

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

**TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE HEAD TEACHER'S VALUE SYSTEM
INFLUENCE THE ETHOS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Gillian Holmes

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ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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The research stems from the researcher's own experience of establishing an ethos in a Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School, and a desire to find out how other heads have developed theirs. Using a case study approach, the research asked heads to explain their personal values, and if and how they used these to establish their school's ethos. The data generated has provided a detailed description of each school and multiple perspectives of the head teacher's influence upon their school.

The case consisted of six Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary schools in rural Essex. Five semi-structured interviews took place in each school, one with the head teacher, followed by interviews with two teachers and two members of the support staff. An observation in each school looked for evidence of the ethos through all aspects of the setting, including the use of indoor and outdoor areas, the content of displays, and the interaction between the pupils and the adults. Each school's most recent inspection reports from Ofsted and the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools were scrutinized for references to school ethos, and values, which could contribute towards the data collected in each school.

The analysis of the data supports research literature, which highlights the important role of an effective head teacher. The knowledge that has also emerged is the dichotomy faced by some head teachers: whether their personal values serve as a guide to the underpinning of their school values or whether they adopt professional values that support the Christian distinctiveness of the school, even when these are at variance to their own personal beliefs. These embedded values support the development of the ethos in their schools.

This research has provided new insights into the development of the school ethos and encourages heads to reflexively consider how their personal values impact upon their school.

Key words: Christian distinctiveness, leadership, spirituality, values, ethos.

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Thanks to my family for their patience and support.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all head teachers working in Church of England primary schools in recognition of their commitment to the role.

List of Abbreviations

BHA – British Humanist Association.

C of E – Church of England.

Church Schools – in the UK schools owned or part-maintained by churches, mainly Roman Catholic and Church of England, but also some Methodist, Quaker and other Christian denominations.

DES, DfE, DfEE, DfES, DCFS – Department of Education and Science, Department for Education, Department for Education and Employment, Department for Education and Science, Department for Children, Schools and Families. Along with the Board of Education these are the different titles used since 1944.

HMSO – Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

LEA – Local Education Authority.

NC – National Curriculum.

NCC – National Curriculum Council.

NCSL – National College of School Leadership.

NPQH – National Professional Qualification for Head teachers.

NS – National Society, previously known as the National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church.

Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education.

PSHE – Personal, Social and Health Education.

QCA – Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, responsible for curriculum from 1998.

RE – Religious Education, used since the 1988 Education Act to describe the curriculum subject, rather than any form of religious observance.

RI – Religious Instruction – the name given for religion as a classroom subject in the 1944 Act.

SACRE – Standing Advisory Council on RE, set up in every LEA after the 1988 Education Act.

SCAA – School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, established in 1992 to ensure quality in the curriculum, replaced by QCA.

SEAL – Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning.

SIAS - Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools. (Changed to SIAMS in 2013)

SIAMS – Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools.

SMSC – Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education.

TTA – Teacher Training Agency.

VA - Voluntary-aided schools, one type of church school, in which the church or foundation body appoint two-thirds of the governors and is allowed to require denominational worship and/or RE.

VC – Voluntary-controlled schools, the church or foundation body has minimum control, only appoint one-third of the governors and RE must be taught according to the LEA agreed syllabus.

Disclaimer:

Throughout this work I will be using the terms: Church of England (C of E) school, Christian school and Church school. This is because different authors use these different terms. I am always referring to C of E schools.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Preamble

1.2. An outline of the thesis

1.3. Conceptual framework

1.3.1. Leadership

1.3.2. Spirituality

1.3.3. Ethos

1.3.4. Values

1.4. Conclusion

1.1. Preamble

The role of a head teacher in any school is a huge responsibility. The head has to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to receive a broad and balanced curriculum, which will enable them to achieve their full potential academically, socially and spiritually. To lead a Church of England (C of E) school comes with the added responsibility of providing a Christian distinctiveness, within the traditions of the school's foundation. All leaders bring both experience and their own personal vision and values to their role. This research will seek to answer the question 'to what extent the head teacher's value system influences the ethos of the C of E Voluntary Controlled (VC) primary school', through undertaking a case study of six rural primary schools in the east of England.

I have worked in education for over thirty years and it has been a privilege to have played a part in preparing children for their future. As a practicing Christian my faith has played a significant role in my life. Most of my professional work had been spent teaching in community schools, with no faith affiliation. This changed in 2006 with the opportunity to be seconded as head teacher at a Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school and thereafter to become the substantive head.

The motivation for undertaking this research came from my position as head teacher in a C of E school and being a practising Christian. This work investigates how other head teachers identify the values they believe are important for their pupils and how these values are incorporated into their schools' ethos. Reflecting upon the experience of leading a C of E school has allowed me to consider how my values impacted the ethos of the school. It also provided the opportunity to consider some of the factors of leading a faith school and leading

one with no faith affiliation. How a leader develops their personal values or authenticity depends upon the individual. 'A leader shapes the ethos in which others must live, an ethos as light-filled as heaven or as shadowy as hell. A good leader is intensely aware of the interplay of inner shadow and light, lest the act of leadership do more harm than good' (Palmer, 2005, p.690).

1.2. An outline of the thesis

This chapter presents an overview of the chapters of the thesis and my conceptual framework. It explains my epistemological stance and the justification for my methodological choices. It defines the terms used in the study. The research has been informed by the theoretical position of writers in the field of leadership, spirituality, ethos and values.

Chapter two is significant as it summarises the history of C of E schools and their contribution to education in England, from their conception in the early nineteenth century to the present day. This background is necessary to appreciate the important focus placed today on the leadership of the head teacher by the National Society for the Church of England which regularly inspects C of E schools for their effectiveness in delivering Christian distinctiveness. The National Society retains its founding purpose: to ensure that education enables children and young people to fulfil their potential by developing their spirituality, belief, humility and independence (Chadwick, 2012). Currently around a third of state schools in England are run at least in part by religious bodies, and approximately two-thirds of these schools are C of E, the remainder being predominantly Roman Catholic, Methodist or Jewish. All schools put a high priority on enabling their pupils to fulfil their potential, but it is the development of pupils' Christian beliefs and spirituality that mark out the C of E school as being different from a community school with no faith affiliation. For the C of E school to play a significant role in the lives of its pupils, it must ensure that its school leaders actively promote Christian distinctiveness through the development of a Christian ethos.

Chapter three critiques the relevant literature and empirical research on leadership, spirituality, ethos and values that informed the development of the research question. It reveals how strong leadership and a systematic whole school programme for value-based education impact the development of the values of the school. The literature review, however, identifies a gap in the literature on the influence of a head teacher's values in the development of the ethos in a voluntary controlled (VC) C of E primary school.

Chapter four locates my study within an interpretivist paradigm. Qualitative research allowed me to investigate the emotions and actions of the head teachers in their professional setting.

I chose to use a case study because it is the most appropriate method of research to answer my research question; 'it can close in on real-life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice' (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p.309). The case study schools were similar in demographic to the one I had led, which enabled me to have empathy and understanding of the challenges faced by the head teachers. The case study comprises six C of E VC rural primary schools where the head teacher had been in post for at least three years. It took a holistic approach by considering three sources of data: observation, interviews and document scrutiny. The research sought to understand and interpret how the head teacher had used their own personal values to influence their school ethos. This chapter also discusses the limitations of these methods. I acknowledge that my professional experience and personal Christian faith has influenced my epistemological position and I have therefore taken a reflexive position to ensure rigorous interpretation of the data. Criteria such as goodness, authenticity and trustworthiness were used to evaluate the robustness of the data analysis. I began this work with a number of pre-conceived assumptions which had resulted from my experiences and the evidence generated from the data supported some of the assumptions but was at variance with others.

Chapter five presents the data gathered from observations in the six schools and from document scrutiny of their most recent Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) inspection reports. This work is characterised by my desire to provide rich description of the six schools. Geertz (1973) advocates this by saying that case study is valuable for portraying how things are by looking close-up at the reality and producing 'thick' description. The observations looked at how effectively the school environment had been used to enhance all aspects of the pupils' educational experience, to celebrate pupils' successes and to enhance the Christian distinctiveness through the use of icons and Christian displays. The document scrutiny provided background on each school at the time of their last inspections. Chapter five clearly sets the scene for interpreting the data gathered through the interviews. My interaction with the schools' environment, their inspection documents and the interviewees informed my critical analysis of the data.

In chapter six the data from chapter five triangulated with the data gathered from five interviews in each of the six case study schools. Interviews were held in each school with the head teacher, two teaching staff and two support staff. The interviews were intended to discern how the five individuals interpreted the influence of the head teacher and their values, and to describe changes made by the head that had affected the school ethos. The

chapter reveals the values held by the head teachers, and how these had influenced the changes they had made in their schools which had impacted their school's ethos.

Chapter seven discusses the range of data collected to answer the research question, with an evaluation of my research and its limitations. Reflection upon interviewees' motives and assumptions was vital to my data analysis. I acknowledge that my position as a practicing Christian could pose a threat to the validity of the research process, but I strove to be as trustworthy, reliable and authentic as possible in the analysis of the data.

Chapter eight summarises my findings and clarifies how the theoretical implications constitute a significant contribution to new knowledge.

Chapter nine discusses the significance of this research to the development of my understanding of my role as head teacher and current role as a school inspector.

1.3. Conceptual framework

My conceptual model for a C of E VC primary school is one where the head teacher's own personal values, accompanied by effective leadership skills, establish their school ethos. This ethos is embraced by staff and governors and underpins the life of the school. In a C of E school, with its Christian foundation, the personal values of the head teacher would ideally align with this and their values would be Christian values. The statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools (SIAMS) looks for and indeed expects the development of Christian values in a C of E school. If a head teacher's personal values do not align with the Christian values, a dichotomy may arise.

My conceptual framework has developed through reading the relevant literature and empirical research. Those which have had the greatest influence upon the development of my framework are considered in the next four sections of this chapter. They have enabled the clarification of ideas and increased my understanding of leadership with particular reference to Christian leadership, spirituality with a focus on Christian spirituality, school ethos and the development and place of values in schools. My conceptualisation that head teachers have the greatest impact upon the development of the ethos of a school endorses the findings of Bazalgette (2006). He found that a change of head teacher in a church school, to a Christian leader, led to significant changes to the ethos, which positively affected attitudes, behaviour and standards within the schools.

My personal experiences, detailed at the beginning of this chapter, have supported the research by enabling me to draw upon my knowledge and experience as a head teacher and more recently as a school inspector. Leading a church school and now inspecting church schools has contributed significantly to my theoretical understanding of Christian distinctiveness.

At the outset of the study I held three pre-conceived assumptions which had developed from my professional experience and personal Christian beliefs and which formed my theoretical perspective:

- The head teacher in a small, village primary school is the person with the greatest influence upon all aspects of their school.
- Schools with a C of E foundation would have visible evidence of a Christian ethos as well as a Christian ethos underpinning policies and practice.
- The personal values of the head teacher would be the values evident throughout the school and would have the greatest influence on the development of the school ethos. A Christian head teacher would have personal values that aligned with the Christian foundation of the school.

I have reflected upon the topic to enable me to deepen my understanding, to clarify key concepts and to identify gaps in the literature. Research has been undertaken on the effect of a Christian ethos in a range of school settings, both in C of E schools and Catholic schools. However my research looks specifically at the head teacher's values used to establish their school ethos, in a VC C of E primary school. This is an area where there is a gap in knowledge. VC schools were selected because there is no expectation by those who are responsible for the appointment of the head teacher, that they will have a personal Christian faith or be a practicing Anglican. This research seeks to generate understanding that will inform and enhance my current practice.

The next section outlines the key themes from my conceptual framework that run through this study: leadership, spirituality, ethos and values. I make reference to the key writers that have had the greatest influence on my epistemological position and on my definition of terms.

1.3.1. Leadership

Block (1987) discusses the need for the head teacher to be an 'empowered manager', who can shape and create an organisation that they believe in'. Leithwood and Jantzi (1990)

agree with this view, but believe that leaders should first articulate a vision, which sets the direction of the school, then develop the people within the school through high-quality interpersonal relationships, and lastly have a plan to structure the organisation to be in tune with the vision. Kouzes and Posner (2007) undertook extensive research to identify traits associated with admired, inspirational leaders who were able to effectively articulate their vision. Fullan (2007) acknowledges that school leadership is a complex phenomenon and does not always result in success. However, Fullan (2011) places at the centre of all effective leadership the characteristics of motivation, collaboration and confidence. A head teacher's leadership is influenced by their personal beliefs but it is also shaped by educational and political considerations and challenges. A head teacher must seek ways to communicate their vision to everyone in the school.

A leader of a C of E school is expected to develop its Christian distinctiveness. In their *Guidance for Schools and Inspectors undertaking a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)* (2013) The National Society defines this distinctiveness. This is the definition I have chosen to use throughout this research:

Distinctiveness must include a wholehearted commitment to putting faith and spiritual development at the heart of the curriculum, with a Christian ethos permeating the whole educational experience.

Leading a C of E school requires the head teacher to be clear about how they will make it distinctive through their leadership, inspiring others to engage and contribute as well. Daft (2008) describes a particular kind of leadership which may support this. It was first used in relation to educational leadership by Greenleaf (1977):

Servant leadership is leadership upside-down. Servant leadership transcends self-interest to serve the needs of others, help others grow and develop, and provide opportunities for others to gain materially and emotionally. (Daft 2008, p.156)

This style of leadership is illustrated by the life of Jesus, putting service before self-interest and is echoed by the National Society (2009, p.16): 'Christian leadership takes as its model the leadership of Christ and places the needs of others above selfish needs'.

My epistemological position has led to my definition of effective educational leadership as the ability to hold and articulate clear values and moral purpose while focused on providing a world class education for pupils. Christian leadership demands that the values are Christian values and that these values determine the moral purpose and the ethos of the school. It is

my contention that for the head teacher to be true to their personal values, a C of E school should therefore be led by a Christian.

1.3.2. Spirituality

Hull (2002) describes the relationship between spirituality, religion and faith as three concentric circles. According to this view the outside largest circle represents spirituality, the middle ring religion and the inside circle faith. All schools in England are required to address the development of pupils' spiritual understanding through their curriculum. C of E schools are also required to teach children about the Christian religion and some of the Anglican traditions. Faith, however, is a personal response and may develop through a fostering of spiritual and religious understanding. The literature concluded that there is no definitive definition of spirituality but to support the head teachers in the case study to articulate their personal interpretation, I used a question devised by Hardy (1991): 'Do you feel that you have ever been conscious of or perhaps influenced by some power, whether you call it God or not, which may either appear to be beyond your individual self or partly or even entirely, within your being?'

Another useful interpretation of spirituality is that described by the Dalai Lama (1999) who writes about two levels of spirituality. The first is based on religious systems in which he includes faith traditions, dogma, ritual and prayer, and the second he terms 'secular universal spirituality' concerned with the human spirit of love, patience, tolerance and harmony which results in happiness for everyone.

Hay and Nye (1998) discuss the notion of spirituality which is widely accepted in a society where de facto norms are highly secular. Ota and Erricker (2005) acknowledge that there will be challenges for faith schools in the twenty-first century as society questions religion and traditional religious practices. They believe that faith schools will need to rise to meet this challenge. Flintham (2010) commends Christian head teachers who are being faithful to the Christian distinctiveness of church schools. He writes that they can draw upon their faith as a reservoir of hope to sustain spirituality in their schools. He describes Christian spirituality as a 'lived faith in action'.

My epistemological position on spirituality holds that spirituality is a human experience that involves a heightened awareness of something beyond the everyday. Christian spirituality involves bringing together the tenets of the Christian truths, found in the Bible and the experience of living in God's presence, grace and love in our daily lives. God's presence is experienced by the Christian through the person of the Holy Spirit. Their faith should be evident through their actions and the values they hold.

1.3.3. Ethos

The school ethos refers to the core shared values, beliefs and practices of an educational community. It implies a particular feeling and atmosphere perceived by members and visitors. Freiberg (1999, p.1) defines a school ethos as 'the heart and soul of a school'. Each educational setting has its own ethos and faith schools often promote values through a distinctively religious ethos. C of E schools are rooted in the Christian tradition and are committed to delivering an education system that builds character and enables pupils to develop as whole, rounded, spiritual beings. The ethos provides a framework for the kind of character that the head teacher wants their pupils to develop. It is the head teacher's responsibility in the C of E School to build an ethos based on Christian values.

In 1999 the National Society provided all C of E schools with a sample ethos statement (reproduced in chapter three: p.55) as a starting point from which each individual school could develop their own. It challenges schools to encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promote Christian values through the experience they offer all their pupils. Every school has a unique ethos because schools are led by people with differing values and beliefs, cultures and faith commitment. The ethos of a school should be clear to anyone visiting, as it should embrace the identity of the school and be evident in the atmosphere. A head teacher needs to work with the governors and other stakeholders to formulate an ethos statement that is based upon the values that they believe are important to the school. The ethos will permeate throughout the school's delivery of its moral, social and spiritual education.

The visual and spoken evidence of the ethos will be demonstrated through the school's policies and practices. For there to be an 'overtly Christian ethos' there would need to be visual and spoken evidence of Christian distinctiveness underpinning everything that occurs in the school. I have embraced Hunt's research findings (2011) and they form part of my conceptual framework. His research investigated the role of the head teacher in creating a distinctive, positive and effective Christian ethos in a C of E primary school. He found that a healthy church school ethos can only be achieved by the dedication of the head teacher accompanied by a theological understanding of God, agreed values, the spirituality of awe and wonder, good quality RE to explain the Christian faith, Christian worship, effective links with the community, and positive relationships with all stakeholders. I draw on these factors in my discussion chapter.

1.3.4. Values

A value is 'a belief in action' (Woodcock and Francis 1989) and remains only an aspiration until it is acted upon. The culture of the school starts with the beliefs and values of the head teacher and the head then seeks to promote the same values and beliefs in the staff (Nias, Southworth and Campbell 1992). Woodcock and Francis (1989) describe an organisation without defined values as a house built on weak foundations that will eventually fall down. Head teachers, therefore, need both to talk about their values and their proposed implementations, and to act, with energy, to lead change, being conscious of how people think and work. There is the need to model the expected values to others, as change is also about motivating others. 'Grasping change involves giving people new experiences that they end up finding intrinsically fulfilling' (Fullan, 2011, pp.51-52). The Christian values that underpin the life of the school will be experienced through worship and teaching, and will be evident in all aspects of school life. My own perception of the link between the ethos and values of the school aligns with those of Gardner, Cairns and Lawson (2005). Referring to the C of E school they write that the ethos of the school is dependent upon the values enshrined and articulated in the school and the purposes of the education provided. They anticipate that the ethos will align with the faith that inspired the foundation of the school. I would suggest that because the head teacher has the greatest influence upon change in the school, the effectiveness of the values of a school will start from the personal commitment of the leadership. The way a head teacher creates the ethos of their school will be their interpretation of their values and vision. Advice in the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule (September 2013) advocates that the values in the school should be values that are distinctively Christian in character, and be shared human values, and that these should be embedded in the daily life of the school. The Christian values and character will have an impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners.

I define values as important and lasting beliefs which have an influence on a person's behaviour and attitudes and provide a guide to action. Christian/gospel values are values that are theologically underpinned by the teachings of Jesus as written in the Bible. The head teachers in the case study used different terms to describe their values because they had different foundations: Christian values, gospel values, personal, social and health education (PSHE) values, or shared values. Only the Christian and gospel values are based on a biblical foundation. The PSHE and shared values have a moral base and endorsed the golden rule of 'treat others as you want to be treated'.

1.4. Conclusion

The choice of a qualitative research methodology is informed and shaped by acknowledging the interpretative nature of human experience. Qualitative research methodology has enabled understanding to emerge through a process of critical dialogue between the data from the interviews, the observations and the context of the schools, my reading of the literature, my professional experience and my personal Christian beliefs.

I suggest that the values of head teachers, in whatever school they lead, are the fundamental personal convictions that are at the root of their work ethic. How the head teachers in my case study draw on these values to develop their school ethos will emerge through the research. To ask a Christian to take their faith into the classroom is to challenge them to take their beliefs seriously in their professional life. My personal belief is that a person's religious faith will impact their value system and influence the contribution they make to the education of pupils. A head teacher who lives out and imparts their values to the whole community is vital to enable the school community to work together. The case study sought to determine how the head teachers had chosen and imparted the values they believed were important for their pupils and the influence this had in changing the ethos of their schools.

My Christian faith was an important source of strength throughout my time working in schools, and linked to my religious beliefs are my moral purpose and personal values. All leaders work towards success, but there are many ways of defining success. By simply using performance tables and progress indicators, some successes remain hidden. An education that is provided by a religious group and schools owned and organized by religious communities, will inevitably have a profound interest in the values and beliefs associated with the traditions of the school.

Chapter 2: Historical Background to Church of England Schools in England

2.1. Introduction

2.2. The beginning of elementary education for the poor

2.3. The early twentieth century

2.4. The 1944 Education Act

2.5. Post Butler

2.6. The 2001 Dearing Report

2.7. Post Dearing

2.8. Conclusion

2.1. Introduction

The history of the English education system shows a long and largely positive relationship between the Church of England (C of E) and the provision of education. The C of E was motivated to provide education not only to give better life chances to the poor but also to give the opportunity for all to learn to read and thus be able to access the teachings in the Bible. Bazalgette (2006) challenged his readers to reflect upon the educational opportunities available for children in the twenty-first century and to consider if the provision that is now in place in England is fit for purpose. He questioned whether the provision of universal schooling in place since the late nineteenth century, 'will fully equip today's children to join the reader in mutual responsibility for the kind of society we aspire for the future' (p.69). If the C of E is to retain its positive influence in education, its role in the twenty-first century will be challenging, as acknowledged in the Archbishops' Council Review: The Way Ahead in 2001:

If the Church has a calling to participate in education, then it must be in a bold and decisive manner, not seeking to impose its faith but offering it as a gift to be experienced through the enjoyment pupils have in working in a community where Christian principles are practised. (paragraph 3.20)

The Times Educational Supplement in February 2001 (Chadwick, 2001) raised the question of how relevant Christian, church schools were to the state education system of the twenty-first century, although demand for places in church schools was high. (This included schools

sponsored by the Christian denominations: predominantly Roman Catholic, Methodist and Church of England.) One million children of different faiths and backgrounds are educated today in nearly five thousand C of E schools in England and Wales. In 2012 the National Society celebrated two hundred years of providing C of E schools. Their philosophy is that the schools help children from Christian families to develop their faith, help those of other faiths to respect others, and set an example for those with no faith which will attract and affirm. Dr Rowan Williams, then Archbishop of Canterbury, commenting on the 2012 report 'The Church of the Future', said:

This report marks the exceptional record of our Church schools in the last 200 years and charts the way forward in a fast-changing landscape'... 'It is important for the nation that we retain their distinctive character and we are working with Government to ensure they continue to thrive.

2.2. The beginning of elementary education for the poor

To understand how the dual system developed in English education, with provision being provided by the Church and the state, it is useful to briefly summarise the history of education in England. This review of the history of the development of C of E schools also helps to explain how ethos and values are constructed and the significant part played by the head teacher in this.

The Church of England has been the established church in England since the sixteenth century and the time of Henry VIII, and has always promoted education as a way of ensuring that Christian morals and values are at the heart of English society. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, following the Reformation and the invention of the printing press, allowing for greater access to the printed word, public schools were established to educate the sons of the upper and middle classes. Prior to 1811, 'there was no provision for any national, comprehensive vision of education. Indeed, the state was apathetic in relation to the role and form of education' (Worsley, 2013, p.21). There had been a few charity schools around the country, but no consistent provision of education for the children of the lower middle and working classes. One of these charitable movements, known as the Clapham Sect, which belonged to the evangelical wing of the C of E, supported the development of the Sunday school movement (founded by Robert Raikes in 1790) which responded to the working patterns of children, employed for six days of the week. Wealthy philanthropists hired women who, along with middle class evangelical volunteers, taught the children from the Bible (Worsley, 2013).

Opposing the claims of the evangelicals, who championed the principles of *sola scriptura*, (the Protestant Christian doctrine that the Bible is the supreme authority in all matters of doctrine and practice) was another wing of the C of E, the high churchmen, who championed the apostolic nature of the C of E.

The established national church at the end of the eighteenth century was both Protestant and Catholic. A group who supported the high church theology and mission met in Hackney and formed the Hackney Phalanx. The Phalanx saw themselves as loyal servants of the C of E and was challenged to work towards social reform. Their work resulted in the provision of education, church buildings, and various printed publications (Worsley, 2013). The Clapham Sect focused on educating children in the scriptures, insisting that all humans are sinful and need forgiveness, which could be achieved through Christ's sacrificial love. The Hackney Phalanx, in contrast, focused on improving the social lot of the poor through education, under the sponsorship and organisation of the C of E. It emphasized the Catholic heritage of the C of E, and claimed that all Christian citizens have a relationship with God through the established church, it being a state relationship, rather than an individual, personal one (Worsley 2013, p.37). They believed that the responsibility lay with the established C of E for the social conditions of the poor and the need to provide education for all children and to improve their life opportunities.

The early nineteenth century saw England in the throes of the Industrial Revolution. Conditions in the industrial areas of the country were appalling, with men, women and children slaving in the mines, mills and factories for very little pay, resulting in poverty, overcrowding in housing, disease and despair. In 1811, when the C of E was being condemned for its ineffectual and distant approach to the industrial revolution, Joshua Watson, a layman with a zeal for charity work, called for every parish in England to provide a church school to educate poor children. Watson was a member of the Hackney Phalanx and his elder brother was Rector of Hackney. Watson himself had done well in the wine business, but his faith drove him to want to make a difference to people's lives. Throughout his life he spent most of his wealth, time and influence serving God. There was no national education system and his ideas were initially viewed sceptically. Factory owners were worried that if the poor were educated they might revolt against the 'upper classes', in a similar way to the events in France, where between 1789 and 1799 the working class had revolted against the nobility, sending many to the guillotine (Worsley, 2013).

Watson, a high churchman, with his friends Henry Handley Norris and John Bowles, who were also members of the Hackney Phalanx, took their ideas to Charles Manners-Sutton, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, and as a result the 'National Society for the Promotion of

the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church' was founded in 1811. 'The sole object of the society shall be to instruct and educate the poor in suitable learning, works of industry and the principles of the Established Religion according to the Established Church' (Worsley 2013, p.22).

Watson retired from his wine business in 1814, at the age of 43, to dedicate himself full-time to supporting the C of E in this work he had started. Melvyn Bragg, when writing his book about the influence of the King James Bible, praised Watson for his role and vision of education and termed it 'his mission to the poor'. Bragg writes: 'His aim was to plant Protestant Christianity in the minds of the impoverished young who would, he believed, benefit both spiritually and materially from a religious education' (Bragg 2011, p.269). Watson is further commended because: 'the energy, faith and vision of Joshua Watson, co-founder of the National Society, helped establish a lasting legacy that has touched the lives of millions' (Chadwick 2012, p. 43).

The National Society set themselves an ambitious target of establishing a C of E school in every parish in England and Wales, a total of 19,000 (Chadwick 2012, p.47). There were some significant barriers to overcome, finding and funding suitable buildings was an enormous task, but there was also resistance from parents and employers to allow children time off from work to attend school. The schools focused on reading, writing, arithmetic and religion; pupils had to learn the Catechism and church attendance was expected. Recruiting teachers was another problem, which led to the creation of the first teacher training colleges in the 1830s. By 1833, three thousand six hundred and seventy-eight Voluntary schools had been established, sponsored by the Church of England, Roman Catholic, Methodist and some Free Churches. In the same year the government gave £11,000 to support the six hundred and ninety C of E schools. The Roman Catholic schools did not get a share of this money because they would not accept the Authorised Version of the Bible, which was required for eligibility. However, some members of the C of E were concerned that accepting state funding might erode the influence of the church. The government became further involved when in 1839 they established the Committee of the Privy Council on Education to coordinate the spending of £20,000 on building new schools, working with the National Society. In the years between 1811 and 1860, twelve thousand schools were set up, not reaching Watson's target of nineteen thousand, but an impressive total nonetheless, including schools in large urban conurbations as well as schools in rural areas.

The demand for places in the voluntary society's schools began to outstrip availability and in 1861 the Newcastle Report recommended the provision of 'sound and cheap' elementary education, by providing a grant to the voluntary agencies with the proviso that all pupils

reached a minimum standard of education. This was called 'payment by results' (Chadwick 2012, p. 48). The next step was the Elementary Education Act, also known as the Forster Act, in 1870, which introduced compulsory education for all children from five to thirteen years of age, and marked the beginning of the government accepting responsibility for, and being fully involved in, the education of children in England and Wales. Money was raised by a local council tax to build 'board schools' in areas where there was insufficient school provision. These schools had no faith affiliation and a conscience clause allowed parents to withdraw their children from religious instruction.

The high church sector of the C of E did not approve of state interference in education as they wanted to be able to continue to teach the Anglican Prayer Book catechism, while some dissenters held that it was not right for the state to part-fund C of E schools who were teaching the tenets of the church. There was much debate in parliament about the content of religious instruction and the final compromise came in 1870, formulated by William Cowper-Temple, that no catechism or religious formulary, which was distinctive of any particular denomination, should be taught in board schools (non-denominational) from then on, while church schools were able to continue to do so. The 1870 Education Act was the first piece of government legislation dealing with the provision of education in Britain and demonstrated their commitment on a national scale. This commitment led to the Royal Commission on the Factory Act in 1876, which recommended that education should be compulsory for children from five to ten years of age and that child labour should cease. It took four more years until, with the 1880 Education Act, education was finally compulsory. Fees were initially payable, but elementary education became free in 1891. Compulsory education attendance was raised to age eleven in 1893 and to twelve in 1899 (parliamentary website).

In the nineteenth century C of E schools were parish based, mainly serving rural communities. Some families found this difficult as it gave little or no choice to parents who did not want their children 'indoctrinated' by the church. 'The dissenters were never reconciled to the C of E monopoly of the village school and right into the twentieth century they had good cause to regard it as the most humiliating of their injustices' (Cruickshank 1963, p.10). Today whilst many parents may support the moral and religious stance taken by church schools in rural villages. In some parts of England some parents may still feel that the C of E has a monopoly of village schools. With improved transport these parents can choose to commute to a neighbouring school which has no church foundation. Chapter six discusses the dilemma faced by one of the head teachers in the study, when a parent criticised the school for being *too Christian*.

2.3. The early twentieth century

In 1902 Parliament passed a new Education Act which had been drafted by Balfour, who became Prime Minister later that year. It reorganised the administration of education by abolishing school boards and putting all schools in the hands of the Local Education Authority (LEA). Many C of E schools had struggled financially in the nineteenth century and recognising the contribution they were making to the educational provision in England, Balfour agreed to continue the fifty per cent capital grant to church schools begun in 1870 and also promised to support the schools by removing their need to pay local rates. In addition, the teaching staff were to be paid from government funds, where previously they had been paid by the church, but in return, the Local Authority was able to appoint one third of the managers (now called governors). All church schools were also to be monitored for their standards by government inspectors, in the same way as Board schools had been. There was some opposition to this move, as the general population, through paying their rates (local taxes) were now supporting schools with a religious foundation, both Protestant and Catholic. John Clifford, a Baptist Minister, led the opposition by decrying the government's support for Catholic schools, with the catch-phrase 'Rome on the Rates' (Chadwick 2001, p.477). The Balfour Bill debated this controversial issue in parliament for fifty-seven days, and even after it was passed and became law, some non-conformists refused to pay their rates, not wanting their money to support the voluntary schools run by the different religious groups.

The 1906 Liberal government, supported by many non-conformists, and encouraged by atheists and secularists, brought in a Bill to abolish the 'dual system' and bring all state funded schools under public control with non-denominational Christian religious education being taught in all schools. The Bill was loudly opposed by the C of E who had fourteen thousand schools, and who saw this as removing the choice for parents to send their children to schools where they would be instructed in the traditions of the C of E. The Bill failed to become law. The Fisher Bill in 1918 was another attempt to abolish the dual system, but this time it was the Roman Catholics and the Non-Conformists who opposed it, fearing the abolition of their influence on the education of the children of their church members.

These examples of conflicts over theology and local politics illustrate how the C of E has been determined to stand firm in its commitment to providing Christian education. It has illustrated the challenges and changes that head teachers have faced. These changes accelerated in the period after the Second World War and continue apace to challenge head teachers today.

2.4. The 1944 Education Act

By 1942 the C of E was struggling to maintain its school buildings, many of which were in poor repair. Of seven hundred schools whose buildings were condemned, three hundred and ninety-nine of them were C of E schools (Chadwick 2001). The Local Education Authorities (LEAs) which had been created as a result of the 1902 Education Act, had taken over responsibility for the organisation of the education of pupils in England, making decisions which were not always popular with the church schools of all denominations. The state sector grew and all schools became subject to regulations, resulting in tensions between church and state (Chadwick 2012). Rab Butler, the Education Minister, and Archbishop William Temple debated the problems of the dual system and made some major decisions for the future of education in this country. The result of the discussions was the 1944 Education Act, also known as the Butler Education Act, which incorporated Christian denominational schools into the state system and created two types of church schools, voluntary controlled (VC) and voluntary aided (VA). Schools which had insufficient funds to continue without the financial support from the state became voluntary controlled which enabled them to be completely funded by the state and in return relinquished much of the church's control. The church ethos would remain, and the church could continue to influence and control the worship. The other option was to become a voluntary aided school where the church retained a greater influence but in return the school received less state funding. As the church retained the land and the building, they had to pay 50% of the cost of maintaining and improving the buildings. (This amount decreased over time and is now only 10 %.) In aided schools the church retained control of school admissions, the appointment of staff and the content of the religious education and the worship. Table 1 outlines the main differences between voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools and helps to explain the reduction of the power and influence of the church for schools that chose to become voluntary controlled. There is however an expectation that both VA and VC schools will have a Christian ethos.

Table 1: The main differences between a VA and a VC church school (Dearing, 2001)

	Voluntary aided schools	Voluntary controlled schools
Buildings	Owned by the trustees: The trust deeds determine the basis on which the school is run. The buildings and external repairs are the responsibility of the governors, supported by a 90% grant from the DfE.	Owned by the trustees: The trust deeds determine the basis on which the school is run where the law does not make this clear. All buildings and repairs are the responsibility of the Local Authority (LA).

Teaching staff	Appointed and employed by the governors, paid by the LA. Governors may ask for evidence of Christian commitment from applicants for posts.	Appointed by the governors but employed and paid by the LA. Governors are directed to follow the LA appointing policy. They may wish to satisfy themselves that a candidate for head teacher will support the ethos of the VC school.
Support staff	Employed by governors and paid by the LA.	Employed by the LA and paid by the LA.
Worship	Reflects the traditions of the C of E and may include worship in the parish church.	Reflects the traditions of the C of E and may include worship in the parish church.
Religious education	Syllabus is set by the diocese.	Syllabus set by the LA.
Membership of the governing body	Church (foundation) governors are in the majority, of which some must be parents. The parish priest is usually an ex officio.	Church (foundation) governors are in the minority. The parish priest is usually an ex officio.
Admissions	Governors determine the policy and make decisions in consultation with the LA.	The LA is responsible for admissions.
Inspections	Inspected by Ofsted and by the Statutory Inspection of Methodist and Anglican Schools (SIAMS) whose role is to assess the RE and worship and the Christian distinctiveness of the school.	Inspected by Ofsted and by the Statutory Inspection of Methodist and Anglican Schools (SIAMS) whose role is to assess worship and the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Ofsted inspects the RE.

The difference between the appointment of staff, and especially the head teacher in VC compared to VA schools was an important one in the selection of the schools in the case study. The head teachers in the case study were all working in VC schools and had been appointed on the basis that they were in sympathy with the school ethos (though chapter three will describe how the term 'ethos' can have a range of meanings) and not that they had a Christian commitment. The personal values of newly appointed head teachers could prove to be at variance to those held by the governors and to the school's identity and ethos. This will be discussed in the analysis and discussion chapters.

The 1944 Education Act replaced the term 'religious' with the term 'spiritual', with all schools being expected to provide opportunities for children's spiritual development, and for C of E schools this provision remains a priority; although as chapter three outlines, the term spiritual has no definitive definition and school's interpret this in many ways, with the head teacher

making the final decision. The Act also stipulated that religious education (RE) teaching in schools was compulsory, but should not include the teaching of any 'catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination'. The exception was in voluntary aided schools, where it was still allowed. The Act also established the Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACRE) in each Local Authority (which finally became mandatory in the 1988 Education Reform Act). Their role was to establish and monitor a locally agreed RE syllabus for all community and VC schools to follow.

The 1944 Education Act set out the framework for the education system in England for the remainder of the twentieth century. Without Butler's intervention, it is probable that many C of E schools would have been forced to close, through lack of funds; however, this new system radically lessened the church's influence on education in England. The National Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church changed its name to The National Society for Religious Education (known simply as the National Society) and the state set legislation for the teaching of RE which included learning about other faiths.

During the first half of the twentieth century there had been a decline in C of E schools. Chadwick (2001) noted that a government report in 1953 stated that one thousand uneconomic village schools had closed in the previous decade, the majority of which were C of E schools, and in a report of 1959 almost four thousand C of E schools had fewer than one hundred pupils, compared to the average number in Catholic schools of two hundred and sixty-one and in County (secular) schools where the average at the time was two hundred and eighty-three. This could be explained by a population shift towards living in urban areas, rather than rural communities with poor transport links and fewer opportunities of employment.

2.5. Post Butler

Since the end of the Second World War the world has seen many changes; the British Empire has shrunk to become almost unrecognisable and we have seen the decline of imperialism, with struggles throughout the world for national independence. People from many different countries have settled in Britain, bringing their culture and religion with them. The United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights introduced standards of moral conduct and with the changing face of western society the influence of the established church is receding in favour of a system of secular values. However, the established C of E still has a place in the tradition of Great Britain as a provider of schooling, as seen by the number of parents who place a high value on ensuring a place for their children in a C of E school. With the growing accessibility of cars, families began returning to live in the rural settlements,

where many village schools have remained C of E controlled. These villages are being rejuvenated, with families moving out of town for a perceived better quality of life, and parents, who have the choice to select their children's school, happy to drive out of the main towns for their children to attend smaller C of E village schools. (This was highlighted by all six head teachers in the case study.)

Debate has continued over England's dual education system, with further support in the 1970 Durham Report. The Durham Commission was an independent commission set up to assess the quality of teaching in RE. It acknowledged new pedagogical trends in education, which were encouraging more pupil participation in lessons and the need to allow discussion over moral issues alongside Christian values. It looked closely at C of E schools and made a distinction between the two historical motives for their establishment. It described these as 'domestic' and 'general' functions. By 'domestic' they meant how the C of E had looked inwards, being concerned that their schools would equip the children of the church to take their place in the Christian community. By 'general' they meant how the schools had been established to serve the nation through the children. The report then evaluated both these functions and concluded that in the twentieth century the C of E school should focus on the 'general' function, because it concluded that 'nowadays no one would pretend to claim that nation and church are coextensive' (Hannaford 1998, p.221). The report recommended that while the dual system remained, the C of E school should continue to see its role as contributing to the nation's education. Today's SIAMS inspections look for schools to be delivering both functions. C of E schools serve the country by providing education for all pupils but they also play an important role in the mission of the church. Although the established church does not hold the same influential position that it held in the past, through its schools it seeks to support the development of children's spirituality and religious understanding.

Following the Durham Report, the next statement on C of E schools was a green paper, 'A Future in Partnership', drafted by Robert Waddington in 1984. Waddington was the General Secretary of the National Society. The paper outlined how the C of E should continue to be involved in education and listed ten key characteristics that should distinguish a model C of E school, highlighting the ongoing commitment to religious distinctiveness along with the desire to nurture. In 1985 the General Synod of the C of E Board of Education published 'Positive Partnership', which paraphrased the previous green paper. The report 'Faith in the Future' was published in 1986 to mark one hundred and seventy-five years of the National Society. It concluded by saying that, 'For C of E schools many of the tensions will cluster around the twin aims of fulfilling a general/community role and a domestic/nurture role, discussed in some depth in the Durham Report' (p.75). The leadership of church schools

today acknowledge these twin aims. The head teachers in all six of the case study schools talked about nurturing pupils within the community of the school and the importance of the school as an integral part of the local community.

Lankshear (1992a), when Deputy Secretary and Schools Officer for the National Society, questioned what observable differences there were between C of E schools and county (community) schools, as he was advocating greater distinctiveness. Later in the year he wrote 'Looking for Quality in a Church School' (1992b) in which he noted that:

Some schools serve a geographically defined community and offer education to all children within the community, other schools offer a C of E education mainly to children of parents who claim membership of the C of E. Most C of E schools fall somewhat in between the two different positions. (p.3)

The schools in the case study all served the community in which they were set but with a minority of pupils traveling to the school because their parents wanted their children to attend a village, church school. This study did not investigate reasons for parental choice as this was not its focus. The head teacher at one of the case schools, however, believed that because her school was the only school in the small village community her focus needed to be on the general/community rather than the domestic/nurture as discussed in the Durham Report. She did not want to impose a Christian distinctiveness on the education of all the children even though she was leading a C of E school. (This is discussed further in chapter six.)

Lankshear had a third publication in 1992, 'Governing Church Schools' (1992c) in which he emphasised the need for the local church to work with the C of E school to support the community. He followed this with the publication 'Churches Serving Schools' (1996), where he emphasised that C of E schools had a responsibility to ensure that: 'no one can be in any doubt that they are Church schools. Such schools will demonstrate that they have a clear understanding of what it means to be the Church school in the location in which it is set' (p. 81). The support and influence of the local church and the incumbent varied between the schools in the case study. (Discussed in chapter six.)

The 1985 Swann Report, 'Education for All', discussed the issue of multiculturalism in education, and praised the contribution that C of E schools made to the country's education system. The report aimed to eradicate discrimination amongst the ethnic minority and ensure that all pupils regardless of ethnicity should have the opportunities to reach their potential. Many of the suggestions that came out of the report have still not been implemented. C of E schools are open to pupils from all ethnic backgrounds. The challenge for the head teacher

is how to make the values they have used to establish the school's Christian ethos relevant to pupils who have diverse multi-cultural experiences and different religious practices.

