**I: = Interviewer (Interviewer in bold)**

R: = Respondent [name]

**I: I'll just put it here so that it can pick up stuff. So I don't know anything about... are you a classroom teacher currently? Where do you teach? How long have you been a teacher for, that kind of stuff.**

R: I am an English teacher. This is my third year of teaching. The last two academic years, so not including this one, I was in Walthamstow and teaching at a school there. I can say the name, can't I, because you're going to take it out anyway.

**I: Yes, definitely.**

R: So I was teaching in [name] Academy, which is part of the [name] Academies Trust. So I was teaching there for two years. Then last year I moved to [name] which is in [area in England]. This is my first year with them. So I'm a teacher there. I've just recently been given the responsibility for working with the pupil premium students at the school. I can't remember the figures but it's quite high, the school that we have. EAL students is quite high as well. So yes, it's my third year of teaching.

**I: So in** [area in England]**, that academy was also with a disadvantaged intake?**

R: Yes. I think the requirement for Teach First is to have at least 25% PP, pupil premium, I think. So they would have definitely had that. Then my school, this year they're taking their first Teach First person on as well so it definitely fits within the bracket. I think it's higher than the school in Walthamstow if I'm honest.

**I: Can I ask you a little bit just really briefly about your own background, where you grew up, how do you identify yourself?**

R: I grew up here in [area in England]. I was born in [area in England] but that's because my mum was working there. But I've grown up in [area in England]. School, everything was in [area in England]. I went to university in [name] so in [area in England] and I studied English language and education studies. I knew I wanted to teach but I wanted to study education before I went into it, which was interesting because studying it, for me, always made me not want to teach because you learn about how certain systems are in place and how they don't work for certain groups. So for a little while I was like, "Mmmm, I'm not sure if I want to go into the system," but I thought, "Well I've been through it, I've studied it. I should be part of it now to just have a general understanding of the whole system in the UK."

**I: When you were yourself growing up in [area in England], what was your experience like with disadvantage or...?**

R: I mean to be fair, my parents, they did quite well for themselves. We didn't really struggle, not really. They worked hard so we were able to live comfortably. But I remember we used to live on one side of [area in England] and we needed a bigger house anyway but we moved to a place where we could go to one of the better schools in [area in England]. I think when I started it was majority white. I think it was 60% white and it was the best school in [area in England]. One of the reasons my parents sent me there, they said they wanted us, myself, my brother and my sister, they wanted us to be comfortable with being the minority in the room. I think actually it really helped me to just be comfortable and to sometimes not realise it, to be in a room with lots of people, with the same people for a number of days and only on the third day think actually I'm the only black person in the room or the only ethnic minority person in the room. So they did that intentionally because they wanted us to be comfortable because obviously they've lived longer than us so they know what the world is like.

**I: Can I ask you about the beginning of your teaching story, when you decided to become a teacher, anything you remember is interesting.**

R: When I was little I wanted to be a nurse because I like helping people. Then I realised that that wasn't for me. I didn't particularly like seeing other people's blood so that wasn't going to happen. I wanted to teach for a long time. I wasn't sure about what age, secondary or primary but I remember watching 'Tough Young Teachers' which was the BBC programme on Teach First. I think I remember seeing how they did it. So that was why I wanted that route. I wasn't sure if I'd get it because I didn't go to a Russell Group uni. I got a 2.1, just missed out on a first so I wasn't sure if I was going to get in, to the point where when I got accepted, the guy who called me to say that I had, he said, "Well done for getting this far." I said, "Okay, it's a big deal." So I wanted to teach for a long time, which is why I made the choice to study education studies with English. In terms of how to do my training, I wanted to do it that way, just throw me in at the deep end.

**I: That was in that school in** [area in England]**, that Teach First training?**

R: That was Teach First, yes.

**I: Your parents, were they supportive of the idea of you becoming a teacher?**

R: Yes. My parents are amazing. They were very supportive. I know there are some whose parents aren't as supportive. I think sometimes culturally teachers are not put on the same level as doctors, lawyers.

