

**MANAGING TO LEARN - LEARNING TO CHANGE:
REFLECTION AND REFRACTION IN ACTION**

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Ph.D.

Division of Education, University of Sheffield

OCTOBER 1996

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD
LIBRARY

To Elizabeth, Mark and Dawn

also to the memory of my parents

Margaret and Arthur

and my sister

Miriam (Betty)

MANAGING TO LEARN - LEARNING TO CHANGE:

REFLECTION AND REFRACTION IN ACTION

ABSTRACT - Bernard Alan Leeson

This qualitative practitioner research is set in a mixed, rural 11-16 Church of England Comprehensive School. It embraces reflective action enquiry into leadership and management of innovation in a turbulent period of national educational change. It is founded on the belief that if change processes are to be understood widely, practitioners must share experience emanating from reflective and analytical practice.

This study is about *"managing to learn"*. It embraces concepts of managing personal learning; managing colleagues' and students' learning; and managing processes leading to the emergence of the school as a *"learning organisation"*. It is also about *"learning to change"*, and espouses learning to promote personal change; learning to facilitate change in others; and learning to establish institutional change as a natural on-going characteristic of organisational life.

This study is founded on a process of *"reflection"*, as characterised by Schön (1983). Consequently, it employs a process of personal reflection on leadership rôles in managing change and learning processes. It employs processes of reflection on cultural and political aspects of organisational life and resultant manifestations and implications of introducing, implementing, and institutionalising organisational and cultural change.

This research utilises *"refraction"*; that is, convergence and divergence. Firstly, it promotes divergent and creative ways of organising which encourage and facilitate innovative processes. Secondly, it employs processes of converging, focusing, and concentrating on taken-for-granted *"critical incidents"* in the life of a developing school, to elicit meanings of events as understood by participants. Thirdly, it applies cultural and political prisms to school organisation, together with autocratic, bureaucratic, adhocratic, and reticular-democratic lenses in order to elucidate important cultural, political and organisational data.

Finally this research is about *"action"*. It is about doing, intervening, intending, committing, motivating, accomplishing, fulfilling and achieving. The essential concept and understanding of *"action"* is that it should be informed action.

**There is nothing more
difficult to take in hand,
more perilous to conduct,
or more uncertain in its
success,
than to take the lead
in the introduction
of a new order of things.**

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

1467 - 1527

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to convey my heartfelt thanks to Professor Len Barton for recognising potential in my initial research proposal; for supervising my research efforts, facilitating my learning processes and advancing my writing skills; and for his positive comments and encouraging remarks when the going was rough, when I was anxious and when my confidence was waning.

My thanks also go to the governors of the school at which I am head, for their permission to undertake this research; for their interest in its progress; and for their support in its execution.

I should like to thank my colleagues, and in particular fellow members of the SMT at the school at which I am head, for their forbearance, for their interest, and for their expertise and support in the extensive fieldwork undertaken.

My thanks are also offered to those individual professional and governor colleagues who have been prepared to be interviewed, or who have contributed data in the form of either oral or written comments.

Finally, I thank my wife Elizabeth, for reading, listening and commenting, even when she was more tired than I, often as a result of intense teaching and pastoral duties at a large urban comprehensive school.

B. Alan Leeson
October 1996

List of Tables and Figures

Figure 1.1	Growth of Bishop Lindis School 1963-1996	Page 40
Figure 2.1	Beare <i>et al.</i> , Governing Metaphors	Page 70
Figure 2.2	The Four Elements in Organisational Life	Page 77
Figure 2.3	Aspects or Qualities Emphasised in each of the Four Elements	Page 78
Figure 2.4	A Spectrum of Conceptual or Verbal Manifestations	Page 80
Figure 2.5	A Spectrum of Visual, Material or Symbolic Manifestations	Page 81
Figure 2.6	A Spectrum of Behavioural Manifestations	Page 82
Figure 2.7	Micro-political leadership Matrix	Page 84
Figure 2.8	A Spectrum of Political Activity within Organisations	Page 90
Figure 2.9	An Area of Focus viewed through an Autocratic Lens	Page 91
Figure 2.10	An Area of Focus viewed through a Bureaucratic Lens	Page 93
Figure 2.11	An Area of Focus viewed through an Adhocratic Lens	Page 99
Figure 2.12	Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	Page 103
Figure 2.13	An Area of Focus viewed through a Reticular-Democratic Lens	Page 105
Figure 2.14	The Paradigm Shift in Management and Leadership	Page 117
Figure 4.1	A Spectrum of Conceptual or Verbal Manifestations	Page 171
Figure 4.2	A Spectrum of Visual, Material or Symbolic Manifestations	Page 185
Figure 4.3	A Spectrum of Behavioural Manifestations	Page 190
Figure 4.4	A Spectrum of Political Activity within the Organisation	Page 196
Figure 5.1	A Spectrum of Political Activity within the Organisation	Page 208
Figure 5.2	Teamwork - A Balance Sheet for SMTs	Page 210
Figure 5.3	A Typology of Managers, Hannan, 1992	Page 214
Figure 5.4	A Spectrum of Conceptual or Verbal Manifestations	Page 222
Figure 6.1	BLS as a Person Culture through a Reticular-Democratic Lens	Page 254
Figure 6.2	A Spectrum of Political Activity within the Organisation	Page 255
Figure 7.1	A Spectrum of Conceptual or Verbal Manifestations	Page 284
Figure 7.2	A Spectrum of Visual Material and Symbolic Manifestations	Page 297
Figure 7.3	A Spectrum of Behavioural Manifestations	Page 302

List of Abbreviations

ACCM	Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry
ACE	Apricot Centre of Excellence
ARR	Assessment, Recording and Reporting
BLS	Bishop Lindis School
CD rom	Compact Disc read only memory
CE	Church of England
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
CTC	City Technology College
DBE	Diocesan Board of Education
DES	Department of Education and Science
DfE	Department for Education
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EMMTC	East Midlands Ministry Training Course
ERA	Education Reform Act
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
FE	Further Education
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GEST	Grants for Education Support and Training
GM	Grant Maintained
HE	Higher Education
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector(ate)
HoDs	Heads of Departments
IIP	Investors in People
IT	Information Technology
INSET	In-Service Training (or In-Service Education for Teachers)
KS3	Key Stage 3 of the National Curriculum
KS4	Key Stage 4 of the National Curriculum
LEA	Local Education Authority
LMS	Local Management of Schools
MIDI	Musical Instrument Digital Interface
NC	National Curriculum
NRA	National Record of Achievement
NTA	Non-Teaching Assistant
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
OU	Open University
PC	Personal Computer
PSE	Personal and Social Education
PSHE	Personal Social and Health Education
PTFA	Parents' Teachers' and Friends' Association
RE	Religious Education
ROA	Record of Achievement
RoSLA	Raising of the School Leaving Age
SATs	Standard Attainment Tasks
SDP	School Development Plan
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SHA	Secondary Heads Association
SIMS	Schools' Information and Management System
SMT	Senior Management Team
SNS	Standard National Scale
TA	Transactional Analysis
TC	Technology College
TCI	Technology College Initiative
TVEI	Technical Vocational Education Initiative
USA	United States of America
VA	Voluntary Aided
3Rs	Reading, Writing and Arithmetic

Contents

Title Page:	Page i
Dedications:	Page ii
Abstract:	Page iii
Quotation:	Page iv
Acknowledgements:	Page v
List of Tables and Figures	Page vi
List of Abbreviations:	Page vii
Contents:	Page viii
Introduction:	Page 1
Managing to Learn - Learning to Change: Reflection and Refraction in Action	
Chapter One:	Page 14
Historical and Philosophical Underpinnings to the Research	
1.1 Introduction:	Page 14
1.2 Autobiographical Writing	Page 15
1.3 Development of Personal Ideology	Page 18
1.4 The Birth and Historical Development of Bishop Lindis School	Page 34
1.5 Conclusion	Page 46
Chapter Two:	Page 49
The Theoretical Framework: Developing an Alternative Paradigm	
2.1 Introduction	Page 49
2.2 Good, Effective and Excellent Schools	Page 52
2.3 Reading, Understanding and Analysing Schools as Organisations	Page 56
2.4 Developing a new Paradigm for Understanding Organisation	Page 61
2.5 A Cultural Prism applied to School Organisation	Page 72
2.6 A Political Prism applied to School Organisation	Page 83
2.7 School Organisation viewed through an Autocratic Lens	Page 90
2.8 School Organisation viewed through a Bureaucratic Lens	Page 92
2.9 School Organisation viewed through an Adhocratic Lens	Page 99
2.10 School Organisation viewed through a Reticular-Democratic Lens	Page 104
2.11 Conclusion	Page 114

Chapter Three: Page 120
The Methodological Framework of the Study

3.1	Introduction	Page 120
3.2	Quantitative and Qualitative approaches to Practitioner Research	Page 121
3.3	Practitioner Research	Page 134
3.4	Defining Practitioner Research as it relates to this study	Page 136
3.5	Characteristics of Practitioner Research as applied to this Project	Page 139
3.6	Opportunities and Dilemmas associated with Practitioner Research	Page 149
3.7	Quality in Qualitative Research	Page 153
3.8	The Ethnographic Nature of the Research	Page 156
3.9	Narrative Story	Page 157
3.10	Procedural Stages of the Research	Page 159
3.11	An understanding of Innovation as it relates to this Research	Page 161
3.12	Conclusion	Page 162

Chapter Four: Page 165
**Contextualising the School: Aspects of Bishop Lindis School
as an Organisation in September 1991**

4.1	Introduction	Page 165
4.2	Bishop Lindis School in September 1991	Page 166
4.3	The Spectrum of Bishop Lindis School through a Cultural Prism	Page 170
4.3i	Bishop Lindis School's Aims	Page 171
4.3ii	The Curriculum	Page 174
4.3iii	Language	Page 176
4.3iv	Metaphors	Page 177
4.3v	Organisational Stories and Organisational Heroes	Page 181
4.3vi	Organisational Structures	Page 182
4.4	Visual, Material and Symbolic Manifestations of Culture	Page 185
4.4i	Facilities and Equipment	Page 186
4.4ii	Artefacts and Memorabilia	Page 187
4.4iii	Crests, Mottoes and Uniforms	Page 188
4.5	Behavioural Manifestations of Culture	Page 190
4.5i	Rituals and Ceremonies	Page 190
4.5ii	Teaching and Learning	Page 193
4.5iii	Rules, Regulations, Rewards and Sanctions	Page 193
4.5iv	Parents and Community	Page 195
4.6	The Spectrum of Bishop Lindis School through a Political Prism	Page 195
4.6i	Authority, Power and Control	Page 196
4.6ii	Ideology and Coalitions	Page 199
4.6iii	Interests and Conflict	Page 199
4.6iv	Contradictions and Goal Diversity	Page 202
4.6v	Consensus, Teamwork and Synergy	Page 203
4.7	Conclusion	Page 203

Chapter Five: Page 206
**The First Cycle of Innovation: September 1991-July 1992
Developments in the SMT and the Aims Exercise**

5.1	Introduction	Page 206
5.2	Development of the Senior Management Team	Page 207
5.3	The Aims Exercise	Page 221
5.4	An Agenda for Change : Strategic Termite Activity	Page 233
5.5	Conclusion	Page 241

Chapter Six: Page 243
The Second Cycle of Innovation: September 1992-July 1993
Saturday Conferences and Pastoral Developments

6.1	Introduction	Page 243
6.2	The SMT Saturday Conference	Page 245
6.3	Pastoral Developments through a Reticular-Democratic Lens	Page 253
6.4	Conclusion	Page 270

Chapter Seven: Page 273
The Third Cycle of Innovation: September 1993-July 1994
The Project School: School Development Planning

7.1	Introduction	Page 273
7.2	The TCI and the School Development Planning Process	Page 274
7.3	Conceptual or Verbal Manifestations of Cultural Change	Page 283
7.3i	Developmental Aims	Page 284
7.3ii	Curriculum	Page 288
7.3iii	Language - Communications	Page 290
7.3iv	Organisational Structures - Management	Page 293
7.3v	Organisational Structures - Personnel	Page 294
7.3vi	Organisational Structures - Governors	Page 295
7.4	Visual, Material or Symbolic Manifestations of Cultural Change	Page 297
7.5	Behavioural Manifestations of Cultural Change	Page 302
7.6	Conclusion	Page 305

Chapter Eight: Page 308
The Fourth Cycle of Innovation: September 1994-July 1995
The Technological Revolution, Pastoral Care, Discipline and Discipleship

8.1	Introduction	Page 308
8.2	The Technology College Initiative	Page 309
8.3	Pastoral Developments	Page 312
8.3i	The Vertical Tutor Group and Specialist Team Options	Page 315
8.3ii	Disadvantages of a Vertical Tutor Group System	Page 316
8.3iii	Advantages of a Vertical Tutor Group System	Page 316
8.3iv	The Staff Consultation Meeting	Page 317
8.4	Discipline Policy	Page 322
8.5	Conclusion	Page 338

Chapter Nine: The Conclusion Page 340

References: Page 352

Appendices: Page 364

Appendix A:	Significant dates	Page 364
Appendix B:	The Aims of Bishop Lindis School	Page 366
Appendix C:	Senior Management Conference, 6 Dec 91	Page 367
Appendix D:	SMT Agenda for Change, Jan 92	Page 369
Appendix E:	Senior Management Conference, Nov 92	Page 370
Appendix F:	School Development Plan Audit, Jan 94	Page 375
Appendix G:	Pastoral Co-ordinator Appointments, July 95	Page 395

Introduction

Managing to Learn - Learning to Change: Reflection and Refraction in Action

This study is founded on a qualitative practitioner research rationale. It is reflective action enquiry into leadership and the management of innovation in a turbulent period of national educational change (*"manifest structural change"* - Nixon *et al.* 1996, p. vii).

In the main, following more than a decade of burdensome and exhausting reform, prevailing turbulence both results from and impacts upon parents', teachers', governors', employers', and politicians' anxieties and actions with regard to the quality of learning in schools.

Changes in school governance through the introduction of the local management of schools (LMS), whilst offering creative leadership opportunities, have resulted in ambivalence and bewilderment about respective rôles and responsibilities at the lay-professional and governance-management interface. In many cases, nationally imposed changes resulting in rôle-ambiguity, rôle-confusion and rôle-conflict, have had negative and detrimental effects on the very fabric of the educative processes they were intended to facilitate and enhance.

New, uninspired and uninspiring managerialism has tended to encroach on the practice of the SMTs of some schools, bringing in its wake bureaucracy and systems approaches which do not sit comfortably alongside the promotion and

reinforcement of the all-important and much neglected affective domain of education.

Similarly, on-going changes to schools' curricula through an imposed National Curriculum (NC); assessment, recording and reporting (ARR) requirements based on performance in standard attainment tasks (SATs) at the end of key stage 3 (KS3) and in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) at the end of key stage 4 (KS4); together with the introduction of records of achievement (ROA), the National Record of Achievement (NRA) and national league tables of examination performance, inevitably fuel concerns shared by both professionals and informed lay people about the apparently low value placed by government on fundamental teacher-student transactions in all-important teaching-learning situations and processes. In other words, government appears to have an overwhelming concern for developing bureaucratic structures at the expense of deposing quality student learning from the centrality of the education agenda. Where creative "*classroom*" initiatives have emerged, for example in "*teaching and learning styles*" projects under the auspices of the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), they have been low-profile and short-lived.

In identifying the need for a new vision for education through consideration of its fundamental purposes, and in recognising the continuing problem of under-achievement and the need for learning, and in particular the notion of the learning society, to be at the top of the nation's education agenda, the prevailing national education culture is aptly summed up by Nixon *et al.* (1996) who suggest that:

"There is, arguably, a growing realisation that the agenda of the recent past has failed to address not only the continuing sore of underachievement but

also the fundamental questions of what the purposes of education are to be in a period of manifest structural change.

...The quality of our future will depend upon our capacity to learn. Only if learning is placed at the centre of our experience will individuals continue to develop their capacities, institutions be enabled to respond openly and imaginatively to change, and the differences within and between communities become a source for reflective understanding. A new vision of education is needed to express the value of and conditions for a learning society."

(Nixon, *et al.*, 1996, p. vii)

They frame their argument for a reconceptualisation of educative processes around a reform of organising principles in which "*learning for citizenship*" displaces current instrumental purposes, understood to support economic regeneration and the needs of the labour market, rather than encouraging cultural renewal. They explain that:

"Our argument is that if society is to address seriously the problems facing education then the solution requires more than a quantitative expansion or a mere adaptation of existing systems. Rather it will need a reform of the organising principles of learning: from an instrumental purpose - supporting the needs of the labour market and economic regeneration - to the moral and political purpose of cultural renewal; from learning for economic interest to learning for citizenship. Encouraging learning will be most effective when it grows out of an education which enables people, individually and together, to find themselves through making their communities."

(Nixon *et al.*, 1996, p. viii)

The possibility of such changes will inevitably impact on those in leadership rôles, both in the macro-political arenas of central and local government, and within the micro-political and cultural milieu in which individual schools operate. In addressing such issues, this research proposes that if change processes, as they affect those involved in them, are to be understood more widely, it is vital that practitioners are both reflective and analytical in their practice and are prepared to share their experiences with others.

As practitioner researcher, and as head of the school, I had the *coign of vantage* in this project, being in a favourable position for both observation and action. Dilemmas associated with the rôle of practitioner researcher, whilst significant, are not considered insurmountable. However, it is recognised that my own subjectivity and ideology influenced the direction of this research, sometimes in contradictory and unexpected ways. By repeatedly challenging my own subjectivity, I have attempted to address these issues as and when they arise.

In the course of this study the focus and emphasis have changed many times. The title, which has emerged from the research process, is intended to convey both the substance and focus of the study, and may be seen to embrace a number of meanings. It also seems appropriate that multiple meanings be ascribed to data collected during the period of fieldwork associated with this project.

Predominantly then, this study is about *"managing to learn"*, and at one level it embraces the concept of managing personal learning; at another level it is about managing the learning processes of colleagues and students; and at a third level it is about managing processes leading to the emergence of the school as a *"learning organisation"*.¹ In speaking of the *"researcher as learner"*, as evidenced by a number of contributors to their discourse on *"Research and the Construction of SEN"*, Clough and Barton (1995) identify important aspects of the learning process in research activity, stressing that:

¹ "The core idea behind the "learning organisation" is that organisations of all kinds will not survive, let alone thrive, if they do not acquire an ability to adapt continuously to an increasingly unpredictable future." (Pearn, *et al.*, 1995, p. 15)

“By offering insights into the processes of their research the contributors have identified some of the benefits, contradictions and dilemmas with which they have had to engage, and from which they have learnt.

....They evidence a sense of humility on the part of the authors, a humility at one with the perception of research as a personal quite as much as a professional learning process. Part of this learning involves challenging one's own existing values, priorities and expectations and, to be sure, working through an agenda of this nature is a very demanding emotional and intellectual activity; there are no short cuts or easy pathways: the process is problematic, risky and disturbing, and through their specific accounts the authors have provided some insight into these learning experiences which would otherwise have remained hidden.”

(Clough and Barton, 1995, pp. 145-146)

This study is also about “*learning to change*”, and at one level embraces learning to promote personal change; at another level it is about learning to facilitate change in others; and at a third level it is about learning to establish institutional change as a natural and on-going characteristic of organisational life. It is recognised that the management of innovation, and the leadership of an organisation undergoing change can be problematic, hence the quotation on page iv of this study, in which Machiavelli states that:

“There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.”

(Niccolo Machiavelli, 1467-1527)

This study is established on a process of “*reflection*”, as characterised by Schön (1983). Consequently, it employs a process of personal reflection on the leadership rôle in managing change and learning processes; and it employs a process of reflection on cultural and political aspects of organisational life and resultant manifestations and implications of introducing, implementing, and institutionalising organisational and cultural change.

This research also utilises "*refraction*"; that is, convergence and divergence. Firstly, it promotes divergent and creative ways of organising which encourage and facilitate the process of innovation. Secondly, it employs a process of converging, focusing down, and concentrating on taken-for-granted "*critical incidents*"² in the life of a developing school, to elicit meanings of those events as understood by actors in the ensuing social dramas. Thirdly, it employs a process of applying cultural and political prisms to aspects of school organisation, together with particular autocratic, bureaucratic, adhocratic, and reticular-democratic lenses in order to elucidate important cultural, political and organisational data.

Finally, this research is about "*action*". It is about doing, intervening, intending, committing, motivating, accomplishing, fulfilling and achieving. The essential concept and understanding of "*action*" in this research, is that it should be informed action. Kemmis and McTaggart (1982) link action and research in the following extract, in which they state that:

"The linking of the terms action and research highlights the essential feature of the method: trying out ideas in practice as a means of improvement and as a means of increasing knowledge...."

(Kemmis and McTaggart, 1982, in McNiff *et al.*, 1996, p. 9)

² "Critical incidents....may refer to those events which provided or caused major shifts or changes in a life." (Thomas, 1995, p. 5)

".....Critical incidents are most likely to occur at particular times in the individual's life. These are the 'periods of strain' that Strauss (1959) identified. I have termed them 'critical phases', they can be provoked by a number of different factors, and fall into extrinsic and intrinsic, as well as personal types. 'Extrinsic' critical phases can be produced by historical events.the Second World War showed up as an example.The second type of 'critical phase' is 'intrinsic'; within the natural progression of a career, there would seem to be several critical periods.The third type is 'personal', family events, marriage, divorce, the birth or illness of a child, can also provoke critical phases and project an individual in a different direction." (Measor, pp. 61-62, in Ball and Goodson, Eds., 1985)

Chapter One is to some extent autobiographical, and offers philosophical underpinnings to the study. My own philosophy, to be understood both ontologically and epistemologically, as a result of more than a quarter of a century's experience in comprehensive education, provides the *raison d'être* for the research approach and methodology. It is the driving force behind the change process itself, and drives the desire to document, and provide attestation of the experience of managing innovation. The first chapter concurrently outlines the history of Bishop Lindis School (a pseudonym), and attempts to explore the nature of its developing culture over time; the approaches adopted in its management, and the prevailing attitudes which were to affect its preparedness for, and understanding of processes of innovation in which it was to engage. The geographical, social, cultural and educational setting are also explored in an attempt at giving meaning to the history of the school as an organisation. The development of its micro-political and social milieu over time, as understood by its leadership, and perceived by other participants in its management, provides an insight into its complex cultural and political inter-relationships and inconsistencies.

Chapter Two aims to map the development of a theoretical framework for the project having regard to historical and philosophical bases of the research charted in the previous chapter. In seeking to contribute to theory leading to a greater understanding of schools as organisations, the framework, which has developed during the course of the research, has evolved from a number of ideologies, perspectives, frames, metaphors, and paradigms extracted, supported and illustrated by relevant references. This approach is founded on organisation theory in general and the theory and practice of organisational analysis in particular. It includes discussion of how different types of school organisation might be related

to their preparedness or otherwise for embarking upon processes of educational innovation; the cultures which are most likely to facilitate change; and the changes in school culture which might result from the process of innovation itself. The second chapter begins with a survey of literature from which it is intended to elucidate the character and nature of *“good, effective and excellent schools”*, before exploring some factors deemed necessary in leading, managing and facilitating school improvement processes.

A detailed description of the practitioner-researcher rôle is included in Chapter Three, the methodological framework of the study. The third chapter also outlines the perspective adopted, and provides a critique of some understandings of qualitative action research prevalent in the contemporary literature. The ethnographic nature of the research is discussed and a detailed description of the participatory methods employed in the fieldwork is offered. A very specific understanding of innovation as it applies to this study is defined, and some techniques which secure (in quantitative terms) the generalizability, validity, reliability, replicability and representativeness of the project are explored. Finally, the third chapter promotes the originality of the novel and innovatory approaches adopted in the research itself.

Chapter Four sets out to describe and interpret significant aspects of Bishop Lindis School at the inception of this project in September 1991 in order to provide a context in which the subsequent processes of innovation might be set. As a contextualising chapter, the emphasis is on describing and interpreting key elements and issues apropos the culture of the school: its leadership, its organisation, its groups, its beliefs, its values, its customs, its practices, its rituals, its

priorities, and its coping strategies by applying a *"cultural prism"* as a tool for organisational analysis. In addition, through the application of a *"political prism"*, this chapter aims to describe and interpret some of the micro-political activity prevalent in the school at the time: the ideologies, power struggles, conflicts and interests that were represented amongst its members. Both cultural and political aspects of the school are discussed in terms of its organisational mix as viewed through appropriate multifocal *"autocratic"*, *"bureaucratic"*, *"adhocratic"* or *"reticular-democratic"* lenses as described in chapter two: the theoretical framework of the study. This initial analysis of the prevailing cultural mix and micro-politics of the school is, of course, partial and focuses only on those aspects which were understood by participants to characterise its organisation at that time. However, this analysis is believed to be crucial in forming the basis of any subsequent understanding of the school's development during the four cycles of innovation which took place over the following four academic years. It offers an analysis of the organisation, its relationships and micro-politics, in an attempt at discerning the ambient culture of the school.

Chapter Five heralds the first of four cycles of innovation and focuses on an exercise designed to elicit views of staff, students, parents, governors and members of the local community. The aims exercise attempts to document, through a series of different but related activities, the perceived aims of the school as understood by each of the representative and constitutive groups. The fifth chapter also describes some of the initial innovatory activity, particularly as it relates to the development of co-operative, collegiate and collaborative approaches initially within the senior management team (SMT), and later in relation to the SMT's interactions with other agencies both within and external to the school.

Chapter Six sets out to be both descriptive and interpretive and focuses on the second cycle of innovation and the initiatory rôle of the SMT Saturday Conferences and on some initial developments of the Pastoral System. The reorganisation of the pastoral system is discussed and one of the most radical of the innovatory approaches adopted, the concept of *"open access"*, is introduced for the first time. My understanding of the period of activity to which this chapter relates emanates from, and is coloured by, apprehension about my rôle as both researcher and change agent. My conclusions are also coloured as the result of having engaged in a period of self-doubt in my first year of headship. Struggling with some of these issues constituted a learning experience for both myself and the SMT. Within the context outlined above, this chapter relates to the management of human resources. It focuses on a concern for the effective deployment of colleagues, for their preparation for performing their rôles and for their ability to carry out functions inherent in their individual contributions to the school. This chapter also emphasises the function of the SMT in recognising the potential of colleagues for fulfilling specific functions, and in engaging in the process of developing colleagues' professional competencies in preparation for performing such functions.

Chapter Seven witnesses to the school's development as a project school at the vanguard of national innovation. It provides evidence of substantial changes in the culture of the school, mainly through the conferring of Technology College (TC) status by the secretary of state for education, but also through the further development of the open access policy. The school, by virtue of activities related to becoming a TC, might be described at this stage as a project school: several departments having achieved involvement in major, nationally recognised projects. An important element of analysis in chapter seven centres on a whole school audit,

carried out in relation to the school's development planning process, and its relationship to the bid to become a TC. The timing of the school's involvement in this initiative, funded through private sector sponsorship and matched with similar levels of government funding, was fortuitous with regard to the progress of this research. It coincided with the third cycle of innovation in which it was hoped that the SMT and appropriate HoDs would develop a *project school culture* (Dalin, 1993). The initiative gave rise to an emergent adhocratic culture which constituted a transformation from the hitherto *fragmented, mechanistic and incremental* stages of innovation.

Chapter Eight discusses the fourth cycle of innovation. Firstly, there is a brief description of the early stages of the school's development as a TC, its relationships with its new partners, and its innovatory activity at a national level, as a context for the ensuing changes constituting the fourth cycle of innovation. Secondly, there is a description and interpretation of consultative procedures surrounding the development of the pastoral system and its structures within the school. Thirdly, there is discussion of the development of a draft discipline policy which was subsequently submitted to the governing body. Whilst the fourth cycle of innovation constitutes the final cycle of this research project, it is important that the process of innovation is understood to have continued beyond this research, and whilst cyclical, is not restricted by any imposed limit. On the contrary, it is understood to be an on-going process comprising multiple cycles.

It is acknowledged that this study has been a mere snapshot of the developments which have occurred at Bishop Lindis School, and which have continued following the project's conclusion. It is also acknowledged that this thesis cannot adequately

represent or convey the nature and extent of fieldwork and research undertaken. Through both the research process and the writing of the thesis, there is an attempt to contribute to theory of leadership and the management of innovation as it relates to the changing culture of schools in general, and Bishop Lindis School in particular.

Thus, the development of this ethnographic case study has resulted in:

- an initial description of the historical development, culture, and micro-politics of Bishop Lindis School as an educational organisation pre-September 1991 (Chapter One);
- a contribution to the development of theory, with regard to both organisational analysis and the management of innovation within Bishop Lindis School as a developing organisation in a post-industrial, post-modern, technological environment, through the development and application of cultural and political prisms, and autocratic, bureaucratic, adhocratic and reticular-democratic lenses (Chapter Two);
- a description and analysis of the developing culture and micro-political activity prevalent at Bishop Lindis School, and the provision of insider accounts, primarily those of the participants and myself as practitioner researcher, between September 1991 and July 1995, from the point of view of the actors playing out social dramas, through the application of both cultural and political prisms as described in Chapter Two (Chapters Four to Eight).

