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Police in schools – an evidence review

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Executive Summary

Although police involvement in schools is not a new phenomenon, there is surprisingly little research considering the effectiveness of existing ‘school police’ programmes.

Moreover, considerable variation in the ways in which police involvement in schools has manifested in different countries has led to significant differences in how the ‘success’ of schools policing is conceptualised and measured. Consistent across many forms of police involvement in schools, though, is the assumption that police-pupil interaction can generate important positive benefits, for the child, the police, and wider society. This evidence review takes both a narrow view of police involvement in schools by reviewing the extant literature on the success of schools policing programmes, and a wide-angle approach to the potential roles of police in schools that considers elements of the wider literature on police-community relations.

Our review of the literature on schools policing programmes shows considerable variation across different countries. In the US, schools policing focuses mainly on enforcement and surveillance, with mentoring and education playing a secondary role. Much less is known about the role of police in schools in the UK, but police presence seems here to be focused primarily on prevention and student safety.

Few methodologically robust studies evaluating the effectiveness of police in schools programmes— i.e. studies that compare schools where police are present to schools where police are not present — exist in the literature. Those we could identify suggest the more preventative approach of the UK to be more effective than the US model. For example, in an evaluation of Safer Schools Partnerships (SSPs) in the UK, improvements were found in truancy, victimisation rates and students’ feelings in safety (Bowles et al. 2005). In contrast, evaluations of School Resource Officer (SRO) programmes in the US find no effect on school safety or perceptions of the police (e.g. Na and Gottfredson 2013). Reviewing the evidence on police delivery of specific educational programmes (e.g. drugs education), programmes that incorporate effective learning methods, such as skills development and participative learning, and those delivered in collaboration with teachers — rather than solely by police officers — have been shown to hold the most promise (O’Connor et al. 1999).

Often missing from the research on schools policing, however, has been a robust understanding of the types of officer behaviour that can generate positive benefits. To examine this question we also include in this review the wider literature on police-community relations. Procedural Justice Theory (PJT) posits that: (a) in their interactions with police, people want to feel they have been given a voice, been treated fairly and with dignity and respect, and that they have been dealt with in an impartial manner during personal encounters; (b) that such ‘procedural justice’ is strongly linked to trust and legitimacy; and that (c) trust and legitimacy are linked to cooperation between police and public, compliance with the law, and other ‘pro-social’ behaviours.

Research across a wide range of contexts has consistently found evaluations of fairness are more important than judgements of effectiveness in driving public satisfaction with police decision making, and in generating trust and legitimacy. Furthermore, perceptions of fairness, trust, and legitimacy are indeed associated with behavioural intentions to comply with the law, to cooperate with police, and other outcomes. The evidence from PJT research thus suggests that procedural justice is important in encounters between police and public, and generates obvious benefits for the police and wider society. Yet the benefits to the individual are important too. The psychological mechanisms underpinning PJT — the attitudinal, perceptual and experiential variables that link fairness judgements to trust, legitimacy and compliance — are premised in large part on the extent to which police behaviour can strengthen identification with, and a sense of secure belonging within, wider society.

A growing body of PJT research focuses specifically on children and young people and the results are strikingly similar to those outlined above. Young people, as well as adults, prioritise procedural fairness and mutual respect in their encounters with police. Like adults, the experience of procedural justice (or injustice) is linked to trust and legitimacy; when young people feel that an officer's behaviour is not fair or respectful, trust and confidence in the police is damaged. Finally, among young people procedural justice and legitimacy are again linked to pro-social behaviours such as cooperation and compliance with rules and laws.

Introduction

The school environment has intuitively been considered a suitable setting in which police and young people can interact positively, and where police can build relationships and trust with students.

There are many ways to conceptualize this process: police presence and action in schools may be informal and/or coincidental to other activity; officers may take on particular educational tasks, e.g. road safety or drugs awareness; or police presence may be more formally constituted and involve enforcement activity (as is the case in many US schools – see below). Across all, though, runs the assumption that police-pupil interaction can generate important positive benefits, for the child, the police, and wider society – although we note at the outset that a police presence in schools triggered primarily by a perceived need to control students might not be considered truly ‘beneficial’ to any of the parties concerned.

A central principle of this review is that, whatever their cause and however they are constituted, everyday interactions with police officers are socially and culturally meaningful to the people involved, whether they be children or adults. Such interactions present ‘teachable moments’ wherein people learn from the police officer – an authority figure representing the state, ‘community’ and a certain sense of belonging – about the nature of society and their role and position within it. There is thus an imperative to get such encounters ‘right’, not least because positive encounters motivate positive relations with police. Yet the presence of police in schools has often been premised on a rather narrower set of concerns, relating most obviously to crime prevention but also extending to discipline and ‘education’ in an arguably rather limited, formalistic sense.

This review incorporates both perspectives. Part 1 considers evidence concerning what might be considered the ‘traditional’ ends of schools police, and indeed of policing more widely – crime reduction, discipline, dealing with truancy, promoting child protection, and so on. Part 2 turns to the question of what police-pupil interaction structured within or around a school setting might produce in a wider sense, and it does this through a discussion of procedural justice theory (PJT). We should note at the outset that Part 2 is necessarily more discursive, and draws on a wider range of literature, than Part 1. Our aim in Part 2 is to outline PJT and describe why it might be relevant not just to interactions between police and young people but also to education, specifically. Our aim in Part 1, immediately below, is more focussed – what does the existing evidence base have to say about the success of schools-based interventions?