**I: Yes, that's why I was wondering, especially coming from a middle class background, did they…**

R: My mum lectures in [subject]. Well she used to, she's just finished that. I think she valued education anyway and so does my dad so they were fine with it. But I know that's not the case. So my sister is studying art at university which is not common I would say for parents to be like, "Yes, go for it." I know that someone I know very well, they were pushed into medicine but they didn't particularly want to do it. That's what I mean, my parents are actually amazing and very supportive of our decisions. I think because they know how they raised us, they know we won't do anything outlandish so therefore what we choose, they then support us in that. But I know that's not the case for everyone.

**I: Also about Teach First, so you said you watched the programme on TV. What attracted you to that specific route rather than PGCE at university?**

R: I think what attracted me is you sink or swim, just having to be there and to just get it done. I know what I'm like. I can talk myself out of doing certain things, whereas with that I wouldn't be able to. I have to be responsible right from the beginning. I have to push past any lack of confidence as well because it's not like I'm sharing a class. That's my class. If I don't develop and get better then it's not good for them. That's what drew me to it and I think the fact that they didn't hide that it was difficult, which is odd.

**I: The intake of those schools, like you said, are usually quite challenging, so how was your experience in the school, in that TF placement?**

R: The school wasn't bad. What I struggled with in that school was the management. It wasn't great. That's why a lot of teachers left anyway. So their turnover was quite high but it was mainly because of how it was led. Sometimes you didn't know what response you'd get from the head so sometimes they'd be really lovely. Another day they wouldn't. That is really unnerving, not knowing what to expect. I think it would be different if I knew that consistently they weren't very pleasant but because it was one day they are, one day they aren't, you never know where you sit with them. It's quite toxic actually because to start off with the pupils were actually fine. We had the systems in place. I actually liked the school. It was the management that wasn't great. Also, I was speaking to one of my other friends, she's not teaching anymore but she did Teach First. The SLT, all of them were in a school in [area in England] where their cohort is incredibly mixed so that was an issue as well, not seeing anyone.

It's not even about seeing a black person for me, it was not seeing the children represented in leadership, whereas the school that I'm at now, it is mixed. Our Asian intake is really high. So there are two, so out of about five or six of them, two of them are Asian. You've got men and women in there. As it stands, they don't have a black person in that role but for me, it's not as important because the cohort is not as big, whereas there's a large Asian cohort in the school. So to see them in those roles, for me, was really encouraging as well. But the leadership team at my current school conduct themselves very differently to my old one. They work together. They're approachable. If I have an issue, I know that I can ask one of them and I won't be shut down or made to feel silly. It makes a big difference, it does. It was good. I think because I like helping people, the pupils in both schools, they're what keep me there I think, for me, because they've got character and they can make you laugh.

Some of them can be quite resilient despite the mess that they've been through in life. That's what I miss about my old school is the pupils and the staff but the management were just too much. It was too much to stay.

**I: Were the staff quite diverse?**

R: Yes actually. I think that's why it bothered me that the management wasn't diverse. It would be different if the staff were mainly the same but they weren't so it didn't make sense as to why SLT wasn't diverse. But then I don't know the ins and outs. So I don't know if anyone had even tried to apply for roles like that. It's interesting because I can see it from the outside and say, "Why have you not got this and this and this?" but then I don't know if anyone's ever applied and if they have, have they been shut down?

**I: But most of Teach First people left that school after the...?**

R: Yes. I think there are a couple of people still there but most of... actually, from my cohort of Teach First, and I think there was five or six of us, I don't think anyone is still at the school. There is no one still there.

**I: And it was okay with pupils. How was it for you?**

R: The pupils are lovely. They just made me laugh. Thankfully, thank God I could build a rapport with them quite quickly which was really helpful. The first year was hard because I was a new teacher and I look really young so it didn't help. But after that they were fine. Some of them had a drive about them. They wanted to learn. They wanted to do well. Those that didn't knew that they still had to behave and still had to try. So the systems in place at the school are really good. I think just the way they were managed, it wasn't nice. You felt micro managed. It wasn't pleasant.

