4.13.33 The opportunity for public commitment to change

McNamara (1998) suggests that at the Action phase, the opportunity to make a public commitment to change is important to the pupil. I felt that this consultation session had allowed R the opportunity to do that. Additionally I felt that the memo would provide further evidence of commitment and that this could be circulated to staff accordingly.

4.13.34 Accommodation issues

Because this final meeting was held at lunchtime, there were a number of interruptions from students and members of staff wishing to speak to the head of year. This did have the effect of interrupting the flow of the meeting.

In all of the individual interviews with R, D and M, I was provided with a quiet office where we were generally free from distraction and where the student could speak in an
confidential atmosphere. I feel that such an environment would be essential for effective MI practice.

4.14 Results of self-assessment questionnaires

4.14.1 Myself-As Learner Scale

This scale, devised by Burden (1998) was constructed to assess pupils’ academic self-perception. It consists of a 20-item scale incorporating simple self-referring statements to which the pupil can respond in a positive, negative or neutral manner, by circling one of five possible responses, ranging from (a) ‘definitely agree’ to (e) ‘strongly disagree’. The scoring system allocates points to each item, awarding 5 for the most positive response, through to 1 for the most negative.

The mean score on this scale, achieved through sampling a population of 389 Year 7 and 8 pupils, was 71.0. The standards deviation was 10.5 (Burden, 1998)

Figure 4.14 (i) Pre and Post Intervention scores recorded by R on the The Myself-As- Learner-Scale (MALS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre Intervention Score</th>
<th>Post Intervention Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R recorded a slightly higher score on the repeated test. It was not felt that it would be valid to subject this data to statistical testing procedures.

4.14.2 Pupil’s Feelings About School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW) – Part A

Part A of the PFSSW incorporates the School Motivation subscales. These focus on the students’ motivation across three domains – affective, cognitive and moral. These are subdivided into three further domains with items on the questionnaire defining aspects of each subscale.

Sixty items are presented to the student which are rated on a 5 point Likert Scale from (a) ‘definitely agree’ to (e) ‘strongly disagree’. Again, 5 points are awarded for the most positive response, through to 1 for the most negative.
A significant result on this scale would suggest an overall change in the student’s general levels of motivation.

Figure 4.14 (ii) Pre and Post Intervention scores recorded by R on the Pupil’s Feelings About School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW) – Part A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Subscale</th>
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<th>Post Intervention Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warmth</td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociability</td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Pressure</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most notable changes occur on the ‘Interest’ and ‘Warmth’ scales.

This data was analysed using a students’ t-test applied to difference scores (as described by Howell (1985), page 140).

Obtained value of \( t = 5.426 \)

Two-tailed test at the 1% level of significance, \( t_{0.05} (9) = 3.355 \)

Therefore this result was significant at the 1% level.

4.14.3 Pupil’s Feelings About School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW) – Part B

The second part of the questionnaire is concerned with the student’s Study Orientation. This is considered across three broad constructs – ‘Approach to studying’, ‘Style of Learning’ and ‘Associated Motivation’.
Figure 4.14 (iii) Pre and Post Intervention scores recorded by R on the Pupil’s Feelings About School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW) – Part B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Pre Intervention Score</th>
<th>Post Intervention Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deep approach</td>
<td>Approach to studying</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic style</td>
<td>Approach to studying</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic approach</td>
<td>Approach to studying</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>Associated motivation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of failure</td>
<td>Associated motivation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental motivation</td>
<td>Associated motivation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>Associated motivation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope for success</td>
<td>Associated motivation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface approach</td>
<td>Style of learning</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial style</td>
<td>Style of learning</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most significant changes were observed on the Hope for Success and Intrinsic Motivation items. Entwhistle and Kozeki (1985) describe these scales as follows:

**Hope for success** – *competitive, determined to do better than others so as to maintain a high level of self esteem*

**Intrinsic motivation** – *interested in the subject matter itself, is excited by academic topics and intellectual ideas*

A noticeably lower score was recorded on the Holist scale, described in the following way by Entwhistle and Kozeki (1985)

**Holist** – *concentrates initially on a broad view of the topic; learns best by making use of analogies and illustrations; prefers anecdotal personalised teaching; tends to generalise too readily and reach conclusions on inadequate evidence.*

This information was analysed using the same test

Obtained value of \( t = 2.187 \)

Two-tailed test at the 5% level of significance, \( t_{0.05} (9) = 2.262 \)

Therefore this result was not significant at the 5% level which suggested that there hadn’t been a significant shift in R’s overall attitude to learning.
I also applied the same test to the items that Entwhistle and Kozeki (1985) identify as being indicative of associated motivation.

Is this appropriate to do this?

4.15 Teachers evaluation form

The completed teacher evaluation form (for example see Appendix 3.3) stated that the R’s head of year felt there appeared to have been a moderate change in R’s general attitude towards school over the course of the intervention. She also noted that it was early days and added she would “suspect this will increase more”.

She indicated that there seemed to have been a little improvement in the areas of behaviour that were initially causing concern, but that the intervention might be helping to improve R’s self-esteem a great deal.

In terms of the items relating to the extent to which the intervention might be helping R to feel happier about herself and to take responsibility for her behaviour, these were both rated quite a lot. R’s head of year suggested that the intervention might be helping R to approach the curriculum with more confidence moderately. She felt that the intervention might be able to help provide staff at the school with a better understanding of R’s needs a little.

R’s head of year provided the response quite a lot when asked to comment on to what extent she had felt the intervention to been a positive experience for R. She gave the same response to the same question but from the school’s perspective.

She felt that the outcomes of the intervention might be beneficial a great deal in helping R in her future educational career. When asked to comment about the extent to which MI might be a satisfactory use of EP time in working with disaffected secondary school pupils, she responded quite a lot.

In terms of meeting the needs of the referral (in this case that R might be able to gain the skills that would enable her to do what she wanted in the future. Also to enable her to improve her attendance and commitment so that the school would be able to provide
her with a good reference) R’s head of year felt that the MI intervention might have helped *quite a lot*.

In conclusion R’s head of year stated:

*R valued the process as was evident by her punctuality and her co-operation in the process. Her attitude became more responsive and she showed a willingness to talk about issues which troubled her. Much of the process enabled R to reflect on her attitude and lack of motivation rather than informing her teachers. She has since had two interviews with myself and the SENCO and the signs are encouraging.*

4.16 Summary of results and issues from Case 1

Evidence from analysis of the MI process, from quantitative analysis of R’s questionnaires and from the responses made by the school suggests that this was perceived as being a successful and useful intervention. There appears to have been an overall shift in R’s perceptions of school, particularly in terms of her interest, motivation and hope for success. The success of R’s work experience placement was also likely to have been a factor in helping her to reconsider her approach to school.
CHAPTER 5 – Case 2 – D – Results and Discussion

5.1 Background Information

D was described by his head of year as a “bright, underachieving boy”. Scores on standardised tests showed him to be of above average ability and projective measures showed him to be capable of obtaining B/C grades at GCSE level. However, the school felt that he was demonstrating a level of motivation that was so low that they were concerned about whether he would actually take them. The head of year felt that D seemed to be making a deliberate choice not to work.

D’s homework was irregular and his attendance erratic. He was described as a ‘selective truant’ and it was reported that his absences were generally unauthorised. He had recently been excluded for a fixed term period following an incident involving an ‘organised theft’ from outside the school canteen.

It was reported that in class and around school D was generally co-operative, although his behaviour in class and commitment to his work depended on the subject and on his relationship with the subject teacher. His head of year stated that he sought approval and liked praise and attention.

The head of year mentioned that D enjoyed the company of his sister, who was in Year 9 and her friends. D’s two close other friends were both in Year 11. Both had learning difficulties and one was on an education supervision order and was also a regular truant. The head of year reported that D’s form group had ‘disowned’ him.

D was described as ‘emotionally immature’ even though he was one of the oldest pupils in the year. It was noted that he liked building dens, tree houses and fires. He often ended up in tears if challenged and was said to be ‘more like a Year 9 pupil’.

D was described as a smoker who experimented with alcohol. He had lost his part time job and the school thought he might be involved in minor criminal activity. He had been caught breaking into building sites. His head of year said he was ‘always short of money’ and suggested there was ‘not much money at home’.
D’s head of year thought that his self-esteem was low. She felt that he was easily led although ‘more intelligent’ than the other members of his social group. She felt that he held status within this group. She suggested that while D could understand what his difficulties were and how to help himself, he couldn’t seem to “follow it through”.

D’s head of year felt that his parents tried very hard, employing a number of strategies to try to help him to modify his behaviour. She reported that his dad would go and look for him when incidents of truancy were reported. She informed me that his parents had recently made a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service).

During the intervention it was agreed that D’s attendance and homework would be monitored.
5.2 Record of Session One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>7.6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>55 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview no.</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**
Initial chat rapport building
Use of questions:
*Do you know why I might be here to see you?*
*Is there anything you would like to tell me about yourself or anything you think I should know before we start?*

Use PCP techniques, self-characterisation task (Kelly, 1955) and triadic method of eliciting bipolar constructs. Use self-description grid to appraise self-perception in relation to these constructs.

Selected ideas from the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992) and from SFBT (George, Iveson and Ratner (1999)).

**Key areas covered and processes used**

**PCP work**
Self characterisation task – see Section 5.3.22

- On the self-description grid, D indicated that he felt himself to be someone who “likes drinking” who was “honest” and who “got to know people before making his mind up about them”

**Processes and techniques used:**
- Menu of strategies – a typical day (in relation to ‘skiving’ and ‘not skiving’). The good things and the less good things (in relation to ‘skiving’). Providing Information (Anger Management)
- Active listening techniques – Socratic questioning, summarising and hypothesis testing
- Solution focused problem free talk – what would life be like without problem
- Scaling questions (George, Iveson and Ratner, 1999)

**Areas covered**
- Truanting behaviour (‘skiving’)
- Attitude in class/trying harder at school
- Discussion about careers
- Making own decisions (‘not being a sheep’)

**Outcomes and plans for next session**
D likely to be at contemplative/determinism stage in model of phases of change (see Section 5.3.27)

For next session – discuss Anger Management Strategies

Use Solution Focused goal setting techniques to address behaviours considered to be problematic (‘skiving’ and trying harder at school)
5.3 Issues from Session One

5.3.2 Process Issues

5.3.21 Opening Strategy

After introducing myself I began by asking D if he had any idea why he thought I might be here to see him to which he replied:

Because I've not been doing that well and I keep skiving off and just not doing any work

I proceeded to follow the same format as I had done in my previous interview with R. She however had not presented any reasons for why I might be present. I felt with hindsight that given that D had immediately raised a concern that it would have been more useful to continue to investigate this, perhaps using the Menu of Strategies rather than distract from the issue by attempting to build rapport using PCP techniques.

5.3.22 Use of PCP techniques

Of the PCP strategies I used, the most important information came from the first technique; the self-characterisation task I had adapted from the work of Kelly (1955). D’s responses in this case were:

He seems to not care but he does and he’s always getting things wrong…

Like if he got a problem – with his parents or something – he'd take the easy way out and just ignore it…think it would go away

He doesn’t always try his best and then realises that he should have

When I asked what D might be doing in class he replied that he might be “Just messing about and not really concentrating”.

These early responses initially suggested that he might be at what McNamara (1998) describes as the Contemplation/Determinism phase (i.e. at stages 2-3 of the model developed by Prochaska and DiClemente (1982). He appeared to be demonstrating an “acknowledgement of the problem situation and a desire for change” Although at this early stage he had not made any sort of “statement of intent to do something about the problem”.

Cathy Atkinson – MSc in Educational Psychology 2000
5.3.23 Socratic questioning

I felt that having established some rapport with D that I would now return to the issues he had raised at the beginning of the interview which were “skiving” and “just not doing any work”.

I drew on the ‘a typical day’ item from the Menu of Strategies to try and establish what D’s behaviour would be on a day in which he did or didn’t ‘skive’. I also asked him how he would be feeling on these occasions. McNamara (1998) describes this type of technique as ‘Socratic questioning’ and suggests that it can help:

> to facilitate “guided discovery” i.e. to facilitate the client “discovering and verbalising concerns about his/her situation

I felt that the technique would help D to identify how he was feeling in certain situations, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you be feeling in these lessons?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Like I'd done something…got it right…then I'd feel pretty chuffed with myself.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>And how would you feel about that, once you'd left school?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'll just be annoyed for a bit and then starting thinking “Why did I do it?” cos I know I'm going to get in trouble for it. Then I'll just want to skive again because I'll be in trouble at school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.24 Solution Focused techniques

I also used some SFBT techniques and questions, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What things would make you stay in school?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not wanting to mess everything up, because then you get put on report and all the teachers start thinking you don't care.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think life would be like if you never skived off?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A whole lot easier, because all the teachers would have more trust in you and then you'd give a damn more.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition I used the scaling questions method (see Section 2.8.23). D rated himself as 8 on both the ‘Wish to change (motivation)’ and the ‘Commitment’ scales. Again this seemed to be indicative of a student who was contemplating changing his behaviour.

5.3.25 Summarising and hypothesis testing

Another technique I used was that of summarising. McNamara (1998) describes this as the “drawing together of utterances... into a neat succinct summary”.

At the same time, I was attempting to hypothesis test my theory that D’s ‘skiving’ might impact on how he was perceived by his peer group.

```
So you’ve mentioned that if you skive off you can go on report, that it’s harder to come back into school afterwards because you’re going to get into trouble and also that it gives you time to think and to regret your decision to skive. Is there anything else that’s kind of a less good thing about skiving off?

You lose your parents trust. They end up dropping you off at school and watching you go in. You’re allowed to go places and that.

So it impinges on your social life and maybe on how your friends see you because you can’t walk to school with friends and so on.

Yes
```

5.3.26 Providing Information

Item 5 on the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992) is concerned with providing information. I was able to use this technique to offer D the opportunity to do some work on Anger Management. I attempted to do this in a sensitive manner and in response to what I perceived to be a desire for change.

```
So at the moment, would it be hard not to skive at all.

I’m not sure. I don’t have to if I don’t want to. But some days I just think “sack it, I’ll just go”.

But you think that you could certainly reduce the number of times you skive.

Yes.

Well that’s really positive because you’ve made some commitment from saying that and you’ve obviously thought it through, that you actually want things to change in that respect, so I suppose, what I would see my job now to be - and I’ll run this past you to see if this is all right with you - would be to actually talk about how we might make things a bit easier for you to do that. For example, I’ve
```
done some work on Anger Management, which is talking about, when you get really upset and angry about something, say for example when the teacher criticises you and you get something wrong and you said you got quite annoyed and that might be a time at which you skived off school. Now Anger Management would teach you a little bit more about how to recognise that you are feeling annoyed and maybe to think about the choices you make at that particular point. Would that be something that would be helpful to you do you think.