1. What has been the success, or otherwise, of extant school/police programmes?

There is considerable variation in the ways in which police in schools programmes have developed in different countries, and as a result significant differences in the way programme effectiveness has been conceptualised and measured (Shaw 2004). Table 1 summarises the main approaches to police presence in schools across the US, UK, Canada and Australia. The following narrative focuses mostly on the US and the UK, highlighting the differences between the two approaches; although the lack of research covering the role of police in schools in the UK, compared to the US, should be noted at the outset.

1.1 Police presence in schools

In the US, police presence in schools significantly increased in the 1980s in response to the increased rates of juvenile crime, and again in the 1990s in direct response to numerous school shootings (Na and Gottfredson 2013). School Resource Officers (SROs) in the US were implemented as part of a suite of violence prevention measures, including metal detectors at school entrances, CCTV and zero tolerance policies. SROs are expected to contribute to school safety through carrying out surveillance and enforcement activity (e.g. investigating allegations of criminal incidents, conducting security inspections), but also through building positive relationships with young people and creating 'bonds of trust' with pupils. SROs may also be responsible for providing educational programming (see next section). Thus, the role of an SRO is considered to be threefold: (1) teacher, (2) counsellor, and (3) law enforcement officer (McKenna and Pollock 2014, May et al. 2018). However, research has shown that most officers see protection and enforcement as their primary role in schools (Coon and Travis 2012), and it has been suggested that police training and the occupational socialisation process create role conflict for SROs: the duty to enforce the law competes with (and overrules) other responsibilities to mentor and support pupils (McKenna and Pollock 2014).

There are few methodologically robust studies available evaluating the effectiveness of SROs. Ideally, to determine whether placing police in schools contributes to school safety and other relevant outcomes (see Table 1), schools where SROs are present should be compared to schools where SROs are not present. However, available research tends to be descriptive in nature and very few studies include a control group. Looking at the descriptive research, people's perceptions of SROs and their effectiveness are mostly positive: school administrators and parents report being satisfied with the presence of SROs in schools and believe they make schools safer (e.g. May et al. 2004, Travis and Coon 2005). It is important to note, however, that these are perceptions, and do not necessarily relate to any underlying evidence base – and more methodologically robust studies, those that include a comparison group of non-SRO schools, have found no effect on school safety or perceptions of the police (Gottfredson et al. 2002, Barnes 2008, Theriot 2009, Na and Gottfredson 2013).

Table 1. Police in schools programmes — proposed outputs, outcomes and evaluation results

	Proposed outputs	Proposed outcomes	Evaluation results
School Resource Officers — US	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Police officers patrol the school and conduct security inspectionsPolice officers investigate allegations of criminal incidentsPolice officers make referrals of students to juvenile authoritiesPolice officers provide mentoring and educational programming to students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved relationships between police and studentsReduced fear of crime and increased feelings of safetyIncreased trust in the policeIncreased reporting of crime to policeImproved safety in and around schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Few methodologically robust studies availableNo effect on school safety or perceptions of police from quasi-experiments

Safer Schools Partnerships — UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police officers provide informal guidance and support to teachers to deal with discipline and behaviour and criminal issues in schools • Police officers work with young people for a sustained period of time • Police officers assist in a partnership approach to any incidents of bullying and truancy and to the delivery of educational classes • Police officers work alongside other agencies to identify young people at-risk • Police officers undertake patrols in and around school and conduct initial investigations into allegations of serious offences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access between police and schools • Improved access between the police and pupils • Improved access between the police and the community • Improved relationships between police and schools, pupils and the community • Increased feelings of safety both in and outside school • Improved attendance • Reduced levels of offending behaviour • Improved behaviour in school and support with discipline issues • Raised achievement of pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in truancy, victimisation rates and students' feelings of safety
Campus Police Officers — Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police officers regularly interact and engage with pupils, schools and the wider community • Police officers engage challenging young people in group work and extra-curricular activities • Police officers share information and liaise with other agency workers • Police officers organise and deliver lessons or sessions with pupils • Police officers offer support to educational staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved relationships between police and pupils • Improved information sharing between the police and school • Reduction in bullying, serious indiscipline, physical violence and gang activity • Increased feelings of safety at school for pupils and/or staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in young people's feelings of safety and some evidence of a reduction in criminal activity. However, the absence of a control group meant it is not possible to attribute these findings directly to the campus officers.

Community Liaison Officer Program — Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police officers give presentations on a variety of student relevant issues (i.e. bullying, drugs) • Police officers participate in extracurricular activities with students • Police officers initiate school partnerships with community-based programmes • Police officers provide conflict resolution to develop positive social behaviours • Police officers provide traditional police support within the school grounds • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved relationships between the community, police and young people • Improved behaviour of youth • Increased school safety • Improved conflict resolution skills and citizenship behaviours of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No impact on student • safety or the promotion of positive social • behaviours
School Based Police Officers — Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police officers address identified needs within the school community using crime prevention and problem solving approaches • Police officers assist teachers in developing and presenting curriculum material • Police officers provide initial response and investigation of incidents within the parameter of the school • Police officers form partnerships within the school community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved relationships between the police and young people • Enhanced community safety and security • Increased confidence and satisfaction with police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No robust evaluations have been conducted

Not only does extant research on SROs show little evidence of effectiveness, but it is believed that the presence of these officers can have unintended negative consequences. A report by the Justice Policy Institute (2011) argued the presence of police in schools has led to an increase in arrests and referrals to the justice system, particularly for minor offences such as disorderly conduct. Many others have similarly argued that the use of SROs brings children into the juvenile justice system for behaviour that might be better handled by school administrators (Theriot 2009, Kupchik 2010, Na and Gottfredson 2013). Price (2009) claims the presence of police in schools contributes to what has been referred to as the school-to-prison pipeline, whereby increased contact between pupils and police entangles young people in the criminal justice system. And the criminogenic effects of bringing children or young people into the justice system is well established: the further (and earlier) a young person enters the formal justice system, the less likely he or she is to desist from offending (Huizinga et al. 2003, McAra and McVie 2007). More troubling still is research showing that SROs tend

to be based more in schools with high levels of disadvantage and thus the school-to-prison pipeline is thought to have a disproportionate impact on poor and minority populations (Price 2009). However, again, very few studies of sufficient methodological rigour exist in the literature to support or refute the claims that SROs, in particular, increase pupils' contact with the juvenile justice system.