The 1988 Education Act conferred the name Religious Education on the subject that had previously been known by a variety of names such as 'religious instruction', 'scripture', and even 'divinity'. The Act established the National Curriculum and although Religious Education was not part of it, the subject remained a compulsory requirement to be taught. Kenneth Baker, then Secretary of State for Education, believed that the Butler Act had settled the issue of religious education, so he left it unchanged (1988 Education Act section 84 paragraph 9). He was reported in the Times in February 1988 as saying that, 'I want to hold the principle established in the 1944 Act that the nature and content of RE should be locally determined. I am against central prescription in this sensitive area'. The demands of the National Curriculum, however, reduced the time available for the teaching of RE. Voluntary Aided schools were and still do follow a Religious Education syllabus laid down by their Diocesan Education department.

The expectations of C of E schools are challenging as they have a dual inspection process. Since 1990 they have had the pressures of the Ofsted Inspections, ensuring that all pupils are making expected or greater progress academically. A further inspection by the National Society focuses on the ways in which the C of E school is actively fulfilling its duty of providing a distinctively Christian and inclusive education. With the introduction of denominational inspections, (Section 13 Inspection within the Education Schools Act 1992 and as Section 23 Inspection within the Consolidation Act 1996), head teachers in C of E schools needed to also be concerned with their school's distinctive ethos, for which they are accountable. Since 2013 this inspection process has been extended to schools with a Methodist foundation and is now known as the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS). The head teacher has external standards they must strive to achieve as they are accountable externally to Ofsted and the National Society through SIAMS, and internally to governors, staff and parents. The external pressures do affect the institutional culture but I also believe that the head's personal values directly affect the ethos that underpins the culture of the school.

2.6. The 2001 Dearing Report

'The Way Ahead' Report, chaired by Lord Dearing, published in 2001, had been commissioned as a result of the General Synod for the C of E stating at the turn of the century that 'Church schools stand at the centre of the Church's mission to the nation'. The Dearing Report looked specifically at C of E schools and asked if they had Christian distinctiveness and if they were based on C of E traditions. 'The Way Ahead' was the first

major C of E report since Durham in 1970, and it was important as it was adopted in all C of E primary and secondary schools in England and Wales. It addressed the nature and mission of the C of E school in today's society. Paragraph 1:5 of the report summarises its purpose: To assess the effectiveness of the role of C of E schools in the mission of the Church, to develop a strategy for the future of C of E schools and to develop teaching as a vocation. It is clear that the C of E understands that change and action are necessary for their schools to retain their important place as part of English educational provision.

Reflecting on his former experience as the chairman of a diocesan board of education, one retired bishop wrote to Lord Dearing to say that: 'I came to the job thinking Church schools were an ecclesiastical irrelevance: I left it convinced that they are jewels in the ecclesiastical crown' (The Way Ahead, 2001, p. 9).

The report was the response to an extensive consultation of teachers in C of E schools, local diocese, teacher training providers and clergy involved in education. It did not find that the C of E school saw its role to proselytise or evangelise; the schools that the church schools' review group contacted in their research saw their mission as providing an environment that would nurture pupils within a Christian ethos. The report however had wanted the C of E's mission in schools to be that of proclaiming the gospel, to allow Christians to flourish, to bring others to faith and: 'to nurture and maintain the dignity of the image of God in human beings through service, speaking out on important issues and working for social justice as part of that mission' (paragraph 3:11). Dearing was concerned that this mission would only be effective if there were enough schools, though no optimum number was mentioned. The report admitted that there were so few young people attending Sunday worship in the C of E, that the church should be pleased that there were nine hundred thousand young people attending their schools who would have the opportunity to 'experience the meaning of faith and what it is to work and play in a community that seeks to live its beliefs and values' (paragraph 3:4). The SIAMS inspection process assesses the outworking of this statement in its schools with a particular focus on how the leadership of the school is driving this forward.

Dearing expressed an expectation that the school and the local church would work together in partnership, at the heart of the church's mission to the community, and in partnership with the diocese. This required the diocese to consider new ways of working and the theological colleges to consider how to include working with C of E schools as part of the training of its ordinands. This case study investigates the influence of the local church and its support for its schools and how, or if, it supports the head teachers' development of the Christian ethos.

C of E schools provide pupils who come from homes which are not Christian, with the opportunity to gain knowledge of Jesus; the report saw this as a special gift to children. For

pupils from Christian homes, the C of E school was there to develop their faith. It was not there only to support the pupils within it, but their families. Paragraph 3:10 included a quote from one head teacher at a consultation meeting who said: 'We do not admit children, we admit families ... It should be a special objective of every church school to engage the parents in the education and the broader school life of the child. In this way the school enlarges its mission of service and nurture'. The C of E school is challenged to look out towards the community in which it is set. Each school in the case study had an open-door policy, welcoming family and friends and had planned activities to support the local community.

In 1998 it had become a requirement for schools to have an ethos statement and in 1999 C of E schools were offered a sample ethos statement, which highlighted the school's responsibility to serve the community in which it was based. 'The school aims to serve its community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice' (The Way Ahead, paragraph 3:24). The Way Ahead Report described the special responsibility of head teachers in a C of E school and acknowledged the huge workload of the head, especially in a small school, often with a teaching commitment along with leadership and management responsibilities. Commenting on the number of small, rural C of E primaries, it praised the valuable role the rural primary was making in supporting rural communities.

2.7. Post Dearing

The Labour government, from 1997 to 2007, looked favourably upon faith schools, actively encouraging their opening and the contribution they made to the educational landscape of the twenty-first century, particularly in secondary education and in areas of social need. Prior to 1997 the UK government only funded Christian and Jewish faith schools, and although Muslim schools existed, they were privately funded. The Labour government (1997-2007) expanded their funding to include schools from other religions and the term 'faith' schools came into use (Schools and the Church of England: Church schools, 2011).

In 2007 the British government with leaders from different faith groups in London worked together to produce the document 'Faith in the System' which agreed on the important role faith communities made to schools. In recent years Britain has seen the increase of other faith schools, particularly Jewish and Islamic. While these schools take children predominantly from their particular faith background, C of E schools are open to children from all religions or families of no particular faith, so helping children to be more appreciative and accepting of children from all cultures and religions. Some voluntary aided schools give priority to children from families who are regular church attendees, while still educating

children from other faiths or none. Voluntary controlled schools (VC) cannot set their admissions policy as their admissions are the responsibility of the Local Authority. VC schools are first required to take all pupils living in the school's catchment area. Priority cannot be given to children who regularly attend church but who may live outside of the area. They may gain a place in the school if there are still places available after all other admission criteria have been addressed.

The National Society launched a 'Values for Schools' website in May 2009, to support schools in deciding which values they felt were important and provided a range of resources from a Christian tradition, to use to develop and nurture these through RE and the whole curriculum. This faith-based learning encourages the formation of Christian values among the staff and pupils. With an increasing number of people living in this country with faiths other than Christian, it seems even more important that children should learn about other faiths to avoid prejudices which can develop through ignorance.

The National Society has responded to the coalition government's (2010-2015) education agenda, but there remain areas of concern over the present diversity of both providers and the provision of education, and the increasing government pressure for schools to become academies. It has been important for the National Society to play a pivotal role following the 2010 Academies Act which enabled schools to convert to academies whilst still retaining their Christian distinctiveness. It also ensured that arrangements were in place for C of E schools to convert to academies with partnerships to enable the improvement of learning and teaching. The National Society sees its role as ensuring that any changes are good for the pupils, the school and the community.

In a C of E school it is important that the pupils understand the traditions on which the school was founded. Cooling and Greene compiled a practical guide for church leaders and youth workers on 'Supporting Christians in Education' (2008), in which they set out to explain education in the twenty-first century and how it fits in to the cultural context of the day. They refer to Barry Sheerman, MP, who, when chair of the government Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Select Committee, described how society is happy to see the opening of faith schools, Christian, Muslim and Jewish, provided that they are not overtly 'distinctive'. He believed that 'we all become a little more worried the more people take their faith seriously' (p.8) as distinctiveness which implies conviction may turn into extremism. Religious diversity, however, can be an opportunity and Cooling and Greene propose that it should be seen as an opportunity to be embraced, rather than a threat to be avoided. They wrote that, 'in the UK, it is not usually people of faith who want to stop each other talking about what they really believe, but people of no faith' (Cooling & Greene 2008, p.20). The

National Society has an expectation (assessed by SIAMS) that its schools will help its pupils to understand that Christianity is a multi-cultural world faith and how to respect the diversity and difference within other faith communities.

2012 saw the publication of the Chadwick Report, 'Church School of the Future', which considered how the coalition government, (2010 -2015) would work with the church. The purpose of the report was to provide an opportunity to take stock of the current situation, listen to the views of stakeholders and consider the needs for the future. It comprised four broad areas:

- The challenges facing the church school system in the future.
- The defining characteristics of church schools.
- How the church school family might develop and grow.
- How schools should be supported at diocesan and national level.

(Chadwick 2012, p.5)

The National Society responded by updating their inspection schedule to include greater expectation for each school; all areas of the life of the school needed to be underpinned by Christian distinctiveness. The responsibility for this was placed firmly with the head teacher. My case study questions how the head teachers in the six schools responded to this responsibility.

Whilst the 2001 The Way Ahead Report had instructed the Church schools to 'offer a spiritual dimension to the lives of young people, within the traditions of the Church, in an increasingly secular world' (Dearing 2001, p.3), the Chadwick Report was even more prescriptive. It outlined that the distinctiveness of the C of E school must, 'include a wholehearted commitment to putting faith and spiritual development at the heart of the curriculum and ensuring that a Christian ethos permeates the whole educational experience' (Chadwick, 2012, p.3). It highlighted the importance of high quality RE and collective worship and how this should continue to make a major contribution to the C of E school's Christian distinctiveness. The report challenged existing C of E schools and newly opened C of E schools to maintain their distinctive Christian character in an increasingly fragmented education system under attack from secularists. It warned against providing children with a narrow education which focuses on academic study to the exclusion of a focus on developing pupils' spirituality. It also warned against a utilitarian approach to education, expressing a concern that economic pressures could restrict the educational opportunities of pupils.

There have been long -standing opponents of faith schools, which include the British Humanist Association and the National Secular Society. In 2008 the campaign group, the Accord Coalition, was founded to ensure state funded schools would teach about different beliefs and would not discriminate on religious or ethnic grounds. To do this they consulted with educationalists, civil rights activists and both religious and non-religious groups (<https://humanism.org.uk/campaigns/schools-and-education/faith-schools/fair-admissions-campaign/>). In June 2013 the Fair Admissions Campaign was officially launched, The aim of the campaign was to abolish the selection of pupils based on their faith or that of their parents at state -funded schools in England and Wales (BBC News, 2013.). The campaign had support from both religious and non-religious organizations at both the national and local level including the Accord Coalition, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, the British Humanist Association, British Muslims for Secular Democracy, CoCo Foundation, the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education, Ekklesia, the Hindu Academy, the Liberal Democrat Education Association, Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign, the Runnymede Trust, the Socialist Educational Association, and the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches. This campaign was already underway when in October 2013 the Theos Think Tank published a research study on faith schools, entitled 'More than an Educated Guess: Assessing the Evidence'. The study concluded that evidence had been found to support the fact that academic performance was increased in faith schools, but that it was probably the result of the schools' admission policies rather than the ethos of the school (John Bingham, 2013). The admissions policy for VC schools does not allow for priority to be given to children from Christian families.

2.8. Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the development of the dual system of education in England and the important role that C of E schools are still playing in the education of children. The C of E opened schools in huge numbers in the nineteenth century to provide a basic education for the poor, at a time before the state accepted the responsibility. The church believed that every person, whether rich or poor deserved a chance to learn to read and write. They hoped that education would result in providing the poor with the skills necessary to escape the poverty and degradation they lived in. The 1870 Education Act had been the first piece of government legislation which supported the provision of education on a national scale and helped to end child labour. In 1902 local authorities were created and they began to take the responsibility for ensuring that all pupils received an education. The 1944 Education Act incorporated Christian denominational schools into the state system and provided sufficient funding for the dual system to continue. Today, the state willingly invests in education

alongside the ongoing involvement of the church. I fully support this statement from the Way Ahead report: 'The purpose of the Church in education is not simply to provide the basic education needed for human dignity. That purpose is to offer a spiritual dimension to the lives of young people, within the traditions of the C of E, in an increasingly secular world.' (The Way Ahead, 2001, paragraph 1.12) This quote highlights the challenge for the leadership in C of E schools, if the school is to deliver effective Christian distinctiveness, alongside the high academic standards demanded by Ofsted.

The Way Ahead report (2001) was a very significant document in the history of C of E schools in England at the beginning of the twenty-first century, setting out aspirations for their continued growth and development. If the recommendations of the report are to be implemented, Anglican diocese need to actively respond to the challenge of supporting the leadership in their schools. The head teacher is recognised by Ofsted and SIAMS in their inspection process as the person who is pivotal in leading on change and challenge and is held responsible for all standards within their school. If C of E schools are to be part of the mission of the church they need to develop their Christian ethos, faithful to the traditions of the C of E. and driven by the head teacher. This conclusion is fundamental to my conceptual framework.

Chapter three critiques literature relating to the key concepts of the leadership of the head teacher, interpretations of spirituality and its role in education, the school ethos with particular reference to the ethos in a Christian school, and the importance of the school values that impact upon the ethos. The literature helped to shape my personal definitions of the key terms in this thesis (outlined in chapter one) and contributed towards the development of my conceptual framework.

Chapter 3: A Review of the Relevant Literature

Chapter three critiques the relevant literature and empirical research that has influenced the development of my research question: 'To what extent does the head teacher's value system influence the ethos of the Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school?'

3.1. Introduction

3.2. Leadership

3.2.1. Characteristics of an inspirational and effective leader

3.2.2. The vision of the effective leader

3.2.3. Christian school leadership

3.3. Spirituality

3.3.1. Spirituality in contemporary society

3.3.2. Different interpretations of spirituality

3.3.3. Spirituality within the education system

3.3.4. Spirituality in Christian schools

3.3.5. Spirituality in the curriculum

3.3.6. Spirituality in the C of E school

3.4. Ethos

3.4.1. A distinct Christian ethos

3.4.2. The effect of the Christian ethos on the pedagogy of the school

3.5. Values

3.5.1. Shared values

3.5.2. Christian values

3.5.3. Core or universal values

3.6. Human Rights

3.6.1. Children's rights

3.6.2. Rational morality

3.7. Conclusion

3. 1. Introduction

The aim of every school, regardless of their demographic or location, is that every pupil will reach their potential through accessing an excellent curriculum. The focus for every head teacher has become the need to raise the achievement and attainment of all pupils through increasingly excellent teaching and learning. Pring (2000) develops this further as he sees the core mission of education as that of developing individuals in two ways; developing their cognitive perspectives, which will transform how they see the world and live in it, and developing pupils' emergent identities. He is concerned with each individual understanding their own qualities and talents. This puts the onus on the head teacher to develop their school ethos and to lead their school in such a way as to provide the best possible education for their pupils, within a secure learning environment.

As Chapter two outlined, it was social reformers who saw the need to establish schooling for the socially deprived and there still remains a residual trust in the Christian faith as being relevant and important in the nurture of children (Worsley, 2013). The popularity of C of E schools and the wish of many parents to send their children to one, suggests that schools with a Christian foundation are felt to be important. Furthermore, the contribution of the C of E to England's education system is expanding and taking up opportunities afforded by the academies programme, with new Christian charities such as Oasis, Woodard and the United Learning Trust as well as diocesan trusts sponsoring schools.

Chadwick (2012) outlines the importance of excellence and effectiveness in C of E schools, not just because the government says so. She believes that C of E schools can enable every child to flourish and achieve their potential as a child of God. Chadwick sees this as a sign and expression of the kingdom of God, which is at the heart of the Church's distinctive mission. This view aligns with that of the National Society and with my own.

The carrying out of theoretical and empirical research on the contribution of C of E schools to the English education system would seem appropriate as they receive public funding. Research could provide greater evidence of the impact of the ethos in Christian schools upon pupils' beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and spiritual development. This work is important because it sets out to learn more about the influence of the head teacher in developing that ethos. Within liberal democratic Britain today some people oppose the policy of faith schools receiving public funding. There have been opponents of faith schools since the start of the twentieth century (see chapter two) and it is important that C of E schools are able to say that they provide value for money by delivering first class education.

The C of E is proud of its involvement in education (The Way Ahead) and the National Society (NS) has upheld its mission statement since its conception in 1811. This sought to provide schools to educate all children, including the poor and to teach basic skills and to provide for the moral and spiritual welfare of the children by teaching them Christianity, as represented in the C of E. The Revd Ainsworth, Chief Education Officer & General Secretary of The National Society, wrote a letter to Michael Gove, the then Secretary of State for Education, in response to 'The Importance of Teaching' white paper that had been published in November 2010. The white paper outlined the steps necessary to enact a whole-system reform to education in England. It proposed structural changes and rigorous attention to standards and a plan for changes to the curriculum and qualifications to make education in Britain the world's best. This included the support for existing C of E schools and the creation of new C of E schools especially in areas of social deprivation. The white paper indicated the government's support for C of E schools and the contribution they have made since their conception in supporting the education of all pupils regardless of background, or social need. In the letter Janine Ainsworth clearly articulated the views of the NS:

We broadly support the key proposals [that the publically funded system of education in England should serve all children well, especially those in most need, through the provision of high quality teaching] but wish to emphasize the importance of a clearly articulated and values based mission and ethos as a necessary underpinning for all schools... We particularly hope that we might have your support in ensuring that the protections for church schools written into primary legislation from 1944 onward will be transferred into any new educational landscape.

(Letter to Gove from Ainsworth published on the NS website December 2010)

Furthermore in 2013 the NS listed some key facts that highlight why C of E schools make a positive contribution to the English educational landscape:

- Approximately one million pupils attend a C of E school
- There are 4,443 C of E primary schools in the UK
- Each diocese has a Diocesan Board of Education supporting church schools
- Ofsted inspectors judge C of E schools to be effective as rated good or outstanding in 81% of C of E schools compared to 78% of non C of E primary schools
- C of E schools have a distinctive identity and ethos
- 92% of C of E primary schools are graded good or outstanding under the SIAMS inspection framework which assesses spiritual and pastoral support

- C of E schools are committed to serving the needs of the whole community.
(National Society, November 2013)

Astley (2013) is passionate about the positive contribution that C of E schools have made to English education in the past and its important role today. In his article 'Church Schools and the Church's Service for the Poor' (2013) he states 'the importance for education of the dimensions of moral and spiritual responsibility, of a commitment independent of rewards or status, and of service and dedication' (Astley, 2013, p.105). Astley challenges his readers not to forget the difference that Christianity should make to education. Moreover, Astley had attempted in his earlier writings to define the aims of education within a Christian context, and had written that education was greater than 'economically-valuable technological knowledge', and announced that 'it is love, and knowledge directed by love' (1992, p.319).

In his 2011 study on the influence of the King James Bible, Melvyn Bragg discussed the part played by the NS in establishing early education for the poor, and described it as having both spiritual and material benefits. Astley describes 'material' as relating to all the benefits attached to good personal and social education. To accept this interpretation would imply that C of E schools are working to secure both these aims. Astley agrees and says that education is rich in what he terms 'social capital', or positive social relationships. Prominent among these positive, personal attributes are the values and beliefs of mutual trust and reciprocity, which together represent the core of the Christian school (Astley, 2013). Grace (2002) uses the phrase 'spiritual capital' to describe the resources of faith and values which a person develops through their religious commitment, and which guides their lives. Worsley agrees with this view and believes that education within a C of E school should seek to develop spiritual capital within its pupils (Worsley, 2013).

3. 2. Leadership

'If England is to compete with the very best, then strong leadership is absolutely critical. Leaders are the key people in changing and improving the culture and performance of the organization. Leaders provide the role models for the rest of the institution' (Ofsted, 2012a, p.9). The role of the head teacher as leader in English schools is pivotal, as evidenced through the government's initiatives of the National Professional Qualification for Head Teachers (NPQH), the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) and the National College of School Leadership (NCSL). The National Standards for Head Teachers (1997, p.4) states that 'the head teacher is the leading professional in the school. Working with the governing body, the head teacher provides vision, leadership and direction for the school to ensure that it is managed and organized to meet its aims and targets.'

Heads are expected to have a vision of where they want their school to be going, and this vision will need to be rooted in the head teacher's values, behaviour and language. 'The vision starts from the core values, which are deeply held convictions about the way the school should be.' (Tomlinson, Gunter and Smith, 1999. p.154) The white paper, Excellence in Schools (1997) details the government's vision *for* education, which would be led by head teachers who had excellent qualities of leadership and management. The document acknowledges that the quality of the head could often make the difference between the success, or failure, of the school and that good head teachers could transform a school, while poor head teachers could block progress and achievement. As a result of the developing and changing role of the head teacher, the government revised the standards in 2004 (DfES 2004) providing a framework for the development of effective headship, which was delivered through the NPQH programme. Since 2004 there have been further government documents on effective leadership. The most recent was the 'Best practice standards for head teachers' which was published in January 2015 as part of the government's paper 'Improving the quality of teaching and leadership'.

3.2.1. Characteristics of an inspirational and effective leader

In an educational context, MacBeath (1998) believes that a good leader is assumed to have a good moral sense but also writes that a person with a giant charismatic ego will not necessarily make a good leader, nor anyone who is selfless. Good leaders, he says, have a command of self, are effective listeners and good followship. They need to be democratic, less hierarchical, deal with conflict and be concerned for the social and emotional development of pupils.

The effectiveness of the school leader needs to be defined not only in the terms of the qualities of the individual, but also in terms of their fitness to a context which itself is subject to continuities as well as change and development, both from forces within the school and from those in the wider environment. (MacBeath, 1998, p. 58)

Leadership is value driven and leaders need to be cognisant of and act appropriately when faced with ethical problems (Sergiovanni 1992). Sergiovanni believes that if everyone in a school adheres to an ethical code, the school will be transformed from an organisation to a covenantal community, so changing it from a secular organisation to a sacred community. He stresses the influence and importance of the role of the head teacher to transform and lead their school community. He defines 'community' as a 'collection of individuals who are bonded together by natural will and who are together bound to a set of shared ideas and ideals' (1996, p.48). Within the community of the school, individual learners learn together as a social activity, and through this learned experience are motivated to become independent

self-motivated learners. The function of the community, he argues, is to develop the learning potential of every member of the community.

Sergiovanni (2005) extolled the quality of 'hope' needed by a leader. Hope, he writes, helps to change events for the better, as hope is grounded in reality and not in wishful thinking. He aligns hope with faith, as he sees faith as a commitment to a cause and strong beliefs in a set of ideas. Schools need leaders, he argues, not managers, who should support, inspire and empower, guided by a living, breathing vision, developed and shared by the whole community (Sergiovanni, 2001).

Effective school leaders can be defined by their vision and passion, and by their capacity to bring a critical spirit into the complex and demanding job of headship. They need to promote a shared vision of the future, underpinned by a common purpose to secure the commitment of all the school's stakeholders. 'Successful leadership captures hearts and minds' (NCSL, 2004, p.9). Furthermore, a good head teacher has to win the trust and confidence of the staff, by their vision being clearly evident, as it is worked out in their actions and words. These definitions of leadership are summed up well by Green: 'Leadership is about your vision of life, your principles and your determination to stand up for them. Leadership is being passionate about turning the vision into a reality' (Green, 2000, p.10).

How leaders lead is somewhat contingent upon the circumstances and the situation they are in. Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) believe that there is no absolute way of defining a 'good leader'; but that the basic skills of leadership can be learned, but 'outstanding leadership is exquisitely sensitive to the context in which it is exercised' (1999, p.4). Despite this, most educational leadership development is generic rather than specific. The report 'Learning to Lead' was published by the National College for School Leadership in 2004. It was based on research, and described the key areas of leadership learning which the National College believed head teachers needed, to enable them to be effective in their role:

- To be self-directed and learner driven
- To be interpersonal and collaborative and have the ability to develop team working and organizational learning
- To be good networkers with colleagues working in different schools
- To be supportive yet also challenging
- To have the confidence to support their staff team
- To be problem-solvers
- To be cognisant e-learners
- To celebrate and acknowledge achievement

(Coles and Southworth, 2005)

This list highlights the importance of the role of head teacher in the school. This thesis acknowledges this important role and has sought to discern how the head teacher's personal values drive both their role as an effective leader and as the primary influence on developing the ethos in their school.

Davies, Ellison and Bowring-Carr (2005) highlight that in the twenty-first century much of the discussion on leadership is based on transformational and instructional leadership, which is known as 'learning-centred leadership'. They support the need for training in these areas, but believe that for leadership to be effective within its context there needs to be the development of strategic leadership abilities (organisational skills) and characteristics (such as wisdom). This acknowledges the two areas of leadership needed in a C of E school: good strategic leadership which will support the school to be successful, as defined by government (through Ofsted) and the characteristics that a leader displays to develop the social, emotional and spiritual aspects of the school. The National College of School Leadership (NCSL) (2004) highlights three strategies used by effective heads: modelling, monitoring and dialogue. Teachers observe their leaders and successful leaders set an example by their actions. Leaders are strongest when they know their staff and understand fully their data relating to pupil progress. Monitoring informs judgements within a school and successful communication is vital.

A study undertaken by the NCSL in 2007 with thirty four head teachers concluded that the greatest personal and professional satisfaction for heads was seeing children progress, develop and succeed. Fifty percent of heads gained job satisfaction simply by doing the job, and thirty-five percent felt rewarded by leading the direction of their school. Nias, Southworth and Campbell (1992) wrote about how the heads' personal and professional identity becomes immersed in their school, and that 'the school becomes a main site for their self-esteem and fulfilment, and so too for their vulnerability' (p.297). The interviews with the head teachers in the case study asked them to share their personal and professional identities. They also provided an opportunity for the heads to talk about fulfilment in their role and also to share their vulnerability.

3.2.2. The vision of the effective leader

Effective leaders need to have a clear vision. A leader must decide on the values, principles, standards, ethics and ideals upon which their beliefs are based, and which drive their vision. A vision describes a person's enduring beliefs and influences every aspect of life; it guides

actions, empowers and motivates. Reflecting upon Dr Martin Luther King's speech in 1963, 'I have a dream', Kouzes and Posner concluded that:

The speech illustrated how the ability to exert an enlivening influence is rooted in fundamental values, cultural traditions, personal conviction, and a capacity to use words to create positive images of the future. To enlist others, leaders need to bring the vision to life. (2007, p.141)

Horner (2003) offers a comprehensive review of leadership theories. He describes leadership as the internal qualities with which a person is born, which poses the question of whether good leaders are made or born. He also considers leaders' behaviour and whether this is consistent or varies according to the situation. One conclusion was that leaders must be able to adapt to change, depending on the culture, as the environment shifts and develops. Horner (2003), MacBeath (1998), Leithwood et al (1999) and Davies et al (2005) all highlight the importance of context alongside the ability of the head teacher to be visionary.

Research undertaken by Kouzes and Posner (2007) over a twenty-five year period into the most important characteristics of an admired leader concludes that for all leaders, a strong shared vision is paramount. From an analysis of thousands of leaders' experiences, most cases followed a similar pattern of actions which they summarise into five practices of exemplary leadership: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act and encourage the heart (2007, p.14). 'Model the way' is concerned with how leaders' behaviour earn them respect and the need to model the behaviour that they expect from their colleagues. Speaking eloquently is not sufficient; leaders must set an example in their daily actions to show that they are deeply committed to their beliefs. To 'inspire a shared vision' is a leader's ability to have a vision for what they want to achieve, and the ability to verbalise the vision and inspire others to get excited about it. Innovation and change may challenge the processes and may involve experimenting and taking risks. Good leaders learn from failures as well as successes and should provide a safe working environment in which others can feel confident to take risks. Leaders need to foster collaboration, build trust and give empowerment to engage everyone to have a stake in the vision. The final practice of an exemplary leader is to 'encourage the heart', to appreciate people's contributions and create a culture of celebrating values and victories.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) also investigated what people looked for and admired in a leader. Of the twenty characteristics highlighted, four received over sixty percent of the votes: honesty, being forward-looking, being able to inspire others and being competent. Honesty may be questionable where a head teacher is leading a C of E school but does not profess a

personal commitment to the beliefs and practices of Christianity. (This concept forms part of the conceptual framework and is discussed further in the data analysis in chapter six.) Staff want a leader who is truthful, ethical and principled; one that they know is soundly honest, as honesty is strongly tied to values and ethics. Good leaders need to be forward thinking and be planning for future success. If the leader's competence is in doubt, they will not have the support. Answering the question whether all leaders in C of E schools should be Christians, Lankshear (1992b) writes that if this demand were enforced, church schools would lose many very good teachers. Head teachers of C of E schools must be able to work within a Christian framework, which implies that they should be concerned with spiritual matters.

Fullan (2003) describes spirituality as a life-giving force which enables change through human and social development, and discusses leadership and the moral imperative. His earlier work (1993, 1999) had focused on how change could be delivered in schools and described how a moral focus would direct the leadership to plan for change within the school and the community. Fullan describes this moral imperative of the school leader as making a difference first to individuals, then the school, beyond the school and finally to society. However spiritual a leader may be they will also have a moral code by which they live and act and which will influence their vision and values. The vision will include the values that the head teacher believes are needed in the school to achieve the ethos which is the outworking of the vision.

Leadership as defined by Leithwood et al (1999) has two main functions: determining direction by the setting and following of an agreed collective vision, and exercising influence by working with others to achieve shared goals. Gunter (2001) discusses transformational leadership which implies that there is an agreed set of values shared between the leader and those they lead, which enables cooperative working. The transformational leadership discussed by Gunter dominated the preferred leadership models of headship in England from the 1990's. Transformational leadership was a response to the demands of reform to achieve appropriate and effective learning outcomes through turning the school into a 'high reliability learning community' (Leithwood et al. 1999, p. 223). Leithwood (1992) sees this agreed working as often depending on a reward within a structured system, while Yuki (2002) sees transformational leadership as being about everyone articulating the vision, but with the leader empowering others. Flintham (2010) questions how easy it is for a leader to survive in a ruthless, target-driven culture as a transformational leader, and asks whether it is possible to be successful if they lack the 'ruthless edge'. Harris (2002b) describes transformational leadership as 'participative leadership' locating power with many, not just a few, and uses the term distributed leadership for working towards a shared vision and purpose.

To be a transformational leader, the leader must seek to motivate staff by engaging them in the process. Transformational leaders build strong working relationships and develop others' skills as they cope with change. Leaders gain the commitment of others by collaboration, openness and a shared vision or goal. Leaders need to construct a vision and a plan of how to imbed the vision in the future of the school. Studies by Leithwood and Jantzi are concerned with transformational leadership in a school context. They believe that leaders should first articulate a vision, which sets the direction of the school, then develop the people within the school through high-quality interpersonal relationships, and lastly have a plan to structure the organisation to be in tune with the vision.

The mission statement of the school should reflect the ethos, which guides the work undertaken to achieve the vision. Fullan and Steigelbauer (1991, p. iv) emphasise how the vision should to be owned by all the stakeholders, as 'visions can blind if they remain the prerogative of one person'. The head should gain the commitment of others to the vision and then shape the policies and practices of the school around it. Senge explains this succinctly:

A shared vision is not an idea. It is not even an important idea such as freedom. It is, rather a force in people's hearts, a force of impressive power. It may be inspired by an idea, but once it goes further – if it is compelling enough to acquire the support of one person, then it is no longer an abstraction. It is palpable. People begin to see it as though it exists. Few, if any, forces in human affairs are as powerful as a shared vision'. (Senge, 1990, p.206)

A person's personal creed influences every aspect of their lives and sets the parameters for hundreds of decisions made every day. The head teacher plays a pivotal role in bringing their beliefs and values to create the vision of the school.

3.2.3. Christian school leadership

Leithwood et al (1999), Southworth (2002), Johnson and Castelli (2000), Starratt (1995), West-Burnham (2002) and Flintham (2003) have all written on the importance of spirituality as a key element of leadership. Referring to the principles needed for headship in a C of E school, Flintham (2003) writes that these may be encapsulated in the metaphor of a 'reservoir of hope'. The head needs to act as the 'external reservoir' for the whole school, providing spiritual and moral leadership based on their personal vision and values. At the same time a head needs an 'internal reservoir of hope' that sustains personal faith in the face of external pressures and critical incidents. These principles need to be continually replenished through sustainability strategies. School leaders without a religious faith may have an underpinning, inclusive spirituality relating to their moral imperative. West-Burnham

(2002) describes this as a motivation and purpose that distinguishes leaders from efficient functionaries. This provides a personal paradigm for their work.

Bazalgette's research (2006) was carried out to discover how three newly appointed Christian head teachers transformed three failing C of E secondary schools. The schools were all in areas of disadvantage, all suffered from low morale, had been criticised by Ofsted, and as a result the schools' staff were demoralised. The research was instigated to examine the transformational effect of Christian heads on turning the schools from failure to success, as graded by Ofsted. In the study, the three heads were all personally committed to their Christian faith, which they expressed publically in their professional role. The study was not investigating the personal religious beliefs of the heads but how their faith impacted on their ability to transform their schools from failure to success, as classified by Ofsted. The study researched,

To what different degrees the three head teachers' professionalism and their Christian faith gave them the inspiration and direction to work in role so as to exercise authority in their schools. This gave freedom to everyone else to find, make and take their roles and thus, in their own terms, to work with authority whether they were child or adult. (Bazalgette, 2006, p.89)

Bazalgette's research was based on discussions with the heads, their staff, pupils, parents and governors. None of the three heads were members of the C of E, but all were Christians, and from the start declared their faith and how they believed their faith accompanied by prayer would support their professional practice.

The action that led to their [schools] turning a corner, in each case, was the appointment of a new head teacher, a person for whom their Christian faith was a core part of their understanding of the meaning of life and the call to work in these particular schools. (Bazalgette, 2006, p.4)

Bazalgette concluded that although the heads were all Christian, they worked with a professionalism which underlies all good headships. In Bazalgette's study, the heads were not just churchgoers but their faith was also woven into their lives, so that their leadership was based on the virtues of love, faith, justice, mercy and forgiveness. They did not see their role as proselytising, but one of developing inclusivity. They all initially began by changing the perceptions and ethos of their schools for staff, pupils, and the community, as places where everyone was valued and respected, and where there was an optimism of success. Behaviour and attitudes were transformed, as pupils felt valued and important and began to realise that their head teacher was working for the benefit of all. Parents began to have

confidence in the heads' Christian values, seeing their positive impact, even if they did not share them. It was the head teachers' leadership that raised morale, enabling everyone to have a pride in their school. Staff noted that the heads' belief in them helped to raise their self-esteem and enabled them to 'buy-in' to the head teachers' vision through new school organisational structures. Whether Christian, or not, the staff acknowledged that it was the heads' Christian faith through diligent work that was the reason for the move from failure to success.

The head teachers defined their schools as structures where the Holy Spirit was at work in all the everyday activities. Their Christian faith was a key factor in how they transformed their schools and established the ethos, but Bazalgette argued that much of what they achieved could have been done by someone of a different faith persuasion or none: 'wisdom is not the exclusive property of the church or of Christians' (Bazalgette 2006, p.152). Nonetheless, the head teachers' faith had been their driving force.

Nouwen (2004) wrote about the difference being a Christian made to leadership: 'A Christian leader is a person of hope, whose strength is based neither on self-confidence derived from their personality, nor on specific expectation of the future, but on a promise given to them' (Nouwen, 2004, p.76). Nouwen was referring to the Christian's confidence in the promises of the Bible.

In her paper 'The Bigger Feelings – The Importance of Spiritual Experience in Educational Leadership' (2007) Woods reports the findings from a study of school head teachers in which she had looked at the importance of spiritual experience as a phenomena which gave greater meaning to their school leadership. Her study acknowledges that spirituality is tied in with emotions and that the heads' spiritual experiences were highly emotional. 'Emotions are moral phenomena. They are closely bound up with and triggered by our purposes. At the same time emotions help us choose among a variety of options in a highly complex world by narrowing down our choices' (Hargreaves, 2001, p.1066). This agrees with Nias (1996) who wrote that, 'teaching is a job which involves interaction among people and inevitably therefore has an emotional dimension' (p.296). The culture of leadership looks for rational professionalism which denies the positive effect of emotions on leadership. However, emotional understanding allows the head teacher to support the emotional experience of others. Hargreaves (2001) also believes that the head teacher's role is to develop a culture of emotional understanding.

Goleman (1995) discusses the importance of emotional intelligence upon which he bases four leadership competencies:

- Self-awareness: emotional self-awareness, self-assessment and self-confidence
- Self-management: self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative and optimism
- Social awareness: empathy, organizational awareness
- Relationship management: inspiration, developing others, team work and collaboration.

These competencies expand upon and complement the four characteristics of an admired leader (of honesty, being forward-looking, being able to inspire others and being competent, Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Goleman's work (1995) stresses the importance of emotional intelligence as significant for the success of an organisation: good for decision making and personal well-being. Emotions are important in leadership because they are the primary source of motivation, information, personal power, innovation and influence. In a school the social and emotional learning of the head teacher has been found to be significant for leader effectiveness, and leaders have been encouraged to develop their emotions and morals (Bennet, Crawford and Cartwright, 2003).

Leaders acquired creative, intuitive frameworks based on in-depth understanding of human nature and of the ethical, moral, even spiritual dimensions inherent in human interaction and choice. Above all, they need sound judgement and a wisdom derived from critical reflection on the meaning of life and work'. (Bennet et al, 2003, p.291)

Reflective practice enables head teachers to consider the dilemmas and conflicts they have between the constant pressure for improving teaching and learning, and the development of the whole child, through their spiritual, moral and social development. Reflecting upon actions, values and beliefs, Johns (2000, p.34) describes reflection as 'a window through which the practitioner can view and focus self within the context of his/her own lived experience in ways that enable him/her to confront, understand and work towards resolving the contradictions'. For Christians, their emotional understanding is related to their spiritual beliefs and their faith which supports them in the fulfilling of their role. Reflexive practice is equally important as it is the extent to which the head teacher with his/her team can reflect upon and then modify their plans and actions. It is a key factor in effectiveness. To be reflexive as a leader is to have a level of critical introspection. Schutz (1962) describes reflexivity as a person's ability to identify the purpose or goals they are seeking. Once the goals are identified action is needed to lead the school successfully. The head teachers in the study had identified their priorities which included the values they believed should underpin their ethos, which had guided their actions.

The literature critiqued in this section contributed to my theoretical conception of effective educational leadership, as the ability to hold and articulate clear values and moral purpose, while focused on providing a world class education for the pupils they serve. Christian leadership demands that the head can act as the 'external reservoir' (Flintham 2010) for the whole school, providing spiritual and moral leadership based on their personal vision and values.

3. 3. Spirituality

3.3.1. Spirituality in contemporary society

Spirituality is not the same as religiosity. It is more a longing and search for meaning beyond the mundane world, for a reality that is more real and authentic than everyday experience. Spirituality may be present in religion but is not dependent on it and may be experienced by those who do not profess religious beliefs explicitly. Hull (2002) describes the relationship between the concepts of spirituality, faith and religion as three concentric circles. The outside, the largest, is spirituality; the middle ring is religion, and the inner circle is faith. Hull defines 'spirituality' as the achievement of human beings or the process of humanisation. (Hull is making a distinction between the biological human and how a human adapts and develops as they interact with the world around.) His views align with those of McCreery (1996), who believes that spirituality is to be found in 'everydayness'. Flintham (2010) defined spirituality as a 'lived faith in action'. I support this view and believe that a person's spiritual understanding reflects their lived experiences and has been shaped by their world views. It is lived out through a person's beliefs, attitudes, moral values and their actions, and has been influenced by their cultural and religious experiences, family, social relationships and work. For a Christian, their spiritual understanding has been shaped by their faith in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It displays itself through the religious practices of the denomination to which they belong.

There has been considerable debate over the concept of spirituality and there is no definitive definition. Spirituality has become an over-used but ill-defined concept in contemporary society. One attempt at a definition has been proposed by Gibbs and Bolger.

It represents a longing to experience both the transcendent and the immanent in all realms and to give a sense of intrinsic worth and cosmic significance to the individual ... In a society characterised by fast-paced living, increasing uncertainty, growing demands in the workplace and family pressures, spirituality is valued as providing coping mechanisms. (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006, p.218)

Christianity is only one interpretation of spirituality. Spirituality may be influenced by mystic traditions within Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism, along with New Age alternatives, all of which provide a challenge that schools cannot ignore.

In his book *Spirituality and Education* Wright (2000) defines spirituality as our concern for the ultimate meaning and purpose in life. He notes that society has failed to provide a viable answer to this question, resulting in a spiritual crisis and a cynical withdrawal from engaging in spiritual questioning. Wright believes that there is a basic assumption that spirituality and spiritual education are controversial and that there was no agreed public view. 'It is unclear whether society is in the middle of a spiritual crisis or standing at the dawn of a new age of spiritual opportunity' (2000, p.7).

Wright uses the term 'modernity' to describe Britain's contemporary culture, which he believes comprises a number of philosophical traditions which have been instrumental in shaping contemporary spirituality. The first he describes as the spiritual values of materialism being limited to physical well-being, comfort and security. The second he terms romanticism, which acknowledges the importance of subjective emotional intuition and is a liberal philosophy accepting of tolerance and difference. The third is post-modernism which reduces all religion, including Christianity to a level of opinion. It is a philosophy that believes there is no absolute truth and is concerned only with the construction of an individual's own spiritual identity, built on a person's feelings, instincts and inclinations. Finally he describes critical realism as reason, emotion and practical experience combining with physiological and mental awareness to enable a person to explore reality.

This research seeks to learn about the personal views of the head teachers in the case study and how they interpret spirituality in their C of E school.