The approach adopted for this case study might be summarised as:

- a *case study* of Bishop Lindis School as a bounded system, in order to illuminate important findings about the management of innovation, manipulation of culture, and micro-politics within the entire social arena of the school;
- a *composite* which describes the findings as they apply to a group of people from the perspective of those participants as understood by the practitioner researcher as a leader of that group;
- an account which includes descriptions of *critical incidents* from the data collected in the fieldwork, representing *hallmarks* of the findings;
- an account which includes presentations of *snapshots, moving pictures and re-runs*, each depicting a "*captured totality*" of particular data under scrutiny; and

- a study in *contrasts and contradictions*, which focuses on *congruencies* and *convergences*, as well as *differences* and *dissonances* in leading, and in managing the process of innovation at Bishop Lindis School.

Finally, I feel it is important to acknowledge that only when I have successfully completed this research project, will I begin to feel competent and equipped to tackle it.

Chapter One

Historical and Philosophical Underpinnings to the Research

1.1 Introduction:

It is clear from the introduction, that this study emanates from qualitative practitioner research in a rural Church of England Voluntary Aided High School. It is set in the context of leadership and management of innovation in a turbulent period of national educational change. In essence, it is reflective action enquiry focused on the manipulation of school culture, and the micro-politics surrounding it.

The commencement of the four year period of fieldwork associated with this research in September 1991, coincided with a change in the headship of Bishop Lindis School. It followed 28 years of the founder head's leadership.

As stated in the introduction, I had the *coign of vantage*, as both practitioner researcher, and as head of the school, being in a favourable position for both observation and action. I believe that dilemmas associated with the rôle of practitioner researcher, whilst significant, are not insurmountable,¹ but recognise that my own subjectivity and ideology have influenced the direction of this research, sometimes in contradictory and unexpected ways. I have attempted to address these issues by adopting a reflective action enquiry approach, and by challenging my own subjectivity and ideology.

¹ A discussion of the dilemmas associated with practitioner research will be taken up in Chapter Three: The Methodological Framework of the Study.

The first part of this chapter is autobiographical, and provides a philosophical underpinning to the study. The *raison d'être* for the research approach and methodology emanate directly from my philosophical allegiances, to be understood both ontologically and epistemologically,² as a result of more than a quarter of a century's learning experience as a teacher in comprehensive education.

The second part of this chapter outlines the history of Bishop Lindis School. The geographical, social, cultural and educational setting are explored in an attempt at giving meaning to the history of the school as an organisation. The development of its micro-political and social milieu over time, as understood by its leadership, and as perceived by other participants in its management, provides an insight into its complex cultural inter-relationships and inconsistencies.

Through this exposition of the school as an organisation, there is an attempt at describing the constitution of its developing culture; the approaches adopted in its management prior to September 1991; and prevailing attitudes which affected its preparedness for, and understanding of, innovative processes in which it was to engage.

1.2 Autobiographical Writing:

I believe that personal conviction and philosophy are driving forces behind innovation. In this study they have motivated and sustained a desire to document, and provide attestation of the experience of leading innovative processes. However, I recognise dangers in using autobiographical material from which to

² A specific understanding of these terms as they relate to this particular research will be proffered in Chapter Three: The Methodological Framework of the Study.

elicit theory which is anything other than mere personal theory without wider relevance, applicability and generalisability. The following extract from Thomas (1995) aptly supports this view, making the point that:

“Autobiographical writing is often thought to be subjective, anecdotal or descriptive, in comparison with other research methods, such as questionnaires or observation schedules.autobiographical writing can be done well or badly. In order for it to be valid and rigorous, it has to meet the criteria for reliable methods of gaining knowledge.

Autobiographical writing is demanding and can be painful. It is also a pleasure to write and to read. Action research, likewise, is both demanding, painful and also a pleasure, both to do and to hear. The personal story is central to both. Learning from the stories of others is, I argue, an excellent way of improving one’s own vision and practices.”

(Thomas, 1995, p. 104)

It is in honouring my experience and in seeking, as head of the school, to provide something better: a better environment, better resources, better equipped teaching staff, and better opportunities for learning, that the focus of this project has veered towards school improvement. It began with a focus on pastoral care and guidance of students. It is believed, however, that there is no inconsistency in this shift. The two concepts can properly be viewed as compatible, and it is appropriate that this research compares and contrasts the one in the light of knowledge gained of the other. The notion of a dichotomy between academic and pastoral dimensions of education, is considered to be a dated, discredited and disingenuous concept (Best *et al.*, 1995; and Power, 1996).

In attempting to honour convictions that my experience and on-the-job knowledge are not only valid and authentic but also paramount in terms of this research, I align myself with Griffiths (1990) who argues for a view of practitioner research as one in which individuals research their own situations, and bring their own selves

into the research process. This view is shared by a number of influential writers in the field (Zeichner and Teitelbaum 1982; Carr and Kemmis 1983; Whitehead 1989; and Elliott 1991). Griffiths makes the point, with which I concur, that there are serious potential problems arising out of emphases on individual stories and selves, in that a wider critical context can be destroyed.

Griffiths (1995), in aligning herself with those who consider practitioner research to be a critical political movement, explains the call to a wider critical perspective, in theoretical terms, drawing on a particular tradition of critical epistemology. In practical terms she explains what she means by anchoring the discussion to autobiographical writing in action research projects by stating that.

“Autobiographical writing is common in accounts of action research. Researchers make frequent use of diaries, logs and journals as part of the action research ‘tool kit’. The final report often contains references to the writers’ own lives: their professional development and personal experiences. Indeed, it would be odd if it were not so. One way of describing an action research report is that it is autobiographical - writing about one’s own story. Action Research is, inevitably, a narrative: it is research into one particular situation, in one particular time and place. Moreover, it is research carried out into the researcher’s own situation. Finally, it is research in which the self of the researcher is itself an issue. Action research requires the researcher’s own attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and values to be brought into question.”

(Griffiths, 1995, p. 95)

In adopting a position similar to the one promulgated by Griffiths, I will attempt to show how the personal, expressed through autobiography might also become critical.

1.3 Development of Personal Ideology:

An “*intrinsic critical incident*” influencing the development of my personal ideology, educational philosophy, and emerging theology³, was born, and took form, on a July evening in 1963, when I was just sixteen years old. The following research diary extract places me outside a critical meeting between my father and my headmaster, and provides the setting surrounding my non-involvement in discussions about my future:

“I stood on the grass verge outside the gates of the state grammar school which I had attended for the previous five years. I gazed at the grey, drab looking building with feelings of ambivalence towards it.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 30th September 1995)

The school was widely acclaimed as a fine state school. It was considered a beacon of excellence at the pinnacle of academic achievement in the community. It was compared favourably with a local direct grant grammar school with an ancient foundation. I recognised its qualities, not wishing to relinquish the kudos attaching to membership.

In spite of recognising the school’s stature, status and success, and my attachment to it and affinity with it, I believed there were aspects of the school, its basic tenets, its organisation, its ceremonies and rituals: in brief, its culture, which were irreconcilable with the needs of pupils in general, and mine in particular, as I understood them. Had it been possible for me to verbalise it at the time, I would probably have said that:

³ This is considered important because, as an Anglican Priest in Secular Employment, it is both essential, and to some extent inevitable, that a process of theological reflection underpins my professional work.

"I had been a victim of the aspirations of a working class family all too ready to promote and sustain a system of educational élitism which seemed to be designed to limit and nullify those very aspirations."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 30th September 1995)

I recognise that it was excessive class consciousness that was responsible for my believing myself to be a victim. In making this proposition, I accept the charge that I may merely have been conforming to type. I also recognise, and align my view with that of Thomas (1995), that it is often difficult to recognise one's own perspective, and that this is why we need research based on autobiographical writing. However, Thomas warns that:

"In so far as I can make my own position clear, the partiality of my perspective can be taken into account. But how to do that is a question that I have not resolved. Blanket statements about my own social class, race and gender are probably not helpful. If children do not fall into neat categories, why should adult researchers?"

(Thomas, 1995, pp. 103-4)

Notwithstanding, in recent years there is evidence of certain minority groups, notably ethnic minorities and women's groups, who have felt aggrieved at their treatment within the state education system. In the mid 1960s, it tended to be those from the lower levels of the prevailing social strata who were particularly conscious of, albeit assumed, adverse effects on educational opportunities. I recognise, however, that many of my contemporaries were both satisfied with, and grateful for the education they received.

Nevertheless, in trying to honour and give meaning to my experiences, I recognise the significance of these events at that time, and the significance they have continued to have in my subsequent professional life. I initially came to this study,

therefore, after more than a quarter of a century as a teacher, carrying much of the social and cultural “*baggage*” implicit above, with which I set out. I recognise that the accumulation of such baggage has continued throughout my professional career, and that this research provides an opportunity to confront previously unchallenged dispositions, assumptions and prejudices, whilst simultaneously addressing the needs of my students who might similarly feel aggrieved at their educational provision.

I recognise that my understanding of the educative process, even prior to my receiving any formal training in it, was dissonant with my experience. My subsequent passionate belief that students not only have the right, but also have the responsibility to be fully involved in their own learning is fundamental to, and probably the result of the way in which I view the events of that July evening in 1963. Reference to my research diary reveals that I believed:

“My future was being discussed by my father and the head of the school without a suggestion that I should be present. I had little real power to be self-determining; to take charge of my own destiny. The school, or rather its head, would decide whether it was possible to provide for, what were perceived as, my particular needs in the sixth-form.

As I stood outside the arena of action, I wondered whether my father’s ambitions for me to become a teacher would eventually be realised. I speculated as to whether he would experience a further sense of his own failure through the perceived failure of his son. I wondered what other ambitions he might have had for me at that time.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 30th September 1995)

It is possible to discern pastoral and guidance issues in this event, which are pertinent to my current educational rôle. On reflecting about that “*critical phase*” in my late adolescent and early adult development, I often conjecture as to why the

head did not interview me during the following day. I also question why my father did not appraise me of what was said at the meeting.

It is easy to forget the prevailing social and cultural milieu in which the events I have related were played out. On reflection, I could have sought an interview with the head. I could also have rebelled and not accepted decisions made on my behalf. In the event, neither of these things happened, and probably did not happen because it was not appropriate to that situation, at that time, under those prevailing conditions. I recognise that evening as one of the formative experiences of my early life, in which:

“The educative process appeared to be one which operated on me, and not one in which I was encouraged, or even permitted to engage.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 5th October 1995)

I see the foregoing event as an *“intrinsic critical incident”*, because the course of my professional life may well have changed had I been allowed to become involved in those discussions about my future. On the other hand, I recognise that I would probably have not coped with the (assumed) eloquent explanations and cogent arguments of the head any better than my father. The experience of meeting with the head could not have been easy for him. I recognise the scenario could not have been less incongruous for either of them.

On reflection, and in attempting to analyse the significance of the social interaction which took place in the head’s study that evening (at which I was neither present, nor fully aware of its content), I see my father as having been confronted with the prospect of presenting a case on behalf of his son to:

"...someone across the academic, intellectual and social abyss which separated them."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 5th October 1995)

By means of illustrating the magnitude of the social and intellectual gulf between my father and the headmaster, I quote from an edition of the school magazine in which the founder chairman of governors described the head as, "*...a wonderful organiser and administrator, and a brilliant classical scholar with a first class degree from Cambridge*" (The Chronicle, the School Magazine, 1964).

By contrast, my father was a 'state enrolled nurse', who sixteen years previously had been a coal miner in South Wales. In cycling to this small Midlands town in search of work and the prospect of a better future for his youngest child, as yet unborn, his actions provide me with a particular, and symbolic, understanding of "*social mobility*". I have been influenced politically, ideologically and professionally by these early formative experiences which I now understand to be "*intrinsic critical incidents*".

My subsequent professional and academic experiences have been both coloured and motivated by a belief and understanding that opportunity rarely knocks twice, and has to be grasped and striven for relentlessly. To reflect theologically on this critical incident, for me, the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30; and Luke 19:11-27) has become a poignant and powerful educational motivator.

I believe the emphasis at that particular school, was on achieving academic results: on each boys' ability to pass examinations. The concept of an "exam factory",⁴ was prevalent, as it has become in the present culture of examination performance league tables. I see emphasis on examination performance to the exclusion of other aspects of education as misplaced. The real issue regarding effective and successful schools, it seems to me, should be learning experience which nourishes students, and provides stimulus for future acquisition of knowledge, and future learning potential.

It is my belief that effective schools should lay the necessary foundations for life-long learning and education in the widest sense. I am unconvinced that structures of education prevalent in the tripartite system⁵, in the immediate period prior to comprehensivisation in Britain were effective for any but a small minority of very able children. I accept that not all my peers and contemporaries would agree with me, as evidenced by the following reflections in which:

"I wondered if other boys felt as I did. Perhaps they believed, in contrast to my own beliefs, that the school was a vibrant and exciting place in which learning was the most important activity. Perhaps, over time, the whole experience has become distorted in its real significance for me as an individual."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 15th October, 1995)

Coloured by my particular experiences, I see a major issue for everyone engaged in education, at whatever phase of development, as "*motivation*".

⁴ The concept of school organisations as factories is discussed in Chapter Two: The Theoretical Framework: Developing an Alternative Paradigm.

⁵ The word tripartite came to be used generally to describe the secondary system of education prior to comprehensivisation. It is a term which relates to the three dominant types of school in this country: grammar, technical and secondary modern. In reality, the system has never existed in more than a few places.

It is my understanding that in order to motivate students, it is necessary to secure their confidence and respect. Progress will only follow if students are prepared to make the necessary journey and explore the offerings of a "*promised land*" of learning which is personal, relevant and experiential. It must "*resonate*" with their needs, and be authentic to their life experiences. I believe that my late secondary school experience did not provide the essential ingredients commensurate with either my innate, or potential ability. I accept that the position I adopt is highly subjective and may be the result of my rationalising experiences and understandings. The particular difficulties I encountered on entering the sixth-form are illustrated by reference to my research diary in which I state that:

"The problem was compounded for me, because the subjects I found most attractive were subjects which did not sit easily alongside each other at A level.

It was also deemed necessary by the school, to supplement A level studies with more O level subjects."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 15th October, 1995)

Issues represented here are relevant today. Breadth of the curriculum at KS4 as demanded by the public examination system, and students' academic preparedness for particular demands of A level or post-16 study seem incompatible. There is continuing debate about the suitability of some GCSE courses as preparation for A level studies, particularly in mathematical and physical sciences.

One factor, the size of schools, has changed dramatically over the years, and whilst it was commonplace, prior to comprehensivisation, for secondary schools to have as few as three hundred pupils, some of the larger comprehensive schools exceeded two-thousand. The range and variety of schools has settled to limits

which are generally between about five and fifteen hundred students. Advantages and disadvantages of size are numerous, but in general terms, the larger an organisation becomes, the more able it proves in providing a wide range of courses. It has also been argued that the larger a school becomes, the less effective it becomes in coping with individual pupil's difficulties and problems. In simplistic terms, it is claimed that small schools are better pastorally, but provide a narrow range of courses, whilst large schools offer a wide range of educational opportunity but fail to provide for the pastoral needs of their pupils. Experience has provided me with a particular understanding of some of the problems of curricular provision and diversity in smaller schools, as attested by the following extract from my research diary:

"Having settled on my choices for A level study, I suffered a further disappointment, since, being a grammar school with just 600 boys on roll, the timetable could not cope with this combination. Subsequently, the pursuit of A level studies was offered, whilst the relevant staff concurrently taught classes from other years".

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 15th October, 1995)

Implications inherent in these decisions are fundamental to curriculum and organisational practice nowadays. The notion of equality of opportunity, regarding access to the curriculum, was not a priority in either policy or practice of most schools in the 1960s. On reflecting about sixth-form experiences:

"I felt that school had deprived me of opportunity. I believed it had failed me. I, in turn, and as a result, had not served it well. I failed it. It was remarkable under these circumstances that I should be awarded a prize at the next speech day for the best A level result in music."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 25th October, 1995)

My perception at that time was, that unless a sixth-former was a potential Oxbridge entrant, or at least a candidate for one of the 'better' universities, then he

was treated as unworthy of the school's resources. My experiences may have been unrepresentative of the school's normal responses. They may have been the result of a combination of my pre-conceptions and prejudices, together with the school's acting out a rôle perceived as expected by the local community and mandated by its status as a selective school.

It seemed to me that some staff found celebrating some pupils' successes difficult, particularly if it was felt that they had not brought particular acclamation to the school, as evidenced by the following extract from my research diary:

"There was an expression of incredulity from one member of staff at my receiving an offer from a college of education to train as a teacher. The significance of this has remained with me, and demonstrates my sensitivity to, and consciousness of, my working class background.

These formative experiences increased my determination to become '*socially mobile*'. They come into play in my present situation both as head of a comprehensive school and as a post-graduate research student.

My unyielding drive and ambition, and my striving for new challenges, both personally and professionally, are products of these early inferiority feelings. They equip me, and sensitise me to those of similar disposition, whether students or colleagues, recognising, of course, that their experiences whilst congruent with mine, emanate from quite different sources."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 15th November, 1995)

Perceptions, understandings and prejudices evident above, must be set alongside the views of many people in that town, who believed the school to be fulfilling important needs, and providing quality education. Nevertheless, my attitude to selective education has been antipathetic from these early days. On reflecting about these experiences, I concluded that:

"The school, unable to meet my needs fully, provided me with a sixth-form education of sorts! I was to embark upon A level studies whilst re-sitting and complementing my studies with further O level work. My A level lessons were to take place whilst other classes were being taught. In spite of this I received a prize for the best music results in the A level

examination two years later. This was probably my most remarkable school achievement!"

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 15th November 1995)

Early prejudices were reinforced on entering college, heralding another "*critical phase*" in my development. My student-teacher experiences of good comprehensive schools in Bristol provided a vision of educational opportunity previously unknown to me, as illustrated in my research diary, in which I state:

"If only I had had these opportunities available to me - things would have been different! Or would they? Am I deluding myself? Would I have performed in exactly the same way? Did this new type of school really offer better learning opportunities?"

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 17th November, 1995)

Comprehensive schools were often large. By virtue of their size they offered a greater range of curriculum than either grammar schools or secondary modern schools of other areas. There tended to be more flexible grouping arrangements designed to avoid negative aspects of a "*self-fulfilling prophecy*".⁶ Pastoral arrangements, in spite of their size, appeared superior by comparison with schools I previously experienced.

In theory, all pupils were considered important and high expectations, encouragement and motivation were not restricted to the most able. In practice, of course, some teachers in some schools lapsed into more negative conventions of the selective system.

⁶ The concept of the self-fulfilling prophesy operates in the following four steps: something is assumed to be true; action is taken based upon that assumption; reaction occurs to the original action; the reaction is observed and is taken as verification of the original assumption.

Such lapses demonstrated contradictions between expressed institutional philosophy and endemic organisational behaviour; between conscious strivings to establish new cultural norms and the deep contradictory pull of personal history. Lapses of this sort highlighted the interface between old, unacceptable custom, and new preferred possibilities. The following extract highlights some of the dilemmas and contradictions experienced by teachers in such schools at that time:

“The change in the 1960s and 1970s from grammar to comprehensive schools in many cases required teachers to carry out a fundamental review of their deeply held values, and some felt betrayed by the change. They felt they were being asked to lower their standards, to abandon their view of what quality education meant and to put on one side their former beliefs and practices.”

(Bell and Harrison, 1995, p. 3)

By contrast, I found the experience of this new world of egalitarian learning opportunity engaging. Theoretical underpinnings provided by lectures at the college in philosophy, psychology, and sociology of education were consonant with this experience. Dissonance, however, was present in the form of the disingenuous relationship between the practice and “*preaching*” of lecturers. At one level they were proponents of educational possibilities of a “*Brave New World*” of the sixties, but at another level, many remained deeply-seated in the axioms of a former less enlightened age.

Unfortunately, principles of egalitarian educational opportunity did not extend to colleges of education, and my progress, beyond qualification as a teacher, was hindered by the bureaucratic establishment within the universities at the time, as attested in the following extract from my research diary:

“Unfortunately, personal disappointment at a lack of opportunity struck once more. Unlike some of my fellow students who had matriculated, I was

barred from reading for a degree. My determination with regard to the pursuit of opportunity was further fuelled.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 3rd December 1995)

On reflection, it is possible that this “*critical phase*” subsequently motivated my commitment to the pursuit of “*opportunity for all*” through working in comprehensive education. I cannot claim a conscious decision made to this effect. However, evidence is provided in the final report from the principal of the college of education I attended, which stated that:

“....(he) is extremely keen to prove his worth to the profession. In particular, he has a deep interest in the philosophy and practicalities of the comprehensive school....”

(College of Education: Final Report, September 1968)

The effects of state education on both pupils and teachers impacted further on my return home to take up my first post. I joined the profession as a non-graduate teacher to lead a music department in a school on the outskirts of town. I became aware of divisions within the profession between graduates and non-graduates. It became apparent that a degree was essential, not only for securing a more lucrative salary, but also in providing a better basis for professional development and career progression. However, professional development was not a priority at this time, though career progression received a boost, heralding the onset of another “*critical phase*” which coincided with a “*personal critical incident*”:

“....I married a colleague. I left at the end of term to take up a department headship in a Birmingham comprehensive school.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 3rd December 1995)

Deepening understandings and empathy with pupils’ social predicaments, came with the promotion. The move heralded a long awaited opportunity to study for a

degree with the Open University, representing an important *"intrinsic critical phase"* in my personal and professional development made possible during the relatively settled existence prevalent in early married life. The following extract from my research diary testifies to the personal importance of this period of professional development:

"For what seemed to be the first time in my life, I experienced a second chance. Harold Wilson's vision had made my dream a reality!"

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 3rd December 1995)

Superficially, the prevailing social conditions surrounding the school, its pupils and its families, were not conducive to quality learning. Incidences of unemployment, one parent families, crime, deprivation, poor quality housing, few social amenities and the lack of a well developed sense of community, all appeared to negate the efforts of a dedicated team of teachers attempting to impact on the lives of their pupils and their families. However, this awareness and understanding of a different dimension and dynamic to the educative process, whilst previously not completely unknown to me, became crucial to progress, or lack of it, amongst the pupils in my care. I gained a particular interest and some experience in pastoral care for the first time in my career, which provided a practical expression of the academic study I had embarked upon.

As a consequence of my greater involvement in the affective dimension of education, I accepted further pastoral responsibilities in addition to my responsibilities as a head of department.

My first experience of research activity occurred at this time. I carried out a research project in reading development at my new school. I understood the

ability to read, and read with understanding, as fundamental to progress. The title of my research, "Learning to Read: Reading to Learn", was a formative expression of what I saw as at the heart of good educational experience, and fundamental to my work as a teacher.

On reflection, it was inevitable that professional development and experience gained in Birmingham, together with the academic study I began, should result in career progression, as illustrated in the following extract from my research diary:

"On being appointed to my first senior post at twenty-six years of age, as Head of the Lower School at a school in Dorset, my professional experience broadened to encompass pastoral responsibilities.

I was awarded an OU degree in December 1975."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 3rd December 1995)

The challenges and demands of a more senior post combined with the satisfaction of successful academic study, provided the stimulus to pursue further studies at a higher level. The importance of my academic experience as an undergraduate, unlike that in more traditional institutions at the time, was that it was "*grounded*" in daily professional activity.

Post-graduate study was similarly viewed as a natural extension to my professional rôle, particularly with regard to the major research undertaken. The following extract from my research diary illustrates the importance of this particular "*intrinsic critical phase*" in my life:

"I was seconded to the University of Southampton to study full-time for a master's degree in *Educational Research and Innovation* in September

1976. My major research project and resulting dissertation comprised, *An analysis of the rôle of the pastoral head in the secondary school.*"⁷

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 3rd December 1995)

The combination of experience at a senior level in the pastoral organisation of a school, together with insights and reflections only possible in sabbatical situations through secondment, provided an impetus for more stimulus and challenge, which led to my seeking a management rôle in education:

"It was around this time that, following the award of a master's degree, I was appointed to a deputy headship in Derbyshire. I took up my first deputy headship on 1st January, 1979. Between 1979 and 1991 I experienced a number of deputy head rôles on a rotating basis."⁸

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 3rd December 1995)

A period of disaffection in the teaching profession, during the mid-1980s, resulted in the withdrawal of goodwill by many teachers. The reasons for, and nature of particular teacher actions are not relevant to this research, except regarding the impact made on teacher meetings and the extra-curricular activities of schools. Every day pressures, especially on senior staff, were reduced as a consequence of not having to attend meetings. There was, as a result, more time for reflection, which is sadly missing from the lives of senior staff in schools today.

Having accumulated five years experience in two deputy headships, it was appropriate that I took stock of my career and the professional contribution I was

⁷ The research project was based on an analysis of the rôle of the pastoral head in twenty secondary schools in the Midlands and the South of England. My own pastoral experience underpinned the research rationale. The major research instrument and analytical framework used had been designed by Taylor (1964). The research methods explored during this extensive course of study focused on quantitative methods of empirical enquiry.

⁸ These included: Head of Lower School; Deputy Head: Community; Deputy Head Administration; and Deputy Head Curriculum.

making in education. Whilst believing that my primary vocation remained to work in comprehensive education, partly as a result of encouragement from colleagues, I felt that I should test a call to the priesthood which had manifested itself over a period of time, and in a number of ways, but to which I had chosen not to respond. The circumstances surrounding this profound and very personal experience, made a response essential on this occasion. As a consequence of engaging in a number of selection processes of the Church of England, including attendance at, and participation in a selection conference conducted by the Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry (ACCM), I was selected for training as a priest. The following extract from my research diary reflects on the process leading up to my ordination and to my subsequent appointment as head of Bishop Lindis School:

"Whilst in post in Derbyshire I commenced training for ordination. I was subsequently ordained Deacon in the Anglican Church in October 1987. Twelve months later I was ordained Priest at Derby Cathedral.

Training for ordination played an important rôle in my preparation for headship. I became a member of the learning and worshipping community of the East Midlands Ministry Training Course (EMMTC).

This community, of about ninety men and women training for various ministries in the Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Churches, met for two hours each week, and for eight residential weekends per year.

In addition, at the end of each of the three years, a 10 day summer school involved my family together with the families of other course members."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 3rd December 1995)

Work accomplished on human relations education was both formative and challenging. In particular, I was profoundly influenced through encounters with *"Transactional Analysis"* (TA), and an unforgettable experiential retreat at the end of the first year of training. TA provided a framework in which to place, and to understand, human relationships in which I engaged daily. Self-learning, integral to

both TA and the experiential retreat, was an extension to professional development as a senior member of the teaching profession. The retreat was not for the faint-hearted. Activities of a personal nature, provided opportunities to investigate responses of *"the self"* to complex human interactions and situations, in the relative safety of a group of like-minded people journeying together. Worship, not restricted to Anglican Prayer Books, was both challenging and liberating within this unique and unrepeatable context:

"Worship within this community embraced shared values, various denominational traditions and some affirming spiritual experiences rarely to be found within the English Parish Church tradition."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 3rd December 1995)

My most recent, and most significant *"intrinsic critical phase"* began on appointment to the headship of Bishop Lindis School, three years after my ordination as a priest. It coincided with the onset of this research project. The various strands of my professional, ecclesiastical, academic and personal life came together in a more cohesive manner than previously envisaged.

1.4 The Birth and Historical Development of Bishop Lindis School:

Concurrently with my professional development and unbeknown to me, an educational enterprise, to which I would contribute in the course of time, was also developing. It seems as appropriate to speak in terms of *"critical incidents"* and *"critical phases"* in the development of Bishop Lindis School as an organisation, as it is to use such terms in relation to an individual's personal and professional development.

12th September 1963 heralded such a *"critical incident"*, in a remote area of the North of England, when a new venture came into being. The birth pangs of the venture, which had been conceived some twenty seven years previously, suffering a long gestation period with the threat of abortion on a number of occasions, resulted in the emergence of a new Church of England Secondary Modern School for one hundred and eighty-eight 11-15 year old boys and girls.

Bishop Lindis CE High School, a special agreement school, and the setting for this case study, opened with a Northumbrian as its first head. The dedication of the school was conducted by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese on 29th October 1963 and the order of service contained a short history of the foundation of the school.

Foundation managers of five primary schools, in what were to become the five foundation parishes, decided to co-operate with the LEA and the diocesan board of education (DBE) in a new endeavour to found a Church of England school for the area. This was decided at a meeting held in one of the villages in 1936, an early *"critical incident"* in the life of what was to become Bishop Lindis School. The dream took twenty-seven years to become a reality.