Much less is known about how police work in schools in the UK. Like the US, high-profile incidents of school violence and fears about youth crime has facilitated increased police presence in schools in the UK (Bhabra et al. 2004). However, in contrast to SROs in the US, the role of police officers in UK schools seems to focus more on early intervention and student safety and less on enforcement and surveillance (Shaw 2004), although gathering intelligence on young people is still a feature. In 2002, Safer Schools Partnerships (SSPs) were introduced in the UK with the aim of building closer working relationships between police and schools, and improving security in and around schools (Bowles et al. 2005). Initially they were formed around 10 'hot-spots' (i.e. areas with high rates of youth offending, truancy and anti-social behaviour); up to 100 police were deployed to schools in 34 Local Education Authorities deemed to be facing the toughest challenges.

The SSP models take various forms, ranging from one police officer covering several schools to a more intensive multi-agency partnership approach. A 'scoping' study of the role of police officers in schools in the UK highlighted that police work with schools in a range of ways and undertake a diverse range of roles and activities (Lamont et al. 2011). For example, officers may be based on school premises or in their usual station, or have bases in a number of different schools; they may be formally dedicated to one or more schools and work independently, or form part of a wider team; they may also work with schools on a more ad-hoc basis to address specific needs. Their specific roles and activities vary depending on the model of working adopted, but include three main areas: enforcement and pupil safety, supporting improvements in young people's knowledge and quality of life (e.g. delivering Citizen and Personal Health and Economic education, covering topics such as citizenship skills, road safety, and substance misuse), and strategic multi-agency preventative working (e.g. sharing intelligence and working collaboratively with other agencies; Lamont et al. 2011). Unlike the US-based model, in the UK, schools retain responsibility for school discipline and most behaviour, with the police providing advice and support as well as a physical presence.

An early evaluation of SSP pilots showed little improvement in its objectives over a six-month period (Bhabra et al. 2004). While perceptions of the programme among officials at SSP schools were largely positive, the experimental results – where eleven SSP schools were compared to two non-SSP schools – revealed no substantial differences in the majority of behavioural measures (e.g. truancy, bullying) and there were no differences in attitudes towards the police. However, an extensive follow-up evaluation with a larger number of schools over a longer period found improvements in truancy, victimisation rates and students' feelings of safety (Bowles et al. 2005). The study included a sample of 15 schools with an SSP intervention and a comparison sample of 15 schools – matched on truancy and exam pass rates – with no SSP intervention.

In addition to these evaluation results, the scoping study by Lamont et al. (2011) – which included surveys, interviews, a literature review and case studies with the Metropolitan Police and West Yorkshire Police – identified a number of benefits to police work in UK schools, including: increased accessibility between police, schools, pupils and the community, improved relationships between all groups, increased sense of safety for students and staff, improved attendance, raised achievement, reduced levels of offending behaviour, and improved behaviour in school and support with discipline issues.

Similar positive results have been found in school policing initiatives in Scotland. Like SSPs, the focus of schools policing in Scotland is on early intervention and prevention rather than enforcement. In a mixed-methods evaluation of campus police officers in Scotland, results showed an improvement in young people's feelings of safety and some evidence of a reduction in criminal activity (Black et al. 2010); however, the absence of a control group meant it was not possible to attribute these findings directly to the campus officers. Particularly important aspects of the role of campus officers were identified as group work targeting challenging and at-risk children, and information sharing with educational staff and other agencies (Black et al. 2010). Similar models of police involvement in schools exist in Australia and Canada – i.e.

that aim to strengthen relationships between police and young people, and to contribute to school safety (e.g. Schools et al. 2006) – however, again the lack of appropriate evaluations limits the conclusions that can be drawn in terms of their effectiveness.

1.2 Educational programming delivered by police

Alongside police presence in schools and the various activities outlined above, officers may also be responsible for providing educational programming, such as delivering drugs education, road safety, and gang education. The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) programme is the most popular school-based substance abuse prevention programme in the US. Police officers deliver the DARE curriculum in hour-long sessions over 17 weeks, providing information about drugs and their consequences, and teaching strategies for resisting peer pressure, concepts of self-confidence, and decision making skills. The DARE programme has undergone numerous evaluations across a variety of contexts. These studies have largely concluded that DARE is not effective in preventing adolescent drug use (West and O’Neal 2004). DARE’s lack of effectiveness is likely linked, in part, to the lack of effective learning methods, which tend to be more didactic than participative (O’Connor et al. 1999). In a large-scale meta-analysis of 120 school-based drugs education programmes (Tobler and Stratton 1997), the more interactive programmes – those that used participative teaching and learning methods – were found to be more effective than the non-interactive programmes that used more didactic methods (DARE was categorised as the latter).