3.3.2. Different interpretations of spirituality

The Dalai Lama, whose beliefs are firmly Buddhist has travelled extensively in the west and came to the conclusion that there are two levels of spirituality, which he wrote about in his book *Ethics of the New Millennium* (1999). The first is spirituality based on the beliefs and practices of an established religious system such as Christianity or Buddhism; and the second is a spiritual understanding which he calls the 'fundamental of human nature'. He makes a clear distinction between religion and spirituality: he describes religion as faith traditions and salvation which encompass dogma, ritual and prayers; spirituality is concerned with the human spirit of love, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, contentment and a sense of responsibility and harmony that results in happiness for oneself and others (Dalai Lama 1999). The Dalai Lama's two definitions of spirituality stem from his realisation that formal

religious practices appear to no longer provide the basic framework of rules for living, and secularisation and non-religious ideas are now the norm. His view is that a person can be free of religious beliefs but no-one can be free from human qualities. His spiritual message is one that encourages people to seek for personal happiness. Although his views are of secular universal spirituality, he does commend everyone to follow their own faith traditions.

Copley (2000) writes that the term 'spiritual' conveniently reflects the current UK ambiguity towards religion. Religious experience is expressed through linguistic traditions (language associated with the churches' dogma) and it is vital that values of such traditions are not ignored. Spirituality can be described as the way a person thinks, thereby acknowledging human worth. Nature, science, culture and the arts can cause a person to experience a spiritual dimension in their lives. Copley acknowledges this, describing religion as just 'one coat that spirituality might wear' (p.139).

Johnson, McCreery and Castelli (2000) undertook research into spiritual and moral development in faith schools. They considered how C of E and Catholic primary school head teachers saw their role in the development of their pupils' spirituality in maintaining a school culture consistent with the moral values of their belief system. Six Catholic school heads and seven C of E school heads were interviewed. The Catholic schools, which were fully part of the Catholic Church and promoted Catholic values and explicit Catholic beliefs, contrasted with the C of E schools where the heads displayed far less doctrinal understanding. The C of E schools offered a moral education welcoming to those of all faith traditions, liberal and multicultural, and their heads operated within an ambivalent faith tradition that allowed him or her to be more aware of the local context and particular needs of the community (Johnson et al, 2000).

Woods (2007) studied head teachers' spiritual experiences and how they affected their leadership. A study by Woods on the importance of spiritual experience in educational leadership initially used postal surveys of primary and secondary heads in three local authorities in England, followed by interviews with some selected heads. Woods acknowledges the significance of spiritual experiences and the levels of insight and awareness they bring. In her work she defines spiritual experience as an area of human experience which involved heightened awareness of something of profound significance, beyond normal everyday reality (Woods 2007). Woods notes that there are different terms used to explain this area of human experience: religious experience, spiritual experience, transcendent experience and spiritual awareness, terms used by Hardy, 1991; Hay with Nye, 1998; and Maxwell and Tschudin, 1990. To define 'spirituality' in her research, Woods uses a question devised by Hardy (1991 p.20): 'Do you feel that you have ever been conscious of

and perhaps influenced by some power, whether you call it God or not, which may either appear to be beyond your individual self or partly or even entirely, within your being?' This very open question allowed for respondents to answer from a spiritual, faith or religious perspective. Hardy's question used in a British survey found that sixty percent of adults reported relevant experiences of some kind (Hay, 1990) and this percentage rose to seventy-six percent in a later survey (Hay and Hunt, 2000).

Woods (2007 p.137) research concludes that most spiritual experiences involves one or more of the following: a feeling of being in touch with an inner strength, a feeling of insightfulness into the significance and importance of an incident, an ethical quality giving a moral conscience, a life-enhancing quality which results in positive feelings or (as described by Hay) an incident that seems more real than everyday reality.

Spiritual experiences can not only be described in a variety of terms, but they also vary in frequency and intensity; they 'may occur in single, dramatic moments or over time through different types of experience, learning and reflection' (Woods, 2007, p.138). Woods main findings were that spiritual experience enhances the capacity of head teachers for practical action and increases ethical sensitivity. The experiences support heads' inner resources, knowledge, emotional sensitivity and virtues such as courage, and spiritual experience helps heads to imbue spirituality in their role as policy makers.

West-Burnham (2002) defines spirituality as a 'journey', a 'reservoir of hope', and as a 'search', (terms also used by Flintham, 2003). 'Spirituality is a journey to find a sustainable, authentic and profound understanding of the existential self which informs personal and social action' (p.2). For the head teacher this is about having the 'confidence of purpose, a clear sense of vocation and clarity of priorities, values and recognition of self-worth' (p.2). Copley explained how the term 'spiritual' is used to describe non-religious and atheistic emotions and ideas, similar to those described by the Dalai Lama, especially in 'state schools', with pupils from families with differing religious commitments or none. 'In a climate in which one of the key values of education is to integrate pupils, while affirming diversity, such a potentially unifying term will find usage' (Copley, 2000, p.3).

3.3.3. Spirituality within the education system

It was into this contemporary modern spirituality that the government introduced the 1988 Education Act, which led to the implementation of the National Curriculum (NC). The second paragraph of the Act promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society. By placing this paragraph towards the beginning of the document, it could demonstrate that the government was aware of the need to educate the

whole person, not just pupils' cognitive development. The DFE white paper (1992) 'Choices and Diversity' further reinforced the place of spirituality in education as an element of shared values, which should underpin the ethos of a school and not simply be part of the curriculum. In 1993 the National Curriculum Council published the document 'Spiritual and Moral Development', which explained that:

The term spiritual applies to all pupils. The potential for spiritual development is open to everyone and is not confined to the development of religious beliefs or convention to a particular faith...The term...has to do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live. (1993, p.2)

This document lists eight aspects of spiritual development: beliefs; the sense of awe, wonder and mystery; feelings of transcendence; the search for meaning and purpose; self-knowledge; relationships; creativity; feelings and emotions. The publication outlines that this should be achieved through the development within pupils of curiosity, imagination, insight and intuition, through the use of schools' ethos, collective worship and explicit curriculum, all of which would be monitored by Ofsted in their inspection process. This development will be guided by the head teacher who will establish their vision and values for the school to enable this to happen.

In 1997 the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), which replaced the Schools' Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA), published draft guidance to schools on how to deliver spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the curriculum. 'Schools and teachers can have confidence that there is general agreement in society upon these values. They can therefore expect the support and encouragement of society if they base their teaching and the school ethos on these values.' This was followed by citizenship education becoming compulsory for secondary school pupils from September 2002, with non-statutory guidance for primary pupils. Despite attempts to define the broad area of personal, social, moral and spiritual education, Best (2000, p.10) notes that 'it is the spiritual which, it seems, is more resistant to operational definition. At its worst, attempts to pin it down lead only to a greater awareness of its intangibility and pervasiveness'. Best questions whether it is reasonable to attempt to define 'spiritual development' in a way which is acceptable both to those of a non-religious perspective and to those with religious beliefs. He also questions how teachers can present moral issues without moral abdication but also without indoctrination.

Flintham (2010) undertook research into spirituality from a range of faith perspectives. He defines spirituality as a 'lived faith in action' and as:

A universal overarching concept which generates for each individual of whatever perspective a personal world-view which enables them to create meaning and purpose in their lives, affects their espoused values and subsequent behaviours and relationships based on them, and impacts on their well-being (p10).

Flintham acknowledges the constant revisions of national education policies that have threatened to overload and destabilise head teachers. He believes that staff look to the head teacher to have a clear agenda, a coherent vision and a direction underpinned by integrity of values. His research captures head teachers' reflections on their personal value systems, leadership styles and sustainability strategies.

Flintham's first study, carried out under the auspices of the National College of School Leadership (NCSL), called 'Reservoirs of Hope', involved interviewing twenty-five serving heads, eight of which were in faith schools. His second piece of research, 'When Reservoirs run dry', was also carried out under the auspices of NCSL. He interviewed fifteen heads who had left headship ahead of normal retirement age, to try to discover some of the reasons for this, by encouraging reflection on their leadership journey. Flintham recognises that the primary purpose of his research is not to provide catharsis for hard-pressed participating head teachers, but to generate messages on leadership that may be of value to the wider educational community (2010).

Flintham's first research question was 'What are the spiritual and moral bases on which head teachers stand, from whence are they derived and how do they impact on leadership?' All the heads, irrespective of their own faith, could articulate their value system, based either on their faith perspective or on the 'golden rule' of 'love your neighbour as yourself' (Flintham 2010 p168). The second question asked them about opportunities to have meaningful times for reflection, and all responded that they needed these to replenish their energy and resilience, particularly in critical situations. The third question was about sustainability strategies and structures for supporting heads. Respondents valued the time spent with like-minded colleagues and those with the same belief structure. Flintham's research concludes that heads of faith schools display similar professional attributes to secular colleagues, but the difference is that those with a faith talk about their work in the 'language of faith' while displaying their own personal attributes and values. Some said it was their 'sense of hope' which was essential to their leadership. This was echoed by the head teachers in the case study who professed to have a Christian faith.

The essential difference, however, amongst the school leaders interviewed by Flintham was not in what they did to sustain themselves, nor indeed how they exercised their spiritual and moral leadership role, but rather in why they felt called to service in the particular context in

which they were head teachers (Flintham 2010). For Flintham, three common themes emerge: the importance of vision, the value of reflection and the necessity for renewal, and the importance of their contribution to the support, sustaining and effective functioning of school leaders. Flintham's research concludes that heads need faith, hope and love to sustain them for the present and the future.

3.3.4. Spirituality in Christian schools

In his book *Spiritual Development in the State School* Copley (2000) discusses the place of the spiritual in UK education in the twenty-first century. He feels that the collapse of a commonly accepted Christian-value base cannot be easily reversed, even if it were thought desirable. Copley further questions whether schools which are working towards integrative communities should focus on a spirituality that is rooted in Victorian values, rather than responding to contemporary diversity. He acknowledges the differing definitions and meanings of the term 'spirituality' and 'spiritual development', but questions whether the differences are partly a result in changes of terminology in each generation. Copley writes that 'spiritual development has merely suffered the collapse of a more monochrome world-view into a plural, diffuse and post-modern one, in which it will not have 'a' meaning, but 'meanings'. Furthermore, he claims that the present educational climate in England is more sympathetic to spirituality than to religion. 'If spirituality in the state school cannot be Christian on the grounds that Christianity is a minority activity and commitment, it cannot be allowed to be secular for precisely the same reason' (2000, p. 142).

The debate about spiritual development in schools within an overall view of educational aims and purpose was considered by McLaughlin (1994b). He believes that there needs to be a vision of the education provided by a school which encompasses these aims. To educate the whole child requires spiritual development to be included within a holistic approach. McLaughlin questions if spirituality is part of the process of educating the whole child, and what constitutes the value base of education in a liberal democratic society. Lealman (1986, p. 68) writes that, 'Education in spiritual growth is that which promotes apprehension of ultimate reality through fostering higher forms of human consciousness'. For Lealman, spiritual experience is to do with awe and wonder; a sunset or a baby's smile, which is a dimension of existence and which transcends the normal everyday world. Warner (1996), however, is concerned with the religious side of spirituality and the commitment of the Church school to develop spiritual maturity in pupils. 'One issue for schools is how to reconcile different faith positions in order to adopt a planned, rational and effective whole-school policy on spiritual development'. (1996, p.344)

Wright (1998) claims that the source of spiritual experience must be human nature itself, if it has no connection with linguistic or cultural tradition, or divine reality and revelation. To Wright, spiritual reality is to be understood in the light of its transcendence, universality, value and mystery, and believes that any more detailed definition requires an objectification that undermines the very nature of the spiritual. However, Wright defines Christian spirituality as 'the developing relationship of the individual, within the Christian community, and tradition, to that which is, or is perceived to be, of ultimate concern, ultimate value and ultimate truth', (1998, p.88). He believes that the source of Christian spirituality is the Holy Spirit, and not the human spirit, and so is incompatible with the way schools teach the Christian knowledge of God through human spiritual experience, rather than divine revelation. His definition helps to recognise a diversity of spiritual traditions across our multicultural society and explains that:

The educational dilemma is how to teach spirituality, in a cultural context, in which spiritual truth matters, in which the power and influence of pathological spiritual traditions are recognised, yet in which there is no consensus as to which, if any, truth is ultimately real and authentic' (1998, p.92).

The focus on spirituality should help to give greater meaning and purpose to life through a holistic education that includes wonder, mystery and creativity. The C of E school has the responsibility to include within its spiritual education a focus on the Christian faith and its beliefs and values. When discussing Christian education, Thatcher (1991, p.23) defines spirituality traditionally as 'the life of prayer and personal discipline or holiness or knowledge of God'. Copley adds that spirituality can also be used to describe 'the reservoir of the spiritual in individuals or groups that motivates them' (2000, p.3). Teachers can liberate children's spirituality by nurturing all aspects of childhood, through activities that enable creating, healing and the transcending of self that can lead to personal growth (Lealmam,1996).

According to Wright: 'A spiritual education that begins and ends with mere nurture limits pupils' understanding and insight, and becomes simply a form of cultural transmission that verges on indoctrination' (Wright,1998,pp.99-100). If spirituality is to recover its proper place, he argues, 'alongside the process of nurture, must stand a tradition of investigation, critique and examination'. To Wright (1998, p.102) 'genuine spiritual education thus transcends the limitations of a pedagogy concerned with stimulating the child's experiential sensitivity as an end in itself. It demands the embodiment of questions of ultimate truth within developing traditions'. Wright sees this as the role of the Christian school and one which I believe is influenced by the head teacher's own beliefs and values.

3.3.5. Spirituality in the curriculum

All the learning and other experiences during the school day combine to form the school's curriculum. The report Faith in the System clearly outlined what they saw as the purpose of the curriculum.

The aim of the school curriculum is to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes necessary for each pupil's self-fulfilment and development and an active and responsible citizen and to provide the foundation of the government's commitment to the development of each pupil's religious literacy. (Faith in the System, 2007, p.9)

The Education Reform Act (1988) states that the curriculum for a maintained school should provide for a balanced and broad curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development at school and of society. However there is no definition in the Act of what was meant by 'spiritual' and the government in 1988 took a neutral position.

Lealman's view is that: 'Education in spiritual growth is that which promotes appreciation of ultimate reality through fostering higher forms of human consciousness' (1986, p.68). A spiritually educated child should be more than one with a highly developed sensitivity towards his or her inner experiential depth. Lealman questioned whether it is possible to have a common definition of spirituality when people have different philosophical and theological perspectives. She proposed that there would need to be a range of definitions so that pupils could have the opportunity to critically consider a diversity of spiritual traditions. Wright maintains that the whole child should develop relationships with themselves, society, nature and 'with the presence or absence of divinity in a manner that takes seriously the ultimate issues of the truth and meaning of the world' (1996, p.148).

The view on spirituality expressed by C.S.Lewis is that every human being is 'spiritual' in the sense that there is a 'supernatural element that is given to everyman at his creation' (Lewis 1960, p.175) and that educators have a responsibility to nurture this spirituality. In school, the spiritual development of the child should be achieved through the whole curriculum; the aims of the school, the ethos of the school, the collective worship that celebrates and shares the traditions associated to the foundation of the school, and through the basic curriculum taught in the school (National Society, 2013).

The head teacher is responsible for creating a learning environment which enables children to develop their spiritual awareness. A head teacher in a C of E school may interpret the term 'spiritual' both in a religious and secular way, depending upon their own experience and

commitment. Warner (1996) carried out research into head teachers' perceptions of their role in spiritual education. He found that heads were seldom explicit about their personal understanding but he concludes that heads are aware of the range of influences affecting the development of the whole child and that one of the head's fundamental roles is to provide for the spiritual life of the pupils. To do this, Warner stresses the need for good RE teaching from teachers with appropriate expertise in the subject, and well planned collective worship, both of which nurture spirituality.

McCreery, Nye and Hay are three of the better-known writers who have published work on the development of children's spirituality through the curriculum. McCreery's research (1996) investigates the beliefs of four and five year olds and concludes that spirituality is in everyday life, and that young children engage in spiritual activities simply by investigating and learning about the world around. Nye defines children's spirituality in three ways: 'God's ways of being with children and children's ways of being with God ... children's natural capacity for awareness of the sacred quality to life experience ... children's spirituality being like a child' (Nye, 2009, pp.5-6). She concludes that children have a more holistic way of seeing things than adults; they are more open, less inhibited and more curious. She writes that in her view spirituality is essential to faith: it 'is seen as integral to what education and being a growing child (of any faith or none) is all about, as essential as intellectual or social development' (Nye, 2009, p.18). Both Nye and McCreery's pedagogical position places the development of spirituality as running through all of the educational experiences provided for children. Hay's *Why Should we Care about Children's Spirituality* (1998) expresses the view that if someone is spiritual they will have a compassionate concern for the people around them as well as an appreciation for the aesthetics of poetry and music.

C.S.Lewis counters this view in his book *Mere Christianity*, where he writes: 'you will not get eternal life by simply feeling the presence of God in flowers and music' (Lewis, 1981/1952, p.132). Lewis wants his readers to base their spirituality on concrete evidence, not subjective feelings. He is concerned that some Christian schools are so focused on ensuring that all the pupils are behaving in a 'Christian way' that they do not foster the good character which Lewis believes is vital. He defines good character as the virtues of compassion, forgiveness, love, self-control and patience. In his book *Abolition of Man* (1943/1978) he discusses the need to educate not just the head but also the chest (heart) and that through the practice of Christian virtues, pupils would discover more about themselves. He stresses his belief that God wants people to pursue Christian virtues and that dignity and freedom within the school, through the whole curriculum, allows for the practice of these virtues. Lewis writes that Christian schools have the ability to do character building better than other schools because

they have the foundation of Christian traditions underpinning the virtues. He felt that the life, work and teachings of Jesus Christ should form the greatest resource for doing this.

There is general agreement about the importance of personal, social and health education (PSHE) within the curriculum, and the emphasis on promoting emotional intelligence, also termed emotional literacy (Best, 2011). The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) curriculum was introduced as a response to this. An individual's emotions need educating to enable recognition of the real values of the world. Best, however, writes that it is not tenable and is too simplistic to equate spiritual education with religious education, due to the multicultural and ethnically diverse society in England today. For schools to deliver spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a challenge. Best (2011) describes a spiritual experience as being 'rich in affect or feeling but reducible to emotion' (p.365). He believes that religion can become stuck in the past and out of touch with present reality and cautions against 'a blind belief in the propositions of religious dogma' (2011, p.366). Best questions whether faith schools are more able to promote spirituality than secular schools. 'Being educated in a faith school is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for spiritual development.' (Best, 2011, p.366) He does, however, applaud schools characterised not just by religious beliefs but 'by beliefs in the life and the soul of the community (with its living values, hopes, sentiments and mutual concerns) may be well-placed to promote spiritual development' (p. 366). Moreover, Best believes that the fundamental purpose of education, and the focus that should run through the whole curriculum, should enable pupils to learn to be fully alive, fully human and at one with each other. I agree with Best that pupils educated in a C of E school will not necessarily have a greater understanding of spirituality than those from non-faith schools. However, it is hoped, that they will have had the opportunity to have had the tenets of the Christian faith explained to them, which will have supported their spiritual development.

3.3.6. Spirituality in the C of E school

Both academic standards and spiritual education are central to the mission of the C of E school. The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) focuses on analysing performance data to ensure that all pupils are achieving their age-appropriate National Curriculum levels, while the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) focuses on the requirement for a distinctively Christian education which is inclusive of all faiths and none (Dearing, 2001). This dichotomy is the challenge for leaders of C of E schools. The Ofsted Framework (2011a) includes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as one of their seven judgements of pupil outcomes. The inspectors assess 'pupils' understanding of societies shared and agreed values' (p.28). Slight changes were made in January 2012:

(Ofsted, 2012) Ofsted inspectors now also have to report on indicators of spiritual development: 'learning about self, others and the world' (p. 23).

The new Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Framework (SIAMS, 2012), when assessing spirituality within the distinctiveness of the C of E school, is looking for what the school is doing to further develop children's understanding of Jesus and the Christian message. It assesses how children are learning about Christianity, not whether the school is making 'converts' to Christianity. It is therefore important that schools provide a rich and varied diet of opportunities for children to encounter the 'spiritual', and this will be evident if Christianity is embedded in the pedagogy of the school. The SIAMS inspection looks for opportunities that the school takes to 'engage in high quality experiences that develop a person spirituality', and looks for 'a highly developed interpretation of spirituality shared across the school community' (The National Society, 2012, p.7).

Brown (2013) describes the challenge of the National Society as being to: 'express its mission in clear theological terms and to present head teachers with a clear and accessible theology' (p.157). This is yet another area of expertise that the head teacher needs to acquire in order to allow staff and pupils to explore spirituality and reflect on learning experiences. The local diocese and the NS need to play a role in supporting head teachers of C of E schools to develop their reflective theology and establish ways of nurturing pupils' spirituality. Alongside the development of spirituality, schools also need to develop a pedagogy of enquiry, at the same time as managing the tensions of accountability.

This section has briefly considered the views of a number of writers on spirituality. While both Nye (2009) and McCreery (1996) advocate a pedagogy that has the development of spirituality running through all the educational experiences provided by the school, Wright (1998) advocates an education that embodied the questions of ultimate truth within developing traditions. Head teachers of C of E schools will have their own interpretation of spirituality which will have an impact on the development of the ethos of their school. My epistemological position on spirituality holds that spirituality is a human experience that involves a heightened awareness of something beyond the everyday. Christian spirituality involves bringing together the tenets of the Christian truths, found in the Bible and the experience of living in God's presence, grace and love in our daily lives. God's presence is experienced by the Christian through the person of the Holy Spirit. Their faith should be evident through their actions and the values they hold. Christian spirituality should be evident in the C of E school through all its policies and practices.

3.4. Ethos

The ethos of the school refers to its core values, beliefs and practices. The importance of a positive school ethos in creating a good school or in securing school improvement is controversial (Glover and Law, 2004), (Matthews, 2009), (Graham, 2012). However, Rutter (1982) identifies differences in outcomes between schools that cannot be explained by socio-economic or other factors, and concludes that the difference could be explained by the ethos, which he describes as, 'school values, norms and expectations' (p. 186). The government and the National Society of the Church of England both support the premise that for a school to be effective, pupils, staff and governors need to be able to articulate the ethos.

In this study I have interpreted the Christian ethos rhetorically, expressed as vision, values and expectations, and the 'reality' on the ground. This view aligns with that of McLaughlin who defines ethos as:

The prevalent or characteristic tone, spirit or sentiment informing an identifiable entity involving human life and interaction... An ethos is evaluative in some sense and is manifested in many aspects of the entity in question and via many modes of pervasive influence. (2005, p. 311)

Ethos is not just the structure that underpins the day to day running of the school, but a set of values that holistically underpins everything that goes on within the school. Values are explained by Woodcock and Francis (1989) as beliefs in action. A school must create an ethos that is authentic and based on values that will engage and be sustainable. Problems may arise if the school has individuals with different belief systems, whether these are religious or not. In a C of E school a priority of the ethos should be passing on the beliefs, rituals and values of the C of E. McLaughlin writes that ethos both intended and experienced is value-laden. The head teacher, I believe, is the major influence in this. These values shape perceptions, attitudes and beliefs. All aspects of the life of the school and influences in the classroom should display the agreed ethos of the school.

3.4.1. A distinct Christian ethos

The ethos within a school is a significant aspect of the educational experience of pupils. The term 'ethos' appears twelve times in the Dearing Report (2001), which urges all C of E schools to articulate their distinctive Christian ethos. Governors in C of E schools are legally required to produce a school ethos statement, to communicate the school's aims and values

(National Society, 2012). In 1999 the C of E provided a model ethos statement for its schools as guidance for head teachers:

Recognizing its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England/Church in Wales and in partnership with the Churches at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. (National Society, 2012)

Promoting Christian values to underpin the Christian ethos is a reoccurring phrase and one which was investigated in the case study. Is it possible for a head teacher who is not a Christian to support the introduction of Christian values, which may be at variance with their own personal beliefs and values? A report by Francis (1986) looked at what determines the ethos of a C of E school. Francis notes that it had less to do with church policy and governors and more to do with the head teacher, the teachers and the day-to-day character of the school. The research analyses the views of three hundred and thirty-eight teachers in twenty C of E Voluntary Aided (VA) and ninety-one Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools for pupils from four to thirteen years of age in the diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, in the county of Suffolk, UK. One of the findings was that decisions made by the head teacher about the distinctiveness of the C of E school, whether or not they were viewed favourably, were influenced by personal issues. It found that younger teachers who worked in C of E schools were less in favour of distinctiveness.

Wilcox and Francis took the findings of Francis (1986) and conducted a similar study in the Diocese of Newcastle, UK, in 1996, using the same questionnaires as the previous study. They came to similar conclusions that older teachers and teachers that attend church had a more positive attitude towards C of E schools and worked to promote the distinctiveness. Wilcox and Francis questioned whether in subsequent generations, teachers would be less inclined to support the development of the C of E distinctiveness and ethos.

Hunt's (2011) small-scale study investigated the role of the head teacher in creating a distinctive, positive and effective Christian ethos in a C of E primary school. He found that each head had established their vision differently and that they had different management styles, but all strove for personal integrity, all were prepared to do all tasks in school and all valued everyone. 'The personal commitment of the head teachers interviewed for this study appeared to be a key element in helping them develop a positive and effective Christian ethos' (2011 p7).

Hunt's report highlights some key elements of a distinct C of E school ethos:

- Theology, which provides children with the opportunity to explore the divine and to understand more about God
- Values, which provides moral strength for life's ups and downs
- Spirituality, which values wonder and amazement
- Good quality RE, which engages and explains the concepts of the Christian faith
- Worship, to celebrate the presence of God
- Links with the church and the community
- Building up positive relationships between all the stakeholders.

(Hunt, 2011)

Hunt concluded that a healthy Christian ethos can only be achieved by the dedication of the head. Hunt acknowledges that no two heads are the same and that all vary in personality, but he believes that if they include his key elements, they will be creating a 'distinctive' ethos within their schools. The analysis of my case study looked at these seven key elements to identify their influence in the development of the ethos in the six schools. The value placed on the importance of each element directly impacted the formation of the ethos. (Discussed in chapter seven.)

Dawson (2007) considered the impact of the leader of a school on the culture, ethos and development by undertaking a qualitative piece of research using a case study of four Catholic secondary schools and their communities. He concluded that modelling by the leadership is an important aspect of setting the ethos of a school. Wright (2001) argues that school leaders cannot exercise their own values and direction for their school as they are already decided at the political level. Wright believes that the success of a school, its direction and values, are driven by the need for better performance, as recorded in league tables. Dawson, however, concludes from his study that head teachers see themselves as the authority figures in their schools and custodians of a set of standards, which they seek to preserve, defend and transmit. The ethos is steered by the head teacher, but Dawson was not able to distinguish between the ethos of a Catholic school from that of a non-faith school.

Qualitative research undertaken by Hemming (2011) at Cardiff University examined the role of religion on the ethos of two different schooling models. He questions whether religion should be a public or a private affair and if it should have a role in state education. His case study comprised of two primary schools, a Community Primary and a Catholic VA Primary, both multi-faith and in urban locations. Hemming concludes that secularisation is clearly not a straight forward process and his research supports Berger's (1999) contention that

modernisation may result in the evolution and mutation of religious expression, rather than merely its decline.

Hemming had also found that the role of religion in public life is a contradictory and contested process. Some parents in his study extolled the amount of religion in the school ethos while others, whose children were at the Catholic school though not practicing Catholics themselves had negative views on the confessional and the doctrinal nature of the school. Hemming questions whether the social class and cultural background of the parents in the study swayed the findings, which may have been different with middle class parents. He comes to no firm conclusions and ends his article by writing that he would need to undertake further research to gain a better understanding of the role of religion in contemporary public life. Hemming was unable to distinguish any distinctiveness in the ethos of the Catholic school from that of a Community school with no faith affiliation, but nonetheless like Dawson, saw the ethos as being of paramount importance in setting the direction of the school.

3.4.2. The effect of a Christian ethos on the pedagogy of the school

Bazalgette (2006) describes how three Christian head teachers led their schools from failure to success (as defined by Ofsted), had used the resources of their faith to support others, and showed consistency of behaviour, attitudes and approaches to their leadership. Bazalgette's conclusions agree with those of Dawson on the important influence of the headteacher, but disagreed with Wright (2001). The three head teachers in Bazalgette's research transformed their schools by transforming the ethos, the culture and the climate, which they developed through shared values, beliefs and practices. Freiberg (1999, p.1) defines a school ethos as 'the heart and soul of the school'. All schools have their own unique ethos but with a faith school one could expect to find a specific ethos based on religious values.

If the purpose of the school ethos statement is to nurture pupils and transmit social culture, it needs to take both the cultural values and local spiritual traditions into account. Along with the need for children to learn cultural values, the school should enable pupils to become critical thinkers, so that they can make their own decisions on moral, cultural and spiritual issues. This was made a requirement in Section 407 of the 1996 Education Act, which states that 'when controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they should be offered a balanced presentation of opposing views' (QCA, 1999, p.26). This would suggest the importance of C of E schools delivering a curriculum relevant for life in the twenty-first century yet with an ethos faithful to the C of E traditions.

Tony Blair, when Britain's Prime Minister (1997-2007), was a strong advocate of expanding faith schools as he believed that their ethos not only supported the development of positive moral and spiritual values but also academic standards. The British government provided financial support to mainstream Christian organisations as well as minority religious groups such as Sikhs and Muslims to enable them to set up their own schools. Green's research, *Mapping the Field* (2009) was an extensive review of the academic research literature available on the spiritual impact of schools with a Christian ethos and how this affected attainment, beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and the spirituality of pupils. The review considered different research paradigms and methodologies and how these had shaped the views of Christian distinctiveness and the interpretation of the ethos of each project. Green found there is no shared understanding or language with which to talk about ethos and spirituality.

Green acknowledges that head teachers struggle to understand the concepts of spirituality, values and distinctiveness. Within the English education system, school effectiveness is judged on pupil performance, analysed in league tables by government appointed educationalists. There is a common preconception that schools with a Christian ethos achieve higher academic standards and some parents feel that 'schools with a Christian ethos offer grounding in morality and ethics perceived to be missing from wider society' (Green, 2009, p.14). Warnock (1996) had earlier expressed the same view, that there is a moral consensus on classroom virtues and most parents, whatever their cultural background, want their children to be taught to behave well in social situations. Green's research supported the perception that pupils in church schools achieved more highly and made better academic progress than pupils in non-denominational schools. The literature she reviewed indicated that researchers had made little attempt 'to disentangle the impact of church, home and school for pupils' (p.81). Green acknowledges that although pupils' prior knowledge may be a contributing factor she believes that there is some 'school effect'. Her research suggests that 'religious affiliation' (p.77) may be a significant predictor of pupils' positive attitude to behaviour and learning. This appeared to be the case in the schools in Bazalgette's research (2006).

Green (2009) carried out a case study in a city technical college in the North of England with a Christian ethos. The college was funded by a non-denominational Christian foundation to raise achievement and increase opportunities for pupils in an area of urban deprivation. The funding came with the stipulation that the sponsor could dictate the college's ethos which would be characterised by Bible-based discipline and traditional education within 'a moral and ethical framework that is broadly Christian' (p. 48). Green concludes that the college deliberately expressed its Christian ethos in broad terms so that they could be adhered to generally. However, they were specifically understood by the senior management team who

shared a very narrow theological set of assumptions stemming from a reformed protestant Christian world view. Green's work establishes the significance of personal interpretations of Christian distinctiveness.

Green's research (2009) also found that schools with a Christian ethos can have a positive impact on achievement. It revealed that researchers who interpreted distinctiveness in terms of nurture and identity formation within the Christian community are more likely to identify a Christian school in terms of its formal religious practices. Researchers with a more holistic approach, however, look at ways that the school implicitly supports the Christian ethos through shared values. Green concludes that further research with a well-defined theory base is needed, to establish the impact of schools with a Christian ethos on pupils' attainment, beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and spiritual development.

Research undertaken with students training to be Religious Education teachers at Christ Church Canterbury University by Revell and Walters in 2010 investigated what place the students saw their beliefs would have in the classroom. The agnostics and the atheists believed that their views would enhance their teaching, whilst the Christians expressed the views that they ought to keep their thoughts private and not take them into the classroom. This result was interesting as the students were training at a university with a C of E foundation. The Right Reverend John Cox, Bishop of Oxford and Chair of the C of E Board of Education and the National Society, in his book *More than Caring and Sharing* (2011), wrote that even Christian values are not enough. He writes that it is the beliefs that underpin these values that make a real difference to the education of pupils in our schools. 'Church schools should above all be places of hope, believing in the possibility of positive outcomes from bad experiences. The cross and resurrection teach that' (Cox 2011, p74). He advocates that belief should lie at the heart of what makes a school and its ethos distinctive and that these beliefs could be educational, moral or social, but in a C of E school they should be Christian, but with an insistence upon inclusivity. This belief lies at the heart of what is assessed through a SIAMS inspection.

In 2001 the General Synod of the C of E and the Archbishops' Council, when considering the part being played by the C of E in English education at the start of the twenty-first century, identified C of E schools as standing at the centre of the Church's mission to the nation. The 'Way Ahead' report published in 2001 proudly states that

The Church school offers a distinctive language for understanding life and interpreting human experience. As a community of faith, the Church school should, in its best expression, reflect the nature of the Trinity, a life shared and defined by reference to others. (The Way Ahead, 2001, paragraph 3:26)

Church schools are places where faith is lived and which therefore offer opportunities to pupils and their families to explore the truths of the Christian faith, to develop spiritually and morally and to have a basis for choice about the Christian faith. (The Way Ahead, 2001, paragraph 3:12)

The pressure is always there for education to be solely driven by economic and utilitarian pressures, but the unapologetic pressure of Church schools can be an appropriate counterpoise. Their focus on spiritual and moral flourishing builds social and emotional capital, contributing to community and individual well-being (Chadwick, 2012). The ethos may be set by the head teacher but needs to be 'owned' by all the staff if it is to have an impact on the school's distinctiveness. The literature on ethos critiqued in this section contributed to the development of my theoretical understanding. Ethos, I believe, describes the lived reality in the classroom, seen through the shared values, beliefs and practices. This visual and spoken evidence will be evident through the school's policies. For there to be an 'overtly Christian ethos' there would need to be visual and spoken evidence of Christian distinctiveness underpinning everything that occurs in the school.

3.5. Values

The research critiqued in the section on ethos has highlighted the importance of values, firmly held beliefs, and how they influence the decisions of the head teacher and their approach to leadership. The values give the school its identity and are a vital part of the ethos. These school values form the mission statement, which informs every aspect of school life.

In this work I have decided to focus on 'values' rather than 'virtues' although the terms are often synonymous. I have defined values as lasting beliefs which affect a person's judgement of what is important in life. A virtue, however, I believe, is a behaviour or character trait which shows a high moral standard evidenced through moral excellence, goodness and righteousness. This research investigated head teachers' personal and professional values and how these affected their behaviour at work and ultimately the development of their school's ethos. It was not appropriate to use the term virtues because the purpose of this study was not to focus solely on the head teachers' behaviour.

Social psychologists define values as moral concepts and specific attitudes as peripheral. A person's value orientations are important in guiding behaviour (they do not describe the actual behaviour) and enabling the person to solve problems. Attitudes and dispositions reflect a person's inner values (Thomas, 2000). Thomas, referring to the work of Dewey (1933), Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1976) suggests that a person's values change and

develop through a sequence from childhood to adulthood. The changes are a result of a combination of maturity and learning.

‘A value is an eternal truth about human nature that an individual believes is important and right. We live up to a value because we believe it is right to do so’ (O’Brian, 2009, p.30). O’Brian believes that a value by its very definition can only be embraced voluntarily, so the values of an organisation must be internalised by everyone in it. The values must then be allowed to influence the ethos and all the policies and procedures within the organisation. The 1998 Green Paper (DfES, p.9) declares that ‘pupils will need education for a world of rapid change in which both flexible attitudes and enduring values will have a part to play’. The role of the head teacher is to decide which values are the most important and how these can be incorporated and developed throughout the life of the school.

Best (2000) defines values as qualities that are in themselves worthy of esteem and that, by virtue of this, generate principles (rules), that guide in thoughts and actions, and standards (ideals) against which things can be judged. Best describes different types of values: intellectual, moral, aesthetic and social. He cautions against confusing values with virtues and defines virtues as ‘endearing character traits, possession of which helps us to live up to our values’ (p.21). A person’s values matter to them as they are aspirations that form goals and standards to work towards and by which a person can judge their effectiveness. ‘To value some quality truly, rather than simply to pay lip service to it, is to believe that others too should value that quality because it is in itself valuable’ (Best, 2000, p.15). A person’s values are important to them as they define who they are.

Values are principles and fundamental convictions which act as justifications for activity in the public domain and as general guides to private behaviour; they are enduring beliefs about what is worthwhile, ideals for which people strive and broad standards by which particular practices are judged to be good, right, desirable or worthy of respect. (Halstead and Pike, 2006, p.24)

3.5.1. Shared values

The 1995 revision of the Ofsted Framework for Inspection defines the importance of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development for all pupils, by requiring inspectors to focus on the extent to which a school is providing pupils with ‘knowledge and insight into values and beliefs’, and providing them with opportunities ‘to reflect on their experiences in a way which develops their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge’. Following this publication there was a fundamental shift in the aims of education. The traditionalist concern for the transmission of knowledge was replaced by the progressive commitment to the development of the whole

child's well-being (Wright 1998). There was concern that there was no clear guidance as to what constituted the moral and spiritual norms with which to nurture pupils. This led to the School Curriculum Assessment Authority (SCAA) conference in 1996, 'Education for Adult Life', which established the National Forum for Values in Education and the Community. Their remit had been to discover if there were agreed values within society, regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, gender or social class, which were thought to be important for pupils' spiritual and moral development, and to suggest how these could be taught in schools. The forum came up with four values, outlined in the 1999 National Curriculum Handbook for Primary and Secondary Teachers. The Self: which gives value to a person as a unique human. Relationships: which give value to others. Society: which gives value to the family as the basis of society. Lastly, the environment: which gives value to the world as a basis of awe and wonder.

There were critics who opposed these values. Thatcher (1999) writing from a Christian viewpoint, argues that they were only superficially Christian, as they were not grounded in a Christian world view. Beck (1999), however, writing from an opposing position, saw them as an attempt at Christian indoctrination, as they were rooted in traditional Christian nurture. Best's (2000) view is that the four values all have value, but how they are interpreted and delivered will depend upon the teachers and head teacher of the school. The shared values had been an attempt to come to an agreement across the whole of pluralistic society, without prejudice, but they were not expected to stand alone, but rather to be assimilated into the traditions of the school's foundation through the ethos statement. For the values to be of educational worth, and not just rhetoric, and to prevent sectarianism, the values would need to be attuned to the wider community, and be welcoming to all diversity of faith and culture.

Research by Lovat (2009) on the impact of a value-based approach to teaching and learning in Australia concluded that

The more attention a school gives to explicitly teaching a set of agreed values, the more students accept and apply themselves to their school work duties, the more coherent and conducive a place the school becomes. (2009, p.85)

Lovat found that value-based education contributed powerfully to the development of high quality pedagogy. In England, the DfE published teachers' standards (2012) which state that fundamental British values should include democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The Australian government was prescriptive in its requirement for all schools to follow the value-based approach, but the British government left it to the head teachers to decide how to interpret

the teachers' standards and to decide upon their own shared, school values. This places a huge responsibility on the head teacher.

3.5.2. Christian values

The Prime Minister, David Cameron (2011) called for a revival of Christian values following an increase in the incidences of terrorism and religious and racial tensions In Britain and around the world.

We are a Christian country and we should not be afraid to say so. Let me be clear: I am not in any way saying that to have another faith or no faith is somehow wrong. I am incredibly proud that Britain is home to many different faith communities, who do so much to make our country stronger. What I am saying is that the Bible has helped to give Britain a set of values and morals which make Britain what it is today.

Cameron listed the Christian values in society as 'responsibility, hard work, charity, compassion, humility, self-sacrifice, love, pride in working for the common good and honouring the social obligations we have to one another, to our families and to the community.' These values all appear in the Bible, but they are not exclusively Christian values. They are all moral values and would be acceptable by all sections of British society as being desirable values to teach children of all cultural backgrounds. To be distinctively Christian, the values would need to be rooted in the life and work of Jesus Christ, and could then be termed 'gospel values'. At a time of educational change and challenge, the need to be unambiguous and explicit about the key characteristics of C of E schools is a priority (Chadwick, 2012).

A Christian education is one offered either within a school community with a Christian foundation, or one that is guided and shaped by distinct Christian principles and outcomes. A school that is linked to a Christian community, as C of E schools are, may not always convey Christian principles and values. My conceptual framework aligns with Gardner's (2000) understanding of the relationship between ethos and values in a C of E school. The ethos of the school is dependent upon the values enshrined and articulated in the school and the purposes of the education provided. The values are an expression and outworking of firmly held beliefs (Woodcock and Francis 1989). The ethos develops by the way in which the head teacher interprets their values and vision. There may be the assumption that the school will be Christian simply by association, but if the school does not exhibit overtly Christian values, it may not be possible to detect a Christian ethos. The ethos of the school should reflect its values. 'The life of the school is developed around an explicit commitment to Christian values and ethos' (Chadwick, 2012, p.16). The C of E Values website

www.christianvalues4schools.com) helps to promote fifteen Christian values, with materials to support their inclusion within the curriculum and ethos. The values are: reverence, wisdom, thankfulness, humility, endurance, service, compassion, trust, peace, forgiveness, friendship, justice, hope, creation and *koinonia*. They are frequently called 'gospel values' and the website helpfully includes a theological exegesis of each value. These values can be used as the base upon which to develop the Christian distinctiveness required of all C of E schools by the National Society through the SIAMS inspections.

Cooling (2011) firmly believes that within a Church school the values that underpin the ethos should be Christian values. In his inaugural lecture as Director of the National Institute for Christian Research at Canterbury Christ Church University in June 2011, entitled 'Is God redundant in the classroom?' Cooling sought to show that people's beliefs are integral to everything they know. He challenged Hirst's (1971) view that Christian education is 'a contradiction in terms' and that only rational, secular thinking, which is free of subjectivity, should shape our sophisticated education. Cooling argued that to be human implies that we are influenced by our beliefs which shape how we interpret and understand what we learn. 'The concept of Christian education is no more a kind of nonsense than is the concept of secular education, I am sure that God will be therefore pleased to know that his redundancy notice for the classroom can be withdrawn' (Cooling, 2011, p.7).