Yes. because I wouldn’t get so angry and run away from here.

5.3.27 Using the Model for Stages of Change

As with R (see Section 4.3.25) I tried to map the statements from the first interview onto the Model of Stages of change. My conclusions are shown below in Figure 5.3 (i).

Figure 5.3 (i) Mapping D’s statements from Session One onto the Model for Stages of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil Statement</th>
<th>Phase of Change</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’ve not been doing that well and I keep skiving off and just not doing any work</td>
<td>Contemplation/ Determinism</td>
<td>Acknowledgement of the problem situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…it does get a bit annoying cos I used to do it a lot [truanting]</td>
<td>Determinism</td>
<td>The use of ‘used’ would suggest that a decision to change has been taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There’s a few people that are just bad news…..just asking me to like go robbing stuff with them and that…and skive off….so I just try and stay away from them. [truanting]</td>
<td>Determinism</td>
<td>Acknowledgement of the problem situation and an example of a pupil experimenting with a self-change strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well my dad’s been saying “Don’t be a sheep and make up your own mind to do things”.</td>
<td>Contemplation/ Determinism</td>
<td>Acknowledgement of the problem situation and a desire for change but falls short of a statement of intent to do something about the problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And do you think you’re at that stage?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.3 Practitioner Issues

5.3.31 When to use PCP

I did not feel that I gained much more information from eliciting the bipolar constructs and from the self-description grid techniques. I felt afterwards, that given that D had
been so candid about his difficulties during the opening strategy and in the self-characterisation task, that actually persisting with these activities this instance these activities did not constitute the best use of my time.

In future, I think that where the client expressed concern early on in the MI process, I would continue straight away with using the Menu of Strategies, rather than using the PCP rapport building tasks.
5.4 Record of Session Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>9.6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>55 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview no.</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**

Present Anger Management strategies (see Faupel Herrick and Sharp (1998) and Feindler and Ecton (1986))

Consider:
- Concept of Antecedents, Behaviour, Consequences (ABCs)
- Identification of ABCs
- Assertion techniques
- Relaxation training (from Feindler and Ecton (1986))
- Fool in the Ring (Feindler and Ecton (1986))

Use SFBT techniques to establish realistic and unrealistic goals

**Key areas covered and processes used**

Processes and techniques used:
- Anger Management - techniques as described above

Use SFBT techniques to establish realistic and unrealistic goals in relation to 'skiving' and trying harder in lessons

Areas covered
- In addition to those described above
- Work experience placement
- What would happen to the parents of persistent truants (legal issues)

**Outcomes and plans for next session**

Following the session, I wondered if D felt that he could maintain his current levels of behaviour regarding skiving and not trying harder and still obtain the qualifications he wanted to effectively qualify him for a job as a mechanic – I decided to consider using provoking, undershooting and overshooting techniques in the next meeting

Recap on goals and review success of Anger Management Strategies

Discuss work experience placement
5.5 Issues from Session Two

5.5.1 Process Issues

5.5.1.1 Goal setting

I used the realistic and unrealistic goals task (as described in Section 4.5.22) to help D to identify ways in which he might address the behaviours he had identified as problematic (skiving and trying harder in lessons). This produced the following suggestions:

**Figure 5.5 (i) D – Realistic and unrealistic goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviour</th>
<th>Unrealistic goals</th>
<th>Realistic goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skiving</td>
<td>Not go out of school at all</td>
<td>Not to skive when people tell me to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not to skive when I get really annoyed and just can't think about anything</td>
<td>Not to go out of school just to skive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not to go out of school when my friends come to see me for lunch (but could go back later)</td>
<td>Consider what will happen if I do skive before leaving school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying harder in lessons</td>
<td>To do my work perfectly every time</td>
<td>Get on with the work and try and do the best I can</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I felt this was a technique that provided D with a range of options with how to address these behaviours. I presented him with a copy for reference at the following session.

5.5.12 Providing information – legal issues regarding truancy

At the end of the session, D raises concerns about a friend whose parents had been taken to court for persistent truanting.

*Is there anything else you'd like to know more about?*

*Can you just like...say I didn’t come into school a lot. Is it your parents that get done? They can get fined can’t they?*

*I think that would depend on the situation really. I wouldn’t know. I think if you didn’t come to school initially the school would inform your parents and if your parents were doing all they could about it I wouldn’t have thought they would go...*
to court, but that I suppose would be for someone to assess whether or not your parents are doing all they could. If your parents deliberately kept you at home, I suspect they would go to court. I'm not sure though, it's out of my area really.

It's just...my mate doesn't come to school and he got taken to court loads of times and his parents didn't get fined but they let him stay off...he just stays in bed in the morning. They don't get him up.

They went to court but they didn't fine them?

Yes.

I don't know why that would be. Perhaps there wasn't proof or they decided that wouldn't be the most helpful thing to do. That sounds like a decision made in court. I that something you're thinking about at the moment?

No, I just think they should have done something...cos he's not in school ...he came in for one lesson yesterday and got punched a few times, went to casualty

I found D’s questions surrounding this issue very interesting. I wondered if on one hand that D might but worried that his parents might become embroiled in some sort of legal action if he persisted in truanting. However, I felt that it was interesting that he felt that something ought to be done. I felt that I needed to raise this issue again with D. I discuss how I did this in Section 5.7.22.

5.5.2 Practitioner Issues

5.5.21 Intent to change and actual change

When I was in school to see R, on 12.6.00, D’s head of year informed me that following our session on 9.6.00 that he had left the school premises. I found this interesting, given his clear expression of a desire to modify his behaviour during the firsts and second sessions. As discussed in Section 5.3.17, D’s responses had led me to believe that he was at the determinism phase. In fact to some extent he seemed to have made a decision that he wanted to modify his behaviour.

This new information suggested that there was actually a mismatch in what D was saying and what he was doing. It made me wonder to what extent MI could be used independently, without behavioural monitoring or school based consultation. Although my impression from the initial sessions was that we had made progress, what was clear was that D would need assistance in seeing through his expressed desire to modify his behaviour.
Prochaska and DiClemente (1982) stress that a decision to change does not mean that change will necessarily occur. They propose two phases in the change process. In the first the client reaches a decision to change through MI techniques. Phase two related turning that commitment into behavioural change.

5.5.22 Providing information – Anger Management

I was able to draw on techniques from another paradigm, that of Anger Management, following D’s acceptance of my offer to provide him with more information about this area. This is another method that could be incorporated into the Cheshire Model (see Section 2.7).

Anger Management draws on Cognitive-Behavioural strategies. Such strategies might be useful techniques in transforming stated into actual behavioural change.
### 5.6 Record of Session Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview no.</strong></td>
<td>Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date of interview</strong></td>
<td>15.6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time of interview</strong></td>
<td>10.20 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length of session</strong></td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**

Recap on progress re: realistic and unrealistic goals and Anger Management strategies.

Hypothesis testing using overshooting/provoking techniques – e.g. “I wonder if because you can get Bs and Cs without trying too hard and because they’ll be good enough to get you a job as a mechanic that you actually feel that you don’t need to work too hard and that you can skive off?”

Discuss awareness of having five GCSEs – A-C as opposed to less than five – difference in terms of career choices. Opportunities in the future. Case examples of people who have gone back to school etc.

Introduce concept that D might be a risk taker. “You’d take more risks than me” – e.g. re: exams

Discuss work experience – has D got something organised?

Try to think about moving towards a final meeting – drawing up a joint plan

**Key areas covered and processes used**

Processes and techniques used:

- Anger Management – techniques as described above
- Menu of Strategies – providing information – re: GCSEs
- MI techniques – provoking, overshooting, summarising, paraphrasing
- SFBT techniques – Problem Free talk
- Use SFBT techniques to establish realistic and unrealistic goals in relation to ‘skiving’ and trying harder in lessons

**Areas covered**

- Work experience placement
- ‘Skiving’
- Attitude in lessons
- Being more assertive – “not being a sheep”
- Monitoring own behaviour – target setting

**Outcomes and plans for next session**

Two-week work experience placement before the next session. Aim to help build on motivation from that. Look at career aspirations. Be aware of gap between sessions

Recap on earlier work.

Explore ways of monitoring behaviour – maintaining change – seeing it through present ideas from McNamara (1996)

Discuss further the idea of finishing with a joint consultation meeting
5.7 Issues from Session Three

5.7.1 Background Information

When I arrived in school on the morning of 15.6.00 at 10.15am (for my 10.35am appointment with D) he was waiting for me anxiously. He asked me where I’d been and told me that he had a dentist appointment at 11.00am. We therefore had a slightly briefer 40-minute session.

As with R (see Section 4.5.1) I felt that this showed a commitment to the counselling process and might be provide further evidence of D’s motivation to address the behaviours that were considered to be problematic.

5.7.2 Process Issues

5.7.21 Provoking

Prior to the session I pondered the following hypothesis: D was of above average ability and had obtained B and C grades in his end of Year exams, much to the surprise of his teachers and with apparently minimal effort and commitment. At the same time, D had stated that he wanted to pursue a career as a mechanic, for which I though that the type of grades he would be likely to get would be adequate. I wondered if it was then possible for D to maintain his truanting behaviour and still get what he wanted from school.

I felt that presenting this to D, might best be described as ‘provoking’:

```
I was just wondering…the other day…thinking about everything, thinking about your skiving, but also about the fact that even though before you skived off and didn't try that much, you still managed to come out with Bs and Cs. Now if you know somebody in this garage then... I don't know... what qualifications would you actually need to go and work there

I don't know...I'd have to find out

OK, cos I was just wondering if maybe you felt that you don't have to get particularly high qualifications

I don't know. Well I'll go for the highest I can get anyway. Cos then if I don't get a job in a garage somewhere I can still get something else
```
At the time this appeared to counter my hypothesis.

5.7.22 Columbo Technique

In Section 5.7.22, I described how D had raised concerns over what might happen, in legal terms to the parents of a student who was not attending school. I referred back to this and in doing so, used the Columbo technique

We talked a bit at the end of the last session about what might happen to people who skive a lot and you actually had an example of a friend who you thought... their parents had actually been taken to court and I just really wondered what you thought school should do. I don't really know a great deal about secondary schools and I wondered... I don't know what could be done to help pupils that skive a lot.

Well, like we're pretty good mates now, and we've sort of made this ...how can I put it...like agreement thing, that he can't get up in the morning, because he's too lazy and he can't be bothered and stuff, so if I call for him in the morning and get him up, then we can like do revision together and stuff like that... we're like helping each other

This time I used the feigned incompetence, suggested by McNamara (1998). The strategy was successful because it led on to discussions regarding a “helping” response that D was able to come up with.

5.7.23 Solution focused techniques

I once again drew on techniques from the SFBT paradigm in helping D to identify ways to achieve his goals.

So how will you know when you’re getting things right

I don't know...like....well school will just be easier...cos like I won't be in trouble all the time

OK. How will you know when you’re trying harder?

Cos I know how I used to be

How will your teachers know you're trying harder in lessons?

Because I'm doing all the work and...well most of it... and coming in more... stuff like that

And what about your parents. How would they know?
They wouldn’t be getting letters home every week, saying he’s not been in here, he’s not been in there

I found this type of questioning easy to implement and effective to use. I felt that it had enabled D to identify a number of positive aspects about changing his behaviour.

5.7.3 Practitioner Issues

5.7.31 Suggesting a consultative meeting – dealing with student reluctance

During the session, I suggested to D that it might be helpful if we were to meet with his head of year to discuss some of the issues we had talked about. My rationale for this was two-fold. Firstly it related to the suggestion by Miller and Rollnick (1991) that dedication to a plan may be enhanced by making it public (see also Section 4.9.22). My other reason related to the fact that I was aware that we had only two more sessions. I felt that it would be helpful to the school to be aware of the issues and the self-help strategies D had presented. My reasons for this are described further in Section 4.9.31.

However, D was reluctant to agree to this meeting as the dialogue below suggests:

It’s good that you shared the anger stuff with your dad because that will make him aware of what you are doing. Would that be something you would be happy talking to someone at school about?

Like who?

That might be best for you to say, maybe [head of year]

About just like this stuff

About the things we talked about, to make her aware of the strategies we’ve discussed

I don’t know. She’s a bit scary…she always gets like dead moody about me

This could be indicative of a mismatch between D’s stated desire to modify his behaviour and his commitment to implementing behavioural change. Alternatively, his concerns about the meeting could have been genuine (although I did try to allay these in further discussions). One possible way of alleviating such apprehensions might be for teachers to share the MI approach with EPs (see Section 4.13.32).
5.7.32 Direct persuasion

I was conscious during this time of the sentiments of Rollnick and Miller (1995) who state that;

_Direct persuasion is not an effective method for resolving ambivalence_

and advise that the counsellor shouldn’t try to be ‘helpful’ by persuading the client about the urgency of the problem and the benefits of change. In light of this, I did not want to put D under too much pressure regarding the joint meeting.
5.8 Record of Session Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>4.7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview no.</td>
<td>Four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>10.35am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**
Discuss work experience:
*How did your work experience go?*
*How will things be different now that you’re back in school?*

Talk about monitoring behaviour – present ideas from Pupil Management book (McNamara, 1996)

Broach subject of joint meeting again – remember *Do not rush clients into decision making* (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992)

Think about eliciting commitment
Miller and Rollnick (1991) suggest that the more a client verbalises a plan to others, the more the commitment to change is strengthened – tie in with behavioural monitoring ideas

**Key areas covered and processes used**

Processes and techniques used:
- Menu of Strategies – providing information – re: GCSEs
- MI techniques – rewording, Socratic questioning, parroting, summarising
- Solution focused talk – *How do you think things will be different now that you’re back in school?*
- Ways for monitoring behaviour

Areas covered
- Work experience placement
- Did D want to pursue all of his GCSE subjects?
- Solution focused talk – *How do you think things will be different now that you’re back in school?*
- Review of goals in relation to skiving and attitude in lessons
- Presented and described examples of joint pupil teacher monitoring aids (from McNamara, 1996).
  - Co-operative Monitoring Diary (Figure, 22, page 23) and Co-operative Monitoring Diary: Variation 1 (Figure 26, page 26) of McNamara (1996)
- Relapse – according to the Model of Stages of Change

**Outcomes and plans for next session**

Meeting four was much shorter as had been the case with R (Section 4.9.36). Due to loss of rapport, D not feeling well, fewer issues to discuss?