A meeting in November 1936 was held when the national economic climate was ailing. Several councillors and clergy decided that local children should have an opportunity to attend their own central school with *"all the most modern facilities it could provide"*. The chief inspiration, and main action for this project came from one of the local vicars.

According to the Education Act of 1936, the church would have to raise twenty-five per cent of the capital cost, which was likely to amount to (a mere) £2,500. Whilst it is hard to imagine a secondary school provided for £10,000, this sum represented a large undertaking for the DBE. The foundation committee's efforts were interrupted in September 1939 by the Second World War representing an *"extrinsic critical incident"* in the development of the proposed school, and for six years apparently more pressing matters required attention, and no further progress towards the new school was made.

After the war, perhaps surprisingly, there was no immediate revival of the committee or of its plans. The reason probably lies in the provisions of the 1944 Education Act, which phased out all-age village schools and made it necessary for children in this remote and isolated area to transfer at eleven to new secondary schools, the nearest of which was six miles away and the furthest fifteen.

By 1955 interest in the building of a new secondary school began to revive in the five parishes. A new committee was formed under the chairmanship of a vicar. A number of sites were considered in two villages and eventually, after numerous factors had been taken into consideration, it was decided to build the school on the site upon which it now stands.

Work started in 1961 and the foundation stone was laid by the wife of the local squire on 12th May 1962. The name of the school was chosen, with the agreement of diocesan authorities, because a one-time Bishop of Lindisfarne was responsible for bringing Christianity to the North of England. The foundation governors were appointed in 1962 under the chairmanship of a suffragan bishop.

It was planned to open the school early in 1963 but delays in building occurred and it was September 1963 when the first pupils were admitted, heralding the onset of, arguably, the most important *"intrinsic critical phase"* in its development. Children already attending schools outside the area covered by foundation parishes were given an opportunity to transfer to the new school. One hundred and sixty-nine initially accepted. The original staff were eleven in number. At its inception, hope was expressed that Bishop Lindis School would become established as *"a school worthy of the highest ideals and practices of the Christian Church"*.

At that time the school leaving age was fifteen, and pupils wishing to take external examinations at O level stayed on voluntarily. The first fifth-year group of 1964 was seven in number. Numbers in the final year gradually increased until seven years later two-thirds of each year group were consistently staying on.

Two months after the school opened the Bishop Lindis Association was formed. Through this association parents have given their support in many different ways and contributed many thousands of pounds towards additional equipment and facilities. The rôle of the association has developed during its thirty or so years of history. It was originally conceived as purely for parents. It has widened its membership to embrace both teachers and friends of the school. Its rôle has also developed considerably during the process of this research project and its functions are no longer restricted to fund raising.

A school of less than two hundred pupils, by virtue of opportunities for everyone to be known by everyone else, does not require a complex care and guidance structure in order to operate efficiently and effectively within the pastoral domain.

Since there was no anticipation that the school would grow to the size it has since attained, there is no evidence that this growth was planned. The school, its head and governors, responded to perceived needs of pupils and of the area. The development of the school was evolutionary.

The school devised an embryonic pastoral structure, which, in the course of time, developed into a complex system with a number of ambiguities. The headmaster was initially head of the pastoral system. Because of the size of the school he was involved in all aspects of the school's daily routines. He met all visitors, signed all letters, interviewed all parents and in every respect not only had his finger on the pulse of school activity, but also generated much of that activity, and was central to the intricacies of the school's internal and external relationships.

From the school's inception to the development of the year head structure in the late 1980s, the lynch-pin of the pastoral system had been the form teacher. The school was initially organised in eight forms; two in each of four years, from the beginning of its work in 1963 until it began to grow beyond a two-form entry school. Initially there was an A stream and a B stream in each year, the school being subject to a further creaming off at the top of the ability range, catered for in several local grammar schools.

The head had ultimate responsibility for all pupils in general, and boys in particular. His deputy was responsible for girls' welfare and discipline. Each form tutor was expected to know intimate details of tutees' families. One teacher from those early days, and still working at the school throughout the period of this research, commented:

"What you can do now at the touch of a button on a computer, you had to know about every child".

(Teacher Interview, Research Log, 17th November, 1991)

The form tutor's responsibilities were seen as all-embracing:

"You had everything to do. Registers were sacred. You had to know everything about each child: medical details; whether they should wear glasses; their brothers or sisters, and which house they were in. You had to write their timetable for them; and list their peg numbers. If a member of your form was in trouble, you felt you had done something wrong."

(ibid.)

Early on in the school's history the head's vision was communicated to staff by various means. He was the author of all policy documents concerned with the development of the school. A teacher stressed that:

"The school was not oppressive; not regimented. Standards set then were very important. This was reflected in the type of staff which were appointed. Policies were developed very early on. The head periodically wrote down what was expected of us."

(ibid.)

The head dealt with all parents, including signing all letters to them, but would usually call form tutors to his room to keep them informed. A teacher recalled how houses, named after great Christian men, Grenfell, Livingstone, Shaftesbury, and Temple, were in place before the school opened.⁹ With increasing intakes of children the numbers in school developed as follows:

⁹ Sir William Thomason Grenfell (1885 - 1940) was a physician. Dr. David Livingstone (1813 - 1875) was a doctor, a missionary and an explorer. The Earl of Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper (1801 - 1885) was a reformer and philanthropist. Dr. William Temple (1881 - 1944) was the Archbishop of Canterbury, and had been Head of Repton School.

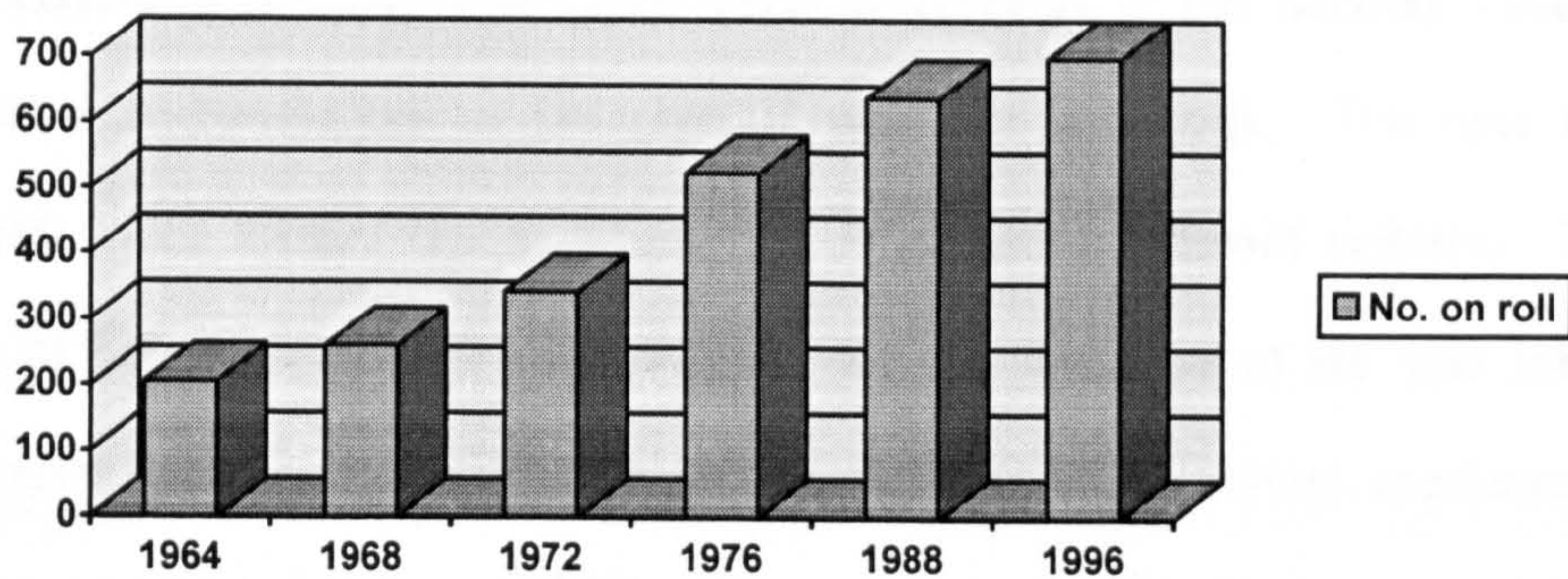


Figure 1.1: Growth of Bishop Lindis School 1963 - 1996

In 1971 the school leaving age was raised to sixteen. This development heralded another *"intrinsic critical phase"* in the life of the school. A new examination, the Certificate in Secondary Education (CSE) was well established, and extensions were necessary to accommodate an increasing number of courses. The new wing was officially opened on 12th November 1971. Previously, on 22nd October 1971 the new building was used for the first time. It was named after a suffragan bishop, who was chairman of governors at the time.

The first major changes in the pastoral system came with RoSLA. The development of a pastoral system at this time satisfied a number of needs. The school became larger and as a result it was less possible for the previous highly centralised system to cope. A number of pupils became recalcitrant in their conduct, mainly as a result of their enforced extended schooling. The developing nature of the upper school curriculum needed pastoral support in order to increase its effectiveness.

A fourth year form teacher became head of fifth year with additional responsibility for careers. He did not retain responsibility for a form. His new rôle embraced the

organisation of proctors (the name given to prefects in this school). There were additional responsibilities to the pastoral work he undertook. The new fifth year students were treated like a sixth-form. They had a different uniform. The new head of fifth year assumed responsibility for the discipline of his year which had previously been vested entirely in the headmaster. The school produced a new leaving report at this time (1971). The report books provided a sort of record of achievement (ROA).

In 1974 a four-classroom extension was approved. This building was named after a former head of mathematics who died suddenly in May 1970. Public subscriptions totalling over £1,000 went towards building costs. In 1975, after years of discussion, it was agreed that secondary schools in this particular area of the county would re-organise into non-selective comprehensive schools.

Governors approved proposals for the school to become a comprehensive high school in September 1976, a year before other schools in the district. So began another "*critical phase*" in the school's history. The opening of a new wing on 31st March 1976, coincided with preparations for the school's new status which took effect at the beginning of the Autumn Term.

On comprehensivisation in 1976, there were a number of changes in staff rôles and responsibilities. Comprehensivisation also brought new staff in its wake. In particular, a science graduate with sixth-form experience was appointed to a new post as Second Master. An explanation for the appointment came from one of the governors, who stated that:

"The school needed a graduate in a senior position to cope with the more able pupils in the comprehensive intake."

(Teacher Interview, Research Log, 2nd December 1991)

A further development occurred within two years in the form a new craft wing, subsequently developed as a technology centre, and named in honour of a diocesan bishop who had worked single-mindedly for church education within the county. The wing was officially opened on 10th October 1978.

In 1986 the first Heads of Year were appointed. The new pastoral system was seen by some staff as a *"bolt on"* system. The LEA made money available for pastoral structures in schools, and then insisted they were in place by the beginning of the autumn term. The new system, which some staff criticised, had a profound effect on the work of form tutors. Many felt they were disenfranchised of a tutorial and disciplinary rôle. The school was also suffering, as many had in the mid-eighties, from the effects of industrial action, and the lack of extra-curricular activity.

Form tutors were no longer universally considered lynch-pins of the pastoral system. It was the belief of some teachers that pastoral work had degenerated into a crisis management model (Forward, 1986), or reactive pastoral care (Best et al., 1995, p. 10), akin to some 1960s models of pastoral care.

It was also believed by some teachers that preparation for and ramifications of the new 1988 Education Act adversely influenced positive developments within this area of the school's activity. One teacher claimed, for example, that:

"I used to let it all wash over me. The politics of it I mean. That sounds as if I didn't care. I was just not involved. I just can't put myself back in those times somehow."

The teacher continued by describing the mid-1980s at Bishop Lindis School as,

"...a quiet period, because of the industrial action of teachers, before the massive changes following the 1988 Act".

(Teacher Interview, Research Log, 10th March 1992)

Some important appointments were made in the mid to late 1980s which influenced subsequent development. In 1984 there was an appointment of a teacher with responsibility for boys' welfare and discipline, and for careers education. In 1987 a first deputy head was appointed on the retirement of the founder deputy.

In the Silver Jubilee year of 1988, Bishop Lindis School was different in many respects from the original school of 1963. Buildings were more extensive. There was a staff of thirty-eight teachers, three and a half times the original number. Ninety-seven per cent of senior classes were engaged on examination courses and academic standards in the school were perceived as very high by members of the local community. The celebration of the school's silver jubilee may be regarded as a "*critical incident*" in its life and development.

One thing in particular remained unchanged. The commitment to provide a Christian education was still a priority. The main aim of the school was to work as a caring community where relationships and attitudes were important and where every individual mattered. In 1963 a school motto was chosen which summed up

the school's ideals. The words, taken from the tenth chapter of the gospel according to St. John provided the school motto:

“That they might have life, and have it in all its abundance”.

(John 10.10)

In 1989, for the first time in the school's history, a senior management team (SMT) was formally constituted, its membership being the head and two deputies. Each individual had a particular area of responsibility. There is little evidence of sustained team approaches, as now understood, or of the team operating by consensus or synergistically. As it increased to five in number, there is some evidence of conflicts, power plays and coalitions within the SMT. Whilst it was publicly asserted that relationships and attitudes were considered important, there is some evidence of wider, whole school micro-political issues, in particular relation to conflicts, power plays and coalitions, which appeared to mirror perceived relationships within the SMT. For example, there were issues regarding grouping arrangements in the school. There were those who espoused the virtues of heterogeneous groups and mixed ability teaching. Some members of the SMT, on the other hand, remained proponents of homogeneous groupings and the merits of streaming.¹⁰

The school site, on a major route connecting the five foundation parishes, is sloping with extensive views across the fells to a range of hills. It is reputed to have the best view of any school in the county. If you stand on the top floor of Bishop Lindis School and look across playing fields and tennis courts, you view the

¹⁰ These issues will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter Four: Bishop Lindis School in September 1991.

full extent of a plain before you. The spire of a village church, a converted windmill, a university, and a number of farms and villages punctuate the foreground. In the distance it is possible to see moving traffic on a motorway, behind which, on a clear day, a range of mountainous terrain provides a dramatic backcloth.

Since the school is located in a remote rural area, it suffers from all of the inherent transport difficulties that poses. The area in which the five foundation parishes are situated is bounded by a river, and until June 1993 the only access from the south was via a narrow toll bridge. The remoteness of the area, and its access difficulties have resulted in the prevalence of both parochial and defensive attitudes amongst some members of the local population. These negative attributes have been balanced to some extent by both pride in and care for each other and the local community as a whole.

The meticulously maintained school grounds win annual awards, usually in the form of first prize in the local council's *"Area in Bloom"* competition. The buildings themselves are multilevel, a feature which, whilst aesthetically attractive, can be a hindrance to access, particularly for one student whose progressive disability confined him to a wheelchair during his final year. It is testimony to the development of caring attitudes during his years at the school that this student wanted to return following major surgery, even though access problems initially seemed insuperable.

By 1991 the school buildings comprised the main school and three other separate wings. The architecture is basic and utility, consisting of a series of uninspired and

uninspiring boxes with flat roofs. Buildings prove to be difficult to *“learn”* initially, particularly for new year 7 pupils. Even older entrants to the school, including staff, encounter difficulties, especially since prior to this study there was no attempt at a cohesive allocation of rooms to departments, or of buildings to *“faculties”*.

At the commencement of this project, year 11 students had social and pastoral use of the RoSLA Wing of the school, but there was an issue about this building’s function, and other solutions to leisure facilities were subsequently sought. The whole site remains both graffiti and vandalism free.

There can be little doubt that the school’s growth was a concern, not only of the local community, which sees itself as the natural catchment area for the school, but also of the other secondary schools in the locality, some of which lost potential pupils to Bishop Lindis School. This had not always been for denominational reasons.

It is vital, for its continued survival, that Bishop Lindis School offers a curriculum and an enhanced extra-curricular life that attracts families to the school in spite of its remote rural location and consequent transportation problems. Traditionally, less than half of the school’s intake come from the original five foundation parishes.

1.5 Conclusion:

In this chapter, I have attempted to provide an account of my developing philosophy of education during my professional experience prior to taking up the headship of Bishop Lindis School, in the belief that this will provide philosophical

underpinnings to the research rationale and methodology which will be discussed in chapter three.

I recognise that my own subjectivity and ideology have influenced the direction and conduct of this research and to that extent they are important issues. The nature of reflective action enquiry provides the rationale through which these issues are addressed thus forming a major contribution to the integrity of the study as a whole. The ways in which my personal philosophy has developed during the period of the research, are integral to it, and evidence of the process of change on my "*self*" is considered to be as important as evidence of the process of change on the school and its members.

This chapter has also provided an account of the history and development of Bishop Lindis School, prior to September 1991, in order that the description of the prevailing culture of the school at the point at which I became head,¹¹ might be understood in the light of what preceded it.

The geographical, social, cultural and educational setting have been explored in an attempt at communicating participants' understandings of the history of the school as an organisation. The development of its micro-political and social milieu over time, as understood by its leadership, and as perceived by other participants in its management, also provides some insight into its complex cultural inter-relationships and inconsistencies.

¹¹ A full description of Bishop Lindis School, including an analysis of the prevailing culture within the school at the point at which I became head, forms the basis of Chapter Four: Bishop Lindis School in September 1991.

Through this exposition of the school as an organisation, there is an attempt at describing the constitution of its developing culture; the approaches adopted in its management prior to September 1991; and prevailing attitudes which affected its preparedness for, and understanding of, innovative processes in which it was to engage.

Chapter Two: The Theoretical Framework, should be understood in the context of the philosophical and historical background provided in this chapter.

Chapter Two

The Theoretical Framework: Developing an Alternative Paradigm

2.1 Introduction:

This chapter aims to map the development of a theoretical framework for the project having regard to the historical and philosophical bases of the research charted in the first chapter. The ensuing theoretical framework has emerged as a result of both thought and reflection. It is the consequence of a number of changes in direction, some of which have led into "*cul-de-sacs*" and "*blind-alleys*". It has been necessary to broaden the area of concern, and knowledge of the context in which the research is set, through appropriate literature searches. This has been followed by a process of focusing, and subsequent re-focusing until a working theoretical framework in which to hang the project has both emerged and endured.

In seeking to contribute to theory leading to a greater understanding of schools as organisations, the framework, which has developed during the course of this research, has evolved from a number of ideologies, perspectives, frames, metaphors, and paradigms, extracted, supported and illustrated by relevant references. This approach is founded on organisation theory in general and on the theory and practice of organisational analysis in particular. It includes discussion of how different types of school organisation might be related to their preparedness or otherwise for embarking upon a process of educational innovation; the cultures which are most likely to facilitate change; and the changes in school culture which can result from the process of innovation itself.

Some aspects of the rationale of the project, and the process of innovation itself, emanate from an appreciation of the view of Bennett *et al.* (1992), who state that:

“In our view, the best way of thinking about how to deal with change is to be eclectic: pragmatism informed by a clear sense of meanings and values, which recognise the rôle of theory in developing a sense of good practice.”

(Bennett *et al.*, 1992, p. 4)

Since leadership and organisation are inextricably linked, how schools are “read”, understood and analysed as organisations has implications for the ways in which they are subsequently led. How schools are led also influences any subsequent organisational analysis. This is especially the case when a school is experiencing the transition from a period of relative stability to one of rapid and turbulent change, in both its environment and from within its organisation.¹

In the past a school’s organisation may well have served its purpose, so long as that purpose remained relatively stable, but may have become a barrier as soon as the function of education began to change. Hitherto, many schools’ leadership, management and organisation have been based on traditional models, the roots of which may be seen to abide in nineteenth century educational thinking:

“The language of school leadership and management in nineteenth-century English schooling was a form of pedagogic discourse which spoke of hierarchy and control. In a strongly class-stratified society, such as England, leadership could only arise (or be legitimated) as the cultural attribute of class position. At the most general, structural level, leadership in education referred to the political ability of dominant classes in England to enact, design and provide an education system for the efficient schooling of other classes. In its origins in English provided schooling, educational leadership was a concept firmly located in notions of class hierarchy and of class-cultural control. Leadership was a realization of hierarchy and a responsibility of hierarchy - it was *noblese oblige*.”

(Beare *et al.*, 1989, p. 28)

¹ This notion is considered to be of central importance to this thesis.

The development of a theoretical framework for this research project, therefore, must take account of and be founded on the belief that the way in which a school is organised and led are important factors in determining its capacity to cope with change. The ability of the school to cope with changing demands, may well be hampered by the very nature of the systems inherent in its organisation and leadership.

Reading, understanding and analysing the school as an organisation is not the whole story. If change is to be introduced, implemented and institutionalised its success depends chiefly on individual teachers and others who comprise the school's community. It is also possible to discern that different leadership styles hinge on a question of how reality is defined. Authoritarian leaders "sell" or "tell" a reality, forcing their definition of a situation upon others. More democratic leaders let the reality of a situation evolve from the definitions offered by colleagues, listening to what is being said, summoning and integrating key themes, and evoking and developing imagery that captures the essence of the emergent system of meaning.

From the outset, this research project has focused on the process of innovation at Bishop Lindis School. It is intended to elicit a more informed understanding of this process, in order to address resulting issues more effectively. Since attention has focused on school improvement throughout the course of the research, it is important to have a clear idea, from relevant literature, of what is considered to be a *"good, effective or excellent school" per se.*

This chapter begins, therefore, with a survey of literature from which it is intended to elucidate the character and nature of *"good, effective and excellent schools"*, before exploring some factors deemed necessary in leading, managing and facilitating the process of school improvement.

2.2 Good, Effective and Excellent Schools:

Since this project's fundamental concern is about the process of school improvement, it seems appropriate to investigate what is meant by *"good, effective and excellent"* schools through reference to some current educational literature, before discussing the relevance of organisational analysis and leadership perspectives to the study.

It appears that each of these terms is used interchangeably by a number of authors, and that there is no comprehensive attempt at definition and distinction between them. Further, these terms are used loosely in the most recent annual report by HMCI (1996), which lists some schools in the *"outstanding schools"* category, whilst in the findings of their OFSTED reports they are merely described as *"very good"*. Others in HMCI's *"good and improving"* list include schools described by OFSTED as *"excellent"* and *"outstanding"*.

In speaking of those qualities which constitute a *"good"* school, D'Amico (1982, p. 61) refers to a *"recipe"*; Lezotte (1982, p. 63) prefers to speak in terms of a *"framework"*; whilst Brandt (1982, p. 3) refers to the *"new catechism for urban school improvement"*. Not only is there confusion with the regard to the use of such terms as *"good, effective and excellent"*, but there is also a wide conceptual

range prevalent (*"recipe, framework, and catechism"*), in attempting to provide definition.

It is not surprising that Beare *et al.* (1989) treat with scepticism the notion that educational practitioners have endeavoured to draw up an inventory of qualities which should be developed in a school in order to make it *"effective"*. These authors are concerned that there should be no suggestion of one best way of doing things. Indeed, they go further, and suggest that teachers who talk seriously about *"diversity and individual differences"* should not adopt practices which lead to new *"conformities"* and *"standardised treatments"* (*ibid.*, p. 15).

In attempting to bring some objectivity to bear, it is inevitable that empirical, quantitative data are sought by some upon which judgements might be made. Gray *et al.* (1990) and more recently, Gray and Wilcox (1995, p. 12) provide some quantitative indicators of quality which have not changed very much over recent decades. They suggest that the percentage of higher grade passes, the *"staying on"* rate, truancy rates and the percentage of disenchanting youngsters are examples of such indicators. Gray and Wilcox also suggest that:

"Whatever the 'quality' in absolute terms of the education on offer in the secondary system, its quality (as judged by small and steady improvements over time) does not appear to have altered much despite press reports to the contrary."

(*ibid.*, p. 13)

A number of writers (Brandt, 1982, p. 3; Cohen, 1981, p. 59; and Cuban, 1983, pp. 695 - 696) have expressed concern that school effectiveness should not be seen to depend heavily on test scores. A cursory glance at the list of

"outstanding" schools in HMCI's report, would suggest that this lesson is yet to be learned in the upper echelons of OFSTED and HMI.

The aforementioned writers' concerns focus on fears of the emergence of a single best way of teaching. They also fear that in pursuing effectiveness based on test scores, the already neglected arts and personal and social education (PSE); and in particular, music, art, oracy, personal growth and self-esteem might suffer further.

In spite of concerns and caveats clearly shared by many influential writers, examples of what is considered good practice are to be found in some relevant literature. Beare and Slaughter (1993), for example, offer a general summary which provides a working definition of *"good schools"* by suggesting that:

"Good schools have clear educational aimsGood schools target learning outcomes. They believe that every student can learn and is willing to learn. An attitude of success permeates the whole school ...A good school has a good principal who is an educator rather than merely a managerGood schoolsunderstand that their core task is educatingThere is a school-wide, systematic, regular assessment program (sic)Good schools maintain an orderly and safe environment for learning. In good schools, it is safe for a student to be curious, to play with ideas, to experiment and to make mistakes. Good schools do not burden either their students or their staff so heavily that time for enrichment, time to reflect, time to participate in recreation or artistic or professional or other educational pursuits are crowded out of the program (sic)Good schools are good places to live and work (in) for everybody."

(Beare and Slaughter, 1993, in Silver, 1994, p. 162)

In justifying their conclusions, and expressing their qualifications for coming to those conclusions, the authors add that:

"....we can recognise what good schooling is like, its characteristics isolated by more than twenty years of systematic research and inquiry."

(ibid., p. 162)

In seeking to extend this initial working definition of good schools to embrace notions of effectiveness and excellence, I cite Dalin *et al.* (1994), who, following their '*How Schools Improve*' study, categorize what constitutes "excellent" and "very good schools" and provide their evidence in terms of the factors studied.

They conclude that in excellent and very good schools:

"...the in-service training process is well implemented, regular, relevant and practical; the school works actively on the adaptation of the curriculum and the production of local teaching-learning materials....; the needed resources (buildings, classrooms, etc.) are available; the headmaster (sic) is motivated, plays a more active, co-ordinative and supportive rôle, is an instructional leader, works closely with teachers, encourages teachers and shares responsibilities; there is a team spirit in the school, teachers co-operate, student attitude toward the reform is positive, and teachers help each other with instructional problems; supervision is regular, shared between the supervisor and the headmaster (sic)...., and appears as a combination of pressure and support; the school experiences more success, more positive students, 'changes in kids'...., teacher co-operation, professional exchanges and extra resources (e.g. from the community); the school gets more support from the community; parents are more interested in the schooling of their children, the community gives material support and financial support..."

(Dalin *et al.* 1994, page xiv)

Comparison of the two definitions cited demonstrates a number of similar characteristics understood to be present in good, effective and excellent schools. However, there is a danger in accepting any research evidence as more than general indicators of "good", "effective" or "excellent" schools, since the geographical, cultural, social and political milieu in which individual schools operate differs. Beare *et al.* (1989) in recognising this phenomenon state:

"Each school is different, just as each child is different! Recent writings on organisational theory and administrative behaviour have emphasised that every organisation is unique; discussions about phenomenology, organisational individuality and uniqueness go well beyond the stereotypical positivist approach which suggests that all organisations can be fitted into typologies and that all of a type are fundamentally the same. The subtle

and subjective quality of personal and interpersonal values, attitudes, and actions, together with other contextual elements, contribute to the unique *gestalt* of a particular organisation, including a school.”

(Beare *et al.*, 1989)

These basic pointers about “*good, effective and excellent*” schools provide an introduction and background for the ensuing analysis of school organisation. The definitions quoted thus far fail to provide adequate material on which to found a programme of school improvement. In the context outlined above, a more rigorous approach to this study is sought within the discipline of organisational analysis.

2.3 Reading, Understanding and Analysing Schools as Organisations:

A wide-ranging, in-depth and systematic, but nevertheless partial and selective investigation of literature, focusing on the theory of organisations with particular reference to educational management perspectives, has revealed that there appears to be no single all-embracing theory of educational management. This understanding is supported by reference to Ribbins (1985) who states that:

“Students of educational management who turn to organisational theory for guidance in their attempt to understand and manage educational institutions will not find a single, universally applicable theory but a multiplicity of theoretical approaches each jealously guarded by a particular epistemic community”

(Ribbins, 1985, p. 223)

House (1981) argues that theories or “*perspectives*” in education are very different from scientific theories, since those adopted in the social sciences relate to changing situations, unlike the absolute truths about phenomena which are pursued by natural and physical scientists. Whilst acknowledging that the social scientist’s

perspective may be considered to have a weaker claim to knowledge than the scientific model, he claims that it is possible for several educational perspectives to be valid simultaneously, by stating that:

“Our understanding of knowledge utilisation processes is conceived not so much as a set of facts, findings or generalisations but rather as distinct perspectives which combine facts, values, and presuppositions into a complex screen through which knowledge utilisation is seen.... Through a particular screen one sees certain events, but one may see different scenes through a different screen.”