**I: Why did you choose that school which you're teaching at now?**

R: It's a funny story. I actually went to that school.

**I: Yourself?**

R: As a pupil. I ran into the current head of English one Christmas, not last Christmas, the Christmas before. She knew that I'd been training so she was like, "What are you doing? What are you up to?" I said, "Well I'm not staying at my school," so we exchanged numbers. I sent in an application and they interviewed me and gave me the job. I didn't realise how much it had changed. The cohort has completely changed. So when I was there, it was majority white and it's now shifted to majority Asian so the challenges are different. But again, young people, there is a character about them that makes it challenging but makes it worthwhile, so, "You don't know that it's rude to say, "What?" to someone but I need to teach you how to do that," and then watching them change and correcting them so, "What? Oh sorry, pardon, Miss," that is worthwhile. So that's how I ended up going back. I didn't think I would but God has a funny way of working these things out.

**I: So you've been there for a year now.**

R: Yes.

**I: How has it been for you this year?**

R: It's been good. It's been interesting. I think the first term was quite good. I was settling, getting used to it. The second term is challenging because I got the pupil premium role, so that's an additional responsibility. Then also I was given a Year 11 class so that was quite challenging as well. It was a compliment because my head of department trusted me to have them. It just made it busy that's all. I think one of the big things about being in the school, the new one that I'm at, I've noticed that I've been more encouraged by the senior leadership than in my last school. So one of them has encouraged me to apply for the PP role, another one has encouraged me to apply for another course. I didn't get that in my other school at all.

**I: Why do you think it did not happen there?**

R: That's a good question. My other school is an academy and it's part of a chain. It felt more like a business. Whereas this school is an academy that is just a standalone academy and I feel like they've kept a school feel about them so it's more like a family. They want people to do well and to progress. There is less hostility. It feels more like a unit. Because it felt like a business, it was like, "How can I get to this point or this point?"

**I: Was there, in your first school, anybody like a mentor who stood out for you?**

R: There is one and, surprisingly, she was a member of SLT. She started I think a couple of months before I did so she had more time out of that school than in the school. So I think the way in which she conducted herself, she did it very differently. She was lovely. She was approachable. She encouraged you to do certain things. She'd have snacks in her room so if you needed to sit and talk to her, she'd just pull out a snack for you. She didn't conduct herself in the way that some of the others did. You could tell that she wanted you to do well. It sounds terrible but she hadn't been in the school that long so she still did things in the way that she was used to rather than in a way that was completely the same as everyone else in the leadership team. So it was almost like she hadn't been indoctrinated, which sounds so pessimistic but I can't help but think that. So she was lovely. I think there's probably more people in my new school to look up to and to think, "I like the way that they handle themselves."

The other person in my other school was my head of department, more for his academic knowledge. He was great in the classroom in terms of understanding but then he was also someone that you could speak to so he had the balance of the two because his results were perfect every year. You could say he had the right to feel as though he was better than others but he never did that. So he was also a good person to look out for. He was lovely. But he didn't like the politics of school so I think that kept him "normal".

**I: When you say politics, do you mean the focus on attainment and results and that kind of data focus, accountability?**

R: Yes. I don't even know how to explain it. In my first school, the SLT would walk around a lot and mark you on things and sometimes not tell you what they were marking you on. One teacher was reprimanded for sitting down while she was teaching. That really upset her, things like that. Whereas I was doing the same thing but no one said anything to me. Maybe it was because I was leaving so they were like, "Whatever." I think people were trying to please those who were in charge but stepping on people's toes whilst they do it. It wasn't fair.