Although I was conscious of not wanting to rush D into change, I was concerned about him not being able to see things through and felt that a joint consultation meeting would be the most effective way of enabling him to do this. As a result I took the decision to persist with trying to get him to agree to such a meeting.

Present ideas for behavioural monitoring program to D during the next session

**Actions**
- Present summary of the main issues arising from our discussions in memo format
5.9 **Issues from Session Four**

5.9.1 **Background Information**

Prior to the fourth session, I spoke to D’s head of year on the telephone. She reported that D had not managed to get anything organised initially for work experience. He came into school for three days and was given simple jobs to do. Much to his head of year’s surprise, he had been attending, but he had not been enjoying the activities provided for him.

After three days, he reported that he had been given a work experience post. He had rung up a garage where a friend of his was supposed to be working. The friend had not turned up and the owner offered D the placement for “showing his initiative”.

The placement was a resounding success. The head of year reported that he had been “first through the door and last out of it” every day. D had been involved in practical activities, stripping engines down. He had thoroughly enjoyed it and shown great enthusiasm. The people at the garage were delighted with his contribution. D later told me that he had been offered an apprenticeship for when he left school at the end of Year 11.

D’s head of year questioned whether or not pursuing a full quota of GCSE subjects in Year 11 would be most appropriate in terms of his academic provision. I later broached this with him during our meeting.

When I first met D in the corridor and asked him how he was he replied that he was “Not great”. He later reported that he had had “a too good a night last night”. D was less talkative than in previous meetings and appeared tired and rather bleary-eyed. While I felt that I was very much driving this session, D’s general state of health on that particular morning could have been a contributory factor to the degree to which he wanted to participate in the meeting.

5.9.2 **Process Issues**

5.9.21 **Counsellor/client rapport**
As with R (see Section 4.9.34) I felt that there had been a slight loss of rapport during the time when D was away on work experience. I was not sure if this was as a result of the break or if D was less responsive because he was not feeling well (see Section 5.9.1).

There was also evidence to suggest that I wasn’t really communicating with D in language that was most conducive to his needs.

Does that make sense?

No I’m not exactly sure what you mean

Right. We’ve talked about the issues. You’ve expressed some ways in which you’d like to change. In a sense, this is keeping a track of how things are going

Right, yeah

Is that better?

Yes. [laughs]. He does that at the garage. He speaks in some language you can’t understand. It’s a bit weird

Nelson-Jones (1995) talks about the importance of language in the counselling process, in encouraging effective communication. To this extent it would influence the level of rapport between the client and the counsellor.

5.9.22 Conjoint Pupil-Teacher Monitoring

In light of D’s ideas that something ought to be done about his friend who was a persistent truant (see Section 5.5.12) but also his evident lack of commitment to seeing through the change process, I decided to present him with some ideas to do with conjoint pupil-teacher monitoring. In describing this approach McNamara (1996) suggests:

The on-report system is recommended when there is little, if any, pupil commitment to change.

McNamara (1996) further states that:

Consequentially it is substantially teacher determined and conforms to the administrative model of change. ie the pupil is substantially passive.
In line with one of the key elements of MI, that “motivation to change is elicited from the client, and not imposed from without” (Miller and Rollnick, 1995) I was keen to try and avoid D having a passive role. I wanted to work with him in negotiating ways in which he could monitor his behaviour, with the support of the teacher, in a way that would be helpful to him.

I presented D with two examples of joint pupil teacher monitoring aids provided by McNamara (1996). These were the Co-operative Monitoring Diary (Figure, 22, page 23) and the Co-operative Monitoring Diary: Variation 1 (Figure 26, page 26).

D was quite enthusiastic about using one of the monitoring diaries.

They basically help you to keep a check on your own behaviour to help you see how things are going

Then you know how the teacher’s thinking

What do you think?

Yeah…it’s just like a report thing

Do you have a report system at school?

Yes, but only if you’ve been in trouble

Does, it actually help to be on report?

Yes, because you work better so you’ll get good comments. But then you get took off and you start messing around

Right. So would you be prepared to have something like this

Yes

Would you like me for our next session to….?

Draw one up

Draw one up

Yes. That would be useful

5.9.3 Practitioner Issues

5.9.31 Considering Relapse
As we had some time at the end of the session, I decided to broach the issue of relapse with D. I did this using the following approach.

\[\text{Fine.....The only other thing I would say to you is that ...I'm sure this is something you are aware of...however good our intentions are, there's always a point where things don't go quite as well as we hoped they might. It's what people call relapse. Whenever they're trying to change their behaviour in a certain way, there may be a time when... I expect you've heard about, maybe when people are trying to lose weight and they go out to a restaurant then think “Oh I had four cream cakes last night. What's the point?”. That's what's called relapse. So what I'm saying to you is that while I appreciate that you are going to try and change, there may be times when you have a bad day and you think. “Oh, it's all a waste of time” and so long as you know things might not go right all the time, but you've still got those goals in sight. You still know where you're going at the end.}

\[\text{Just try not to fall back into it}

\[\text{Yeah. Just don't get disheartened if one day things don't go quite as well as they might}

\[\text{Yes}\]

In doing this, I was considering the sentiments of Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) who state:

\[\text{Resolutions to change often break down. Make sure the student understands this and does not avoid contact if things go wrong.}\]

While I was keen not to condone his behaviour, I didn’t want him to feel that in relapsing, the process would be finished.
## 5.10 Record of Session Five

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Interview no.</th>
<th>Four</th>
</tr>
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<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>4.7.00</td>
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<td>10.35am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
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### Plan of session
- Review progress
- Go through the memo (Appendix 5.5)
- Broach with D the idea of having a joint consultation meeting
- Discuss ideas for conjoint pupil-teacher monitoring

### Key areas covered and processes used

#### Processes and techniques used:
- Solution focused memo writing (Johal –Smith and Stephenson, 2000)
- Selective active listening techniques – Socratic questioning,
- Solution Focused questions
- Techniques from the Menu of Strategies – the good things and the less good things
- Conjoint teacher-pupil monitoring
- Representing choices by diagram
- CBT – identifying ‘triggers’

#### Areas covered
- Dealing with relapse – re. ‘skiving’
- Behavioural monitoring programme – drafts discussed and suggested amendments made by D
- Points from the memo

#### Outcomes and plans for next session
- Joint consultation meeting – D agreed to meet with his head of year to discuss the memo and the behavioural monitoring programme.
- Behavioural monitoring sheets to be adapted to address the changes requested by D.

## 5.11 Issues from Session Five

### 5.11.1 Background Information

Prior to Session Five, I had spoken to D’s head of year on the telephone. She reported that the previous day, D had gone out of school and that she had telephoned his parents. D was said to be very remorseful at his behaviour, saying “I don’t know why I did it” and “I knew I’d get caught”.

### 5.11.11 Dealing with Relapse
I had broached the subject of relapse with D at the end of Session Four (see Section 5.9.31) and had also made a note in D’s memo that said “You are aware that things don’t always go perfectly and are keen to not fall back into old ways if things occasionally don’t go quite right”. I was keen to stress to D the sentiments of McNamara (1998) and Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) in being realistic about relapse in terms of the overall process (see Section 2.2.16).

However, I did wonder if D was using this to justify his ‘skiving’ behaviour. For example:

```
That’s interesting, because we talked about maybe when things don’t go so well at the end of last session
I’ve just kind of dropped back into it
```

The following conversation is with regard to the item about relapse on the memo (see above):

```
Does that seem reasonable to you?
Yeah, apart from [indicates last item] where that one is. I might sometimes fall back into it, maybe one lesson or something, then regret it and come back in
And is that how you want things to be?
No... but that’s what will probably happen, cos it’s happened once, and I’m trying not to do it again
```

I wondered how keen D was to address the behaviour that he had seemed so keen at the outset to address.

5.11.12 The good things and the less good things

I again used this technique from the Menu of Strategies described by Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) in relation to the previous day’s truanting incident.

```
So Monday morning. What were the good things about doing that?
I went round to my mates house cos he’s left school and we’re planning a camp trip in the summer, so we just sat in a tree and just talked about that for a few hours
OK. Now I know you got caught, but just assuming that you hadn’t, what would have been the less good things about doing that
```
I felt that at this point D’s ideas about the less good things in relation to skiving were less clear than they had been earlier in the process (for example, see Section 5.3.25)

5.11.13 Conjoint Pupil/Teacher Monitoring

I provided D with some examples of teacher/self monitoring sheets provided by McNamara (1996). This was in response to D suggesting that he might have been less likely to ‘skive’ if someone had seen him in school.

D was keen to have a form which you couldn’t ‘forge’. He felt that asking the teachers to make a comment would be one way of achieving this. This seemed to be indicative of a lack of self-efficacy in feeling that he could stop himself skiving. D also asked for a system by which his behaviour could be graded from A (‘very good’) to D (‘bad’). D identified the following targets for himself:

- Turn up to lessons
- Work hard and quietly
- Get homework’s in

I felt that this system was a step forward in providing D with a formal way in which he could review progress towards his stated goals.

5.11.2 Practitioner Issues

5.11.21 Goals of Motivational Interviewing

At this stage I found it useful to return to the Goals of MI, described by McNamara (1998) (see Section 2.3). In light of my comments surrounding D’s apparent lack of self-efficacy in feeling that he could control his truanting behaviour (Section 5.11.12), I wondered how successful I might have been in promoting the other objectives described by McNamara (1998).

5.12 Record of Session Six

D did not appear for Section Six, despite his agreement to meet with myself and the head of year in session five having left the school premises. I was slightly disappointed
although not altogether surprised. D had expressed some reluctance to the meeting throughout the process and I was quite surprised that he had stated aduring session five that he would be willing.

D had said during Session 4 that he would be happy for me to discuss our meetings with his head of year without him being present. I did not wish to do this without his consent on the day. I decided to leave the memo I had discussed with him with his head of Year (I did not show it to her) in an envelope. I felt this would give him the opportunity to discuss the points raised with her if he so chose, and enable him to still feel that he had ownership of the process.

I did provide D’s head of year with the monitoring sheet that D had drawn up with me because I felt that his intention to use it was clear and that it did require some degree of explanation in order that it might be useful to the school.

5.13 Issues from Session Six

5.13.1 Process issues

5.13.11 Reasons for non-attendance at the meeting.

In contemplating D’s decision not to attend the final meeting, I am drawn back to considering his initial reluctance to agree to a joint consultation meeting in the first place (see Section 5.7.31). Alternatively it might have been more of a case that D simply did not want to modify his behaviour (see Section 5.13.13).

5.13.12 The Action and Maintenance Phases

Despite D’s non-attendance at the meeting, the fact that he had agreed to use the teacher-student self-monitoring sheets suggesting that in this respect at least he was at least considering the ‘Action’ phase of the Model of Stages of Change. Cheshire EPS (2000) suggests that this phases might be most effectively co-ordinated by a designated school based person, rather than by the EP. This seemed to be to be another important reason for ‘handing over’ the process to the head of year.

5.13.13 Exiting the model?
The alternative view (and perhaps one supported by the results of the head of year’s evaluation) is that D chose to exit the Model of Stages of Change. At the outset of the process, he appeared to be at Stages 2-3 (Contemplation/Determinism). It is possible that he made an active choice at the determinism phase to continue with his truanting behaviour. It is possible that this might have been a response to the fact that despite his previous ‘problematic’ behaviour, he had still managed to achieve Bs and Cs in his Year 10 exams. He had also been offered an apprenticeship during his work experience for which I suspect this level of qualification would be more than adequate. It perhaps raises the question about for whom the behaviour is a problem and whether D felt that he could maintain the social and status-related benefits of his truanting, while still leaving school with the qualifications he needed.

5.13.2 Practitioner Issues

5.13.21 Ongoing consultation and the importance of a strong relationship between EP and school

For most of the process, I was working at an individual level with D meant that apart from a few quick conversations with the head of year. D was very honest about his behaviour throughout the whole process. However I did not really have an accurate idea of how, from the school’s perspective, he was functioning within the school environment and whether the interventions were having much impact on his behaviour.

I feel that this aspect would be addressed in a situation where I had a greater understanding of the school as a system and how D as an individual might fit into it.

5.14 Results of self-assessment questionnaires

Figure 5.14 (i) Pre and Post Intervention scores recorded by D on the The Myself-As- Learner-Scale (MALS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre Intervention Score</th>
<th>Post Intervention Score</th>
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</thead>
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<td>61</td>
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</table>

Figure 5.14 (ii) Pre and Post Intervention scores recorded by D on the Pupil’s Feelings About School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW)
Evaluation of an Intervention for Student Disaffection using “Motivational Interviewing” Techniques

Figure 5.14 (iii) Pre and Post Intervention scores recorded by R on the Pupil’s Feelings About School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW) – Part B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Pressure</td>
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5.15 Teachers evaluation form

The completed teacher evaluation form (for example see Appendix 3.3) stated that the D’s head of year felt that in terms of items 1 – 3 (relating to a positive behavioural change, improvement in the areas causing concern and improving self-esteem) that the intervention had helped not at all. The same was true for items 5 and 6 which related to
D approaching the curriculum with more confidence and taking responsibility for his behaviour.

She also felt that the intervention had been not at all beneficial in the extent to which it might help to provide staff at the school with a better understanding of D’s needs. She provided the same response when asked to what extent she felt that outcomes of the intervention might be beneficial in helping D in his educational career.

D’s head of year did feel that the intervention might be helping D to feel happier about himself a little bit. She gave the same response to questions 8 and 9 which asked to what extent the intervention might have been a positive intervention for the student and school respectively.