In contrast to DARE, another popular US school-based programme – Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) – has found positive programme effects on its key outcome measures. GREAT was originally modelled on DARE but underwent a rigorous review and redesign of the curriculum. The revised curriculum had a greater emphasis on the development of skills through problem-solving exercises and participative learning strategies, as well as incorporating the growing body of research on risk factors for youth gang involvement. An evaluation of GREAT found that students who received the programme (its redesigned curriculum) had lower odds of gang membership compared to those who had not received the programme (Esbenson et al. 2012). The treatment group was also found to have more pro-social attitudes on a number of outcomes. What the above research seems to suggest is that incorporating effective learning methods and educational principles, such as skills development, problem-solving, and interactive learning, rather than simply providing young people information about drugs, is likely to have the greatest effects.

In the UK, DARE was first implemented in 1994 in 15 schools in Nottinghamshire, and was expanded to all interested primary schools in the East Midlands in 1996. The UK DARE programme uses the same delivery methods and techniques as the US but has content tailored to a UK context. Early evaluations found the programme had little meaningful positive impact (Whelan and Culver 1997). More recently, an independent randomised control evaluation consisting of 1496 pupils from 51 schools was conducted on the UK DARE primary school programmes (Evans and Tseloni 2018). Unlike the previous evaluations from the US, the outcome of interest in this evaluation was not substance use. Instead, the authors focused on intermediate outcomes, such as improved communication and listening skills, dealing with peer pressure, and managing personal stress. Findings showed DARE had a statistically significant effect on four of the nine intermediate outcomes measured: communication and listening skills, getting help from others, making safe choices, and knowledge about drugs, alcohol and substance abuse.

Interestingly, the largest effects were found when the programme was delivered in collaboration with teachers, rather than solely delivered by police officers (Evans and Tseloni 2018). Other research reviewing drug education in the UK has similarly concluded that schools and teachers should lead and co-ordinate this area, with the police, as well as parents and the broader school community, playing a supporting role (O’Connor et al. 1999). The research questioned the preparedness and suitability of police officers to take the lead role given the importance of participative teaching and learning methods.

2. Taking a wider view of police-pupil interaction

While some of the programmes outlined above tended to be focussed on crime (prevention or enforcement), discipline and related issues, many paid at least some attention to the importance of improving relations between police, school children and indeed the wider community. Usually lacking, though, was a robust understanding of the types of police behaviour that could sustain and enhance such relations, and a clear view on the potential benefits — and dis-benefits, should things go wrong. Procedural justice theory (PJT) provides for just such an account. At the core of PJT is the insight that in their interactions with police and other power-holders — not least teachers — people want to feel they have been treated fairly, been given a voice, been treated with dignity and respect, and feel they have been dealt with in an impartial manner during personal encounters. From this apparently simple observation flows a set of implications highly pertinent to the question of what police should seek to achieve in schools. This section first outlines some of the key ideas underpinning PJT, with particular focus on what benefits or positive outcomes are thought to accrue from police-public interactions experienced as fair by the individuals concerned. Discussion then moves on to consider evidence of procedural justice effects among children and young people.

2.1 Procedural justice theory

PJT is an increasingly popular theoretical approach through which to view police-community relations and, in particular, public trust and institutional legitimacy (e.g., Tyler 1990, 2006, Tyler et al. 2015). With its central focus on the generation of consensual rather than coercive relationships, PJT resonates strongly with the ideology of policing by consent: that the trust of the public, and the legitimacy granted to the police by the policed, are fundamental to the proper and effective functioning of the police in a democratic society. PJT is also premised on the idea that most people obey the criminal law most of the time because they think it is the 'right thing' to do, and not simply because it is in their own best interests to do so. A central claim of the theory is that such 'normative' compliance is grounded, in part, in trust and the legitimacy of legal institutions. In turn, trust and legitimacy are shaped by encounters with individual legal actors, perhaps most importantly police officers, and particularly along dimensions of fairness. Core tenets of PJT — e.g. the idea that 'fair' policing builds legitimacy and that legitimacy enhances consent-based relationships between police and public — have become widely accepted among academics and policy-makers (e.g., President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015, HMICFRS 2018).

For current purposes, PJT can be said to make four main predictions:

- (a) that the style of social interaction — particularly along dimensions of voice and respect — and the neutrality of decision-making in encounters between individuals and police officers are central to the way people experience them;
- (b) that the social bonds between individuals and institutions are strengthened when authorities make fair and neutral decisions, and when people are treated in ways that are recognised to be fair, respectful and legal, and not based on bias and stereotypes;
- (c) that out of these social bonds comes a sense that legal authorities are legitimate — that the police and courts have the right to power, the right to dictate appropriate behaviour, and are morally justified in expecting cooperation and compliance; and,
- (d) that legitimacy promotes normative modes of compliance and cooperation that are both more stable and more sustainable in the long run than models of policy based on deterrence, sanction and fear of punishment.

What then are the ‘ingredients’ of procedural justice? Two different ways of categorizing the underlying concept are often presented. On the one hand, specific behaviours on the part of authorities are adumbrated, with a particular focus on four: offering participation or voice, behaving neutrally, treating people with dignity and respect, and displaying trustworthy motives (Tyler and Blader 2000, Tyler and Fagan 2008, Mazerolle et al. 2012, Jonathan-Zamir et al. 2013). When assessing people’s perceptions of authority’s behaviour (e.g. whether or not they felt they experienced procedural justice during an interaction), survey-based research tends to find that responses to items representing most or all of these different indicators collapse into one underlying psychological construct, which represents a general sense of procedurally fair (or unfair) treatment on the part of the respondent. The implication is that people do not much distinguish between these different components but rather take a holistic view about the procedural fairness of a particular encounter or interaction, and indeed of the general way the authority concerned acts. To put it another way, in any one interaction it may be difficult for a police officer (for example) to demonstrate all four aspects of procedural justice — but if they get one ‘right’, those they are interacting with will often (a) make an overall positive assessment of procedural justice and also (b) infer that the other elements were present, too.

