

A ROLE FOR THE FUTURE

Anglican Primary Schools in the London Diocese



John Gay
Brian Kay
Helen Newdick
George Perry

Culham College Institute, Abingdon

First published in 1991 by
Culham Educational Foundation,
The Malthouse,
60 East Saint Helen Street,
ABINGDON,
Oxon OX14 5EB



© 1991 John Gay, Brian Kay, Helen Newdick, George Perry

ISBN 0 907957 36 6

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Copyright owner.

Foreword

Church of England schools have a long and honourable history, and were pioneers in providing education for the generality of children as much in London as anywhere. It is because of this that our schools are so much more densely distributed in the inner city and generally longer established parts of the Diocese, and thinner on the ground in the more recent suburbs, which have grown up since county school provision has become more general over the past century or so. In some parts of London Church of England schools are in a majority over quite wide areas, and are thus a very significant factor in the general provision of the maintained sector.

But the structure of that sector, and the conditions under which schools within operate, have been subject to quite rapid change in recent years. Since church provision plays so large a part in London schooling, we thought it right to set about re-examining our role. The church itself has a right to know both the extent and the effectiveness of the uses to which its resources are put, and the public at large, represented by local and central government, have a right to know how much the church's distinctive contribution adds to the general provision for those who choose to take advantage of it. This Board, too, needs a body of objective information on which to base its policies for the future in these rapidly changing times.

This survey gives us a starting point; it embodies the views of heads and chairs of governors on how they see the roles and performance of their schools as church schools. We would like to proceed in due course to sampling parents' views, and to add more local case studies to that, in order to get a more complete picture.

We believe this survey has achieved at least three purposes for us. First, it has shown that the very strongly held and expressed views of those in schools do generally reflect the Board's policies. Secondly this allows us to build and renew policy with more confidence, and to address areas where weaknesses emerge. Thirdly it gives us a factual basis for a renewed case for church schools in the face of a radical re-examination of their role. We are therefore very grateful to the Culham College Institute for their care, their interest and their professionalism in conducting the survey, and so it is with every confidence that we recommend it to you.

John Osborn

Prebendary John Osborn,
Director,
London Diocesan Board for Schools.

June 1991

A Role for the Future: Anglican Primary Schools in the London Diocese

Preface

In 1988 the London Diocesan Board for Schools invited the Culham College Institute to undertake a study of the role of its church schools. The purpose of the study is to build up a comprehensive picture so that the Board can meet the individual needs of the schools more effectively, and also maintain and strengthen the overall position of church schools in central policy negotiations. The study will also provide the schools themselves with information to assist their future work and development.

It is essentially a collaborative exercise involving the Board for Schools and the schools themselves; we are most grateful for the large amount of advice and help we have received and also for the enthusiasm and co-operation of all the heads and chairs¹ of governors involved.

The project aims to explore the views and expectations of a variety of groups, the first stage is concerned with the heads of the schools and the chairs of governors. Interim reports were published in November 1989 (on the views of the heads of primary schools) and in May 1990 (on those of their chairs of governors), both with circulation restricted to those mainly concerned. This report, which is designed for wider circulation, makes use of the material included in the interim reports, compares different groups of schools working in different conditions, and discusses some of the issues which arise.

The report is based on the information and views provided by 99 heads of Church of England primary schools and 100 chairs of governors. A questionnaire was sent out in May 1989 to the heads of all 137 such schools and subsequently in November 1989 a somewhat different questionnaire was sent to the chairs of governors. The response rate in each case was over 70%. In the case of the heads statistical checks revealed that those who responded are representative of the diocesan primary schools as a whole. In most cases it was possible to pair heads' and chairs' reports on the same school, though there were others where we received completed questionnaires from either the head or the chair but not from both.

The questionnaires were the outcome of a long process of discussion and consultation. The project was first talked over with the officers of the Board for Schools. Subsequently a number of heads and chairs of governors met with the Culham team and diocesan officers at a half-day conference to identify and discuss the main areas that the enquiry should cover.

¹ Not everyone likes the term 'chair'; it was adopted by Culham as being the one most widely used among London schools.

Members of the team then visited some dozen heads in their schools and with the aid of an interview schedule further defined topics to be included in the questionnaire. A draft questionnaire was then produced and sent for comment to twelve different heads and discussed with them in the course of a further visit. Finally after revision in the light of those discussions it was shown again to officers of the Diocesan Board and some further revision incorporated. The final version was then sent to schools in the Summer term of 1989.

The construction of the questionnaire for chairs of governors was influenced by a study of the responses that had already been received from heads. The two questionnaires overlapped to a considerable extent but that sent to chairs of governors omitted a number of items which related more closely to the internal workings of the school and was extended to cover issues relating to the governing bodies in greater detail. In both cases some of the questions required coded responses while others were open-ended, but in the questionnaires sent to chairs of governors there was more emphasis on the latter.

Synopsis

The schools - an overview

Page 7

1. The aided primary schools are medium-sized co-educational schools mostly covering the ages 5 to 11. The majority have a catchment area largely defined by the parish in which they are situated.
2. Heads report that about two fifths are in deprived areas and face a variety of environmental difficulties and a number of problems affecting their pupils.

Governors

Page 8

3. The most important qualities to be looked for in a governor are a supportive attitude to head and staff, a sympathy with the school's aims and an ability to look objectively at school needs. Specialist knowledge or experience is considered less important.
4. The most important tasks are attendance at governors' meetings and the appointment of heads. Other tasks such as the appointment of teaching staff, membership of sub-committees, getting to know the staff, visiting the school and taking part in training are all rated as at least fairly important.
5. The most important items on the agenda for governors' meetings are the Christian ethos of the school, the curriculum, the financial management, the admissions policy and long-term planning.
6. The most important objectives for governors include helping to create a good educational establishment, supporting head and staff, maintaining the school's Christian ethos and encouraging good relations both within the school and externally, especially with parents.
7. This constitutes a fairly heavy workload which is likely to become heavier in the future.

The role of chair of governors

Page 11

8. The workload of chairs of governors is still heavier and likely to increase; however, in general they find their role a rewarding one.

The role of head

Page 12

9. The majority of heads are women who are active members of their local churches. They have generally served as heads in their present school for less than 10 years.
10. They see the most important parts of their task as creating a good educational establishment, maintaining its Christian ethos, being concerned for the children's

welfare and acting as leader of a team of teachers and support staff. Good relations both within and outside the school are central to these tasks.

Teachers

Page 13

11. The attitudes to religion of potential appointments to the school are very important. In practice the great majority of teachers attend collective worship and teach R.E. Maintaining this level of religious commitment in new appointments is often not easy.

Parents

Page 14

12. Most schools believe in involving parents actively and many succeed in doing so to a substantial extent. But there is some anxiety, especially among chairs of governors, that parents may wish to interfere or try to dictate in professional matters.

Pupils

Page 15

13. Schools show a variety of social mix from predominantly middle- and professional-class to almost wholly manual class households, but the majority are heavily weighted towards the latter.
14. Virtually all the schools are ethnically mixed, and in some cases white pupils form less than a quarter of the school population. There are also schools with substantial numbers (occasionally more than half) of pupils whose parents are practising adherents of non-Christian religions.

Admission criteria

Page 16

15. The great majority of schools are over-subscribed, especially in their earlier years, but rapid pupil mobility sometimes leads to empty places higher up the school.
16. Admission criteria usually put a great deal of stress on parents' attendance at the parish or other Anglican churches or churches of other Christian denominations. Schools do not see themselves simply as serving the needs of all members of the local community equally.

Curriculum

Page 17

17. A majority of schools teach R.E. according to a syllabus they have designed or by a combination of their own syllabus and that of the diocese. In three-quarters of the schools Anglican clergy take part in R.E. teaching.
18. A majority of heads think that being a church school should affect other parts of the curriculum as well as R.E., with Christian values and insights permeating the whole.

19. Christian values, respect and concern for others, self-respect and self-discipline are among the values which schools are concerned to foster in pupils. Schools with mixed races and cultures lay particular stress on tolerance and understanding.
20. Among the academic values mentioned the most commonly identified are industriousness and enjoyment of learning.

Collective worship

21. Collective worship is generally shared by the whole school, less commonly by sections of the school.
22. Parents are regularly invited to join in school worship in over two-fifths of the schools and occasionally invited in all but six of the remainder. Withdrawal of pupils from worship is uncommon and usually affects only one or two pupils in each case.
23. As well as heads, the senior staff, clergy and pupils all take part frequently in the conduct of school worship. In about half the schools pupils regularly attend Eucharist either in church or in school, generally either termly or more frequently.

The school and the church

24. A few respondents, both heads and chairs expressed doubts about the desirability of having aided schools at all.
25. Most see church schools as a natural outcome of the concern that the church has for all aspects of life.
26. They see the prime purpose of church schools as providing education of the highest possible quality, which necessarily comprises a spiritual dimension.
27. The school is also seen as part of the church's outreach towards the community.
28. Most respondents thought that the church should not see its schools as a means of carrying out its missionary function.
29. Church schools may however act as a bridge by which families are brought into contact with the church.
30. It is considered that part of the function of the church school is to provide Christian education for families who are active members of the church themselves and others who wish for it. Such a role has its dangers and ultimately the church should be seen to be serving the whole community.

31. The view is expressed that the aided school needs to work out the processes by which while being essentially a Christian institution it fully serves a society in which Christianity is only one of several religions in a predominantly secular culture.