When asked to comment about the extent to which MI might be a satisfactory use of EP time in working with disaffected secondary school pupils, she responded a little adding “in this case!”.. 

In terms of meeting the needs of the referral (in this case that D might be happier with himself and be able to get himself out of the rut he has got himself into and to find a way to get the good GCSEs that he seems capable of) D’s head of year felt that the MI intervention might have helped not at all.

In conclusion D’s head of year stated:

D has viewed his time as an opportunity to spend time out of lessons and whilst the experience between you and D has appeared to be very positive with some excellent outcomes, it has not changed the behaviour pattern. D remains on a one-to-one a great character but is reluctant to ‘conform’ even though he sees the logic in doing so. He is continuing to truant from school and he has been absent so that a positive feedback has not been achieved.

5.16 Summary of results and issues from Case 2

The results of the teacher evaluation form suggest that in D’s case, the MI intervention was not perceived to be a particularly helpful intervention from either D’s or the school’s perspective, or a profitable use of EP time.

I speculate in Section 5.13.13 that D may have taken the option to ‘exit’ the model. However, alternatively he may make an alternative choice to use the conjoint pupil-
teacher management sheets and may choose to move to the Action phase. Because this study coincided with the end of term it is not clear what the longer or even medium-term effects of what this intervention will be.

Whereas the work experience placement appeared to have positive impact on R, it appeared to have the opposite effect on D. He had had a very successful placement, at the end of which he had been offered an apprenticeship for when he finished the course.

I would like to speculate that possibly the outcomes of the intervention might have been viewed more favourably had D chosen to attend the joint consultation meeting. This might have resulted in some sort of public commitment to change, at least in terms of D’s use of the conjoint pupil-teacher monitoring programmes.
CHAPTER 6 – Case 3 – M – Results and Discussion

6.1 Background Information

M’s referral was related to his general negative attitude to school and apparent low self-esteem. Despite attending a school in a very affluent area, M lived on a council estate within an area of considerable socio-economic deprivation. M had a younger brother who was a high achiever and had a place at an esteemed independent school.

He was described as being ‘offhand’, ‘stubborn’ and ‘surlry’. M’s head of year felt that this offhandedness was linked to his low self-esteem. Although he wasn’t on a record of support, the SENCO felt that M had organisational difficulties and found it hard to organise his thoughts.

M’s parents had a rather strained relationship with the school. In Year 7, M had been excluded over what they considered a rather trivial incident and as a result they had informed the press and the story had been in the local papers. The SENCO reported that there still appeared to be tension between the school and M’s parents although she had met with them and found them to be supportive.

M had been physically bullied while he was a younger pupil. He was described as a boy who didn’t have many friends and who had difficulties forming friendships. M’s friends were mainly from the pupils in the learning support department and were a close knit group. They also shared the same social background. There were suggestions that M was still being bullied and his parents still felt that this was an issue. It was noted that M was sensitive to the comments of his peers and ‘occasionally reacts’.

Organising M’s parental consent proved a little difficult. M misplaced his original letter and a further hand-written note from the SENCO. Eventually he returned a second hand-written request, the day before the MI sessions were due to begin.

During the intervention it was agreed that M’s form tutor would monitor his general attitude towards school, making informal notes about any incidents of particular relevance.
6.2 Record of Session One

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview no.</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>1.45pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**

Initial chat rapport building
Use of questions:

- *Do you know why I might be here to see you?*
- *Is there anything you would like to tell me about yourself or anything you think I should know before we start?*

Use PCP techniques, self-characterisation task (Kelly, 1955) and triadic method of eliciting bipolar constructs. Use self-description grid to appraise self-perception in relation to these constructs.

Selected ideas from the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992) and from SFBT (George, Iveson and Ratner (1999)).

**Key areas covered and processes used**

**PCP work**

Self characterisation task – “He likes sport and computers”, “He doesn’t like school”, “He doesn’t like being given work but he has to do it at school”

Triadic methods task – not as successful – did not use the formal self characterisation grid. *M felt he was someone who did get along with people, but rated himself in the middle for the ‘Goes out but doesn’t hang around with stupid people – does stupid things on a Friday night’ item*

**Processes and techniques used:**

- A typical lesson – describing a good and a not so good lesson (IT and RE respectively)
- Active listening techniques – positive restructuring, structuring, Socratic questioning, summarising and hypothesis testing
- Information providing – re: concerns about safety in school

**Areas covered**

- Lessons – good and bad points
- Relevance/irrelevance of school subjects
- Previous educational career
- Bullying incidents in Years 7 and 8
- Feeling unsafe in school

**Outcomes and plans for next session**

Told SENCO about M’s worries about his safety in school.

Consider whether M is a suitable candidate for an MI approach or whether a referral through another channel (e.g. CAMHS) might be more appropriate)

Sought information regarding mental health issues

Focus on M’s comments “That’s why I don’t like the school. That’s why I stopped doing hardly anything. I just do as much as I’ve got to do”. Explore these further – reasons for doing so and also the potential impact they might have on his educational career
6.3 Issues from Session One

6.3.1 Process Issues

6.3.11 Mental health issues?

During the session M raised concerns about not feeling safe at school. He told me that “Anyone could get into the school” and raised the issues of Dunblane, the IRA and “..burglars and psychos coming in..”.

At this point, I was worried that there might be mental health issues and at this point I ceased the MI approach and tried to turn ‘information provider’ in order to try and alleviate M’s anxieties. I asked M at the end of the session if it would be all right to discuss any of the issues further with the SENCO and then mentioned this aspect of our conversation to her.

M told me in no uncertain terms however that these concerns did not determine how he felt about school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil Statement</th>
<th>Phase of Change</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That’s why I don’t like the school. That’s why I stopped doing hardly</td>
<td>Precontemplation</td>
<td>Expresses conscious decision to maintain problematic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OK, well what I’ll say to you is, first of all, try not to worry. That might be not easy but obviously while all this is worrying you then actually school’s not going to be an enjoyable place to any degree

I don’t find it enjoyable even if I did feel safe

6.3.12 Using the Model for Stages of Change

I used the Model of Stages of Change to try and assess at what stage M appeared to be. I did this using statements from the interview. The outcomes are shown in Figure 6.3(i) overleaf.

Figure 6.3 (i) Mapping M’s statements from Session One onto the Model for Stages of Change
I concluded from this that \( M \) was at the precontemplative stage of the Model. This is discussed further in the following Section (6.3.13).

6.3.13 Rebellious precontemplation

McNamara (1998) defines four categories of precomtemplators (see Section 2.2.11). It seemed to me that \( M \) was making an active choice to maintain the behaviour that was perceived by the school to be problematic. The following dialogue supports this theory:

| \( I'd \) get DTs [detentions]. I'm not bothered about DTs. I wouldn't go to the RE one anyway. | Precontemplation | Appears undistressed about the situation |
| \( Oh \) she doesn't do that anymore, she knows I won't do the work. She starts saying that and I'll just walk out. She's not going to keep me behind because I don't like it | Precontemplation | Expresses conscious decision to maintain problematic behaviour |

\[\begin{array}{|l|l|l|}
\hline
\text{So when you came to high school had you made friends in the primary school?} \\
\hline
No not really. I did have friends at the other school but I got in with the stupidest combination. I did like him, but...he was a bit like one of these people that if you get along with them too well you become like him and not a lot of people did like him \\
\hline
\text{This was someone you met at primary school?} \\
\hline
Yes, he wasn't very popular with us though. I was put in with him in [name of form] so I moved out of there after two years...it took them to finally realise that people were battering me, hitting me and things. It took them a full two years \\
\hline
\text{This was here} \\
\hline
Yes. That's why I don't like the school. That's why I stopped doing hardly anything. I just do as much as I've got to do. The teacher sets the work and I do just that. I don't do any extra or anything \\
\hline
\end{array}\]

This appeared to indicate that \( M \) would fit into the category of pupils described by McNamara (1998) as ‘rebellious precontemplators’. Ideas for working with pupils who appear to fall into this category are discussed further in Section 6.5.22.
6.3.2 Practitioner Interviews

6.3.21 Is this a Motivational Interview?

Following our first session, I had some concerns about whether MI was the most appropriate intervention strategy for M, given the concerns expressed in Section 6.3.11. I felt that Session One had not really been a motivational interview, although I had tried to redirect our discussions onto M’s general attitude towards school and learning towards the end of the session.

I will return to discuss these thoughts when considering the final outcomes of the intervention.
### 6.4 Record of Session Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview no.</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>26.6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>12.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>35 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Plan of session

Focus on M’s comments “That’s why I don’t like the school. That’s why I stopped doing hardly anything. I just do as much as I’ve got to do”.

What are the good things and the less good things about this approach?

Use of Solution Focused questions, e.g.
- How could school be more enjoyable for you?
- How could lessons be made more enjoyable?
- How would you know when you’re enjoying school more?
- How would your teachers know?
- How would your parents know?

Self rating, Miracle question

#### Key areas covered and processes used

**Processes and techniques used:**
- Menu of Strategies – The good things and the less good things (in relation to the fact that M said he had “stopped doing hardly anything and just did as much as he had to”)
- Active listening techniques – overshooting, parroting, reflections of conflict, summarising, hypothesis testing
- Solution Focused techniques: Miracle question (George, Iveson and Ratner, 1999) solution focused questions “How would you know you were enjoying school more, etc). Scaling questions

**Areas covered**
- Maths lessons
- Career goals – GCSE requirements
- Relationships with teachers
- Positive experiences in lessons
- Relevance/irrelevance of different subjects
- How things might be different in another school setting
- Motivating factors – having targets, working alongside peers

#### Outcomes and plans for next session

Introduce the notion of “working to rule” – who might suffer. (E.g. *I wonder who your behaviour might affect in the long term.*
- Are you angry with the school?
- Are you working to rule?
- How does that make you feel?

- Consider the impact that M’s approach might have on his academic success and future career prospects
- Consider:
  - Setting very clear targets – what is expected – enhancing self-efficacy
  - Having a peer mentor. Someone from a similar social background, someone who is ‘like’ M
- Consider consultation meeting with a member of staff
6.5 Issues from Session Two

6.5.1 Process Issues

Over the course of Session Two it became clear that M seemed to have taken an active decision not to put in much effort and to maintain certain behavioural patterns. These are discussed further in Sections 6.5.2 and in Section 6.7.

6.5.11 Overshooting

I used the overshooting technique, described by McNamara (1998) to try to exaggerate M’s feelings regarding his Maths work.

So you feel you would need to do something different or a bit more challenging

What I do in the lessons I could do anyway without all the talking and writing different sets of sums even, like what we did today. I would have learnt that and then something else. But she goes trying to explain it even though I know what I’m doing. I’ve already told her I know what I’m doing. What’s the point of writing it down. You can go over it in your head

So in fact the lessons aren’t challenging enough for you. They’re not hard enough for you

Not really. The only thing she needs to explain is… when I do get them wrong, its just stupid mistakes by not looking at the question right

So would you like them to be harder? Would you like the teachers to expect more from you

Yes. I think they should like… try and put more into the lesson, because otherwise, like today we had to do…I think it was twenty questions, but we knew what we were doing after ten. She said “If you do ten questions you can stop” then she decided to do twenty questions and then I had to give them a go. It was easy anyway so I could have just done ten. She started talking…trying to explain them…what we did last lesson I think…explained that again. We should just get the sheets…just do it

This seemed to suggest that M found the Maths lessons somewhat monotonous and unchallenging. I was very interested therefore when straight after Session Two, in front of me, M asked the SENCO if he could be moved down a Maths set. I made a note to raise this issue with him in the next session.

6.5.12 Reflections of conflict
This technique normally involves trying to elicit from the client a consideration of the pro and cons of changing his or her behaviour (see McNamara, 1998). Such a statement might be indicative that the client is at the contemplative stage in the Model of Stages of Change.

In this particular instance, I have tried to suggest to M that the particular behaviour he was demonstrating is actually having the opposite effect to what he would see to be the desired outcome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are you happy with things as they are at the moment?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not really because I don't like coming to school. Especially when you know what lessons you've got. It's like in Science. You know that if you don't do it you've got to stay behind. They put RE before lunch now so you know you're going to stay behind…like Maths on Thursday we were late for lunch. I don't like her so she keeps me behind. Games after school. They don't like me because I never do it, so they keep me behind and make me do detentions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK. So by doing not very much in the lessons the teachers are actually asking you to spend more time in school than you would be normally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes... but...she told me what to do, I did it and she still wants to keep me in because you didn't do what everyone else did. Even though she said “do that” and “if you do finish that, do this”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.5.13 Miracle and Solution Focused questioning

Berg (1991) describes how the use of the miracle question can be used in trying to help the client form a vision of what the future might look like without the problem and in suggesting the potential for a lifestyle change (see Section 2.8.22).

This produced an interesting reaction from M when used in conjunction with solution focused questioning (How would you know you were enjoying school more? How would a teacher know you were enjoying school more?). M regularly referred to the ‘relevance’ of lessons during the course of the MI process. He discusses this here when talking about how school could be more enjoyable for him.

| I suppose ... a bit of an interesting question. Suppose you were to go to sleep tonight and there was a miracle...and the miracle was that from now on school was really enjoyable. What would be the first things you notice. When you came to school in the morning. How would you know that miracle had occurred |

Cathy Atkinson – MSc in Educational Psychology 2000
If you’ve got a lesson, you really want it to be a GCSE subject. I can’t remember why I chose drama. But I didn’t have to do that…I didn’t want to do that. If you chose want you wanted to learn…what would be relevant for the future. Choose what type of maths work you do, what type of English

And how would you know in that situation that you were enjoying school more?

Because I’d be learning what I want to learn and you can ask the teacher to explain it more to you if you need it. So if it doesn’t need to be explained there’s no point of the teacher saying it to everybody.

So in the situation where you were enjoying school more. If I was the teacher, how would I be able to see that you were enjoying school more?

I would write down more…what I do. Write down notes about what people have said.. what the teachers say. Reading…in English I don’t bother reading but if I started reading a bit more

This could provide useful information for a member of the teaching staff. It made me raise with M the subject of what other pupils might see as relevant to their needs (see Interview Three, Appendix 6.3). In doing so I was trying to provide information to M about individual differences and the fact that other pupil might have different expectations of school, all of which need to be catered for by teaching staff.