Cooling (2011) also defined education that is distinctively Christian, as a form of education that is seeking to be faithful to Christian teaching and values and looks to the Christian tradition for its inspiration. Cooling added that it should not just be an optional add-on to education, a looking for opportunities in the school day to mention Christian values or talk about Jesus in assembly, but should be more encompassing. He declared that 'the task is to grow a version of Christianity which is responsive to the requirements of education in twenty-first century Britain, which is shaped by and under the authority of Christian thinking'. Cooling concluded his inaugural lecture in 2011 by reaffirming that 'Trusting in the Christian God makes a difference to what we believe is the purpose of human life. It shapes our anthropology ... which makes a huge difference to how we approach teaching and learning' (p.11). This view aligns with that of Bazalgette (2006) and his research conclusions that it was the faith of the head teachers that gave them the strength and purpose to work with their staff to improve their schools.

Jelfs' (2010) study of C of E primary schools concluded that schools do not always have a clear understanding of how their Christian values relate to the core pedagogical practices of teaching and learning and the curriculum. These conclusions were the result of her comprehensive review of 11,000 scholarly articles on Christian education. She expressed

her concern that only 500 of the articles focussed on teaching and learning, which she believed should be the core aim of education. In her PhD (2008) she writes that 'the Christian character of C of E schools is thus compromised by an unwitting compliance with values and principles that may compromise those they seek to promote' (p.2). She proposes a move away from an 'older belief-centred paradigm of Christian faith that emphasised authority, moralism and belief in central doctrines' (p.65) towards 'understanding the Christian faith as a way of seeing, knowing and doing which offers a theological perspective to the task of distinctive Christian education' (p.80). This aligns with the views of Cooling. Jelfs' research suggests that heads in C of E schools are not clear on a coherent Christian rationale for education or the values they feel are important.

Deakin-Crick (2002) carried out her research in a Bristol C of E secondary school (UK) over a two year period, to investigate the impact of a Christian value-based education. At the outset she believed that all values were rooted into belief systems and that education had to take diversity into account. The school focused on nine values and each of the values formed the pedagogy of a curriculum topic. During the delivery of the topic, one group of pupils had lessons with the value-based approach, while another group were taught as before the intervention. Deakin-Crick found that the pupils exposed to the value-based approach were more engaged in learning, took a greater part in discussions and were more able to think critically. The teachers who took part saw the value of supporting their pupils' spiritual wellbeing.

Jelfs also carried out research in the same Bristol school. Previously, Deakin-Crick had worked through the teaching staff, but Jelfs worked directly with the pupils, by encouraging them to reflect on an artefact or place which had significance for them. Jelfs found that this had an impact upon pupils' spiritual development and was directly related to the quality of the pupils' teaching experience. This illustrates the connection between learning power (helping pupils become better, reflective learners) and values. The studies by Jelfs and Deakin-Crick highlight the positive impact of schools making their shared values explicit through their pedagogical practices and the importance of both staff and pupils working together. The research appears to be very positive, but there is no evidence that this value-based approach is becoming more widespread in schools.

3.5.3. Core or universal values

Cooling (2011), referring to the work of Deakin-Crick, questions whether there are perhaps some core values which are common to all humanity. The results in the Bristol school, after the intervention, suggested that Christian values were relevant and beneficial to everyone in the school community. Deakin-Crick and Jelfs' later research at the same Bristol school

indicated a shift away from an explicit pedagogy of Christian values, to a more implicit approach, with all pupils on a learning journey underpinned by values. The school appeared to have the same links with the church, but the change from explicit values did not have the same impact. Cooling suggests that a reason for this could be that they found 'a focus on doctrinal content that was alien to the spiritual aspect of the learning process and did not cater for the diversity of student backgrounds and personal commitments in schools' (2011, p6).

The impact of any value pedagogy is affected by the strong leadership, a systematic whole school programme for value-based education, universal values vocabulary amongst the whole community, teachers modelling the values in their own lives and an emphasis on pupils being given time to reflect. Further research by Green (2009) and Cooling (2013) highlights how even some 'Christian-ethos' schools were unable to explain what constituted a Christian distinctiveness, or explain whether their values were shared, universal or Christian.

In my conceptual framework I define values as important and lasting beliefs which have an influence on a person's behaviour and attitudes and provide a guide to action. Christian/gospel values are values that are theologically underpinned by the teachings of Jesus as laid down in the Bible. Shared and PSHE values have a moral underpinning. My work is based on the assumption that it is the head teacher as the leader of the school who will decide upon the values that they believe will best support the pupils' educational experience. These values then need to be agreed by all the stakeholders in a school. If the values are agreed through discussion with the staff and pupils, each school may develop its own specific values; these values could be called core or universal values. Parents who choose to send their children to a C of E school are making a choice that their education will have some specific 'distinctiveness', and that this distinctiveness will be reflected through the school's values. It is often the parents who make the choice of school for their child to attend, but the child has the right to understand what attending a C of E school means to them.

3.6. Human rights

Cameron (2011), referring to what he termed the 'passive tolerance' of recent years, called for a 'more active, muscular liberalism' approach. He believes that Britain is a society which actively promotes values such as freedom of speech, freedom of worship, democracy, the rule of law, and equal rights, regardless of race, sex or sexuality. The new 'Teachers' Standards', (DfE, 2012) set the required standard for the conduct of teachers throughout their teaching career, which should be adhered to.

Teachers are expected to uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by: not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; and ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead to break the law. (DfE, 2012)

For head teachers who are unclear about the values they personally feel are important to their school, these British values provide a moral base for consideration.

3.6.1. Children's rights

Children's rights were outlined in the 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child', adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1989, which under international law required all countries to adopt these rights. They include the right of the child to have provision for their basic social and economic needs, including health care, economic welfare and education. Article fourteen states the right of the child to be protected against harmful practices: abuse, neglect and sexual exploitation and participation rights which provide a child with a voice on matters that affect them including freedom of expression, freedom of thought and religion. Article three states that the interpretation and application of the rights should be guided by the principles of the child's best interests, age-appropriate and non-discriminatory. According to the Convention the responsibility is on the state, parents and authorities to respect the rights of the child. Under article five, parents (or the child's guardian) have the obligation to provide appropriate direction and guidance to their children, and article eighteen goes even further by stating that the best interests of the child should be their basic concern. Teaching children about their own rights helps them to understand about their responsibilities and how to be good citizens both in school and out in the community. It teaches about the attitudes and values of living as good citizens in a democratic society, and it helps to empower children to be able to promote the rights of others. (Covell, Howe and McNeil, 2010; Tibbits, 1997).

The UK Human Rights Act of 1998 has the requirement that 'the state shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical connection' (UK Parliament 1998, Schedule 1, Part 2, Article 2). Responding to the 2009 Labour government's proposal in the 'Badman's Review of Elective Home Education' (clause 26 of the Children's Schools and Families Bill) to shift the primary responsibility for educating children from parents to the state, Professor Almond cautioned against allowing the government to direct what is taught to children through moral education, which could result in indoctrination. The proposal failed and parents continue to have the

choice of school for their children and how they are educated, choosing the school which best matches their own values (Almond, 2010). Religious schools exist because parents can exercise their right to choose an ideology they wish to have imparted to their children. The case study confirmed that for some parents it is the perception that religious schools provide a moral education that is the important factor that they want for their child and the religious foundation of the school is the secondary factor.

It could be questioned whether prescribing the development of 'character education' infringes the rights of the child. However, 'Every teacher indoctrinates to some extent, as children do not always understand the reasons why they should believe and act in certain ways even while teachers insist that they should do so' (Arthur 2003, p.37). Some head teachers may feel that within a pluralistic society they should not stand by their own set of subjective values. The best character education takes place when the pupils trust the teacher and appreciate that the teacher is doing the best for them. Parents who have made a conscious decision to send their children to a C of E school have accepted that their child will be educated within a Christian distinctiveness. The school needs to deliver this in the way described by Cooling (2011) that plans and delivers a version of Christianity which is responsive to the requirements of education in the twenty-first century.

3.6.2. Rational morality

Hick's theology asserts the rationality of religious belief as grounded in experience, but believes that the world, as experienced today, is religiously ambiguous and can be interpreted by rational humans in both a naturalistic and religious way.

The views of ethics as grounded in the structure of human nature is capable of being incorporated into either a religious or a naturalistic world view... It is the aspect of our nature which generates the invisible dimension of moral value. (Hick, 1989, p.98)

Moral values can be religiously triggered but can equally have a non-religious interpretation. A translation of the Golden Rule found in the Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, Taoist, Zoroastrian, Jain and Christian scriptures, and in the Jewish Talmud and Muslim Hadith, as well as Kant's concept of a rational person, could be:

Since morality is thus generated by the inter-personal nature of personality, its basic principle is mutuality or acceptance of the other as another person, someone else of the same nature as oneself. The fundamental moral claim is accordingly to treat others as having the same value as myself. (Hick, 1989, p.149)

I accept that all traditions teach of the importance of generous love, compassion and care for others, so the welfare of others is central to society and should be in all schools. Multicultural Britain is home to people from many traditions, and it is vital that schools do their best to understand and support all their pupils. This aligns with the aims of C of E schools, which were founded on the importance of education for all, regardless of religion. If they fail to be fully inclusive, they will be open to criticism by opponents of faith schools because they will not be showing tolerance of those of other faiths or mutual respect. (As demanded by DfE standards, 2012.)

Hick's view is that within our nature, we respond differently to the personal, the physical environment, and to the transcendent. We all need opportunities to appreciate the aesthetic dimensions through enjoying colour, shape, tastes, sensations and movements. This aligns with Nye (2009) and McCreery's (1996) work on children's spirituality, in which they contended that spirituality runs through all our everyday experiences and will develop through providing children with the opportunity to investigate their world. Spiritual experiences can be individual or communal and can occur at different levels of intensity. Schools have an obligation to be clear about the main purpose of education that they provide for all their pupils. These need to be shared with pupils, parents and staff, 'so head teachers and governors need to elucidate their own beliefs about what persons should become' (Ungoed-Thomas, 1996, p.134).

The British Humanist Association has campaigned, over the years, against all faith schools, and not exclusively C of E schools. Norman, a member of the British Humanist Society, and active campaigner against faith schools, wrote in his book *On Humanism* (2004) that he believes that shared human values are entirely independent of religious beliefs. From his humanist viewpoint, these shared values are connected to human rights, with no religious association, and are part of rational morality. His view is that Christian beliefs have no place in today's education, as education is for everyone and therefore it is not beneficial to be divisive over religious issues. His views align with Hirst, who challenged church schools as 'illegitimate', calling Christian education a 'contradiction in terms' and 'a kind of nonsense' (1971 ,pp. 43-54), and arguing that there is nothing distinctive that theological reflection could bring to the educational table (1974). Hirst believed that education should have objectivity and reason, with no particular beliefs and values (1994).

Hirst made a stand against traditional values, which were based on religion and promoted the view that education should be based on what is true and not on uncertain opinions and beliefs. He believed that by teaching critical spiritual education, pupils would have the skills to make their own choices. Education policy documents between 1977 and 1988 reflected

Hirst's views, but the 1988 Education Act focused on the acquisition of knowledge, and although RE and spirituality were not part of the nine National Curriculum subjects, they remained an integral part of the aims of education. The critical edge promised by Hirst's proposal was replaced with the nurturing of pupils within an inclusive, non-controversial agenda (Wright, 2000).

In a debate at the Royal Society of Arts (2011), Copson, Chief Executive of the Humanist Association, reiterated Hirst's views that Christian beliefs are a 'gloss' and that Christianity offers nothing distinctive. The British Humanist Association (BHA) holds that, as education has to be inclusive, this implies that the pedagogy cannot be described as distinctively Christian because it does not generate uniquely Christian classroom outcomes. However, the present government does not agree with the British Humanist Association and has in fact promoted the opening of new faith schools. Christian schools have continued to be popular with parents who value an education that has a moral focus and one where pupils receive a good education. For the school to be distinctively Christian it needs a caring Christian ethos to underpin the educational experience for the pupils. I believe for the ethos to be effective it needs to be underpinned by Christian values. It may be difficult for a head teacher who does not have a personal Christian faith to implement this. The challenge for head teachers in C of E schools, especially if they themselves do not have a faith, is how they should structure their school's curriculum and approach to teaching and learning so that it is distinctively Christian.

3.7. Conclusion

The head teacher remains the figure-head of the school and with it is the responsibility of leading the staff and the pupils. This chapter has critically considered literature relating to leadership, spirituality, ethos and values. For a head teacher leading a C of E school I believe that the values they embed should support the view expressed below by Smith.

Our role as Christians in education is surely not to unthinkingly implement a blueprint but to seek creatively and responsibly to create something which honours God and reflects something of God. This is part of our calling as human beings, and derivatively as educators, which is not to function as automato, but to imagine God in our works in the world'. (Smith, 1995, p.15)

A number of research projects have been discussed in this chapter, some undertaken in secondary schools and others in Catholic schools. My case study will focus on C of E primary schools, specifically Voluntary Controlled schools, where there has been no expectation that the head teacher will be either a practicing member of the C of E, or a

practicing Christian. The next chapter describes the research approach taken to investigate how the head teachers have used their personal values to develop their school's ethos. My research looks at the development of the ethos and how it was described by the head teacher and other members of staff and the impact they felt that the school's ethos had upon the pupils. This research will provide new insights into the development of a school ethos and encourage heads to reflectively consider how their personal values impact upon their school.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1. The research paradigm

4.2. The choice of the sample for research

4.3. Case study

4.4. How the case study was chosen

4.5. Interviews

4.5.1. Semi -structured interview schedule

4.6. Additional methods used in the research

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4.7.1. An example of how the data collection method and the analysis led to one of the findings

4.8. Validity, reliability and generalisability.

4.9. Ethical considerations

4.10. Acknowledged limitations of the research method and conclusion

This chapter explains the methodological approach which has been taken to answer the research question, 'To what extent does the head teacher's value system influence the ethos of the C of E voluntary controlled primary school', and the methods used in this piece of qualitative research. The chapter makes reference to my conceptual framework outlined in chapter one and discusses the choice of case study as the approach. It considers the advantages and disadvantages of the choice, and how the schools in the case were selected.

When constructing my conceptual framework I found the work of Ravitch and Riggan (2012) useful. They define the conceptual framework as a 'guide and ballast' and as an argument about the worth of the research question, the discussion and the significance of the findings. As a way of describing how the integration of the researcher's ideas has led to the chosen approach to the research question and the choice of methodology. They believe that 'the

development of a well-articulated conceptual framework supports your development as a researcher and scholar. It drives you to articulate your reasons for doing the research you choose to do, and helps you to understand what it means to do the work rigorously' (2012, p.159). The research methods used for collecting data were in-depth interviewing, an environmental observation and scrutiny of documents from each school's Ofsted and SIAMS inspections. The documents were used to support or contrast with the data gathered through the interviews. The chapter also considers the methods of data analysis and highlights the importance of ethical considerations throughout the process.

4.1. The research paradigm

Kuhn (1962) undertook ground-breaking work on approaches to research methodology and paradigms. He defines a paradigm as a way of looking at or researching phenomena, and a set of principles and a way of pursuing knowledge. Positivist and interpretive paradigms are ways of understanding phenomena through two different lenses. Cohen, Manion and Morrison explain that while 'Positivism strives for objectivity, measurability, predictability, controllability, patterning, the construction of laws and rules of behaviour, and the ascription of causality; interpretive paradigms strive to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.31).

Positivism's concern for control implies that it is a less appropriate paradigm for researching 'more open ended, creative, humanitarian aspects of social behaviour' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.15). The positivist approach was unsuitable for my research which focused on values, informed opinions and beliefs, and so instead I chose an interpretive approach. The positivist attempts to explain behaviours through external environmental stimuli or internal stimuli, whereas in contrast, the interpretivist approaches from the action of an individual as they relate to others in shared experiences.

I have taken an interpretivist model because my research looks for meaningful relationships and their consequences for action, and the values that are embodied in organisational action. This model is often associated with research that is looking for insights and perceptions in the context of a social setting, and recognises that subjective meaning plays a crucial role in social actions, and accepts the personal involvement of the researcher. By using the interpretive model, concepts and theories about social events can be developed on the basis of their observable effects, and interpreted in such a way that they can be understood and acted upon. The interpretation may be open to revision as understanding grows (Walliman, 2006).

4.2. The choice of the sample for research

To choose a method of sampling I needed to consider the purpose of the research, the research design, time restraints and any other constraining factors. The sample chosen had to be meaningful and appropriate to the research question. As a qualitative researcher I chose purposive sampling which allowed a sample to be chosen that was relevant to the research question and has certain research goals in mind. The schools in the case study were selected because they were relevant to the social situation being studied. The size of the sample of schools that made up the case was informed by 'fitness for purpose'. The purpose of the chosen sample was not to make generalisations but to present a unique case which had its own intrinsic value. It was large enough to generate thick description (Geertz, 1973) but not too large to provide data overload.

I selected a small group of six C of E VC primary schools to form the case study, chosen because they matched my selection criteria (detailed in 4.4).

4.3. Case study

There are many definitions of 'case study' proposed by writers on research methods. Stake (1995) calls it a study of a 'particular', while Cresswell (1994, p.12) defines case study as 'a single instance of a bounded system'. I find this definition too restricting and prefer Yin's definition 'the study of a case in context, which includes rich description' (2009, p.18). Cohen et al. (2011) advocate the use of case study when researching real people in real situations, which is the aim of this study. They write that one of the strengths of case study is that it can be used to establish cause and effect, by observing the effects in real contexts. Geertz (1973) has a similar view and writes that case study is valuable for portraying how things are, by looking close-up at the reality and producing a 'thick' description. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) acknowledge that the case study may be set in an institutional setting, as in my research, which sets the boundaries, or by the characteristics of the individuals involved and can be defined by participants' roles and functions. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) also describe other factors of a case study that are relevant to my work: their views align with Yin and Geertz that case study provides rich (or thick) description, and added that it can focus on individuals within the setting to seek to understand their perceptions of the situation. In this work I will be asking head teachers and other members of staff how they perceive the ethos in their school.

As the researcher, I am integrally involved in the case study as it is linked to my personal interest and experience. One of the advantages of case study is that by attending carefully to the social situation being studied, I was able to detect discrepancies or conflicts between the

viewpoints of the participants, and the insights gained could be directly interpreted and put to use. Nisbet and Watt (1984) agree with these advantages but also add that case study is immediately intelligible and speaks for itself, that it is strong in reality and can build on unanticipated events and variables and is suitable to be undertaken by a single researcher. I needed to be aware of the possible weaknesses of case study as a method of research highlighted by Nisbet and Watt (1984). The results are not generalisable except where other researchers see their application. The researcher may be selective, biased and subjective and the results cannot easily be checked for accuracy and there can be a problem of observer bias. Taking an interpretivist paradigm my work will not be generalizable. I acknowledge my personal stance but throughout this work I sought to ensure that all arguments and conclusions could be supported by the data.

Case study is open to the researcher's analytical interpretation but it has the advantage of being able to 'close in on real life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice' (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p.309). I was involved in the process as a participant and needed to try to limit my observer subjectivity by being aware of its influence. Throughout our lives we use a process of constructing and interpreting our experiences and I brought my life experiences to this case study. I have defined the case in this piece of research as a community comprising of six C of E Voluntary Controlled (VC) primary schools, in rural Essex. Visiting the schools I was entering a familiar environment, having worked as a head teacher in a C of E VC primary school, but I was unfamiliar with any of the individual settings. Flyvbjerg discusses the value of the professional experience held by the researcher into the area of the research, which enabled them to use their expertise to support their understanding. 'Context-dependent knowledge and experience are at the very heart of expert activity; ... it is only because of experience with case studies that one can at all move from being a beginner to being an expert' (cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p.303).

4.4. How the case study was chosen

Through careful consideration of the time scale for this piece of research and the quantity of data that would be generated from each school for analysis, I decided to have six schools in my case study. Purposive sampling led to my decision to choose schools that had a number of similarities to reduce variables that could influence the head teacher's role in their school. They were all:

- Schools with a similar demographic to the church school where I was head teacher, this enabled me to have a greater empathy with the head teacher and an understanding of the specific demands of leading a small, rural school.

- Schools with head teachers that I did not know personally and with whom I had not worked professionally.
- Voluntary Controlled C of E primary schools. The differences between Voluntary Aided (VA) and VC was explained in chapter two but the important differences for this study are that head teachers in a VC school are not required to have a Christian faith or to be practicing Anglican or members of another Christian church. The requirement is that they are in sympathy with the school's Anglican foundation. The other difference, which is important for the recruitment process of the head teacher, is that while in a VA school the foundation governors (those appointed by the local church and the diocese) are in the majority, in the VC school they are in the minority. They therefore have less votes or influence over the appointment of staff.
- All rural schools and an integral part of the small local community.
- Small schools where the head teacher has the greatest influence. With the small number of teaching staff there may be no deputy head or few if any other staff taking a leadership role in the school.
- The head teacher has been in post for at least three years, giving them time to make changes to policies and practice resulting in a changed ethos.
- The schools were within a twenty-five mile radius of my home, for ease of access.

I initially approached the Diocesan Education Officer for a list of schools that matched my chosen criteria. Within the Chelmsford diocese (in 2014) there were one hundred and forty-two C of E schools: fifty-six voluntary aided schools, seventy voluntary controlled schools, six foundation schools, seven academies, two affiliated schools and one free school. I wrote to the head teachers in six voluntary controlled primary schools that matched my criteria, explaining the purpose of the research and asking permission to visit them. I followed up the letter with a personal email and then a phone call, which enabled me to talk to the school office, but in all cases I had to leave a message for the head teacher. From the initial six approaches two schools agreed to take part in the case study, one responded negatively and the other three did not respond despite two further emails to the heads. I then contacted a further six schools, which led to three further schools agreeing and the final school was selected after sending out twelve further requests to schools.

The purposive sample was then further refined by the head teachers who responded to my requests and allowed me access and time in their school, with them and their staff. The six schools had similarities which enabled them to form a holistic 'case'. I have constructed a sample which is meaningful theoretically, because it builds in certain criteria which have helped to answer my research question. If the sample is theoretical it is designed to provide

a detailed or meticulous view of each school which may be relevant to, or appear within, the wider educational arena. I acknowledge that the sample selection was restricted by needing agreement from the schools that I approached. However, as this research takes an interpretivist approach I was not looking for a sample that would model or represent reality, but to explore the phenomena relating to the influence of the head teacher. I know that it is important for the researcher to be able to give a justified reason for the choice of the case study and that the value of the case will depend on the researcher's validity claims.

4.5. Interviews

Statistical methods such as the use of data bases or questionnaire surveys which use standard questions are useful in generating new hypotheses, but in isolation they cannot back up hypotheses and there is no way of knowing what variables have been omitted. Face to face interviews using open-ended questions allow the researcher to identify the variables (George & Bennett, 2005). Interviews are used widely in qualitative research because of their flexibility. The interviewing, the transcribing of the interviews and the analysis of the transcripts are very time-consuming but produce rich data: data that can describe in detail, with in-depth description and objective interpretation, what is seen and heard. Data must be fully analysed and acknowledged even if it does not fit into emergent themes.

Through the process of critiquing the literature in chapter three, areas of questioning have emerged. I decided on a set of questions that would stimulate discussion and help to answer my research question. As a qualitative researcher my decision was to employ semi-structured interviews which were more flexible than structured interviews and allowed for more depth to be achieved and for probing and expanding of responses. I had a pre-prepared schedule of questions, most of which I asked, but the order was flexible and other questions added to follow up on answers being given. I allowed the interviewees to go off at a tangent and to talk about aspects that they believed were important. Responding to the direction that the interviewee may take can result in the researcher adjusting the emphasis of the research (Bryman, 2008). I was looking for rich, detailed answers.

It was clear to me that the semi-structured interview would provide the focus that I needed. I had a clear area of interest to research and planned the schedule to lead the interviewees into responses that focused on the head teacher's values and how the ethos in the schools had developed. I chose interviews rather than self-completion questionnaires, even though questionnaires would have been quicker to administer, as they could have been distributed via email or post. It would, however, have been difficult to know how many questionnaires would have been completed and how long recipients would have taken to respond. The questionnaires would have needed set questions and for ease of answering most would

have needed to be closed questions. Gauging the number of questions can be difficult, as too many could result in fewer questionnaires being completed and too few questions could jeopardise the effectiveness of the research. The person completing the questionnaire may not understand the questions and answers may be brief and contain insubstantial data. The questionnaire benefits from the removal of the interviewer effect, factors such as gender, ethnicity and bias both for the interviewer and the interviewee.

By selecting to use interviews I was able to add explanation to the questions, reword them for clarity, or to probe further, and ask additional questions to follow up issues raised. This intimate knowledge of the subject being studied allows the researcher to pick up on nuances in conversation and in the behaviour of those being interviewed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Denzin (1970) notes a number of problems which he believes can 'distort' interviewees' responses, and which I needed to consider. Purposive sampling, however, had enabled me to select schools where my intimate knowledge allowed me to empathise and to understand the interviewees' positions. I had an understanding of educational 'jargon', appreciated the roles carried out in the school by the different interviewees and had a working understanding of the policies and practices which were referred to. I knew the importance of presenting myself in a friendly and professional manner and of being well prepared but also flexible so as to avoid disturbing the smooth running of the school. I acknowledge that the brevity of my time in each school could have resulted in me establishing 'volatile', 'fleeting' relationships, where the respondent may fabricate stories, rather than keeping to the facts, as they have no commitment to the research process. I hoped that because the head teachers had agreed to set aside the time to engage in my research and that they had been well-briefed on the purpose and content of the research, they would be honest in their answers to my questions. The teaching staff and support staff interviewed had been selected by the head in each school but all seemed willing to engage and appeared to talk from experience. Each school was very considerate and provided me with a quiet and private space for the interviews to take place. I made every effort to enable the interviewees to feel relaxed in the interviews. When I did encounter any difficulty in penetrating the private experiences of the interviewees, I used my experience to re-phrase questions and to encourage the interviewees to tell me in their own words about themselves and their experience in school.

My personal and professional understanding played an influential part throughout, beginning with my selection of interview questions and areas to discuss. Throughout the interview process I aimed to listen, to question, but at no time to influence the interviewees' answers or to make any judgements. As an interpretivist researcher my aim was to record everything spoken in the interviews so that through analysis this data would help to answer the

research question. The interviews were digitally recorded, with participant's consent, so they could be transcribed in full.

4.5.1. Semi-structured interview schedule

Questions for the head teacher:

- Had you worked in a C of E school prior to taking up this post?
- Have your personal values and beliefs shaped you as a person?
- How do your values impact upon your professional life?
- Do you behave differently and think differently in school than you do out of school?
- Do you feel that you have ever been conscious of and perhaps influenced by some power, whether you call it God or not, which may either appear to be beyond your individual self or partly or even entirely within your being?
- What values do you think you pass on in school?
- What do you believe by the term Christian distinctiveness, as applied to the educational experience of the pupils in your school?
- What changes did you make to establish your ethos and the distinctiveness you have introduced/embedded in the school?
- How do you think this distinctiveness impacts on the educational experience you provide for your pupils?

Questions for the teaching and support staff:

- Can you describe the ethos of the school? Has the present head changed/enhanced/embedded this ethos? Can you give some examples?
- Do you feel that the ethos is a reflection of the head teacher's value system?
- What values are taught to the pupils?
- As this is a C of E school do you think that it has Christian distinctiveness? How would a visitor to the school see this distinctiveness in the everyday life of the school?

4.6. Additional methods used in the research

4.6.1 Environmental observation

When using a case study it is important to have a rich description of the setting and using an environmental observation, or climate walk, in each school enabled me to see evidence of the ethos which had been described by the interviewees. Most observational research is concerned with observing behaviour but in this research this was only one of the intentions. Whilst observing a school environment during a working school day it was relevant to note how the pupils responded to each other, the staff and to the researcher as a visitor, as well as their interaction with their environment. I was looking for evidence of the school's ethos: the importance placed on the celebration of pupils' successes, the range of activities provided for pupils both as part of the curriculum and through the provision of extra-curricular

activities and the evidence of the values in displays. I also looked for evidence of the Christian foundation of the school: prayers both published and written by the children, pictures drawn by the children to illustrate the school values and how they were demonstrated through text and illustrations. The presence of Christian icons and colourful Christian posters were also evident in some of the schools. I believed that the artefacts and symbols around the school would provide indicators to the way the head teachers had interpreted their ethos. How the head teachers had developed their outside areas also provided evidence of their values for the school. I used a basic observational schedule to focus my attention and to ensure consistency across the six settings.

Observation schedule:

- Ethos/Mission statement
- School values
- Discernible school ethos
- Christian symbols/artefacts/displays
- Artefacts/displays from other religions
- PSHE displays
- Rewards and celebrations
- Evidence of collective worship
- Pupils' attitudes to each other and visitors
- Adults' relationships to children and other adults
- Use of outside areas

Spradley explains how 'the complexity of social life requires that the ordinary participant excludes much from conscious awareness', while 'the participant observer, in contrast, seeks to become explicitly aware of things usually blocked out to avoid overload' (1980, p.55). Participant observation requires the researcher to have an increased awareness and raised levels of attention, to take notice of as wide a spectrum of information as possible. Spradley (1980) described a continuum of involvement experienced by the participant observer. At one extreme there is the 'passive' participant who is present in a situation being observed but does not interact or participate in the activity being observed. Then there is the 'moderate' participant, who has to balance being an insider and outsider observer. The 'active' participant is fully involved in the activity being observed, to appreciate and learn the rules of behaviour; and a 'complete' participant is one who is observing their familiar setting, where they know the members of the setting and the rules of behaviour within it. My research placed me, on the continuum, most closely to that of a moderate participant observer, being familiar with the workings of a small rural VC church school, both as an insider and an outsider, as I was not familiar with each specific school. In this dual role I was

aware of things that others take for granted. I recorded what I saw and experienced and engaged in introspection to fully understand the situation.

4.6.2. Document analysis

Bryman (2008, pp.526-527) cites Atkinson and Coffey (2004) who acknowledge the value of document analysis, but cautions that the researcher must always remember for whom the document was produced. I have used the latest Ofsted Inspection Reports and the latest School Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Inspection Reports for each school, which were written to provide evidence to support inspectors' grading. Atkinson and Coffey note that documents have ontological status by providing a documentary reality to the social setting, but caution, 'we cannot learn through written records alone how an organisation actually operates day by day. Equally, we cannot treat records however official as firm evidence of what they report' (2004, p.58). I acknowledge that the scrutiny of these reports does not fully align with an interpretivist paradigm. However, the reason for reviewing these reports was to further enhance the 'thick' description of each school. The data gleaned supported the findings from the environmental observations and supported the interpretation of the data from the interviews.

Scott (1990) lists four criteria for assessing the quality of a document: authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. These are rigorous criteria for gauging the usefulness of a document. The inspection reports for both Ofsted and SIAMS are moderated and quality-assured and therefore have value as a source of data. They would seem to have all Scott's required qualities. However, these reports are snapshots of schools over the course of one to two days by trained inspectors and although inspectors have to back all statements with evidence that they have seen, heard or read, there will still be an element of subjectivity. Schools are inevitably nervous about inspections, because of their importance to the reputation of the school, and because they are viewed as a reflection of the competence of the head teacher. My challenge as a researcher was to ensure that the head teacher and their staff felt relaxed and comfortable during the interviews and understood that my research was not about making judgements which would have an effect upon the school's reputation.

The documents gave background to each school and provided evidence to support what I observed and was told. Any dichotomy has allowed for further reflection on the data and has required interpretation. I have been unable to reference these documents because to do so would break the confidential agreement made with each school.

4.7. Data analysis

A case study approach sets the boundaries of the data collection. The transcribed interviews resulted in thirty transcripts. It was not appropriate to use Discourse Analysis or Conversation Analysis, which would focus on language use and functionality of speech (Braun and Clarke, 2006) as the work is related to the experience and understanding of the participants within the setting. I have used Content Analysis to summarise the data through a strict and systematic set of procedures for the rigorous analysis. As a coding method it is systematic and verifiable as the rules for analysis are transparent. Coding is defined by Kerlinger (1970) as the translation of question responses into specific categories for the purpose of analysis.

I made the decision not to use an electronic research analysis program but to analyse the transcribed interviews by hand to enable me to live and feel what was said as I immersed myself in the data collected. My conceptual framework helped me to focus on the aspects I believed would generate data to answer my research question. Each transcript was examined and highlighted for references to:

- the reasons why the head teachers had chosen to apply to their schools
- the school's ethos and distinctiveness as a C of E school
- the school's values
- the head teacher's values
- the head teacher's understanding of spirituality both within the school and personally
- changes they had made to the schools, since their appointment, which had affected the ethos of their school
- the influence of the local church and the extent of clergy involvement in the school

The analysis of the transcripts from the interviews with the teaching staff and the support staff were used to support or contrast with information highlighted in the head teacher's transcript. Coding allowed for the emergence of patterns and themes and for me to search and retrieve the data that matched my categorisation system. 'Codes are astringent pulling together a wealth of material into some order and structure' (Cohen et al., 2011, pp.559-560). The highlighted sections from each school were collated and analysed to present the findings in chapter six under the headings:

- 6.1. Factors that had motivated the head teachers to apply to their schools
- 6.2. Head teachers' experience of spirituality in their lives and in their schools
- 6.3. The influence of the local church

6.4. Head teachers' personal values that have driven their vision

6.5. Head teachers' influence on their school's ethos

It was necessary to return to the transcripts throughout the collating and analysis process to ensure that any conclusions reached could be supported by the data. Comprehensive notes had been made immediately after each school visit to reflect initial impressions and these provided additional evidence. Immersion in the data from each school helped me to build up a comprehensive picture of the influence of each head as explained by them and the staff who were interviewed.

Guillemin & Gillam describe research as 'primarily an enterprise of knowledge construction' (2004, p.274) with the researcher and those who are taking part in the research engaged in producing knowledge. Humans are reflective beings, and are not simply determined by their surroundings. It is therefore impossible for a researcher to take a completely detached stance, so an investigation will be dependent upon the researcher's interpretation (Walliman, 2006). Research should be a reflexive process, where the researcher can critically assess their research process as well as the data that they generate. Reflexivity refers to the way in which the researcher takes account of and processes all the interdependent influences of a social setting. Hertz (1997, p.viii) supports this reflexive approach by noting that the researcher does not merely report the 'facts' of the research, but also actively constructs interpretations, while at the same time questioning how those interpretations came about. Reflexivity in qualitative research can be perceived as a way of ensuring rigour. Reflexivity ensured that I referred all my interpretations back to my conceptual framework. Throughout the analysis of the data I returned to the research question and to my pre-conceived assumptions. I ensured that I took breaks from my work for reflection and discussed the data with other researchers. I tested a number of coding categories before deciding on the ones chosen (Cohen et al. 2011).

Qualitative enquiry is not a neutral activity and researchers have their own biases, beliefs and values which form the lens through which they view the social world. Reflexivity allows the researcher to reflect on how 'self' affects the research, and to acknowledge the affects. I needed to be reflexive in the process of analysing the data, as I selected what to report of the rich description, what words to quote from the interviews. Reflexivity enabled me to consider carefully and critically my interpretations and to continually return to the data to ensure that there was evidence to support these interpretations. My analysis of the qualitative data is interpretive, as the data is a representation of what I heard and observed, and it will be 'a reflexive, reactive interaction between me as the researcher and the

decontextualized data that are already interpretations of the social encounter' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.554).

Bryman (2008) lists tasks that need to be carried out immediately after an interview has taken place. He recommends that notes should be made about how the interview went, where it took place, any feelings about the interview and the setting. By doing this, I was able to give substance and context to the interviews. Bryman also recommends recording and transcribing the interviews, which I did. He gave reasons for doing so: firstly recording prevents the researcher from forgetting what was said, allows thorough examination of what was said, and allows for repeated examination of the interviewees' answers. Recording counters any accusation of researcher's being influenced by their values or bias in their analysis and lastly, it allows the data to be reused by the researcher for further research work.

4.7.1. An example of how the data collection method and the analysis led to one of the findings

I began the interview of the head teacher by asking the direct question: had they worked in a C of E school before? Although this appears to be a closed question it led to the head teachers feeling relaxed as they freely talked about their career experiences. With prompting this led to them talking about the reasons they had chosen to apply for the headship at the school. I believe that if I had begun by asking directly their reasons for seeking the leadership, they may have given me a different answer, one they 'thought' I might expect to hear. By using a semi-structured interview schedule allowed for a range of prompting and responses. Throughout the interviews I encouraged the head teachers to refer to their past career experiences. They all shared what had attracted them to their schools, what they had felt when they had made an initial visit and why they had applied for the post. Without asking the direct question about their reasons for applying, the answer to this question emerged.

I coded all references in the transcripts of the head teachers' interviews that answered the question: What factors had motivated the head teachers to apply to their schools? (Analysed in chapter six.) One of my pre-conceived assumptions that had led to the formation of my conceptual framework was that: the personal values of the head teacher would be the values evident throughout the school and would have the greatest influence on the development of the school ethos. To investigate this it was important to know what factors had led to the heads' choices for applying to the schools, and why they wanted to lead that particular school. They had all made the conscious decision to lead a C of E school and their personal values had influenced that decision. Notes made during the environmental walk, as the heads drew my attention to how they had developed their school ethos, contributed to my

understanding of why they had chosen to work in the school. This understanding helped to reveal more about the head teachers' values.

4.8. Validity, reliability and generalisability

In qualitative research validity is seeking to ensure honesty, depth, richness and scope (Cohen et al. 2011). However, because qualitative data is subjective and I have taken an interpretivist paradigm this work has been investigating the opinions, attitudes and perspectives of those involved in the schools. This research, therefore, will only have internal validity. Silverman (2010, p.281) highlights the importance of interrogating the data before jumping to conclusions and reminds the researcher that an explanation is not satisfactory if backed up by *nearly* all the data: every piece of the data must be accounted for.

Bryman (2004, p. 71) describes reliability as the degree to which results are repeatable. He expands this further by providing three factors which he believes are needed: 'stability' which is the degree to which measures are stable over time, 'internal reliability' which is the degree to which the indicators are consistent with all the data used, and lastly, 'inter-observer consistency', which is consistency between observers in their recording and interpretation (this is only applicable if there is more than one person working on the data collection). As I worked alone there was no need for inter-observer consistency, and as my school visits were over a five month period, stability was also not relevant, but I sought internal reliability by ensuring that the interview and observational process was as similar as possible in each school.

This work does not have external generalisability because the case was unique and cannot be replicated. Despite this, I believe the findings are important, which agrees with Flyvbjerg's views. He writes that formal generalisation is only one way to accumulate knowledge and that 'knowledge that cannot be formally generalised does not mean that it cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation in a given field ... it may be transferable even where it is not formally generalisable' (2011, p.305). As a researcher I assume a personal responsibility for the reliability and authenticity of the analysis of my data.

Yardley (2000) proposes four different terms as alternatives to reliability and validity: sensitivity, commitment, transparency and impact, all of which I saw as vital to support my drive towards reliability and authenticity. Firstly I needed to show sensitivity to the context of each school's social setting, which is concerned with theoretical positions and ethical issues. Secondly I worked towards commitment and rigour throughout the data collection and the analysis stages of the research. I worked to ensure transparency and coherence with a

clearly specified and articulated argument and reflexivity. Lastly I considered the impact and importance of the research to social theory.

4.9. Ethical considerations

My choice of research design, the methodology, and the conceptual framework that informs my research are governed by my values and beliefs. Guillemin & Gillam (2004) write that it is paramount that the researcher maintains their own integrity in accordance with their own values, as a researcher is justified when they act with honesty and consideration for the welfare of others.

Formal ethical approval was gained from the University Research Ethics Committee before I began the research. Applying for approval ensured consideration was made to the design of the research and how it could be carried out to fulfil basic ethical principles. Before beginning the practical work in schools I ensured that the head teachers were fully aware of the purpose of the research and provided all participants with a 'participant information' form and a 'participant consent' form, including details of their right to withdraw from the process at any time [Appendix 1].

I assured all participants that each school would be given a pseudonym and that they would only be referred to by their role in the school, and not by name.

It is only through relationships in the field, supported by procedures and negotiations over what is fair, relevant and just in the precise socio-political context, that we can know if we have acted ethically in relation to those who are part of our case.

(Simons, 2009, p.110)

Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from coercion, with confidentiality respected at all times. The independence and impartiality of the researcher must be clear and any conflict of interest made explicit. I made a decision to select only schools with head teachers that had not been colleagues of mine at any time in the past, as I knew that it could be difficult to be objective with people known to me. The practice of regular reflection ensured that ethical and methodological considerations were continually evaluated as the values of honesty and integrity are the ethical responsibility of all researchers.

We all interpret what we hear and see according to what we consider to be recognisable ethical norms. We learn ethical norms at home, at school, in church, or in other social settings. Although most people acquire their sense of right and wrong during childhood, moral development occurs throughout life. Every individual will have a different interpretation

of these norms, depending upon their own values and life experiences. When conducting a piece of research there has to be a standard of conduct appropriate to the discipline. Resnik (2011) explains that one can define ethics as a method, procedure or perspective for deciding how to act and for analysing complex problems and issues. I acknowledge the importance of adhering to exemplary ethical standards in my research by: avoiding errors by promoting knowledge and truth, promoting the values of trust, accountability, mutual respect and fairness and by ensuring that I am accountable to the public for the research processes and findings. I also need to be open to criticism and new ideas which could challenge my pre-conceptions and lead to new learning.

Shamoo and Resnik (2009) and BERA (2011) also note the importance of storing all data to comply with the Data Protection Act and state that the data used should comply with the original agreement made with participants and agreed by the University Ethics Committee.