Two groups of schools

Page 23

32. Two groups of schools were identified: one of schools in relatively favoured surroundings, the other of schools in deprived areas.
33. There is little difference between the groups in attitudes to parental involvement, but in practice parents take more part in the activities of the more favoured schools.
34. Schools in the two groups differ little in admission policy, but schools in more favoured areas are more heavily over-subscribed.
35. The favoured schools are overwhelmingly white in race; in the other group (except for one school) white pupils form a minority, in some cases a very small minority.
36. Most schools in the deprived group contain adherents of other world religions, who in a few cases constitute a majority of pupils.
37. Views of chairs of governors about the nature and purpose of aided schools differ little between the two groups. However, chairs of the more deprived schools tend to put more emphasis on their specifically Anglican role.
38. Both groups see the prime role of the schools as serving the community, but also as offering an excellent education in a Christian context, and providing nurture in the Christian faith for those whose parents wish it.
39. The heads and chairs in the more favoured group of schools see a clear role for schools in creating links between home, school and church, in communicating Christian ideas and moral principles, in giving an opportunity to pupils and families to participate in the Christian religion and in answering a demand for church school education.
40. The heads and chairs in the disadvantaged group placed more stress on presenting the Christian faith to children so that they can make up their own minds about it, and on encouraging respect for all religions.
41. Six schools with a predominantly Muslim population were identified as a separate group. It seems that these schools are carrying out the sensitive task of giving pupils an understanding of Christianity and the experience of Christian worship without seeking to convert the children or to undermine their faith in their own religion.

Discussion

Page 34

The schools - an overview

The schools covered by the study are all co-educational; two-thirds have between 150 and 250 pupils and between 5 and 9 staff. They are mostly 'combined' schools covering an approximate age range of 5 to 11 (83).²

Over a third of the sample have nursery units attached. In two-thirds at least 75% of the staff are teachers with over five years teaching experience. Of the 50 schools which have probationer teachers, most have only one or two, and in only 11 schools do probationers represent 25% or more of the staff. The staffing position is reasonably stable in about two thirds of the schools.

Two-thirds of the schools have a catchment area largely defined by the parish in which they are situated, but a minority take in pupils very widely, even beyond their borough in at least nine cases.

Accommodation in general is regarded as adequate for modern educational requirements: 71 heads described their premises as either reasonably or well suited, 66 have playgrounds which are good or adequate and rather fewer (32) have playing fields which are good or adequate. This leaves, of course, a substantial minority in each case where facilities are not very well suited to modern educational needs.

Pupils in 75 schools have access to a swimming pool, in 62 to green spaces, in 48 to an indoor sports area - but in only about a quarter or fewer do pupils have access to a nature trail or to the natural countryside. Some 11 schools state that they have access to all five amenities, whereas eight schools have no easy access to any.

The schools vary very much in their environment, with 42 reported as being in deprived areas. The environmental problems most commonly faced are economic and social: unemployment, population mobility leading to changing social or ethnic balance, poverty or poor housing (especially bed-and-breakfast accommodation). Each of these affects over a third of the schools. Equally important is the number and range of difficulties individual heads feel they have to face. Nearly a quarter of the heads regard their school as free from all the twelve difficulties listed.³ A further 20 acknowledge only one, and 22, two or three. At the other end of the spectrum, seven schools face 10 or more.

When asked their perception of the difficulties facing their schools, some chairs of governors responded as follows:

² Figures quoted throughout refer to the actual number of schools. Since the number of responses received both from heads and chairs approximates to 100, they can also be treated as percentages.

³ a) Alienation of community from police, middle-class values, etc., b) Changing social or ethnic mix, c) Class conflict, d) Homelessness, e) Petty crime, f) Poor housing, g) Population mobility, h) Poverty, i) Racial conflict, j) Unemployment, k) Vandalism, l) Violent crime.

Homeless families, ..., many non-English speaking. Many mother tongues, 33 this term. Children come from families in stress, and many children come with problems.

Heavy over-subscription of people for each place available. Many children have to be cared for by friends after school. Usual London alienation of people at home means lack of social skills, communication, etc.

The domestic population is roughly doubling in a four to five year period, the newcomers being fairly well off, and carry into a traditional and isolated working class community increasing numbers from ethnic minorities and other faiths.

Heads were also invited to respond to a list of nine problems⁴ directly associated with pupils. Some of these (such as bullying) are mainly internal to the school, others (physical or sexual abuse of children) normally external. It is the external problems that schools are most conscious of: parental conflict (43) and child abuse both physical (28) and sexual (24) being the most commonly identified, while chairs of governors also mention the problems of single-parent families. Theft and bullying are problems for nearly a quarter of the schools. Most of these are judged to present 'some' rather than 'many' problems. Again the number and range of problems faced by a single school is an important issue. While 27 schools acknowledge none and 45 either one or two, 10 schools face five or more problems to a greater or lesser degree.

In tackling these, heads most commonly see parents as a major resource (87 regarding them as fairly or very useful), closely followed by fellow heads and welfare officers (82 and 80). Educational psychologists (74) and clergy (67) are mentioned next most frequently. If the category 'very useful' is taken by itself, clergy are seen by 39 heads as second only to parents (42) in helping to cope with problems. Clergy (57) and other heads (36) are also the groups with whom heads generally tend to have very strong associations.

Governors

Heads and chairs of governors agree very largely about the relative importance of the qualities that a governor most needs, with three standing out: a supportive attitude to head and staff, a sympathy with the school's aims and an ability to look objectively at school needs. An informed interest in children's educational development and the ability to give time and energy to involvement in school life came next. More chairs than heads consider active membership of a Christian church very important, while the reverse is the case with knowledge or experience of education, though the difference is largely in the level of importance assigned. Industrial and commercial experience rates even lower, only about two fifths of the chairs of governors rating it important.

The emphasis by both groups is therefore on attitudes rather than expertise, whether in education, finance or industry, and this is perhaps surprising in view of the increased management responsibility that school governors will carry in the future.

4 a) Bullying, b) Parental conflict, c) Physical abuse of children, d) Sexual abuse of children, e) Theft, f) Truancy, g) Vandalism, h) Violence against teachers by parents, etc., i) Violence against teachers by pupils.

Table 1

What qualities and/or qualifications do you see as being important in governors?	Numbers of schools			
	Heads n=99		Chairs n=100	
	Very Imp	Fairly Imp	Very Imp	Fairly Imp
Supportive attitude to head and staff in the implementation of aims	95	3	89	10
Sympathy with school aims	92	7	88	10
Ability to look objectively at the needs of the school as a whole	91	8	77	18
Informed interest in children's education and development	70	27	48	50
Ability to give time and energy to involvement in school life	63	33	33	57
Knowledge or experience of education	25	58	8	67
Special skills in finance	17	60	18	29
Active membership of a Christian church	16	50	33	50
Commercial/industrial experience	7	43	12	29

The balance of membership of governing bodies is generally considered about right except in two respects: the representation of ethnic minorities, considered too small by the majority of both heads and chairs; and the presence of younger age-groups, considered insufficient by about a third of each group.

There is a great variation among schools in the difficulty of making appointments of new governors: 28 schools find it very difficult; 27 others find it fairly difficult; while 17 find it not very difficult and 28 find it not difficult at all. The class of governors most difficult to replace appears to be LEA representatives.

Chairs were asked to judge the importance of various activities and tasks that governors might be called upon to fulfil. By far the most important in their eyes were attendance at governors' meetings (rated as very important by 99) and the appointment of heads (81). Five other tasks were rated as very important by a substantial proportion of chairs: the appointment of teaching staff (51), the membership of sub-committees (48),

getting to know the staff (40), visiting the school during school hours (39) and participation in governor training (35). Four other tasks rated as at least fairly important were: having individual discussions with the head (76), attending school functions (78) or religious services (68) and getting to know pupils (64). Only one of the tasks listed the appointment of ancillary staff was considered unimportant by over 50.

Among the items on agendas of governors' meetings, the Christian ethos of the school was rated as very important by 77 of chairs of governors and the school curriculum by 75, the financial management of the school by 74, the admissions policy by 72 and long-term plans for the school by 71. Next came the implications of the Educational Reform Act rated as very important by 65, the maintenance and improvement of school premises (56), school discipline (47), the professional development of teachers (39) and school links with the community (32). Classroom methods were perhaps regarded as being less the province of the governors, since only 22 rated them as very important (77 thought them at least fairly important) in the context of governors' meetings. One or two items were added to those we had suggested; in particular, by three or four respondents, the school's links with the local church, with the LEA and with the diocese.

Some objectives that governors might set themselves were suggested in the questionnaire; among these, helping to create a good educational establishment was rated as very important by 94, support to the head and the staff by 91, maintaining the school's Christian ethos by 87, encouraging good relations within the school by 82 and encouraging good relations with parents by 79; good relations with the wider community came rather lower down the priorities, 52 considering it a very important objective. Making it possible for R.E. to be taught effectively was judged to be very important by 62 while rather fewer (39) gave top priority to ensuring that it is taught within diocesan guidelines.

Responsibility for the upkeep of the buildings has always been a main concern for governing bodies of aided schools, and this was confirmed by the survey when 72 of the chairs deemed it 'very important'.

All these objectives constitute a workload which 61 chairs thought to be rather or very heavy though only three thought it intolerably so. However, 94 thought it was likely to become heavier in the future. By far the largest group of respondents thought that this would be the result of greater management responsibilities with more involvement in the management side of running the school (69). It was in this area of management that the largest group (66) thought that training for governors was most needed, with the National Curriculum (25) and interviewing techniques (18) coming well below.