6.5.14 Scaling question

I describe the use of the Scaling question (George, Iveson, Ratner, 1990) not because it worked in the way that is intended, but because it elicited from M a very interesting response.

OK. Another interesting thing. In terms of your general attitude towards school as it is at the moment, just doing what you need to get by. Talking maybe about maybe changing in the future. If I ask you this question

On a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 representing you, being truthful, not being at all bothered about the way that things are and 10 representing you knowing that this is the most significant thing facing you at the moment which has got to change, where are you at the moment?

I don’t know. If I went to another school I’d really enjoy to change….want to…really want to change, but at this school I don’t really want to change. What I’m doing at the moment is just right

This provided me with a very powerful message. That M felt that at the present time he would not be able to change unless he was to move schools. This idea formed the basis of much of the discussion that followed, as I was then able to focus on thinking about what could happen at M’s present school that would make him consider change.
6.5.15 Reflections of feelings

McNamara (1998) states that in implementing this technique, the counsellor is attempting to reflect the feelings underlying the client’s spoken words. It is also a hypothesis testing approach by which the EP can make judgements about the student’s feelings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s helped things to get better?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well before I moved up into this form, nobody spoke up for me. Well one person but I didn’t want him… I didn’t get to choose, everyone else did. So I was with the dodgiest person. So now I’ve moved into this form I’ve got friends that stick up for me. I’ve asked, “Could you help me”. Yeah, they could. They’re willing to spend their time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So from that point of view is school better than it was?

Yes, better… than it was basically

I felt that in this interchange, M was able to identify that there had been some perceived improvement in his school situation.

6.5.2 Practitioner issues

6.5.21 Dealing with resistance

Miller and Rollnick (1991) categorise all the ways in which clients might present resistance. Of these, M would fit best into the category of unwillingness to change, where:

The client expresses a lack of desire or an unwillingness to change, or an intention not to

Miller and Rollnick (1991) suggest that in expressing resistance, the client is probably rehearsing a script that has been played out many times before. Where the therapist presents the same ‘predictable’ responses the client will arrive at the same conclusion that he or she has done previously.

6.5.22 Working with rebellious precontemplators

My initial hypothesis that M was a rebellious precontemplator seemed to be confirmed by Session Two. DiClemente (1991) suggests that the best approach for working with
such clients is either to provide choices or to use paradox. Miller and Rollnick (1991) describe the latter technique in their chapter on ‘Dealing with Resistance’. One example of a script they provide is:

> We’ve talked about the difficulties you’ve been having and we’ve discussed quite a few different options that you have for changing. What strikes me is that none of the options appeal to you. You actually seem very happy with your old pattern, at least when you compare it with any alternative. It seems to me, then, that what you ought to do is to keep on exactly as before. There’s no point in going to all the trouble to change if what you really want to do is stay the same.

I did not feel comfortable with using this type of technique with M at this stage (certainly not before I had explored other options). I could imagine that he might respond in the affirmative and that this might impose a kind of finality on our discussions. I was keen to make the most of the five sessions I had with M.

I wondered whether this type of approach might however be more viable at a systems level on in one-off assessments with pupils. In the former case, I feel that it would be important that the EP had had the opportunity to develop good relations with the school and was in an environment that fostered honesty and openness. It would be easy to be perceived as brusque and off hand.

I resolved to reconsider the use of this strategy with M towards the end of our sessions.
6.6 Record of Session Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Interview no.</th>
<th>Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>30.6.00</td>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>2.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plan of session

Discuss with M why he asked to be moved down a Maths set

- Introduce the notion of ‘working to rule’ – and consider how this might impact M and the school – who might suffer. (E.g. *I wonder whom your behaviour might affect in the long term.* ) impact that M’s approach might have on future career prospects – pros and cons of maintaining behaviour
- Consider – “What would life be like if you stopped working to rule and decided to try your best”.
- Present alternatives e.g. “it seems a shame, that, when you only have a year of school to go, and you know exactly what you want to do that you don’t feel able to put in a bit of extra effort so that at the end of your school career, you will leave with the qualifications that will enable you to do what you so choose”.

Consider
- Target setting – enhancing self-efficacy
- Peer mentoring

Suggest consultation meeting with a member of staff

Key areas covered and processes used

Processes and techniques used:

- Menu of Strategies – The good things and the less good things (about working hard in maths)
- Active listening techniques – undershooting, overshooting/provoking, positive restructuring, rewording, parroting, rewording, summarising, structuring
- Introduced the notion of ‘Work to Rule’ – provided a framework for discussions
- Consider work to rule ethos from others’ perspectives – “do your teachers know why you’re working to rule?”
- Considered the impact on the school and on M
- Constructed diagram on M’s work to rule behaviour and the implications this would have (see Figure 6.7(i))

Areas covered

- Moving Maths sets/maths lessons
- Career goals/GCSEs
- Working to rule – comparison with workplace.
- Considering impact of work to rule ethos on school and on M himself
- Parental involvement
- Consultation meeting

Outcomes and plans for next session

Very clear the M’s ‘work to rule’ attitude stems form his perceptions that the school refused to recognise the fact that he was being bullied in Year 8 – see if this can be addressed retrospectively – reframed.

Present diagram (figure 6.7(i)) - explore whether M will consider a shift in behaviour to follow the path with ‘Extra Opportunities’

Discuss consultation meeting further. What will M be prepared to offer in terms of a more positive approach – more powerful negotiating stance with teachers.
6.7 Issues from Session Three

6.7.1 Process issues

6.7.11 ‘Working to rule’ - Providing a frame of reference for M’s behaviour

I decided to introduce the notion of ‘working to rule’. I hoped that this might provide M with a specific way of labelling his behaviour and a frame of reference for the attitude he was upholding. I felt the phrase ‘work to rule’ was indicative of the conscious decision M had taken not to work to his full potential with the intent of ‘teaching the school a lesson’ for not recognising that he was being bullied.

While an MI approach intends to avoid head to head confrontation and conflict, Miller and Rollnick (1991) suggest that MI:

..is confrontational in its purpose: to increase awareness of problems and the need to do something about them

I felt the need to confront M over his stated decision to “just do as much as I’ve got to do”. In doing so, I wanted to help him clarify the causes of his behaviour and identify the impact it might have on his long-term career plans.

I will spend some time now discussing the introduction of the work to rule notion and M’s response to it. I believe that it was central to the process of enabling him to reconsider the entrenched patterns of behaviour he had become accustomed to.

I introduced the concept of ‘working to rule’ in the following way:

**OK. Something we were talking about earlier. The fact that you didn’t like school, that you’d stopped doing hardly anything and that you just did as much as you had to and after I’d left, I thought about that. Because within a workplace environment, say industry, that’s got a name, working like that. It’s called ‘work to rule’. And people do it, work to rule, which means you only the minimum they have to and they don’t do anything extra and they do it when they’re really angry with their working conditions, or maybe they feel like they’re not being recognised in the job they do, or maybe, something to do with the atmosphere in which they’re working. I wondered if that was true for you in school and if that was true, what was making you work to rule.**

**How nobody noticed when I was getting bullied**

**And that was in Year 8**
And Year 7

And Year 7

Even in Year 6 when we came to the induction days, by the same people

Right, so actually you’re in quite a similar situation to the people in the workplace, because where you work, you’ve seen something you’re not happy with so that’s the decision you’ve made – to work to rule

At work. Because when I did the work experience I did what I got told. I wouldn’t dare, because a job’s a job. You earn money. At school…the only thing you earn in education …is does seem important. The GCSEs are, the most important ever. For doing subjects ..you can not do that well in a subject and still get the grade at the end. Even if it’s a G

From there, I moved on to asking M to identify some of the reasons why he chose to work to rule.

I’m just thinking, because when people work to rule, they do it because…I mean, say I worked for a company and I decided to work to rule, the reason I would do that is that it would mean that the company would not be able to provide such a good service. So it would harm the company in effect. And I just wondered. In you working to rule, who that is actually having an impact on. Whether it’s actually harming the school or whether its your education that its affecting

I’m trying to prove something to [headteacher]. I even went to the paper about it. About the dress code. My dad…I had a stud in my ear and it said, in the first Year 7 planner, it said you could have one stud, not in each ear. Then they changed it. So my dad stood there, in the middle of the corridor, watched people go by, then got one of the teachers and said “you’ve got an earring in. So’s he…so’s he”. He pointed about seven people out and the teachers said “Oh, we can’t do anything about that they were there before [headteacher] came” But there’s one rule for one and one rule for another. It’s an equal school. Everybody should get equal education

I also proposed that perhaps M’s decision to ‘work to rule’ might be of more detriment to him than to the school.

I’m just wondering though. Come the end of next year, who will have benefited from this work to rule behaviour and who will have actually …suffered from it I suppose

I think I’ll benefit from it because they’ll think “God he didn’t do no work in lessons and look at the grade he got. He got better than I expected”. Because I am learning something even if I’m not writing it down. I remember stuff I didn’t write down in Year 7, I still know it

So you’d like to surprise the teachers
Yes. Properly surprise them. Because when you do the course and you go to a job
terview “He didn’t do well at school but he got great grades. He didn’t do a lot of work.
How?”

I don’t want to do extra work but I could put extra effort into it... but because I
tried to put extra effort in....Something’s blocking it in my head. Saying “no,
you’re not doing extra work. Look what they did to you. They didn’t help, so why
should you help them?” What I’d have done for the teacher makes them look
good because one day, somebody from the school could be really famous. The
teacher could say “I taught them”

That’s true, but ..the impact of the school is much less than it is on your life, because its
you and its your life and its just… I don’t know how many people there are in your year

I think there’s 300

So the school’s got 300 pupils, but there’s only one you

M confirmed that he was happy to use the term ‘work to rule’ and continued to use it to
refer to his behaviour in subsequent sessions.

6.7.12 Presenting results in diagrammatic form

Now that we had established the agreed concept of M ‘working to rule’ we discussed
how the bullying events at Year 8 might have impacted on his educational career. Our
discussions resulted in M and I drawing up the following diagram ( see Figure 6.7 (i)
overleaf)
This diagram provided M with a very clear picture of the impact his work to rule stance was having on his future. In subsequent discussions and in the eventual consultation meeting with M’s deputy head of year, we were able to refer to this diagram and talk about moving across from the left hand to the right hand side.

6.7.13 Undershooting and overshooting/provoking
The techniques described below, probably fit best into the undershooting and overshooting or provoking categories described in the range of selective active listening skills. I found them useful ways of eliciting more information about M’s expressed concerns.

I use the term ‘provoking’ here in a slightly different way to McNamara (1998). He uses it in the context of suggesting to the student that he or she has no problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>So it’s not because it’s too difficult its because there’s too much work [undershooting]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No it is too difficult. (angry) She tries to put pressure on me and she doesn’t put pressure on everyone else. But I always do it and she gets annoyed and… I just don’t like the teacher as well. That’s why I want to move down. I just want to get along with doing my GCSE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>So is it really because you don’t like the teacher [overshooting/provoking]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not only that. I do think the work is hard. I told her I can’t do division a lot. She still tries to make me do it. Then I get drilled for not doing the homework but I don’t know how to divide…and if I use a calculator she knows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.7.14 Positive restructuring

McNamara (1998) advocates the use of positive restructuring. This involves trying to put a positive interpretation on negative information provided by the client. I attempted (unsuccessfully) to do this in order to reframe M’s views about himself in relation to his Maths lessons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>So you said you find division difficult, but you seem to be all right with multiplication, addition, things like that. You seem to have a reasonable grasp…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not multiplication.. not like. The ones that I can do in my head are like 2s, 3s, and 9s. I can do those [9s] on my fingers. I can’t do the rest. Well I can but it takes me a bit longer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What about the other things you’re good at in Maths?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factors, balancing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors, balancing, addition, subtraction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well I can do the basics…everyone can do the basics. They’re no problem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.7.2 Practitioner Issues

6.7.21 Consultation meeting

With it being the third session, I wanted to broach with M the subject of rounding off our sessions with a joint discussion with his head of year. However, although M was happy to agree to this suggestion, it was clear that he and I had different agendas in mind.

**OK, because there’s a whole lot of issues and like I say, I can understand very well why you’re angry, but I wonder if people at school understand**

I don’t think they do

**And I wonder if that’s something I might speak to your head of year with or we both might speak to your head of year with**

You’re better off speaking to Mr F. He’ll do something straight about it straight away.

**Mr F, who’s Mr F**

He’s the deputy head of form. He’s just there in case Mrs G is away. Mrs G would do something but it would be like a week later. I want something done straight away and if the teachers know all about it then they know I’m not going to work so there’s no point in trying to make me

I feel that this has important implications for consultation meetings, both in terms of the timing of such discussions and in preparing the student adequately for the session. It was clear that at this stage, entering into discussions with a member of staff would very likely not be helpful in addressing M’s needs.

The EP needs to assess the client’s readiness for change in order that meetings between school staff are of maximum benefit. Where systems level issues are a factor, my experience with R (see Section 4.13) suggested that the outcomes more likely to be successful if these issues can be raised in concordance with an expressed commitment from the student to try and address his or her problematic behaviour.

6.7.22 Parental involvement

M was very keen that his parents were not involved because he “didn’t want big fuss”. He had not enjoyed the attention when his parents had involved the newspapers in a school issue earlier in his school career (see Section 6.1) and appeared to be concerned that another confrontation might bring him unwanted attention.
I did not feel that in this particular instance, parental involvement would have been advantageous given his concerns. However, Cheshire EPS (2000) suggest that parental involvement might be considered at the ‘Action’ phase of the Model of Stages for change (see Section 2.7)

I will discuss this issue further in Section 7.7.1.

6.8 Record of Session Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of student</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview no.</td>
<td>Four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview</td>
<td>3.7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of interview</td>
<td>12.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of session</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of session**

Use diagram (figure 6.7(i)) to promote further discussion regarding extra opportunities in the future and taking the ‘right hand path’

Discuss ways of overcoming the ‘block’ at Year 8 – can it be made less significant. Reframing.