(House, 1981, p. 17)

In seeking to develop an alternative paradigm for analysing school organisation, it is also clear that some perspectives and insights have to be excluded. Silverman (1970), in acknowledging this limitation states that:

“All perspectives offer insights in exchange for limitations in approach.”

(Silverman, 1970, p. 44)

Bolman and Deal (1984, p. 4), for example, argue that perspectives or “frames” form the basis for managerial practice. They see frames as “*windows on the world*”, which filter out some things whilst allowing others through. They see frames as an aid to ordering the world and deciding what action to take.

In recent years “*metaphor*” has been used as a framing device in school management theory. Metaphors abound in any discussion of education, where images of “*gardens*”, “*empty vessels*” and “*production lines*” are commonplace. Educational management is similarly littered with such imagery, and during the past few decades theories of educational management have been founded on different and often contradictory metaphors such as “*machines*”, “*organisms*” and “*families*”.

Kuhn (1970) has suggested that scientific enquiry is implicitly regulated by paradigms and metaphors, which act to define and bind areas and methods of enquiry. This notion has been applied with enthusiasm by social scientists who have argued that there are various metaphors that are fundamental to the ways in which organisations are perceived. Such perceptions include *“functionalist”*, *“interpretive”*, *“radical humanist”* and *“radical structuralist”* perspectives (Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

It is also evident that schools as organisations, and the educational system at large, have been structured and managed according to organisational models taken from other sectors of society. Schools, like most other organisations, have therefore reflected a certain model of society as well as certain assumptions and theories about how organisations ought to function.

An explicit metaphor employed by Taylor (1947) and Fayol and Gulick (1937) is that of a *“machine”*. This view of management likens people to cogs in a machine, each being a small part amongst many, working together in order to achieve uncontested organisational goals.²

Follett (1924) and Metcalf and Urwick (1941), propose that some organisations are more like *“families”*. This human relations perspective became more widely accepted in the wake of the Hawthorne Studies³ (Roethlisberger and Dickson,

² A fuller discussion of mechanistic organisations follows later in this chapter.

³ The whole question of work motivation became an issue in the wake of the Hawthorne Studies, as did the relationship between individuals and groups. A new theory of organisation began to emerge built on the idea that individuals and groups, like biological organisms, operate most effectively only when their needs are satisfied. Maslow's (1954) *“Hierarchy of Needs”* is therefore of relevance to the Hawthorne Studies and is discussed later in this chapter.

1939). It also gave primacy to the smooth running of the organisation, and to the development and maintenance of dynamic relationships, with conflict seen as:

“a normal process by which socially valuable differences register themselves for the enrichment of all concerned.”

(Follett, 1924, p. 300)

A conception of an organisation combining both the mechanistic qualities of the machine metaphor and the human dimension of the ecosystem analogy is that of the social system. In the social systems metaphor, the school can be seen as an “*organism*” (similar to Gaia) which is characterised by:

“an interdependence of parts, a clearly defined population, differentiation from its environment, a complex network of social relations and **its own unique culture**”.

(Hoy and Miskel, 1982, p. 51, *my emphasis*)

Such organisations are considered to be “*synergistic*” and maintain themselves through interactions which result in adaptation to the prevailing external environment: the school becomes a living organism, greater than the sum of its parts. In applying such a metaphor, issues of power and influence are assumed rather than stated explicitly.

It is for the foregoing reason that “*political*” theorists (e.g. Greenfield, 1975) employ a “*jungle*” metaphor to describe and explain the chaotic reality of schools and the processes individuals use in order to satisfy their needs and to influence other members of the organisation. In this context Ball (1987) criticised the tidiness of previous writings about organisational management. Similarly, Balbridge (1971) adopted a conflict perspective to explain these sorts of processes which exist in school organisations.

An important element in the political metaphor lies in *“exchange theory”* where heads and their staffs use *“goods”* such as material resources, promotion, esteem, autonomy, lax application of the rules, support, opinion leadership, conformity and reputation (Hoyle, 1986, p. 72) in order to get their own way.

Handy (1978) and Handy and Aitken (1986) have been influential in applying a *“culture”* metaphor to organisations. Such writers have proposed that schools and other organisations possess their own definable cultures, and that it is the task of managers to manipulate culture in order to accomplish the aims of the organisation. It is a *“relativist”* assumption that there are many different possible cultures, and that different cultures are appropriate for different organisations and situations: cultural theorists tend to be *“contingency”*⁴ theorists. An implicit assumption of the *“culturalists”* is that there is no one best culture.

Stoll and Fink (1996) provide a link between culture and the aforementioned framing devices for analysing school organisations by suggesting that:

“Culture describes how things are and acts as a screen or lens through which the world is viewed. It defines reality for those within a social organisation, gives them support and identity and ‘forms a framework for occupational learning’ (Hargreaves 1994, p. 165).”

(Stoll and Fink, 1996, p. 82)

In emphasising the diversity of theories of management and organisation, Morgan (1986) both discusses the concept of organisational culture, and uses *“metaphors”* to explain *“the complex and paradoxical character of organisational life”* (Morgan, 1986, p. 13)

⁴ The contingency approach to management is discussed later in this chapter.

In his influential study, *Images of Organisation*, he proposes that effective managers and professionals in all walks of life, including those involved in the leadership and management of schools, have to become skilled in the art of *“reading”* situations they attempt to organise or manage. He suggests that this skill invariably develops as an intuitive process, learned through experience and natural ability; the process of reading and re-reading often occurring at an almost subconscious level. It is for this reason that effective managers and problem solvers are sometimes believed to be born rather than made, and appear to have some kind of mystical power to understand and transform situations in which they find themselves.

From the foregoing introduction to organisational analysis, it has been implicit that one of the most confusing aspects of educational management theory is in the use of different terms to explain similar phenomena. House (1981) prefers to use the term *“perspective”*, but also refers to *“screens”*, whilst Bolman and Deal (1984) choose *“frame”* and Morgan (1986) adopts the notion of *“metaphor”* in trying to extract meaning from a given situation. Boyd (1992, p. 506) adds to the confusion by referring to *“paradigms”*.⁵

2.4 Developing a New Paradigm for Understanding School Organisation:

Whilst not wishing to add to the confusion that already exists, the prolonged and tortuous process of trying to develop a theoretical framework in which to hang this study, has resulted in what I believe to be a novel way of viewing school organisation.

⁵ Paradigms are models or theories guiding, consciously or sub-consciously, our thinking about such things as organisations, leadership and policy. Boyd admits to using the term loosely.

This proposition has evolved as a result of making comparisons and contrasting examples in the literature, to which reference will be made in due course. In ploughing through reams of text, and in trying to make sense of them in the light of personal experience, both ontologically and epistemologically, an attempt has been made to produce an amalgam: to reduce the raw ingredients to an essence, with all of their inconsistencies and ambiguities intact, albeit in concentrated form.

The concept it is intended to explore is that of using different and particular *"lenses"* through which it is proposed to view aspects of school organisation. Both Morgan (1993, p. 5) and Stoll and Fink (1996, p. 82) provide fleeting references to *"lenses"* in this context, but do not develop the idea. Indeed, it was only having spent time in developing this paradigm that I stumbled upon the reference from Stoll and Fink previously cited, and Morgan's brief reference to *"lenses"*. This proposition is offered, therefore, in an attempt at developing the notion of *"frames"*, (Bolman and Deal, 1984), *"screens"* (House, 1981) and *"lenses"*, (Morgan 1993).

In trying to make sense of a bewildering array of literature, and in attempting to formulate and adopt a method with which to view Bishop Lindis School as an organisation, and provide pointers for action, I experienced a sense of confusion and disorientation. In comparing aspects of the literature with aspects of Bishop Lindis School as an organisation, I experienced an uncomfortable and frustrating sensation through having to constantly re-focus from text to aspects of the school, and *vice versa*.

The experience was not dissimilar to that experienced when, on growing older, it becomes increasingly difficult to focus on very close objects, through spectacles

that have been prescribed for short-sightedness. Eventually the day arrives when the problem can only be solved through the application of *"multifocal"* or *"varifocal"* lenses. My initial experience of using a pair of multifocal spectacles, was bewildering. However, by viewing different objects at different distances through different areas in the lenses, it becomes clear that in theory it is possible to focus on almost anything within the *"field of vision"*.

In practice, an initial array of distorted images bombard one's brain. The secret appears to lie in training the brain to eliminate all of the inconsistent and ambiguous information and data which initially come rushing in. After several weeks of frustrating and disorienting use, the new skill is accomplished, and life begins to take on a new meaning. Certainly, detail which previously had not been appreciated, comes clearly into focus. The relationship between objects in the foreground with the wider canvas of the background provides an entirely new perspective on the landscape as a whole. For example, constantly changing the focus of vision between written words on the page and those on a computer screen, is an art which can eventually be mastered.

The application of the analogy above to this study offers the possibility of a new approach in carrying out organisational analysis. A *"lens"* permits light passing through it to diverge or converge: it becomes wider or narrower by a process of *"refraction"*, or change in direction. Focusing in this way on school organisation permits a narrowing down or broadening out of the organisational area under scrutiny.

By extending the analogy further, it is possible to provide insights into some aspects of organisational analysis by also adopting the notion of a *"prism"* as a conceptual tool. Light passing through a prism, separates into its basic colours: the colours of the rainbow, known as the *"spectrum"*. By extending this analogy to viewing school organisation, it would appear possible to focus on particular components of the spectrum representing an aspect of school organisation, in order that they might be analysed in more detail.

An amalgam of knowledge accrued from appropriate literature searches, together with the application of the process outlined above, suggests that aspects of school organisation might thus be viewed through one of four multifocal lenses:

- an *"autocratic lens"*, which permits events to be viewed and analysed within a field of vision encompassing *"mechanistic-person"* perspectives;
- a *"bureaucratic lens"*, which focuses on events to be viewed and analysed within a field of vision encompassing *"mechanistic-rôle"* perspectives;
- an *"adhocratic lens"*,⁶ which focuses on events to be viewed and analysed in a field of vision encompassing *"organic-rôle"* perspectives; and
- a *"reticular-democratic lens"*, which focuses on events to be viewed and analysed within a field of vision encompassing *"organic-person"* perspectives.

The terms used above relate directly to those of autocracy, bureaucracy, adhocracy and reticulocracy as used by Elliott-Kemp and Elliott-Kemp (1992, p. 84-85). The first three terms are in general use, but the last, *"reticulocracy"* is the exception. In this study the term *"reticular-democracy"* is substituted in describing a particular type of democracy characterised by networks. In such networks, self-confidence, independence, self-management, non-hierarchical and loose, flexible structures,

⁶ The term *"adhocracy"* has previously been used by Toffler (1971), Mintzberg (1983) and Quinn and McGrath (1985).

together with informal and shared leadership abound. In this study, by extending the notion of refraction, *"prisms"* through which aspects of an organisation might be separated into their component parts or *"spectrum"* are, specifically, a *"cultural prism"* and a *"political prism"*.

Originality is not claimed for ideologies, perspectives, frames, metaphors or paradigms used in the ensuing discussion, which acknowledges the ideas of others through appropriate references. It is believed, however, that the approach to be adopted: that of using cultural and political *"prisms"* and autocratic, bureaucratic, adhocratic, and reticular-democratic *"lenses"*, (with due acknowledgement to Morgan, 1993 p. 5; and Stoll and Fink, 1996, p. 82) is a novel development of, and deviation from prevailing research practice.

Through the application of each of the aforementioned *"prisms"* and *"lenses"* it is possible to explore ways of thinking about school organisation, based on the premise that ideas and concepts thus generated might help in understanding schools in specific settings. I aim to demonstrate how this might be done through the proposed case study of Bishop Lindis School.

It is also hoped to develop a two-fold approach that uses insights generated by different *"prisms"* and *"lenses"* to produce diagnostic readings of situations being analysed, and then moves to a critical evaluation of how various insights relate (based on Morgan's paradigm, 1986 p. 16). In this way it is expected that the general idea of viewing and reading school organisation might be developed as a more concrete method of analysis that permits an exploration of the complexity of school life in a very practical manner.

Finally, it is anticipated, through the major influence of Morgan, to focus on the possibility of developing an approach to school organisation that builds on the *"transformative potential"* of the ideas and analysis developed in the course of this research.

The *"prisms"* and *"lenses"* which will be discussed, have been selected to illustrate a broad range of ideas and perspectives, but, of course, do not exhaust all possibilities. It is important to appreciate, and this has provided a continuous challenge to me, that the mode of analysis developed in this study, as a result of combining the work of some influential writers in the field, rests in a way of thinking, rather than in the mechanistic application of a small set of clearly defined analytical frameworks.

Whilst this study seeks to focus through the application of a number of *"prisms"* and *"lenses"* that appear to have relevance for understanding a wide range of school situations, there are probably many others that might produce their own special insight. Effective organisational analysis, it seems, must always remain open to this possibility.

In engaging in the management of educational innovation, it becomes clear that we live in a world that is rapidly changing and becoming increasingly complex. Unfortunately, most educational practitioners' thinking rarely matches this complexity. Practitioners often persuade themselves that everything is more simple than it actually is, dealing with complexity by presuming that it does not really exist.

The approach to the organisational analysis of Bishop Lindis School being developed in this study aims, to some extent, to stand against this general trend and allies itself with the stance adopted by Morgan, in the belief that **school organisations are generally complex, inconsistent, ambiguous, and paradoxical.**

The challenge is in learning how to deal with complexity. The method of analysis offered here points to a way in which it is hoped to take up this challenge by engaging the most valuable asset available to the qualitative practitioner researcher: the capacity for critical thinking.

It is anticipated that by building on the use of "*prisms*" and "*lenses*" as analytical tools, it will be possible to enhance my personal capacity for creative yet disciplined thought, in a way that permits a grasp of the multifaceted character of organisational life at Bishop Lindis School. In doing so, it is hoped that new ways of organizing the school and new ways of approaching and addressing organisational problems within it will become established.

Realistically, any approach to the organisational analysis of schools must start from the premise that school organisations can be many things at one and the same time. There are, therefore, many more ways of understanding school organisation, and of reading the languages of education management than have been cited hitherto, or are subsequently considered in the research process

On taking a closer look at processes used, following certain pointers provided by Morgan (1986), it is possible to discern that the apparent *mystique and power*

involved in the process of reading organisations, are usually based on an ability to develop deep appreciations of situations being addressed. Morgan claims that all skilled practitioners, presumably including those in an educational setting, are able to develop such expertise in reading situations with various scenarios in mind, and of forging actions appropriate to their discoveries.

In seeking to expand this ability, Morgan supports Bennett *et al.*, (1992, p. 4) in the notion of being both eclectic and pragmatic, and sees it as important to develop the capacity to remain open and flexible, suspending immediate judgements until more comprehensive understandings of situations emerge. New insights can arise as skilled practitioners read situations from new perspectives, and wide and varied interpretations can create wide and varied possibilities for subsequent action.

It seems reasonable to conclude, and Morgan supports the notion, that less effective managers and problem solvers are more prone to interpreting situations from a fixed standpoint. They are more likely to encounter obstacles they cannot surmount. Their actions and behaviours can be rigid, inflexible and a source of conflict.

Morgan states that there is a close relationship between the process of reading organisational life and the process known as "*organisational analysis*". The formal analysis and diagnosis of organisations, like the process of reading, he suggests, rest in applying some kind of theory to situations being considered.

It follows that theories, like readings, are interpretations of reality, and it appears to be possible to theorise about or “read” situations in attempting to formulate images and explanations that help make sense of their fundamental nature. An effective analysis, like an effective reading, chiefly depends on being able to do this in ways that take account of rival theories or explanations, rather than being committed to fixed and immovable points of view.

Morgan (1986, p. 12) explores and develops the art of reading and understanding organisations:

- firstly by demonstrating that conventional ideas about organisation and management build on a small number of “*taken-for-granted*” images, especially mechanical and biological ones (the mechanistic and organic models);
- secondly, by exploring these and a number of alternative images, he demonstrates how to create new ways of thinking about organisation;
- thirdly, he demonstrates how this general method of analysis can be used as a practical tool for diagnosing organisational problems, and for the management and design of organisations more generally;
- finally, he explores the implications raised by this kind of analysis.

His basic premise is that theories and explanations of organisational life are based on metaphors that lead to seeing and understanding organisations in distinctive, albeit partial ways.

Beare *et al.* (1989) see such metaphors as “*analogies*” and observe that our language is full of them. They also see metaphor as a way of making sense of the world, by comparing one thing with another, by classifying and by linking qualities. Values that are applied to a given situation are therefore most powerfully revealed by means of the comparisons that are made. One way to ascertain the nature of core values and beliefs underpinning such theories is through focusing on what

Beare *et al.* (1989, p. 64) call “*governing metaphors*”. The following table, figure 2.1, offers a few examples of such metaphors:

School as:	Student as:	Teacher as:
Family	Child	Parent
Nest	Brood	Mother Hen
Body	Member	Member
Prison	Prisoner	Warder
Church	Laity	Priest
Welfare State	Client	Social Worker
Army	Troops	Officer
Battle Ground	Combatant	Combatant
Sport	Competitor	Official
Factory	Worker	Manager
Market	Customer	Salesperson
Society	Citizen	Politician
Journey	Traveller	Guide

Figure 2.1: Beare *et al.* “Governing Metaphors” (Clark, 1996, p. 118)

That most schools are governed by a conglomeration of metaphors, and are often the scene of, “*a series of competing (management) discourses*” (Davies, 1994, p. 4) is not surprising. What is surprising is how often such “*governing metaphors*” are taken-for-granted, and yet how powerful they can be in shaping the culture of individual schools.

Metaphor can be regarded merely as a device for embellishing discourse, but Morgan sees its significance as greater than this. He sees the use of metaphor as implying a way of thinking and a way of seeing that pervade how we understand our world generally. This notion is entirely congruent with the viewpoint expressed by Beare *et al.* (1989). Morgan suggests that research in a wide variety of fields, including education, has demonstrated that metaphor exerts a formative influence on science, on our language and on how we think, as well as on how we express ourselves on a day-to-day basis. He states that:

"We use metaphor whenever we attempt to understand one element of experience in terms of another. Thus, metaphor proceeds through implicit or explicit assertions that A is (or is like) B. When we say 'the man is a lion' we use the image of a lion to draw attention to the lion-like aspects of the man. The metaphor frames our understanding of the man in a distinctive yet partial way.

One of the interesting aspects of metaphor rests in the fact that it always produces this kind of one-sided insight. In highlighting certain interpretations it tends to force others into a background rôle. Thus in drawing attention to the lion-like bravery, strength, or ferocity of the man, the metaphor glosses (over) the fact that the same person may well also be a chauvinist pig, a devil, a saint, a bore, or a recluse. Our ability to achieve a comprehensive "reading" of the man depends on an ability to see how these different aspects of the person may coexist in a complementary or even a paradoxical way."

(Morgan, 1986, p. 13)

It is believed that this kind of thinking has relevance for understanding the organisation and management of schools. School organisations are complex and paradoxical phenomena that can be understood in many different ways, and many of the ideas that are taken-for-granted about organisations in general are metaphorical, even though initially they may not be recognized as such. For example, schools are sometimes referred to as "*well oiled machines*" which operate smoothly and efficiently, designed to achieve predetermined goals and objectives. As a result of this kind of thinking some schools are organised and managed in a "*mechanistic*" way, forcing their human qualities into the background.

By using different metaphors to understand the complex and paradoxical character of organisational life, it is possible to manage and design school organisations in ways that were not thought possible before. This is illustrated by exploring implications of some of Morgan's different metaphors for thinking about the nature of organisation, and by adapting them in using "*lenses*" through which various

aspects of school organisation are viewed and “read”. Whilst most of these lenses tap familiar ways of thinking, others help in the development of novel insights and perspectives, most of which are influenced by Morgan’s metaphors.

Beare *et al.* argue that metaphors are neither consciously chosen, nor is the significance of their inherent symbolism always clearly understood. Importantly, they suggest, teachers use metaphors too loosely to describe teaching, learning, individual students and the school. They claim that:

“If students are not to be confused or cowed by the school’s approach to learning, there ought to be some commonality among the metaphors used in the school, as well as some agreement about the metaphors which are condoned or favoured and those which are not to be used.”

(Beare *et al.*, 1989, p. 188)

2.5 A “Cultural Prism” applied to School Organisation:

Reference to a number of influential authors, some of whom have developed alternative paradigms for analysing school organisation, has informed an understanding of schools as cultures.

A basic assumption from which much theory emanates is that the organisation of each school is different from every other school, and that schools, as a group, are different from all other kinds of organisation. Put another way, the organisational culture of individual schools might be viewed as “*the way we do things around here*” (Deal and Kennedy, 1983, in Stoll and Fink, 1996, p. 81). This assumption appears to be both natural and uncontested since school organisations can be viewed as living entities, “*each with its own history, traditions and environment and its own ability to shape its destiny*” (Handy and Aitken, 1986, p. 83).

Handy and Aitken are also keen to point out that:

"It would be a very dull and uncreative world if there was only one way to design and run a school organisation, just as it would be a dull and uncreative world if all families were exactly the same. Nevertheless, there are things that are true of all families, and, in spite of their differences, there are some truths and theories that can be applied to all organisations, be they schools, banks or hospitals."

(ibid. p. 83)

They also claim (p. 86) that it is the recognition of the essential "*rightness of differences*" in organisations that has led to the development of the idea of organisational cultures.⁷ For example, they suggest that in some school organisations there are clear hierarchical lines of communication, whilst in others leadership seems more diffuse. Teachers might have three or four line-managers or might work in a group led by one of their subordinates. In some schools they note that everything might appear chaotic; whilst in others calm and ordered. They also note that aspects most prized in one school, for example, music, or good sports results, might be of a lower order in another. Some schools, they suggest, will claim that staff never leave them, whilst others thrive on a constant change of personnel.

Do teachers speak their minds or keep their mouths shut; work as hard as they can or as little as they can? Are they motivated by the work itself, or by the security of belonging to a good school? Do they feel that they have "*bosses*" or only "*colleagues*"? Handy and Aitken suggest that it all depends on the culture of the school.

⁷ According to the Chambers Dictionary, "culture" is the, "*total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge, which constitute the shared bases of social action*" and "*the total range of ideas and activities of a group of people with shared traditions which are transmitted and reinforced by members of a group*".

A fourfold classification of cultures or *"ideologies"* was first outlined by Harrison (1972), although earlier organisational theorists had developed two-sided models, e.g. organic and mechanistic, or calculative and coercive. Harrison's classification has been developed by Handy and Aitken (1986) into a more comprehensive description of four cultural types, with indications of when and where each culture might thrive and how the four types might blend together to form each individual organisation's cultural mix.

In spite of work on cultures having been based on business organisations, an exploratory study by Handy suggests that all four cultures can be observed in schools; that each school has its own mix; and that schools are affected by the same cultural dilemmas that also affect other organisations.

In considering Handy's four cultures: *"club"*, *"rôle"*, *"task (or achievement)"*, and *"person (or support or existential)"*,⁸ it is emphasised that no one culture is wholly good or wholly bad. Each culture is good in the right place. Each is good for some things and less good for others. A school's culture which supports a long period of stability, for example, may be entirely inappropriate in a sustained period of turbulent change.⁹

In applying a cultural prism to school organisation it becomes clear that no schools have only one culture and that like other organisations, schools are a mix of a

⁸ Earlier works by Harrison (1972) and Handy (1978) spoke of task and existential cultures instead of achievement and person (support) cultures.

⁹ This notion is understood to be central to this thesis because in aiming to change the culture of the school it was intended to improve school effectiveness in the light of the prevailing social, political and cultural milieu in the rapidly changing, post-modern, technological, global environment in which the school operated.

number of them. What makes each school different is the mix that is prevalent. What makes schools “*good, effective or successful*” lies in being able to apply the right mix at the right time.¹⁰

In similar vein to Handy and Aitken, Elliott-Kemp and Elliott-Kemp (1992), also claim that all organisations are a combination of four basic, different but related, elements. The Elliott-Kemps’ elements are “*person-control*”, “*job-control*”, “*job-freedom*” and “*person-freedom*”, and they also maintain that schools differ from each other, and from themselves over time, in the relative proportions of each element present (their cultural mix).

The purpose of the Elliott-Kemps’ conceptual framework is to map specific parameters of school organisation and to facilitate a process of conceptualising, designing or developing organisations which reflect a particular set of values appropriate to a period of rapid social and technological change. The instrument is built around two fundamental polarities in organisational development:

- “the balance or imbalance between freedom and control: a polarity which tends to reflect the prime issue in organisational behaviour;
- the amount of emphasis on the person as a unique individual as distinct from an emphasis on the job or rôle that the individual performs.”

(Elliott-Kemp and Elliott-Kemp, 1992, p. 84)

Since schools have a mix of all four elements, they differ from each other in the relative proportions of each element present in them. In using this instrument, it is

¹⁰ This notion is also understood to be central to this thesis and does not imply any criticism of the cultural mix prevalent at the school prior to embarking upon the programme of change, constituting the four cycles of innovation under scrutiny in this research.

possible to construct a pictorial profile, or map, of how a school is perceived by its members.

The characteristics of *“the four elements in organisational life”*¹¹ are described in detail in the following table, figure 2.2. Each school is understood to contain some characteristics in each of the four quadrants. An *“organisational shape and position”* can be mapped, indicating the organisational mix of the particular school under scrutiny at any given time.

More importantly, if the exercise of mapping school organisation is repeated following a lapse in time, it is possible to both demonstrate and illustrate a change in the organisational character or culture of the particular school. In other words, it is possible to demonstrate a cultural shift. The purpose of this instrument in mapping some important parameters of organisations is to inform and facilitate the process of conceptualising, developing and designing school organisations which reflect a set of values which are deemed appropriate to the age of rapid technological and social change in which we live.

¹¹This conceptual framework was used in part of a project constituting a “Self-Initiated Group Managed Action” programme at Sheffield City Polytechnic (1992).

Person control

Strong, decisive leadership.
Close supervision, tight control.
Competitive climate.
Security stemming from leader's ability to establish clear policy directives and to handle major problems.
Emphasis on loyalty to leader.
Ask the boss before making a decision.
Danger of dependency on leader(s).

Person Freedom

High independence and self-reliance.
Mastery of informal channels of communication (the grapevine).
Shared leadership without reliance on formal structures.
Respect based on expertise or skills.
Security stemming from confidence in self and colleagues.
Little importance attached to status, rank or title.
Contempt for red tape or bureaucratic inertia.
More enthusiasm for experiment and innovation than for permanence and stability.
Tell others, including boss, after making decision.

Job control

Preference for written communication.
Emphasis on hierarchy and status derived from position in the hierarchy.
Clear guidelines, standing instructions and responsibilities.
Standard procedures laid down for common problems.
Security stemming from the orderly framework provided.
Red-tape, routine procedures often too ponderous or time-consuming.
May be rigid rather than adaptable.
Emphasis on loyalty to the system and adherence to policy and regulations.
Rôles carefully drawn up (e.g. job descriptions emphasised).
Tendency to "go by the book".
Consult the rules before making a decision.

Job freedom

Collaborative ethic, emphasis on teamwork.
Project groupings cut across formal department boundaries.
Willingness to accept shared leadership.
Loyalty to team and colleagues.
Security stemming from strong team spirit.
Respect based on contribution to achieving group tasks or goals.
Adaptable to change and new challenges.
Consult team before making a decision.

Figure 2.2 The Four Elements in Organisational Life
(Elliott-Kemp and Elliott-Kemp, 1992, p. 82)

The Elliot-Kemps' classifications of person-control, job-control, job-freedom and person-freedom equate to the notions of "autocracy", "bureaucracy", "adhocracy" and "reticulocracy" respectively. They claim that all school organisations can be seen as consisting of a distinctive blend of these four basic elements: the "autocratic", the "bureaucratic", the temporary systems (or "adhocratic"), and networks (or "reticulocratic").