Other research takes a subtly different approach. Here, the emphasis is on the ‘quality of decision-making’ and the ‘quality of treatment’ (Tyler and Blader 2000, Tyler and Huo 2002, Reisig et al. 2007), with a further distinction sometimes drawn between formal and informal levels (i.e. those relating to formal rules and those relating to the behaviour of individuals — Blader and Tyler 2003a, 2003b). Quality of decision-making refers primarily to openness, consistency, neutrality and a lack of bias (and therefore, in general, the ability and willingness to make the right decision), while quality of interaction relates primarily to issues of respect, dignity, voice and trustworthiness. These do appear to be distinct aspects of people’s experiences, at least in some studies (Tyler and Blader 2000, Blader and Tyler 2003a — although see Reisig et al. 2007), which may have practical and policy implications. It may be useful for a legal or other authority to know whether people using its services place particular importance on the way they are treated by its staff, for example.

2.2 Defining trust and legitimacy

Trust and legitimacy are central concepts in PJT, and it is therefore worth outlining briefly what, for current purposes, they mean. In much of the social sciences, trust is increasingly commonly defined as a willingness to be vulnerable founded in beliefs concerning the current and likely future behaviours of police officers (Bradford et al, 2017, Hamm et al. 2017). On this account, trust in the police is a process: premised in evaluations that they are effective in the tasks set to them, behave in appropriate ways, and are well intentioned towards those they govern and serve, and expectations that they will behave in these ways into the future; and resulting in a readiness to be vulnerable to the potential future deeds (or misdeeds) of officers. In practice, trust is often measured in surveys by assessing respondent’s expectations and evaluations of police and police activity, using items such as “If you encountered a police officer for any reason, would they treat you with respect” and “How confident are you that the police are effective in dealing with serious violent crimes?”.

Legitimacy, by contrast, concerns the justification of power (do we believe that those who govern us have the right to do so?) and the moral duty to obey (do we believe that those who govern us have the right to dictate appropriate behaviour?) (Coicaud 2002). Procedural justice scholars commonly identify two components to legitimacy. The first component is normative alignment, referring to the extent to which people believe police behave in an appropriate manner — do they judge that officers and organizations do the things police should do, and in the ways these things should be done (Jackson et al. 2012, Huq et al. 2017)? The second component of legitimacy is an internalized sense of consent to (properly established) authority structures. When an individual recognizes the authority of the police, they feel a normatively grounded obligation to obey officers’ instructions and the rules and directives operative within the social and physical space governed by police (Tyler and Jackson 2013).

2.3 The weight of current evidence

Within the framework sketched out above, the vast bulk of PJT research has focused on four particular areas of concern. This trajectory of research reflects the fact that the primary concern to date has been validation of some of PJT's central contentions, and existing research has validated some of the theory's core hypotheses, albeit that, as ever, more is needed. The first concern has been with the aspects of police behaviour that individuals place most importance upon when interacting with officers. Studies across a wide range of contexts, and in relation to many different social groups, have found that procedural justice, as outlined above, is consistently the most important — although of course not the only — factor driving outcomes such as satisfaction with the encounter, decision acceptance, and trust in the officer(s) involved (Tyler and Folger 1980, Tyler and Huo 2002, Murphy 2009, Mazerolle et al. 2012, Myhill and Bradford 2012). Importantly, this seems to be the case in both enforcement and service-oriented encounters. During stop/searches, for example, people attend closely to the fairness of officer activity (Bradford 2017).

The second concern of extant PJT work has been the dimensions on which people trust or do not trust the police and, again, research has shown that fairness perceptions are the most important predictors of trust in the police (Jackson and Bradford 2010, Jackson et al. 2013, Murphy et al. 2013, Hamm et al. 2017). Notably, evaluations and expectations of fairness appear to be much more important in forming 'overall' trust than evaluations and expectations of effectiveness.

Third, research has considered the predictors of legitimacy judgements. Here, the evidence is overwhelming, at least in developed liberal democracies — the extent to which people believe policing to be procedurally fair is consistently and usually very strongly linked to the legitimacy they grant it (whether they feel normatively aligned with police and that they have a duty to obey police instructions) (e.g. Jackson et al. 2012; for a systematic review see Mazerolle et al. 2013). In other parts of the world, however, police effectiveness may be an equally or more important predictor of legitimacy (e.g. Tankebe 2009).

Finally, work in the PJT paradigm has focussed on how fairness perceptions and legitimacy judgements relate to behavioural intentions to comply with the law, cooperate with the police and other outcomes. The picture here is more mixed, but still positive in terms of core predictions. Research has explored, for example, the associations between legitimacy and people's self-reported willingness to cooperate with police (Sunshine and Tyler 2003, Tyler and Fagan 2008, Van Damme et al. 2015), and regularly concluded that people's willingness to cooperate with police is shaped at least in part by legitimacy. Others have examined the association between legitimacy judgements and self-reported offending (Tyler 2006, Jackson et al. 2012, Papachristos et al. 2012, Bradford et al. 2015, Akinlabi and Murphy 2018), and 'real' (e.g. police recorded) offending (Paternoster et al. 1997, Wallace et al. 2016). In both cases, there seems to be a fairly consistent, but by no means universal, link between legitimacy and crime-related behaviour. Finally, in a recent systematic review Higginson and Mazerolle (2014) concluded that at a neighbourhood or area level, policing interventions that boost legitimacy tend to reduce crime levels.