**I: So the relationship between staff was not very...?**

R: There was a very clear hierarchy in the school. It was the head, SLT, middle leaders, heads of department and then the rest of the staff. Then under that were LSAs, teaching assistants and I hated the way they were treated. So teachers, there was a bit of flexibility in terms of when they left. LSAs had to leave at a certain time. They weren't really given the respect that they deserve as well which for me is nonsense because when an LSA does their job really well, they're so valuable in the classroom so to not do that, for me, just seemed wrong. But yes, there was a very clear hierarchy in the school and that wasn't very pleasant, whereas in the new school I think everyone is more like a family which I think it would take a long time to cultivate that but they seem to have managed to keep it.

**I: How is your workload now? Everybody is talking about workload.**

R: I think the advantage of doing Teach First is that it's a lot all at once. So rightly or wrongly, you get used to having a lot on your plate. So my workload at the moment, I wouldn't say it's terrible. I still manage to leave things at work and come home and not doing anything and sometimes whole weekends not doing any work but that's a conscious effort. I have to stay at work until it's done and then go. My thing is I prepare what's needed for the next day and then if it's not needed I don't do it. Otherwise there are endless amounts of work that you can be doing but thank God they taught me how to manage it otherwise, as a teacher, there is a lot to do. All of it is fairly important so sometimes it's hard to prioritise it. But I've got this system in place where if I don't need it for the next day and it's going to stress me out doing it, I'm just not going to do it. I think in my last school people would stay late more often whereas in this new school, some of them leave when the children do and it's fine.

No one says anything to them about it. In my last school, if you left at that time sometimes people would say something, to the point where one of our team members had to speak to the head and say, "Look, I've got children, can I leave at this time?" which I don't know if she should have had to do that. I think there is a balance. You don't want people taking the mick but then at the same time there needs to be a level of trust as well. I suppose if you're consistently walking around and walking into classes, you'll know whether they're slacking in their teaching. So I think workload, there is always a lot to do. I think there are things that can be done to reduce it but, at the same time, I personally have had to learn how to prioritise. If I don't need it for the next day, I'm not doing it.

**I: Often teachers from minority backgrounds - actually there is more research in the US about that so I can't really tell you about here because I've just started the interviews - talk about the importance of multicultural capital in the schools, meaning attitudes to pupils from minority backgrounds and generally just having that conversation about equity and inclusion, things like that. What is your experience with that?**

R: I don't think it's spoken about. To be fair, in my first school they were starting to do more things to build culture capital because they knew that a lot of their students didn't have it. We started to do more trips. I think every term there would be a whole school trip where each year group went to a different museum. So in terms of building the capital of the students, that's what they were doing. I think sometimes people feel like if it's mentioned, they're almost being attacked. I had a conversation in the staff room with one of, well there was a few colleagues in there but one of them said, "I don't see colour." I'd literally, the night before, been watching a lecture from someone who said that actually you're supposed to see colour and you're supposed to value and appreciate the different cultures that you see in the classroom and things like that. So I was able to bring that to their attention to say, "I don't think it's that you don't see colour. I think it's that you don't allow it to cause you to treat the pupils better or worse than one another," to which they agreed.

So I just don't think it's a conversation that is had. I think it should be in terms of understanding why certain children may behave in certain ways. Even little things like I know that in some communities we speak louder than others and to know actually they're not trying to be disrespectful, they're just used to shouting out. They do it without realising it. I mean I sometimes have to tell my sister, "You're inside, don't shout. I can hear you." She's like, "Oh yes, sorry." So I think conversations like that are important but they just don't seem to be at the forefront. I think that's what it is. There is usually maybe in the staff room but nothing whole school, so not on an inset day. I've never had an inset when they speak about diversity unless it's related to SEN but other than that... but I think it would be good, especially as a school, if you were to break down and see, "Well where do our children come from? What are the key things in their culture that we should know? How do we prepare them for England?" Although we have culture, we live in England. How do we prepare them for that? What can we be doing to help with that?

I think that would be a really good thing because even with my students, I made the decision to realise that some of them aren't intentionally being rude when they say, "What?" They say, "What?" at home. It's about, "Well that's fine at home but you can't say it in the classroom, it's disrespectful." But that's because I took the time to understand rather than just they're a rude child.