The following diagram, figure 2.3, which can be superimposed on figure 2.2, provides some key characteristics of each of the four elements in the conceptual framework:

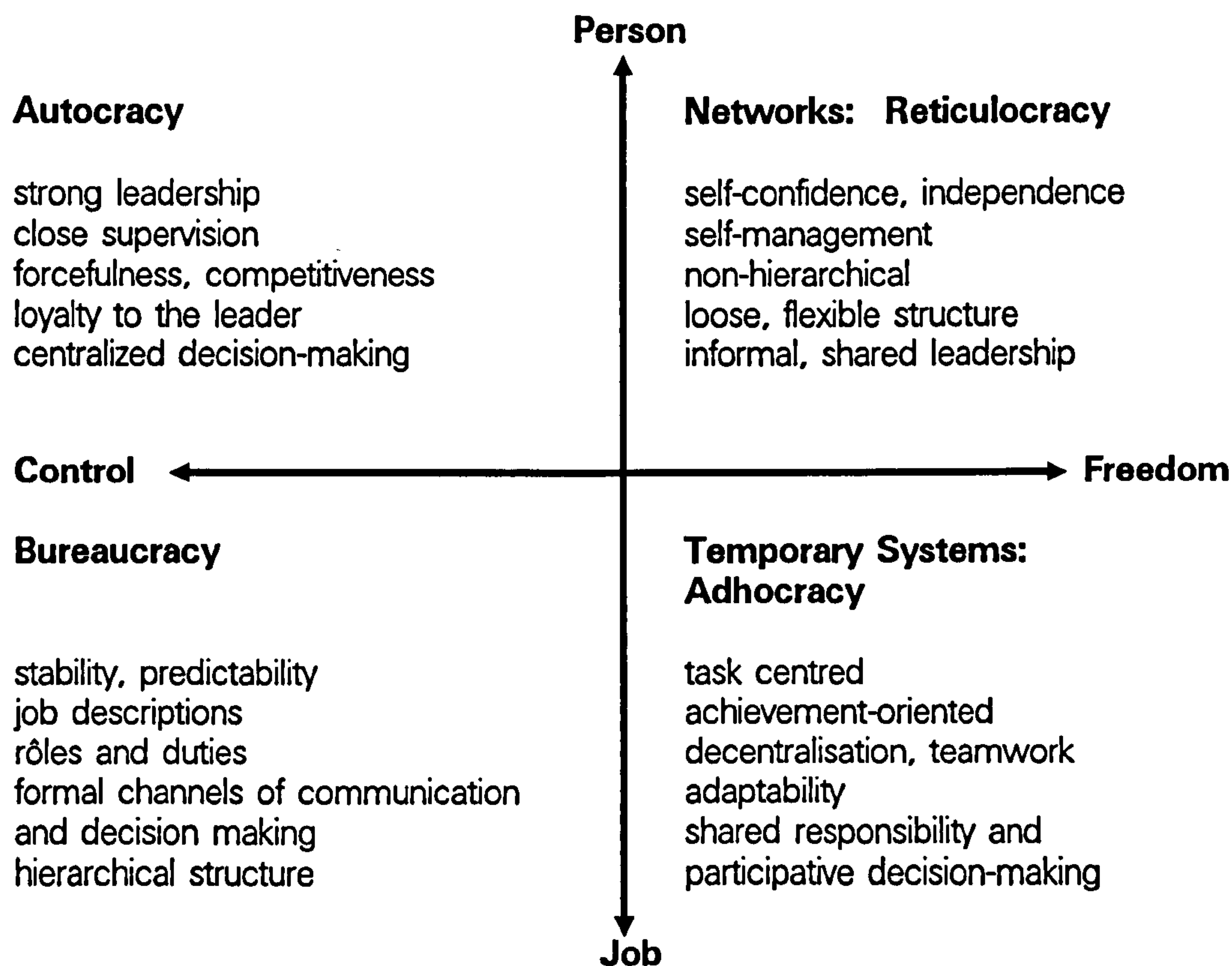


Figure 2.3 Characteristic Aspects or Qualities Emphasised in each of the Four Elements. (J. and N. Elliott-Kemp, 1992)

It is understood from the foregoing examples that school cultures might be categorised, analysed and changed. Traditionally, the discipline of education management has comprised the study of such categories, analyses and changes. In contrast to this notion, Davies (1994) challenges the traditional wisdom, and it is in the following context that an alternative theoretical framework for this study has developed further. Davies states that:

“Education Management is not a discipline, but a collection of languages, **a collection of different ways of seeing.** ...Before managing schools in different directions, one has to manage meaning”.

(Davies, 1994, p. 5, *my emphasis*)

Influential authors in the prevailing educational literature have explored the notion that school organisations might be viewed as cultures. In applying a “*cultural prism*”, organisation might thus be seen to reside in the ideas, values, norms, rituals, and beliefs that sustain schools as “*socially constructed*” realities. This focus provides a way of managing and designing school organisations through the values, beliefs and other patterns of shared meaning that guide school life.

Applying a cultural prism to aspects of school organisation might also contribute to an understanding of organisational change. Traditionally, the change process has been conceptualised as a problem of changing technologies, structures, and the abilities and motivations of teachers. Effective change has also been seen to depend on changes in the images and values that guide action. However, an understanding of schools as cultures whilst providing many crucial insights is unlikely to provide an easy recipe for solving problems of leadership in general, and the problems of change in school organisation and culture in particular.

When applying a cultural prism, determining the culture of the school is prone to subjective judgement. It should be understood, however, that the predominant measuring instrument in qualitative research, of necessity, is the researcher himself or herself.¹² The quest for theory might be viewed as an attempt at authenticating this process.

Beare *et al.* (1989, p. 186) suggest that school culture is mediated **in a tangible way** firstly, through conceptual or verbal manifestations; secondly, through visual or material manifestations and symbolism; and thirdly, through behavioural manifestations. Before an attempt can be made to change or reshape the symbols and manifestations that express what a school stands for, it is essential that meaning is ascribed to them and that thereby they are understood as fully as possible. The following diagram, figure 2.4, illustrates one way in which a cultural prism might thus be applied to a school organisation, thereby producing a spectrum of conceptual or verbal manifestations of school culture:

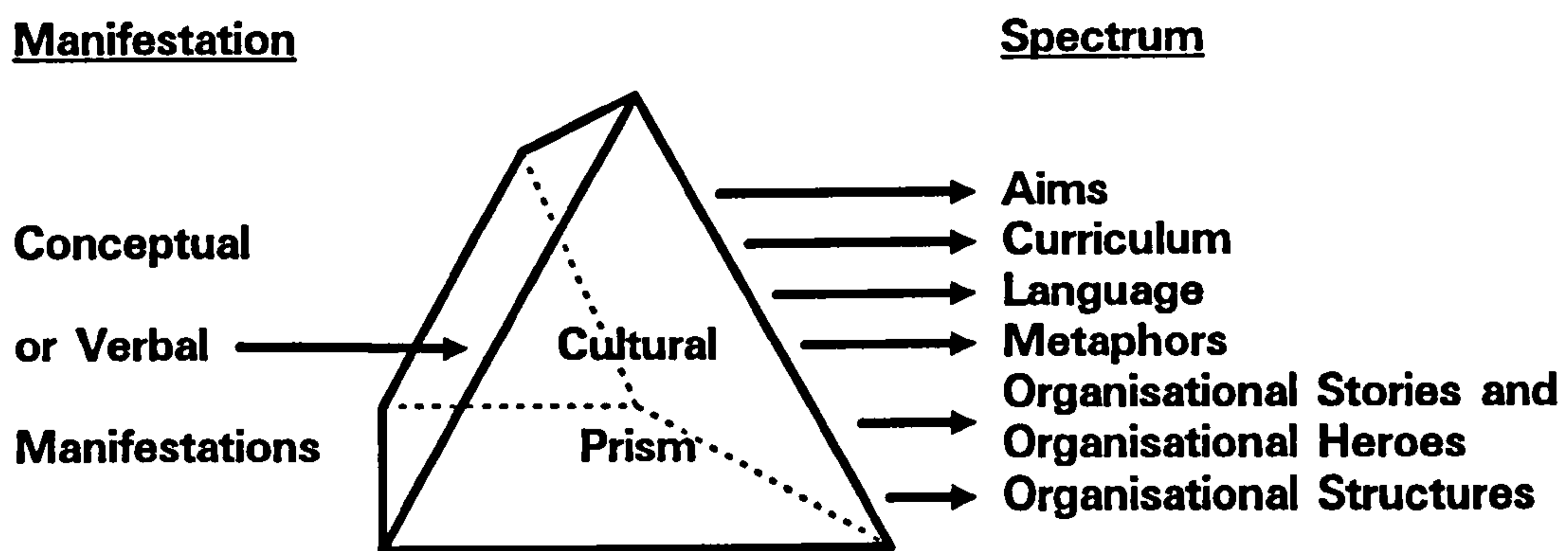


Figure 2.4 A Spectrum of Conceptual or Verbal Manifestations

¹² This will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Three: The Methodological Framework of the Research.

Symbolic and expressive manifestations of school culture constituting the resulting spectrum are those which appear in the written documents of the school, or are communicated in words amongst the members of the school community. The aims, curriculum, language, metaphors, organisational stories, organisational heroes and organisational structures are identified by Beare *et al.*, (ibid., pp. 186-192) as constituting such verbal or conceptual manifestations.

Similarly, they claim that the visual, material or symbolic manifestations of school culture are mediated through the facilities and equipment of the school together with its artefacts and memorabilia, its crest and mottoes, and its uniforms.

These manifestations are represented in the following diagram, figure 2.5, as the result of applying a cultural prism with a different focus and resulting in a different spectrum:

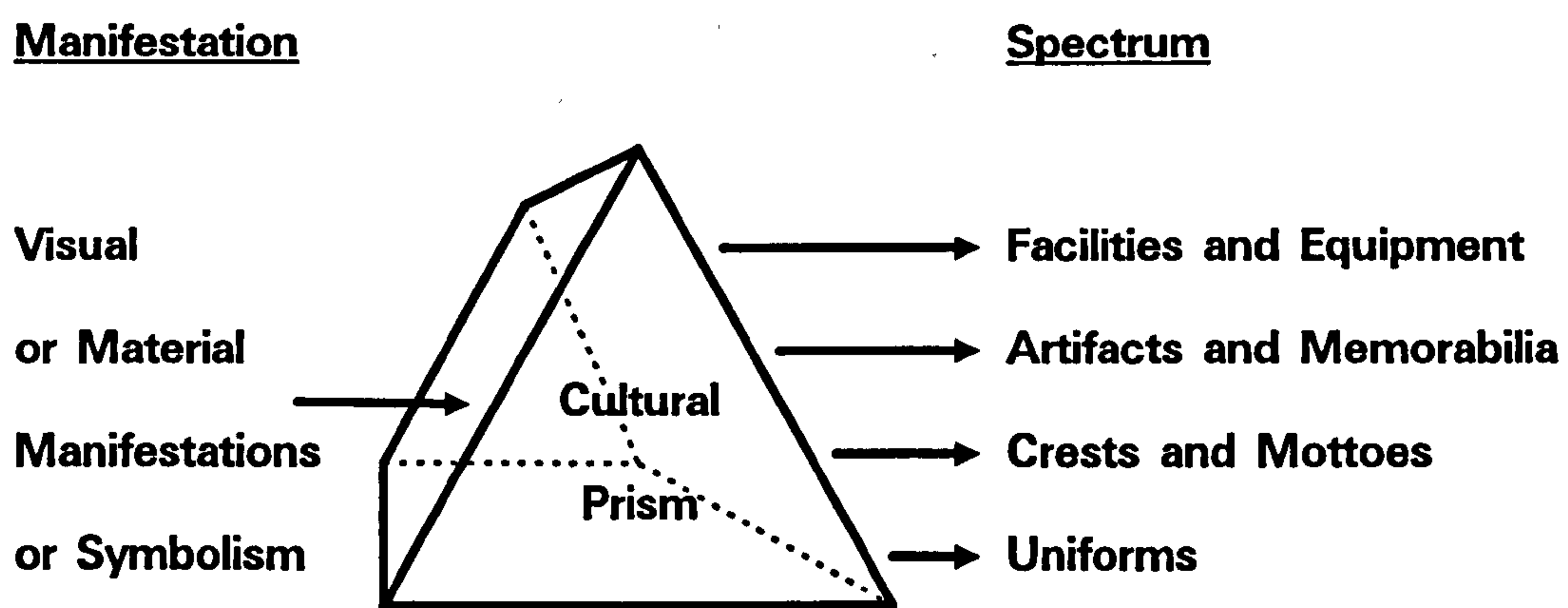


Figure 2.5 A Spectrum of Visual, Material or Symbolic Manifestations

In similarly applying a cultural prism to the behavioural aspects of school culture it is possible to discover that *“the enacted expressions of culture can be so intrinsic*

to the operation of the school that we tend to view them as routine or purely functional and overlook their collective impact" (ibid., p. 195). In applying this prism to school organisation, it is important to discern enactments which are deliberately contrived, and to explore their impact accordingly.

The following diagram, figure 2.6, illustrates that in applying a cultural prism to behavioural manifestations of school organisation, the resulting spectrum comprises the rituals and ceremonies of the school, together with its teaching and learning (styles), its rules, regulations, rewards and sanctions, and its parents and community (contributions and relationships):

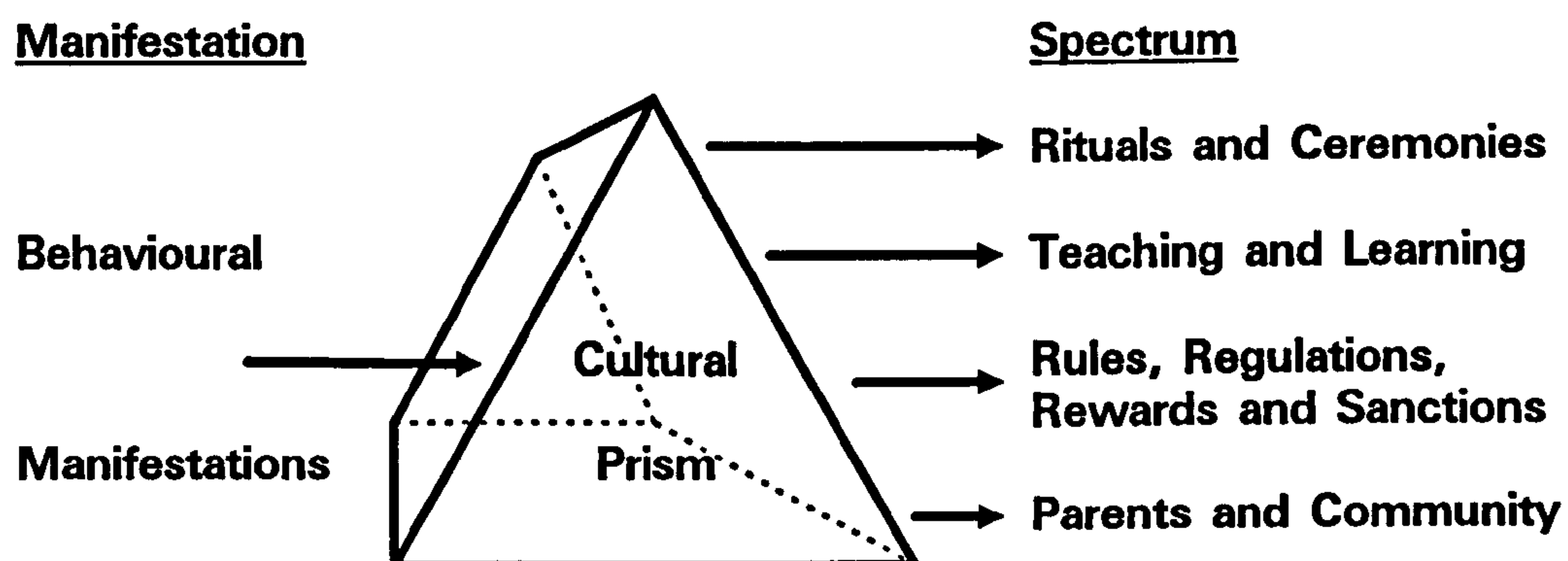


Figure 2.6 A Spectrum of Behavioural Manifestations

In applying these particular analytical instruments, the school's culture might be viewed as the *"gestalt"*¹³ of the verbal, visual and behavioural manifestations of its organisation. That a school's culture is capable of modification and transformation *"through the intentional manipulation of emphases and weightings of the various elements, which produce the observable differences among schools"*, (ibid., p. 199) is important to this thesis.

¹³ The organised whole which is seen as greater than the sum of its parts.

In summary, Beare *et al.* see:

“a co-ordinated culture developing from a dynamic combination of strong, imaginative and **transforming leadership** within a forward looking school community, in which consistent values, philosophy and ideology permeate all decision making.”

(*ibid.*, p. 199, *my emphasis*)

2.6 A “Political Prism” applied to School Organisation:

In making a link between school culture and the organisational micro-politics of schools, micro-political activity is seen to be important in the light of the following quotation from Beare *et al.*, who claim that:

“a strong culture may be contrary to the officially articulated philosophy and values of the school and, in such a circumstance, a kind of counter-culture will develop which will be at variance with the official philosophy and values”.

(*ibid.*, pp. 199-200)

In such circumstances it is understood that significant cultural confusion can result for members of the school community, and if not countered, can become the predominant school culture. This situation might indicate the absence of strong formal leadership, and the presence of strong informal leadership. It is important, therefore, that the rôle of the head, the formal leader in developing school culture, is understood to be potentially and fundamentally very powerful, and yet vulnerable.

The following categorisation of leadership is therefore believed to be relevant. It is congruent with the foregoing discussion of organisational analysis and culture, and also provides an additional analytical tool. Blase and Anderson (1995) categorise leadership according to the following matrix which directly relates to, and is

congruent with the Elliott-Kemps' four elements in organisational life (Figures 2.2 and 2.3):

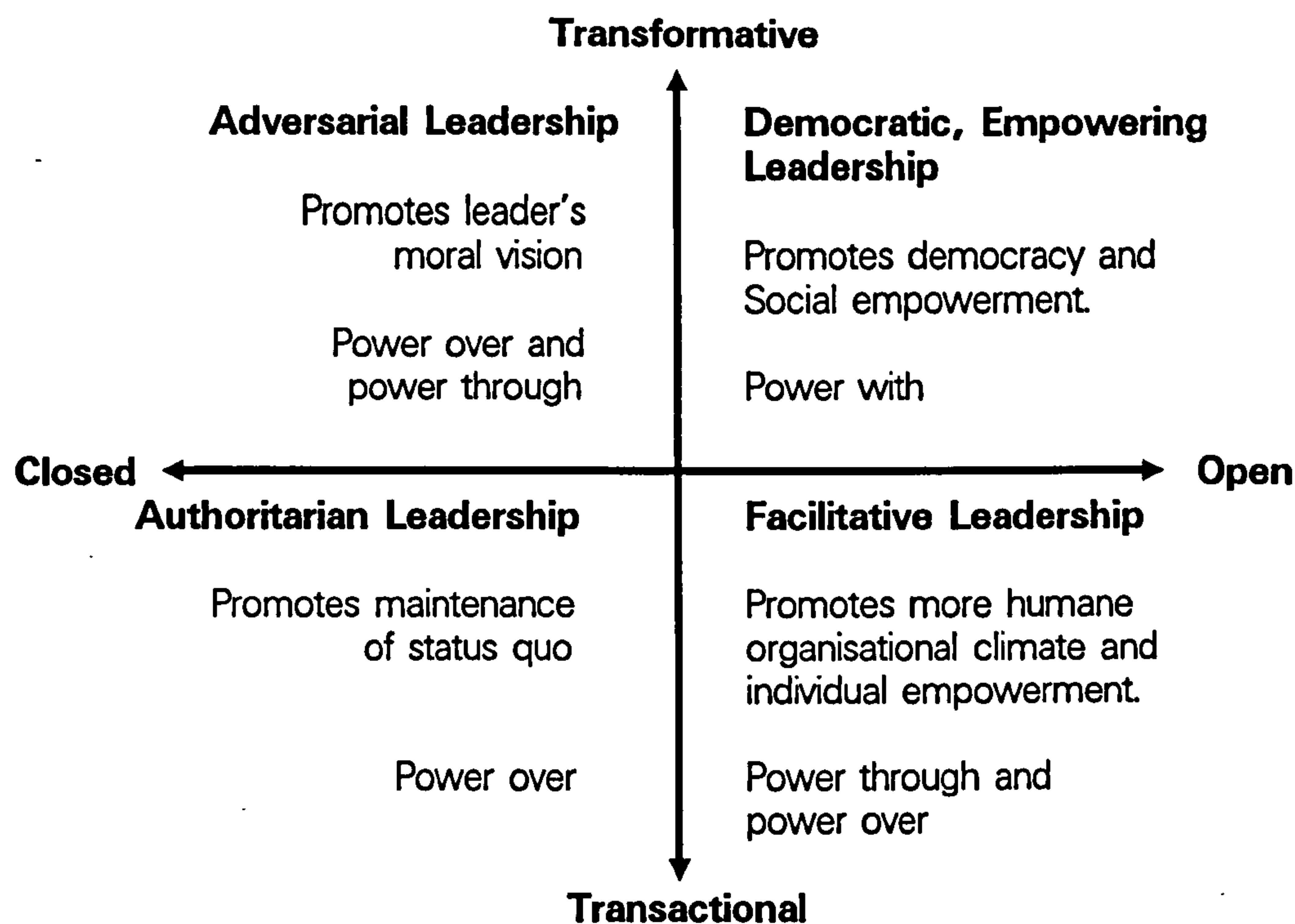


Figure 2.7: Micro-political leadership matrix (Blase and Anderson, 1995, p. 18)

In seeking to explain the foregoing micro-political leadership matrix, Blase and Anderson provide some definitions of the terms used. The horizontal axis represents a continuum, or range of leadership styles. The terms open and closed indicate ends on a continuum which represent degrees of closedness or openness. It is recognised, by Blase and Anderson, that although no leader possesses characteristics of only one style, the micro-political data suggest that most leaders have a dominant one.

At one extreme of the continuum, the open style describes leadership as characterised by a willingness to share power. Open leaders are also

characterised by teachers as more honest, communicative, participatory and collegiate than closed leaders. At the other extreme of the continuum, the closed style describes a leadership style characterised by an unwillingness to share power. Closed leaders are also characterised as less accessible, less supportive, more defensive, more egocentric and more insecure than open leaders.

The vertical axis represents another continuum, or range of leadership approaches. The terms transactional and transformative refer to ends on this continuum which represent the degree to which leaders are transactional or transformative with regard to the goals and direction of the organisation.

At one extreme of the continuum transactional leadership is seen to be based largely on exchange relationships between leaders and followers. In return for effort, productivity and loyalty, leaders offer tangible and intangible rewards to followers. This approach is oriented to creating an environment that remains essentially static and supportive to the status quo.

At the other extreme of the continuum, transformative leadership is perceived as involving a relationship oriented towards fundamental change, the object of which is the raising of the consciousness of leader and follower alike. Transformative leadership is thus concerned largely with end values.

With regard to power relations inherent in the analysis, *"power over"* leaders achieve goals through their control of resources, persuasiveness, and hierarchical position over followers. The power-over approach is strongly influenced by the bureaucratic tradition. Power is exercised *over* followers.

"Power through" leaders achieve their goals through the motivation and mobilisation of followers. The power-through approach is strongly influenced by the human relations and organisational development traditions. Power is exercised *through* followers.

By contrast with the previously cited examples, *"power with"* goals are achieved through the collaboration of leaders and followers. Leadership and followership may shift depending on the issue. The power-with approach is strongly influenced by feminist, participatory and workplace democracy traditions. Power is exercised *with* followers. (Blase and Anderson, 1995, p. xiii)

In the foregoing context, and in applying a *"political prism"* to aspects of school organisation, it is proposed to focus on the resulting spectrum of interests, conflicts, and power plays that shape school activity. In applying this device, it is planned to explore the nature of school organisation as a system of government drawing on various political principles to legitimize different kinds of rule.

Influential authors who have employed similar methods of analysis include Morgan (1986), Hoyle (1986), Blase (1991), Blase and Anderson (1995) and Ball (1987). Different perspectives are represented within this collection of authors, and comparisons and contrasts can be made in studying the following quotations, which may be seen to be representative of prevailing literature.

An introduction to the notion of the micro-political perspective can be gained from the following quotation from Blase (1991) who states that:

"The micro-political perspective on organisation provides a valuable and potent approach to understanding the woof and warp of the fabric of day-to-day life in schools. This perspective highlights the fundamentals of human behaviour and purpose.

Micro-politics is about power and how people use it to influence others and protect themselves. It is about conflict and how people compete with each other to get what they want. It is about co-operation and how people build support among themselves to achieve their ends. It is about what people in all social settings think about and have strong feelings about, but what is often unspoken and not easily observed.

The micro-political perspective presents practising administrators and scholars alike with fresh and provocative ways to think about human behaviour in schools."

(Blase, 1991, pp. 1-2, *my emphasis*.)

Comparison of the "*prism*" approach adopted in this study may be made with that of Hoyle, in which he seeks to encapsulate the essence of micro-politics. The notion of a political continuum may be seen to relate to, and to some extent equate with the concept of a political spectrum. Hoyle suggests that:

"Micro-politics is best perceived as a continuum, one end of which is virtually indistinguishable from conventional management procedures but from which it diverges on a number of dimensions - interest, interest sets, power, strategies, and legitimacy - to the point where it constitutes almost a separate organisational world of illegitimate, self-interested manipulation."

(Hoyle, 1986, p. 126)

In the following quotation Ball provides a different perspective on micro-politics in which he stresses group-level analysis and conflict dynamics by stating:

"I take schools, in common with virtually all other social organisations, to be "*arenas of struggle*"; to be riven with actual or potential conflict between members; to be poorly co-ordinated; to be ideologically diverse."

(Ball, 1987, p. 19)

Blase, as a development of the extract previously quoted, also provides the following more comprehensive definition of micro-politics within school organisations, in which he states that:

“Micro-politics refers to the use of formal and informal power by individuals and groups to achieve their goals in organisation. In large part, political actions result from perceived differences between individuals and groups, coupled with the motivation to use power to influence and/or protect.

Although such actions are consciously motivated, any action, consciously or unconsciously motivated, may have political ‘significance’ in a given situation. Both co-operative and conflictive actions and processes are part of the realm of micro-politics. Moreover, macro- and micro-political factors frequently interact.”

(Blase, 1991, p. 11)

Morgan’s (1986) *“political metaphor”* encourages the view that all organisational activity is interest-based. He also stresses that every organisation manifests political power plays and conflicts. Organisational goals, structure, technology, job design, leadership style, and other aspects of organisational functioning are also understood to have a political dimension.

Much organisation theory has built on an assumption that organisations, like machines or organisms, are, *“unified systems that bind part and whole in a quest for survival”* (Morgan, 1986, p. 196). Applying a political prism suggests otherwise, pointing to *“disintegrative strains and tensions”* that stem from *“the spectrum of diverse sets of interests on which organisation builds”* (ibid.).

Applying a political prism and analysing the resulting spectrum, politicises an understanding of human behaviour in schools. Applying a political prism also encourages a recognition of how and why teachers are political actors, and an

understanding of the political significance of the patterns of meaning enacted in corporate school culture and sub-culture.

The application of a political prism can encourage the recognition of socio-political implications of different kinds of school organisation and rôles that such organisations might play in society. Though it is common to draw strict divisions between organisation theory and political science, it is understood that schools are always to some extent political, and that the political implications of schools need to be systematically explored.

There is a danger however, that when schools are analysed using a political prism it is almost always possible to see signs of political activity, confirming the relevance of the approach. The activity becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. There is a danger that in seeing politics everywhere, hidden agendas might be perceived even when there are none. There is also a danger that the use of a political prism might generate cynicism and mistrust in situations where there was previously none.

The following diagram, figure 2.8, represents a spectrum of political concepts resulting from the application of a political prism to a particular aspect of school organisation or activity. It is a development of concepts identified by Wallace and Hall (1994, p. 24), which in turn have been developed from a conceptual framework originally offered by Ball (1987).