4.10. Acknowledged limitations of the research method and conclusion

The data generated represents a detailed analysis of each school and multiple perspectives of the head teacher's influence upon their school. There have been limitations and constraints in this piece of research. The case study was restricted to six schools, but this number was chosen to enable adequate time for in-depth analysis of the data generated. Further work would need to be carried out in more schools to test whether the results can be generalised across other C of E VC rural primary schools. The sample of schools was theoretically meaningful as I used purposive sampling with specific criteria, though I acknowledge that I chose only six schools from a potential seventy VC primary schools in the diocese where I live. The head teachers all expressed different views and from my experience of working with colleagues who are head teachers in a C of E school, I believe they are a representative sample.

I was restricted to using schools where the head teacher had been willing to allow me access to him/her and had the time to spare to speak with me. This resulted in all the schools in the case study being 'good' as defined by Ofsted. This gave the head teacher the public recognition that they were doing a good job and were providing a good education for the pupils. (Parents and others in a community place confidence in an Ofsted grading and it appears to reflect upon the popularity or otherwise of a school.) Through my own experience I would suggest that heads leading schools that 'require improvement' (Ofsted) would have been unlikely to agree to my visit or have had the time to spare. None of the schools in the study were graded 'outstanding' (Ofsted) this may have been simply that there are very few small rural schools in the vicinity who have achieved that grade. I was also careful to use

schools where the head teacher had been in post for at least three years, providing time for them to make changes which could impact upon the ethos.

No research can eliminate the influence of the researcher. As a head teacher I tried to put staff at ease. In all of the schools the head teacher had told the staff of my experience of headship in a C of E school. This helped to provide credibility but may have caused some initial anxiety with staff. My aim was to investigate the values of the head teachers; but to achieve this I needed to investigate the complex social organisation of each school, in which the head teachers were working, by capturing the richness and variety within their settings. The use of interviews, observation and document analysis provided triangulation that increased internal validity. Through accurate observation and recording I collected as much information as possible. I acknowledge my feelings, prejudices and background will have affected my interpretation of the findings.

Engaging with the literature and formulating the research question resulted in the development of the conceptual framework which has informed my choice of research design and methodology. The next chapter will begin by placing the research into its context, by setting the scene and providing the rich description of the six schools that made up the case. An analysis of the most recent Ofsted report and the SIAS/SIAMS report for each school provided a greater insight into the schools. This will then be followed in Chapter six by a detailed account of the data gathered and a comprehensive analysis of that data.

Chapter 5: Background to the Schools in the Case Study

5.1. St Anne's school

5.2. St Botolph's school

5.3. St Catherine's school

5.4. St David's school

5.5. St Egbert's school

5.6. St Francis' school

5.7. Conclusion

This chapter sets the scene on the observations made during my tour of each of the six schools which make up the case study. The details are important because they provide an account of the context within which people's behaviour takes place (Bryman, 2008). Yin (2009) writes that the study of a case in context should include 'rich description' and Geertz (1973) advocates including 'thick description' of social settings because it portrays how things are by looking at reality close-up. The description sets the head teacher's behaviour and values in the context of the specific environment in which they work. With six schools in the case study, the thick descriptions will help to convey the significance of context. The schools have been given pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality.

This chapter also draws upon relevant comments made about each school in their most recent Ofsted Inspection Report and SIAMS (or SIAS) Report, to help triangulate what was observed and the views expressed.

Ofsted inspects all educational providers for children. The framework used to inform inspectors' judgements was updated in September 2014. Inspectors report on the quality of education provided by the school under four headings: the achievement of pupils, the quality of teaching, the behaviour and the safety of pupils and the management of the school. All head teachers would agree on the importance of these areas to raise the achievement for all pupils. Ofsted has however, also acknowledged that education is not solely about academic progress. Inspectors must also report on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school. Also the extent to which the education provided by the school meets the needs of the range of pupils at the school and in particular the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

The National Society's Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAS) was updated and amended to include the inspection of Methodist schools: from 2012 the inspections became known as SIAMS, the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools. Inspectors use an evaluation schedule (revised September 2013) which provides criteria and grade descriptors to support inspectors in evaluating how well the school's distinctive Christian character and values ensure the development and achievement of the 'whole' child. There are some similarities between an Ofsted inspection and a SIAMS inspection because SIAMS reviews the academic progress of pupils, but in the context of how effectively the Christian school is being led and how it meets the needs of all learners. Its main focus is to grade how Christian values underpin a Christian ethos, which then underpins the whole educational experience provided for each child. Inspectors are expected to interpret the grade descriptors based on the context of each school being inspected. Inspectors seek to find the answers to four core questions:

1. How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners? (Assessed in Voluntary Aided (VA) and Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools.)
2. What is the impact of collective worship on the school community? (Assessed in VA and VC schools.)
3. How effective is the religious education? (Assessed only in VA schools, which follow the Diocesan syllabus, VC schools must follow the County syllabus.)
4. How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school? (Assessed in VA and VC schools.)

5.1. St Anne's school

St Anne's school has 210 pupils and is one of the largest C of E primary schools in Essex. The head teacher was very enthusiastic about the research. His tour of the school was delivered with pride, and it was clear that he enjoyed every minute of his time there. The school had a welcoming, calm environment that celebrated the pupils. Ofsted had also noted that 'The school is a calm and orderly community'. The welcome page on the website summarised what I saw in the school:

[St Anne's school] Is a friendly and caring school where the education of the whole child is central to all we strive to achieve. In addition to gaining academic skills and knowledge, your child will build confidence, develop self-reliance, learn to make decisions and develop the ability to articulate feelings and ideas. The ethos of the school reflects its close links with the church.

The Ofsted report concluded that:

This is a good school. Its strong commitment to Christian values permeates all its work. The head teacher has a clear vision and high aspirations for the school's future which all staff and the governing body share.

Through my interviews with the head and staff it was clear that the head was the driving force within the school. He was the person who had worked hard to ensure that both the curriculum and the extra curriculum activities that the school provided supported the development of pupils' academic, social and spiritual needs.

An acrostic poem, to the letters of the word 'Diversity', was located in the head teacher's office. The poem emphasised the inclusivity of the school, that everyone is different but uniquely important, it read: 'Different, Individual, Valuing, Each other, Regardless of, Skin, Intellect, Talent or Years'. The same notice board boasted the school's position in the top 200 primary schools in England according to the Key Stage 2 SATs results in 2013.

The pupils' personal and social development and their well-being were evident throughout the school. All classes had Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) displays, for example: Early Years had a board headed 'Our class is happy when...', Year (Y) 1, 'Star of the week', Y4, 'Friendship Week', Y5, 'Time Capsule about Me'. There was an impressive display of coloured paper jigsaw pieces, fitted together with the label 'Like pieces of a puzzle we fit together and make a team'. Early Years and Y1 and Y2 used the local woods for their Forest School's work, learning about their environment and how to care for it through outdoor learning. The school grounds boasted a wildlife area, an outdoor stage, climbing equipment, picnic benches, many with board games on the table tops, gazebos to provide shade and shelter as well as a garden arranged in raised beds. The gardening club, supported by staff, had won awards for their garden and had been so successful in the growing of strawberries in the previous summer that they had been able to take surplus to the local care home to serve strawberry cream teas to the residents. Both the Early Years and the Y1 class had well equipped outdoor learning areas, securely fenced, well cared for and extensively used for all areas of the curriculum.

For pupils who needed time-out or were having difficulties socialising appropriately in the playground, there were seats in the corridor outside the head's room, by a poster that read 'How to be a good friend' and a box of laminated pictures with questions about friends and friendships. The school was in the process of equipping a small sensory room where a counsellor from an outside provider could work.

Due to the fact that the majority of pupils had a 'white British' ethnicity (explained by the head) the school had linked with a large, 1000-pupil multi-cultural primary school in London. Some KS2 pupils had swapped between the schools and appreciated a day being taught in each other's school. There were plans for this to be an on-going project. Ofsted (2012) had noted that pupils' 'knowledge of faiths other than their own, though satisfactory, is limited' and challenged the school to 'increase pupils' understanding of different faiths and how faith can influence the way people choose to live their lives'. This London contact would be beneficial in addressing this weakness.

The corridors of the school were full of photographs and pieces of work which celebrated the vast diversity of activities that the school provided to support the pupils' development into rounded citizens: the annual school residential in Norfolk for Y5 and Y6 pupils, Enterprise week, when all classes raised up to £200 with the support of the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA), the Children's University with photos of the pupils who graduated last year, School Council, the annual whole school performance, and the list went on. It was a very active school, where the children were able to enjoy the range of activities provided over and above the curriculum. Even the breakfast club from 7.30am each day had forty children attending and had a waiting list.

There was a small wooden cross in the entry vestibule and a clock which had been a gift from their link Church school in Kenya. The Ofsted report also commended this overseas link. There was also a small notice board in the hall where there was reference to the Church's Ecclesiastical Year, but these appeared to be the only displays of a Christian or C of E nature. The Mission Statement was not displayed around the school, but there was a single copy in the head's room. The statement read: 'Knowing that I am valued, and belonging in the community where we value each other so that I can run faster than I hoped, reach higher than I dreamed and achieve more than I thought'. Both of the teachers interviewed were asked if they knew the statement, but neither did. This statement embraces high aspirations but was not specifically or distinctively Christian. Staff were, however, very positive about the Christian leadership of the head and the Christian ethos of the school.

Assessing pupils' spiritual development the Ofsted report read that:

Within a framework of excellent relationships, teachers set high expectations for behaviour and application to tasks which pupils try very hard to meet. In almost all lessons teachers encourage children to reflect which contributes to pupils' spiritual development.

St Anne's SIAS report praised the strong partnership links with the parish church and the local community, which was evident during the visit. SIAS noted the 'very effective' Christian leadership of the school provided by the head teacher and the quality of the relationship between all members of the school community which is grounded in the school's distinctive Christian character.

All aspects of the school's provision and work reflect the highest level of importance the school places on core Christian values of care, respect, trust, honesty, courage, compassion, responsibility, truth and friendship.

Collective worship is used to help pupils to understand how Christ's teaching is reflected in the school values.

Within the school there is an atmosphere of spiritual depth which is tangible at times.

The strengths of the school were listed in the Ofsted report as follows:

- Strong commitment to Christian values permeates all its work.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding.
- The head teacher has a clear vision and high aspirations for the school's future, which all staff and the governing body share.

The strengths of the school were listed in the SIAS report as follows:

- Strong partnership links with the parish church and the local community.
- The quality of the relationships between all members of the school community, which is grounded in the school's distinctive Christian character.
- The very effective Christian leadership by the head teacher, ably supported by his staff team, incumbent and governors.

The visit to St Anne's school confirmed the strengths identified in both the Ofsted and the SIAS reports which were clearly being led by the head teacher. All the adults interviewed, spoke of the head teacher's Christian influence and the emphasis placed on Christian values which the head exemplified by the way he led the school. The school had the Christian ethos running through the whole curriculum, a requirement of Cooling's for a Christian school.

5.2. St Botolph's school

St Botolph's is a smaller school than St Anne's, with 130 pupils taught in six small classes within a small rural village. The head teacher had been in post for four years. It was clear

talking to the head that she placed great emphasis upon making everyone feel valued and special, from the children through to all the staff and parents. St Anne's head had achieved his desired ethos, (though he was still looking for ways to make it even better) but at St Botolph's the school was evolving, with ongoing plans - very much a work in progress. The ethos statement was emblazoned in the entrance vestibule, in large letters which were impossible to miss: 'A Special Place for Learning, Inspiring Hearts and Minds'. The actual mission statement was also a work in progress with pupils meeting regularly in family groups (including pupils from Early Years through to Y6) having opportunities to give their ideas on what it should say. A display in the mixed Y5 and Y6 class showed that they had been considering the values that they thought were important. The children had suggested caring, happy, responsibility, value learning, being helpful, being creative, offering friendship and feeling safe.

The development of pupils' personal, social and spiritual development was a priority for the head at St Botolph's as it was at St Anne's. The school had benefitted from recent building work, providing several new work areas as well as a meeting room. One such area was used every lunch-time for a club which provided a 'safe' place to go, supported by an adult, for pupils struggling with appropriate behaviour, or other pupils having difficulties making and sustaining appropriate friendships. Outside the head teacher's room and in every classroom there was a 'reflection corner', where children were encouraged to take a moment to reflect or to say a prayer. A box, decorated in each class by the children, was positioned in each reflection corner for children to place a bead in, as recognition that they had visited and used the corner. The children had been given a cardboard 'teaspoon' to decorate and encouraged to say 'teaspoon' (tsp) prayers, one that included thanksgiving, saying sorry for what they have done wrong and saying please to God for something they wanted Him to do, hence **tsp** prayers. Ofsted had noted 'Quiet prayer areas in classes and in the main corridor provide places of calm for reflection'. Each reflection area had a cross, a thought for the week (which was the theme for all collective worship that week, and used by visiting clergy), and a range of Bible story books appropriate to the age of the pupils in the class. St Botolph's school benefitted from weekly visits from the two local clergy, who knew all the children by name and were clearly a valued addition to the school community.

St Botolph's head teacher had worked hard to provide a range of creative activities, for opportunities for pupils to take risks in their learning, to accept that it is fine to be wrong, and to always have a go and not be afraid to speak out. The curriculum and the behaviour code were based on Christian values. It was the head who had worked with the school to establish the values, which had impacted upon the enrichment of the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Teachers who had been prepared to change to the head's way

of working had embraced her ideals, while those who could not or did not want to had moved on to other schools. Ofsted (2012) had noted that 'The head teacher provides ambitious leadership which has ensured good teaching and continued pupil progress'. The staff interviewed spoke about how good it was to work as a member of the team and how members trusted and supported each other. Prior to the head's arrival, staff had worked more independently, with an 'every man for himself' attitude. The head was happy to have a noisier working environment if pupils were all engaged in talking and questioning their learning. The behaviour policy and practice of the school was based on Christian values. These had impacted positively to ensure that the behaviour of pupils around the school was good, the early years pupils even walked silently, in single-file, going into the hall for their lunch, knowing what was expected of them, even though no adult was with them. 'Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils show kindness and respect to each other and listen attentively' (Ofsted). Within the classrooms pupils were not as confident as at St Anne's, where pupils had been keen to talk about their learning. However, St Botolph's classes were bright and cheerful, with many photographs of pupils taking part in curriculum activities, as well as examples of their work.

Where St Anne's had focused on PSHE within a Christian ethos, St Botolph's delivered their PSHE through its Christian and Religious education. The head had increased the time per week that all classes spent on RE and each term, as well as introducing the pupils to other world religions, all classes were expected to study a Christian unit of work. The Early Years had been working on the Creation story which tied in with the circular, colourful mat on the classroom floor; the centre of the mat was a large map of the world, and the map was encircled by children from different ethnic backgrounds holding hands. The children had been taught about how special and individual they were, all created by God. Outside areas, although not as developed as in St Anne's, did include a quiet garden, a growing garden used by the gardening club, and climbing apparatus, as well as a field and hard surface areas.

St Botolph's head teacher was proud of the work she had undertaken to develop her school's ethos, which she had based largely on the values from the C of E Values website, where there were also resources that she had utilised. These Christian values aligned with the values she believed were important for the development of the school. She had a vision for a Christian school and staff confirmed that she had worked tirelessly to implement it. The head teacher of St Botolph's had wanted, and had succeeded, in making the school welcoming to all, open for parents to visit and engage in all the different activities of their children and a welcoming place for the community. All staff agreed that it was now a caring

and supportive environment, where everyone was prepared to change and improve their practice to benefit the pupils.

SIAS noted that St Botolph's:

Is a happy, caring school where the Christian values underpin daily life. All members of the community care about each other and pupils are happy and enthusiastic.

Effective links have developed between the church and the school, with the parish now regularly supporting worship and the school curriculum.

The Christian ethos is strengthening and pupils are more secure in the knowledge that their thoughts and beliefs are valued.

RE makes a positive contribution to the spiritual and moral development of all pupils.

The strengths of St Botolph's school were listed in the Ofsted report as follows:

- Good teaching ensures pupils make good progress in lively and well-paced lessons.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- The curriculum provides a rich variety of learning experiences.
- The head teacher provides ambitious leadership.

The strengths of the school were listed in the SIAS report as follows:

- The head teacher, ably supported by senior leaders and the incumbent, provides very strong and effective direction to the church school.
- Christian values underpin all relationships across the school. This is apparent between adults, between adults and pupils and between learners.
- The centrality of collective worship is evident in all aspects of school life.

The visit confirmed all of the strengths noted in the SIAS report and agreed with most of those in the Ofsted report. However, I saw little evidence of 'lively lessons', as pupils although engaged and well-behaved, appeared subdued.

Having worked previously in Catholic schools, the head teacher at St Botolph's had created a very visual school environment displaying Christian pictures and icons to support and illustrate the Christian values she had introduced which underpinned the ethos.

5.3. St Catherine's school

St Catherine's is also a small primary with 110 pupils, located within a village which has grown over the years as a dormitory to a large town just a few miles away. The head teacher explained that parents chose the school for their children for a variety of reasons: it is small, it is a village school, it is graded 'good' by Ofsted and it is a C of E school. A recent school survey indicated that just over fifty percent of parents valued the fact that it was a C of E school. Parents exercise their right to choose the school for their children. It may be that they embrace the Christian faith that the C of E schools has embedded, but even if they do not, they often value the ideological moral position of the school and the fact that faith schools usually produce better academic results than non-faith schools.

The office staff and the head teacher were generous with their welcome. There was a buzz of activity throughout, with children engaged in their work, yet having permission to talk, express themselves, laugh and seemingly enjoy their educational experience. This contrasted with St Botolph's, where the children, despite the head teacher's effort to change the established learning environment, were still inhibited and less free to express themselves. St Catherine's Ofsted report had noted that:

Pupils are proud of their school. They behave well in lessons and around the school and are thoughtful and caring to others. The school is a happy, friendly place. Pupils follow the good examples set for them by adults in school and show respect to each other.

St Catherine's head teacher welcomed the opportunity to talk about her school, as did all the staff. The head teacher sets high expectations and leads by example, she provides well-focused leadership' (Ofsted). The Mission Statement at St Catherine's had remained unchanged by the present head teacher. She had put her energies into introducing the gospel values, which the children could apply practically to their lives. Throughout the visit, the emphasis was on these core gospel values that underpinned everything in the school. The staff, governors and the children had decided upon which values the school should take and they were evident everywhere around school. They had chosen eighteen values, listed in no particular order: courage, well-mannered, hope, creativity, happiness, trust, forgiveness, fairness, respect, responsibility, generosity, wisdom, perseverance, independence, friendship, honesty, caring and pride.

On entering St Catherine's school it was clear that this was a church school, with a large cross in the vestibule. There was a notice board that displayed the school prayer, a sign saying 'We are Special' and a liturgical wheel, which explained the liturgical cycle of the

Anglican church's year. Every classroom had a worship table, above which hung a colourful cross. On the tables were children's Bibles, books for reflection, a post box for children to post prayer requests, photographs, prayer books, prayers written by the children and unlit candles. The library also had a large display on the books of the Bible as well as prayers written by the children.

In addition to the Christian material in the classrooms, the main hall at St Catherine's had a worship table and two of the large display boards behind the table were allocated for 'worship'. One board held the photographs of children in Year 6 who had recently become 'Worship Leaders', and who were responsible for starting the worship each day by leading the responses and also doing readings and leading prayers. The other board celebrated the gospel values, focusing on the specific one for the half term around which all the worship was based. Other display boards around the school celebrated the various activities within school, school council, children's university, sports and music. To recognise pupils' involvement in the local community, one display board had photographs of children and the activity they participated in in the village, such as brownies, and noted the time and place where the club took place. Music had a high priority in the school, with many children learning instruments and an active choir that joined schools from around the country to sing in the O2 in London each year.

The outside areas at St Catherine's were well appointed with a growing allotment, wildlife area, climbing apparatus, a quiet area, a friendship bench and the usual space for playing more energetic games. Lunchtime began with all children in the hall together sitting at tables and Grace was said before they all began to eat, which was one example of the family feel of the school. To enhance the IT provision in the school there was a laptop trolley as well as iPads and a well-equipped computer suite. There was a nursery on site, which shared the dining facilities, but was run by outside providers. For a small school it was very well resourced, with five classes and just over twenty children in each class. Parents, members of the community and the local clergy were all encouraged to come into school and contribute to the children's learning. Ofsted (2013) noted that 'Close links with the church contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is a strength of the school'. Celebrating success was evident and the positive attitude of the head teacher had filtered through the school to energise the staff and children.

The school website began its introduction with the words: 'We are extremely proud of our school and value every individual child. As a school we have the highest aims for all pupils and believe that they learn what they live'. This statement was followed by part of the poem, 'Children Learn What They Live' by Dorothy Law Nolte which outlines the importance of

showing children inclusion, tolerance, fairness and justice and ended with the line 'If a child lives with acceptance and friendship he learns to find love in the world'. The poem illustrated some of the gospel values that the head teacher had introduced. The gospel values were also on the website, arranged in a circular fashion so that there was no hierarchy, but they stood alone without any explanation about their Christian roots. For the values to be gospel values and not merely moral values they need to be theological underpinned by biblical understanding. Though not explained to parents on the website, the head teacher ensured that the Bible was used to illustrate the values from the life of Jesus for the pupils.

SIAS had written that St Catherine's:

Has a caring and inclusive ethos, with implicit Christian values, which underpin the whole school community. Established and effective links with the parish church supports pupils' learning about faith and care for others.

Children recognize the significance of implicit Christian values.

Worship is at the heart of the school day.

The governing body has worked with the whole staff to support the Christian vision of the school.

The strengths of the school were listed by Ofsted as follows:

- The head teacher sets high expectations and leads by example.
- Pupils are proud of their school and behave well in lessons and around the school.
- The school is a happy and friendly place.
- Teaching is consistently good and pupils make good progress.

The strengths of the school were listed by SIAS as follows:

- Christian values implicitly underpin the whole school community, establishing a strong family ethos and very good relationships between all members of the community.
- Well established links with the parish church and the incumbent support worship and the Christian values of the whole school.

St Catherine's head was passionate about the importance of gospel values, which she believed were important values for every school regardless of its faith affiliation or none, and strove to ensure their influence in all areas of school life and for all members of the school

community. All the strengths noted in both the Ofsted and SIAS reports were evident in school -it was 'a happy, friendly place' which embraced the gospel values.

5.4. St David's school

St David's C of E primary school, with 208 pupils, is larger than both St Botolph's and St Catherine's, though a similar size to St Anne's. It is set in a small village community only a few miles outside of a large town, serving both the rural families and the families living in the newer housing development. The entrance vestibule did not initially proclaim that it was a church school. There was a display board given over to the value of 'fairness', accompanied with the words, 'Fairness isn't everyone getting the same thing. Fairness is everyone getting what they need so they can succeed'. (During the visit to the school, some examples of the children's views of 'fairness' were added to this display board.) There was a prayer tree: a branch in a pot, from which hung prayers written by the children and used each week in the Friday Celebration Assembly, to which parents were invited. Above the office in large letters was the school's mission statement, 'We Care, We Succeed, and We Learn'. There was a small cross on the value board and a children's Bible, and a copy of the leather-bound commemorative 1662 King James Bible on a table. (A copy had been presented to every school in England in 2012 by the Secretary of State for Education to mark the 350th anniversary.)

St David's head teacher proudly pointed out the 'gospel values' board in every classroom. She had introduced the values, having seen the advantage of focusing pupils on a moral code which she believed should filter through every element of school life. The head's previous school, where she had been the deputy, had been a Community school with no faith affiliation, which had employed the company Edison Learning. Edison Learning works in collaboration with primary schools to help bring about a lasting improvement against the key Ofsted measures that define school success, and the achievement of individual school's goals and aspirations, while focusing on improving teaching and learning. Edison supports schools to develop their ethos through a value system. The head explained how she had been able to bring some of the elements of Edison Learning to St David's (without employing Edison Learning) to support the development of a set of values. The school had adopted eight values, (the same values that the head had in her last school): courage, integrity, fairness, hope, responsibility, respect, compassion and wisdom. For four weeks each value became the focus for worship and was highlighted throughout the curriculum. As well as being the focus of the display boards in the classrooms, there was a large display of all the values in the hall. Each value had been attributed to the behaviour of a different animal. Fairness was a chameleon, an animal that can change its appearance externally but is

always the same inside. The head introduced her chosen values to the children from the starting point of an animal's characteristic, rather than beginning with the teaching of Jesus and what value the Bible was illustrating.

Ofsted had acknowledged the school's focus on values and had written that:

The school has clear behaviour codes based on gospel values and a positive ethos. Pupils get on well with each other and adults, they are well-mannered, polite and courteous.

The school's emphasis on gospel values, close links with the church and many opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of awe and wonder reinforce spiritual values.

Ofsted saw spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as a strength of the school, particularly where pupils were given opportunities to work together to learn about other's point of view. Ofsted commented that 'Pupils enjoy learning and participate well in lessons'.

St David's had a section on their website called 'Church and Community', which listed their gospel values; 'Our school is proud to follow our chosen gospel values'. Accompanying the list of values there was an outline of each value with related bible quotes. The section included a comment on collective worship: 'Collective worship is a special time for us all to reflect together particularly on our gospel values'. The website ensured that anyone viewing details about the school would be clear about the Christian basis of their values approach to all their learning. This contrasted with the approach of St Catherine's head, who had focused on pupils' theological understanding of the values rather than the parents.

St David's still retained the original village school building, which had been enlarged and modernised over the years. In addition there was a modern purpose-built block, consisting of four classrooms, a kitchen for the pupils to use as part of the curriculum, a library and a Rainbow room used for pastoral support. The outside area provided a full range of resources: an adventure playground, a quiet reflective area with a pagoda for shelter, a wood in the neighbouring field (given by the local farmer) a wildlife area, allotments for growing fruit and vegetables, an outside stage and a field for active games. The heads had all focused on ensuring that the outside area was used effectively to support pupils' social and spiritual development with awe and wonder and quiet reflection being important.

Although each class had a 'Gold Book' for recording the names of pupils who produced good work and 'Praise postcards', all other rewards were class-specific, with no whole school agreed system. Classes all used 'Key Skills' and the rooms all made use of learning walls

with copious learning prompts. Around the school were display boards celebrating pupil's work across the whole curriculum. The focus of the hall was the 'Worship Table' with a cross, a candle and story books. Besides the large 'values' display behind the worship table, there were seven display boards, one for each class to display their own work and a final board with the photographs of the class representatives of the School Council. Celebration of success and full inclusion were again important elements of the church school.

St David's SIAMS report said that it:

Has a well-established Christian character, fostered by all members of the school community. It is reflected in the mission statement and deeply embedded in the vision of the school as a family. Every pupil is highly valued and treated as a child of God.

Relationships in school are based on Christian principles of mutual trust, love, honesty and understanding, which are based around gospel values.

Collective worship is central to the life of the school and is very inclusive, themed to the Christian calendar, and gospel values.

The head teacher is strongly supported by staff and governors. Leadership is based on clear Christian principles, valuing each other as unique and special. The head teacher's strong, distinctive Christian vision is supported by staff and parents.

The strengths of the school were listed by Ofsted as follows:

- The head teacher, staff and governors are working effectively together to improve teaching and learning.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe.
- Key skills help pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strength of the school.

The strengths of the school were listed by SIAMS as follows:

- The Christian character of the school contributes to pupils' academic achievement.
- The spiritual development of learners is enhanced by the outstanding school environment.
- Pupils have a positive attitude towards prayer and derive inspiration from it.

These comments reinforced what I had seen and heard in the school. The head firmly believed in a moral code based on a value system which the head related back to the Bible

teachings of Jesus in worship and made explicit to the parents. She believed that they were important values even for non-believers as they had moral integrity.

5.5. St Egbert's school

St Egbert's school was the smallest school used in the case study. It is located on the outskirts of a small village and had just 73 pupils in three classes. For a small school it was well resourced, with a library, a purpose-built wet area and outside play area for the Early Years children and a meeting room. Although the grounds were not as extensive as in the other schools, they had been thoughtfully developed. The outside space had been well utilised, with a football pitch, a well-equipped playground area with two climbing frames, a climbing wall and a gazebo. A grass mound on the edge of the playground had been crossed with tunnels for children to play inside and run through and behind the field there was an allotment where the pupils grew fruit and vegetables. Unfortunately the school was located on a busy main road that ran through the village. Though it was within walking distance of the church, the main road made it difficult for regular visits.

The school website opened with the words:

Our school is a small caring school with a family feel. The excellent facilities and friendly ethos ensure that everyone feels valued here. Our parents know their children will leave as confident, well rounded achievers, fully ready for the next stage in their educational development.

St Egbert's school had a welcoming reception area. There was a very small cross on the wall and beside the cross was the school prayer in a frame (very old and not used). In the reception area there was no other physical evidence indicating that it was a C of E school. The Mission Statement was on the website, but neither the children nor the teaching staff were aware of it. It was under the heading 'Our Aims and Values'.

Children feel safe, happy, cared for and valued within the school's Christian environment. Our stimulating teaching and outstanding resources make learning an exciting adventure. We nurture children's emotional and spiritual growth, which enhances their educational and physical achievements. We have close relationships with parents and carers. We value and actively encourage their involvement in their children's learning. Our children develop enquiring minds, well equipped for life-long learning and success.

The website was not used to explain what was meant by a 'Christian environment'. Rather than expect pupils to remember the Mission Statement, the head preferred to use the strap

line, 'Learn, Respect, Keep Safe'. This was displayed on the walls around the school and all pupils were aware of its meaning and how it impacted on all aspects of school life. St Egbert's head explained the reasons behind the chosen words. When she joined the school eight years ago, as a temporary appointment, she felt that there was a lack of respect between staff and other staff, staff and pupils, and parents and staff, which was impacting upon the learning throughout the school. The head had worked hard to ensure that now there was respect in all relationships and she believed that the school was a happy, calm place to be, where everyone could be proud to be part of St Egbert's. Ofsted had seen evidence of this: 'The head teacher has established an ethos of pride in the school because pupils themselves feel they are well taught and well behaved'.

Each class had a very small cross on the wall and a copy of the Lord's Prayer, but no other obvious Christian or C of E reference. There was one RE display in a corridor on the Bible; RE takes its turn with all other subjects on the rota for displays. Classrooms had a mix of Working Walls, with curriculum support material and examples of children's work. The school was bright and cheerful with a buzz of pupils engaged in learning.

The hall had a worship table covered with a cloth and with a plain wooden cross and two candles. The table was used by the clergy when they came in fortnightly to take morning worship, but not during other worship sessions. There was a display board for worship, which had details about this term's theme of prayer. The clergy had 'prayer' as their topic this term, while the school was focusing on Old Testament characters. The school exhibited a culture of celebrating success. A board in the hall displayed work from the 'Gold Book', celebrating pupils' good work. There was a well-established House System with children receiving house points for good work and good behaviour, with the winning house receiving the 'cup' for the coming week. The three mixed-aged classes meant that staff had a very wide range of ability in each class. The teaching staff were ably supported by a team of six Learning Support Assistants. There was an open door policy for parents and they were welcome to attend Celebration Assemblies on Friday. Parents were valued as partners in their children's education. The head held a Parent Forum half-termly to give parents opportunities to discuss items of mutual interest and agree ways forward. There was an active 'Friends of the School' which arranged social events and fund-raising. There was also an active School Council.

Compared to St Botolph's, St Catherine's and St David's, there was little evidence around the school to indicate that this was a C of E school. St Anne's school had also had little physical evidence of its Christian distinctiveness in the classrooms, but had had a variety of items in the reception area which boldly set the scene. The head at St Egbert's explained

that one family had removed their child from school because the daily assemblies were too overtly 'religious'. She was conscious that most parents sent their children to the school because it was a 'good' (as graded by Ofsted) school, in a village location and was small and friendly, not because they wanted Christian input. It is the head teacher's decision to decide on the values that will embed the school ethos. At St Egbert's she had decided to focus on the moral value of respect to underpin the curriculum and the Bible was used in worship to learn about the Christian faith rather than as theological underpinning for Christian/gospel values. Ofsted had seen evidence that the school was part of the village community as well as being a Church school:

Pupils are aware that the school is at the heart of its local community. The school has close links with the local church and the diocese. Moral considerations are reinforced in assemblies, circle time and philosophy for children sessions.

St Egbert's SIAS report noted:

It is a good Church school, whose distinctiveness and effectiveness is characterized by a caring Christian ethos and a commitment to providing a stimulating and supportive environment in which learners can thrive.

Parents and governors refer to the school as a 'caring family community', where learners are encouraged, supported and celebrated.

The strengths of the school as noted in the Ofsted report were listed as follows:

- Teaching is consistently good, pace challenging and expectations high.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe.
- The head teacher, staff and governors work together to raise standards.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is well developed.

The strengths of the school as noted in the SIAS report were listed as follows:

- The head teacher, staff and governors together have a clear vision and commitment to a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.
- The caring Christian ethos of the school enables individuals to feel valued and nurtured to enable them to achieve their potential.
- All staff support the high standards of pupils' personal, social, moral and spiritual development.
- There are strong and effective links with the church and the local and wider communities.

The head teacher professed a personal faith which she believed gave her inner strength to carry out her leadership of the school. The focus at St Egbert's was one of supporting all pupils to enable them to feel valued as important members of the school community and of the village community. The Christian ethos which the head had nurtured was seen as caring and supporting, rather than overtly through a focus on Christian values as in the other schools. The visit supported the views of Ofsted and SIAS; it was a school where there was a strong drive towards continued academic improvement as well as a Christian ethos that enabled pupils to feel valued and nurtured to achieve their potential.

5.6. St Francis' school

St Francis' school has 160 pupils and serves a village community which consists primarily of recent housing for commuters driving to the neighboring town or traveling by train to London. The school had been built as part of the community provision for the village. St Francis' head teacher had been in post for five years. She had previously worked in two C of E primary schools and had been a head teacher in an independent girls' school. This was her first headship in the state system. In the five years she had been in the school she had replaced all the learning support assistants (LSAs) and every teacher bar the deputy, who had been appointed two terms before the present head had taken up her post. The head teacher's present team was loyal to her and supportive of her changes. Ofsted had noted that 'The ambitious leadership of the head teacher is shown in the drive for improvement'.

The previous head teacher had been overtly Christian and there had been evidence throughout the school of its Christian distinctiveness. (This was the view expressed by the deputy-head.) Under the present head this was no longer the case. There was now very little evidence to indicate that this was a C of E school. On entry into the school there was a very small wooden cross on a table to the side of the front doors and hung in a dark corner there was a wall hanging made of six sections, one from each class, to depict different Bible stories. The computer monitor in the reception area showed a loop of pictures and information: there were photographs of children taking part in a range of activities and examples of good work, the after school club timetable, useful information and the school's mission statement and the school prayer. Neither the mission statement nor the prayer gave an indication as to the nature of the school. The mission statement was similar to that found in schools with no faith affiliation.

The school strap line was prominent on the website: 'Inspire, Explore, Achieve', and the school described itself as 'a small, friendly village primary and very proud of our warm, inclusive community'. The website highlighted the school's vision; to inspire in every child a love of learning and the confidence to explore, grow and achieve as individuals. Also the

school's values; we work hard to ensure that all children enjoy learning. We believe that children learn best when they are engaged, motivated and interested and when they are given the correct support and challenge in order to reach their potential. The mission statement, values and vision were all fully inclusive and appropriate for pupils from all religious and ethnic backgrounds. They were all based around the three words of the strap line, but did not mention the school's C of E foundation or Christian character. The only reference to the C of E connection was the website statement, 'We are proud of our links with the local church'.

Around the school there was no other physical evidence of this school being a Church school. As the main hall was used by the outside community there was no worship table set up, nor was one brought in for the daily act of worship. There were displays in the hall above the windows, all of a high standard, showing joint art projects by the children, but none was related to Christianity. The corridors throughout the school were crammed with display boards of pupils' work and the classroom display boards were used for 'learning walls', learning resources and pupils' work. There was no Christian content or evidence of RE teaching, although I was told that every class had RE at least once a week. This was led by a Learning Support Assistant (LSA) while staff were having their PPA time (ten percent of non-contact time for planning, preparation, and assessment). It is unusual in a church school for an unqualified teacher to be given the responsibility to deliver RE, which is assessed by SIAMS as a contributor to enhancing the Christian ethos of a C of E school.

Emphasis was placed on personal, social and health education (PSHE) and use of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) resources, and the values from SEAL were used effectively throughout the school. Each half term a new value was selected from SEAL and was used as a whole school focus, introduced in an assembly, worked on by the teachers in each class and used as the focus of assembly at least once a week by the deputy head. The stories used came from different world religions and the head teacher explained that she used a Bible story about once a month. Ofsted made a very positive comment in their report noting that 'Excellent personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's success and underpins all the school's strength'. The head did confirm that the school celebrated the main Christian festivals and used the local church for services.

Pupils' personal, social and emotional needs were well supported. Besides the six classroom bases, there was a room called the 'Learning Zone' and a part of the room partitioned off for the 'Star' room. These were both used by the special needs teacher and her support staff to work with individual children or small groups. Outside there was a well-resourced Early

Years play area, a multi-games area, a basketball court, jungle gym, tyres for jumping over and a covered seating area with benches. A recent addition was a large wood cabin with heating and wi-fi connection, called the 'Alpine Learning Zone'. This new facility could seat up to ten pupils and was used for music lessons and small group intervention work.

The head teacher at St Francis' had introduced a 'STOP' box in the entrance area. STOP stood for 'Start Telling Other People' or 'Several Times On Purpose'. Children could put notes in the box if they were worried about any bullying issues. There was a board with pictures of the members of the School Council and the head had introduced the concept of Head Boy and Head Girl, not found in many primary schools but possibly a result of the head having previously worked in the independent sector. Ofsted commented that:

Pupils' behaviour is good, pupils are keen to learn and are unreservedly polite and caring of one another.

Teaching is good because teachers create a calm, welcoming and extremely polite learning environment which fosters good relationships and promotes high expectations of pupils' behaviour.

The head at St Francis' was proud of the number of clubs they could offer, almost as many as St Anne's even though it was a smaller school. They provided clubs in art, choir, wind band, recorder, guitar, football, netball, multi-skills, multi-sports, Italian and science, a real achievement for a small school. Throughout the tour the head emphasized how the children always came first and how her work was focused on providing a really enjoyable, happy and fulfilling time for every pupil every day.

St Francis' SIAS report wrote that:

All members of the school community are supportive of the school's distinctive Christian character and recognize that it has a significant impact upon the personal and spiritual development of the children in its care. The school has strong links to the local church and the wider community.

The head teacher ensures that newly appointed staff support the Christian ethos. The school ethos is rooted in Christian values.

(The report noted that these Christian values needed to be expressed with greater clarity and consistency, as they were referred to by the children as PSHE themes rather than Christian values.)

The head teacher believes that the pupils will experience the Christian message through an enriched curriculum, delivered within the principles of kindness and high levels of care.

The strengths of the school noted by Ofsted were listed as follows:

- Teaching is good because teachers create a calm, welcoming and extremely positive learning environment.
- Pupils are keen to learn and are unreservedly polite and caring of one another.
- The head teacher, the deputy, the strong team of teachers and the support staff have worked hard to raise standards.
- Excellent personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's success and underpins all of the school's strength.

The strengths of the school noted by SIAS were listed as follows:

- The honest and supportive relationships between all members of the school community are based on Christian values.
- The head teacher is committed to nurture and develop the Christian character of the school.
- The school community is receptive to embrace change which impacts positively upon the pupils' personal and spiritual development.
- The governors are committed to support the school's Christian character through their involvement in the daily life of the school.

The school is due a SIAMS inspection and the SIAS report available for analysis had taken place four years ago very soon after the head took up the post at the school. This could account for the SIAS comment regarding the distinctive Christian character of the school being supported by all the community, as the previous head teacher and staff had been more open in their focus on developing Christian distinctiveness. In a church school it is unusual for RE to be taught by a member of the support staff and not a qualified teacher, when considering its importance in the curriculum for developing the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The head teacher explained that the values were still PSHE focused (moral values) and were taken from the SEAL material, despite the SIAS report (four years ago) noting that the values needed to be rooted in Christian theology. St Francis' was a calm welcoming school, with staff working as a united team. It was clear that the head teacher was passionate about providing an enriched curriculum. She put the children first and their happiness, safety and academic success were paramount.

5.7. Conclusion

Each school's Ofsted report noted good or excellent spiritual development, as one would hope to see in a C of E school. Ofsted also saw evidence that each school exhibited a calm, positive learning environment and that behaviour was good. Adults were also commended for their good teaching and respect and care for their pupils. Several common factors were highlighted in the SIAS/SIAMS reports for all six schools: .

- Effective Christian leadership and/or strong leadership.
- Strong partnership links with the parish church and the local community. Effective support by the incumbent and/or foundation governors with a clear direction for a church school.
- The centrality of collective worship to all aspects of school life.
- Christian values, gospel values or PSHE values underpinned the ethos.
- High standards of pupils' personal, social, moral and spiritual development were strengths.

This chapter has set the scene by placing the head teachers in each of their schools in the case study and has summarised the findings of Ofsted and SIAS/SIAMS. Chapter six will seek to analyse the findings from the data gathered at the interviews with the head teachers and their staff, to answer the research question. In the analysis, data will be drawn from the 'thick' description of each school and the summary comments made in their Ofsted reports and SIAS/SIAMS inspection reports.

Chapter 6: Findings and Analysis

6.1. Factors that had motivated the head teachers to apply to their schools

6.2. Head teachers' experience of spirituality in their lives and in their schools

6.3. The influence of the local church

6.4. Head teachers' personal values that have driven their vision

6.5. Head teachers' influence on their school's ethos

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the responses to my questions which have provided evidence to answer the research question: 'To what extent does the head teacher's value system influence the ethos of the Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school?' All the head teachers had been in their schools for at least three years (one of the criteria for selecting the schools for the case study) which had given them time to establish themselves and articulate their vision and values. Analysis of the transcripts of the semi-structured interviews with the head teacher, two class-teachers and two support staff in each school has provided me with an increased understanding of the head teachers' values and visions. The four staff were selected by the head teacher in each school and I could therefore make the assumption that the head was confident that they would give answers that supported the school. In all cases they were very positive about their schools but their views although supportive of the head, often revealed a lack of understanding about changes and new initiatives implemented by the head teacher.