**I: So it has to do with social background, not just ethnicity but of course everything is intersected in such a complex way.**

R: Yes. I think it's hard to sometimes separate the two because you have cultural and then you have what they've grown up around. It all merges into one. They don't come to us empty. They have had life. They've been through life before they get to us. I think for us to just... one of the things in my school, one of the key rules is respect. I said, "Well respect is culturally defined." What I'd love for my school to do is tell the pupils what we mean by respect because otherwise it's a little bit unfair. In certain cultures you will bow to someone out of respect. In certain cultures you won't use your left hand. What is the respect in our school? What does that mean? So they can start on the same playing field. But if we don't have conversations like that related to diversity and culture then these things... there is the assumption that everyone knows but actually they don't. Then certain people are penalised for it because they're not intentionally being rude but that's how it comes across.

**I: I mean the statistics is clear, I think something like 85 or more percent of teachers are white British in England. But that's quite interesting actually that so often they say, "Disadvantaged schools might hire more of diversity as far as ethnic background or social background of teachers," but then they lose teachers faster. That might be I suppose a school culture thing as well.**

R: Yes, it could be. It could also be that the pupils are challenging, if I'm honest. It's difficult. I think you need to get to know your pupils. Until you do that, it's very hard to teach them. It's very easy to become discouraged. I think in terms of... it might be that the pupils are challenging in terms of retention but then also, if I've got challenging classes but I know I'm being supported, it helps. So if I have a lesson and they haven't behaved well, if I go into the staff room and someone is like, "Okay (unclear 00:28:19), you can do this, you can do that," it's going to help me want to stay and build my resilience, whereas if you've got a challenging classroom and then a challenging atmosphere in terms of the staff and colleagues, it's not worth it. Your mental health just deteriorates.

**I: Was it more like that in** [area in England] **where you have a challenging intake?**

R: Not the leadership. I think the staff, colleagues were lovely but if I had to escalate something, other than that one member of SLT, it was hard because you didn't know how people were going to respond. It sounds interesting, it sounds like that school did it to them because when they were leaving, so a couple of SLT members left. As they were getting closer to leaving, they almost became themselves again, where they weren't uptight anymore. You could see a smile on their face. I think maybe the pressure of that environment, that school culture, it really almost made them lose their ability to empathise. So I think school culture is really important as well, that community, knowing that you are accepted, not just accepted but helped and encouraged. That is so important. If you feel like an outsider all the time, you're going to want to be outside eventually.

**I: Do you feel that being from a minority background impacted your teaching career so far in any way?**

R: I think it's helped me. So to be in schools where the children are disadvantaged has helped me to understand them because I think one of the things that I was unsure about with the course that I did was the background of the teachers, so white, middle, upper class, Russell Group University, sometimes not really interacting or having to interact with people of other cultures, it worried me that they wouldn't understand the pupils. Thankfully, a lot of them put the effort in and learnt and understood. There were a couple of people in my cohort who could have potentially not understood them but they took the time to understand them and it worked and it helped. I think I almost had the upper hand because I knew more of their story. It's not the same but I knew more of their story going in which is why I could see, "Actually she's not being disrespectful, she's got low self-esteem and it comes across as her being rude."

So I think it has helped in terms of understanding the pupils, understanding what their struggles might be or just being aware of them, even if I hadn't experienced them. I think it has helped in that regard.

**I: Despite being from a middle class environment?**

R: Yes. It was interesting. I think because I did grow up in a middle class background but with church and things like that, you interact with people from all sorts of backgrounds and you hear what's going on or you read or things are said to you. If you go away, people look at me, they don't automatically see class. They see skin colour. So it didn't matter if I was middle class if no one knew who I was. I'm a black woman. I remember we went on a trip with church once and the group were black. There was one Asian woman. The leaders went into an electrical shop to buy some earphones because they had broken so we all just waited outside because there was no point all of us going into the shop. But it was so funny because you could see the security guard gradually just come and stand by the shop. We were laughing because we knew that we weren't doing anything wrong but it was almost being aware, "Okay, my colour is seen more depending on where I am," or just being out with the family and noticing that someone is staring at you. I ended up just smiling back.