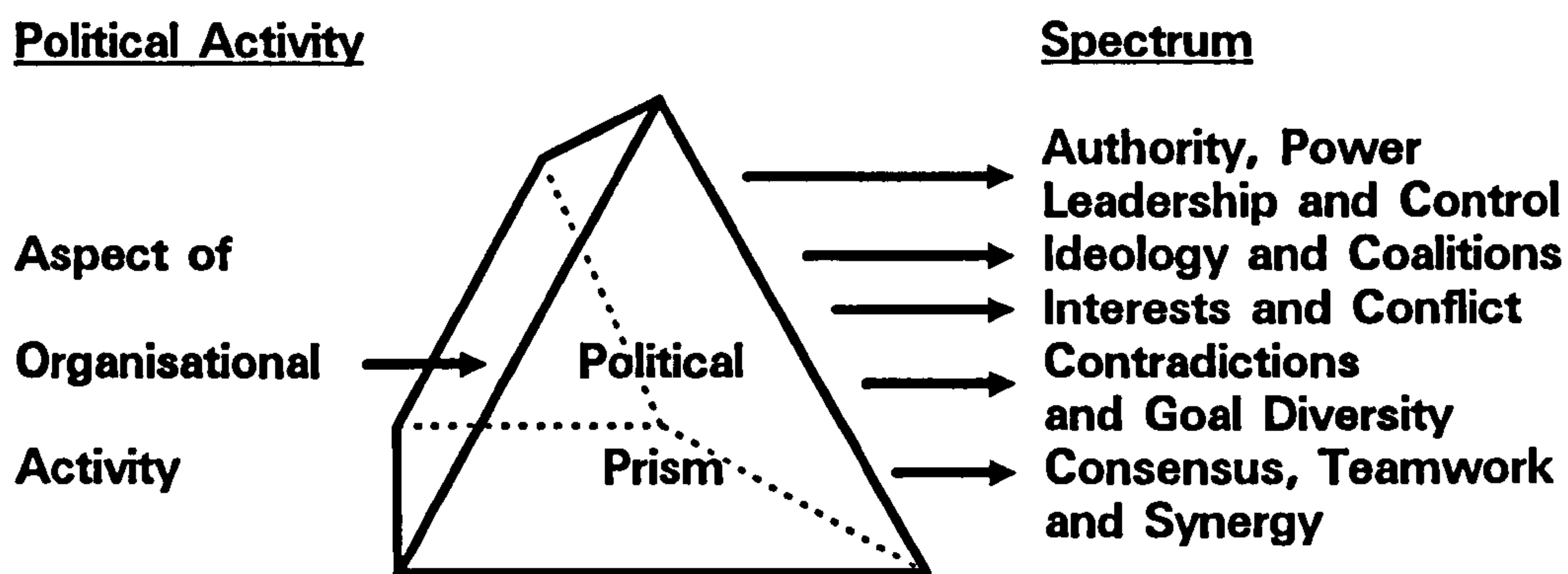


Figure 2.8 A Spectrum of Political Activity within Organisations

In applying this political prism, the resultant spectrum encourages a focus on aspects of authority, power, leadership and control within the school, together with its inherent ideologies and coalitions, its underlying interests and conflicts, its intrinsic contradictions and goal diversity, and a measure of its consensus, teamwork and synergy.

2.7 School Organisation viewed through an Autocratic Lens:

In applying an autocratic lens to school organisation, illustrated in figure 2.9, it is possible to inform an understanding of different aspects of its mechanistic-person culture emphasising person-control, by comparison with job-freedom at the other extreme of the continuum. It is thus possible to view school organisations both as *"club cultures"* (Handy and Aitken, 1986, p. 85), and as *"instruments of domination"* (Morgan, 1986, pp. 273-319).

Autocracies, club cultures and instruments of domination are characterised by strong, decisive leadership with centralised decision making systems. They are organisations in which close supervision and tight control is exercised. Autocracies thrive in competitive climates and security is understood to stem from leaders'

abilities to establish clear policy directive and to handle major problems. There is an emphasis on loyalty to leaders in autocracies, often resulting in a danger of dependency on them. The adversarial leadership styles often prevalent in an autocracy promote the leader's moral vision. Power is exercised both through and over subordinates.

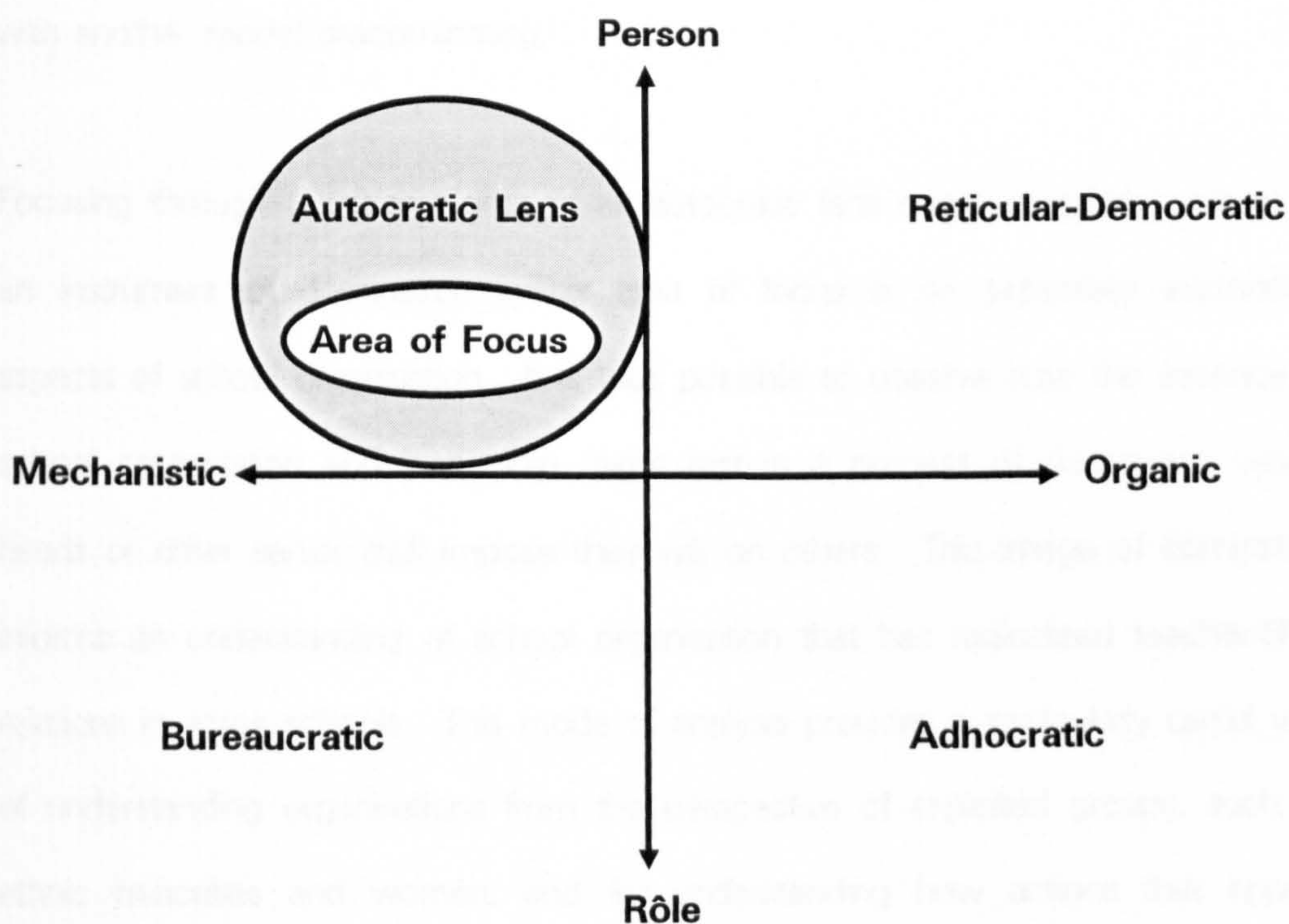


Figure 2.9 An Area of Focus viewed through an Autocratic Lens

When a club culture predominates, focusing through one area of an autocratic lens reveals a school's organisation as a spider's web. The key resides in the centres of club cultures which are surrounded by concentric circles of intimates and influence. Individuals' power and influence increase as they become closer to the spider. Schools in which club cultures predominate thus extend the person of their heads. If such heads could do everything themselves, they would. It is because they cannot that there has to be an organisation at all. Such schools' organisations

become extensions of their heads, acting on behalf of them, and forming a club of like-minded people. A danger of club cultures in schools lies in the dominance of the head. Without a spider the web is dead. If the head is weak, corrupt, inept, or selects the wrong people, the school also becomes weak, corrupt, inept or badly staffed. Club cultures have no predominant place in school organisation nowadays. However, a club culture may form a minor facet of school organisation with another model predominating.

Focusing through a different area of an autocratic lens might reveal the school as an instrument of domination. This area of focus is on potentially exploitative aspects of school organisation. It is thus possible to observe how the essence of school organisation and leadership might rest in a process of domination where heads or other senior staff impose their will on others. This image of domination informs an understanding of school organisation that has radicalised teacher-SMT relations in some schools. This mode of analysis provides a particularly useful way of understanding organisations from the perspective of exploited groups, such as ethnic minorities and women, and for understanding how actions that appear rational from one point of view, can prove exploitative from another. It also informs an understanding of domination as intrinsic to the way in which schools are organised and not just an unintended side effect.

2.8 School Organisation viewed through a Bureaucratic Lens:

In applying a bureaucratic lens to school organisation, illustrated in figure 2.10, it is possible to inform an understanding of different aspects of its mechanistic-rôle culture. Focusing on this domain reveals an emphasis on job-control by comparison with person-freedom at the other extreme of the continuum.

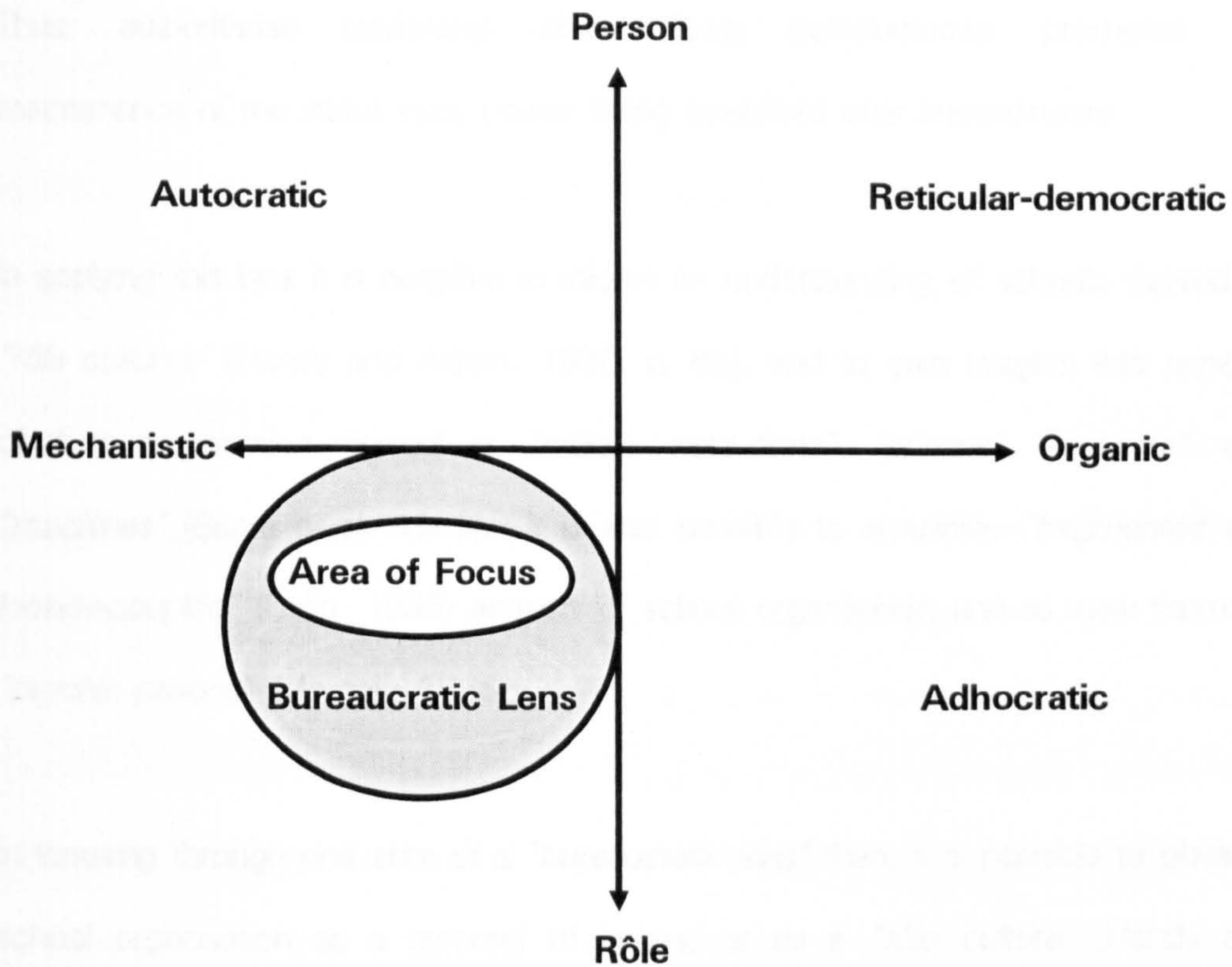


Figure 2.10 An Area of Focus viewed through a Bureaucratic Lens

Bureaucracies and rôle cultures, revealed in applying this lens, are characterised by a preference for written communication. They provide clear guidelines, standing instructions and responsibilities. There is an emphasis on status deriving from one's position in the hierarchy. Standard procedures are laid down for dealing with common problems. Security is provided by the orderly framework in which bureaucracies operate. Red-tape and time-consuming routine procedures are often rigidly applied. There is an emphasis on loyalty to the system and adherence to policy and regulations. Rôles are carefully drawn up and job descriptions emphasised. Leaders tend to "go by the book" and organisational members are expected to consult the rules before making decisions. Bureaucratic leadership provides stability and predictability and imposes formal channels of communication.

Thus, authoritarian leadership characterising bureaucracies promotes the maintenance of the status quo, power being exercised over subordinates.

In applying this lens it is possible to inform an understanding of schools viewed as *"rôle cultures"* (Handy and Aitken, 1986, p. 85), and to gain insights into aspects of their organisation viewed as *"military institutions"*, *"prisons"*, *"factories"*, and *"machines"* (Beare et al, 1989). It is also possible to scrutinise *"fragmented and loosely-coupled"* (Dalin, 1993) aspects of school organisation and to view them as *"psychic prisons"* (Morgan, 1986).

In focusing through one area of a *"bureaucratic lens"* then, it is possible to observe school organisation as a pyramid of boxes, or as a *"rôle culture"* (Handy and Aitken, 1986, p. 86). Inside each box in the pyramid is a job title together with an individual teacher's name, indicating that he or she is the current occupant. The box continues after the teacher leaves the school, except in cases of redundancy. The boxes fit into departmental pillars, co-ordinated by a *"head of department"* at the top, forming a structure appearing like a Greek temple. Rôle cultures tend to be conservative, encompassing the person via the rôle. They are functionalist and tend to view difficulties in terms of rôle conflict. Individual teachers might be viewed as *"rôle occupants"* or *"rôle incumbents"*, with job descriptions that spell out the requirements of the rôle and its boundaries. From time to time, a school might re-arrange rôles and their relationship to each other (reorganise) as priorities change, and then re-allocate individual teachers to new rôles. Rôle cultures thrive in schools in periods of stability and when unchanging tasks are required, and are

not designed to cope with turbulent change.¹⁴ However, efficiency and fairness in routine tasks call for rôle cultures, the logic of the design being all important. Individual people are seen as less critical factors since they can be trained to fit the rôle.

Focusing through another area of this lens permits both "*military*" aspects of school organisation, and those associated with "*prisons*", to be observed (Beare *et al.*, 1989, p. 189). Hierarchical, inflexible structures, and uniformity, understood to stifle creativity and innovation characterise what is viewed. Highly coercive, untrusting, non-risk-taking and punitive aspects of school organisation come into focus. Teachers appear directive and authoritarian, lacking in compassion and consideration and often operate from a presumption of guilt. Stringent observation of rules and regulations is expected, indicating inflexibility and bureaucracy. Such organisations appear basic and spartan, and tend to be overly controlled.

Slight refocusing might reveal aspects of school organisation equating with those of "*factories*" (ibid., 1989, p. 189), and "*machines*" (Morgan, 1986, pp. 19-38), characterised as a mechanistic and routine institutions in which expectations of uniformity and predetermined standards emanate from teachers with rigid expectations, displaying production-line mentalities to teaching and learning. Management adopts systems approaches to organisation, their hallmark being efficiency rather than effectiveness. Expectations of uniformity permit little concern for special cases, there tending to be quantitative rather than qualitative approaches and focuses to the life of the school. When heads think of schools as mechanistic,

¹⁴ This notion is central to this thesis, and underpins activity which both informs and generates the process of cultural change at Bishop Lindis School.

they tend to manage and design them as made up of cogs or interlocking parts, that each play a clearly defined rôle in the functioning of the whole. Whilst sometimes this can prove highly efficient, at others it can have unfortunate results.

The strengths of mechanistic organisations are manifest when there is a straightforward task to be performed, and when the environment is stable enough to ensure that the products of the enterprise will be appropriate. This form of organisation also excels when the aim is to produce the same product, to a high degree of precision, consistently time and time again. The mechanistic school organisation works well, therefore, when the human "*machine*" parts are compliant and behave as they were intended to. Mechanistic schools can have severe limitations and great difficulties in adapting to changing circumstances. They often result in mindless and unquestioning bureaucracies. They can have undesirable and unanticipated consequences as the interests of those working in them take precedence over the goals the school was designed to achieve. Notably, mechanistic schools can have dehumanising effects upon teachers, especially those at the lower levels of the hierarchy.¹⁵ One of the most important limitations of mechanistic schools in the context of this study, is that they have difficulty in adapting to changing circumstances because they are designed to achieve pre-determined goals. In other words, they are not designed with innovation in mind. It is possible to reconcile this notion with the nature of machines which are usually:

"single purpose mechanisms designed to transform specific inputs into specific outputs and can engage in different activities only if they are explicitly modified or redesigned to do so."

(Morgan, 1986, p. 35)

¹⁵ Attention is drawn to Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" which is discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

Changing circumstances call for different kinds of action and response. Mechanistic school organisations often fail because flexibility and capacity for creative action in schools undergoing change often become more important than narrow efficiency.

One of the basic problems of school management is that the mechanical way of thinking is so ingrained in our everyday conceptions of school organisation that it is difficult to organise in any other way.

Slight re-focusing through a related area of a multifocal bureaucratic lens might reveal the school as *"fragmented"* (Dalin, 1993, p. 16), being predominantly mechanistic and *"loosely coupled"*, with little common innovative experience amongst the staff. There tends to be little common understanding of needs, little discussion, and often a norm that each person looks after himself or herself. Fragmented schools suffer from limited initiatives for improvement and renewal, and where they do take place they are restricted to a *"one teacher-one classroom"* context. A fragmented school may have some classrooms which function well, with excellent teaching and learning taking place, but this is often only incidental in organisational terms. Major initiatives for change most likely come as a result of pressure from the environment, which in the context of this research means LEA's or central government's initiatives. Dalin accepts that initiatives can emerge in fragmented schools as a result of a change of leadership, though rarely as a result of joint staff initiatives, that is, through collaboration. Faced with new challenges from the environment, heads of fragmented schools may use such challenges as opportunities to change internal practices, and discuss the internal needs for change. Initially few teachers may be mobilised and the school often requires

external help in order to embark upon some form of mandated change programme.

In choosing a different area of a multifocal bureaucratic lens it is possible to shift the focus of attention to a more abstract mode of viewing organisation: that of the school as a "*psychic prison*" (Morgan, 1986, pp. 199-231), in which people become trapped by their own thoughts, ideas, and beliefs, or by preoccupations originating in the unconscious mind. Morgan asks:

- "Could it be that our favoured modes of organizing manifest an unconscious preoccupation with control?
- Or a form of repressed sexuality?
- Or a fear of death?
- Or a desire to minimize or avoid anxiety-provoking situations?
- Could it be that our ways of organizing are designed to protect us from ourselves?
- Could it be that we often become prisoners of our thoughts confined and controlled by the way we think?
- Could it be that we are prisoners of ideologies that confine us in alienating modes of life?"

(Morgan, 1986, p. 15)

The image of a psychic prison invites us to examine school life to see if, and in what ways, we have become trapped by conscious and unconscious processes of our own creation. In doing so, focusing on the school through this area of a bureaucratic lens offers many important insights about the psycho-dynamic and ideological aspects of school organisation. This process encourages the operation of digging below the surface to uncover unconscious processes and related patterns of control that trap some people in unsatisfactory modes of existence.

Most importantly, from the point of view of this research project, and according to Morgan, the psychic prison perspective can help in the identification of many of the

barriers standing in the path of innovation and change. Many aspects of social and organisational culture and structure serve conscious and unconscious purposes that are invisible to the human eye. This provides an explanation as to why it is often difficult to change some school structures, even when the change seems logical and beneficial to all concerned.

2.9 School Organisation viewed through an Adhocratic Lens:

In applying an adhocratic lens to school organisation, illustrated in figure 2.11, it is possible to inform an understanding of different aspects of its organic-rôle culture. Focus on the organic-rôle domain emphasises job-freedom, by comparison with person-control at the other extreme of the continuum.

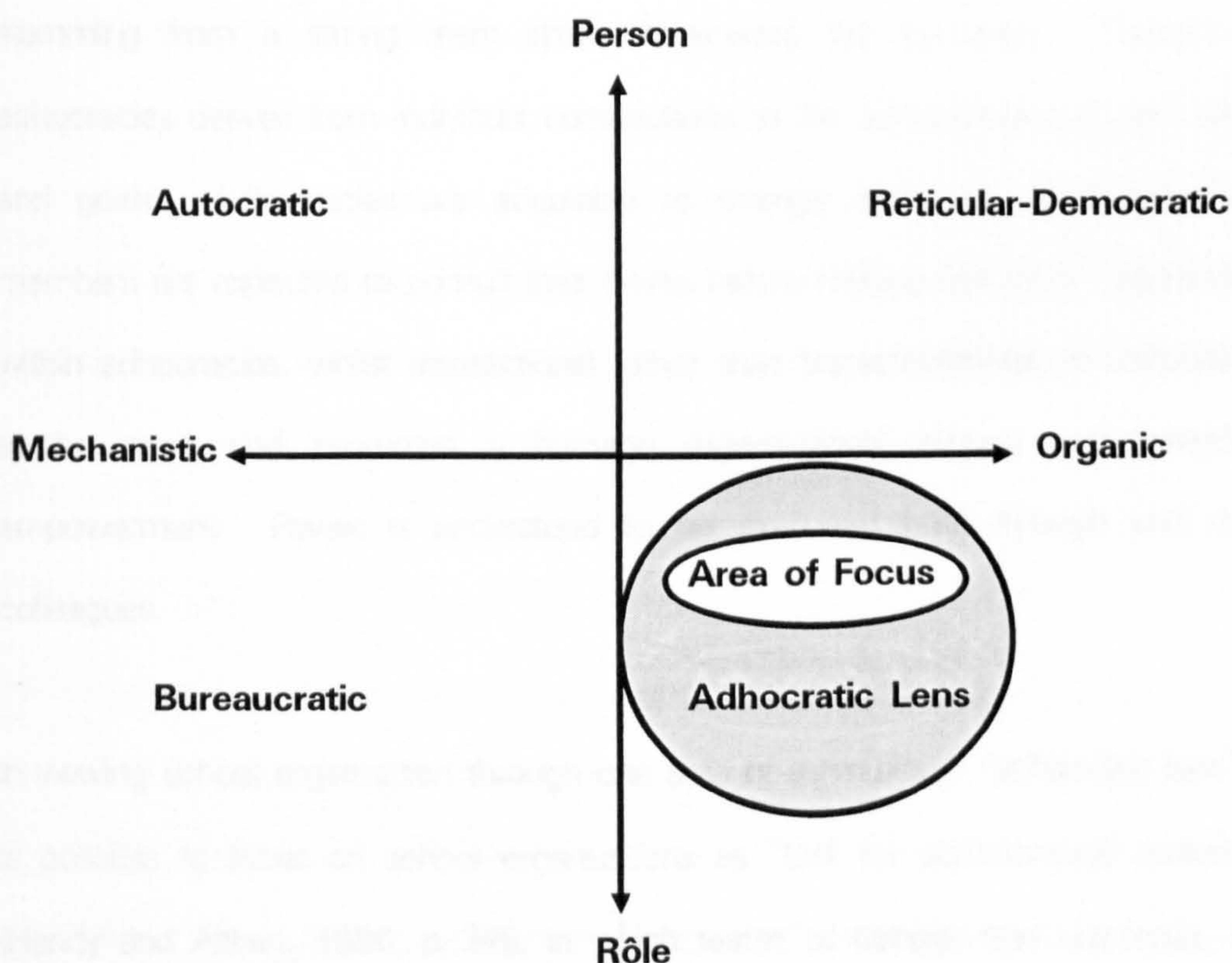


Figure 2.11 An Area of Focus viewed through an Adhocratic Lens

In applying an adhocratic lens it is possible to view school organisations as *"task cultures"* (Handy and Aitken, 1986), *"project schools"* (Dalin, 1993), and *"organisms"* (Morgan, 1986).

Adhocracies, Task Cultures and Project Schools are understood to be characterised by temporary systems in which work is task centred and achievement oriented. There is an expectation of decentralisation, teamwork and adaptability. There is also a prevalence of shared responsibility and participative decision making. Job freedom is an essential characteristic of an adhocracy, in which a collaborative ethic and project groupings often cut across departmental boundaries. Willingness to accept shared leadership, loyalty to team and to colleagues, and security stemming from a strong team spirit characterise the approach. Respect in adhocracies derives from individual contributions to the achievement of team tasks and goals. Adhocracies are adaptable to change and new challenges, and members are expected to consult their teams before making decisions. Leadership within adhocracies, whilst transactional rather than transformational, is understood to be open and promotes a humane organisational climate and individual empowerment. Power is understood to be exercised both through and over colleagues.

In viewing school organisation through one area of a multifocal *"adhocratic lens"*, it is possible to focus on school organisations as *"task (or achievement) cultures"*, (Handy and Aitken, 1986, p. 88), in which teams of people, and resources, are applied to projects, problems or tasks. The notion evolved because of the need for an organisational form that could respond to change in a less individualistic way than a club culture, and more speedily than a rôle culture. In a task culture each

task gets the treatment it requires and does not have to be standardized across the school. Project teams can be changed, disbanded or increased as the task changes. A task or achievement culture is the preferred culture of many competent people, because they work in teams, sharing both skills and responsibilities. They constantly work on new challenges since every task is different, and they thus keep themselves developing and enthused. A task culture is characteristically warm and friendly because it is built around co-operative teams of colleagues without much overt hierarchy. There are plans rather than procedures; reviews of progress rather than assessment of past performance. It is a forward-looking culture for a developing organisation. A task culture supports "*co-ordinators*" and "*team leaders*" rather than managers. It requires commitment, rewards success, and promises excitement and challenge.

Dalin (1993, p. 16) speaks of school organisations founded on task cultures as "*project schools*". They tend to be schools that have been involved in innovative projects, where teams of teachers work together, and where the SMT is involved in the initiation and co-ordination of improvement programmes. It is possible, however, that the drive for change comes from both teams of staff and the SMT.

By focusing on school organisation through a different area in a multifocal adhocratic lens it is possible to view the school as an "*organism*" (Morgan, 1986, pp. 39-76), by focusing attention on understanding and managing individual and organisational "*needs*" and environmental relations. In viewing school organisation as an organism it is possible to perceive different types of school as belonging to different species. In extending the analogy, it is possible to recognise that different species are suited for coping with the demands of different environments, and it is

therefore possible to develop theories about school-environment relations. It is also possible to illustrate how school organisations are born, grow, develop, decline, and die, and how they are able to adapt to changing environments.

As in the case of the mechanical example previously cited, this kind of imagery leads to an understanding of school organisations from a unique perspective that has already contributed to management and organisation theory in a wider industrial and commercial context. Dalin (1993) describes organic (or organismic) schools as tending to have developed processes where many teachers, parents and students are involved. The norms of the school are subject to development; methods and procedures become questioned and modified; and relationships and behaviour undergo change. New objectives tend to become more generalised and new practices more easily institutionalised. The initiatives for change within schools predominantly organised as organisms may come from within the school as well as from its environment. Such schools become open to improvement and more readily acknowledge their strengths and weaknesses. They develop the motivation and capacity to cope with improvement programmes.

A strength of this way of viewing the school derives from an understanding that school management can be improved through systematic attention to the *"needs"* that must be satisfied if the school is to survive and flourish. Comparisons might be drawn with the human needs characteristics of the higher levels of Maslow's *"Hierarchy of Needs"* in which assembly line technology characterised by routine, boring, low-discretion jobs result in human boredom and alienation where game playing and sabotage emerge as means of gaining self-respect.

Maslow's (1954) *"Hierarchy of Needs"* presents human beings as psychological organisms struggling to satisfy needs in a quest for full growth and development. The suggestion that human beings are motivated by a hierarchy of needs progressing through the physiological, the social, and the psychological, has powerful implications, for it suggests that bureaucratic organisations which seek to motivate employees through money, or by merely providing a secure job, confines human development to the lower levels of the needs hierarchy.