All the schools in the case study are C of E voluntary controlled schools. There is an expectation that C of E schools will, alongside providing the best education as defined by Ofsted, provide a distinctive Christian education, as defined by the National Society of the C of E and assessed in the SIAMS inspection process. My understanding of Christian distinctiveness is based on the criteria promoted in the SIAMS framework, outlined in chapter one. To be effective this Christian distinctiveness needs to be an integral part of the school's ethos.

6.1. Factors that had motivated the head teachers to apply to their schools

This was the first headship (in the state education system) for all six heads and I wanted to discover what had motivated them to apply to become head in their present school. For example had it been that the schools were all small and therefore suitable for a first

headship, that they were all in pleasant village locations, that they were all C of E primary schools or had it been a combination of factors?

For the head at St Anne's it had been both a love for the school itself, with 'the added bonus of it being a Church school', which he believed contributed another important dimension to the children's education. He described the school as being his 'second family', where 'we trust each other, we work hard but have lots of fun'. He felt at home in the school because his personal values aligned with the Christian values he promoted there. The fact that it was a church school had also been important to the head at St Botolph's, who had previously worked in Catholic schools. Her experience in Catholic schools had encouraged her to apply to a Christian denominational school, but she had found notable differences between the Catholic schools and St Botolph's. The Catholic schools had had a far greater emphasis on Christianity, with all staff fully involved in the Catholic ethos. (This aligned to the findings of Johnson et al. 2000.) On her appointment to St Botolph's she had found little evidence of it being a church school, but she was clear about her commitment to church schools:

My strong belief is, whether we believe or not, it is the culture of this country and of this school that children should have an understanding of their own faith or of the culture of the faith of the school.

From the outset the head at St Botolph's had worked to bring Christian values to the school. The head explained that she accepted that the children needed to be taught about other faiths, as they would be living in a country with people practicing different religions, but she believed it was important that the pupils experienced and understood the Christian faith, which she felt was still the basis of the traditional British culture.

It had not been of paramount importance to the head at St Catherine's that it was a C of E school. She explained that having the feeling that she was 'in the right place', in a school which fitted her beliefs and values about education had been more important. This had also been the case for the head at St David's. She had not previously worked in a C of E school, but immediately upon entering the school she had sensed a welcome and warmth and knew it was 'the right school' for her. She explained that the warmth was based on there being people within the school who ensured that everyone who entered the school, regardless of their background, was valued and made to feel welcome. The head contrasted St David's welcoming atmosphere to that in her previous large community school. She agreed that the size of the school could account for the difference, but also believed that a church school should have a more caring approach to anyone visiting the school. The role of the C of E school is to welcome people of all faiths or none and to share such values of care and concern with everyone who visits the school (Way Ahead 2001). Church schools are known

for their caring nature but in this work I am looking for how the head teachers' values have influenced the ethos that results in a caring school. Whether their values have a moral base or a Christian distinctiveness and how influential these have been in shaping the ethos. The atmosphere in each of the schools, the way the pupils talked with each other and the staff, and the welcome I received from both staff and pupils displayed this caring characteristic.

The head at St Egbert's experience on taking up her headship had been very different from the other heads interviewed. As a Christian and a practicing Anglican she felt that working in a C of E school would mean that she would be more able to share her faith than in a Community school, so she had actively sought a headship in a C of E school. Despite unsuccessfully applying for a number of headship posts, she had been seconded as acting head to St Egbert's. Her initial negative impressions of the school changed as she began to settle into the role. She too felt it was 'the right place' for her and as a Christian attributed this to God's guidance. She believed that she could support the school to make improvement in standards and had subsequently become the substantive head teacher. She acknowledged that her faith had provided her with personal strength and confidence to undertake the challenges at St Egbert's. She enjoyed her job and had been successful in leading the school to 'good' as acknowledged by Ofsted.

The head teacher at St Francis' had previously been head of a girl's independent school and prior to that had worked in two C of E primary schools. She had missed the rigour and standards of the state education system and had left the private sector to return to working in a state school. Her reasons for looking for a headship in a C of E school were different from the other head teachers. She wanted the ethos of a church school (which she described later as a 'community that treats everyone with respect') and the opportunities to celebrate the festivals of Christmas, Harvest and Mothering Sunday and believed that this role would be good for her career. Further questioning led to the head explaining that the C of E school had a similar atmosphere to her independent school, along with a small family feel but to further her career in the way that she wanted she needed to be back in the state system. For the head at St Francis' career progression was important and the church school ethos appeared to be instrumental in supporting this.

All six heads, despite their differing reasons for applying for the headships, expressed the opinion that they 'felt' they were in the 'right place'. For the heads at St Anne's, St Catherine's and St David's this feeling was immediate, but for the other three head teachers it had occurred gradually as they worked to change the ethos. Only the heads at St Anne's, St Botolph's and St Egbert's had actively sought headship in a C of E school, believing that a

Christian school added an important dimension to pupils' education, by allowing a greater focus on spiritual development. All three heads had a personal Christian faith which they believed gave them focus and support in their leadership. They all agreed that they could be effective Christian leaders in any school, but acknowledged that it was a privilege to be able to lead a Christian school and the extra dimension that gave.

6.2. Head teachers' experience of spirituality in their lives and in their schools

A head teacher in a C of E school may interpret the term spiritual both in a religious or a secular way, depending upon their own experience and commitment. Best (2011) commends church schools for the spiritual development that runs through their curriculum, along with the focus of enabling pupils to learn to be fully alive, fully human and at one with each other, as expressed through the Christian message. My own belief about the purpose of C of E schools aligns with Wright (1998) who says that a spiritual education based simply on nurturing pupils limits the child from developing greater insights into faith and in itself could be indoctrination.

The interviews were seeking to discern whether the head teachers were aware of spirituality at work in their lives or their schools. Spirituality may be present in religion but is not dependent on it, and may be experienced by those who do not profess religious beliefs explicitly. Both Hull (2002) and McCreery (1996) write that the spiritual is to be found in 'everydayness', which was evident from the spiritual focus in St Egbert's and St Francis'. However, C.S. Lewis expresses the view that every human is 'spiritual' and every educationalist has a responsibility to educate the spirituality of children. He also held that this could be achieved if spirituality was an integral part of everything that went on in school: through the curriculum, the aims of the school, the ethos of the school and the collective worship. Lewis differs from Hull and McCreery in that he believed that this would involve celebrating and sharing the traditions associated with the foundation of the school.

Heads at St Anne's, St Botolph's, St Catherine's and St David's aligned with this view and had made the development of Christian spirituality an important integral focus of their schools. To achieve this focus, Lewis (1978/1943) acknowledged that all members of the school community would need to work together cohesively and agree which values were important. The heads at St Botolph's and St Francis' had actively sought to bring in new staff to replace the staff who were in post when they took up their headships, who were not supportive of the spiritual direction that they planned to foster in their schools.

Woods (2007) defines a spiritual experience as an area of human experience which involves heightened awareness of something profoundly significant, which is beyond what is usually perceived as everyday reality. Her research concluded that most spiritual experiences involve one or more of the following: a feeling of being in touch with an inner strength, a feeling of insightfulness into an incident, a moral conscience or an incident that seemed more real than the everyday. Woods' research also found that spiritual experiences enhanced the capacity of heads for practical action, to exhibit virtues such as courage and emotional sensitivity and increased ethical sensitivity. For her research Woods (2007) had used a question devised by Hardy (1991 p.20: 'Do you feel that you have ever been conscious of and perhaps influenced by some power, whether you call it God or not, which may either appear to be beyond your individual self or partly or even entirely, within your being?' This question was asked to each of the six head teachers in the case study, to help them to articulate their experiences of spirituality. I had chosen not to ask directly whether the head teachers were Christians because I was looking for how their spirituality had affected their personal values. Whilst explaining their spiritual experiences in response to Hardy's question, the heads talked about their interpretation of spirituality. These included their views on Anglican religious practices and if they practiced a personal Christian faith.

The head teacher at St Anne's explained that he was a practicing Christian, but responded to the question by saying that he knew he was a 'lucky person' and felt that he 'created his own luck'. However he also acknowledged divine intervention: 'I suppose I do personally feel a strength that helps me through the day'. The head attributed being successful in securing the headship to luck, but attributed the guidance and daily strength that he felt to his personal faith and belief in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There may be a tension between a person who outwardly confesses to have a personal Christian faith and their acknowledgement of good fortune attributed to 'luck'. The head's manner exuded competence and confidence, and he commended his hard-working staff team for their professionalism and the way they supported his vision and values for the school. Interviews with staff confirmed how the head's Christian faith underpinned his vision and values for the school and positively impacted pupils' experiences.

In contrast, the head at St Egbert's, who also had a personal Christian faith, had started at the school when it was experiencing a vulnerable period, with low pupil numbers, inadequate staff and unsatisfactory pupil progress. She had a strong Christian faith and in a similar way to the head at St Anne's, acknowledged the strength she felt from the guidance of the Holy Spirit. 'God put me in the school so I know he is in everything I do here. God has helped to make the school a calmer happier place.' She believed that God had guided her

appointment, as she had not expected to gain the position due to her limited experience of leadership. She had successfully steered the school to 'good' (Ofsted) and she felt that God had supported her in her day to day role as head teacher.

The head at St Botolph's considered carefully how to respond to the question 'do you feel that you have ever been conscious of and perhaps influenced by some power, whether you call it God or not, which may either appear to be beyond your individual self or partly or even entirely, within your being?'. She was not sure whether to call the 'feeling' she had experienced God or conscience, but said that there was something which connected to her values, and explained that she would always act in accordance to her beliefs. Her previous teaching experience in two Catholic schools had influenced her priorities for the development of pupils' spirituality, as well as her overt introduction of Christian symbols and the focus on prayer and reflection. These had all been evident in her previous schools but had been missing from St Botolph's when she took up the post. This finding aligned with the research by Johnson et al (2000) into how head teachers interpreted their role in the development of their pupils' spirituality. They had concluded that Catholic schools promoted Catholic values and Catholic beliefs more overtly, in contrast to C of E schools who offered a moral education within a more liberal and multicultural context. This moral approach was evident in all six of the case study schools. All the head teachers were anxious to ensure the spiritual education in their schools was relevant and acceptable to pupils of all faiths or none. Whether they used Bible stories extensively, as at St Botolph's and St Anne's, or infrequently as at St Francis', the moral messages in all the schools were made explicit. This will be discussed further in Chapter seven.

The head at St Catherine's gave a full response to the question 'do you feel that you have ever been conscious of and perhaps influenced by some power, whether you call it God or not, which may either appear to be beyond your individual self or partly or even entirely, within your being?' She initially referred to the words of a psalm, 'Be still and know that I am God', and explained that she benefitted from taking time to pause and reflect, because it helped her to work out her priorities. Her responses relates to Flintham's (2010) research. He had asked heads if they had opportunities to have meaningful times of reflection and unanimously they had responded that they needed them not only to replenish energy but also to provide resilience in times of critical incidents. The head at St Catherine's concurred with this view. She believed that she was conscious of a higher power:

I think sometimes in moments of stillness or moments of thinking or trying to come to a decision, then I think there are aspects outside of myself which impact. Not so

much a guiding, but just a kind of leading and clicking perhaps the bits of the jigsaw into place. I felt it was right me coming here and sometimes things just feel right. Some people might say that's divine intervention, some people might say that it's fate, some people may say it's just a series of coincidences. I don't feel like I'm being guided like a rat through a maze, but I do think sometimes I'm just being nudged in one direction or another.'

This concurred with Woods' (2007) findings about being aware of an inner strength and guidance and had also been the experience of the heads at St Anne's and St Egbert's, although they attributed the guidance to the Holy Spirit at work in their lives. (This theme will be developed further in Chapter 7.) The head teacher at St Catherine's did not say that she had a personal faith but experienced a personal spirituality. This spirituality influenced her personal and professional life. She believed that the pupils in her school should be given the experience of a Christian education in line with the foundation of the school. This would provide them with a firm moral foundation and knowledge about Christianity that they could draw on in later life.

The head at St David's, when asked if she had ever been conscious of and perhaps influenced by some power, whether she would call it God or not, responded sarcastically by asking if that was a reference to Michael Gove (the then UK Education Secretary). This may suggest that she was distancing herself from having to respond to the question. She did, however, say she had not been aware of any, but believed in a strength within herself that was a conviction that helped her in her work. Although she sought to develop her pupils' understanding of spiritual values, she did not describe herself as having any personal spiritual experiences.

The head at St Francis' used the word 'luck' in her response, but unlike the head at St Anne's who had mentioned luck, she did not qualify her response with any spiritual acknowledgement. St Francis' head believed that people made their own luck. She explained that she worked hard and had built a good team around her and believed that 'if a person was firm in their purpose then good things would happen'. The head was clear that she wanted to give her pupils the opportunity to develop their spirituality by being exposed to a range of faiths. There was a lack of evidence of any Christian distinctiveness in the displays around the school.

Results from current research and from literature (Dalai Lama, 1999; Copley, 2000; Wright, 2000; Woods, 2007) make it clear that people have different conceptions of spirituality which

can be strong motivating forces within a person's private and professional life. All the heads in this study were prepared to discuss their personal views and to talk freely about their schools. They all spoke of the importance of educating their pupils to ask questions and seek for a purpose and meaning for their lives. Five of the six head teachers described feelings of spiritual support, which they expressed in different terms, such as 'Christian strength', 'guidance of the Holy Spirit, 'conscience' or a 'feeling'. These feelings concurred with those of Woods (2007) in that heads felt enhanced strength that had helped to spur them on to practical action and increased empathy and sensitivity. The strength of their 'spiritual commitment' was evident to their teaching staff, through the way they led collective worship and related to staff, pupils, parents, governors and visitors to the school. It also influenced the focus placed on spiritual and Christian development within the life of their schools. This study agreed with the findings of Flintham (2010) that heads of faith schools display similar professional attitudes to those of secular colleagues, but the difference is that those with a faith talk about their work in the language of faith, based on their own personal and professional values and attitudes.

The SIAMS inspection process is focused on assessing what the C of E school is doing to further develop children's understanding of the Trinity: God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and the Christian message, and not whether the school is making 'converts' to Christianity. SIAMS looks to see if Christianity is embedded into the pedagogy of the school and 'how effectively the Christian character supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners, whether they are Christian, of other faiths or of none' (SIAMS 2013, p.4). All six of the head teachers would need to give an account of their focus on pupils' spiritual development at their next SIAMS.

The head teachers at St Anne's, St Botolph's and St Egbert's all acknowledged a personal Christian faith and a commitment to leading their schools in a way that they felt displayed their faith. The head at St Anne's expressed his religious faith in an open evangelical way, as he talked freely about the influence his faith had had on his leadership. The head at St Botolph's was from an Anglo-Catholic background and expressed her faith through her caring, pastoral leadership with Christian icons and images in evidence around the school. In contrast, the head at St Egbert's although displaying many caring characteristics, preferred to keep her beliefs more private. She shared them in her interview but did not feel she should be more open about her own Christian faith in-case parents did not want their children explicitly exposed to Christianity.

None of the heads at St Catherine's, St David's or St Francis' had a personal faith, but all saw their role as leaders in a C of E school as requiring them to encourage the development of spirituality in their pupils. The focus they placed on the development of Christianity and Christian values varied according to their own personal values.

6.3. The influence of the local church

The Way Ahead Report (2001) had acknowledged the importance of local clergy supporting the development of spirituality through Christian distinctiveness in the C of E School and their support for the school's leadership. The report (2001, p.53) states that 'Church schools... should see themselves as a living, collaborating part of the Church community, each knowing that it is supported by the prayers and ministry of the other'. The report urges all elements of the church community to look afresh at the way the school and the church can work together. Each head teacher in the case study acknowledged the support and involvement of the incumbent of their local Anglican church, but the part played by the incumbent varied across the schools. I believe that the support and involvement of the church through the incumbent is pivotal in supporting the head teachers in their drive to develop a Christian ethos based on their values.

The incumbent at St Anne's was referred to as 'a friend' by the head and the staff and as 'a visible presence, well known by the pupils'. He knew all the staff and pupils by name. He was in school every week; he was a governor, led collective worship, taught some RE lessons and had even gone as a helper on school trips and residential visits. He was an integral part of the school community; available to support both staff and pupils. He actively encouraged the head in the development of the Christian distinctiveness of the school which was based on his Christian values. The incumbent worked with the head and deputy to plan the worship programme and to deliver training to the staff and governors on developing the Christian ethos.

St Botolph's head spoke of her passion for developing the Christian distinctiveness and welcomed the support from two local clergy, one who was specifically employed to develop children's work in the parish. As at St Anne's, the clergy were regularly in school. Every week at least one of the clergy led collective worship and the church was used at least twice a term for services. The children's worker had helped to develop pupil involvement in worship and their understanding of prayer. One class teacher reported openness between the children and the clergy. St Botolph's had also organised governor and staff training from the clergy and their diocesan education adviser on spirituality and reflecting on the school's

distinctiveness as a C of E school. Both the head teachers at St Anne's and St Botolph's welcomed clergy involvement and saw the clergy support as integral, not only for the pastoral support of pupils and staff, but for the development of spirituality and of the Christian ethos of their schools.

St Catherine's also benefitted from the local church having two workers: an associate minister and a school's worker. The associate minister was the vice-chair of governors. The head knew that the relationship between the head and the incumbent was an important one, and she acknowledged that the C of E school is an integral part of the Anglican parish's work with children and families (Dearing, 2001). As a nominal Anglican, the head favoured a more traditional approach to worship, compared to the local church which was described frankly by the head as 'evangelical sin smashers'. This had resulted in some initial differences which had related to the churchmanship of the clergy being different from her preferred churchmanship. However, compromises had been made, and these had strengthened the relationship between the head and the church leaders. As well as the regular support at St Catherine's with collective worship, the school's worker led a 'Jas' club (Jesus in school) as a regular after-school activity. Two teachers and two support staff mentioned the popularity and success of the 'Jas' club, which was always over-subscribed. There was an acknowledgement that the head welcomed visitors to take assemblies, but there was no mention of clergy support for the staff in school. It appeared that the head at St Catherine's had a more defined role for the clergy, with them involved in supporting the spiritual development of pupils rather than the adults in the school. The head preferred to keep the influence of the clergy firmly under her control, not wanting overt evangelism to take place in her school.

The influence of the local church at St David's was very limited. The head talked little about the local church or the influence of the clergy but explained that the school used the church for termly services. The parish had recently inducted a new incumbent who had still to get to know the school. The school held a 'Messy Church' club, supported by church members, which is a club that encourages children to think about the meaning of the Bible stories through practical craft activities. The class teacher's view was that the previous incumbent had not been 'a child-friendly vicar', and other staff also acknowledged that he had not got involved in the school. The lack of clergy involvement could also help to explain the head's reluctance to discuss spirituality, as she had not had the opportunity to build up a relationship with the local church since becoming a head and she herself was not a church attender.

St Egbert's head described the school as: 'A Christian school and not necessarily a traditional Anglican school', referring to the lack of any visual material relating to 'church' and worship being less structured and with little reference to the traditions of the C of E. She did, however, encourage regular visits from the incumbent and the curate from their local Anglican church. Both clergy remained in school after leading assembly, to be available to talk with staff at break. The school also used the local church for festival services. One of the class teachers interviewed noted that the clergy were very approachable and supported all members of the school community.

They squeeze your hand and you just know that they are thinking of you and it makes you feel as if you are special ...you can talk to them about anything. You can feel the bond between the head and the local vicar and their friendship and that's positively reinforced in front of the children.

Although the head teacher favoured a moral approach to spirituality, with the focus on PSHE values rather than Christian values, she was happy for the clergy to lead Christian worship and to focus on the traditions of the C of E, which she chose not to do herself. She wanted her school to be accessible to everyone in the village, without it being overtly a C of E school.

The head at St Francis' spoke positively about the newly appointed incumbent to their village. The head had very strong views on developing pupils' spirituality without focusing specifically on Christianity or Anglican traditions. 'I don't want to ram Christianity down their throats. What I would like to see are the values from every religion coming to make them whole, rounded people.' It appeared that the incumbent was prepared to follow the head's direction, using stories from the Quran as well as the Bible when he led collective worship. The local church was used for festival services, but the influence of the church was restricted by the head's desire to deliver a full range of faiths, with equal emphasis being placed on the different world religions. The role of the head teacher in the C of E school is not to 'ram Christianity down [pupils'] throats' which St Francis' head implied took place in some schools, but to 'readily articulate the impact of explicit Christian values on the lives of learners'. Their role is also to 'ensure that the whole curriculum is informed by a distinctive Christian vision' (SIAMS 2013). I believe that St Francis' head teacher would struggle to do this. It will be interesting to know if once established in the parish, the vicar is more proactive in leading distinctive Christian worship or whether his Christian influence with the pupils and staff continues to be restricted by the head teacher. The head teacher had been selected by the governors, who may not have been pro-active in ensuring that the head

teacher's beliefs and values would support and enhance the development of the Christian ethos within the school.

The first class teacher interviewed at St Francis' explained that it was only when the incumbent came in to lead collective worship that she felt that it was a Christian school 'and of course the name'. This acknowledged how little the school focused on its Christian foundation. The two support staff were not aware that a new incumbent had been appointed. It would appear that the new incumbent was not yet a regular visitor to school and had not yet embraced his responsibilities to the church school in his parish. The Dearing Report (2001, p.54) outlines the responsibility of the incumbent:

All the clergy ...will want to demonstrate their loving care for their Church school, in counselling staff experiencing personal difficulties, in being seen often in and around the school, and in developing the framework of ongoing relationships between church and school. The incumbent will encourage the school to see that the children become familiar with the main liturgy.

Although in a voluntary controlled school the number of foundation governors who represent the church are in the minority, (in a voluntary aided they would be the majority), they still play an important strategic role in supporting the Christian ethos. It will be the responsibility of the foundation governors, along with the head teacher, to ensure that the incumbent becomes involved in the Christian life of the school.

Each of the head teachers had a different experience of Anglican worship. Visits from the local clergy, their support in leading collective worship and in supporting the RE curriculum will be vital to ensure that the traditions of the C of E are shared with the pupils and staff. They also support the head in their role of establishing values that underpin the school ethos.

6.4. Head teachers' personal values that have driven their vision

Further questions asked the heads to explain their own personal values and if these had influenced the development of their school values. 'Values are principles and fundamental convictions which act as justifications for activity in the public domain, and as general guides to private behaviour' (Halstead and Pike, 2006, p.24). O'Brian (2009, p.30) writes that 'a value is an eternal truth about human nature that an individual believes is important and right'. Furthermore, he believes that a value by its definition can only be embraced

voluntarily, so the values of an organisation need to be internalised by everyone within it. A person's values matter to them as they are aspirations that form goals to work towards and by which a person can judge their effectiveness, as defined by achieving personal and professional success.

St Anne's head explained that his Christian faith had influenced his personal and professional life. He had written the school ethos statement, 'I want to run faster than I hoped, reach higher than I dreamed and achieve more than I thought', which was underpinned by his personal Christian values of respect, caring, friendship, compassion and aspiration. These values were recognised by the school staff; they believed that the pupils would know their Christian significance and be able to recall Bible stories that illustrated them. The head was confident that his values would be the same whether he worked in a C of E school or one with no faith affiliation, although he acknowledged that it was easier in a church school to shape the values into a whole school Christian ethos. He used Bible stories to illustrate the values and to make them relevant to the children. 'Jesus made sure that everyone was important, that we respect people, that we show compassion. I suppose it puts a context to it, rather than just saying this is how you behave at school.' The head's focus on grounding the values in the teachings of Jesus meant that he could have described them as 'gospel values', the term used by the heads at St Catherine's and St David's, but he had chosen to call them Christian values because they were his personal values that were important to his Christian faith.

The Christian values shared by St Anne's head were very personal to him. He confirmed that pupils and staff would know that these values were deep-rooted in his personality. 'There's a great mutual respect about everybody here and they respect the values that are important to me'. The class teacher confirmed that the head's values were 'who he is, with high standards and high expectations'. Another class teacher acknowledged that the head felt very strongly about how the children treated each other and that stemmed from his Christian values. She recognised that the school's values were moral values similar to those she had experienced in a Community school, but that the head brought his religious thoughts and references from the Bible into the collective worship where the values were made explicit as Christian values. The two support staff both agreed that the head ensured that staff and pupils felt appreciated and valued by the way they were treated and spoken to. One commented that 'the Christian values impact on what goes on everyday but they are not in your face'. She was aware of how the head based the school values on the life of Jesus and other stories in the Bible but the head teacher did not try to influence what the staff believed. There was however, an expectation that they would support the Christian values as they

underpinned the ethos. The head's Christian values aligned with the Christian values which were evident in school before his appointment, but through his charismatic personality had been accepted, developed and embedded within the school. The head's values were common courtesies and expectations for all good schools but he was effective in using the values to deliver Christian distinctiveness by illustrating them from the life and teachings of Jesus. This was recognised and acknowledged in both the school's last Ofsted and SIAS inspections.

St Botolph's head also agreed that her personal beliefs had shaped her as a person and as a head teacher and acknowledged that at home she was reserved, but that at school she exhibited a confident, outgoing personality, which was her professional persona. She talked very little about herself personally, but in common with most school leaders she was passionate about her role in providing the best possible education that would help her pupils to become independent learners. The head teacher had worked with the children to select eight Christian values: caring, happy, responsibility, value learning, being helpful, being creative, offering friendship and feeling safe. The head acknowledged that these values were important to her and she believed that by embedding them into all areas of school life they would help the development of the school's distinctive Christian character. Both class teachers, reflecting on the head's value system, acknowledged that she valued team work and the contributions that everyone made. One of the support staff recognised that the head had strong values as to how she wanted the children to be 'moulded'. By this she was referring to the Christian values that the head believed that both the pupils and staff should follow. None of the four staff interviewed could articulate the head's personal values, but all spoke of her professional persona. They were all aware of and working towards embedding the Christian values introduced by the head. These values had become the focus for collective worship and the whole school behaviour policy, and were referred to in every aspect of school life. The head's passion for developing her school's Christian distinctiveness, through embedding the Christian values, had been embraced by the staff that were interviewed and were evident around the school through visual material: prayer corners, children's illustrations of the values and Christian icons.

The head at St Catherine's willingly talked about herself and her personal values. She emphasised that she had 'a really heightened sense of right and wrong' and that 'a moral imperative is really important to me'. Her values, if introduced in a community school, would have been core values based on her moral imperative; instead, being in a C of E school, she had called them gospel values. (The issue of a moral imperative will be discussed in Chapter seven.) There were eighteen values: respect, responsibility, courage, well-mannered, hope,

creativity, happiness, trust, forgiveness, fairness, caring, pride, generosity, wisdom, perseverance, independence, friendship and honesty. She had introduced gospel values to the school eighteen months before my visit, and in her interview explained that if she could begin her time at the school again, she would have worked with the children to establish the gospel values as soon as she had taken up the post of head teacher. Instead, being an inexperienced head in her first headship, guided by the demands of the Local Authority advisers, she had concentrated on the standards of the teaching and learning which were in need of improvement. In hindsight, she realised that the values underpinned everything in school. For the children to embed gospel values in all areas of school life would have laid firm foundations, which she believed would have resulted in the improvement of all areas including the teaching and learning.

The head articulated clearly the responsibility she felt in leading a C of E school:

I think that there is a tradition and a history behind being head of a church school which you don't get as the head of a community school and it's that continuity (the passing on of the Christian values of a C of E school) ... and the fact that you are part of this kind of chain. A bit like the Olympic torch relay, you know, you're taking the baton of a church school on from people that have done it previously.

She acknowledged that her gospel values could be called core values as they would be relevant for children in any educational setting, but in a church school they were linked to the gospel message from the example of the life of Jesus. This ability to imbue Christian values more easily in the C of E school than the community school was a view expressed by St Anne's head. St Botolph's head had also talked about the continuity of faith and culture, 'Children should have an understanding of their faith or of the culture of the faith of the school, upon which our nation is based'.

All the adults interviewed at St Catherine's mentioned gospel values, how they were the focus of worship and more recently were being used as the foundation for the introduction of Philosophy for Children, (P4C). P4C is a movement that aims to teach reasoning and argumentative skills to children. These acquisitions are believed to support the development of other cognitive and academic skills and assist learning generally. Through the use of P4C pupils were learning to question the importance and impact of the gospel values as they underpin the curriculum. Each term two values were selected and these became a focus throughout the curriculum. These values were clearly displayed around the school. One teacher at St Catherine's acknowledged that the head had brought her own values to the

school, and although they were similar to the values that were already established, the head had celebrated and shared them more. Another teacher praised the work of the head and believed that she had very strong Christian values and that by focusing on gospel values they had become a more Christian school. The support staff acknowledged that 'The school's values reflect the head and her values', but made no reference to them being specific Christian values. This could be explained by the fact that support staff do not always have the opportunity to know the head personally or to attend staff meetings where changes are discussed, or to the fact that this staff member was only part-time and did not attend collective worship. St Catherine's head had acknowledged that there were Christian values in the school before her appointment but she believed that they were rarely mentioned. She had specifically chosen the values with the children and referenced them from the teachings of Jesus in the Bible, which enabled them to be called gospel values. These gospel values were highlighted on every occasion, so that they became the focus for pupil behaviour and all work and play undertaken in school. For the head at St Catherine's the gospel values were based on the values she believed were important for a church school, rather than on her own personal values which were formed from her moral imperative.

The head at St David's had worked with Edison Learning at her previous school, where the staff, using the Edison materials, had considered the importance for a school to have an agreed set of values that would underpin all areas of school and impact upon teaching and learning. (St Catherine's head had also come to this conclusion). Edison Learning works in collaboration with primary schools to bring about lasting improvement against the key measures that define school success and the achievement of individual goals and aspirations. It works with the leadership of the school to clarify vision and to develop shared values which will underpin the pupils' and staff behaviour and the curriculum. St David's head believed that the adults in the school should promote the values which had been agreed were important to the particular school through words and actions. In this way they would demonstrate them to the pupils, leading by example and maintaining a positive attitude by being exemplary role models. The head had explored eight values with Edison in her last post and on her suggestion pupils and staff had adopted the same eight: respect, responsibility, courage, wisdom, integrity, compassion, fairness and hope, which they called gospel values. The head acknowledged that these eight values were her personal moral values and impacted upon her professional life:

My values are entwined; they're linked in with those gospel values. They're the way I hope to lead my life with integrity. They're all things that I strongly believe in. I think a moral code is just vital for a child to succeed in life in all different ways.

The same eight values in her previous school had been called 'core values'. The difference between the Community school and the C of E school is not the choice of the values themselves, but how they are taught and embedded in the school. How this is undertaken is dependent upon the emphasis placed upon them by the head teacher. St David's head spoke as enthusiastically about the need to embed gospel values as the head at St Catherine's had done, as both saw the values as important foundations for the development of a Christian distinctiveness within a C of E school. For both these head teachers the values they had chosen for their schools were their own moral or core values but because they were leading a Christian school, they believed that the values needed to be underpinned with the gospel and illustrated by the life of Jesus Christ.

The class teacher at St David's believed it was the head's personality and values that had resulted in the embedding of gospel values and that a different head with different values would lead the school in a different way. The class teacher selected honesty and trust as two values she discerned in the head teacher, but she did not equate these to being Christian values, although they were two of the school's gospel values. When asked about the gospel values that were evident around the school on displays and in the classroom, the teacher responded that these were important values whatever your faith, or if you had no faith at all. The difference in the school was that they tried to explain why they were gospel values with reference to the Bible. The action point from the school's last SIAS report had been to embed the values in Christian theology, which appeared to have been achieved. One of the support staff however, accepted that the school's values were called gospel values but felt that the school was Christian with 'a smaller 'c' than in other schools'. By this she explained that she was referring more to the lack of engaging with C of E traditions than to the Christian focus on gospel values. This could be explained by the limited clergy involvement. The head at St David's had expressed no personal Christian faith, though she strongly believed that she had a responsibility to lead her C of E school towards increased Christian distinctiveness. Her focus on gospel values and her insistence on the staff modelling these to the pupils indicated that she was indeed committed to this.

The head at St Egbert's also agreed that her personal values and beliefs had shaped her as a person. While working as a deputy in a school she had learned the importance of treating everyone with respect. She believed that it was an important leadership skill and an effective way to lead by example. She acknowledged that working in a C of E school enabled her to share more of her faith than in a Community school, but rather than commending the support provided for head teachers by the diocese, she felt that they had put unnecessary pressure on her. She had not appreciated being told how to lead her assemblies, or how to make her

school more explicitly a C of E school. As this was her first headship, she had wanted the freedom to make her own decisions and to prove that she was capable of leading the school effectively. The head had focused on bringing the shared values of respect and honesty into the school which she felt were not evident when she had taken up the post. These were two of the head's personal values which she acknowledged underpinned how she carried out her leadership role. A class teacher reported that she had never heard the head talk about her faith, but explained that 'I know the way that she behaves and the way that I see her treating other people and that tells you more about a person than what they say or believe'. One of the support staff acknowledged that the head brought a 'Christian viewpoint into the school' as in her assemblies she frequently talked about her faith and referred to what she had heard in church on Sunday. The values of respect and sharing were mentioned by all four of the staff interviewed and they acknowledged the shared, moral emphasis placed by the head on achieving these in the school.

The St Egbert's school staff all referred to 'collective worship' as 'assembly', a term used in community schools but not encouraged by SIAMS as a term to describe the act of Christian worship that should take place daily in a C of E school. As the only school in the village, the head put little focus on the school being a faith school, despite verbally extolling the contribution that C of E schools can make to the education of pupils. The head at St Egbert's was clear that she did not want to be overt about her Christian faith, in case this alienated parents in the village, but from her interview it appeared that her faith underpinned her work in school and was acknowledged by her staff. The head focused on the shared values of respect and sharing and used the PSHE curriculum to deliver a programme of moral education. This was in contrast to St Botolph's where the gospel values were taught through the RE and worship curriculum. As all the schools has an Anglican foundation, there is the legitimacy and there should be the expectation, that they will have a Christian ethos based on Christian values.

The head at St Francis' talked openly about her beliefs and had firm views on her personal character and values and how these had affected her work in the school.

I'm quite a calm person, I'm not somebody who shouts and throws my toys out of the pram and I'm not hierarchical. However, there comes a point when I have to say, well I'm the head and actually this is going to happen. I'm straight down the line and I say what I think. I believe in honesty and I believe in being open as well.

The head talked about the difference in the school, such as the change of ethos and her more direct approach to leadership, now that all but one of the teachers and all support staff were new and chosen by her. She explained that the majority of the staff at the school prior to her appointment had chosen to leave, as they had not been comfortable with her radically 'different approach' to leading the school to the previous head. Prior to the changes she had made, the present head had felt insecure in her role; 'it's wonderful now because you can walk into any room and you know you're safe as a person, you know that people are not talking about you in an unprofessional manner'.

When asked which values she thought were most important she chose 'courtesy, mutual respect, perseverance, kindness, and friendship. These were the head's personal values and not the values she selected to be taught to the children through worship and the curriculum. It was the task of the deputy (not the head teacher) to choose the values from the SEAL materials for this. The deputy explained that under the previous head there had been an overt emphasis upon the Christian aspects of the school. Things had changed as the values of the two heads were very different, both in their personal beliefs and practices. She explained that, 'now we are not so overt, but we are still caring and friendly and we mark all the Christian festivals as well the festivals of other religions'. This response indicated that there appeared to be little Christian distinctiveness and the comments could refer to a school with no faith affiliation. The RE syllabus for all primary schools in England has the expectation that the main Christian festivals will be studied along with the main festivals in other religions. The deputy described the values taught to the children as personal, social and health education (PSHE) values. When asked, she was unable to list these values, indicating that they were not a school priority or focus. Despite this she did however believe that:

Our values and the themes that we have every half term, I think that they reflect our Christian nature. This is a conversation that we had recently with our adviser, because I think we feel that we do lots of things that show that we're a C of E school, but perhaps they're not seen to be high enough profile.

The interviews at St Francis' certainly upheld this view. The deputy did say that the spiritual aspect of school was something that was 'voluntary'. By this she meant that children are expected to fully engage in the curriculum and there were also expectations that pupils would take a full part in all sporting activities, but whether pupils chose to listen to, believe or follow anything spiritual was completely their choice. The school expected the children to learn about the Christian calendar and about world religions, but 'whether or not they chose

to join in with the school prayer or hymn is very much still left up to them'. It appeared that there was no expectation that the children needed to be active participants in a daily act of collective worship, which indicated that collective worship was not seen as an important part of the Christian life of St Francis'. The Evaluation Schedule for SIAMS (2013, p.10) states that inspectors are looking for 'the extent to which collective worship is distinctively Christian, setting out the values of the school in their Christian content' and 'how well collective worship enables participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and a Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit'. It would seem that St Francis' would struggle to achieve these expectations at their next SIAMS. The support staff believed that the head had made 'her mark' and that the school was now 'more orderly, more open and friendlier'. They attributed this to the head teacher's professionalism. St Francis' PSHE values were not clearly evident either as gospel values or core values, but focused on caring, friendship and respect, without the Christian foundation evident at St Anne's and St Egbert's. At St Francis' the head teacher appeared to use her personal moral values to direct her leadership but the values taught to the pupils and on which the school curriculum and worship was based, were the PSHE values from the SEAL curriculum. This would seem to be depriving the pupils of the Christian education which should be delivered in a C of E school.

The head at St Catherine's used the expression 'walking the talk' to describe how she worked and believed that gospel values would be made more meaningful to the pupils if they were modelled by all the adults in school. St David's head also expected her staff to model the gospel values and the heads at St Botolph's and St Francis' had recruited new staff to support their values and visions for their schools.

6.5. Head teachers' influence on their school's ethos

The interviews identified the values that each head teacher personally felt important, and those that they believed were important for their pupils. Further questioning of the head teachers and staff sought to discern whether the schools' ethos had developed from the heads' personal values or the ones taught to the pupils, or if they were the same. Freiberg (1999, p.1) defines a school ethos as 'the heart and soul of the school', and emphasises the importance for the head teacher to establish an ethos which embraces the values which they believe are important for their school.

At St Anne's, the ethos was based on the head's Christian values that had resulted in a nurturing atmosphere and high expectations for work and behaviour, for adults and children alike. As a practicing Christian the head had been in agreement with the Christian ethos and

the school values that were already in place when he started at the school. He had not made any significant changes but his values had enhanced the school ethos. He described everyone in the school as being on a journey, working together to improve the teaching and learning, providing more exciting and innovative challenges for the pupils, as well as enhancing the Christian distinctiveness of the school's ethos. One class teacher described the school's ethos as 'warm and friendly, with a village feel, where everybody knows everybody'. She confirmed the head's view, that the school had always had a Christian ethos, but felt that the head had embedded and enhanced it: 'lots of what goes on here is driven by the head'. The two support staff described the ethos as 'caring, for both the children and the staff'. They both described how the head encouraged the staff to work effectively as a team, supporting each other and sharing skills and expertise. One member of the teaching staff believed the school displayed the characteristics of any 'good' school, (using Ofsted's criteria) where there was support, care and guidance accompanying good teaching and declared that, in her view, it was 'not distinctively Christian'. She was the only person interviewed at St Anne's that held that view. She had only been at the school for half a term and had previously not worked in a C of E school. She had expected the Christian distinctiveness to be more overt and with a greater focus on the Anglican traditions. However, one of the support staff believed that the ethos was driven by the Christian nature of the school and its close links with the local church. Staff who had worked in the school for several years were clear that the small family feel of a village school had remained the same and that there had always been implicit Christian values which formed the ethos. St Anne's head and some members of his staff agreed that he had enhanced the existing Christian ethos. His staff spoke of how his enthusiasm had been crucial in the enhancing and embedding of the ethos, which was based on a set of Christian values that aligned with his personal ones: caring, friendship, respect and hard work. The Christian ethos had been evident through the creative use of the school buildings and the outside areas and through displays. The calm, friendly, supportive atmosphere throughout the school also provided supportive evidence.

The head at St Botolph's was very clear about her school ethos.

Our school's Christian ethos gives us skills to build a strong foundation for faith and exploration. We are happy, caring and safe and take responsibility for ourselves and our environment. Everything we learn gives us the confidence to continue our journey through life.

The school had worked with the governors to establish the ethos, which was very much based on the children's views of the school with its Christian values. The head admitted that

she had focused on the Christian signs and the symbols that were evident around the school and the way in which adults and children talked about God. Her experience in Catholic schools had encouraged her to be overt in visually displaying the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The head believed that the staff now embraced the Christian ethos. Staff that had felt uncomfortable with the head's focus had left and others appointed who were happy with the head's new approach. The first teacher interviewed was clear that it was 'very much a Christian ethos in that we try to promote caring and thinking about others and supporting each other as much as possible.' The second teacher acknowledged that the school now had a Christian ethos because the head had a clear vision for a church school. 'We definitely do more around the Christian ethos and we always reflect back to Christianity when we're speaking with the children or dealing with children or their behaviour'. Both the support staff interviewed described the school as a caring, Christian school, where there was a feeling of respect and kindness, and where the focus for the ethos came from the head teacher. One teacher told me that prior to the present head's appointment the ethos had been nominally Christian, but with the present head the ethos had developed and become overtly Christian, in line with her chosen values for the school. This view was supported by both of the support staff. The head had built a supportive team around her and was taking the school on a journey (as St Anne's head had also described) to develop the Christian ethos. 'I've changed my personnel and I've got people who've come in knowing what my ethos is and what I expect from them...we are all learning together'. She had introduced the Christian values, which aligned with her personal values, used the Bible to explain them to the children and these now underpinned the Christian ethos.