Chairs of governors added comments such as the following:

When the governors are responsible for the financial management of the school we will need to meet more frequently as there will be many more items e.g. meals, cleaning, staff salaries, insurance, etc to deal with.

Local management of schools means decision-making by people who have largely been elected/appointed as consultants.

One aspect is funding: if government funding for education is decreased in response to schools seeking 'other' sources then this spiral will create more work for governors. There is likely to be an increase in the amount of monitoring/audit type work as LMS bites and evaluation moves schools more into the market place.

I hope that the formation of committees will spread the load and encourage more active participation. Both the head and the chair hope that it will lessen their administrative workload and allow more time for pastoral work in the school community.

The role of chair of governors

A high number of chairs of governors thought that their own workload was rather or very heavy (72) and eight thought it already intolerable: 85 thought that it would get worse. The additional task for chairs of governors identified by the largest group (47) was the close contact with and support for the head and staff. After that came the task of maintaining a 'team spirit' within the governing body and encouraging 'good morale' among them (19), and keeping an eye on the financial affairs of the school (16). One important task that a number of chairs of governors saw themselves carrying out was effective delegation - getting volunteers from among the governors to undertake a diversity of tasks.

Examples of comments by chairs about their additional tasks are as follows:

The overall caring and supporting of the head and her staff. To be always available when needed. To engender a warm-hearted team spirit in the governors. A willingness to do the difficult job when needed.

Meeting the head regularly so that I remain fully informed if problems arise. Developing a good personal relationship with the head and all the teaching staff so that they feel that (they) are fully supported. Acting as a benign irritant to other governors to ensure that they carry through all the tasks allotted to them at meetings and through sub-committees etc.

To support the head and be available to him. Co-ordinate the governors outside as well as at governors' meetings. Represent the school to the community/officialdom. To try and find some patience and perseverance. To give a spiritual lead to school and governing body. To be convinced that it is all worthwhile: to find and expound a philosophy of Christian education.

Amongst the duties chairs of governors tend to find most rewarding are their continued association with the school, staff, parents and children, and the feeling that they are able to do something to help, e.g.

The privilege of going into school, meeting the head, staff and children and joining them at the weekly mass in school, also at specific occasions thanking parents for their support.

The most recent and in some ways a surprising source of satisfaction was the company of three ten year old girls who offered to help me at a school fund-raising event. They were cheerful, friendly - quite unabashed at assisting the chair of governors: they worked extremely hard for four hours doing the dreary things as well as the enjoyable things - and if they are typical products of our school then I feel very proud - we are doing the right thing for our children.

The realisation at the end of the summer term that on the whole the parents are happy with the education their children are receiving.

The role of head

Of the heads who returned the questionnaire, rather more than half (55) were women. Most have been heads for under 15 years - 30 for up to five years, 32 for five to nine years and 22 for ten to fourteen years. They have been heads in their present schools in most cases for less than ten years - 36 for under five, 36 for five to nine years. In each case a smaller number of heads have been in post longer. Three-quarters are active members of their local churches, 41 describing themselves as 'very active'.

When faced with the difficult task of summing up in a few words what they felt to be the most important aspects of their role as head of a church school, heads tended to focus inevitably on a few issues. The most frequently identified was that of establishing and maintaining the Christian ethos of the school. In this context some mentioned the head's role in providing Christian witness within the school and of fostering its links with the church. The next largest number of references were to their role in helping to create a good educational establishment, their responsibility for the development of the curriculum, and their caring role in knowing the children and being concerned for their welfare. Almost as many references were to the head's role as leader of his or her staff, managing the school in such a way as to enhance their effectiveness and to encourage their professional development. The head is also seen as responsible for good relations both with fellow staff and with parents and pupils, and for this needs to be 'accessible' and a good communicator. The tenor of many of the responses is reflected in the following examples:

To achieve an atmosphere in which children and staff are happy and in which children learn what being a Christian means. To develop individual children so that they realise their full potential: to recognise staff achievements and to help them to develop successfully.

To lead and develop the staff to formulate policies which will aim for the highest standards in academic achievement, child care and Christian behaviour and then ensure that the policies are carried out.

Managing curriculum development and delivery; providing advice and liaising with support services for individual children; support and management for staff; liaising with outside bodies to represent the school/staff, eg governors, parents, L.E.A.

Communication with pupils, staff, governors, parents and L.E.A.; curriculum development; whole school approach in a Christian ethos; matching needs with resources; being seen by the community as an arm of the church; working in harmony with the parish priest, chair of governors and the parish.

Teachers

Table 2

In staff appointments to church schools (assuming professional criteria are reasonably met), how important do you rate each of the following:	Numbers of schools			
	Heads n=99		Chairs n=100	
	Very Imp	Fairly Imp	Very Imp	Fairly Imp
Teachers should be Christian or in sympathy with Christian ideals	81	16	74	21
Teachers should be practising members of a Christian church	19	44	34	52
Senior members of the teaching staff should be practising Christians	51	36	61	33
The head should be a practising Christian	85	11	82	14

Heads and chairs agree in regarding the religious attitudes of potential appointments to schools staffs as important; in many cases, very important. Over 80% of both groups consider it very important that the head should be a practising Christian and a majority of each group (larger in the case of chairs) thought that the same applied to senior staff. The much smaller proportions making the same requirement of the teaching staff may well reflect a sense of reality about the problems of appointment - but the great majority still believe that all teachers in church schools should be Christian or sympathetic to Christian ideals.

The success in putting into practice some part of this policy is implied by the fact that in 91 schools the majority of teachers attend collective worship, in 68 schools all the staff regularly take part in teaching R.E. and in 85 three-quarters or more do so. The maintenance of the policy is not easy, however. Thirty-five schools find it very difficult to recruit teachers with the right Christian qualities as well as the right professional calibre, while only 12 find it easy or not very difficult. It is proving somewhat easier to appoint teachers qualified to teach about Christianity in R.E.: 30 find it at least fairly easy, 44 fairly difficult and only 20 very difficult. It is more difficult to recruit teachers well equipped to teach about other religions: only eight find it fairly easy, 45 fairly difficult and 32 very difficult. Recruitment is no doubt a frequently recurring problem in about a third of the schools (35) where heads report a turnover of staff more rapid than they would wish.

Parents

The great majority of schools achieve the active involvement of parents at least to some extent for help with school visits (96), in using work schemes with children at home (93), or helping in the classroom (86). Many of them involve parents to a great extent in helping with school visits (56), in using work schemes with their own children (25) or helping in the classroom (29). Communication with parents in most cases is through various forms of teacher/parent evening and newsletters supplemented by a great deal of informal contact. Twenty seven schools communicate with some parents in languages other than English.

Chairs of governors were asked what involvement parents should, in their view, have in the life of the school. Their answers in general show approval of the present practice. They saw parents as having a role as helpers in the classroom (22)⁵ and in extra-curricular activities (10); as members of a PTA (15); showing support for and interest in the school in a variety of ways (10), including fund-raising (10), and as governors (10). A number mentioned the importance of parental support for and interest in their own children's development (13).

But at the same time there were some reservations expressed, and some 17 warned that parents ought not to interfere or try to dictate in professional matters, and implied that there were occasions when parents overstepped that mark. The gap between enthusiastic involvement and interest on the one hand and interference on the other is a narrow one, and respondents were clearly concerned that the level of communication between school and parents should be such that the role of each is fully understood by the other.

Examples of comments are given as follows:

(The use of parents) as governors involved in the day-to-day running; as fund-raisers for extra books, equipment etc; in the classroom to provide wider experiences for the children by offering the teachers an extra pair of hands.

A reasonably high level (of parental involvement), encouraging their presence and support, but not allowing this to develop into a divine right of judgement and interference which easily happens.

School is an extension of the family and whilst the teaching and organisation are the responsibility of paid professionals, parents should be involved in clubs, visits and some classroom activities, e.g. reading.

We encourage involvement. But parents live at a distance and there are many one-parent families. It is an uphill task.

Parental involvement is crucial. Where there is a lack of interest or concern for the child in the home, the child is denied the love and security essential for it to benefit from the work at school.

⁵ Figures in these two paragraphs cannot be directly compared. Heads' views were tested by inviting them to tick items on a list; chairs of governors' views were the result of an open-ended question, hence the lower figures.

Pupils

The social balance of the schools varies greatly. In nearly half (47) more than 75% of the pupils are from manual backgrounds. In a substantial number of these (28) the proportion rises to 90% or more. A minority (18) on the other hand have over 75% of middle- and professional-class children.

The incidence of poverty is again very varied, judged by the take-up of free school meals: 26 schools have fewer than 5% of pupils receiving free meals, 49 fewer than 25%, while five schools have over 75%.

The great majority of schools have some children whose ethnic origins are outside Europe, but in many cases the actual numbers are small (see Table 3). Of the children of African or Afro-Caribbean origin, six schools have none and 21 have fewer than 5%; these children do however form a quarter or more of the school population in 25 schools and over a half in eight of these. Of children of Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin, only two schools have none and 30 have 1% to 4%. In 14 schools these children form a quarter or more of the school population and in three of these over half. Children of near- or far-Eastern origin rarely constitute more than 15% of the population of any one school and usually less than 5%. White children are fewer than a quarter of the population in 12 schools and a half or less in 34.

All but 10 schools have at least some pupils whose home language is not English. Of these, 52 have up to 25% and a further 17 up to 50%. In six schools three-quarters or more of the pupils fall into this category.