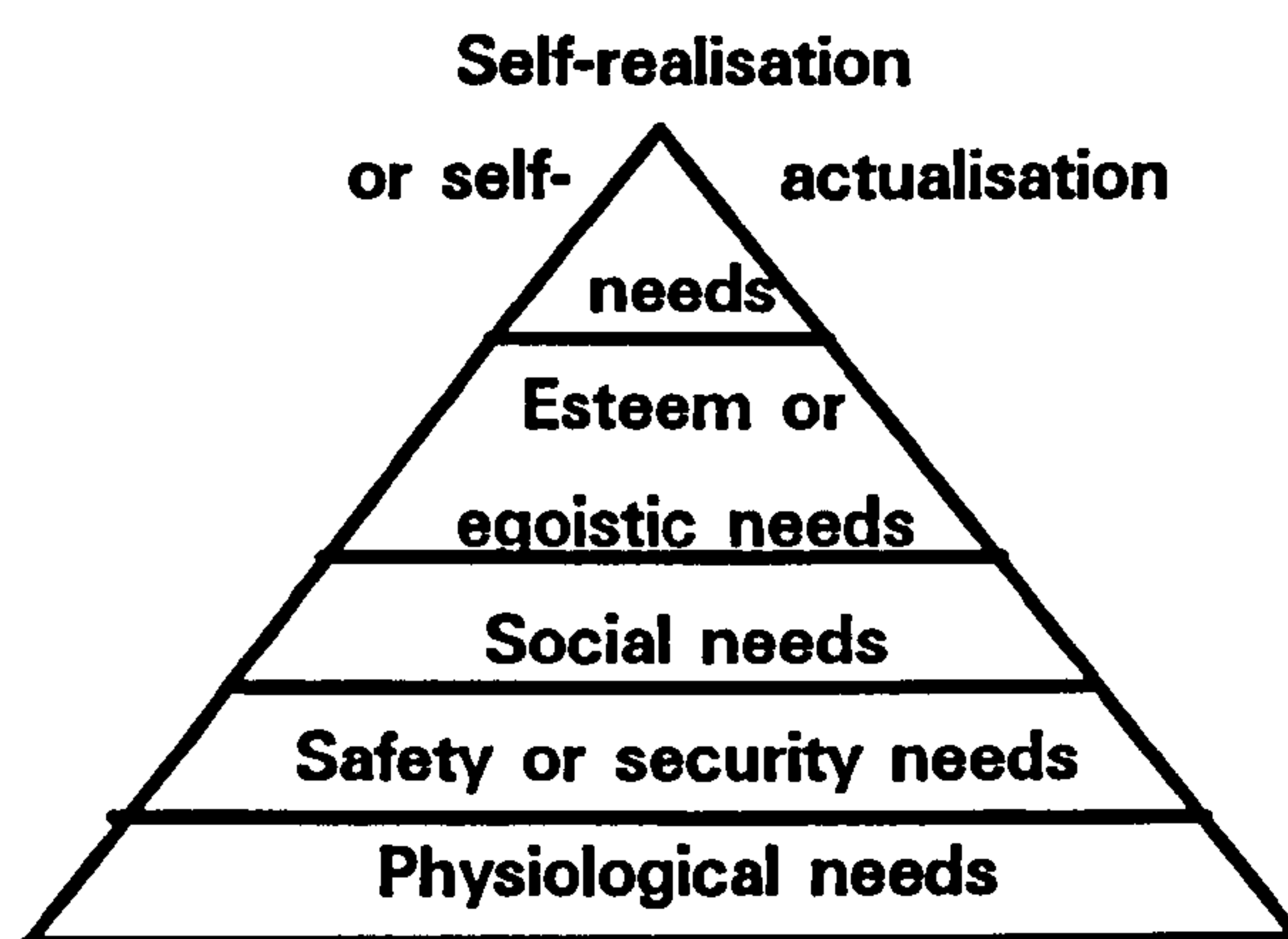


Figure 2.12: Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

An important strength of viewing school organisations as organisms is the virtue of organic (or organismic) forms of organisation in the process of innovation. Whilst it is not true that mechanistic organisations do not innovate, the flexible, dynamic, project-orientated matrix of organic forms of organisation are understood to be superior to mechanistic and bureaucratic ones in creating a climate for successful innovation. Another strength of viewing school organisation as an organism rests in

its contribution to the theory and practice of organisational development, especially through the *"contingency approach"*.¹⁶

A limitation of viewing school organisations in this way rests in the assumption of what Morgan calls *"functional unity"*. In the human body, for example, the blood, the heart, the lungs, the arms and the legs normally work together to preserve the *"homeostatic"*¹⁷ functioning as a whole. In schools, however, it is relatively rare to discover the component parts working together with the same degree of harmony. Most schools do not function as unified organisms. Organisms being *"functionally integrated"*, can suggest the notion that schools should be the same. People can become resources to be developed, rather than human beings who are valued in themselves and who are encouraged to choose and shape their own future. The implications of this limitation are particularly relevant to any discussion of school organisation.

2.10 School Organisation viewed through a Reticular-Democratic Lens:

In applying a reticular-democratic lens to school organisation, illustrated in figure 2.13, it is possible to inform an understanding of different aspects of its organic-

¹⁶ **The contingency approach to organisation:** Organisations are open systems that need careful management to satisfy and balance internal needs and to adapt to environmental circumstances. There is no one best way of organising. The appropriate form depends on the kind of task or environment with which one is dealing. Management must be concerned, above all else, with achieving "good fits". Different approaches to management may be necessary to perform different tasks within the same organisation, and quite different types or "species" of organisation are needed in different types of environment. (Morgan, 1986, p. 48-49)

¹⁷ **Homeostasis:** The concept of homeostasis refers to self-regulation and the ability to maintain a steady state. Biological organisms seek a regulatory form and distinctness from the environment while maintaining a continuous exchange with the environment. This form and distinctness is achieved through homeostatic processes that regulate and control system operation on the basis of what is now called "negative-feedback", where deviations from some standard or norm initiate actions to correct the deviation. Thus when our body temperature rises above normal limits, certain bodily functions operate to try and counteract the rise, e.g., we begin to perspire and breathe heavily. Social systems also require such homeostatic control processes if they are to acquire enduring form. (Morgan, 1986, p. 46)

person culture. Focus on the organic-person domain emphasises person-freedom, by comparison with job-control at the other extreme of the continuum. In applying a reticular-democratic lens it is possible to view school organisations as “*person cultures*” (Handy and Aitken, 1986), and as “*brains, holographs and systemic learning organisations*” (Morgan, 1986 and Dalin, 1993).

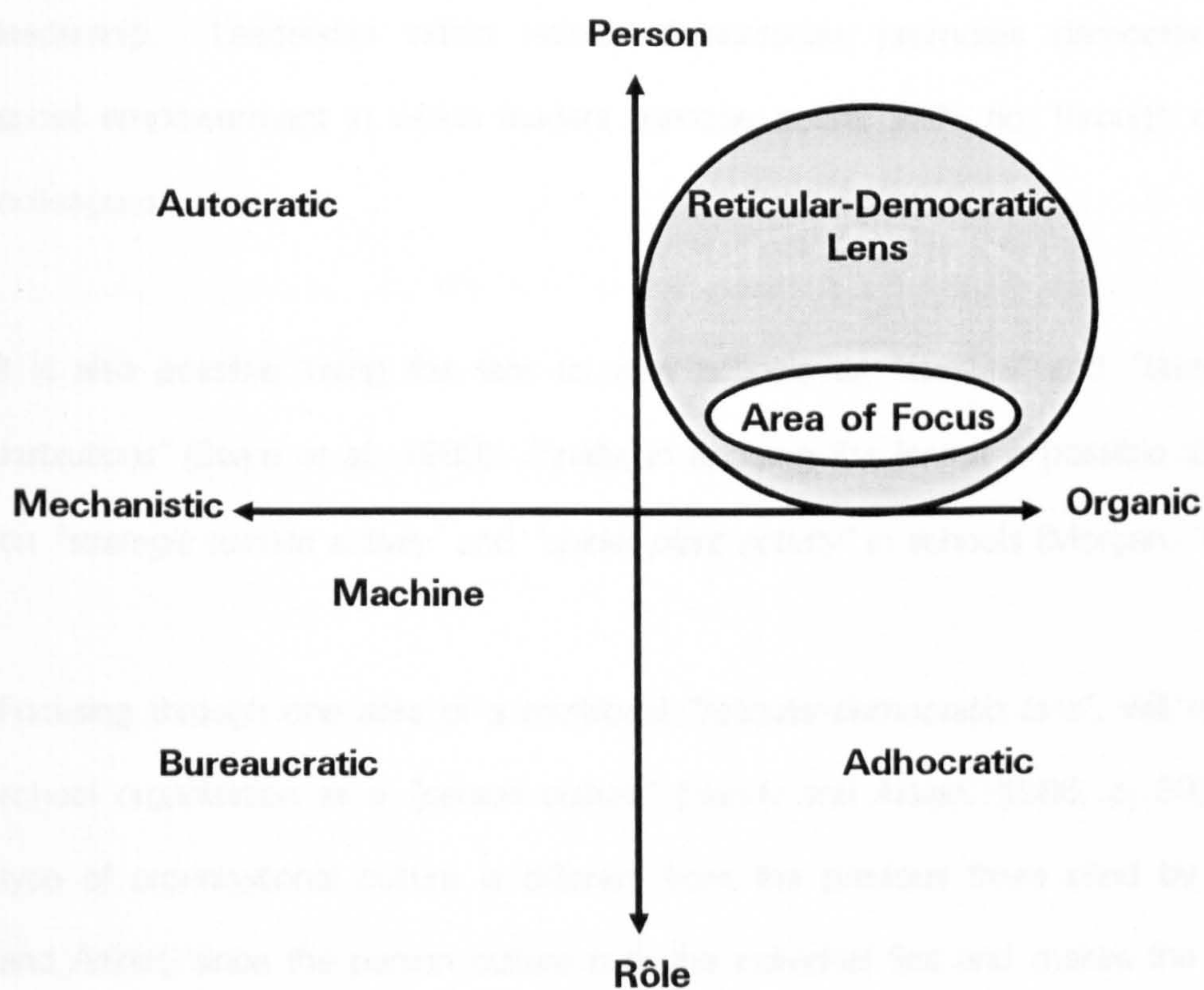


Figure 2.13 An Area of Focus viewed through a Reticular-Democratic Lens

Reticular-democracies, person cultures and systemic learning organisations are understood to be characterised by high independence and self-reliance. They encourage mastery of informal channels of communication (the grapevine). They involve shared leadership without reliance on formal structures. Respect within reticular-democracies is based on expertise or skills. Security stems from

confidence in self and colleagues. Little importance is attached to status, rank or title. There is often contempt for red tape or bureaucratic inertia. There is usually more enthusiasm for experiment and innovation than for permanence and stability. There is a tendency to tell others, including one's boss, after making a decision. In brief, self-confidence, independence, and self-management prevail in a non-hierarchical, loose, and flexible structure characterised by informal, shared leadership. Leadership within reticular-democracies promotes democracy and social empowerment in which leaders exercise power with, not through or over colleagues.

It is also possible, using this lens to view schools as "*families*" and "*laissez-faire institutions*" (Beare *et al.*, 1989). Finally, in applying this lens it is possible to focus on "*strategic termite activity*" and "*spider plant activity*" in schools (Morgan, 1993).

Focusing through one area of a multifocal "*reticular-democratic lens*", will reveal a school organisation as a "*person culture*" (Handy and Aitken, 1986, p. 89). This type of organisational culture is different from the previous three cited by Handy and Aitken, since the person culture puts the individual first and makes the school the resource for the teacher's talents. The other three cultures put the school's purposes first and then harness the teacher to these purposes.

It is also possible to view school organisation through a different area of a reticular-democratic lens as a "*brain*" (Morgan, 1986, pp. 77-109), drawing attention to the importance of information processing, learning, and intelligence, and providing a frame of reference for understanding and analysing schools in these terms. In the history of brain research different concepts have been used for thinking about the

brain, and Morgan explores two of these. The first treats the brain as a kind of information processing computer; the second, as a hologram. These images, especially the latter, highlight important principles of self-organisation for designing schools in which a high degree of flexibility and innovation is needed.¹⁸ A strength of viewing a school as a brain lies in its contribution to an understanding of "*organisational learning*" and the capacity of an individual school for self-organisation.

In discussing organic (or organismic) organisations, the importance of creating organisations able to innovate and evolve, and thus meet the challenges and demands of changing environments has been stressed. The notion of organisations as brains, or as "*systemic learning organisations*"¹⁹ (Dalin, 1993, p. 20) is an extension to this notion.

A number of influential authors have developed the theme of "*the learning organisation*", including Argyris and Schön (1978); Clark (1996); Garratt (1994); Handy (1990, pp. 44 - 63; 179 - 87); Pearn *et al.*, 1995; Pedler *et al.* (1991); Senge (1990) and Willie and Hodgson (1991, pp. 163 - 77).

It is a common view of these authors that innovative schools should be designed as learning systems that place primary emphasis on being open to enquiry and self-criticism. The innovative school will need an ethos (Morgan terms it a

¹⁸ It is in this context that the concept of view schools as brains is a particularly useful tool in this particular research project.

¹⁹ Burns and Stalker (1966) distinguish between the terms system, systematic and systemic. The first is often related to "system theory", the second to the notion of sequential, linear and rational theories and the last implies that an organisation needs to be dealt with in all its complexities and relationships, however rational or counter-intuitive they might be. The notion is that major change will have consequences, often unintended, for the total.

"holographic spirit"²⁰) where the innovative attitudes and abilities desired of the whole are enfolded in the parts.

Dalin (1993, p. 20) sees the learning organisation as a vision for schools, a goal that will never be fully reached, but a future that is worth striving for. He sees the objective as being to create schools that can better respond to the needs of young people and society in a world that is constantly facing new challenges. It is his view that the only way schools will survive the future will be to become "*creative learning organisations*." He believes that the best way that students can learn how to live in the future is to experience the life of a "*learning school*".

The challenge to design school organisations that can innovate is understood to be a challenge to design schools that can self-organise. Unless a school is able to change itself to accommodate the ideas it produces and values, eventually it is likely to block its own innovations. A strength in viewing school organisations as brains, therefore, hinges on the contribution this makes to an understanding of how strategic management can be designed to facilitate "*learning to learn*".

It is understood that holographic organisational designs that break free of bureaucratic controls demonstrate that organisations can deal with uncertain and complex problems in ways that go well beyond the capacities of any single individual. Modern brain research demonstrates that there is another side to

²⁰ The way a holographic plate enfolds all the information necessary to produce a complete image in each of its parts has much in common with the functioning of a brain. It is possible to extend this image to create a vision of organisation where capacities required in the whole are enfolded in the parts, allowing the system to learn and self-organise, and to maintain a complete system of functioning even when specific parts malfunction or are removed. (Morgan, 1986, p. 95)

cognitive capacity, namely the holistic, analogical, intuitive, and creative capacities of the brain's right hemisphere (Zdenek, 1983).

If new organisational designs can tap these creative possibilities it is believed they will provide further means of extending and transforming schools' organisational capacities for rational action. There is a danger, however, of overlooking important conflicts between the requirements of learning and self-organisation on the one hand, and the realities of power and control on the other. Any move away from bureaucratic modes of operation towards self-organisation has major implications for the distribution of power and control within an organisation.²¹ The process of learning requires a degree of openness and self-criticism which is foreign to traditional modes of management, but which are congruent with the reflective practitioner's *modus operandi*.

Learning and self-organisation generally call for a re-framing of attitudes, emphasising the importance of activity over passivity, autonomy over dependence, flexibility over rigidity, collaboration over competition, openness over closedness, and democratic enquiry over authoritarian belief. For many schools this may call for a "*personality change*", "*paradigm shift*", or "*metanoia*" (Senge, 1990, p. 5).

Further refocusing reveals that schools organised as "*families*" and "*laissez-faire*" institutions (Beare *et al.*, 1989, p. 189) are those in which humanness and humaneness abound, where there is an expectation of consideration in all things,

²¹ This is not seen as a major problem with regard to the progress of this research, since the empowerment of colleagues is a fundamental principle which has underpinned the whole of the planning and innovation process at Bishop Lindis School. However, it does have major implications for the study of the micro-politics at play within the school throughout the period of the research.

and where members are expected to be supportive and forgiving towards each other. They often promote a '*do-your-own-thing*' mentality in which '*anything-goes*', there being an absence of rules and regulations. There is usually an emphasis on individuality and creativity in a flexible environment which tends to be condoning of aberrant behaviour. Members of schools predominantly organised in these ways share a concern for the needy, helpless and insecure, and invariably there is a strong emphasis on interpersonal relations. Staff tend to be encouraging of creativity, innovativeness and self-awareness, and management is usually non-bureaucratic, non-specific, and non-directive. The ethos invariably encourages self-expression, and members of the school community are expected to be unhurried and unflappable. Such schools exhibit a lack of concern for efficiency and effectiveness, but are founded on an understanding that personal experience and expression are of paramount importance.

Viewing aspects of school organisation through a different area of a reticular-democratic lens might permit the school to be observed as displaying "*strategic termite activity*" (Morgan, 1993, pp. 41-61). By means of introduction to the concept, Morgan states that:

"In times of change, plans and planning often prove ineffective because they create rigidities. In highly politicized contexts, they often serve as magnets for political opposition, catalyzing and crystallizing the views of those who do not want to travel in the planned direction. This creates an enormous dilemma for would-be leaders or managers, because they have to find ways of planning without plans or, at least, of creating some kind of visionary framework that can evolve and adapt as circumstances require."

(*ibid.*, p. 41)

In attempting to address the need for change, the micro-politics of organisational life, and the sort of dilemma described above, Morgan sees new and creative

ways of managing as essential. His termite metaphor, which leads to a radical approach to managing change, is founded on the concept of small, piecemeal, seemingly unplanned and incoherent levels of activity accumulating until, eventually, major changes emerge and become established. He describes termite activity in the following terms:

"Termites! Small, blind creatures related to the cockroach....

Imagine a termite colony somewhere in the tropics. There are thousands of termites milling around. The ground on which they start to build their nests is quite flat. The termites begin their work by moving earth in a random fashion. Gradually, distinct piles of earth begin to emerge. These then become the focus of sustained building activity, resulting in columns located in more or less random positions. These are built to a certain height, then construction stops.

When columns emerge that are sufficiently close together, building resumes until they are joined at the top to form a rounded arch. In this way, the termite nest evolves as an increasingly complex structure, with the arch as the basic unit. The approach eventually results in a kind of free-form architecture, comprised of interlocking caverns and tunnels that are ventilated, humidity controlled, and beautifully formed."

(Morgan, 1993, pp. 42-44)

The advantages of the approach to those involved in managing innovation, are in keeping things moving, and allowing flexibility, particularly when a problem is encountered. The approach allows changes in direction, changes in emphasis, and changes of activity, in response to various demands of organisational life. Whilst acknowledging that the termite metaphor is a humble one, and also recognising that many managers see it as unflattering, Morgan develops his argument by stating that:

"Termite nests are products of random, self-organizing activity where structures emerge and unfold in a piecemeal, unplanned way. They provide inspiration for developing coherent approaches to strategic management and change, without the straitjackets and problems imposed by trying to follow pre-determined plans."

(Morgan, 1993, p. 43)

He sees the approach as relevant in times of rapid change, and in particular in organisations undergoing structural and cultural change. He suggests that effective managers have to learn to cope with the flux of everyday life, and have to find creative ways of going with the flow. They have to help coherent, relevant initiatives emerge from the dynamic and unpredictable events that surround them. Morgan also suggests that they have to be skilled in managing disorder and in helping their organisations self-organise and evolve in relevant open-ended ways. This new context challenges much of the old rhetoric of rational planning and control (Morgan, 1993, pp. 58-59).

In emphasising the qualities of the approach in turbulent times, he states that:

“The image of ‘strategic termites’ operating through processes where a sense of order is allowed to emerge from chaos has a lot to teach us about management in a turbulent world.”

(Morgan, 1993, p. 59)

Finally, Morgan sees strategic termite activity as infectious. He offers hope and comfort to those who might initially be apprehensive at embarking on such activity. He believes that others will tend to emulate termite activity, and illustrates his point by stating that:

“You may start alone, but, as you begin your journey, you’ll probably find that other termites join you. Termites attract termites. The ‘mounds’ of activity that you initiate or support will often energize, focus and mobilize others of similar mind.”

(Morgan, 1993, p. 61)

Viewing aspects of school organisation through a different area of a reticular-democratic lens, might permit the organisation to be observed as a “*spider plant*” (Morgan, 1993, pp. 63-89). Morgan developed this radical way of designing

organisations in response to leaders facing the challenge of finding more flexible and adaptable ways of managing. He offers the image of a spider plant as a way of rethinking organisational design and management styles in order to promote flexible, decentralised modes of operation. This way of viewing, reading, and subsequently designing organisations, has developed as an alternative to mechanical models which have prevailed. Designing organisations as spider plants, he suggests, points to ways of managing multiple decentralised teams and projects, in a controlled yet self-organising manner.

Morgan suggests that most of us facing the task of re-designing an organisation, will tend to produce lines and boxes (a rôle culture) and perpetuate a bureaucratic and mechanistic model of organising which often militates against the sorts of flexible approaches essential if innovative processes are to become established. In suggesting an alternative, he states:

“To break free, we need to develop new images of organisation that can help us ‘imaginize’ new forms. This is especially important in an era of rapid change, where free-flowing, organic images that have more in common with brains, webs, cells, balloons, bubbles, and umbilical cords are more likely to be relevant than the static blueprints found in typical organisation charts.”

(Morgan, 1993, p. 64)

The image of a spider plant is one in which the core management team resides in a central pot from which a number of offshoots are “*thrown out*” via “*umbilical cords*” to new embryonic plants representing other teams in relationship with the core team. In school organisation terms, the central pot accommodating the “*mother*” plant might represent the SMT, with the umbilical cords representing links with other teams, such as departmental or pastoral teams, creating offshoots in the form of potential new plants dependent upon the mother plant for survival.

Morgan sees the umbilical cords as life-lines. As the spider plant grows and reaches out for new ground in which to reside, it receives nourishment from the mother plant. When it eventually roots, and is able to sustain its own life, the cord is no longer necessary.

The spider plant metaphor provides a new way of thinking about organisational issues. It encourages a looking beyond hierarchical, mechanistic and bureaucratic modes of managing. Morgan sees it as providing: *"...a lifeline for managers who want to delegate authority to teams and project groups by combining a 'hands on' and 'hands off' style of management."* (Morgan, 1993, p. 88)

2.11 Conclusion:

Metaphors and metaphorical ways of thinking can constitute important aids to understanding new and difficult data and knowledge. In naming, in framing and in using concepts, metaphors can be central to thinking processes. Metaphors and the process of using them, can therefore also become central to making sense of experience. For example, Beare *et al.* (1989, P. 188) suggest that the recurrent imagery people use, often gives a clear indication of the templates they carry in their heads; the patterned way in which they think about subjects.

By engaging in a process of reflection on my own experience, and in investigating and reviewing some relevant educational and management literature in this chapter, including the use of metaphor as a framing device, an attempt has been made at developing an alternative paradigm as a theoretical framework for this study. Within this process it has become evident that in applying almost any organisational theory to the management of schools a contrast might be drawn between the two

"ideal types" of leadership style and authority prevailing. In a *"hierarchical model"*, authority may be seen to reside in the leader's office, and for orders to be passed down through the hierarchy. In a more *"collegiate"* model, authority may be seen to be located in groups of professional equals who operate in a more democratic mode.

In attempting to develop further an alternative paradigm, partly intuitively; partly informed by daily experience as head of a comprehensive school; and predominantly through knowledge gained from literature searches; I have come to some tentative conclusions. Namely, that it is possible, in applying both cultural and political prisms to aspects of organisational life in schools, whichever style of leadership or model of authority is thought to be prevalent, that interpersonal influences, compromises and negotiations which constitute the school's social and political milieu might be exposed, and indicate *"what is actually going on"* and *"how things are done"* in organisational terms.

Furthermore, the application of a political prism might also provide a means by which it is possible to demonstrate how power is exercised, reinforced and reproduced, sometimes as a result of conflict and struggle, but also through mechanisms of acceptance and legitimacy. Such analyses are understood to inform how reproduction or change in structures and processes in schools are brought about both by heads and other teachers.

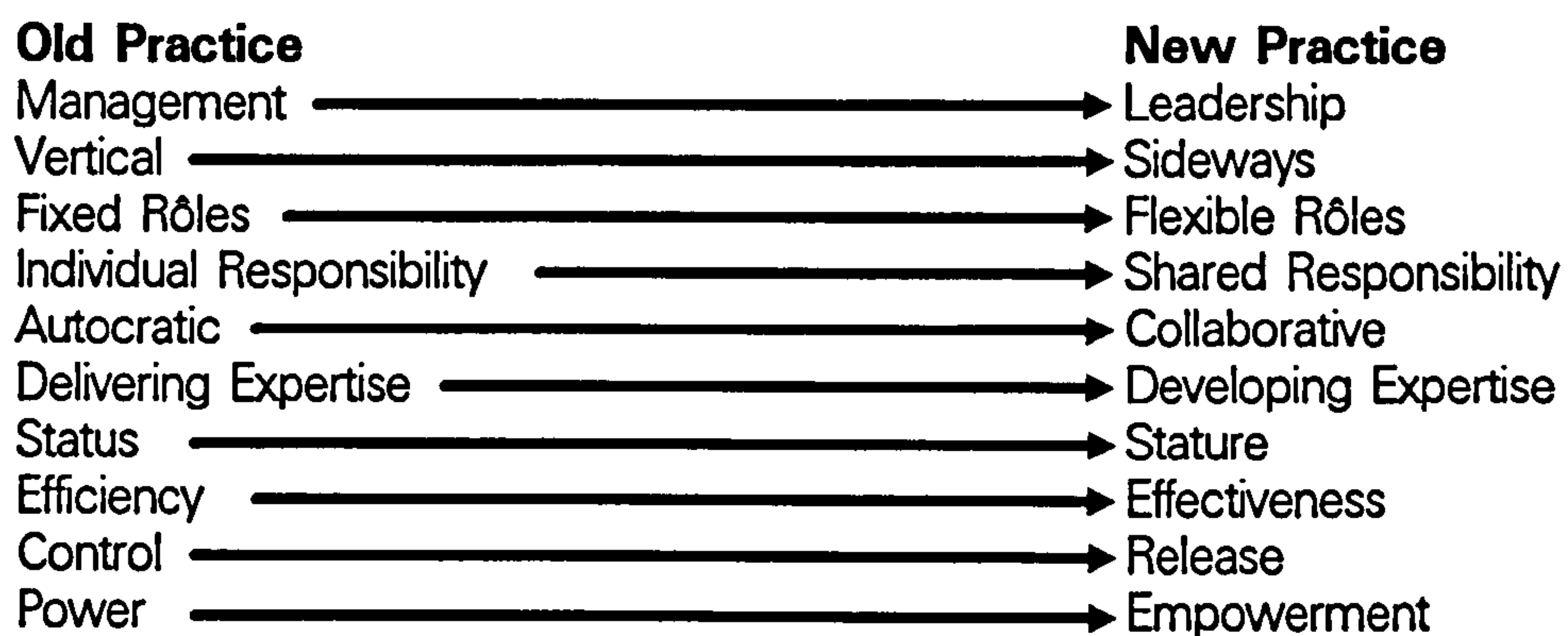
Often what is discovered in such processes is ambiguous, contradictory, paradoxical, messy and turbulent. "Ian" in Salmon (1992, p. 54) describes problems thus exposed as: *"complex, soft, fuzzy, messy, vicious and wicked, (to*

use some technical terms which have been used to describe them)." I can only concur.

Both cultural and micro-political analyses are understood to represent attempts to combine analytical strengths of the interactionist theoretical position with that of ethnographic methodology. Such methods have concentrated on actors' meanings, experiences and interpretations of events (Woods, 1983; and Burgess 1985), and have the advantage of concentrating on detail and reporting events as they were perceived by actors involved in the social dramas being enacted.

In spite of the problematic nature of the activity, in applying knowledge from analyses of both cultural and political spectra of school organisation, together with an appreciation of the characteristics of school organisation as viewed through the four previously described lenses, it appears possible to come to some tentative understandings about the types of organisational mix, and the nature of micro-political activity likely to be present in schools undergoing, or preparing for a process of radical change.

This knowledge also informs an understanding of conditions that are likely to be necessary in facilitating a process of organisational innovation and implicit cultural change. Some of these changes in school culture which indicate a paradigm-shift deemed necessary if innovation is to be initiated, implemented and institutionalised have been categorized by Whittaker (1993) in figure 2.14, which follows:



**Figure 2.14: The Paradigm Shift in Management and Leadership:
(Whittaker, 1993, p.87)**

Qualities listed above as *“Old Practice”* are congruent with those previously cited as characterising mechanistic approaches. Similarly those listed as *“New Practice”* are congruent with those previously cited as characterising organic approaches. In other words, in order for a paradigm-shift to have occurred, in Whittaker’s conception of organisational change, there needs, *at least*, to be a demonstrable shift from the mechanistic to more organic ways of organising schools. This conclusion is congruent with Dalin’s (1993) thesis.