The weight of evidence thus suggests that procedural justice is important in encounters between police and public, generates trust and legitimacy, and therefore shapes people's propensities to cooperate with police, comply with the law, and in all likelihood engage in other pro-social behaviours (Tyler 2011). The benefits accruing to the police and indeed wider society are obvious — cooperation and normative compliance based on social bonds linking individual to institution are the foundation of social order in a general sense, and in specific cases where, for example, police and communities need to work together to solve problems. Yet, further work on PJT reveals important benefits to the individual, too. The experience of fair process at the hands of authority figures such as police officers motivates a sense of identification with and inclusion in the group(s) those authorities symbolically and materially represent. The police, for example, are frequently cited as 'prototypical' (Sunshine and Tyler 2003) representatives of the nation state and its communities (e.g. Loader and Mulcahy 2003, Reiner 2010), making encounters with police officers identity relevant to many along these dimensions. Studies have shown, for example, that thinking police are procedurally just in a general sense, and experiencing specific, fair, encounters with officers, is linked to stronger identification with superordinate social categories — such as 'Britishness' or 'Australianness' — and a stronger sense of belonging or inclusion (Bradford 2014, Bradford et al. 2014). Conversely, of course, procedural injustice can exclude, marginalise and/or alienate from such categories (Blackwood et al. 2015). The implication here is that

procedurally just policing can promote a sense of secure belonging among the policed, or at least reinforce membership that is founded in a wider set of processes (e.g. childhood socialisation). It may help to generate a sense of ontological security and indeed freedom to act within an institutional framework in which one has a stake — and a say.

2.4 Procedural justice and young people

The discussion of PJT research above drew almost entirely on studies conducted with adults. There is however a (surprisingly small, yet growing) body of work specifically considering relations between police and children and young people. And research in this area, across a wide variety of social and political contexts, has tended to corroborate the key findings outlined above.

Looking first at what aspects of police behaviour young people and children find most important, qualitative work with young people (aged 13-19) in Belgium has supported the idea that when interacting with police, youth, as well as adults, prioritise procedural fairness:

When thinking about how well the police perform, the youths stated that they generally did not attach much importance to effectiveness. They were more concerned with the manner in which police officers handle cases. In evaluating the performance of the police, youths thus seemed to tap into thoughts about the procedural fairness of the police and more specifically into their beliefs with regard to how motivated police officers are to help people and about how concerned police are about people's needs. (Diriyx et al. 2012: 199)

Similarly, Saarikkmomäki (2015) reports that when thinking about interactions with police and security guards (e.g. those working at a shopping centre), Finnish young people aged 14-18 prioritised friendliness, mutual respect, and empathy.

The experience of procedural (in)justice during encounters with officers has also been clearly linked to trust in the police among young people. Qualitative research with young BME people in the UK, for example, has consistently found that officer behaviour, particularly if it is seen as disrespectful, aggressive or racist, damages trust and confidence among those who experience it (e.g. Sharp and Atherton 2007, Parmar 2011).

Turning to the predictors of legitimacy, Hinds (2007) found that among a sample of 14-16 year olds in Australia, procedural justice perceptions were a strong predictor of legitimacy (and stronger than 'performance', i.e. effectiveness). Strikingly similar results are reported by Akinlabi (2017), working with a sample of 13-18 year old secondary school pupils in Ibadan, Nigeria. Using a sample of 10-16 year olds from New York City, Tyler and Fagan (2005) found that the perceived procedural justice of interactions with legal actors including police, school security officers, and store security staff were associated with the legitimacy of the police and courts. Similarly, Reisig and Lloyd (2009) report results from a survey of high school students in Jamaica, and again find a statistically significant association between perceptions of procedural justice and legitimacy

Finally, there is also support for the idea that among young people, as well as adults, procedural justice and/or legitimacy are linked to cooperation and compliance. Tyler and Fagan (2005) report that legitimacy judgments were negatively correlated with self-reported offending in their New York sample (i.e. those who granted more legitimacy tended to report lower levels of offending). By contrast, working with a longitudinal sample of young people (aged 12-17) on probation in British Columbia, Canada, Penner et al. (2014) found that while respondents' perceptions of the fairness of the youth justice system in their dealings with it predicted later self-reported offending, this association was not mediated by legitimacy. In somewhat similar findings, Reisig and Lloyd (2009) report that perceptions of police procedural justice — although not legitimacy — were associated with young people's intentions to cooperate with police in Jamaica.

A recent paper utilising data from 11 waves of the Pathways to Desistance study brings together much of the above (Kaiser and Reisig 2017). Participants in this study were aged 14 to 17 on enrolment – all were classified as serious adolescent offenders at the time. Following the baseline interview, participants were interviewed roughly every six months for the first three years of the study, then yearly for the next four years. Based on their analysis of the data, Kaiser and Reisig (ibid.) conclude that: (a) procedural justice perceptions predict legitimacy beliefs; (b) across individuals, more positive procedural justice perceptions predict lower levels of offending; and (c) that some of this association is mediated by legitimacy beliefs. With some provisos – for example, change in procedural justice perceptions did not seem to influence offending within individuals over time – the key findings from this study are supportive of a PJT framework.