Table 3

Approximate percentages of the ethnic origins of the pupils	Numbers of schools						
	0%	1-4%	5-14%	15-24%	25-50%	Over 50%	No response
African/Afro Caribbean	6	21	26	8	17	8	13
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	2	30	34	9	11	3	10
Far Eastern	15	39	25	1	-	-	19
Near Eastern	21	31	22	3	1	-	21
White	1	1	5	5	22	55	10

Heads were also asked to give approximate proportions of children 'whose families are actively involved in religious observances.' 'Active involvement' may well have been

interpreted in different ways. This appears particularly to be the case in relation to Christianity, where schools report between 3% and 100% of pupils in this category. Between these extremes schools are spread fairly evenly.

The figures relating to other world religions appear to be more reliable, but still need to be regarded with caution. Heads report a substantial proportion of pupils (20% or more) whose families practise a religious faith other than Christianity in 17 schools.

In the case of Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism, 11 schools have 10% or more such pupils and four of these schools have 20% or more; only one school has 40% or more.

Practising Muslims constitute 10% or more of the pupils in 27 schools, 20% or more in 17 of these and 40% or more in 10; in six of these they are reported as forming a majority of pupils.

Admission criteria

Two thirds of the schools draw mainly from their own parish. Others draw from much further afield, beyond their borough boundary in nine cases. Though 79 schools describe themselves as over-subscribed, in a number of cases (17) by a 100% or more, and only six are under-subscribed, two-thirds of them have vacant places at some stage or other, particularly at the junior level (37 have places at lower junior levels and 54 at upper junior levels) and this no doubt reflects the results of population mobility. Some schools are clearly admitting new pupils constantly at all stages - one, a school of 156 pupils, referred to 196 pupils admitted since Sept 1988, mostly from single-parent families in bed-and-breakfast accommodation.

Schools vary in the detail of the principles by which they select pupils, but there is a broad pattern which emerges. The top criterion in most schools is that parents should attend the parish church in the parish where the school is situated and/or that they should be practising Anglicans. Of almost equal importance is that brothers or sisters already attend the school, no doubt themselves admitted in most cases because of the religious affiliation of their parents.

Parents' membership of other Christian denominations affords a somewhat lower priority and membership of other world religions lower again. Between these two, in order of priority, comes the requirement of living within the school's catchment area: six schools give this as the first or second priority, but in most it comes below the religious criteria. Other criteria rank somewhat lower again, though social deprivation or physical disability are given some weight in a significant minority of schools.

Heads broadly endorse the principles laid down by their governors, though they give rather greater weight to the criteria of having a brother or sister in school and to living within the catchment area. One or two are concerned, however, that parents may exploit the system:

We cannot estimate how many of our families are truly Christian and how many use the system in order to attend the school.

Curriculum

A majority of schools teach R.E. either according to a syllabus they have designed (30), or using the Diocesan syllabus (17), or by a combination of the two (24). A few schools use another Agreed syllabus, generally in association with their own (5) and sometimes in association with the Diocesan syllabus as well (3). Twelve schools did not acknowledge using any of these syllabuses.

R.E. is based to a large extent on the church's year, follows a topic or theme pattern and covers the main world faiths as well as Christianity in about two-thirds of the schools in each case.

Anglican clergy take part in R.E. teaching in 72 schools and other Christian clergy do so in 18. It is rare to find clergy from other religions taking part - only four schools reported this. Heads generally play a leading part (66 schools) in the teaching of R.E. but fewer than half of the schools have another teacher formally qualified to teach the subject. In the great majority of schools (81) all the pupils, including those of other religions, are expected to attend R.E. lessons.

The majority of heads believe that being a church school should affect other parts of the curriculum (60). Their comments fall mainly into three groups:

1. One is summed up in the words:

In my opinion, being a church school lays an even greater obligation on the school to provide the best possible all round education for the children.

Good teaching is fundamental, church schools should have a high standard of teaching, strong pastoral care, school life embraced by collective worship. It is worship that sets the tone, not R.E. teaching.

2. Second, a belief that:

Christian values and precepts should permeate all through the curriculum.

The moral and Christian values should influence our whole lives and therefore affect our relationships, teaching etc.

More specifically:

All areas of the curriculum enable us to explore and to be excited about our discovery of God's world. It is a world with a purpose and this understanding will affect our aspirations and life choices.

All learning is 'thinking God's thoughts after him'. We encourage a sense of wonder and awe when studying his creation, the potential for good in modern technology and the immense satisfaction in creating a picture, model, music or piece of writing as we are made in the image of the Creator.

3. Third, Christian insights can affect the attitude to and thus the teaching of some areas of the curriculum:

(There are) possible Christian perspectives in some areas of geography, history, science, but other than that I am not convinced that it should affect the rest of the curriculum. Humanities should have the underpinning of a Creator, science approached from the position that man is finding out about God's world, morality not from the social ... angle but from Christian principles of love and concern for others.

Teachers who are informed about Christianity should be able to recognise cultural references to Christian traditions, origins and morality and be able to offer insights accordingly.

Values

There was broad agreement between chairs and heads about the most important values and forms of behaviour which should be cultivated in a Church of England school. Respect for others was the most widely identified quality along with the closely related qualities of tolerance and understanding, politeness and courtesy and respect for the community, each of which was referred to specifically by a number of respondents. 'Christian values' were explicitly mentioned by many while others spoke of the individual qualities of truthfulness, honesty, etc. Self-respect and self-understanding, self-discipline and a sense of responsibility were also identified as important aims that the school should have for its pupils. Among the 'academic' qualities mentioned, the most commonly identified were enjoyment of learning and industriousness and, with rather fewer mentions, 'autonomous' learning, initiative, imagination, an enquiring attitude of mind, an openness to new ideas and a readiness to tackle difficulties.

Examples of comments by heads and chairs of governors are as follows:

Children are encouraged to care for one another and to understand that their actions can affect others. (H)⁶

Self-motivation - discipline, community understanding, service to others, honesty, integrity, enquiry, non-conformity. (C)

Curiosity, wonder, imagination, consideration, respect for (the) rights of others, sensitivity to personal relationships, spiritual and moral values. (C)

Central to education is the development of whole, well adjusted individuals and I also see this as part of the Gospel and (of) building God's Kingdom. Education cannot be value-free and therefore in a church school Christian values such as justice and honesty can be established and seen to be valued. This I believe helps to build these values into society as children grow up and take their part in the world. For some children school

⁶ In this section the source of the quotation is indicated by (C) chair of governors or (H) head of school.

may also be the only place where they encounter caring adults who build their self-esteem. This is to reflect God's attitude towards children and thereby lay the foundation for an understanding of and desire to know him. (H)

To make our school a happy community in which adults and children respect each other and work towards cultural and social harmony. To develop independence and individual worth through self-confidence, motivation, self-respect and self-discipline. (C)

Security, trust, joy, cooperation, excitement, wonder, diligence, self-discipline, self-awareness, kindness, gratitude, empathy, consideration, love. (C)

Collective worship

The majority of the schools in the survey are relatively small so it is not surprising that pupils take part in collective worship most commonly as members of the whole school group - in only three schools does this rarely or never happen. By contrast 27 schools do not have collective worship conducted for sections of the school separately and 66 do not do so in individual classes. When sectional assemblies are held, pupils generally attend them not more than once or twice in the week, and when class assemblies are held, not more than once.

Only in a few cases (6) are parents never invited to attend school worship, and in 43 they are regularly invited. In 88 schools all pupils attend worship, and where there are exceptions, it is generally only one or two pupils who are withdrawn.

It was assumed that heads play a major part in the conduct of collective worship. Additionally collective worship is conducted at least once a week by senior staff in 77 schools, by Anglican clergy in 69, by pupils in 64 and by assistant staff in 37. The only other significant participation mentioned is by clergy of other Christian denominations - termly in 11 schools, monthly in five and at least weekly in four. Leaders of other religions are only recorded as taking collective worship in six schools, generally yearly or termly.

All but six schools attend church for some form of service, most commonly either termly or yearly. Thirty-one⁷ hold a Eucharist in school either weekly (12), monthly (5), termly (11) or yearly (3). Thirty-four take part in a Eucharist in church, either weekly (6), monthly (7), termly (14) or yearly (7). A number of schools attend Eucharist at different times both in school and in church (21), the latter generally on a yearly or termly basis. About half of the schools (48) rarely or never attend Eucharist either in school or in church.

One school gave its weekly pattern of worship as follows:

Monday - Parish priest takes assembly to the set theme.
Tuesday and Wednesday - The head.
Thursday - Mass in Church.
Friday - Children's 'showing' assembly where all staff also contribute.

⁷ This figure is high when one remembers the age range of the pupils concerned.