I think my parents are really good because they did prep us for that, being aware of how others may or may not see you and just be yourself, represent yourself well, do what's right, which sounds like you shouldn't have to have conversations like that with your children but you do. I think because of where they came from, mum grew up working class. Her parents came over from Jamaica. She grew up working class. I think my grandma was a seamstress and my granddad, one of his jobs he worked at a leisure centre but he couldn't swim. He used to clean the pool but he couldn't swim. But they worked hard. They needed to get the money in the house and then they taught my mum and my uncle to value education. So they knew more than what we had to face. It's different now than it was for them. But they then instilled that in us as well.

**I: Can I ask you, what's your plans for the next few years? Are you planning to stay in teaching?**

R: I don't think I will be in the classroom for the rest of my life. I have a love and a passion for education. I've had that for a little while actually but I don't think I'll teach forever. I think I may go into leadership roles if they arise. I would actually really like to be a head of year. I really like the pastoral side to education as well. I think I'd love that but there's also the questioning of it. I'm still quite young. Am I ready to take on that responsibility? Do I have what it takes? I'm going through that internal questioning as well, as to whether or not I should but that's an internal thing rather than an external because people have encourage me in most things but it's more myself, should I do it? I don't know, maybe it's because I haven't seen anyone who looks like me do that thing. It's encouraging when you do see someone in a position of influence and you can relate to them, even if it's just because they've got the same skin colour as you because it's like, "They've done it so actually, yes, maybe I can do it." Maybe it's because I haven't seen someone who looks like me in that position or maybe it's just an internal conflict of just actually, "No, you are able. You can do it."

But I think if I had my way, it would be more into the pastoral side of things. To be honest, if I wanted to get into leadership, it would be more because hopefully I'd be able to impact on a larger scale positively, not for I want to be the person in charge. I don't have time for stuff like that but to be able to influence more young people for the better is the only reason that I would go.

**I: With the school culture as well because that's the factor in teacher retention.**

R: Yes.

**I: What would be the most important retention factor for you, something that would encourage you to stay in teaching?**

R: For me personally, I think it is having a cultural support because I was trying to think whether or not I would leave a place because I was the only one or the only ethnic minority. I don't even know because of how I was trained because I was trained to be comfortable with being the only one so that wouldn't be an issue for me. It may be for others, which is fine. I think because of my training it wouldn't be but I think that school culture, for me, is really important. If I don't feel supported and feel able to stretch myself to learn, if I do get it wrong I'm not going to be ripped to pieces for it, that they'll support me in that. That, for me, is more important because it means that I will do more things, put myself out there a little bit more. I won't mind doing this thing because they've supported me in this. So I think feeling welcomed and supported because then you can make it a home then, you can stay if you're comfortable.

**I: Do you think it would be the same for all teachers?**

R: I don't know. I think for many, for that feeling of not feeling like an outsider or feeling welcome, yes, I think that's really important. I think the way that I was brought up means that maybe certain things aren't issues for me whereas they could have been. But I think it would be an important factor. It's the whole feeling like you're not on the outside anymore, that you're welcomed, you're accepted, they want you here. I think when it comes down to it, a lot of people want that. But then there are some who don't care and they know that they want something for themselves so they'll just stay in that place. But personally, I don't know many like that. I know there are and that's fine. A lot of the people that I know generally, yes, feeling like you're wanted is really important. It's really important because I think it's I know they want me here which helps me get through the challenge. It's hard today but actually I know I'm wanted, I'm valued.