Discuss consultation meeting further. Discuss what M might offer in terms of behavioural change in order to negotiate a more favourable deal for himself in school

**Key areas covered and processes used**

**Processes and techniques used:**

- Menu of strategies – The future and the past
- Active listening techniques – Columbo technique, paraphrasing, reflections of conflict
- Empathic reflection
- Solution focused – problem free talk to promote self-efficacy
- Anger Management techniques

**Areas covered**

- Moving Maths sets/maths lessons
- Teachers opinions and attitudes – reasons for
- Considering the idea that the teachers might not understand the reasons for M’s work to rule behaviour and that it might be misconstrued.
- Managing Anger – concept of ABCs

**Outcomes and plans for next session**

Provide further information on Anger Management

Produce memo to M outlining the key points of our discussions

Arrange joint consultation meeting with M’s deputy head of year
6.9 Issues from Session Four

6.9.1 Background Information

After the third session with M, I felt that I had made a bit of a breakthrough with M. I felt that producing the diagram had enabled him to see the impact his behaviour might be having on his long term career opportunities and hoped that in the intervening days since we last met, that he might have thought about reconsidering his work to rule stance.

However, our early discussions suggested that my optimism was rather premature.

... do you see, yourself continuing on this [points to left hand side of diagram]

Probably yes

So within the school situation, you don’t see a way in which, given that this [right hand side of diagram] would give you extra opportunities

No I don’t

OK , so there’s nothing you could do in terms of going back and thinking about maybe how we could make things better

No, I think it’s a bit too late now, as far as I’m concerned anyway. I can’t change it now. It’s too late to do anything about it. I’ve only got one year left. I can’t get in higher sets. I can’t do anything more because I just can’t be bothered

Even given… this [points to extra opportunities]

I don’t think so. There’s only one year left and you can't change the system. I don’t think I could get any higher

6.9.2 Process Issues

6.9.21 Empathic reflection

Miller and Rollnick (1991) suggest that empathic reflection can be used selectively to reinforce certain points while de-emphasising others. In this particular instance I was trying to be empathic about M’s situation, while at the same time trying to get him to reflect on how his teachers might perceive his behaviour. I also tried to use the Columbo technique here, but it did not provoke a response from M.
6.10 Record of Session Five

Session Five involved a brief meeting at which I presented my memo to M. The format of this meeting was the same as the one described with R in Section 4.10. I also provided M with some further Anger Management Strategies as follows:

- ‘Fool in the Ring’ (Feindler and Ecton, 1986)
- Examples of relaxation training (Feindler and Ecton, 1986)
- relaxation techniques sheet – deep breathing, square breathing, backward counting and visual imagery (Feindler and Ecton, 1986)

6.11 Issues from Session Five

6.11.1 Practitioner Issues

6.11.11 Anger Management Strategies

With hindsight I feel that had time allowed it would have been beneficial to share the Anger Management Strategies described here and also with D (section 5.5.22) with a key member of staff. This would have enabled that person to help the student to use these ideas more effectively and to offer them specific support in managing their anger.
6.12 Record of Session Six

**Name of student**  
M

**Interview no.**  
Six

**Date of interview**  
10.7.00

**Time of interview**  
1.45pm

**Length of session**  
20 minutes

---

**Plan of session**

Joint consultation meeting involving M, M’s deputy head of year and myself

Go through the memo (Appendix 6.5) – address issues that arise. Also present diagram (Figure 6.7 (i)) and air issues that resulted in M’s work to rule attitude. Aim to try and elicit some sort of consideration to moving to the right hand path of the diagram.

Discuss with deputy of year and M what might be done in school to address M’s needs – use a Solution Focused approach

Provide satisfactory end point for the intervention.

---

**Key areas covered and processes used**

**Processes and techniques used:**
Solution focused memo writing (Johal-Smith and Stephenson (2000))
Consultation approach
Solution-focused approach and summarising (by deputy head of year)

**Areas covered**
- Points raised in memo (Appendix 6.5)
- Bullying (in Year 7/8 and current situation)
- How M felt about his various lessons
- Friendship groups
- GCSE choices, career goals and qualifications
- Discussion about diagram (Figure 6.7 (i))
- Discussion of ways in which the deputy head of year could help M
- Discussion of how the process required a two-way commitment

**Outcomes and plans**

Deputy head of year to speak to M’s teachers regarding how he could be made to feel more ‘comfortable’ in lessons – with regard to bullying, learning approach, M’s reaction to pressure, long term goals

Deputy head of year and M agreed to have regular mentoring meetings where M’s progress would be reviewed

---

6.13 Issues from Session Six

6.13.1 Process Issues

6.13.11 Using the Model of Stages of Change
During the final interview, M made some remarks that suggested a shift in attitude and implied that he had effectively made progress according to the Model of Stages of Change. These are detailed in Figure 6.13 (i) below.

Figure 6.13 (i) Mapping M’s statements from Session Six onto the Model of Stages of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil Statement</th>
<th>Phase of Change</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m trying harder in most lessons</td>
<td>Active Change</td>
<td>Expression of self-change behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m going to try because like my mum says, you’re not going to get nowhere</td>
<td>Determinism/</td>
<td>Recognition of problem situation and its potential consequences. Expression of intent to implement self-change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>without your five GCSEs</td>
<td>Active change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well that’s right. She’s right</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’s dead right. So I better start trying to work before I fail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s obviously got to come from you. I’m not saying right you’ve got to come and see me [regarding ongoing mentoring]</td>
<td>Active change</td>
<td>Seek support to maintain self-change programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No because then you can see how I’m working and try and get me on the right track</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So we’ll start meeting on a regular basis then. Once a week…or once a fortnight?</td>
<td>Active change</td>
<td>Decision taken to meet to review progress of self-change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About that, yeah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.13.12 The role of the key person

I felt that to a large extent, the success of this final meeting during which M expressed a commitment to change his behaviour was due to the expertise of his deputy head of year, firstly in demonstrating empathy towards M’s predicament, but also in negotiating a two-way approach to change. The following conversation describes how he achieved the latter:

…it would have to be a two-way thing, M. You know. If you’ve got this work to rule, then you’d have to think about moving across to the other side of this diagram here, if I was prepared to go along and help you and talk to staff and make them aware of how you’re feeling. That’s if you want me to do that

Yes
Then obviously this work to rule thing. You’d have to move from that side [of diagram] more definitely onto that side, you know. So we are working together. It’s not a case of me trying to make things easy for you, but you’ve got to put the effort in.

I am now

And we’ll try and work something out that way

Yes. I’m trying hard with most lessons. When I get told off for doing something I tried to do and it didn’t go right. The teacher doesn’t see it my way, I think, oh right, no point trying then. Just if you get put down

So would you like me to do that?

Yes, cos then if the teacher knows I’ve done it wrong, they can explain it, instead of just “Oh you didn’t do that”

The deputy head of year also offered to support M in his commitment to change by offering to act as his mentor (see Section 6.13.11). In this case, the solution-focused memo (see Appendix 6.5) could be used as a basis for reviewing progress, especially in initial meetings.

The skills employed by M’s deputy head of year are discussed further in Section 6.3.21.

6.13.2 Practitioner Issues

6.13.21 Informal use of selective active listening techniques

Within the interview situation, I felt that M’s deputy head of year inadvertently but very effectively demonstrated the use of some of the active listening techniques that McNamara (1998) describes. For example:

Some of my lessons. Some like, RE. [Friend’s name] sits next to me there. Geography…oh no …I don’t like Geography cos I don’t like the person in Geography I sit next to. He’s a bit of a snob and he keeps going “You don’t drive a car, you don’t get anything do you”. Like “Yes I do. I get a lot more different things than you do. He keeps having a go at me so

So that’s a little bit like bullying then really then isn’t it?

Yes

This could be described as an example of summarising where the counsellor draws together client utterances into a succinct summary. The summary allows the client to
agree (as in this case), disagree, modify or correct the counsellor’s statement (McNamara, 1998).

In addition, M’s deputy head of year adopted very much a Solution Focused approach in asking M what he could do in order to help the pupil to achieve his goals. For example:

| If I said to you, if you had a think about it, how could I help you? What do you think I could do to help you? If there was away of me helping you. Would it be…to have a chat with someone who’s giving you a hard time? Would it be to chat to some to some teachers about what’s going on
| The teachers…. The teachers because they can kind of put me at a slower pace so I can get more time to do the same questions and I can get better marks. The more questions I do the better marks I get. I should get a better pace |

The skills demonstrated by the deputy head of year suggested to me that to some of the techniques described by McNamara (1998) were likely to be practised ‘naturally’ by skilled practitioners, such as M’s deputy head of year. It struck me that what was most important here was the relationship of trust and empathy between M and this key person.

This also suggests to me that maybe the key principles of MI are more important than the actual procedure use of the strategies and techniques that support them. This will be discussed further in Section 8.2.??.

### 6.14 Results of self-assessment questionnaires

As described in Section ???, M did not complete the final questionnaires due to the pressures facing staff at the end of term and because he was not in the learning support department following the end of the MI intervention. I have included his scores on the pre-test questionnaires as they are indicative of how low M’s self-perceptions and motivation were at the beginning of the intervention

**Figure 6.14 (i) Pre Intervention score recorded by M on the The Myself-As-Learner-Scale (MALS)**

| Pre Intervention Score | 28 |
In research conducted by Burden (1998) the mean score was found to be 71.0 and the standard deviation 10.5. Therefore M’s score was more than 4 standard deviations from the mean, indicative of an extremely low perception of himself as a learner.

**Figure 6.14 (ii) Pre Intervention scores recorded by M on the Pupil’s Feelings About School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Pre Intervention Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warmth</td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociability</td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Moral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>Moral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Moral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Pressure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In each of these cases, a score of six would be the minimum that could be recorded by a pupil. M’s scores on the affective and cognitive scales were extremely low.

**Figure 6.14 (iii) Pre and Post Intervention scores recorded by M on the Pupil’s Feelings About School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW) – Part B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Pre Intervention Score</th>
<th>Post Intervention Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deep approach</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic style</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface approach</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial style</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of failure</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic approach</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope for success</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.15 Teachers evaluation form

The completed teacher evaluation form (for example see Appendix 3.3) stated that the SENCO felt that in terms of items 1 and 2 (relating to a positive behavioural change and improvement in the areas causing concern) that the intervention had helped *moderately*. The same was true for items 5 that related to M approaching the curriculum with more confidence.

In terms of items 3 (improving self-esteem) and 4 (enabling M to feel happier) about himself, she responded *quite a lot* when asked to describe to what extent the intervention might have been useful. She felt that it might have helped *a little* in helping Mark to find ways in which he might take responsibility for his behaviour.

The SENCO felt that the intervention had been *moderately* beneficial in the extent to which it might help to provide staff at the school with a better understanding of M’s needs. In relation to questions 8 which asked to what extent the intervention might have been a positive intervention for the student she responded *a great deal*. When presented with the same question from the school’s perspective she answered *quite a lot*.

The SENCO felt that the outcomes of the intervention might be of benefit in helping M in his educational career *quite a lot*.

When asked to comment about the extent to which MI might be a satisfactory use of EP time in working with disaffected secondary school pupils, she responded *a great deal* but added “*but time consuming considering the workload of many Educational Psychologists*”.

In terms of meeting the needs of the referral (in this case to help M to improve his general attitude towards school and to develop his self-esteem) the SENCO felt that the MI intervention might have helped *moderately*. 
In conclusion, the SENCO at M’s school stated:

M attended all sessions willingly which is a positive response from him. He seems more positive in his approach and more confident. M approached me last week about a difficulty he is having in a particular subject (with a teacher) – in the past he has avoided raising such issues.

Additionally the SENCO informed me that over the course of the process, M’s form teacher felt that there had been a positive shift in his general attitude towards school.

6.16 Summary of results and issues from Case 3

Comparing Figures 6.3 (i) and 6.13 (i) relating to M’s position on the Model of Stages of Change during Interviews one and six (see Sections 6.3.12 and 6.13.11 respectively) would suggest that over the course of the intervention M moved from the precontemplative to the determinism/active change phase.

It is interesting to consider that at the start of the process I felt that M might be an unsuitable candidate for M (See Section 6.3.21). His explicit commitment to change was not made until the final consultation meeting and it is my belief that the impact of the deputy head of year involvement at that stage was crucial to what appeared to be a considerable movement through the Model of Stages of Change on M’s part.

Unfortunately it is not possible to quantify any progress M may have made in terms of enhancing his motivation because there are no post intervention results from the questionnaires.

In terms of developing a positive attitude towards school and in improving his self-esteem, self-efficacy and internal attribution, evidence from the evaluation form and from reports given to the SENCO by M’s form tutor would imply that the MI intervention had to some degree had a positive impact.
CHAPTER 7 - Summary of Results

7.1 Introduction

In this section I will try and provide a brief overview of Chapters 4, 5 and 6 as well as a summary of trends across the three interventions. I will review these findings under the following headings

- General points
- Outcomes of the interventions
- The Model of Stages of Change
- Values, principles and goals of MI
- Use of MI Techniques and Strategies (incorporating ideas from other paradigms)
- Additional factors and issues

7.2 General points

7.2.1 MI approach used

All the interventions involved recognising MI as a process (as described in the Cheshire Model, Section 2.7) and drew on a range of strategies from the MI literature and other paradigms.

7.2.2 Subjects

This study involved three Year 10 students, two male and one female. They attended secondary mainstream schools in Cheshire. They were selected by staff at the school on the basis that they were experiencing disaffection from school. A further female student, also identified, did not participate in the study as she was absent throughout the period of the study.

7.2.3 Sessions

All of the students had five individual sessions of varying lengths over the period 7.6.00 – 11.7.00. Two of the interventions culminated in joint consultation meeting with a
member of staff identified as a key person who might take responsibility for the student’s ongoing needs.

7.2.4 Transcriptions

All of the interviews were successfully recorded, transcribed and have been attached in the Appendices section.

7.3.1 Outcomes of the Interventions

7.3.11 Student Outcomes

7.3.11 The students’ views of school

In the cases of R and M, the MI intervention appeared to have a positive impact on the pupils’ general attitude towards school. This conclusion in supported by the teacher evaluation report, statistical data (in the case of R) and qualitative analysis of the MI transcripts. In the case of D, the intervention did not appear to have any observable positive effect.