The school and the church

A few respondents, both heads and chairs, expressed doubts about the desirability of having aided schools at all or about their being the most effective way in which the church and its members can carry out their mission to the world:

I think it is a very finely balanced question as to whether our schools hinder or help: albeit they do provide a whole range of openings and contacts, some of which inevitably turn very sour, while others are fruitful. (C)⁸

I think church schools are not cost-effective. I would prefer to see more Christian teachers in state schools. In working class parishes church schools can be a financial burden diverting time and money which would otherwise be spent on Christian outreach. (C)

Are they divisive? What about equal opportunity: the church has limited vision about laity and women and oppressed groups. (H)

The church appears to serve white, middle class, heterosexual families. It does not appear to have a mission to the outcasts, homeless, poor, unemployed, lesbians and gays, the old. (H)

But with few exceptions both groups see the existence of church schools as being a natural outcome of the concern that the church has for all aspects of life:

The church (is) to be seen involved in all aspects of a person's life including education; contact with those outside the parish congregation; church seen to do things well; mission by example and care. (C)

It is part of our aim as a parish church to be totally involved in the community of which we are a part. To have a church school helps us fulfil this aim to a great extent. We seek to be involved pastorally, meeting the needs of a number of the parish's children and parents. We seek to be involved educationally, that is in the social and academic development of the children. The school also enables the children to experience the Christian faith at close quarters for the above reasons; and also because they experience regular Christian worship in church and school they come into frequent contact with the parish priest and regularly enter the parish church; above all the school works within a Christian ethos which controls personal relations and behaviour. (C)

(The role of the church school is) witness in its wider sense. The State system is either secular or too multi-faith to have a clear message. An important role is the link with the church, in my case a very active church with plenty to offer the children and staff. While not seeking to evangelise, it is hoped that children will look back on their school days with pleasure and regard the church as significant in their lives and grow up with a sense of God as their Heavenly Father. A deeper faith than this is the responsibility of the church not the school. (H)

They feel that the prime purpose of the Church of England aided school is to provide education of the highest possible quality, and that an education in the fullest sense of the term necessarily comprises a spiritual dimension. The emphasis on this spiritual

⁸ In this section the source of the quotation is indicated by (C) chair of governors or (H) head of school.

dimension is a contribution to the educational system which the church can and does make, and is perhaps the most important part of its mission, as many comments implied:

The school's first and primary role is to give a good education. For a Christian this must of necessity include knowledge and sensitivity to the spiritual dimension of life which will affect all other areas, plus ways of knowing and understanding - such an education is of the greatest benefit to the church's mission to both society and the individual. (C)

To provide a good education and a caring community. These are far more important than teaching the Faith. The quality of the church school should in itself speak volumes for the church's mission of standing for what is good, true and loving. (C)

To provide a learning community which expresses within the school age-group what living together under the Lordship of Christ involves. Thereby to give children a criterion for church and community life which will be applied in their later experience of the world. (C)

To create an environment where God can be spoken of freely, where religious education can provide the life story of Jesus, where worship is part and parcel of daily life and so a child may be able to develop spiritual values alongside the other values he or she acquires in the school community. Ideally the school provides the highest standards of education, and R.E. and worship is not left out. The child then can develop in the faith as he/she develops in the rest of his/her life. It is not a place for brain washing or proselytisation but a place of encouragement and nurture. (C)

The school, they suggest, is also part of the church's outreach towards the community - part of its witness, an implementation of its pastoral care and of its service to society:

To serve local parents; to provide knowledge of Christian teaching for local children; to be a focus for ministry/outreach by the clergy/laity. (C)

To educate the children within the community; to make available to children and their families the opportunity to participate in Christian religion; to care for the children and their families who attend the school, the academic, physical and social development as well as religious. (H)

Providing a focus for the neighbourhood community with an obvious broad base of caring/sharing/standards of behaviour and discipline. Leading on to sharing worship and social functions at church so that the mission reaches people very casually - does not pose a threat. The influence we have on the children can be positively reflected in the whole family. (H)

But some warn that the church should not look to its schools as a means of carrying out its missionary function; evangelisation is not their job:

I believe our first task is educational, moral, social (in that order) but the context is the Christian opportunity created through the work of the staff and with the active support of parish clergy and governors. I don't believe a church school is part of the evangelistic outreach of the local church. (C)

I am very unhappy with the evangelistic role solely and see the church as a servant to the community in which it lives, interpreting the cultural situation rather than fighting against it. I see 'creation' theology prevailing over 'redemption' theology. (C)

- though families may be brought into the church through the school:

The school provides 'a bridge' through its caring support of families, sometimes in conjunction with the church, and the monthly school church services. Parents and children begin to feel 'at home' in the church and may be drawn in. About 70 or so join the 200 plus children for such school services - parents, grandparents come. Parents know that they may not get their children into the school unless they are regular worshippers so they attend! More young families are thus drawn into the church. Sometimes families with problems are distressed in my room earlier in the week and then come to the school service, often, not regular church-goers. It is a marvellous opportunity and privilege. (H)

Many of our families do not practice a faith, but all come to value the ethos of the school and the commitment of its staff and clergy and many are drawn to the faith. The 'bridge' is two-way - the church school can be the means by which parish families can avoid becoming inward-looking clubs concerned with the micro-politics of parish life. (H)

They define part of the function of the church school as providing Christian education for families, particularly, but not exclusively, families who are active members of the church themselves and who wish for it:

The church school provides education in a Christian context for children of Christians and others. Its exemplification of Christian living should be a powerful witness to families of children attending who are not themselves Christians. (C)

To provide education from a Christian standpoint for those who want it whether or not they attend church. Part of the caring aspect of the servant Church. (C)

In this particular area there is an obvious desire for church school education even though few parents are active members of a church themselves. (H)

But such a role, they feel, has its dangers, and ultimately the church should be seen to be serving the whole community through its schools and not only Christian families:

Church schools (in this LEA) are over-subscribed and tend to have children only from committed Christian families. The schools have a supportive role alongside parents and home parishes in bringing children to faith. It may be that the mission of the church would be more effective where church schools were neighbourhood schools serving a small catchment area. (C)

In this context one head was:

...very concerned about what to do when parish church and clergy are critical of (the) percentage of children in school from non-Christian homes or non-white ethnic background.... How do you educate the governors? (H)

Moreover, they suggest that the aided school needs to work out the processes by which, while being essentially a Christian institution, it fully serves a society in which

Christianity is only one of several religions in a predominantly secular culture; such a school can provide 'the forum for reconciliation and understanding for all religious groups'.

In a multi-racial primary school like ours one cannot argue that it's a base for converting children or their families. The Muslims see it as a means of teaching moral principles. I would like to feel that its role was to provide an ethos which encouraged those without commitment to another faith to think about becoming Christians. I think the bottom line however is to provide a basic support for parents who wish to bring up their children as practising Christians. (C)

(It is) no longer the local church school educating the children of church-goers in the community. The school now reflects the new community with its ethnic mix and multi-faith pupils. It is important for the church schools to show an example of respect and acceptance for other world faiths in true understanding of Christ's teaching. (H)

It should teach the elements of Christianity very simply and accurately, emphasising wherever possible that which is common to universal religious experience and avoiding what deeper knowledge or experience of the world may cause to be repudiated or discarded later. It should provide an experience of living in a community where values are formed and lives lived with reference to authority which may run counter to the world's values. It should bring children to the love of God by showing them joy, companionship, stability and love. (H)

Two groups of schools

Do heads and chairs of governors of the more favoured schools see their aims and purposes differently from those in the more disadvantaged schools? Do the schools' circumstances affect their view of their role? At least it seemed possible that the admissions policy and the expectation of the school's place in the mission of the church might vary according to the extent to which other faiths are strongly represented amongst its pupils. To examine this a number of variables from the heads' responses were considered:

- a) Whether or not the environment of the school is described as a deprived area.
- b) The total number of particular circumstances in the school's catchment area which pose special difficulties.
- c) The percentage of pupils having free school meals.
- d) The total number of special problems among pupils arising from social issues.
- e) The approximate percentage of pupils whose social background is manual.
- f) The approximate percentage of pupils whose home language is not English.

The responses to all these proved to correlate positively but as is shown in the table on the following page the correlation between the first three was particularly high.

Table 4

Correlation of
variables listed
on previous page

Variables	Kendall's Tau	Pearson's R	Spearman
a) x c)	.66	.72	.73
c) x e)	.65	.72	.75
a) x b)	.61	.68	.68
b) x c)	.59	.67	.71
b) x e)	.56	.65	.65
a) x e)	.55	.61	.61
b) x d)	.48	.56	.57
c) x d)	.43	.49	.51
b) x f)	.41	.47	.48
c) x f)	.41	.47	.48
d) x e)	.40	.48	.48
a) x f)	.37	.39	.40
a) x d)	.37	.41	.41
e) x f)	.32	.38	.38
d) x f)	.25	.27	.30

It was easy to select 14 schools which the head had identified as not being in a deprived area, as having no difficulties arising from the catchment area and where fewer than 5% of the pupils were entitled to free meals. In most cases these schools also had no special problems among the pupils arising from social causes, a higher than normal proportion of middle and professional classes, and few if any children whose home language is not English. Of these schools it was possible to match heads and chairs of governors in 12 cases (in the other two one of the questionnaires has not been returned) and this provided the first sample.

The other group was the opposite: schools which heads had identified as being in deprived areas, where they had identified five or more special difficulties arising from this, where 50% or more pupils were entitled to free meals. These criteria made it possible to select 12 schools and again to most of them between one and three of the other criteria applied - heads also listed five or more problems among their pupils, there was less than 10% middle or professional class among the pupils and 50% or more did not have English as their home language. Unfortunately in nearly half of these cases we failed to receive questionnaires from chairs of governors, so that it was necessary to extend the list by adding further schools which satisfied two out of three of the main criteria and also at least two of the secondary criteria. This then provided a sample of 11 with matched questionnaires for head and chair of governors.

In the section which follows the two main sample groups will be referred to as 'favoured' and 'disadvantaged' respectively.

The two groups compared

There was very little difference between the views of both heads and chairs of the two groups about the qualities to be sought in appointing staff: the great majority are concerned that senior staff and heads should be practising Christians and that other teaching staff should at least be in sympathy with Christian values. But staff in the disadvantaged schools are less likely to be taking part in the teaching of RE - only in

about a half of the schools in this group are 100% of teachers involved, while this is the case in all the more favoured schools.