**I: I wanted to follow-up, you said head of year, which year would you teach?**

R: At the moment I teach Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and I had a Year 11 class, so the whole year but I don't know, it would depend. It depends on when the position may arise. Are they in Year 9 at that point, which means they're probably quite challenging. But I think because I feel like I can build a good rapport with students quickly, I think that would help me. I think if they are well and happy, then it's easier for them to learn and to get their academics. I think it's really difficult for them to not be healthy mentally, to be struggling with things and to learn at the same time. So if I can help them with that part then although they might not all be academically, I don't know if right is the right word or as able as one another, they can still enjoy school and take what they need from it. You need growth. You need the pastoral and you need the academic because pastoral, for me, is about them being good people and then the academic is about them getting the keys they need to open the door to where they want to go, so to be able to help with that so that the teachers can then teach properly. It's something that I've thought about. I really love that side of school as well.

**I: We want to draw out some messages and recommendations out of this research so I'd like to hear your views. Do you think teachers need special training to teach in disadvantaged schools, urban schools?**

R: Yes, I think they do. I don't know, maybe one of the reasons that ethnic minority teachers leave school is because maybe they're presenting ideas and it's being blocked because there isn't that understanding. That is pure speculation but that might be one of the reasons. My husband grew up in [area in England] so there are certain ways of thought and ways of thinking that he knows that I'm just not aware of. He will then be able to reach a child in a way that I wouldn't be able to and that's because of his upbringing, the way he grew up. So I do think that if you're in that area, you should either have experience of living in that area or be willing to learn about it. Actually, I think it will help a lot of people to break down certain barriers that there are between teachers and students. I think there should be boundaries between teachers and students but I don't think there should be barriers that hinder their learning or hinder their growing and bettering themselves. Sometimes it is just a cultural clash but because it's not spoken about or seen as taboo, it's like, "If I admit that I don't like this, I might be racist."

I think sometimes it seems like an awkward conversation to have but I think actually yes, knowing where the children come from, knowing what their life is like, knowing what they mean when they say this or knowing why they may say this or why they may walk in a particular way because what you can then do is help correct some of those myths as well. If I walk in this way, people are going to respect me. Actually no, you don't have to walk in that way. You can conduct yourself differently. But you have to have an understanding of them before you can do those things. So yes, actually I think it would be really good and also in other schools as well, just knowing where the cohort comes from, knowing what drives them, what pushes them, what struggles do they have, it would better your teaching practice because you understand who you're teaching. It's like knowing your target audience, knowing who you're trying to reach. Actually it sounds bizarre that we haven't done things like that yet. That's a really good idea.

**I: Did you have any support in your training around those issues or you just had to rely on your own culture knowledge?**

R: There was no training whatsoever.

**I: Your training is destined to go to schools like that. It's not particularly white, middle class.**

R: I haven't been drawn to those schools at all. I don't know, I think part of me likes the rough and ready in the children of disadvantaged schools. For me as well, I think the fact that they may need this education more than someone else, where they don't have parents who know someone who know someone. They need their grades. I think for me, sometimes it's more worthwhile, it seems more worthwhile. I mean there are certain things that I don't know about white, middle class children, the struggles that they go through because it might be that they're pressured from certain areas and that can be stressful. But yes, I think because of how I've grown up and I've interacted with, I'm more drawn to that type of school because I have an understanding of them although it's not comprehensive. There are still elements in there that I need to learn.

**I: There are obviously other identities. It's not just race, it's class and gender and all those things.**

R: It's everything all mixed together. I think it's challenging but it's a worthwhile challenge. I think when I see how they've progressed and how they've developed as people and see how that's developing in their grades as well, it's beautiful. Actually it's the thing that keeps you going in teaching because there's politics and the timetable can be really challenging but you definitely have to know why you're there. Then that support system that you get in certain schools is so crucial.

**I: Finally, do you think I should ask about something but I haven't?**

R: I don't think so. I think the only thing I'd say with the training is for it to be effective it has to be authentic. So be incredibly selective as to who delivers it. I think the staff, maybe it's not their thing to do stuff like that, just enable them to see how valuable it is so (unclear 00:45:54) as well with schools. If there is no buy-in, it will just completely wash over. So I think whoever does it or does training like that, they need to 1) know exactly what they're talking about, have a passion about it and the teachers need to be made aware of how valuable it is but I really like that idea.

**I: Thank you very much.**