Similarly, another longitudinal study, this time using three waves of data from 8-11th graders from New Hampshire, reported an association between legitimacy judgments and later ‘rule violating behaviour’ (how many times the respondent had engaged in 22 specific behaviours in the past six months) (Cohn et al. 2012). Interestingly, this association was entirely mediated by assessments of the normative status of the acts (how wrong they were). Respondents who granted the police more legitimacy tended to think violating rules was ‘more wrong’, and those who thought this way at Time 1 were less likely to report rule violating behaviour at Time 2.

In sum, findings from PJT and associated research focussed on young people tend to concur with the wider PJT literature, particularly when the focus is on fairness perceptions, trust and legitimacy judgments. Results in relation to compliance behaviour are somewhat less consistent, but it is important to note this is probably not surprising. PJT offers just one set of reasons why people may or may not comply with the law, and must ‘compete’ in this arena with a whole range of other factors (e.g. deterrence, self-control theory, social learning etc.) The claim of Tyler’s model is not that procedural justice determines behaviour, but merely that (a) it is one factor among many, which, crucially, is (b) within the control of police and (c) a more important aspect of police behaviour than, for example, any deterrent threat generated by effective performance

2.5 Procedural justice in family and school

Work on procedural justice in criminal justice contexts resonates strongly with parallel literatures on authority dynamics in families and schools, and indeed studies have directly explored the existence and importance of procedural justice in these two domains. An excellent summary account of both is provided by Tyler and Trinkner (2017: Chapters 7 and 8); in both cases, the importance of procedural justice in motivating rule compliance and active engagement in wider systems of norms shines through.

Turning first to the family, Tyler and Trinkner note that elements of procedural justice can be identified in ‘classic’ theories of parenting, such as Baumrind’s model of permissive, authoritarian and authoritative approaches to controlling children. Most pertinently, authoritative parents explain their decisions to children, encourage verbal give and take in the setting of rules, and parents display warmth and caring, even when they are enforcing rules. In other words, authoritative parents display key elements of procedural justice in their parenting styles, and authoritative parenting has been linked to a variety of positive outcomes for children, such as high levels of self-esteem, self-reliance, and academic achievement (Baumrind 1991, Hoeve et al. 2009). Other studies have shown that children are directly responsive to the way authority is wielded in the family, and have indicated the importance of procedural justice in parent-child relationships. Indeed, research has shown that children are sensitive to, and place value on, process fairness from a very early age, as young as six or seven (Thorkildsen and White-McNulty 2002). When children experience respect, openness, two-way interaction and empathy in their relationships with their parents, they tend to experience a trusting, warm family relationship, which has been linked to lower levels of deviant behaviour and greater inclination to follow rules (Brubacher et al. 2009, Jackson and Fondacaro 1999).

Considering, second, the school environment, Tyler and Trinkner (2017) note that for most children school is the place where they first form relationships with authority figures in a context marked by formalized rules and (relatively) impersonal relations. Considering the function of school – and hence the ends to which those rules and relationships are oriented –

they go on to quote Arum (2003: 3) “primary and secondary school is as much about the socialization of youth as it is about teaching rudimentary cognitive skills”. The kinds of relationships children form with teachers, and the rules that guide these relationships, are an ideal world oriented not only towards skills and academic knowledge but also the development of social and other forms of capital and motivating engagement in civil society (see section 2.6 below). By now, it should come as little surprise that behaviour in line with the notion of procedural justice has been found to promote both rule following inside school and engagement in the wider normative ‘project’ of schooling. On this view, not only does procedural justice in school settings cement a sense of belonging in extra-familial social groups, but the formation of relationships based on fairness with teachers comprises an important way in which children learn, and internalise, the ways they too should behave. Moreover, in this new, more formal, environment, legitimacy begins to play an important mediating role between procedural justice and outcomes of various kinds, and studies have shown that the experience of procedural unfairness is linked to diminished attribution of legitimacy to teachers and school (Gouveia-Pereira et al. 2003) and a variety of negative student behaviours. James et al. (2015: 16), for example, conclude that:

“Students who perceive unfair treatment from teachers are more likely to bring a weapon to school and to fight at school than are students who believe their teachers are fair. Students who perceive rules are unfair are more likely to bring a weapon to school than are children who believe rules are fair” (quoted by Tyler and Trinkner 2017: 168).

Again, aspects of procedural (in)justice directly in line with the criminological literature appear to be important in generating such outcomes. Cornell and colleagues, for example, argue that students respond positively to regulatory control when they are given an opportunity to give their side of the story, and when any ensuing punishment is implemented in a fair and respectful manner (Cornell et al. 2016). Caring and showing interest in children, communication of praise when earned, application of fair and transparent rules, and explanation of decisions have also been shown to be important aspects of teacher-student relations (Tyler and Trinkner 2017: 168).

In sum, research on children’s and young people’s relationships with parents and teachers seems to underline the importance of procedural justice in relationships governed by (formal or informal) rules and marked by significant power imbalances. Nor is this limited to criminal justice, families and schools – research on employer/employee relations has produced very similar findings (Greenberg 2011). Particularly pertinent in the current context may be the extent to which experiences of procedural injustice across the three domains considered here – family, school and policing – may interact with and/or offset one another. Can experiences of procedural injustice within families, which seem to be likely although not inevitably correlated with other problematic home experiences and which may diminish commitment to rules and laws and inhibit wider social engagement, be offset or ameliorated by school environments, and encounters with police officers, experienced as procedurally fair? Taken as a whole, research on procedural justice in policing and other criminal justice contexts suggests this is indeed the case – because people who experience fair policing are more likely to obey the law net of many potential individual level confounds – but there seem to have been few if any studies directly testing such a claim.