Another marked difference, bound to make an impact on the working of the schools, is that while the rate of turnover of staff in nearly all the favoured schools is considered about right (the exception being the school where the staff is considered too stable); in nearly half the disadvantaged schools it is considered too rapid.

Among chairs of governors in both groups there was a spectrum of opinion about the role of parents in a school. One chair would restrict it to the 'home front' of bringing up children and another would prefer to see 'less involvement than at present.' At the other end of the spectrum, some thought that it should be 'as wide as possible - helping in outings, sports, assisting in the classroom, etc.' Others mentioned fund-raising, serving on governing bodies and PTAs etc. Several stressed the key role of parents in supporting their children by showing interest and concern for their development. There was no discernible difference between the views of governors of the two groups of schools on this subject.

It is usually expected that in favoured 'middle-class' areas it is easier for heads to involve parents in the work of schools, and it was indeed clear from heads' replies that nearly all do so - very heavily in helping with school visits and only somewhat less heavily in the classroom, in collaboration with the school in supervising work schemes at home and in acting as 'visiting experts'. The view by one chair of governors that the parents' role should be restricted to the home was reflected in the practice of the school concerned - the only one in which parents' help was not being used, according to the head, except to a limited extent in supervising work schemes at home.

In the disadvantaged schools, while the policy is to encourage parental involvement, in practice schools use parents rather less except to involve them in supervising work schemes at home with their own children. Despite this difference, however, the general level of parental involvement is quite high, as is indicated by the following table.

Table 5

Schools' use of parental support	To a great extent		To some extent		To no extent		No response	
	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F
In collaboration with the school in using work schemes with their children at home	3	2	7	9	-	1	1	-
As helpers in the classroom	-	6	10	5	-	1	1	-
As helpers on school visits	4	9	7	2	-	1	-	-
As visiting 'experts' for projects or the curriculum	-	-	4	11	7	1	-	-

D = Disadvantaged (n=11) F = Favoured (n=12)

Governors and heads were rightly chary of fixing labels of 'traditional' or 'progressive' on their schools, even on a graduated scale, but it was important to get some idea of what they felt about this, if only because it is often said that middle-class parents in particular favour church schools because they believe them to have more traditional attitudes to discipline and teaching. In fact while the preponderant view among chairs of the more favoured group was that if anything the schools verge somewhat towards the traditional side, one or two saw them as mildly progressive. Among the other group of chairs the views of governors on either side of the mean almost exactly balanced each other.

One governor helpfully distinguished between a somewhat traditional approach to teaching methods, discipline and children's behaviour, combined with a somewhat progressive approach to the curriculum. Though it is not possible wholly to separate teaching methods from curriculum, this may well be a formula very acceptable to the sort of population for which this group of schools mainly caters. Another rejected the term 'progressive' as woolly, and described the school as extremely traditional in discipline. A third distinguished between a traditional junior department and a progressive infant department. Overall there was little difference between the attitudes of governors of the two groups of schools.

Schools in the two groups differ little from each other in relation to admission policy. In both groups attendance by parents at Anglican or other Christian churches is given a high priority among criteria for admission. The presence of a brother or sister already in the school is also rated highly - but this is no doubt an extension of the first criterion as the sibling was presumably admitted on similar grounds. Living close to the school or within its catchment area is given less weight in most schools but in two of each of the groups it is virtually the prime condition for entry. Association with other world religions is generally given less weight, especially in the more favoured group of schools (where in many cases the question probably does not arise) but is considered relatively important, fourth in order of priority, in four of the less favoured schools. In three or four of each group social or physical disadvantage is given some weight (generally about fifth or sixth in priority). Heads generally agree largely with the admission criteria set out by governors. Where there are in a few cases significant divergencies, it is to give more weight to local residence as a criterion.

There is a substantial difference in the degree of selection that the two groups of schools have to apply to applicants for places. Among the favoured schools eight are heavily over-subscribed by amounts ranging between 20% and 40% in three schools, and between 80% and 100% in four other schools and by 150% to 200% in another. By contrast only one of the schools in the disadvantaged group is heavily over-subscribed. On the other hand seven of this group are somewhat over-subscribed - by about 5% to 10%. Only one school in either of the groups is under-subscribed. This school, in a favoured area, suffers from lack of pupils because:

The price of property in this area means that there is some restriction on the numbers of families with children of infant and primary school age.

It is not easy to offer an explanation of the difference between the two groups on admission levels. It may reflect a difference in the popularity of schools in favoured areas as against disadvantaged areas in comparison with the other schools available for parental choice, or it may reflect greater population pressure on schools generally in some areas rather than others. If the former of these explanations is correct, then it could well be that the church school fulfils the expectations of the middle class indigenous families who tend to opt for it in the favoured areas more than it does the multi-cultural and mixed race populations of the less favoured areas.

Where schools are heavily over-subscribed the problems caused by the application of the admission criteria can be quite severe, as is illustrated by the following comments made by heads and chairs of governors of schools in the more favoured group.

One reports that not all the Christian families who apply can be accepted, as there is not room. The head in another over-subscribed school comments:

In this particular area there is an obvious desire for church school education even though parents are not active members of the church themselves.

Another head whose school is somewhat over-subscribed adds:

We cannot estimate how many of our families are truly Christian and how many use the system in order to attend the school.

A thought-provoking contribution comes from one chair of governors:

Admission policies are a crucial means of expressing our understanding - especially when a school is over-subscribed. The policy should make some provision for Christian (CE) parents - not unlimited access. The policy can express an equal concern for aspects of the community by setting places aside for other faiths and for those who just happen to live near the school. I would suggest that ethos starts with staff rather than intake.

The application of these principles, however, would serve to sharpen further the dilemma of the school which already has to turn away some children of genuinely Christian parents who wish for a Christian education for their children, because there is no room for them.

The pupil population of the schools in the favoured group is overwhelmingly white in race (only one school drops to 83%, another to 87%, the rest being 90% or more white). The only school in this group with any significant racial or cultural minority is one school in which over a fifth are of Greek or Cypriot extraction and a quarter have English as their second language.

There is very little evidence of other world religions among pupils of schools in the favoured group. Six of the schools have none; in the rest other religions are represented by no more than a handful of pupils - in three cases just one or two. Heads however see 90 to 100% of the pupils as being actively linked with Christian churches in four schools and as few as 10% in only one. This latter example, with just 3% of

Anglicans amongst its pupils still makes attendance at an Anglican church one of its top priorities for admission.

The position is quite different in the disadvantaged group. In all but one of the schools white children are in a minority ranging from 3% to 40% of the pupil population and in the other the percentage reaches only 50%. In two schools the majority of pupils are of African or Afro-Caribbean origin - 88% and 63% respectively, and in two about half the children are from the Indian sub-continent. In three schools 50% or more of the pupils do not speak English at home.

Other world religions are represented in substantial numbers in six schools - in four of them by 50% or more of the pupils. Islam provides the largest numbers with 40-53% of the pupils in five schools. While in one school the head identified 88% of pupils as being actively connected with Christian churches, (60% non-Anglican), in no other school do pupils from Christian homes amount to as many as 50% - in five they are 20% or less. In two cases schools identify 2% (three pupils) or none as Anglican, despite their making attendance at an Anglican church their first criterion for admission.

The proportion of pupils whose 'families are actively involved in religious observances' of different faiths must be treated with caution, since heads obviously interpreted this in very different ways. But even allowing for some inaccuracies, it remains remarkable that the criteria of admission in the two groups are so similar, while the balance of their pupils is so different in practice.

When we compare responses by chairs of governors to the items in the questionnaire about the nature and purpose of church schools, and by both heads and chairs of governors about the schools' role within the mission of the church, some differences emerge between the two groups.

It will be seen from the table on the following page that there are only slight differences, if any, between the two groups on the issues of teaching Christian beliefs and practices, of encouraging children to believe and practise the Christian faith, and of providing equal opportunities for all, irrespective of race or sex. In relation to other world religions there are similarly only slight differences between the groups though a marked spread of opinion within each of them. On the issue of children learning about other world religions more chairs of governors of the disadvantaged schools strongly agree, while more chairs of governors in the favoured schools agree less strongly. Most chairs in both groups favour teaching children tolerance and understanding of other religions.

Interestingly, a difference does emerge in the last three items included in the table, with the disadvantaged group tending to emphasise more strongly the denominational role of the schools. This shows up to some extent on the issue of giving priority to children of Anglican parents, and more strongly in the view that RE teaching should be denominational in character, where again there is a spread of opinion within each group. The other item where a similar difference occurs is perhaps more to be expected in view of the cultural mix in the environment of the disadvantaged schools: more

chairs of governors in this group than in the other think that the schools should welcome pupils from non-Christian faiths.