7.3.12 Internal attribution, self-efficacy and self-esteem

Again analysis of the data described above would suggest some improvement in these areas for M and R but appeared to have had no direct observable benefits for D at the time of this write up.

7.3.2 School outcomes

7.3.21 Meeting the needs of a referral

In terms of the school’s referral, it was felt that in the cases of R and M the MI intervention had met the school’s needs quite a lot and moderately respectively. In the case of D it was felt that it had been not at all useful.

7.3.22 An effective use of EP time?

The schools were generally positive when asked to comment on the extent to which MI might be a satisfactory use of EP time although their views appeared to be related to the success of the student outcomes. It was noted that the process was “time consuming considering the workload of EPs”.
7.4 The Model of Stages of Change

7.4.1 MI as a process

Within this study I have viewed MI as a process. I felt that the Model of Stages of Change was at the core of and provided the focal point for all of my intervention work whether I was using it in a formal manner or just as an underlying frame of reference. It was particularly helpful to have the Cheshire Model (Cheshire EPS (2000), see Section 2.7) to provide me with an idea about the techniques and strategies that might be applicable at each of the Stages.

7.4.2 Variance in relation to different behaviours

Within the Model of Stages of Change, the student’s commitment to change appeared to vary in relation to different behaviours or in different contexts.

Systems level factors may be important in identifying reasons for this variation. For example, R stated a general commitment to improving her attitude to class work, but did not feel that this was realistic in the context of IT lessons, due to other issues. (See also Section 4.3.32)

7.4.3 Commitment to change and actual change

Particularly in D’s case there was a difference between his verbalised commitment to change and his actual observable behaviour. Prochaska and DiClemente (1982) identify these two phases of commitment to change. Phase 1 involves reaching a decision to change while Phase 2 entails converting this commitment to change into actual change. It is possible that Cognitive Behavioural Techniques (e.g. Anger Management) and Behavioural Monitoring Programmes (see Sections 5.9.22 and 5.11.13) might help the pupil to turn the expressed desire for change into actual behaviour, but this warrants further research.

The consultation meeting provided a forum for the R and M to verbalise their commitment to change (as advocated by Miller and Rollnick, 1991). Longer term monitoring would be needed to establish the outcomes of this.
7.4.4 A consultation model

A consultation model is advocated by Cheshire EPS (2000) as part of the Action phase of the Model of Stages for Change. Experience from this study suggests that even where the student was not deemed to have reached this phase of the Model, a summative consultation meeting was helpful in allowing a shared perspective of the issues from both the school and student’s viewpoint.

The use and outcomes of a consultation approach is discussed further in Sections 4.9.22, 4.9.31, 4.13.31, 5.7.42, 5.13.22 and 6.7.21.

7.4.5 Action and maintenance phases of the Model of Stages of Change

In the interventions described in this study, I was working for the majority of the time at phases 1 – 3 of the Model of Stages of Change. In the case of R and M, I was able to hand responsibility for implementing the Action and Maintenance phases over to the school. This is in line with the thinking of Cheshire EPS (Cheshire EPS, 2000).

I would suggest that this approach was appropriate at these phases because it enabled ongoing monitoring and support by a key person with whom the student could have daily contact, if required.

7.5 The Values, Principles and Goals of MI

Throughout the interviewing process I tried to bear in mind the underlying values, principles and goals of MI (as described in Section 2.3).

7.5.1 The Goals and elements of MI

The Goals of MI are defined by McNamara (1998) in relation to an educational setting. I found them to be more applicable to schools than the elements, outlined in the FRAMES acronym by Treasure and Ward (1997).

During the interventions, the goals provided me with a frame of reference, rather than a specific focus (except in the case of working with R to try and promote internal attribution, as described in Sections 4.3.33 and 4.5.21).
7.5.2 The key principles of MI

As with the goals described above, these provided me with an underpinning philosophy when approaching the interventions. In general terms I felt the overall values described by McNamara (1998) of unconditional positive regard, a non-moralising attitude and positive expectations were central to the success of the approach.

7.5.21 The counsellor-client relationship

I tried to remain within the ethos promoted by Rollnick and Miller (1995) who suggest:

*the therapeutic relationship is more like a partnership or companionship than expert/recipient roles*

In working with Year 10 pupils within a mainstream setting, I found this principle to be viable. However, it should be noted that I was working as an EPiT (Educational Psychologist in Training) in a research capacity rather than as an EP asked by the school to work with an individual pupil.

7.5.22 Direct persuasion

The effect of my direct persuasion in working with D was that he chose not to attend the consultation meeting (see Sections 5.7.31 and 5.13.1).

In view of the pressures of time and my desire for D to make a public commitment to change via a consultation meeting I chose not to follow this key principle, suggested by Rollnick and Miller (1995).

The difficulty here relates to the lack of time I had to work with D. In all of the interventions I took a very active approach in an attempt to move the student round the model of Stages of Change in respect of these limitations. In the case of D, it would appear that the therapeutic approach used was too directive.

7.6 The Strategies and Techniques of MI (incorporating ideas from other paradigms)
7.6.1 PCP techniques and building rapport

In this study PCP techniques were used as a way of trying to establish rapport with the student at the beginning of the intervention. The self-characterisation task, adapted from Kelly (1995) was found to be a quick and easy method to use, which appeared to help build rapport and also enabled the pupils to provide a honest picture of how they perceived themselves and their behavioural patterns.

The successes of the triadic method of eliciting bipolar constructs and self-report grid technique were more variable and the methods took longer to implement. I would suggest that these strategies would be most appropriate where the student does not present any information about his or her perceived difficulties at the outset (see Sections 4.3.21, 5.3.22 and 5.3.21 for further details).

Where there was a gap in the MI intervention process, I felt that there was a need to re-establish rapport with the pupil (see Sections 4.9.34 and 5.9.21).

7.6.2 The Menu of Strategies

Selected techniques from the Menu of Strategies outlined by Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) (see Section 2.4) were used in all three interventions. In general terms these ideas were easy to ‘pick up and use’ and elicited useful information about the students’ self-concepts and educational needs.

Further details about the techniques from the Menu of Strategies can be found in the previous chapters, as detailed in Figure 7.5 (i) below:

**Figure 7.6 (i) Additional information about techniques used from the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Section for reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening Strategy</td>
<td>5.3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A typical day</td>
<td>4.3.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The good things and the less good things</td>
<td>4.7.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The future and the past</td>
<td>4.3.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Providing Information | 5.5.12, 5.5.22
Helping with decision making | 4.5.33

In terms of procedure, I felt that it was appropriate to use these techniques at different points during the MI interventions and to reapply a strategy that may have already have been used to a new situation.

I also felt that it was not necessary to use the Menu of Strategies sequentially. Instead I found the ideas useful as individual methods, particularly for eliciting further information from the student’s situation about how they perceived themselves within the educational context (see also Section 4.7.31).

7.6.3 Selective active listening techniques

I did not find it easy initially to grasp the range of techniques of active listening techniques (as described by McNamara, 1998) although I did feel that as the interventions progressed they became more ‘natural’ and easier to use. They represent important transferable skills that can be used across a range of situations (for example, they would be helpful strategies to use in a consultation approach).

The fact that M’s deputy head of year was able to use active listening techniques in an informal way suggests that a skilled practitioner might not need to have a formal understanding of the range of techniques described by McNamara (1998). In adopting the Model of the Stages of Change in accordance with the underlying values, principles and goals of MI, the EP could potentially develop their own MI approach, drawing on strategies from his or her own particular area of expertise.

I felt that these MI techniques were very beneficial to the process as basic counselling skills and that the development of active listening skills would enable a more effective MI approach. They would also represent a useful skill base for EPs in all interactions. However, I found that they did require substantially more preparation work and practice than for example the Menu of Strategies or SFBT methods. If a MI approach were to be used by EPSs, this might have important training implications for EPs.
All of the techniques listed in Figure 7.5 (ii) were used and have been discussed during the MI interventions. Further details can be obtained through reference to the sections indicated:

**Figure 7.6 (ii) Additional information about selective active listening techniques used**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Section(s) for reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Columbo Technique</td>
<td>4.3.23, 5.7.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overshooting</td>
<td>4.7.22, 6.5.11, 6.7.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parroting</td>
<td>4.5.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provoking</td>
<td>5.7.21, 6.7.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections of conflict</td>
<td>6.5.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections of feelings</td>
<td>4.7.24, 6.5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socratic questioning</td>
<td>5.3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarising and hypothesis testing</td>
<td>5.3.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.6.4 Solution Focused Brief Therapy techniques

These techniques seemed to fit particular well into the MI model, in helping the pupil to identify potential for change and to elicit ways in which this might be achieved. The use of Solution Focused questions was a strategy applicable to all of the students at all stages of the process (see Sections 4.9.21, 5.7.23 and 6.13.21)

### 7.6.41 Goal setting using realistic and unrealistic goals

This technique of goal setting was particularly helpful, both in terms of getting the students to consider a range of ideas for addressing difficult behaviours and in providing something ‘concrete’ for the student to work to (Section 4.5.22, 4.5.32, 5.5.11 and Appendix 4.4). In the case of R this information was shared with the key member of staff.

### 7.6.42 Miracle and scaling questions

The ‘scaling questions’ technique was useful in helping to establish the students’ level of commitment to change. In this sense, it could be useful in helping to map students
onto the Model of Stages of Change in terms of their expressed commitment and motivation to change (see Section 5.3.24). With M it was useful in an unusual way in helping to identify potential barriers to modifying his behaviour (see Section 6.5.14).

The Miracle question (see Section 6.5.13) provided an opportunity to establish a clearer goal of what M’s ideals were in terms of his educational provision. This helped me to identify potential areas of conflict between what he wanted from school and the kind of educational experience the school was providing.

The fact that both of these techniques are scripted means that they are easy for an EP to use. As a result, they can easily be incorporated into a kind of ‘toolbox’ of approaches that might be useful in MI.

### 7.6.43 Use of Solution-Focused memos

I found this technique (as described by Johal-Smith and Stephenson, 2000) a particular helpful strategy. Firstly it represented a way of summarising the key issues for the student. In all cases the students agreed that it would be appropriate for me to share the information on the memo with the member of staff making the referral. This provided a way of increasing the schools’ awareness of the students’ self-perceptions, feelings about school and individual educational needs.

Where joint consultation meetings were held, I found the memos an invaluable prompt for addressing the issues that had come from the discussions. They could also form the basis for an ongoing review of progress, as in the case of M (see Section 6.13.12)

### 7.7 Additional factors and Issues

#### 7.7.1 Parental involvement

None of the interventions involved any liaison with parents apart from at the initial stage where consent was sought. This was due to the constraints of time and logistical factors, rather than preferred practice.
In the cases described here, I feel that it would possibly not be beneficial in M’s case (see Section 6.7.22) but in working with R and D I felt that parental involvement might well have been advantageous and enabled more of an interactionist approach (Wagner, 1995).

7.7.2 Taping the interviews

This was useful in enabling a reasonably in depth analysis of the MI sessions and also meaning that in terms of mapping the pupils onto the Model of Stages of Changes that verbatim quotes could be used. It is likely that time constraints might make this unrealistic within normal EP working practice, thus the EP would have to rely on hunches and general intent of feeling when assessing the student according to this model.

7.7.3 Accommodation issues

The MI interviews were most successful when carried out in a quiet, ‘confidential’ environment where the student was free from distraction. My experience suggests that it would be difficult to establish rapport in a situation where the pupil was concerned about being overheard or felt uncomfortable at being seen with the EP.

7.7.4 Time allocation

I found that where the students were allocated one hour sessions at the beginning of the MI intervention, the third and fourth sessions were noticeably shorted. Where three quarters of an hour was provided, the length of meetings did not decrease over the course of the four individual interviews (see Sections 4.3.35, 4.9.36)

Whereas I would expect this to vary between individual cases, I would anticipate that the length of EP time required for individual meetings would decrease over the course of the process.

7.7.5 Is this an EP role?

During this process, one of the interviews in particular focused predominantly on the student’s behaviour out of school and as such might not fit into the normal remit of EP work. However, the discussion at this meeting was helpful in not only providing me
with an idea of the potential conflict between R’s educational and social environment but also enabled R to identify ways in which her out of school behaviour might impact on her school life (see Section 4.7.42).

7.7.6  Joined up thinking

I felt that within a consultation meeting situation, it would have been helpful for the member of staff involved to have had some sort of shared understanding of the MI process (see Section 4.13.32).

7.7.7  Appropriateness of the technique for the students involved

I was not sure at the beginning whether or not MI techniques would be an appropriate intervention strategy for M (see Section 6.3.21). However, over the course of the sessions, I felt that the process had enabled him to reconsider his ‘work to rule’ stance and did in fact promote his levels of motivation and commitment to change.
CHAPTER 8 – Discussion

8.1 Introduction

In this section I aim to return to considering the results in light of the key questions, focusing on some of the issues that have arisen during the course of this study.

8.2 Key questions

8.2.1 Can Motivational Interviewing effect a change in disaffected secondary students’ views of school?

8.2.1.1 Results of the study

In two out of the three cases detailed, it would appear that MI appeared to help effect a change in disaffected secondary students’ views of school. Any conclusions drawn here should be treated with some caution in the light of the fact that this intervention involved a very small sample and one not necessarily representative of students who would normally be seen by EPs (see Section 3.3.18). The effect of external factors on motivation (e.g., end of year exams, work experience) should also be considered.

8.2.12 Longitudinal effects

The outcomes here are considered immediately after the intervention finished. Many of the methods used (e.g., trying to enhance motivation by considering long term career goals) are unlikely to have had an immediate effect. Similarly it is not clear whether or not in the case of the more successful interventions, the change in positive attitudes could be sustained over time, in the absence of regular and ongoing EP involvement. Longitudinal research would be needed in order to establish whether or not MI has any long-term benefits.

8.2.13 Who benefits from a behavioural change?

Another question here considers for whom is effecting a change in the pupil’s views of school beneficial. In clinical settings, it is generally the client’s health that is of primary concern to counsellors. One could argue that promoting positive views of school might enhance the pupil’s academic and educational welfare, but there could possibly be a
secondary impact on the student’s social and emotional wellbeing. For example, changing their behaviour might have an impact on how they might be perceived by their family or peers that might not be directly observable. This raises the question of to what extent the intervention should be aimed at meeting the needs of the individual pupil, or by satisfying the aims of the school’s referral.