The head at St Catherine's described the ethos of her school as 'developing children's potential in a caring, Christian community'. She believed that she had changed the ethos and that the change was evident by how the school 'felt'. The first teacher interviewed believed it was a Christian school which was very welcoming and with 'a family feel'. (This expression will be discussed further in Chapter seven.) She supported strong gospel values and described the impact of the values: 'If our school was a stick of rock and we were to cut it, you would see the values through the middle'. The teacher believed that the Christian ethos had become stronger under the present head teacher and there had been changes to reflect that. The head believed that to be a successful Christian school (as defined by SIAMS) the school needed to embrace strong Christian values and these values showed through in everything she did. Although not a practicing Christian herself, she willingly accepted the responsibilities that came with leading a church school. Many of the values were already evident in the school, as core expectations, but she explained that they were not a focus and nor were they described by the staff or children as gospel values. Everyone

was now aware of the gospel values and they were celebrated in worship and incorporated into the curriculum. The other class teacher felt that the ethos had changed little, but it had been enhanced through the emphasis on gospel values. Both of the support staff agreed that the head had changed the ethos, because now everybody within the school upheld the Christian ethos and promoted it and celebrated it. St Catherine's school had had a Christian ethos under the previous head, but the present head had, by introducing gospel values, ensured that the Christian ethos permeated through the whole of the school, impacting upon pupils' behaviour, the collective worship, the curriculum and the relationships between staff, pupils, parents and governors. She had been clear about her expectations and the staff had willingly embraced these and promoted the Christian ethos and helped to embed it in all areas of school life.

St David's head, when describing what attracted her initially to the school had explained: 'when I inherited it, it was a beautiful school with a beautiful ethos and I'm proud to say I feel that that's continued. We didn't have the gospel values then, but the ethos was founded on mutual love and respect and a very strong moral code'. She believed that she had not made significant changes to the ethos, but had linked the ethos to gospel values, which once fully embedded, had influenced standards, both academic and behavioural, because they provided children with aspirations to achieve. One of the teachers expressed the view that the ethos was caring, and supported children to achieve good academic standards. A member of the support staff described the ethos as 'a safe environment in which the children can learn and thrive and develop all kinds of interests whether it be academic, sports or artistic'. Like the head, she felt that the ethos had not changed, but that the children now knew what the values were based upon, not just moral values but gospel values. Another member of the support staff described the differences under the head as 'a continuation' from before. The head had expressed no personal Christian spirituality, but acknowledged the responsibility she felt leading a C of E school and the need to develop the Christian ethos. As at St Catherine's, the introduction of gospel values had helped to focus and embed the ethos on Christian values. At St Catherine's and at St David's their ethos had not changed significantly, but had been enhanced, in that everyone in the school community knew the values that were expected of them and which formed the foundation upon which their ethos was based. St David's head teacher's personal values were moral values but as a professional leading a C of E school she had worked to give a biblical foundation to the values. Not all the staff could detect how this had changed the ethos, but the head teacher believed that her changes had led to the strengthening of the Christian ethos.

St Egbert's head believed that she had been proactive in changing her school ethos because when she first arrived at the school a lack of respect was permeating through every aspect of school life. She described the ethos now as 'a calm and really friendly place, where pupils feel safer and happier and show respect'. She had worked hard with the staff, pupils and governors to ensure equal opportunities and respectful behaviour ran through all the policies and practices. She did not mention the ethos being specifically Christian. One of the class teachers described the ethos in the school as 'respecting others and treating people the way you would want to be treated', and the other class teacher described the ethos by explaining that the children have lovely manners, show respect and behave well. A member of the support staff emphasised that the ethos ran through everything that went on in school. The word that re-occurred through all the interviews at St Egbert's was 'respect'. There was no reference by the staff to the ethos being based on Christian values; however, the head firmly believed that her Christian faith influenced her actions and her words in school. Although the school had not chosen to introduce specific gospel or Christian values to the children, the shared values of respect and caring underpinned the school ethos and were instilled by a Christian head and supported by the clergy. As noted earlier in this chapter, the head teacher wanted her school to be fully Inclusive; with all aspects of the social and spiritual curriculum being appropriate for pupils of all faiths or none. She had made a conscious effort not to introduce Christian/gospel values. Instead, the head had established an ethos based on the moral values of respect and caring; values that should be evident in all schools, regardless of their foundation.

St Francis' head was clear that the ethos was 'remarkably different than it was', as she had changed it from overtly Christian. She described the school as a community that treated everyone with respect. 'We encapsulate everything and everybody. I believe that the values from every religion should come to make rounded people'. The head was clear that she felt her responsibility was to provide the pupils with information about a range of faiths and that Christianity should not have a greater focus than other faiths. The deputy described the ethos as 'a caring school with a family atmosphere', referring to its small size and the fact that every child was known by name by all the staff. The support staff said that it was a 'happy school' and that the ethos ensured 'equal opportunities' for staff and pupils. Although these descriptions should all be evident within a Christian school, they are found in most schools, regardless of their foundation. (This will be discussed further in the next chapter.) The descriptions of the ethos at St Francis' were devoid of Christian references. The school environment was also devoid of any evidence of Christian distinctiveness. The ethos had changed significantly with the present head. Almost all the staff who had worked with the previous head had left and the present head had appointed staff in agreement with her ethos

and the direction she was leading the school. St Francis' head had been very influential in changing the school ethos. She had given the responsibility to her deputy to select values from the PSHE curriculum, moral values, for the pupils to focus upon. The head's own personal vision was to move the school away from focusing on Christian values to adopting the moral values of respect and nurturing, which aligned with her beliefs, and could be applied across a range of faiths.

The head teachers at St Anne's, St Botolph's, St Catherine's and St David's had all embraced the Christian ethos which had already been established in their schools and enhanced the ethos by their own personal and professional attitudes and values. They had all led their staff by example and modelled the Christian ethos to pupils, staff, parents and governors. The head at St Anne's talked openly about his personal Christian commitment, while the head at St Botolph used visual prompts to illustrate the Christian values and ethos of the school. St Catherine's and St David's heads had accepted the responsibilities that went with leading a C of E school and had enhanced their Christian ethos by focussing on gospel values, and using Bible stories about the life of Jesus to illustrate the relevance of the values to the pupils' lives. St Egbert's head was faithful to her personal Christian values in the way she carried out her professional duties in the school, but her focus had been on developing an ethos of respect and caring, two shared values that are important in all schools regardless of their foundation. The head at St Francis' had allowed her personal values to have a greater impact on the school's ethos than in the other five schools. She had actively changed the majority of the staff, by appointing new teachers and support staff, who were in support of her drive towards the values of respect and nurturing. Within the first few years of taking up the post, the head had changed the ethos from overtly Christian, to a school where staff acknowledged that the only visible sign that it was a church school was the name of the school on the board outside. There appeared to be little or no evidence within the school of its Christian distinctiveness.

Although the head teachers in all six schools acknowledged the pressures from the government and the Local Authority to implement new initiatives and to continue to improve pupils' levels of attainment, none felt that these pressures had prevented them from developing the values that were important to them. This had not been the view of Wright, (2001) who believed the influence of governmental and political changes to education prevented head teachers from being able to make autonomous decisions. It did, however, support the findings of Dawson (2007) that the head teacher was the person with the greatest influence on the values of a school. All the heads agreed that the ethos of their

schools had not developed immediately upon their appointments but as a result of their positive interaction with all the members of their school community.

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the head teachers' and staff responses to a series of questions. These have helped to build up a picture of the heads' personal and professional values; how these have been developed in their schools, with (or without) the support of the local church, and how they have influenced and developed their school's ethos. All schools are different and all heads are different, but the words 'respect', 'friendly', 'caring' and 'happy' were used by the teachers and support staff in all the schools in the case study. The difference that emerged between the schools was the fundamental beliefs and values held by the head teachers that had formed the foundation of the ethos that had allowed the school to embrace the words 'respect', 'friendly', 'caring' and 'happy', and to what extent the head teacher had influenced this.

The discussion around personal and whole school values has highlighted a range of terms used in schools to describe these: Christian values, gospel values, core values, PSHE values and moral values. I defined these terms in chapter one. Although the values within each school that have been chosen by the heads have similarities across the schools, the term used to describe the values has been influenced by the head's personal and professional beliefs. For example, the Christian head at St Anne's had chosen to call his school's values 'Christian values', while the head at St David's, though not a practicing Christian, understood her professional responsibility in leading a C of E school to teach pupils about the life of Jesus and to develop Christian distinctiveness, by introducing her pupils to 'gospel values'. These different terms will be developed further in chapter seven, while considering their contribution to the distinctive Christian ethos required of a C of E school. The Discussion chapter that follows will also evaluate further the extent of the influence of the six heads and what themes are developing which will increase our understanding of leadership in a VC C of E primary school.

Chapter 7: Discussion

7.1. Head teachers feel that they are in ‘the right place’

7.2. Schools are described as having ‘a family feel’

7.3. Head teachers take their schools on ‘a journey’

7.4. Head teachers describe their school’s values

7.5. Personal values or professional values

7.6. Developing an overtly Christian ethos

7.7. Developing Christian distinctiveness

7.8. Conclusion

Chapter six analysed the findings from the data collection in the six schools in the case study. It compared and contrasted the findings with findings from previous studies and academic writings discussed in Chapter three’s literature review. It is clear that the influence of the head teacher is significant. The six head teachers were experienced professionals all carrying out their professional roles in the way they believed was the best for their school. This chapter discusses six emerging themes which will contribute towards answering the research question: ‘To what extent does the head teacher’s value system influence the ethos of the Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school?’

7.1. Head teachers feel that they are in the right place

The expression in ‘the right place’ was attributable to all six head teachers, but while it provided positive affirmation to each head, their interpretations were different. The head at St Anne’s reported that he felt a strength that helped him through the day and positive feelings of being in ‘the right place’, doing the right job. St Egbert’s head spoke of the inner strength and positive feeling she had experienced when she had tackled problems in school and how she was confident that God had guided her in her leadership. As Christians they both acknowledged the positive strength, peace and confidence that they felt from the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. St Catherine’s head had also been conscious of a power guiding her but she did not attribute this to the Holy Spirit. She had experienced a feeling of insightfulness and an inner feeling of peace when dealing with critical incidents. She was able to explain being in ‘the right place’ by using subjective phrases such as ‘having a positive feeling’. The head from St David’s also talked about the positive feeling of

being in 'the right place' and the confidence she felt. In a similar way to the head teacher at St Catherine's, she could only describe this as the 'feeling of warm acceptance'.

The passion of the head at St Botolph's to develop the Christian distinctiveness indicated a positive attitude to the Christian faith but she did not attribute this positivity to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. She accepted that if she wanted to bring in an ethos which was contrary to that which was at the school before her appointment she might experience opposition. She realised that she would need to make changes in personnel to transform the school. By doing this, she now had staff fully supportive of her passion towards a Christian ethos. Four years on from taking up the headship at St Botolph's, she now believed that she was in 'the right place', being able to make a difference to the educational opportunities for all her pupils.

The head at St Francis' had initially felt that the school was 'the right place' for her to work, but her reason for believing this was based on her desire to progress professionally in her career and for this she acknowledged that St Francis was the ideal state, village school. The head expressed no insightful feelings, or spiritual confirmation for being in 'the right place', and although she acknowledged that some heads consciously feel that they are being called to a specific place, she had not experienced that feeling.

Both the Christian heads at St Anne's and St Egbert's acknowledged their guidance as being from God. Both had worked hard to develop their preferred school ethos and reflecting upon the journey that they had taken with their schools they were now able to feel that they were positively in 'the right place'. These heads had been able to draw on an 'internal reservoir of hope' (West Burnham, 2002, p.2) that sustained their personal faith in the face of external pressures and critical incidents. There had also been a period of time before the head at St Botolph's was able to feel in 'the right place', while both the heads at St Catherine's and St David's sensed positive feelings when visiting the schools before their appointment. These feelings they described as 'being comfortable' and 'feeling like home', and were a conscious recognition rather than being attributable to any spiritual direction. The head at St Francis' initial feeling of being in 'the right place', unlike the other heads, was a conscious decision to further her career. The school matched her chosen criteria for advancement and provided her with the confidence and assurance of 'the right place'. By pronouncing that they felt they were 'in the right place', the heads were providing a positive reinforcement to the choices and changes that they have made in their schools. These had included the values they had introduced and the development of their chosen ethos.

7.2. Schools are described as having a family feel

Desmond Tutu, describing a family said that, 'You don't choose your family. They are God's gift to you as you are to them'. For a C of E school to describe itself as 'a family' it could be appropriate to embrace Desmond Tutu's words and view the pupils as God's gift to the school and accept the responsibility to nurture the children's Christian understanding. In the case of all six of these schools, the head teachers' interpretation of 'family' conformed to the stereotype of being supportive and caring. In fact, in all schools there are children from dysfunctional families and for whom school is the one stable, consistent part of their lives. The church school has the opportunity to develop a Christian ethos which provides a supportive, stable, caring place where the education of the pupils will help prepare them for the future. Many village schools are an integral part of the community and have been providing a caring Christian education for many years. The parents and grandparents of some pupils may have attended the school themselves as children and may view the school as a safe, secure place that provided them with positive memories which they would like to see replicated for their children.

C of E schools were challenged by the Way Ahead Report (2001) to consider their role within the mission of the church and within the community. To take this role seriously C of E schools need to be exemplary in the way that they care for pupils, both in supporting them academically and also pastorally, following the example of Jesus. It is the leadership of the head teacher that determines how this is carried out. This was exemplified by the schools in the study who adopted Christian or gospel values. 'Christian leadership takes as its model the leadership of Christ and places the needs of others above self', (National Society 2009, p.16). This reflects the 'servant leadership' described by Greenleaf (1977, 2002). All the heads had talked of being prepared to carry out any task in their school necessary for its smooth functioning and for it to exemplify a 'caring family feel', with all members working together. This behaviour illustrated their personal values, whether from a Christian commitment or a pastoral one, or indeed a combination of both.

The head at St Anne's described his school as 'like walking into a second home' and 'like a second family'. He believed in treating everyone in school as you would a member of your family, with care and mutual respect, whether they were a pupil, a teacher or the caretaker. His focus was to nurture his pupils as an important part of developing the Christian ethos. Evidence from the interview with the head at St David's also highlighted her focus on encouraging a family feel within her school. She asked her staff to draw animals to illustrate how they would describe the school ethos. A group drew a cat, lying down and curled up,

and annotated the picture with the words 'we're a family here'. The head at St Francis' had worked to develop a 'caring school' with a 'family atmosphere' focusing on the sharing values of community; ensuring that the children felt safe and 'comfortable'. One of the criteria that had encouraged the head to select the school had been that it had a 'family feel' similar to the private school where she worked before taking up her post at St Francis'. All the head teachers spoke of the uniqueness of leading a small village school compared to the larger schools they had previously experienced. They had the opportunity to know all the pupils and their families and worked to ensure that their school was an integral part of the community. Their desire to embrace the 'family feel' as a positive contribution to a Christian and/or a caring school aligned with the caring values exhibited by all the heads. The difference between the heads was what personal values motivated their drive for a 'family feel'. One of the aims of a C of E school outlined in The Way Ahead report (2001, paragraph 3.4); states that C of E schools can give opportunity for pupils to 'experience the meaning of faith and what it is to work and play in a community that seeks to live its beliefs and values'. For this to be realised the C of E school needs to deliver its Christian distinctiveness through being a 'caring family' community.

7.3. Head teachers take their schools on a journey

All of the head teachers in the case study talked about the actions they had taken since becoming the head as well as all the things they still planned to do. They all described their roles as 'a work in progress' or as being 'on a journey'. To 'take their school on a journey' the head teachers in this study believed that they needed to motivate their staff and governors to acknowledge the necessity for hard work and high expectations underpinned by the values that formed the foundation of the ethos they had established. They all accepted the need for continued all-round improvement. The importance of effective leadership is indisputable and Ofsted affirms that effective leadership is vital to good and improving schools. My definition of effective, educational leadership (outlined in chapter one) is the ability to hold and articulate clear values and moral purpose while focused on providing a world class education for the pupils they serve. Christian leadership demands that the values are Christian values and that these values determine the moral purpose and the ethos of the school. The quality of the head teacher can make the difference between success and failure; good heads can transform a school (DfEE, 1997). What drives inspirational leaders is an inner need to prove something to themselves (MacBeath, 1998). The heads in the study were all passionate about their work and what they had achieved in their schools. The head teacher provides the vision, leadership and direction for their school.

Leaders are strongest when they know their staff and communicate effectively. The teaching and support staff in all six schools praised the open communication between the head and their staff and how effectively the channels of communication were open for all stakeholders. The heads had all shared their vision for their schools and had gained the support of their staff to develop the vision through the values and ethos. The heads at St Anne's, St Catherine's and St David's had highlighted modelling and setting an example as vital to embedding their values. St Botolph's and St Francis' heads had employed new staff to form a team that supported their leadership and their values. Each of the heads understood the need to foster collaboration, build trust and give empowerment to engage everyone to have a stake in their values. This aligns with the findings from the research of Kouzes and Posner (2007) who found that there were five practices of exemplary leadership: modelling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging processes, enabling others to act and encouraging united commitment; all were found in all six schools. There are few forces in human affairs that are as powerful as a shared vision (Senge, 1990) which is vital to ensuring that the whole school community journeys together.

Both St Anne's and St Botolph's heads talked about being 'on a journey', in developing their school's Christian ethos. They were both supported by their staff on the journey. St Botolph's head changed her staff and appointed a new deputy who was open to supporting the development of the Christian distinctiveness through the introduction of her Christian values. She explained that the school was on a journey, 'we are moving in the right direction, everything we learn gives us confidence to continue our journey through life'. She acknowledged that the journey that she had begun with the staff and children at St Botolph's was a journey that would be ongoing. St David's head talked about 'building' upon the existing ethos and encouraging 'change' in everyone, to enable staff to be more reflective and have higher expectations. She believed that if they continued on that course (or journey), pupils and staff would have pride in themselves and their learning. The head teachers had transformed their schools through the skills of effective leadership. They had introduced their agreed set of values which were shared and embraced by their staff, enabling cooperative working and resulting in the process of change.

All six heads believed that they had already made a number of positive changes in their schools, which were based upon their chosen values. For some the values were their personal ones, while for others they were based on professionally chosen values which the heads believed were necessary for the effective leadership of a church school. The heads all had a vision for further action and were eager to see their schools moving from 'good' to 'outstanding' as defined by Ofsted. Five of the six heads also expressed the desire to see the development of the Christian distinctiveness of their school. To all six heads, their

schools were on 'a journey' to achieve these aspirations. Taking their schools 'on a journey' through effective leadership required all the heads to articulate their vision, set the direction of their school, work with the staff (in the case of St Botolph's and St Francis' this required new staff to be appointed), create high quality interpersonal relationships and set an agreed plan for the future in tune with the vision (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990).

7.4. Head teachers describe their school's values

The heads in this case study exuded competence and confidence and colleagues knew that they could depend upon them to have a clear agenda, a coherent vision and a direction underpinned by integrity of values. Successful leaders 'lift the spirits of their people and help them translate the vision into the daily practices of their work...providing a sense of purpose and direction' (Duignan, 2006, p. 21). The head teachers understood their role in the development of their pupils' spirituality and in maintaining a school culture consistent with the moral values of their belief systems. This agreed with findings from the research by Johnson et al (2000). The heads in all six schools held very deep convictions and believed that their vision and values played a significant part in the way they were leading their schools. The schools in the case study were all 'good' schools as judged by Ofsted and the heads believed that the way they had chosen to lead their school was effective because of Ofsted's validation. However, the heads all agreed that education was more than simply improving academic standards. They all believed that it was important to develop pupils' spiritual and moral understanding and all acknowledged that this was supported through the values that underpinned the school ethos.

The heads used different terms to describe the values that they had chosen as the basis for their ethos: Christian values, gospel values, PSHE values and shared values. Many of the values that are part of our British culture have been influenced by the country's Christian heritage, which was praised by David Cameron the British Prime Minister (2011). These 'British' values are frequently termed 'shared or core values' when highlighted in Community schools. St David's head, while working with Edison Learning in her previous school (a Community school), had established 'core values'. She had adopted these same values for St David's, but renamed them 'gospel values' when she had given them a Christian focus. The values chosen by some C of E schools and called 'gospel' or 'Christian' values should be taught in a way that is faithful to the theological meaning that underpins each value with its biblical references. If the foundation of the values taught is based on the preaching and teachings of Jesus, the school will be faithful to its Christian distinctiveness. The 'Church School of the Future' report (Chadwick, 2012, p.8) discussed the need for C of E schools to

display authentic Christian values, suggesting that there is an obligation 'to share an enduring narrative, a set of values and ways of behaving that stem from, and express, the Christian foundation'.

The values suggested by the National Society (described in Chapter 3) are not unique to Christians but are thought by the majority of British citizens to be desirable values which are appropriate to today's secular culture. Staff at all the schools agreed with and described their school's values as being appropriate for pupils of different faiths or none. The National Society values are accompanied by guidance on their theological foundation and resources to enable them to be delivered with more of a Christian focus than just 'caring' and 'sharing' (www.christianvalues4schools.com).

The values of 'caring' and 'sharing' highlighted by St Egbert's and St Francis' were important in all the case study schools and were evidenced in the focus on fundraising, supporting a range of charities. While it is commendable for pupils to learn the importance of supporting others less fortunate than themselves, the C of E school has the responsibility to also teach their pupils the Christian meaning of 'caring' and 'sharing', as illustrated by the life and work of Jesus. Wright (1998) concludes that a spiritual education that focuses solely on nurture, limits pupils' understanding, and that alongside the process of nurture, there needs to be a tradition of investigation, critique and examination of the Christian faith. The head at St Anne's was confident that his school's Christian values had firm Christian foundations, but the heads at St Egbert's and St Francis' did not address this issue, believing that the values of caring and sharing were important moral attributes. The focus on Christian and gospel values is a way to facilitate the whole school community working together towards Christian distinctiveness.

St Catherine's and St David's head teachers had focused on introducing gospel values by ensuring that all pupils were made aware of the Christian meaning of each value, and had used the values as building blocks for their behaviour policies and their teaching and learning policies. However, St Egbert's head had specifically focused on the 'shared value' of 'respect' which was now evident between pupils and staff. The head was a practicing Christian, but despite having been in the school for seven years, she had not felt the need to focus on establishing a set of values that could underpin everything that went on in school, as St Anne's, St Botolph's, St Catherine's and St David's heads had done. St Egbert's last SIAS report recognised that the school had a caring Christian ethos in which individuals were valued and the head had maintained this whilst making a conscious decision not to adopt gospel values or to make her school overtly Christian. St Francis' head had given

priority to fostering the effective development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This had been achieved through its PSHE curriculum, which provided the values taught to the pupils: a focus on the moral teachings of different religions and the emphasis placed on how an appreciation of the arts contributed to spiritual development. It was difficult to detect anything that indicated that the school was distinctively Christian, which SIAMS will be looking for in their next inspection. The school had worked hard to improve behaviour and to develop the school's ethos of promoting a safe and happy learning environment (SIAS report).

The heads at St Catherine's and St David's despite not being practicing Christians, had used gospel values to underpin every aspect of their schools and as the catalyst for delivering their moral purpose, while the heads at St Egbert's and St Francis' had used their PSHE curriculum for this. All the heads talked passionately about the responsibility they felt to provide a moral leadership for their staff and pupils and to model this by their behaviour.

Fullan (2001, p.5) wrote that successful leaders, guided by a moral purpose, and who are seeking to make changes, need to be 'consummate relationship builders'. Staff praised the head teachers at St Anne's, St Catherine's and St David's who had worked with them to inspire them to promote the Christian and gospel values that they modelled. The heads at St Botolph's and St Francis', however, had chosen to employ new staff to support their values, rather than work with the existing staff. A moral purpose must be accompanied by the strategies to achieve it, 'so mobilizing everyone's sense of moral purpose', (Fullan, 2001, p.21).

7.5. Personal values or professional values

Fullan (2003) acknowledges that however a person describes themselves spiritually, they will have a moral code by which they live and work, and this will influence their vision and values. A leader's spiritual awareness, moral code and core values are deeply held convictions which underpin their vision for their organisation. It is important that leaders understand their own spirituality and are able to interact with others who follow them, allowing for different spiritualities. They must then decide how their interpretation of spirituality will have an effect on how they lead and manage. As the leader of a C of E school, the head's spirituality is crucial to their authenticity. The head's spirituality will become evident because whether or not the head realises it, their spirituality and values fundamentally affect his/her leadership. Values affect perception, motivation and choices and these cannot be hidden from work colleagues. How a particular head develops a personal spirituality or authenticity will depend upon the individual, either by deliberate

comment or by omission. I believe that to lead a C of E school which has Christian values underpinning the Christian ethos the head teacher needs to have a personal Christian spirituality. The spirituality people create needs to be faithful to the traditions they live, but they also need to be positive towards those around, whatever their convictions, if they are to benefit their broader communities. The challenge for the head is how to make the development of spirituality a part of the vision for their school. An even greater challenge would appear to be how the head teacher can instil a Christian spirituality into the ethos of the school if they themselves do not share those spiritual Christian values in their vision.

The head at St Anne's was keen to share the fact that he behaved the same at school as at home, even describing St Anne's as his 'second family'. He was a Christian and he was proud to acknowledge that this influenced and guided his behaviour in both his private and professional life. The head at St Botolph's explained that she was much more confident in her professional persona at school, where she modelled to the staff her expectations for the way they should behave in school towards each other and the children. St David's head explained that she had, 'bought into the gospel values to provide a framework for integrity'. She believed that they provided a moral code to enable a child to succeed in life in all different ways. The head was conscious that her words and actions in school were important as she was 'a role model for "impressionable children"'. She explained further, 'if you are a religious person you can relate the value system and the teachings of Jesus and how that's helped to give people guidance in their life, but if that's not for you the [gospel] values are still valuable'. She believed in giving children the opportunity to explore faith and ultimately make their own decisions. She expressed the view that Christian values benefitted everyone even if they did not practice the Christian faith.

Fullan tries to demystify spirituality, removing any focus on religious practices, by linking it with moral purpose and giving it clear parameters to begin to influence change. He writes (2003, p.31) that 'Spirituality provides the moral basis for human relationships and many of its most important expressions are found in human interaction'. A moral imperative is a principle that originates within a person's mind and compels the person to act because they believe it is the right thing to do. The head has the desire not only to make a difference in pupils' lives, but also to make a difference in the school as an institution and a community, which requires collegiality, caring, and respect.

The Dalai Lama (1999) proposes two definitions of spirituality which are helpful in explaining the views of the heads in this study. The first is a spirituality based on religious beliefs, which I believe should acknowledge the three aspects of the Trinity: God the Father, Son and Holy

Spirit. The second, he termed secular universal spirituality, explained as the human spirit of love, patience and tolerance. All the heads expressed a secular universal spirituality which they lived out in their work, showing love and patience. They had a sense of responsibility and harmony that resulted in a confidence in their professional position. Religious spirituality, however, acknowledges beliefs associated with the understanding of salvation and the importance of prayer. This religious spirituality was personally meaningful for the head teachers at St Anne's, St Botolph's and St Egbert's but professionally rather than personally meaningful for the heads at St Catherine's and St David's, who understood their responsibility as leaders of a C of E school with a Christian foundation, but expressed no personal religious spirituality.

Flintham (2003) acknowledges the important role of a Christian head in a C of E school and suggests that the head needs to act as an 'external reservoir' for the whole school, providing spiritual and moral leadership, and as an 'internal reservoir' of hope to sustain their personal faith when dealing with external pressures and critical incidents. For the head teacher with no personal religious spirituality, their universal spirituality will be related to their moral imperative, which will provide motivation and purpose.

7.6. Developing an overtly Christian ethos

The C of E school can offer a spiritual dimension to children's lives, keeping faithful to the traditions of the Anglican Church. Within a Christian school Cooling (2005; 2010; 2011; 2012) advocates that Christian distinctiveness should run through the pedagogy of every area within the school day. For a school to be described as having an 'overtly Christian ethos' there would need to be visual and spoken evidence of Christian distinctiveness which underpinned the policies and practices within it. Hunt's (2011) study investigated the role of the head teacher in creating a distinctive, positive and effective Christian ethos in a C of E primary school. The findings of this study agree with his: each head establishes their vision differently. They all exhibited personal integrity, and all worked to ensure that everyone in their schools felt valued. Hunt concludes that a healthy Christian ethos can only be achieved by the dedication of the head, and highlights some key elements of a distinct C of E school ethos. These elements are: theology to understand more about God, values, spirituality which valued awe and wonder, good quality RE to explain the Christian faith, Christian worship, and effective links with the local church and the community and positive relationships between all the stakeholders. The six schools in the case study differed in the extent to which they displayed these elements. Theological understanding was evident in the underpinning of both the Christian values at St Anne's and St Botolph's and the gospel

values at St Catherine's and St David's. All the head teachers in the case study had selected values to focus upon. All their school environments were creatively planned to enhance their outdoor areas for learning and play, focusing on stimulating awe and wonder. With the exception of St Francis' who used support staff to deliver their RE, the other head teachers focused on the importance of delivering a well-planned RE curriculum and St Botolph's used their RE to deliver their 'values'. All the heads planned their 'worship' carefully, but did not all focus on the worship being Christian. SIAMS (2013) looks for 'the extent to which collective worship is distinctively Christian, setting out the values of the school in their Christian context'. The incumbent of the local church played a varying role, but all had a presence in the school. Both Ofsted and SIAMS had noted the effective communication between the schools and their parents and governors. The good communication skills of the head teachers were also highlighted by staff as an area of effectiveness in all the schools.

The head at St Anne's personal values were Christian values and his personal and professional life demonstrated these values. He did not feel a need for his school to define or demonstrate these values overtly through displays, prayer corners or other outward signs and symbols. However, I would concur with the view expressed in the school's SIAS which had noted that 'within the school there is an atmosphere of spiritual depth which is tangible at times'. This would confirm that the ethos of St Anne's was based firmly on Christian values, supported and continually being developed by the head teacher as he himself overtly lived out his personal faith. The head at St Botolph's had employed new staff who supported her overtly Christian approach to delivering Christian distinctiveness. Her experience in Catholic schools which openly promoted their Catholic ethos had provided an example of how to develop an overtly Christian ethos at St Botolph's, where there was a plethora of Christian icons and Christian displays. (Catholic schools are all voluntary aided and there is an expectation that the head teacher will be a practicing Catholic and develop an overtly Catholic distinctiveness in the school.) Christian values were embedded and referred to by staff throughout the day and the school's behaviour code was tied in to the values. The overtly Christian ethos was visible for all visitors to the school.

St Catherine's head teacher believed that she had changed her school's ethos as she modelled the gospel values in all her work in school. The ethos was described as the writing that ran through a stick of seaside rock. The ethos of the school had been Christian before the present head had taken up her post, but the staff believed that under the present head it had become stronger, as she had built on the existing ethos and the school now had an overtly Christian ethos evident for all visitors to see. St David's head teacher believed that she had not needed to change the ethos, but she had developed it so that the children knew

what the values of the school were based upon. However, staff did not all focus on the Christian message of the values and the school's Christian distinctiveness which, though evident through talking with the head teacher, was not overtly obvious through displays. For the ethos of the school to be more overtly Christian, it would need the gospel values to be fully embedded and the Christian gospel to become the foundation for the school's pedagogy as in St Anne's, St Botolph's and St Catherine's.

St Egbert's head teacher was a committed Christian but had made a conscious decision not to make her school overtly Christian because she was concerned that parents chose the school as it was the only one in the village, rather than because it was a C of E school. The head had rebuffed some of the early support offered by the diocese as 'interfering' in how she had chosen to lead her school. Most staff were aware that the head teacher was a practicing Christian, but her focus was on nurturing the values of respect and caring and there was little evidence of the development of specific Christian or gospel values amongst the pupils or through worship or the curriculum. St Francis' head, unlike the head at St Egbert's, did not profess to a faith, but she too had not wanted to lead a school that was overtly Christian. The present head had been very influential in nurturing the moral values of respect, hard work and good behaviour. There was very little visible evidence that St Francis' was a C of E school.

7.7. Developing Christian distinctiveness

Every school's values and underpinning ethos will be implicit or explicit, but they will be visible. The Christian narrative, rooted in the life of Jesus, will help children to understand themselves, others and the world. However, it is not the only narrative, and part of a good education is helping children to understand alternative narratives. C of E schools are not faith schools for Christians but Christian schools for all (Genders, 2015). To develop a distinctive Christian education, leaders need to be committed to a Christian vision and their approach to embedding it. C of E schools are not about indoctrination, but provide a welcome to all. Nigel Genders, C of E Chief Education Officer, in a speech at the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life (2015) extolled the virtues of C of E schools. He said that C of E schools which are transparent about their underpinning values offer a philosophy of education which is focused on the whole child, and serves children across religious, social and ethnic divides. He suggested that England needed more schools committed to this approach, not fewer.

The effectiveness of the Christian distinctiveness in a C of E school is assessed through SIAMS. These inspections in VC schools are evaluating:

- How well the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners.
- The impact of worship on the school community.
- The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school.

The effectiveness of the school is also considered in the light of the requirement that the school 'should enable every child to flourish in their potential as a child of God' (SIAMS, 2013). Distinctive Christian values should be made explicit and become embedded in the daily life of the school community. The inspection also seeks to discover if the school has a clear definition of spirituality which is understood across the school. In a distinctively Christian school, collective worship is both inspirational and inclusive, and is a valued part of the life of the school through which pupils learn the value of prayer and reflection. Collective worship should include a focus on Christian/gospel values illustrated through biblical material, with a strong focus on the person of Jesus Christ and an understanding of the Trinity.

The responsibility is on the head teacher to create a learning environment which enables children to develop their spiritual awareness. A head teacher in a C of E school may interpret the term 'spiritual' both in the religious and the secular, universal way, depending upon their own experience and commitment. However, in securing the role of the head in a C of E school, the head should accept the responsibility for developing the Christian distinctiveness.

The aim of the school curriculum is to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes necessary for each pupil's self-fulfilment and development and an active and responsible citizen and to provide the foundation of the government's commitment to the development of each pupil's religious literacy. (Faith in the System, 2007, p.9)

The heads at St Anne's, St Botolph's, St Catherine's and St David's, whether practicing Christians themselves or not, had all worked with their pupils, staff and governors to develop their interpretation of Christian distinctiveness. The work they had undertaken varied in its intensity and focus, but all four schools showed evidence of how the head teacher had prioritised Christian or gospel values becoming the foundation of policies and practice. These values were an integral part of each school's ethos and a way of defining their spirituality. The four heads were working towards developing their school's Christian distinctiveness. In contrast, the heads at St Egbert's and St Francis' both sought to develop an ethos based on moral values. St Francis' had less emphasis on Christian traditions, on

the value of prayer or on the teachings of Jesus. There appeared to be no clear understanding of spirituality among the school leaders and the school did not appear to provide many opportunities for the pupils to develop Christian spiritually.

7.8. Conclusion

All the head teachers appreciated the responsibility of being head of a C of E school. However, some appeared to have had little understanding of the additional responsibility required by the C of E (from the National Society in their SIAMS) when taking up their post. If they had previously worked in a Community school, their responsibility as a leader had been to raise standards and achievement (inspected by Ofsted), with less thought to spiritual matters.

For the heads at St Anne's and St Francis', the way they had interpreted their school's ethos appeared to align perfectly with their personal values and aspirations, one head from a Christian perspective (religious spirituality) and one from a moral perspective (secular universal spirituality) (Dalai Lama, 1999). The heads at St Catherine's and St David's had both embraced their responsibility to develop Christian distinctiveness by a focus on gospel values and Christian distinctiveness, and although neither of the heads professed a personal faith, both interpreted their professional roles in leading a Christian school as needing to provide an education for their pupils based upon Christian distinctiveness. The head teachers at St Catherine's and St David's appeared to have modified their personal beliefs to match their professional roles. They had acknowledged the importance of their school's Christian foundation. St Egbert's head had chosen to stay true to her Christian beliefs but to keep them personal and not to allow them to take precedence over her professional duties. She based her school ethos on a moral code of respect and caring, rather than choosing to develop a more overtly Christian influence. The head at St Botolph's had shared less than the other heads about her personal beliefs, but her overt focus on developing Christian distinctiveness and the evidence from staff interviews indicated that the Christian values in her school aligned with her personal faith belief.

The findings from this study affirm that the heads all had a personal moral base, or secular universal spirituality. The head teachers that had a personal Christian faith also exhibited a Christian spirituality which underpinned the Christian/gospel values upon which they had developed their school's ethos. Some heads were prepared to embrace the Christian message as part of their professional role as head in a C of E school, without them having a personal Christian faith. The gospel values they introduced were not a reflection of their own beliefs. All the head teachers acknowledged the benefit of a values' pedagogy to support pupils' moral education, but I would question the moral integrity of a head in a C of E school

who acknowledges the value of developing Christian or gospel values in their school if they themselves are not Christian and do not personally embrace these values. The research found that all heads, irrespective of their own faith, could articulate their value system, based either on their faith perspective or on the 'golden rule' of 'love your neighbour'. The effective leaders in this study were able to articulate and live out their values whether they were personal, professional or one and the same.

From this study I conclude that:

- Some head teachers live out their faith through their personal leadership roles. Their faith, which is evident to both staff and pupils, forms the foundations for the values they deem are important and for the establishment of their school ethos.
- Some head teachers, irrespective of their faith position, believe that because they have accepted the responsibility of leadership in a C of E school, they should focus on the adoption of gospel values, which underpin everything in school and upon which the school's ethos is based.
- Some head teachers irrespective of their faith position or the fact that they lead a C of E school, choose to adopt moral values which are applicable to all children of whatever faith or none, to ensure that their school is fully inclusive, regardless of the need to develop Christian distinctiveness as required by SIAMS.

These findings would suggest that the head teacher has the greatest influence upon the school ethos, but that it is not simply the head teacher's own values that influence this but what the head teacher believes is best for their school. Chapter eight will summarise what I believe has been achieved through this research, and its contribution to knowledge.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

8.1. The contribution to knowledge

8.2. The research process

8.3. The head teacher's responsibilities

8.4. Future research

8.5. Final reflections

When I embarked upon this education doctorate I was working as a head teacher, challenging my staff to work with me to provide the very best educational opportunities for all the pupils in the school. I wanted the staff to understand and support my vision for the school which was based on the values which were my deeply held convictions about the way the school should be. As a Christian leading a school with a Christian foundation I believed that the values underpinning the ethos should be Christian values based on sound biblical theology.

Through the literature review I began to appreciate more fully the multiple interpretations of spirituality and how Christian spirituality could be interpreted and developed in a C of E school. The case study gave me the opportunity to study six schools in depth and I was impressed by the dedication, commitment and hard work displayed by each of the head teachers. They all believed that the way they were leading their schools would give the best possible educational opportunities to their pupils.

As my empathy and understanding grew towards these head teachers my commitment to the importance for C of E schools to develop faithful Christian distinctiveness also grew. The Way Ahead report (2001) had been undertaken in response to the remit by the Archbishops' Council of the C of E to advise on the achievements and future development of C of E schools in the new millennium. The report clearly states that the C of E school should aim to serve its community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. The Chadwick report (2012, p.3) agrees with and supports the recommendations of the Way Ahead report and declares that the distinctiveness of the C of E school should include 'a wholehearted commitment to putting faith and spiritual development at the heart of the curriculum and ensuring that a Christian ethos permeates the whole educational experience'. If C of E schools are to be effective in supporting these recommendations, I believe that head teachers must take the responsibility to achieve this.

The analysis of my case study confirmed that the head teacher in the small, rural primary school is the person who has the greatest influence upon all aspects of their school. This confirmed one of my pre-conceived assumptions outlined in chapter one. It also revealed that the head teacher is the person who makes the ultimate decision on which values the school will adopt and embed into the school's pedagogy, resulting in the development of the school's ethos. The head teacher consciously chooses whether it will be their personal or professional beliefs that underpin this decision. This research has highlighted the important role played by all head teachers leading a C of E school. They must ensure that their focus is on working towards good and outstanding as graded by Ofsted, and ensure a good or outstanding grade in their National Society inspection (SIAMS). The research challenged my personal and theoretical stance and threw into question a number of my pre-conceived assumptions.

8.1. The contribution to knowledge

This doctoral work has made a significant contribution to our understanding of the factors that affect the choices head teachers make when deciding on the values they believe are important for their pupils. My research question asked: To what extent does the head teacher's value system influence the ethos of the C of E VC primary school? The research revealed that the influence is considerable: small schools have a limited number of teaching staff and the head teacher needs to be both a leader and a manager, with few if any senior staff with whom to share the role. Heads are therefore in a prominent position to influence every aspect of school life. The research has also revealed additional knowledge: that while for some heads their personal values are the catalyst for developing their school's Christian ethos, for others it is their professional role of leading a C of E school that influences the ethos they create. In this case, they have decided that the values associated with their professional position are more important than their personal beliefs and it is these professional values that influence the development of their school ethos. These findings contribute to the existing knowledge on how values and ethos are established in a school.

At the outset of this research I was aware that my personal values had influenced the development of my school's values and ethos and as a result I had made a number of pre-conceived assumptions which provided both a stimulus and a challenge to my work. I was expecting to learn that the personal values of the head teachers in the case study schools would be the values evident in their schools. As a head teacher I had personally experienced the ceaseless and demanding pressures from both the local education authority and from government, through Ofsted, for continued improvement in all areas of teaching and

learning. Even when a school has achieved a good inspection outcome, there is ongoing pressure not only to retain the 'good', but to become 'outstanding'. In the C of E school there is also the added pressure of the SIAMS inspection. All head teachers need to decide upon the priorities for their school but it may be difficult to focus on improving the Christian distinctiveness, as assessed by SIAMS, if the academic standards of the school are causing concern, and pressure is being applied by the local authority or the academy sponsors to focus on aspects assessed by Ofsted. Parents, governors and the local community may also exert pressures upon the head teacher.

The opportunity to lead a C of E school had initially been offered to me by the local authority, although it was my decision to subsequently apply for the position of substantive head teacher at the school. I responded to the pressure to focus on improving the teaching and learning whilst at the same time improving the school's Christian distinctiveness. As a Christian working in a C of E school, my personal values aligned with the Christian distinctiveness that I accepted as my responsibility to develop in the school. To have the responsibility of leading a C of E school as a Christian enabled me to introduce Christian values, rooted in the life of Jesus: these were personally important to me as well as relevant to the pupils who were attending the C of E school with its Christian foundation. This research revealed that some head teachers, in contrast, were prepared to support the development of Christian distinctiveness in their school even when they themselves were sacrificing their personal integrity: by fostering values (the doctrinal belief that Jesus is the Son of God and the second person of the Trinity) which they themselves did not appear to personally believe. Their personal beliefs may have aligned with the school's values if the values had instead been underpinned by secular universal spirituality (Dali Lama, 1999) but not if rooted in the life of Jesus, defined by the Dali Lama as religious spirituality. My work also revealed that for some of the heads in the case study the location of the school in a small rural community, and the reputation of the school had been more important reasons for applying for the post, than the fact that the school had a C of E foundation. For some, the fact that they were applying to a C of E school had been of little initial consequence. It was only when they had established themselves in their new post that they had begun to give thought to this additional responsibility.