Table 6

The nature and purpose of aided schools	AS		A		N		D		DS		NR	
	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F
Children in any C of E aided school should be taught about Christian beliefs and practices	8	9	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Aided schools should encourage children to believe and practise the Christian faith	5	7	5	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Being a church school should affect the teaching of the whole curriculum and not only RE	8	7	3	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Aided schools should give a high priority to providing equal opportunities for all irrespective of sex or race	6	5	4	5	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Children in aided schools should learn about other main religions as well as Christianity	5	2	-	6	3	2	2	2	1	-	-	-
Aided schools should teach children to show tolerance and understanding of other religions than their own	7	6	1	4	3	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
The children of Anglican parents should normally be given priority for admission to their nearest C of E aided school	8	5	3	4	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
The RE teaching in a C of E aided school should be denominational in character	3	-	3	4	3	1	-	4	1	2	1	1
Church schools should welcome pupils from non-Christian faiths	3	2	6	4	1	5	1	1	-	-	-	-

AS = Agree strongly, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, DS = Disagree strongly, NR = No response

D = Disadvantaged (n=11), F = Favoured (n=12)

The difference in views about the denominational role of the schools is not a very pronounced one but it may in part arise from the fact that the more favoured schools exist in an environment where Christianity, and more specifically the Church of England, is not widely challenged, though it may be ignored, while in the areas served by the less advantaged schools there are other rival religions with strong following and the Church of England may almost be seen as a minority cult. Under these conditions it could be that the Church of England character of the school needs greater emphasis in the view of some governing bodies. It is interesting that one chair in this group commenting on the school's function quoted the Roman Catholic schools as an appropriate role model to follow. The problem of relating such a view to the actual circumstances of schools with a high proportion of children who are not only not Christian but active adherents of other faiths, is one that clearly exercises both heads and chairs.

All these factors lead to some differences between the two groups in their statements about the role of the schools in the church's mission. In the group of favoured schools both chairs and heads see that role clearly as:

1. Serving the community by providing an excellent education both academic and social in a Christian context:

I do not see church schools as sectarian 'Anglican Christians' only. I would like to see church schools having a close link with their church not just in terms of services, but teaching, outings, social events and fund-raising events. They then need to be a school for the local community with a Christian ethos. Hopefully this might contribute much to the church's mission. (H)⁹

The provision of a high standard of education in a caring situation with Christian bias. (H)

2. Creating links between home, school and church:

Foster family and Christian links between home/school/church. Establish common values which will strengthen young people as they develop and enter into the world of work. (H)

Its role is vital. In a sense it is the life blood of the church. At an important stage in family life there is forged an important link between church and parents/children and the opportunity of laying a good foundation. (C)

3. Providing nurture in the Christian faith in the context of other world faiths:

To offer Christian education to all in the neighbourhood and set an example of service and love to all who are involved in the school. To nurture the young in their Christian faith and teach an understanding of other world faiths. (H)

Children should come to experience the love of Christ and this should provide the basis for growth in this knowledge so that the whole of their lives is enriched. Such a

⁹ In this section the source of the quotation is indicated by (C) chair of governors or (H) head of school.

foundation will influence their attitudes to society, marriage, parenthood and the world in which they live as they become responsible adults. (C)

To help in the formation of next generation Christians. To lay a good foundation for membership of the human family. (C)

4. Communicating Christian ideas and moral principles:

I feel it has a very important role to play in communicating Christian ideas and principles as well as fostering attitudes of tolerance and understanding towards minority, ethnic, and cultural groups. (H)

5. Giving an opportunity to pupils and families to participate in the Christian religion:

To educate the children within the community. To make available to children and their families the opportunity to participate in Christian religion. To care for the children and their families who attend the school, the academic, physical and social development as well as religious. As a church outreach. (H)

6. Answering a demand for church school education not necessarily from active church-goers:

In this particular area there is an obvious desire for church school education even though parents are not active members of a church themselves. With over 400 pupils on roll this must be a very important area of mission and an important family support unit. (H)

Many of these points are summed up by the following contribution from one chair of governors:

Providing general Christian nurture, supporting the growth of folk religion, encouraging parents in their desire to maintain at least moral standards; a conducive area of witness for Christian families keeping the church before the community; a rock of resistance to marginalisation in society.

Among the disadvantaged group there was clearly more uncertainty about the issues. There was a feeling that the traditional role of the church school had inevitably changed and that a new and perhaps less clear-cut role was being worked out:

I think that it is becoming more and more difficult to define what is the mission of the church. If it is to get people into pews and pay the sum required for the common fund - important though they are - include me out. If it is there to say that God is our loving father, father of all - with a love for all expressed in Christ, then the church school is there to encourage children to give top priority to that virtue - that encouragement is fostered by the caring way all subjects are taught and by patient attention given to each child - no matter how dreadful he/she may be! (C)

In particular there was some divergence in this group as between heads and chairs of governors. The latter as we have seen tend to stress the traditional values of Anglicanism and in general the Christian role of the school. Heads tend to see the schools more as community schools, though marked out by a 'special ethos'. There is

less stress by both heads and chairs on direct Christian nurture and more on Christianity providing a context in which sound education can be provided.

The leading aspects of the schools' role are seen as:

1. **Serving the community by providing an excellent education both academic and social in a Christian context:**

To provide education from a Christian standpoint for those who want it whether or not they attend church. Part of the caring aspect of the servant church. (C)

I believe our first task is educational, moral, social (in that order). But the context is the Christian community created through the work of the staff and with the active support of parish clergy and governors. I don't believe a church school is part of the evangelistic outreach of the local church. (C)

To be an educational resource for the whole local community, to live out our Lord's commandment 'love one another' partly by placing worship at the centre of the school. To cherish the faiths of all the religious groups in a school. (H)

The church school should provide an opportunity for children to be given an excellent education within a caring Christian environment. It is a great opportunity for the church to serve the community and show the love of Jesus in action. (H)

2. **Providing nurture in the Christian faith:**

I think the bottom line is to provide a basic support for parents who wish to bring up their children as practising Christians. (C)

To promote Christianity through teaching and learning and to form children for life in a Christian way. All education should contribute to this. (C)

3. **Presenting the Christian faith to children so that they can make up their own minds about it:**

Briefly, to present to children the facts and practicalities of what being a Christian means so that they can make their own choice of 'a faith to live by.' (H)

In a multi-racial primary school like ours one cannot argue that it's a base for converting children or their families. The Muslims see it as a means of teaching moral principles. I would like to feel that its role was to provide an ethos which encouraged those without a commitment to another faith to think about becoming Christians.

4. **Encouraging respect for all religions:**

No longer the local church school, educating the children of the church goes in the community. The school now reflects the new community with its ethnic mix and multi-faith pupils. It is important for the church schools to show an example of respect and acceptance of other world faiths in the true understanding of Christ's teachings. (H)

Schools with a large Muslim population

There were six schools in which heads reported that 50% or more of their pupils were from Muslim families and of these only four of the chairs of governors returned their questionnaire. So we have a sample too small for reliable comparisons to be made.

The main impression received from responses of heads and chairs is that the schools differ little from the norm. Five out of six are over-subscribed, by as much as 100% in one case, and schools (like the disadvantaged group) tend to suffer from rapid turnover of staff. Admission criteria are similar to those of other schools except in one case where local residence is a major criterion and religious criteria come at the bottom of the list.

In all the schools all pupils attend R.E. classes which in four of them covers other faiths as well as Christianity; no children opt out of assembly. Similarly the majority of staff participate in the teaching of R.E. and attend assembly regularly - in two of the schools all the staff regularly attend.

Heads see the schools' roles as showing

the love and care of Christians to the community.

And also as teaching

religious truth and placing worship at the centre of the school.

Chairs are equally clear about the Christian role of the schools. One sees an aim of the school as being

to help (pupils) leave school with a God-consciousness and with a clear understanding of the Christian ethos.

Another makes the distinction:

We should not seek to convert but respect the home faith while still showing that Christianity is real and living.

Another affirms:

Where it is understood that Jesus is the way to life then this conviction must show through in example, speaking and teaching practice. Only on this latter basis does a church school have validity.

From these responses it would seem that the schools are carrying out the difficult and sensitive task of giving all their pupils an understanding of what Christianity stands for and an experience of Christian worship while avoiding any impression of seeking to convert the children or undermine their faith in their home religion. The fact that none of this group of schools is under-subscribed suggests that in the eyes of Muslim parents they are successful in steering this difficult course.

Discussion

'There is considerable ambiguity about the church schools - both within the church as a whole and within many individual schools - which springs very largely from our failure to resolve the question: what are church schools for?' These words from the report *Living Faith in the City* are quoted at the outset of a recent paper on 'The Role of the Church School in a Multifaith City.'¹⁰

Answers to the question 'What are church schools for?' have always been less clear-cut for the Anglican than for the Roman Catholic church. With the changing patterns of religious thought and the changing nature of the communities within which the schools function there has been a constant reappraisal of the role of the aided school over the years, a reappraisal which continues unabated. The final section of this report is a contribution to that ongoing debate.

There has almost certainly never before been so detailed an enquiry into or analysis of the views and attitudes of the heads and chairs of governors of aided schools within a diocese as the present one. This analysis throws up questions that deserve serious consideration which might lead to a reappraisal both of existing practice and policy. Although there has been helpful discussion with Officers of the Board for Schools and a number of their suggestions have been incorporated in this section, the views expressed are solely those of the authors.

The Church of England aided primary schools included in the survey are in general characterised by a sense of purpose relating to their historical links with the church and their current practice. This sense of purpose however far from being embodied in a single clear set of aims, is made up of a number of different strands.

One of the strands is the function of providing a full Christian (or indeed an Anglican) education for the children of parents who are themselves committed Christians and wish their children to be educated within an explicitly Christian framework. Most schools see this as an essential part of their role - how otherwise, apart from independent schools, could this need be satisfied? There are in fact a few chairs of governors who see this as uniquely the task of the schools and who look to the Roman Catholic aided school as a model, with its traditional aim of providing Catholic education for Catholic families. But history (and indeed the intention of the founders) does not support this exclusive view of the Church of England schools, and there is some evidence that the Roman Catholic schools are themselves departing necessarily from this model.¹¹

A very different strand is the school's function of providing a good education for all within the community who wish for it, while interpreting 'good' as implying a Christian spirit within the school and a spiritual dimension within the curriculum.