8.2.14 The opportunity to consider change

In considering the possible longer term impacts of MI, one could argue that this intervention has at the very least provided the students with the opportunity to analyse their own behaviour and to make better informed choices in relation to the pros and cons of maintaining or changing it accordingly. Change might not be observable in the short term, but where there is opportunity for reflection, the student might decide that in the longer term, it makes sense in his or her world view to reconsider the options for change. I felt that by writing the memos, the students would be provided with an aide-memoir should they wish to re-evaluate their behaviour in this way in the future.

8.2.2 Can Motivational Interviewing enhance the self-esteem, self-efficacy and internal attribution of these students?

8.2.21 Results of the study

In two of the three cases, the MI intervention appeared to be helping to enhance the self-esteem, self-efficacy and internal attribution of the students. The reliability of this information is diminished by the fact that students M or D did not complete final questionnaires and in these cases quantitative information is not available. Therefore conclusions have been drawn based on my own interpretation of the success of the MI process and responses on evaluation questionnaires completed by the member of staff making the referral.

8.2.22 Promoting self-efficacy, self-esteem and internal attribution using techniques from other paradigms.

The techniques used in this intervention were not specifically geared to promoting these three characteristics, although they are specified in the goals underpinning the theory of MI (see Section 2.3).
In viewing MI as a holistic process, there seems to be no reason why an EP shouldn’t in addition draw on specific techniques designed to enhance any one of these aspects in trying to promote the students’ self-esteem, self-efficacy and internal attribution. For example Schunk (1990) advocates the following techniques for promoting self-efficacy:

- Goal setting
- Strategy planning and metacognition
- Teaching Approach – a focus on learning rather than performance goals
- Peer Models and grouping

The idea of incorporating further ideas from other paradigms is discussed further in Section 8.2.3.

8.2.23 MI within a consultative approach

Within a consultation model, the most effective intervention would consider systems level issues at the same time as individual behavioural patterns are being discussed and considered (through the one-to-one sessions). The strategies suggested by Schunk (1990) for example might be particularly helpful to consider at the Action and Maintenance phases of the Model of Stages of Change in helping the student demonstrate an ongoing commitment to change.

8.2.3. Which Motivational Interviewing strategies and techniques are particularly useful in working with secondary age students?

8.2.31 The Structure of MI

The structure of Motivational Interviewing (see Section 2.2) is not an easy one to grasp. For a start, there appear to be three different elements to MI: the Model of Stages of Change, the underpinning theory and goals and the techniques and strategies used. The range of theories (see Section 2.3) and the range of techniques (see Section 2.4) are varied and drawn from various educational and clinical settings. Certainly it would be fair to say that there does not appear to be one ‘right’ or consistent approach.

For me, the most useful way of using MI was to develop an understanding of the Model of Stages of Change and to think about using the skills and strategies I knew about to think about and to decide how I might best work with pupils at the different stages of
the model. The Cheshire Model (Figure 2.7(i)) was helpful in enabling me to take a process-based approach to working with the three students.

8.2.32 Use of MI techniques and strategies

A range of different techniques and strategies were used with various degrees of success in the three interventions. The outcomes are summarised in Section 7.6.

I would say that once the idea of the Model of Stages of Change, and the general underlying theories are grasped, there is room for a great deal of flexibility within the model. I would suggest that into this structure, EPs could bring areas of expertise, individual skills or strategies from a range of paradigms in addition to the ones described here. For example, Emotional Literacy (see for example Goleman (1996)) and Choice Theory (see for example Glasser (1998)) could easily be incorporated into the MI model.

8.2.4 To what extent do schools see Motivational Interviewing techniques as of appropriate responses to some kinds of case referrals for individual students?

8.2.41 Results of the study

In two of the three cases described here, the MI interventions provided what were considered by the school to be appropriate responses to the individual case referrals. These conclusions were reached on the basis of my interpretations of the responses given on the teacher evaluation forms by the school-based member of staff who made the initial referral.

8.2.42 MI and allocated EP time

Of particular interest to me was the comment by the SENCO at M’s school, who whilst satisfied with the outcomes of the intervention remarked that it was “time consuming considering the workload of many EPs”.

At this point it is interesting to reflect back to the thoughts of Indoe (1998b) in highlighting the fact that EPs rarely have the opportunity to be involved in therapeutic work (see Section 1.1.3). With the additional demands imposed on EPs, partly due to
the ever-increasing drive towards standards, it is questionable how many schools would feel able to allocate the level of EP time (approximately five hours per student in school, plus additional time for travel, preparation of resources and report writing) to one student. Where an intervention is perceived to be unsuccessful (as in the case of D), it would be even more difficult for the school to justify that sort of level of involvement with one pupil, where there may be others with equally pressing needs.

In the situation where EP time to schools is limited, there will always be pressures on the EP within the referral process that might appear to contradict the very ethos underpinning MI. For example Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992) suggest that clients should not be rushed into decision making while Rollnick and Miller (1995) advocate that motivation to change should be elicited from the client, not imposed from without. This might be difficult to avoid where the EP is conscious of trying to satisfy the needs of the school’s referral within a short time scale.

8.2.43 How long should an EP spend working with an individual student?

One might speculate for example, in a ‘real-life’ situation, how long an EP might be able to spend working with a rebellious precontemplator such as M. In this particular case, there did not really seem to be any real change in M’s attitude, certainly within the MI meeting situation, until the later sessions. There are questions, perhaps of an ethical nature, regarding how long an EP might keep working with a student in a therapeutic intervention. Where there are underlying issues (for example in M’s case, the bullying incidents which prompted his ‘work to rule’ attitude) these may not come to light immediately until the student has developed rapport with and feels that he or she can trust the counsellor.

Where more complex issues have contributed to student disaffection or where for example an EP is asked to work with a pupil with mental health difficulties, it is possible that a short term ‘quick fix’ MI approach will not be sufficient to address the pupil’s needs. The length of time needed for the pupil to consider and potentially make the behavioural change will be specific to the needs of the individual pupil. However, it is likely that the outcomes will be better if the EP is able to given a substantial amount of time to work with the student.
8.2.44  A shared approach to MI

It is possible that a shared approach to MI (as described in Section 7.7.6), where schools were aware of say the Model of Stages of Change and some of the underlying principles, would be helpful in enabling a more interactionist approach, as advocated by Wagner (1995). Making the MI process explicit might help to enable a more joined-up way of working and help school to maximise the benefits of a MI approach to a referral. A well-established relationship with the school, regular liaison and ongoing consultation with the school would also seem to be helpful policies.

8.2.45  Schools expectations of an EP role

The outcomes of this study suggest that as a therapeutic technique for working with disaffected youngsters, MI is not likely to provide a ‘quick fix’ solution for either the schools or the students. What it would appear to offer is a way in which, in some circumstances EPs can help students and schools to work together to help disaffected students to reframe their attitudes towards schools and learning. It is likely that the long term effectiveness of the interventions described will be influenced by the school’s role in assisting the student at the Action and Maintenance phases, once the EP role has ceased to work with the student on a one-to-one basis.

A MI approach such as the those described here assumes joint responsibility and ownership of processes to address the needs of the individual student within the educational context and requires joint working, co-operation and liaison. Where the school has expectations that ‘the EP will sort out the problem’ it is highly unlikely that MI would be an effective approach.

8.2.46  Pupil absenteeism

As described in Section 3.3.24, one of the students referred, S, did not participate in any of the MI sessions due to prolonged periods of absence during the intervention.

This is perhaps not surprising in that the DfEE (1999) highlight ‘prolonged truancy’ as one of the indicators of student disaffection. However, it does raise issues about what sort of contribution an EP might make in this case and how he or she might be able to work with a pupil who is not in school. In order that EPs can assist non-attendees, who
may represent some of the most disaffected students, there would need to be some way by which pupils could access EP support.

8.2.5 How realistic is a Motivational Interviewing approach for EPs?

8.2.51 What is MI and how does it fit into EP practice?

In terms of considering this final question, I would like to think of MI in the broadest possible context. This means referring to it as a process and thinking about how EPs might be able to successfully develop their own MI approach.

Having completed this study, I am still not entirely clear what constitutes MI or indeed a motivational interview. What I do know is that the term ‘Motivational Interviewing’ brings with it a whole range of principles, strategies and techniques. These seem to me to be directly relevant to the work of an EP, whether it be working at a one-to-one level with an individual student or working at a systems level via a consultation approach.

8.2.52 MI as a transferable skill base

I feel that one of the strengths of MI is that as a model it provides EPs with the opportunities to draw on a range of techniques, applicable to different situations that can be mapped on to the Model of Stages of Change. In that respect I believe it is an approach that could address the needs of a wide range of students and could also be used to address issues at a systems level.

For example, we as EPs might question what motivation a disaffected 15-year-old might have to stop truanting. We might also consider what would be the motivation of a primary school teacher to maintain a youngster whose behaviour appears to be particularly problematic within a mainstream setting. At a systems level, there might be issues surrounding the commitment of staff to an overhaul of long-standing school procedures. In all of these contexts, the Model of Stages of Change provides a useful frame of reference (either formally or informally) for EPs.

8.2.53 Difficulties with an MI approach

The difficulty with MI seems to be that it is less well defined than other approaches that are more widely used in the current practice of EPs (for example, PCP and SFBT). I
believe this partly due to the fact that it is more complex in terms of its structure. The three aspects of MI: the Model of Stages of Change, the values, principles and goals and the techniques and strategies of MI all warrant considerable attention in order that an EP is able to establish a concept of MI that can then be used.

I also feel that the fact that MI has its roots in clinical settings means that within an educational setting, in is perhaps more open to interpretation as to how the principles and strategies might best be applied.

8.2.54 MI as a process – making it ‘useable’ for EPs

It would be unfortunate if the complexities of MI were to deter EPs from incorporating the Model of Stages of Change, the principles and techniques of MI into their own practice. Perhaps it would be helpful if there was some sort of generic MI ‘toolkit’ that EPs could pick up and use when using a MI approach. This might look something like the Cheshire Model defined in Section 2.7 (Cheshire EPS, 2000) but could also incorporate the Menu of Strategies and techniques from other paradigms.

In terms of the techniques, I would imagine that an expanded ‘Menu of Strategies’ encompassing additional methods drawn from other paradigms (e.g. incorporating PCP into the opening strategy and SFBT questions into the future and the past) would be one way of making MI a practical ‘toolkit’ for EPs. In addition this might allow EPs to use the skills and techniques with which they feel most comfortable that are within their own area of expertise.

8.2.55 Assessment using the Model for Stages of Change

The Model of Stages of Change provides a means of assessing the student’s commitment to change (see McNamara, 1998) as described in Section 4.3.36. In one off assessments, it could be used to provide information to the school. However, as in these three cases, it is likely that in order to enable the student to progress through the Model of Stages of Change, more than one session involving specialist input would be required.
A school-based member of staff, using the guidance provided by McNamara (1998) could potentially make assessment of an individual student. An EP could then be asked to contribute to intervene at a specific stage of the Model, drawing on the strategies outlined, for example in the Cheshire intervention cycle (Figure 2.7(i)). This would have implications for school training (e.g. through INSET).

8.2.56 Training issues for therapeutic interventions

Indoe (1998b) suggests that further training and education is necessary in order for EPs to claim competencies in the area of therapeutic work. From my own perspective, trying to establish an understanding of MI procedures was a time consuming exercise. EPs faced with substantial workloads are unlikely to have the same opportunity for personal research and reflection. It is likely that where an EPS was to adopt an MI approach there would be considerable time and training implications.

8.2.57 Technical expertise versus client-counsellor factors

In considering the possible complexities of the MI process, I feel it is important to refer to the work of Lambert (1992) who looked at what influenced effective outcomes in counselling relationships. He discovered that in terms of effectiveness, while 30% was due to relationship factors and 40% was due to client factors, only 15% were due to model factors. This would suggest that while the EP’s expertise with MI techniques is likely to have some impact, the relationship they have with the student is considerably more significant. My feeling is that this should serve to be encouragement to EPs who whilst wanting to engage in more therapeutic type interventions might not feel that they have a complete understanding of the counselling approach they wish to adopt.

8.2.58 Working with parents – an interactionist approach

Because MI is a client centred approach (Rollnick and Miller, 1995) it is likely that the issues that the student raises will not always be directly related to the educational context. Indoe (1998b) suggests that EPs should become more involved in working to help student address their emotional difficulties and the influence of family and social factors in such cases is likely to be of relevance.

As described in Section 2.7, Cheshire EPS (2000) include parental involvement at the Action phase of the Model of Stages of Change. Additionally Wagner (1995) suggests
that a joint school-family consultation meeting should follow a school-based consultation meeting. I would envisage that involving parents would be appropriate in certain cases in working with disaffected students using MI interventions, where the EP judged this to be beneficial.

8.2.59 Using MI approaches in other individual case based referrals

I have already mentioned that I feel that MI approaches would be useful in working with individual members of staff and at a systems level on organisational issues. There is also a question relating to whether or not it would be appropriate for working with pupils experiencing a range of difficulties across different age groups.

MI as an individual therapeutic intervention poses certain limitations in that as a talk based therapy it is useful only to those students who are able to verbalise the issues and consider change through dialogue. The fact that it has its roots in clinical settings suggests that it would be helpful to EPs in working with students who for example have substance use difficulties or eating disorders. However, this again raises questions over areas of competence and expertise in these particular fields and therefore has training implications (Indoe, 1998b)

The extent to which MI could be used in helping younger children is also questionable, given the fact that they may find it more difficult to verbalise feeling and identify areas of conflict and this would warrant further investigation.

8.2.60 MI and the future role of the EP

In view of all these thoughts, I am still brought back to the initial issue of whether or not there is the potential for EPs to work in this type of way with disaffected students. In the past EPs have not had a great deal of opportunity or perhaps the expertise to practise therapeutic interventions when working with students (Indoe, 1998b). The outcomes of the long awaited guidance from the DfEE regarding the future role of the EP may go a long way to determining just how realistic therapeutic techniques such as MI are in terms of meeting the needs of students and school with the current educational climate.
Evaluation of an Intervention for Student Disaffection using “Motivational Interviewing” Techniques

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