2.6 Legal Socialization

Some recent theoretical work has taken some of the arguments outlined above a step further. Justice and Meares (2014), for example, claim that the criminal justice system provides one of the central ways in which the state educates its members in what it means to be a citizen. They draw on educational theory to suggest that this process has both overt and hidden aspects, and they focus in particular on what they call the curricula of criminal justice, which can be found in the interactions people have with criminal justice agencies, and the processes through which they move into and within criminal justice institutions. These curricula constitute ways – experiences – through which people learn about the values and meaning of citizenship, and their status as inside or outside the social and administrative categories concerned.

The overt curriculum is concerned with values of legality, participation, service to others, and engagement with society and community – values, that is, of procedural justice, trustworthiness, legitimacy and equality of worth. It can be found encoded in the formal procedures, processes, rules and laws which govern the activity of criminal justice institutions and actors, and in the wider set of social and cultural images and ideas that surrounds the institution of, in this case, the police. The hidden curriculum, by contrast, can be found not in official rules and procedures, nor in the mainstream image of policing, but in ‘back stage’ areas and in real-life interactions between police officers and individuals. It is encoded in mundane, everyday, practices of police that are premised on unstated, rather than explicit, norms, rules and beliefs – in policing as it occurs ‘on the streets’ not ‘in the books’. On many occasions, the two curricula operate in tandem, and reinforce one another. The activity of many police officers can and does follow explicit rules and the ideology of policing, communicating justice, trustworthiness, inclusion and the legitimate use of power. Yet, if the hidden curriculum of policing fails to live up to these ideals people learn a different lesson during their interactions with officers. In particular, police activity that is procedurally unfair undermine values of trust, legitimacy and inclusion, providing an education in what Justice and Meares call ‘anti-citizenship’, and generating different, negatively valenced, forms of membership.

Tyler and Trinkner (2017) similarly argue that encounters with police officers are key moments in the legal socialization of young people (see also Tyler and Fagan 2005, Trinkner and Tyler 2016). Defining legal socialization as “the process whereby people develop their relationship with the law via the acquisition of law-related values, attitudes, and reasoning capacities” (Trinkner and Tyler 2016: 1), they argue that such interactions provide opportunities for young people to learn not only, or even primarily, about the law in a narrow sense but also and more importantly about what the law represents and how they should interact with legal authorities. Parents and teachers inevitably provide the most important examples, sources of information and ‘tuition’ in this regard. But police officers, wherever and whenever they are encountered by young people, can help in processes of: value internalization (e.g. that one should respect the law); the formation of positive attitudes about legal authorities, such as trust and legitimacy; and in the development of legal reasoning – conceptions not just of the law but of the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

For current purposes, the obvious implication of this work is that ways should be found to leverage positive – i.e. procedurally fair – interactions between police and young people, since these will be most likely to produce the outcomes described above. Such interactions may provide important opportunities for young people to learn about: the ways those in authority should, and do, behave; their own place in society; and the ways they themselves should behave in relation to others. One challenge is that these authors rely in the first instance on procedural justice as an aspect of officer behaviour in natural settings such as street encounters, crowd events, etc., to ‘do the work’ of developing citizenship and relations with the law. It is somewhat less clear how more formalised interactions – for example in the classroom – might be best configured to produce similar outcomes. Which is not to claim, of course, that informal interactions between police and young people in schools cannot be considered as ‘natural encounters’ of the types that dominates the procedural justice literature.

3. Conclusion

In this review we outlined, in Part 1, the existing evidence base on the success of schools based policing programmes. In Part 2, we introduced the idea of procedural justice as a way of providing a framework for both describing what good police-public interactions ‘look like’ and the types of outcomes such interactions might produce. We discussed evidence suggesting that procedural justice effects can be identified in relationships between police and young people across a wide variety of contexts; and that such findings map closely to the literature on authority relations within families and schools. Finally, drawing on some recent approaches, we described how police activity, wherever experienced, might be considered an important part of the education, or perhaps more correctly legal socialisation, of young people.

What we have not been able to do is to draw the two parts of the review together. While the lack of robust evaluations of schools policing is concerning, and the weight of evidence in favour of procedural justice compelling (although not overwhelming), we could find no studies that combined the two. We also found little or no discussion of how the ideas

of procedural justice might be introduced into the types of formalized interaction police officers might have with children in schools. This remains, to our minds, a significant gap in the existing literature base. It also, we suspect, reflects a wider failure in terms of thinking holistically about interactions between police and young people and what outcomes these might produce

That said, PJT offers important insights into the potential role of police in schools, and for two reasons. First, on a practical level it describes what types of officer behaviour are most likely to produce positive outcomes in terms, for example, of compliance with laws. PJT's prescriptions also chime with equivalent literatures on family and schools/education research, indicating that like parents and teachers, police officers may have an important role to play in the legal and wider socialisation of young people (albeit that the former two groups are likely to be considerably more influential in most cases). Second, and following from this, PJT offers a way of re-thinking the role of police and, indeed, the activity of policing that is made particularly visible in the context of schools and education. By shifting our focus away from enforcement and social control via threat and deterrence, Tyler's theory underlines both the possibility and the importance of relationships between police and policed that are based on shared norms of behaviour, social bonds, trust, and legitimacy. When 'got right', officer engagement with young people, and participation in their education as members of society, may prove in the long run a more effective, ethically viable and cost-effective way of working towards the avowed, Peelian, aims of policing: preventing crime and disorder, and developing cooperation between police and public as the most important way of securing these outcomes.

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