In between these there are a number of other strands and in practice virtually all the schools in the sample have multiple aims. Apart from the two already mentioned,

¹⁰ By Tim Raphael, Archdeacon of Middlesex and Chairman, London Diocesan Board for Schools, January, 1991.

¹¹ See, for example, 'Church Schools in a Pagan Culture', by Brian Green, *The Tablet*, 6th October, 1990, which raises issues very similar to those discussed in this section.

schools identified a number of other objectives including: providing a value-laden moral and religious education for those of non-Christian faiths; establishing a bridge between the local church and its community which may enable the church to influence the uncommitted; serving as an expression of the church's concern for the community; witnessing to a Christian way of life in a largely secular educational system; giving an example of respect and acceptance of other world faiths on the basis of Christ's teachings. The simultaneous fulfilment of all these objectives would impose great strains upon the curriculum and organisation of the school and the skills and professionalism of the staff, and in practice it seems likely that schools must select those objectives to which they are to give priority.

As well as a broad consensus about the range of purposes, there is also considerable agreement about the means by which they are to be achieved and the resources, in particular the human resources, needed to achieve them. Among the resources all agree that the qualities of the head and staff are crucial: the church school is ideally staffed by committed Christians whose influence, both direct and indirect, moulds the ethos of the school.

Governors are another resource, and for them the major requirements identified by both heads and chairs are favourable and supportive attitudes towards the school, its head and its staff. Much less stress is placed on their commitment to Christianity and comparatively little on their knowledge of education or of managerial skills, perhaps surprisingly in view of the greater managerial role they will play in the future. Strong consistent support by its governing body is a major school resource. It is to be hoped that the difference in response rate from the chairs of governors in the two groups of schools mentioned on page 24 is not evidence that the disadvantaged schools tend to enjoy this support less than the favoured ones.

Parents too are seen as an important resource and the majority of schools make some use of them to help in school activities both inside and outside the classroom. Again it is unfortunate, though understandable, that the more disadvantaged schools whose pupils could benefit most from additional support from parents tend, in practice, to be less able to count on it. Other resources on which schools depend to a greater or lesser degree are the Diocesan Board for Schools, the LEA, the local church and its clergy.

The means adopted to achieve their aims typically include an important place for Christian worship in the school life and for RE in the school curriculum, as well as Christian insights in the curriculum as a whole, the cultivation of a Christian ethos through good relationships within and beyond the school, the encouragement of Christian values in pupils' behaviour, the showing of concern for the welfare of pupils and their families, and a firm but fair pattern of discipline depending as much on praise and encouragement for good behaviour as on punishment for wrong-doing.

While some of these characteristics are no doubt shared by many county schools, the full range of aims and means may well mark church schools out as being a distinctive sector of the public educational system with a distinctive contribution to make.

At the same time schools are more aware than ever before of the complexity of the society in which they function and which makes their tasks more difficult. The fact that they operate within a secularised society in which organised Christianity directly involves only a small minority has an impact on the resources referred to earlier, teachers and governors in particular. Schools realistically have accepted that they cannot hope to staff themselves wholly with committed Christians and are content to appoint assistant staff who are 'in broad sympathy with Christian aims', while still in most cases requiring that the head and senior staff should be committed Christians. In practice, at a time when there is for a variety of reasons a shortage of teachers in the greater London area, schools must often be only too happy to appoint any competent teachers irrespective of their religious views - though no doubt teachers hostile to the ethos of the church school would choose to go elsewhere.

Similarly, while nearly all schools give top priority for admission to children whose parents attend Anglican churches, in practice this leads to 34 of the schools having one in 10 or fewer of such pupils, and only 16 having more than half their pupils in this category. Even if similar commitment to other Christian denominations is added, the figures are not very much higher - fewer than one in five pupils in 37 of the schools and over half in just 25. The actual proportion of pupils with church links no doubt depends both on the admissions policy of the schools, on their siting and on the extent of the catchment area - whether parents are realistically able to choose between aided or county schools or whether the aided schools are *de facto* community schools because no accessible alternative exists. The nature and characteristics of the community in which they work and of the pupils who attend are perhaps the most significant factors in determining to which of their objectives schools assign the greatest importance.

Since the churches, and especially the Church of England, tend to be supported by white middle-class adults, church schools which admit a high proportion of children from church backgrounds may also appear to be selecting on social grounds and in turn be chosen by other parents with no church connection for social rather than moral or religious reasons. Many schools preserve a balance by reserving a quota of places for 'community' as against 'foundation' pupils. Others give some priority in their admission criteria to the socially deprived or the physically disabled, though many schools are inhibited from the latter by the nature of their buildings.

Where schools serve a community typical of the country as a whole, with a small minority of church attenders and a majority who are almost wholly ignorant of religious matters but have a vague warm feeling about Christianity, church schools can do much to make the children better informed about Christianity and give them a moral framework for their lives: they may further serve as a bridge between church and the wider community giving parents a contact with the church through their children perhaps for the first time.

A new situation has arisen over the last 20 years or so with the growth in the number of adherents of other world faiths in this country, and more recently with their growing self-awareness. Such groups, while a tiny proportion of the population as a whole, can locally form a substantial part or even a majority of the community served by an aided school.

A church school trying to provide an essentially Christian experience for pupils whose background is either a Christian home or a post-Christian society largely indifferent to the claims of religion faces one set of problems. However in a community where other faiths are active the problems are different. In such a community, schools may well meet with a much greater spiritual awareness among their pupils and an attitude to prayer and worship from which there is something for Christians to learn, but they will also meet deeply held values some of which are incompatible with the Christian view of life and the rejection of some of the central tenets of Christian belief.

British society today is more open than in the past and puts a high value on allowing equal opportunities for all faiths and all cultures, though there are plenty of pockets of intolerance. But society shows this tolerance in part because of an absence of any deeply held beliefs. It is easy to be tolerant of others' beliefs and practices if one has no strong views oneself, and if one believes all religions and philosophies to have as much or as little claim to the truth as each other. This particular style of tolerance has no place in a Church of England school working in a multi-faith society.

The schools in the survey seem to take up a more positive attitude and reflect the changes that have taken place within the churches in their relations with other faiths, and in particular the greater emphasis on exploring the common ground than on focusing primarily on the differences. But fundamental differences there are, and the handling of these, especially in the context of RE and Christian worship, makes theological demands upon the teachers which require the maximum support if the solution is not to be sought in mere ambiguity and blurred definition.

It was not to be expected that the contributions on the questionnaires from chairs and heads could adequately deal with the complexities of defining a position in relation to other faiths, but the following quotations from schools in multi-cultural contexts seem to indicate a range of rather different positions: 'to cherish the faith of all the religious groups'; 'to promote Christianity through teaching and learning'; 'to show an example of respect and acceptance of other world faiths'; 'to help pupils leave school with a God-consciousness and with a clear understanding of the Christian ethic'; 'where it is understood that Jesus is the way of life then this conviction must show through...only on this latter basis does a church school have validity'; 'to present to children the facts and practicalities of what being a Christian means so that they can make their own choice.'

To define objectives is difficult. To ensure that the practice is such that they are achieved is much harder. How in fact schools operationalise these objectives is largely outside the scope of the present enquiry. They seem however to do so in a way which is broadly acceptable to adherents of other world faiths - parents of other faiths are at least as willing for their children to attend church schools as county schools and perhaps more so.

Part of the task of education is to communicate the inherited values which bind society together from one generation to another (just as another task is to promote a spirit of enquiry which questions the continued validity of those values). It may be that one of the elements in the voluntary aided school role is to maintain within the educational

system those Christian values which in many county schools may have become so diluted as to be barely recognisable, but which ultimately provide the key to a full understanding of British and European culture. Though this view was not explicitly stated by respondents, it was implied in a number of statements.

This concluding section of the report started with a reference to the ambiguity surrounding the role of the aided schools. That ambiguity, we have shown, arises from the complexity of their interlocking aims; but it also arises in part, we would suggest, from the attempt to define the role of aided schools as a homogeneous group rather than as a number of individual institutions which are in many ways different from each other while sharing a core of common characteristics. The differences, we have seen, arise both from the difference in their clientele and also from the different circumstances in which they work.

Is it possible that this review offers an opportunity for the drawing up of a new 'mission statement'¹² for the schools in clear unambiguous terms? Such a mission statement should consist of a core of those tasks which are essential for any church school to perform if it is to carry out its distinctive function, and a further 'menu' of tasks, not all of which can be carried out (at least not to the same extent) by all schools. The more disadvantaged schools, while having a great deal in common with the more favoured ones, not least in their stated admission policies, nevertheless tend to omit some of the aims given by the more favoured ones and replace them by others. This self-differentiation could form the basis of a differentiation within a mission statement and that in turn could be built on the perceptions of role contained in this report.

The clearer and more understood the mission of the church school is, the more sharply defined the individual school's objectives can become and the greater the probability that they will be translated into effective professional action.

Having thus further clarified the role of the aided school as perceived from within the system, it then becomes all the more important to learn what are the expectations of the 'users' and in particular the parents of children who attend, and to what extent these match the declared objectives of the schools. This is, we hope, the next stage of the research project.



¹² This term has been adopted widely and without any specific religious overtones to signify a statement of an organisation's concept of itself and its aims, designed both to clarify its own perception of its role and to communicate this to the outside world. This is the sense in which it is used here - though of course in this context it also embraces the religious concept of mission.