8.2. The research process

When I was seconded from a Community school to take over the headship of a Voluntary Controlled (VC) C of E school I had expected to discern a number of differences between the two schools. I had believed that a school with a C of E foundation, whether VC or

Voluntary Aided (VA), would at least have had some visible acknowledgement of being a Christian school, through the presence of perhaps a cross placed in a prominent position, or a set of Bibles. The school also lacked a coherent mission statement explaining its vision and values. The school that I was asked to lead was devoid of evidence of its C of E status, except in its name. The changes that I made to the school had a direct impact upon the development of the Christian distinctiveness. I questioned whether the impact of a change of leadership, which had been my experience, was also the key factor in other C of E schools. In this research, therefore, I talked with the head teachers and staff in the case study schools about the values and ethos in their schools both before the arrival of the present head and in the period of time since their appointment.

Qualitative enquiry is not a neutral activity and at the outset of this work I acknowledged my own beliefs and values. These have been determined by my personal history, preferences, disposition, education, upbringing and past experiences, which have included the decision to accept Christian beliefs. This work was not examining objective facts but rather exploring people's subjective experiences. The findings emerged through my interpretation of the facts and data. I believe that I am in a unique position as a researcher in this area of study because of my insider-outsider relationship as a head teacher and a Christian. I did not know the head teachers or their staff before undertaking the interviews and I was not familiar with their schools. However, I was conversant with the structure and day-to-day running of a small village C of E primary school. This allowed me to have a prior understanding of the situation and to apply critical self-exploration of my own interpretation of the data. Through reflexivity I was able to examine both myself as a researcher and consider how the relationship dynamics affected the questions and responses in the interviews. Reflexive practice also provided opportunities for revising questions and refocusing as the research unfolded. The recorded and transcribed interviews allowed for thorough examination of the responses of the interviewees. It was important to interrogate the data before jumping to conclusions, all of which needed to be backed up by the data. Nonetheless, my personal and professional understanding played an influential part throughout.

Great care was taken in analysing the data to ensure that quotes used in the thesis could be checked back to the transcripts or to the Ofsted and SIAS/SIAMS reports used. At all times I acted with honesty and consideration for the welfare of the interviewees and other members of the school communities, and adhered to the university's ethical guidelines.

8.3. The head teacher's responsibility

As a head teacher I enthusiastically accepted the challenge of developing the Christian distinctiveness of my school as an important responsibility that came with the leadership role. At the outset of this research I had expected to encounter a similar response from the heads in the case study schools, as they were leaders in C of E schools. This was not the case in all the schools and this research revealed a range of differing responses. I would suggest that Christians applying for a headship post in a C of E school should find that this responsibility aligns with their own beliefs and Christian values. This research reveals that for an individual with no personal faith commitment, the challenge is whether to stay true to their own (non-Christian) values: in so doing they may in fact make changes that diminish any Christian distinctiveness that may have been evident before their appointment.

Alternatively, they may feel able to make an objective decision to adopt a professional set of values appropriate to the foundation of the Christian school, which may be at variance with their own beliefs. By adopting these Christian values they are supporting the Christian development of the school. I commend their professionalism in supporting the aims of the National Society to ensure the promotion of Christian distinctiveness in their C of E schools. However, I question the sacrifice of a head teacher's personal integrity and honesty if they make the decision to promote Christian values which they themselves do not personally believe in. This may result in a dichotomy which could lead to personal pressures and stress in their leadership role.

Leaders need to have the ability to lead and manage people and to work towards agreed goals (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Upon taking up a post of head teacher, a leader must understand the role they will play in establishing the ethos of their school. Emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995; Hargreaves, 2001; Nias, 1996; Woods, 2007) and social awareness (Leithwood et al, 1999) are fundamental traits needed by a leader. These traits need to be modelled by the head teacher (Kouzes and Posner, 2007) if the school is to be successfully united with one agreed ethos. Effective leadership involves having vision, (Leithwood et al, 1999; Senge, 1990) that is, in a holistic way, creating a mental picture of what the future could and should look like. The vision can be shared and achieved through collaborative working, good communication, building trust between colleagues and striving to engage everyone to have a stake in the vision (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). In this research I selected schools for the case study where the head teacher had been in post for at least three years, enabling time for them to become established and to make changes. All the head teachers in this study had had time to focus on the importance of their vision for their school, based on the values they believed were important, whether these were their

personal or professional values. When taking up a post as head teacher, the challenge for the new head is to carefully consider how their values and leadership set the ethos and culture of their school, which fundamentally affects the educational experience of their pupils.

However effective a head may be in leading and managing people, in showing emotional intelligence and social awareness and being able to share their vision, a head teacher with no personal Christian faith will need to consider whether they feel that their personal integrity allows them to accept the headship of a C of E school. Honesty and personal integrity are important traits that anyone holding this influential position should model to pupils. Conversely, Christian head teachers have much to offer their school, both in their Christian understanding and their faith commitment. Their views should align with the Christian values that need to be established to cultivate a Christian ethos.

8.4. Future research

I am passionate about the contribution that C of E schools can make to the education of children in England today. The Way Ahead report (2001) addressed the nature and mission of C of E schools in the twenty-first century.

If the Church has a calling to participate in education, then it must be in a bold and decisive manner, not seeking to impose its faith but offering it as a gift to be experienced through the enjoyment pupils have in working in a community where Christian principles are practiced. (The Way Ahead, 20001, paragraph 3.20)

I commend the National Society who has worked with successive governments since its conception in 1811 (Worsley, 2013) to ensure that the development of children's spirituality has remained a focus, alongside academic subjects, which prepares children for their adult life. This is evidenced in the most recent Ofsted School Inspection Handbook (2015). Before making the final judgement on the overall effectiveness of the school the Ofsted inspector must:

Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The spiritual development of pupils should be shown by their: ability to be reflective about their beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values. (Ofsted, p.34)

The National Society's inspection process (SIAMS) for its own schools has in recent years also revised its evaluation schedule to focus closely on the effectiveness of the leadership and management in their schools and how they ensure that the school provides 'opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to be characterised by distinctively Christian values' (National Society, 2013, p. 5).

England has an established church and a liberal democracy, not a secular democracy. Part of the role of the C of E as the established church is to stand up and defend the contribution that it is making to education in England today. To do this effectively its schools need to be open to public scrutiny to ensure that their pupils are receiving the very best education. Planned systematic research also needs to be carried out to provide data-rich evidence of the effectiveness of C of E schools.

This case study comprised of six VC rural primaries, where the head had responded positively to my request to visit and agreed for their school to be included in my work. I was careful to explain to all the head teachers contacted that if they agreed to be part of the study, their school would not be named in the thesis, as all schools used in the case study were allocated a pseudonym. The head teachers that agreed to be part of the case study were ones that were leading 'good' (Ofsted and SIAS/SIAMS) schools and felt confident in having their school and role scrutinised. They appeared not to be threatened by my presence and were confident that they had established a coherent ethos which they were proud to share. The head teachers also had members of their staff team whom they were happy for me to interview. These staff all spoke with confidence and loyalty about the positive contribution that their head teacher had made to the school. They praised the hard work undertaken by their head to ensure excellent educational opportunities were available for all the pupils. These staff members all supported the vision and values promoted by their head teacher even if they themselves did not fully agree with them all. My work acknowledges that the schools were, by the very nature of their selection, ones led by confident, outgoing personalities, as these heads had been keen and willing for their school to be included in the case study. They were enthusiastic about taking part and relished the opportunity to proudly promote their school to another head teacher. They were justifiably proud of the improvements that they had made and very willing to talk about them. The six head teachers were all able to explain how they had worked with their staff and pupils to influence their school's ethos, yet all had a different story to tell.

The challenge for me now, as a researcher, is to take the new knowledge generated from this in-depth case study and gather further data from other C of E schools to confirm and develop further knowledge in this area of study. It could be valuable to gain access to

schools where the heads, when previously approached, had not been as forthright nor had felt sufficiently confident to agree to take part in the research project. The research may find that they are still working to establish an agreed ethos or one that all the adults in the school can vocalise. Changing the context of the school could also produce interesting comparative data: although the C of E has many small rural schools, it also has some very large inner city schools working with very different cohorts of pupils. For example, both in London and Birmingham (UK) there are C of E primary schools where the majority of pupils come from a Muslim background. These schools are all inspected by the National Society under the SIAMS process, assessing them for Christian distinctiveness and how this impacts upon the life of the school community. Christian values such as love, compassion and care for others are universally accepted and shared by other faiths, but the task of the C of E school is to ensure that these values are rooted in the narrative of Jesus in the gospels, yet still have a relevance to pupils from diverse religious and non-religious backgrounds. To do this can be a challenge. In VC schools the head teacher is not required to acknowledge a personal faith or attendance at a place of Christian worship, but does need to be in sympathy with the Christian faith. The head may also not have the biblical knowledge or experience to develop the Christian distinctiveness of their school. All head teachers in a C of E school need to accept the challenge of delivering Christian distinctiveness, within the context of their school, to pupils from Christian, Muslim or other faith backgrounds as well as pupils with no faith experience or persuasion.

The interviews for this case study that provided the greatest amount of data were those with the head teachers, as they had been personally responsible for establishing their school's ethos. The interviews with staff were used to confirm or question the information shared by the head, as well as for learning more about their views on their school during the tenure of the present head teacher. For future research it could be helpful to interview the school's foundation governors and the incumbent of the local church to secure their views. This could provide additional evidence to ascertain how well the head's values are known to those who are in school less frequently and who are not working there on a daily basis. The governors could be asked how clear the school's values are to them, and those answers compared against governors' meeting minutes. The local incumbent could describe how he/she has interpreted the school values and ethos and what part they have been able to play in ensuring the development of Christian distinctiveness in the school: through their role in leading collective worship, leading school church services, supporting the teaching of RE and as a foundation governor.

8.5. Final reflections

My research journey has allowed me to study the contribution made by the C of E on education from the nineteenth century to the present day, to read widely around the topics of school leadership, values and ethos and to undertake an in-depth case study. This journey has impacted upon me as a professional in education and personally as a practicing Christian. Chapter nine details the significance of the research to practice.

Reflecting upon my experience of leading a C of E school has allowed me to consider how my values had an impact upon the ethos of my school. It also provided the opportunity to consider whether leading a faith school had been different from leading one with no faith affiliation. I had completed my National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and had leadership experience in a Community school, but I received no guidance or support to prepare me for this important part of my role as a leader in a C of E school. I am passionate about ensuring that head teachers who are new to leadership in a church school receive the necessary training and preparation to enable them to carry out their role effectively and confidently.

I believe that this research will help head teachers and other senior leaders to have a greater understanding of their role and responsibility in leading a school with a C of E foundation. The work will also provide diocesan educational advisors with further insights into the personal challenges that face head teachers when taking up new positions in C of E schools. It is the responsibility of the head teacher to enable the development of all staff and governors as leaders in C of E schools through a planned, strategic approach, and this work will also provide support for this.

I hope that these findings will contribute to the strategic planning for aspiring leaders in schools. If the education of all pupils is to be characterised by best practice from staff, then leaders need to be aware of the many factors that will contribute to them developing an effective leadership style which is faithful to their own values and those of the distinctively Christian C of E school they lead. This case study revealed in particular the importance of involvement from the local clergy, both in the support of the pupils and the staff and in supporting the development of the Christian distinctiveness through the development of a Christian ethos; this may have implications for clergy training.

If the C of E is to continue to play a pivotal role in the Christian education of children in England, I believe that the leaders of its schools should be adequately trained and supported

to ensure the effective delivery of an education based on Christian distinctiveness. The training needs to begin with the head teacher who has the greatest influence in the school, but should also include training for staff, governors and incumbents.

Chapter 9: The Significance of the Research to Practice

9.1. The significance of the research to my own learning and experience

9.2. The significance of the research to the policy and practice of C of E schools

9.3. The significance of the research to the development of training for potential church school leadership

This chapter uses the insights that have been generated through the research process to consider the significance of the work upon the researcher, policy and practice in a C of E school and the training of staff to enable them to work effectively in a C of E school.

9.1. The significance of the research to my own learning and experience

This research sought to generate new insights into the significance of the values held by the head teacher and how influential these proved to be in retaining, enhancing or in fact changing the ethos of their school. I had had first-hand experience of leading a C of E school and am a practicing Christian, which meant that I brought a unique set of skills and experiences to this research. I was able to show empathy and understanding when talking with the head teachers and staff, having experienced many of the pressures and challenges that they faced.

Through my involvement in the research process my skills have developed as a researcher. The professional doctorate programme provided time for broadening and developing my knowledge of the process of research, as well as time to reflect upon personal and professional practice. It has enabled me to grow and develop as a writer and to question and interpret the related literature that I have studied. The regular workshops, lectures and opportunities to meet with other professionals involved in educational research all played a positive role in my development as a researcher.

As an interpretive, qualitative researcher I have learned the importance of reflexivity: of employing critical reflection on how, as the researcher I influenced each step of the research process. Reflexivity enabled me to be constantly assessing the relationship between knowledge and the way of achieving that knowledge. This necessitated critically examining the methods used for collecting the data, particularly my relationship with the interviewees,

and making appropriate decisions on the data analysis, and the amount and detail of description which should be included to support the important detailed analysis of the interview data. I learned to take a more detached stance and to be aware of the possible influence of my personal biases and beliefs. Through the in-depth study of related literature I learned to develop my skills as a critical reader.

By employing a reflexive approach to the research process, I was encouraged to reflexively consider my practice in school as the head teacher. In a busy school it can be difficult to make time to pause and reflect, or to give detailed thought to visionary planning rather than working on day-to-day necessities. There was the daily challenge of coping with the dilemmas and conflicts that occur on a regular basis and the constant pressures for improving teaching and learning within the school. I learned the importance of finding time to reflect on more effective ways to develop the whole child, through their spiritual, moral and social development within the experience of being educated in a church school. This work highlighted the importance for the head teacher to set aside quality time away from the daily 'treadmill' to reflect and consider strategic planning.

As my interest and knowledge of this area of study has developed, I became aware of the important role played by the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) programme in assessing and providing focused areas for improving the development of Christian distinctiveness in C of E schools. As a result of this, I applied to and have successfully trained with the National Society as a SIAMS inspector. As an inspector I now have the opportunity to visit other C of E primary schools to discern the effectiveness of their whole school approach to the development of spirituality, through time spent with the leadership of the school, pupils, parents and governors. The inspection also considers how 'the leadership of the school consistently and confidently articulate, live out and promote a vision rooted in distinctively Christian values'. These inspections contribute to highlighting for the school areas they may need to develop, as well as celebrating the effective leadership of many head teachers.

I had the opportunity to present a paper on this piece of research at the International Conference for Christian Research in 2014. [Appendix 2] The questioning and feedback helped to refine my thinking and made me aware of the breadth of Christian academic writing. Listening to other doctoral students presenting papers on their research into Christian education highlighted for me the importance of leaders in education having greater opportunities to take part in research as a way of supporting and enriching their professional development.

9.2. The significance of the research to the policy and practice of C of E schools

The English education system is constantly changing in an attempt to keep up with the demands of the twenty-first century. In June 2014 Michael Gove, then UK Secretary of State for Education, set out plans giving the responsibility to all schools to teach 'British values'. These had been mentioned in 2011 as part of the government's 'Prevent Policy'. A renewed focus came as a direct result of the 'Trojan horse' affair in Birmingham, UK. A small group of Muslim extremists appeared to attempt to take over six schools in Birmingham and run them on strict Islamic principles. When this came to light Gove commissioned a report which made various recommendations to prevent this recurring. The introduction of 'British values' in all schools was one of the recommendations. The Department for Education placed on schools a legal responsibility, monitored by Ofsted, to actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberties and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Schools need to deliver these through their whole curriculum, but especially as part of the school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

In November 2014 the Department for Education produced rudimentary guidance to support schools in promoting these values. These four values are arguably not uniquely 'British' and appear to be an attempt by the government to introduce four ideals which they believe could help to unite the wide diversity of people living in Britain today. Despite Department for Education guidance these values are open to multiple interpretations. C of E schools have the responsibility to do more than simply adopt and foster the four 'British values' outlined by the Department for Education, but should use the opportunity to incorporate them into the Christian values that make the school distinctive. This will enable pupils to understand and accept the four 'British values' within a Christian pedagogical approach to all aspects of the curriculum and the life of the school.

The academy agenda is also having a significant impact upon the influence of the head teacher within their school. Sponsored 'academy schools' are governed by an external sponsor whose role may be more than simple governance. Sponsored academies, unlike converter academies (which are schools that had at least a 'good' Ofsted grade before becoming an academy) replace underachieving schools, sometimes in the same building and with the same pupils. As my research has shown a school vision and resultant ethos is usually set by the school leader, but within the sponsored academy the sponsor's values will also impact upon these. The academy sponsor has considerable powers and 'the legal right to determine the vision and ethos of the academy' (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2008, p.6) along with the right to appoint the majority of the governors. For an underachieving C of E

school being forced to become a sponsored academy, it is vital that sponsors are chosen who will allow the school to continue to follow its church foundation. There are also opportunities for good and outstanding schools to convert to academies and many are doing so, under the umbrella of a diocese. This ensures that the values adopted by the C of E school are Christian and that foundation governors can continue to carry out their important role of encouraging and monitoring the development of the school's Christian distinctiveness.

There are constantly changing demands being forced upon schools by the government and it is probable that in the next few years there will be more policy changes, new approaches to school inspections and an increased focus on governance and safeguarding. The C of E will need to continue to interpret any new government directives to ensure that their schools comply with new legislation, whilst retaining the Christian distinctiveness which is of primary importance to the health of their schools.

The C of E, as the established state church, can be proud that it has played an influential part in the development of British society and British values which are rooted in Christianity. The C of E had a vision for the education of children before any other English institution accepted the responsibility, and has continued to do so. There are approximately one million pupils attending C of E schools, in 4,500 primary schools and over 200 secondary schools. Each diocese runs a Diocesan Board of Education supporting church schools, which represents an annual investment of over fifteen million pounds. C of E schools are not 'faith schools' for Christians but Christian schools for all, committed to serving the needs of the local community. C of E schools are committed to a broad education which enables every child to flourish. In 2014 Ofsted inspections judged the majority of C of E schools to be effective: eighty-four percent of C of E primary schools were judged good or outstanding by Ofsted compared to eighty-one percent of non-C of E primary schools. C of E primary schools have secured some of the best exam results in the country, according to league tables released by the Department of Education. Six of the top 10 schools, and over half of the top 100 schools, were C of E primary schools (C of E Newspaper December 19/26 2014, p.8).

My research has shown that for C of E schools to flourish they need:

- To understand the context of today's society, accept government policies but interpret them to enable Christian distinctiveness.
- To understand accountability and autonomy (which a school earns through success) and make things work for the benefit of all the children.

- To exercise courageous leadership and encourage others to take leadership responsibilities.
- To build character for transformation, for staff as well as children.

There is no such thing as a neutral ethos, as there are implicit and explicit values in every school that convey a message to its children. Ethos and values matter as much as results, for without values results will be worthless. In my research I have argued that within a C of E school there should be a Christian narrative behind their values which are rooted in the life of Jesus. Education rooted in this will allow children to flourish, not just by being educated for economic productivity but also to develop spiritually. C of E schools need a compelling vision of education for the development of friendships, relationships, good citizenship, and wisdom for character formation (emotional intelligence).

Every significant action taken in a school should make a difference to children. My research has shown that leaders make the single biggest difference to school effectiveness, and can transform the school culture for better or worse. Education is important because it can provide a transforming vision for children. A good education opens doors and is the gateway to opportunity. C of E schools are places where children from all backgrounds and abilities are welcome. The C of E school does not indoctrinate but should focus on values: to live out gospel values the school needs to give every child the opportunity to flourish and master skills. School improvement is about every child's life chances as children flourish emotionally and spirituality.

The SIAMS inspection looks for where the school engages in high quality experiences that develop pupils' spirituality, and for a highly developed interpretation of spirituality shared across the school community. The SIAMS framework assesses what the school is doing to develop children's understanding of Jesus and the Christian message. This requires heads to develop their reflective theology and establish ways to prioritise the development of Christian spirituality in their schools. The Way Ahead (2001) reported that the C of E school was at the centre of the church's mission to the nation. This mission was defined as proclaiming the gospel, nourishing Christians in their faith, bringing others to faith and nurturing and maintaining the dignity of the image of God in human beings through service and working for justice. Schools are a part of the church's ministry and to fulfil this mission, schools need to reflect the nature and ministry of Christ in a distinctively Christian way. The report stated clearly that 'no church school can be considered to be part of the church mission unless it is distinctively Christian' (Dearing, paragraph 1:11). It also required all C of E schools to adopt an ethos which placed a special responsibility upon the head teacher as the main instigator of the values that underpin the church school's distinctiveness.

This research has shown clearly the important role played by the head teacher in establishing and embedding values in the school and their influence in leading the staff and pupils to adopt and apply the values in all areas of the life of the school.

9.3. The significance of the research to the development of training for potential church school leadership

My research has identified the present lack of training for potential leaders in C of E schools which would enable the role to function as an extension to the mission of the church in the local community.

I believe that C of E schools should offer a spiritual dimension to the lives of young people, within the traditions of the church. Neither national government, nor all dioceses, provide adequate support and preparation for their head teachers to work in C of E schools. At present there is an optional module as part of the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), on leading a faith school, but the NPQH qualification is no longer a necessary requirement to becoming a head teacher in England. As a quarter of all primary schools in England have a C of E foundation, there appears to be insufficient preparation to fulfil this role effectively. Opportunities need to be provided for potential leaders to reflect upon their motivation for seeking a headship and if it is to be in a C of E school (or an alternative faith school) the leaders need to be challenged to consider how their personal beliefs will enhance or be detrimental to such an appointment. There needs to be a national approach to training both teachers and head teachers to work in C of E schools.

There also needs to be greater governor training to prepare foundation governors to work in schools alongside the head teacher. One of the important roles of a foundation governor, in a C of E school, is to support the development of the Christian distinctiveness and to monitor the work undertaken by the leadership of the school to enable this to happen. School governors play a vital, statutory role in supporting and challenging the leadership of a school. Their effectiveness is questioned and assessed by both Ofsted and SIAMS and failure to be effective may result in schools being downgraded in inspections. However, governors receive no payment for this heavy responsibility and although they may be skilled professionals in their own field of work, can feel inadequately skilled for the demands put upon them to fulfil their governor role effectively. All dioceses and the National Society need to play a role in supporting governors of C of E schools as well as head teachers and school staff to develop their reflective theology and establish effective ways of nurturing pupils' spirituality within a community based on Christian distinctiveness.

My research has demonstrated that for C of E schools to flourish they need to:

- Be rooted in theology: the whole school curriculum should be informed by a distinctive Christian vision which is based upon explicit Christian values that are found in the Bible and exemplified by the life of Jesus.
- Be underpinned by high quality research: which shares good practice and informs school staff about innovative new approaches to teaching and learning in a Christian school.
- Offer an understanding of children's developing spirituality: the C of E school has the responsibility, which is assessed by SIAMS, to have a highly developed interpretation of spirituality shared across the school community. Learners are required to have regular opportunities to engage in high quality experiences to develop a personal spirituality. Heads need to ensure that these opportunities are well established.
- Provide training, leadership, and a Christian pedagogical approach to the curriculum: heads need to develop a strategic approach to the training of all the adults who work with the pupils in the development of a Christian pedagogy and the development of Christian values. This training needs to run concurrently with the focus on teaching and learning.
- Build expertise for all adults involved in the education of the children, including the governors: research and training builds expertise and are vital for a school to achieve 'outstanding' and to provide excellence for its pupils.

This will only be possible with world-class training and development, fostering and equipping, along with a Christian vocation to teach, lead or govern. The C of E has a unique past and can have an influential future, but only if schools are pro-active in transforming pupils to transform the world. The focus of the National Society through C of E schools is the formation of people for the transformation of the world in the twenty-first century. The head teacher will continue to have an important role in enabling this to happen.

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Appendix 1: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

The Research Project

I would like to invite you to participate in a study that I am undertaking as part of my Professional Doctorate (Doctorate in Education) programme at Anglia Ruskin University in Chelmsford. My research will try to answer the following question:

To what extent does the head teacher's value system influence the ethos of the Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school?

I am interested in how Head Teachers, appointed to lead a C of E Primary School, interpret the distinctiveness of their school and how they have worked out their ethos in their school since becoming the head teacher. I am also interested in finding out how this is seen in practice impacting on the educational experience of the pupils.

I believe that what I learn from my research will be useful to new Heads, who have not had previous experience of leading a C of E school, in helping them to reflect on their own interpretation of distinctiveness.

I am self-funding my work as I am passionate about the important role C of E schools have in today's educational landscape, as they can be the bridge between; de-mystifying and making the church relevant in the 21st century as well as providing a caring, supportive education based on Christian values.

Your Participation in the Research Project

I would like to look in depth at six Voluntary Controlled C of E primary schools in rural Essex, where the Head Teacher has been in post for between three and six years, so enabling time for them to establish their individual ethos. I have chosen to look at rural schools as I believe that they play a vital role in the local community.

If you agree to take part your school and the names of staff would remain anonymous. I would make an initial visit to explain the process and book convenient dates for my follow up visits. I will need to interview the Head Teacher initially for between 30mins and one hour and then follow up with interviews of two of the teaching staff and two of the non-teaching staff for approximately 30 minutes each. After the interviews I would like to walk around the school to note how the distinctiveness is evident in the environment.

Everything that is said during the interviews will be handled with confidentiality and your participation in the project will be kept confidential.

I appreciate that everyone who works in school has a heavy work commitment, but my research relies upon me having the opportunity to go into these selected schools to see your good practice, so that this can be shared with others.

You have the right to refuse to take part and to withdraw at any time by sending me an email to that effect.

I can be contacted by email on gill.holmes@student.anglia.ac.uk or by phone on 01245 361955 for further information.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP, TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

Title of the project:

To what extent does the head teacher’s value system influence the ethos of the Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school?

Main investigator and contact details:

Gill Holmes: gill.holmes@student.anglia.ac.uk 01245 361955

Members of the research team:

Gill Holmes, Dr Simon Pratt-Adams (EdD supervisor), Dr Heather Meacock (EdD supervisor).

1. I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.

3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded.

4. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.

5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.

Data Protection: I agree to the University¹ processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me.

Name of participant (print).....Signed.....Date.....

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP

¹ “The University” includes Anglia Ruskin University and its partner colleges

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above.

Title of Project:

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2: Presentation at:

International Conference Foundations: Underpinning Christian Education?

Do the Head teacher's Values influence the ethos of a Church School?

Brief Biography:

I am a recently retired head teacher of a Church of England VC Primary School in rural Essex. I am married to an Anglican clergyman and have four grown up children. I began teaching in the early 1970s and apart from a few years, when I took time out when my children were very young, I have taught in primary schools in different parts of the country. I am a practicing Christian and my faith has played a significant part in my personal and professional life. I had always felt called to work in challenging schools in urban areas and I had always worked in Community schools, with no faith affiliation, until in 2006 I was seconded by the Local Authority to support a C of E VC primary school as Head Teacher. A year later I became the substantive head.

Introduction

A state school is a public institution open to scrutiny by everyone and accountable to the government through Ofsted, the Local Authority, from parents and from the wider community. There is the expectation that every pupil will reach their potential through accessing an excellent curriculum, being given targets to achieve and finally becoming good citizens. This is the aim of every school regardless of their demographic or location. The focus for the head teacher in the primary school has through necessity become the need to continue to raise the achievement and attainment of all pupils through increasingly excellent teaching and learning.

All schools put a high priority on enabling their pupils to fulfil their potential, but it is the development of pupil's Christian beliefs and spirituality that mark out the C of E School as being different from the school, with no faith affiliation. C of E schools also differ from other faith schools, as where other faith schools focus on providing education for children of families with that faith persuasion, the C of E School provides education for the whole community. The C of E School is unique as a faith school because from its conception its role has been to provide education for all children as part of its collaborative ministry. 'If the Church has a calling to participate in education, then it must be in a bold and decisive manner, not seeking to impose its faith but offering it as a gift to be experienced through the enjoyment pupils have in working in a community where Christian principles are practised'. (The Way Ahead, 2001, par.3.20) The C of E school is about teaching and learning being closely linked to Church tradition, that of worship and action.

To be a head teacher in any school is a huge responsibility, but to lead a C of E school comes with the added responsibility of providing a Christian distinctiveness, within the traditions of the school's foundation. All leaders bring both experience and their own personal vision and values to their role. The Dearing Report, 'The Way Ahead' published in 2001, looked at the position of C of E schools at the start of the twenty-first century. It described how I viewed my vocation, 'For a Christian, a vocation to teach should be the context in which he or she understands himself or herself called to act and speak for God', (Paragraph 6:26).

Reflecting upon the experience of leading a C of E school has allowed me to consider how my values impacted upon the ethos of the school. It also provided the opportunity to consider whether leading a faith school had been different from leading one with no faith affiliation. Looking back at the time I spent as head in the C of E School, and talking to staff and parents from the school, they have confirmed that the ethos of the school had changed and developed over time, under my leadership. Every head teacher has their own value system which is important to them, and which will influence their leadership and the ethos they develop in their school. Values affect perception, motivation and choices. How a leader develops their personal values or authenticity depends upon the individual. 'A leader shapes the ethos in which others must live, an ethos as light-filled as heaven or as shadowy as hell. A good leader is intensely aware of the interplay of inner shadow and light, lest the act of leadership do more harm than good', (Palmer, 2005, p.690). Nias et al (1992) support the pivotal role of the head teacher and how the culture of the school starts with the beliefs and values of the head and the head then seeks to promote the same values and beliefs in the staff. The head teacher is both a professional and a spiritual model. The extent to which the C of E school is part of the wider mission of the Church will depend upon the values held by the head teacher. The embodiment of these values will be critical to the development of the character or ethos of the school. In his book 'Virtue Reborn' (2009) Wright discusses how the values of the school will run through it like the writing through a stick of seaside rock.

The C of E School provides pupils with the opportunity to consider Christianity philosophically, as faith can play an important part in how pupils look at the world around. Elbourne began his book 'Church Schools: a Mission-Shaped Vision' (2009, p.3) by declaring that 'God's mission is carried forward through Church schools as much as congregations' and wrote that the C of E school is one of the principal contributors to the community. C of E schools are entrusted with the task of passing on the tenets of faith: love, compassion and discipleship. Faith schools have an important role to play; 'faith schools and religion shape not only a national identity but the belief systems of communities as well as those of individuals', (Gardner et al 2005, p. 9).

C of E schools are expected to be 'distinctively Christian'. The term distinctive is defined by the National Society in their Guidance for Schools and Inspectors undertaking a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) (2013); 'Distinctiveness must include a wholehearted commitment to putting faith and spiritual development at the heart of the curriculum, with a Christian ethos permeating the whole educational experience'. A school where the purpose of education is clearly articulated and communicated is a far more effective school than one in which there is no obviously agreed purpose, or where the head teacher's view of education and schooling is not informed by and transmitted to the other people who work there, (Gold and Evans, 1998). To lead a C of E school requires the head teacher to be clear about how they will make it distinctive through their leadership.

Leadership

'Leadership is about your vision of life, your principles and your determination to stand up for them. Leadership is being passionate about turning the vision into a reality', (Green, 2000, p.10). Research undertaken by Kouzes and Posner (2007) over a twenty-five year period, into the most important characteristics of an admired leader, concluded that although all leaders are unique they all exhibit certain practices. From the analysis of thousands of leaders' experiences, every case followed a similar pattern of actions which they were able

to summarize into five practices of exemplary leadership; model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act and encourage the heart, (2007,p.14). To 'Model the way' is concerned with how leader's behaviour earns them respect and the need to model the behaviour that they expect from their colleagues. Speaking eloquently is not sufficient; leaders must set an example in their daily actions to show that they are deeply committed to their beliefs. To 'inspire a shared vision' is a leader's ability to have a vision for what they want to achieve, and the ability to verbalise the vision and inspire others to get excited about it. All leaders 'challenge the process' which will involve a change from the status quo. Innovation and change involves experimenting and taking risks; leaders learn from failures as well as successes and must provide safe working environment for others to feel confident to take risks. Leaders need to foster collaboration, build trust and give empowerment to engage everyone to have a stake in the vision. The final practice of an exemplary leader was found to be the need to 'encourage the heart', to appreciate people's contributions and create a culture of celebrating values and victories.

Workers want a leader that is truthful, ethical and principled; one that they know is soundly honest, as honesty is strongly tied to values and ethics. 'We resolutely refuse to follow those who lack confidence in their own beliefs. We simply don't trust people who can't or won't disclose a clear set of values, ethics, and standards and live by them', (Kouzes and Posner, 2007p.33). Good leaders need to be forward thinking and planning for future success. It's the ability to have a vision, a dream, a calling, a goal or a personal agenda, all within a clear plan for the way ahead. If the leader's competence is in doubt, they will not have the support needed. Competence includes having relevant experience and sound judgement.

A leader must decide on their values, principles, standards, ethics and ideals upon which their beliefs are based, and which drive their vision. A vision describes a person's enduring beliefs and influences every aspect of life, it guides actions, empowers and motivates. Reflecting upon Dr. Martin Luther King's speech in 1963, 'I have a dream', Kouzes and Posner concluded that the 'speech illustrated how the ability to exert an enlivening influence is rooted in fundamental values, cultural traditions, personal conviction, and a capacity to use words to create positive images of the future. To enlist others, leaders need to bring the vision to life', (2007, p.141).

Ethos and Values

Hemming (2011) wrote that the school ethos, culture or climate generally refers to the core shared values, beliefs and practices of an educational community. It implies a particular feeling and atmosphere perceived by members and visitors. Freiberg (1999) defined the school ethos as, the heart and soul of a school. Each educational setting has its own ethos and faith schools often promote values through a distinctively religious ethos. C of E schools are rooted in the Christian tradition and are committed to providing an education system that seeks to build character and enable pupils to develop as whole, rounded, spiritual beings. The ethos provides a framework for the kind of character that a head teacher wants the pupils in their school to develop.

The Christian values that underpin the life of the school will be experienced through the worship and teaching, and evident in all aspects of school life. Gardner et al. (2005) referring to the C of E school wrote that the ethos of the school, the values enshrined and articulated in the school and the purposes of the education provided, will be based on the faith that

inspired the foundation of the school. It is the head teacher's responsibility in the C of E School to build a learning environment or 'ethos' based on Christian values. The word 'ethos' appears twelve times in the Dearing Report (2001) where it states that the Church school should articulate their distinctive Christian ethos. The Church School of the Future Report (2012) highlighted the importance of the ethos and required all C of E schools to have an appropriate ethos statement, (Chadwick, 2012,p.15).

Every school has an ethos which is unique because every school is made up of people with differing values and beliefs, cultures and faith commitment. The ethos of a school should be clear to anyone visiting, as it should embrace the culture and identity of the school and be evident in the atmosphere. A head teacher needs to work with the governors and other stakeholders to formulate an ethos statement that embraces the values that they as head teacher have brought to the school. The ethos of the school is then developed by the leadership and as head teacher I was committed to my vision and values and worked them out through my school's ethos. The effectiveness of the values of a school will start from the personal commitment of the leadership. The way a head teacher creates the ethos of their school will be their interpretation of their values and vision of leadership. The extent to and manner in which we value ourselves, those around us, our environment and the absence or presence of God is dependent on the level of concern we have about them.

Every school has the responsibility to nurture their pupils into a broad set of shared national spiritual values, as well as values specific to the head teacher, within the traditions of the school. In our pluralistic society it is controversial to define what constitutes the culture of England in the twenty-first century, never the less; it is the responsibility of each school to decide on the values and cultural norms that will be evident through the ethos of the school, and to make these clearly visible to the whole community.

The National Society provides specific advice to the SIAMS inspectors in the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule September 2013, who are looking for 'Christian distinctiveness' in the schools, through their ethos and values as evident in their curriculum and worship. It advocates that the values in the school should be both values that are distinctively Christian in character in addition to being shared human values, and these should be embedded in the daily life of the school. The Christian values and character will have an impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners.

I suggest that what influences the values of head teachers, in whatever school they lead, is what fundamental personal convictions are at the root of their work ethic. To ask a Christian to take their faith into the workplace is to challenge them to take their beliefs seriously in their professional life. My personal belief is that a person's religious faith will impact upon their value system and influence the contribution they make to the education of pupils. Whatever beliefs a head teacher may have, their influence on the school will not be 'value free'. 'It seems to be endemic to the way we are as human beings to promote with others what we ourselves have come to understand as true and good', Haughey (1998,p.286). A head teacher living and imparting their values to the whole community is vital to enable the school community to work together.

Cooling firmly believes that within a Church school the values that underpin the ethos should be Christian values. In his inaugural lecture, as Director of the National Institute for Christian Research at Canterbury Christ Church University in June 2011,entitled, 'Is God Redundant

in the classroom?', Cooling sought to show that people's beliefs are integral to everything they know. He defined education that is distinctively Christian as a 'form of education that is seeking to be faithful to Christian teaching, looks to the Christian tradition for its inspiration, and is characterised by a Christian anthropology' (2011, p.9). Cooling added that it should not just be an optional add-on to education, a looking for opportunities in the school day to mention Christian values or talk about Jesus in assembly, but it should be embedded in the pedagogy.

The Research

Being passionate about the importance placed on the head teacher to effectively lead their school, and wanting to find out more about it, led me to propose my research question, which is 'To what extent the Head Teacher's value system influences the ethos of the Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School?' I am using a case study to carry out my piece of qualitative research and have selected a small group of six C of E primary schools to form the case study. The schools match my selection criteria of small rural Voluntary Controlled (VC) Primary Schools in rural Essex. For geographical convenience I restricted the schools to within a twenty five mile radius of my home. I further refined the criteria to schools where the head teacher had been in post for at least three years, which would have given them time to make changes. The six schools, had similarities which enabled them to form a 'case', holistically. This selection was then further refined by being schools where the head teachers had responded positively to my request to include them in the case study, and allowed me access and time in their school, with them and their staff. Going into the schools I was entering a familiar environment, having worked as a head teacher in a VC C of E primary school, but I was unfamiliar with each individual setting. Throughout our lives we continue to use a process of constructing and interpreting our experiences and I took my life experiences to this case study.

I chose to use only VC schools, and not a mix of VC and Voluntary Aided (VA), as in VC schools the head teachers had been appointed by the governors, supported by representatives from the Local Education Authority. (A Diocesan Education Adviser would normally attend the interviews and offer support in the selection of the head teacher, but would have no voting rights.) There would have been no expectation that the candidates for the posts of head teacher were either Christian or regular attendees at a Christian place of worship. Questions at the interviews would have focused primarily on candidates' leadership experience and educational qualifications for the post and less on their personal values and beliefs, with questions asking if they were in sympathy with the ethos of a Church school.

It was clear to me that the semi-structured interview, five in each school: the head teacher, two class teachers and two of the support staff, would provide the focus that I needed. I had a clear area of interest to research and planned the schedule to lead the interviewees into responses that focused on the head teacher's values and how the ethos in the schools had developed. My personal and professional understanding played an influential part throughout, beginning with my selection of interview questions and areas to discuss. Flintham's book 'Reservoirs of Hope' (2010) outlined the details of a study of Spiritual and Moral Leadership. 'As a phenomenological study, the research sought to focus on the lived experience of the head teachers interviewed and to express it in a language that is as loyal to that lived experience as possible', (p.6). My study had a similar focus. A number of Flintham's serving head teachers, in his research, said that it was the 'sense of hope' that

kept them going and that they felt called to service in the particular school in which they were head. This was just one of the areas I was investigating along with the answer to a question used by Woods (2007) in her research: 'Do you feel that you have been conscious of and perhaps influenced by some power, whether you call it God or not, which may either appear to be beyond your individual self or partly within your being?'

When using a case study it is important to have a rich description of the setting and using an environmental observation, or climate walk, in each school, enabled me to see evidence of the ethos which has been described by the interviewees. Atkinson and Coffey (2004) acknowledged the value of document analysis, but cautioned that it should always be used whilst remembering for whom the document was produced. The documents that I will be using are the latest Ofsted Inspection Reports and the latest School Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS). The inspection reports for each school will have been written to provide evidence to support inspectors' grading. Atkinson and Coffey note that documents have ontological status, by providing a documentary reality to the social setting, but caution, 'we cannot learn through written records alone how an organisation actually operates day by day. Equally, we cannot treat records however official as firm evidence of what they report' (2004, p.58). The documents will however, provide some background to each school and will serve to provide evidence to support what I see and hear or provide contradictory evidence. Any dichotomy will allow for further reflection on the data and require interpretation.

Qualitative enquiry is not a neutral activity and researchers have their own biases, beliefs and values, which form the lens through which they view the social world. Reflexivity will allow me to reflect on how 'self' has affected the research and acknowledge the affects. 'Highly reflective researchers will be acutely aware of the ways in which their selectivity, perception, background, inductive processes and paradigms shape the research', (Cohen et al, 2011, p.225). I will need to be reflexive in the process of analysing the data, as I will be selecting what to report of the rich description, what words to quote from the interviews and what to omit, these decisions will affect the reliability and validity of the research.

The interviews have been completed and transcribed and analysis is at an early stage. All six of the heads are hard working professionals, driven by the desire to see their schools becoming even better. They have all been able to tell me about their vision for their school and how they developed their ethos; with some it was a work in progress and the ethos was evolving. The in-depth analysis of my data will allow me to discern the underlying values held by each head and how influential these have been in developing their school values and vision.

'Napoleon Bonaparte described leaders as 'dealers in hope', an appellation which requires them not only to maintain reservoirs of inner self-belief and personal resilience when faced with challenging circumstances, but also to inspire and imbue those they lead with the same spirit of hope in the prospect of a better future' (Flintham 2010 p2).

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