Furthermore, much activity associated with *“Old Practice”* is also congruent with that previously cited as rôle or job dominated, and much activity associated with *“New Practice”* equates, more or less, with activities previously cited as person oriented. In other words, in order for a paradigm-shift to have occurred, in Whittaker’s conception of organisational change, there needs *also* to be a demonstrable shift from ways of organising schools which emphasise the rôle or the job, to ways which emphasise the primacy of the person, or the individual.

In summary, and in terms of the Elliott-Kemp (1992) paradigm, the organisational shift which promotes a particular set of values appropriate to an age of rapid technological change, appear to be from bureaucratic to reticulocratic (or reticular-democratic) modes of operation. It is recognised that this proposition is too simplistic, clinical and tidy to reflect the reality of change as I have come to understand it. Notwithstanding, the most important concept underpinning the theoretical stance adopted in this project, is that of the *"paradigm-shift"* (Whittaker, 1993) or *"metanoia"* (Senge, 1990) necessary in the culture of the school, if innovation is to be successfully initiated, implemented and institutionalised. It is also my understanding, supported in particular by reference to the literature already cited, that the school itself, as an entity, needs to *"learn to learn"*, to become a *"brain"*, Morgan (1986), a *"systemic learning organisation"* Dalin (1993), or a *"transforming learning community"* Clark (1996), in order for innovation to be a natural process in its daily life.

It is for these reasons that a *"paradigm-shift"* in the cultural mix, management philosophy and leadership style of Bishop Lindis School was understood to be necessary if it was to develop further into what has been described in the foregoing literature as a *"good, effective or excellent"* school. The vehicle for this development was the onset of a new opportunity for change, introduced on my appointment, together with activities associated with this research project which have inevitably contributed to the changing culture of the school.

It has been demonstrated that all organisational theories have certain built-in assumptions about human beings. Based on this premise, it seems appropriate to

ask pertinent questions which relate to the relationship between the practice of the human beings within organisations to which the theories apply.

In specific terms, and related to Bishop Lindis School, the school under study:

- To what extent did the organisational or cultural mix of Bishop Lindis School, as viewed through various multifocal lenses, limit the school's potential for coping with innovation in a turbulent period of national educational change?
- To what extent did the leadership style previously inherent at Bishop Lindis School equate with perceptions of the need for innovation within the school, in its local environment, in the wider environment of the LEA and with reference to the national educational scene?
- What micro-political climate was prevalent, particularly with regard to the nature of power and authority within Bishop Lindis School at the outset of this research project?
- To what extent was organisational control necessary, in an institution in which, theoretically, there were shared values and common practices?
- To what extent were individual teachers at Bishop Lindis School goal oriented? What characterised human interactions at the school?
- What motivation structure could be expected in an organisational setting such as Bishop Lindis School?

The ways in which the above questions might be explored with regard to the management of innovation at Bishop Lindis School are addressed through the development of an appropriate methodology for the research which forms the basis of the next chapter.

Chapter Three

The Methodological Framework of the Study

3.1 Introduction:

Having discussed the development of a theoretical framework in which to hang this project, this chapter is dedicated to the development of an appropriate methodology.

It seems both inevitable and appropriate that in writing up this experience, the final product should appear rational, organised and coherent. Any such impression does not adequately represent the reality of doing qualitative research as I experienced it. The product of this enterprise thus emerged from a laborious series of experiences comprising uncertainties, ambiguities, and inconsistencies. The process was often messy, seemingly disorganised, and painful. It is one in which there was sometimes self-doubt, occasional over-reliance on some authors and some approaches, and often an intense feeling of being trapped. To submit to the various pressures would be tantamount to succumbing and surrendering, and would negate the considerable investment of time, money and *"self"* into the project. To continue the struggle often felt masochistic and was perceived as obsessional by those close to me personally and professionally. The following reference illustrates the point:

"When the analysis and writing of the report began I became marginalised to my family, my school and the various other social and professional aspects of my life. By making space for this time consuming and all-embracing activity, I found that I became totally absorbed in the process of re-creating the social milieu I had encountered during the fieldwork.

The experience was not without pain. It could also be intensely pleasurable and absorbing. I discovered both the agony and the ecstasy of being a researcher.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 25th September 1995)

As head of a comprehensive school, it was necessary for this research to be both relevant and integral to my work, since modern headship and the pursuit of academic study of this magnitude in the post-LMS and post-Dearing era are otherwise considered incompatible.

This chapter consists of a number of parts. Firstly, it charts the inner struggle experienced in addressing dilemmas associated with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Inevitably it does not do justice to the process, and it in no sense represents the sequence or chronology of events. Later, following initial definitions of *“practitioner research”* and *“action research”*, I discuss some opportunities and dilemmas associated with being a practitioner researcher, together with some ramifications of data collection procedures used in the four year period of fieldwork. The nature and value of keeping a research diary are discussed and reflections on the process offered. The chapter ends with a discussion of what constitutes quality in qualitative research, the ethnographic nature of the study, its particular use of narrative story, and a description of the procedural stages of the project.

3.2 Quantitative and Qualitative approaches to Practitioner Research:

The background to the approaches chosen, and the methodology used, may best be illustrated by initial reference to personal reflections documented as follows:

"This project began on my appointment to Bishop Lindis School, and whilst related to previous research, results from a different approach and method of enquiry.

I believe my grounding in quantitative empirical research principles to be extensive, and initially this made an understanding of qualitative research difficult. My orientation towards this project was therefore as *quantitative* action research. I encountered an initial philosophical and intellectual barrier to complete acceptance of more subjective approaches inherent in qualitative methodology.

As the research progressed I discovered the nature of my enquiry necessitated the approach chosen. Questions I asked with regard to managing cultural change, and experiences coming out of that process demanded more than statistical explanations.

I came to an understanding that human interactions and relationships are more than merely (major) factors in school development, but the very substance of them. Open ended interviews, participant observation and the study of documents are all essential strategies in capturing the nuances and meaning of the lives of the participants in the social drama which began to unfold. I recognise that I was a key player in socio-cultural changes in the school. Sometimes these changes took place at enormous speed."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 12th November, 1995)

It has been reassuring, for reasons already cited, to learn that an initial inclination of many practitioners is to attempt quantitative, statistical research in their own settings. Although much educational research is of this kind, I recognise it represents only one of a number of options available to practitioner researchers. It is true, of course, that some questions may be best pursued statistically and there are some books available that address this kind of practitioner research (e.g., Brause and Mayher, 1991; Myers, 1985; Rowntree, 1981).

I also recognise that quantitative and qualitative methodologies need not necessarily be seen in dichotomous terms. Sometimes, for example, questionnaires can provide a focus for subsequent interviews. The nature of questions explored in this study, have necessarily influenced methods chosen. Nevertheless, there is evidence in the literature that there is a natural initial over-reliance on quantitative

approaches, even when qualitative research is subsequently acknowledged as more appropriate. In the following reference, Elliott suggests that there can be good practical reasons for wanting to opt for a quantitative approach, by stating that:

“Teacher researchers in schools tend to opt for quantitative methods of data collection, such as questionnaires, in preference to qualitative methods, such as naturalistic observations and interviews, because the latter involve ‘personalised’ situations in which colleagues and pupils find it difficult to divorce an individual’s position and rôle as researcher from his/her other positions and rôles within the school (see Elliott *et al.* 1979).”

(Elliott, 1991, p. 62)

The situation identified by Elliott is not unique, as illustrated by Simons, who observes that:

“...teachers prefer to use questionnaires in order ‘to distance themselves’ from the potentially disturbing effects interviewing and observing can have on personal relationships in a school.”

(Simons, 1978, in Elliott, 1991, p. 62)

She also argues that teachers do not automatically build their research rôle on ‘*natural practice*’ by exercising the same skills and qualities which make them good teachers. Practitioner researchers tend to distrust these skills and qualities, preferring to switch into:

“what they assume is the rôle of the researcher, adopting the canons of practice they perceive to be those of the researcher.”

(*ibid.* p. 63)

From these initial examples it seems reasonable to argue that in some cases, with some researchers, the “*teacher*” identity is split off from the “*researcher*” identity in segregated rôles, rather than being unified within a single teacher-researcher rôle by a set of qualities and skills generic to it. There are a number of dilemmas and tensions associated with this issue which will be discussed as this chapter unfolds.

Quantitative research, with which I felt comfortable from the outset of this project, is experimental. Its findings are based on *"hard data"*. Quantitative research adopts an *"outer perspective"*, and is *"empirical"* in nature. It is *"positivistic"*; that is, it takes the view that *"social facts"* exist and can be ascertained (Durkheim, 1895). It is based on *"statistical evidence"* and may be considered to be *"etic"* since cultural events and behaviour patterns are described by the researcher and illustrated through research literature.

This qualitative research project, by comparison, has been conducted using *"fieldwork"* in which *"soft data"* have been collected. It is *"ethnographic"* and might be perceived as a holistic view of the cultural and micro-political milieu of Bishop Lindis School and its community. As a qualitative researcher, I have adopted an *"inner perspective"*, and research has been *"naturalistic"*, or *"relativistic"*, since I have endeavoured not to place confidence in the existence of so called social facts. This research may be considered to be *"emic"*, since I have also endeavoured to describe cultural and behavioural patterns as they are viewed by participants themselves.

I accept that the school, as I perceive it, may appear differently to my colleagues, and have therefore set out to explore, and, to some extent, understand the school from their point of view; that of the *"social actors"* within it (Silverman, 1970). I have not so much sought to obtain a set of facts, as to gain an insight into a perspective. This study sets out, then, to view events, actions, norms and values from the perspective of the people being studied, my professional and governor colleagues at Bishop Lindis School.

I endeavour to understand the meaning of events and interactions as my fellow participants appear to understand them. I try not to assume what individual events and situations mean to them as social actors (Douglas, 1976). I try to make sense of multiple ways of interpreting experiences accessible to me as researcher, through my interactions with colleagues, in order to *"construct reality"* through the meaning of those experiences (Greene, 1978). Through this process it may be demonstrated that reality can be *"socially constructed"* (Berger and Luckman, 1967).

The resulting case study of Bishop Lindis School is essentially descriptive and interpretative and is based on *"historical and documentary sources"*, *"open ended interview"* and *"participant observation"*. I am chiefly interested in identifying and describing mundane, *"taken-for-granted"* aspects of the social reality of the school. Understanding the consequent data necessitates a belief in the significance of the context in which the various social dramas are played out.

Whilst both this study and my previous work are influenced by a sociological perspective, previously I was concerned with notions related to *"systems theory"*, *"behaviourism"* and *"structural functionalism"*. By comparison, this study is placed within a *"cultural and micro-political setting"* and it is framed around the concept of *"symbolic interaction"*. Symbolic interaction is based on the assumption that human experience is mediated by interpretation (Blumer, 1969). The symbolic interactionist perspective is one in which objects, people, situations and events do not possess their own meaning; rather it is conferred on them.

In applying this perspective to the research, I recognise that human beings are actively engaged in creating their own world, and act, not on the basis of pre-determined responses to pre-defined objects, but rather as interpreting, defining, symbolic beings whose behaviour can only be understood (by me) by my entering into the defining process (their world) as a participant observer, and then seeking their construction (interpretation) of the events under study.

Methodologically, then, symbolic interaction becomes the "*conceptual paradigm*" as opposed to internal drives, personality traits, unconscious motives, needs, socio-economic status, rôle obligations, cultural prescriptions, and social-control mechanisms of social actors, or of the physical environment in which the action takes place.

In applying this concept to the development of a research methodology, it is believed that other concepts, such as Maslow's "*Hierarchy of Needs*", are in no sense negated. There is, however, implicit in this approach, a requirement that such "*needs*" are understood through their symbolic meaning, and not merely as a set of rules, regulations, norms and belief systems. It is also recognised that organisations vary in the extent to which they provide fixed meanings and the extent to which alternative meanings are created within them.

Probably the most important aspect of symbolic interaction theory relating to the methodological approach in this research project is the construct of the "*self*". The self is not seen to be lying inside an individual like the ego, or as an organised body of needs, motives, and internalised norms or values. The self is the definition people create, through interacting with others, of who they are. In constructing or

defining self, people attempt to see themselves as others see them by interpreting gestures and actions directed towards them and by playing themselves in the rôle of the other person. A central aspect of this process is that people come to see themselves, in part, as others see them. It is believed that the adoption of this perspective encourages a self-critical approach to the research act.

The self is thus a social construction - the result of persons perceiving themselves and then developing a definition through the process of interaction. This way of conceptualising the self has led to studies of the *"self-fulfilling prophecy"* and has provided the background for what has come to be called the *"labelling approach"* to deviant behaviour (Becker, 1963; Erickson, 1962; and Rist, 1977).

Thus, in applying key concepts of *"meaning"*, *"common sense understanding"*, *"everyday-life"*, *"process"*, *"social construction"*, *"definition of situation"*, *"negotiated order"* and *"grounded theory"*, I adopt a qualitative approach which is in sharp contrast to my former research experience. In previously carrying out quantitative research, the key concepts in which I dealt were those of *"variable"*, *"operationalisation"*, *"hypothesis"*, *"reliability"*, *"validity"*, *"statistical significance"*, *"replication"*, and *"prediction"*.

Previously my goals were to test theories, to establish facts, to provide statistical descriptions, and to show relationships between variables. My goals in this project, by comparison, are to develop *"sensitising concepts"*, to describe *"multiple realities"*, to develop *"understanding"* and to develop, adopt and apply *"grounded theory"*.

Whilst previously engaged in designing structured, predetermined, formal and specific research projects in which I developed detailed plans of operation and action, this project evolved in a more flexible and general way, and I often followed hunches as to how I might proceed. There was no unquestionable prescription for action. There were no off-the-shelf recipes to follow. The whole process was an extremely challenging, albeit stimulating undertaking.

My initial quantitative research proposal was quite extensive. It was reasonably detailed with a specific focus, and involved detailed and specific procedures. I attempted an initial review of literature, written prior to any data collection, with some tentative hypotheses postulated. It was only following substantial fieldwork in which I grappled with data, that I began to form new, brief and speculative proposals for ways in which the research might proceed. The data itself suggested some directions in which it might both proceed and subsequently be deemed relevant.

My proposals were repeatedly drafted and re-drafted in attempting to establish a framework for progress. Many attempts at progressing in the first two or three years were thwarted and frustrated by a failure to internalise the process through which I subsequently had to direct myself. Whilst I understood, or thought I understood in cerebral terms, what was expected of me, I had not engaged the critical faculties necessary in carrying out such a monumental endeavour.

Previously I had experience of quantifying and codifying data, through various counting and measuring procedures. My expertise was in statistical analysis in which I manipulated operationalised variables. As this project gained maturity, I

found myself confronted with a plethora of field-notes, personal and organisational documents, colleagues' own words, descriptive accounts of meetings, situations and encounters, not to mention attempts, initially haphazard, of keeping a research diary and research log. The research diary was subsequently recognised as central to methodological processes engaged in by qualitative researchers. The value and rôle of the diary should neither be discounted, nor should the difficulties in sustaining it alongside full time employment be underestimated.

Subjectively, the research diary and associated research logs have become, for me, the most ambiguous and contradictory elements of the research process. On the one hand they have evidenced the richest and most valuable data informing the ethnography, whilst on the other hand the consistency and rigour with which they were maintained represent the weakest aspects of my methodology.

Potentially, the research diary has four functions (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, pp. 100-104, and p. 146). Firstly, as a record of observational notes, it provides a means for recording events experienced chiefly through watching and listening. The aim of this function is to provide as little interpretation as possible, by carefully constructing a reliable source of logged data. Secondly, as a record of methodological notes, it provides statements that reflect planned and completed operations, including instructions, reminders, aide memoirs and a critique of research tactics used. Methodological notes contain details of timing, sequencing, stationing, stage-setting and manoeuvring, and are a means of self-observation and reflection in the methodological process. Thirdly, as a record of theoretical notes, it provides a means for self-conscious, controlled attempts at deriving meaning from other collected and logged data. Finally, as a record of analytical memos, it

enables the researcher to make, elaborate on, and link inferences in abstractions with which to inform the ethnography.

By contrast, I was used to justifying research through the use of large stratified samples. I used control groups and random selection techniques, being careful to provide controls for extraneous variables. The whole emphasis was on precision. This research project, by contrast, is based on just one institution. It is non-representative and small by comparison with my previous experience. It is difficult to claim significance for what has been undertaken. My only concession to scale is in terms of the longitudinal approach adopted.

Whilst initially I was more comfortable with setting up experiments or quasi-experiments, or conducting surveys in which to conduct structured interviews and structured observation, I reconciled my new mode of thinking and operating to such techniques as participant observation, reviewing documents and open-ended interviewing. I now recognise that former approaches are inadequate to deal with research issues addressed in this project.

My relationships with subjects in previous research was circumscribed, distant and short-term. In this research I had to be empathetic and egalitarian in approach. There has necessarily been an emphasis on trust, with intense levels of contact with colleagues. Whilst acknowledged as friends, I stayed as detached as possible from them in order to make sense of meaning they ascribed to events and situations in which we engaged.

As a quantitative researcher I used inventories, questionnaires, indexes, scales and test scores, and analysed the resultant data with the assistance of appropriate computer software. The only research instrument I permitted myself in this project was *"myself"*. I make no claim to being anything other than a *"blunt instrument"* in the early stages of the research. Techniques were used to maintain rigour, the most frequent being that of triangulation.

"Triangles possess enormous strength. Among other things, they make the basic frames of bicycles, gates and house roofs. Triangulation enables extraordinary precision over phenomenal distances in astronomy. Similarly, in social scientific research, the use of three or more different methods or bearings to explore an issue greatly increases the chances of accuracy."

(Woods, 1991, p. 87)

I decided that tape recording would be too intrusive in many situations likely to be rich in data, and that I would rely on memory, not even allowing myself the luxury of writing notes at the time, since to do so might have been perceived as intrusive. On the one hand this decision led to subsequent difficulties in writing up the content of meetings and informal interviews. On the other hand, and more positively, it enforced a development and honing of skills vis-à-vis the reconstruction of colleagues' accounts and their understandings of shared realities. I also developed recall skills necessary in attaching and ascribing meaning to situations recounted by them.

My previous understanding of data analysis was that it should be *"hypothetico-deductive"*, and that it would occur at the conclusion of the data collection period. In this research I found myself forced into an ongoing process in which data analysis, albeit rudimentary at times, took place alongside collection. The processes in which I was involved, were inductive and became based on models,

themes and concepts. I engaged in a process of analytical induction, in which I attempted to apply a *"constant comparative methodology"* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; and Strauss, 1987). This process is particularly frustrating and challenging when new models, themes, or concepts evolve from the interminable background reading, and it is necessary to re-trace steps, and re-analyse events and situations in the light of discovering new ways of thinking and applying meaning and understanding. This approach necessitated a flexibility of field research in order to respond to changing circumstances, or changing priorities that I, as researcher, identified.

Problems previously encountered in quantitative research: controlling other variables, reification, obtrusiveness and validity, pale into insignificance by comparison with those encountered in doing this particular piece of qualitative research. This research was extraordinarily time-consuming, particularly when carried out in conjunction with the responsibilities and pressures inherent in leading a comprehensive school. I found the process of data reduction and justifying its relevance particularly formidable and onerous on occasions. Making sense of an array of different forms of data also added to problems encountered.

In summary, and in seeking to justify the considerable investment made in this project, it seems essential that *"ontological and epistemological"* underpinnings of this research come directly from my experience, and understanding, of my rôle as a head. They shape, in varying degrees, every part of the methodology, and that inevitably includes how findings are both established and reported.

It is important to register at this point that this research is based on a number of assumptions. It assumes the complexity and richness of the human subject. It assumes that human beings attach meaning to their lives and their behaviour. It assumes a fundamental reliance on the goodwill of colleagues in order for the research to be undertaken. It assumes that issues of power and relationships between participants need to be engaged with. The research also assumes the possibility and potential importance of unintended consequences. It assumes a problematic relation between official discourse or rhetoric and actual practice. It assumes a perennial dilemma between experiencing the process of research and representing it in particular ways to oneself and to others.

Whilst qualitative research is understood to mean anything from ethnographic methods to journals and essays, essentially, this research is a collection of on-the-spot procedures designed to deal with concrete problems located in immediate situations. This means that step-by-step processes used needed to be monitored over the entire time in which fieldwork took place, by a variety of mechanisms (e.g. consulting documents, participant observation, entries in the research log and diary, and interviews). Ensuing feedback was translated into modifications, adjustments, directional changes and re-definitions, as necessary, so as to bring about lasting benefit to the ongoing process itself rather than to some future occasion.

Although data collection was achieved through various means, interviewing, participant observation, the study of documents, and keeping a research log and diary are seen as particularly important research tools in this action research context. I believe that the methodology adopted equates fairly with the rôle and responsibilities inherent in *"qualitative and reflective practitioner action research"*.

3.3 Practitioner Research:

Before discussing opportunities and dilemmas of *“practitioner research”*, it seems appropriate to discern what it is, and what constitutes the use of the term. There are many ways of describing research done by school practitioners within their own organisations in current use in the contemporary literature. The most commonly used terms in circulation are: *“action enquiry”* (Bell, 1985); *“action learning”* (Revans, 1982; and Morgan, 1993); *“action research”* (Dewey, 1916; Lewin, 1946; Corey, 1949, 1953 and 1954; Stenhouse, 1970; Freire, 1970; Kemmis, 1982; Elliott, 1991; and Argyris and Schön, 1991); *“action science”* (Torbert, 1981; Argyris, Putman and Smith, 1985); *“collaborative action research”* (Tikunoff, Ward and Griffin, 1979; Griffin, Lieberman, and Jacullo-Noto, 1982; Huling and Johnson, 1983; Ross, 1983; Oja and Ham, 1984; Oakes, Hare and Sirotnik, 1986); *“educative research”* (Gitlin *et al.*, 1992; Russell, 1992); *“emancipatory praxis”* (See participatory research); *“insider research”* (See practitioner research); *“participatory research”* (Fals Borda, 1979; Fernandes and Tandon, 1981; Hall, 1981; Tandon, 1981; Brown and Tandon, 1983; Yopo, 1984; Gaventa, 1988); *“practitioner research”* (Dewey, 1916; Lewin, 1946; Corey, 1949, 1953 and 1954; Stenhouse, 1970; Freire, 1970 and Kemmis, 1982; McKernan, 1988; Argyris and Schön, 1991; Elliott, 1991; Anderson *et al.*, 1994); *“reflective practice”* (Schön, 1983); *“site-based research”* (see practitioner research); and *“teacher research”* (Graves, 1981; Atwell, 1982; Myers, 1985; and Goswami and Stillman, 1987).

Each of the researchers above uses different terms to register different emphases. Sometimes a single researcher uses more than one term to compare and contrast different approaches embodied within his or her research. This is particularly the

case regarding the interchangeability of *“action research”* and *“practitioner research”*. In general, however, it may be argued, that each different term represents a different research tradition that has grown out of a specific social context.

The term practitioner research has been adopted in this study for both pragmatic and philosophical reasons. As has been demonstrated, other terms, such as *“action enquiry”*, *“action learning”*, *“action research”*, *“collaborative action research”*, and *“insider research”* are still widely used in education, and also have relevance to the methodologies adopted in this project. These terms are often associated with a particular academic social science tradition, but will be used in connection with some of the research activity in this project, when such terminology is deemed appropriate.

“Practitioner research”, a term increasingly used by school practitioners because it places them at the centre of the enterprise, is considered less exclusive than the term *“teacher research”* in this study where the predominant activity of the head is not teaching. It is recognised, however, that the term *“teacher research”*, adopted by a movement of researchers in the United States of America, recently extended to embrace all school practitioners (Anderson *et al.*, 1994, p. 1).

The term *“practitioner research”* appears, by definition, to exclude other participants in the process of education, such as students, parents, and other community members. It certainly does not exclude the possibility of influence from such groups. Whilst the term also appears to exclude the important component of *“action”*; action is the essence of this particular practitioner research project.

The literature is cluttered with an array of allied but confusing terms, and to be more precise would add to overall bewilderment. The emerging term prevalent in both the USA and the European Literature is *"practitioner research"*. It is for this reason that the adoption of a more inclusive, but more cumbersome, term, e.g. *"qualitative and reflective practitioner action enquiry"*, is rejected.

Amidst the plethora of terms used to describe this type of research, practitioner research is a living, growing movement in the process of evolving. There still appears wide disagreement on many key issues. Nevertheless, a working definition of practitioner research, together with an exposition of working assumptions, is an essential starting point.

3.4 Defining Practitioner Research as it relates to this Study:

In attempting to provide a working definition of practitioner research, it becomes clear that every point in providing a definition is likely to be controversial and at the centre of debate in the developing literature. This attempt at a definition, therefore, aims to encapsulate prevailing understanding of the term, and its use in this particular project, at this particular time, in this particular school.

In this study, practitioner research is insider research in which, as head of the school, I use the educational setting immediately available to me on a daily basis as the focus for the project. I understand this, of necessity, to be a *"reflective"* process (Schön, 1983). It is important, however, that it is distinguished from spontaneous reflection, which is usually isolated, in that I see *"reflective practitioner research"* as deliberately and systematically undertaken. It is intended that in this

research I will provide evidence presented to support findings. What constitutes "evidence" or, in more traditional terms, "data", is subject to continuing debate.

Most practitioner researchers, and this is true of my position, address a particular situation in which some "action or cycle of actions" is undertaken. It is for this reason that the term "action research" is traditionally used to describe this type of research.

Whilst this project has a "qualitative action research perspective", I recognise that to give a comprehensive definition is difficult, because usage varies with time, place and setting. For this reason, the following conventional definitions are offered as a starting point. Practitioner action research may thus be seen as:

".....a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention."

(Halsey, 1972, in Bell *et al.*, 1984, p. 41)

".....a form of self-reflective problem solving which enables practitioners to better understand and solve pressing problems in social settings"

(McKernan, 1988, p.6)

".....the systematic collection of information that is designed to bring about social change"

(Bogdan and Biklen, 1992, p. 223)

Whilst the rationale underpinning this research is to improve professional practice of participants, I recognise it as important to examine effects of interventions, which in some instances are counter-productive to the ideal as stated. What constitutes appropriate social change or improvement is not self-evident, and therefore subject to value judgements. The process of practitioner research is thus inevitably value laden. This can be particularly problematic in a field such as education, where

there is no consensus on basic educational philosophy. Anderson *et al.* (1994) illustrate this difficulty by stressing that:

“Practitioner research takes place in educational settings that reflect a society characterised by conflicting values and an unequal distribution of resources and power.”

(Anderson *et al.* 1994, p. 3)

The extract above points to some political implications of action research. It is for this reason, and in order to create ownership of an established philosophical basis for the project, that the first cycle of innovation at Bishop Lindis School, includes an aims exercise.¹

In developing a methodological framework, it is necessary to seek out more detailed definitions of practitioner research on which to found research methods.

For example, McCutcheon and Jung (1990) define action research as:

“...systematic inquiry that is collective, collaborative, self-reflective, critical, and undertaken by the participants of the inquiry. The goals of such research are the understanding of practice and the articulation of a rationale or philosophy of practice in order to improve practice”

(McCutcheon and Jung, 1990, p. 148)

The definition offered above is founded on the notion of research undertaken informing subsequent action, not on some indeterminate future occasion, but in almost immediate succession to its findings. Kemmis and McTaggart (1982) provide the following more detailed, specific and radical definition of practitioner research, and go further in identifying legitimate collaborators and participants.

¹ A detailed account of the aims exercise may be found in Chapter Five: The First Cycle of Innovation: September 1991-July 1992, and the aims themselves are in Appendix B.

They stress the notion of critically examined action as central to the methodology and see action research as:

“...a form of collective, self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out.

Groups of participants can be teachers, students, principals, parents, and other community members; any group with a shared concern. The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realise that the action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of the individual group members.”

(Kemmis and McTaggart, 1982, p. 6)

Both extracts quoted above, together with other definitions previously quoted, suggest that in a study such as this, it is judicious to remain as eclectic as possible with regard to definition. It is important, however, to offer a few assumptions that underpin the activity and rationale of this research. The assumptions offered here derive from engagement with the literature and experience of becoming a practitioner researcher.

3.5 Characteristics of Practitioner Research as applied to this Project:

The characteristics of this research project broadly emanate from a position as postulated by Elliott (1978). In particular, the broad aim is to deepen my understanding (practitioner's diagnosis), of the problem of managing innovation as head of a comprehensive school in a turbulent period of educational change. I therefore adopt an exploratory stance towards any initial definitions of the situation held.

Throughout this research I endeavour to adopt a theoretical stance in which any action intended to change a situation is temporarily suspended until a deeper understanding of the practical problems inherent in the situation is achieved. In making this statement, I accept that fellow participants may not necessarily concur with its sentiments, and may have their own ways of interpreting the process from their own points of view.

In explaining what goes on throughout the period of this research, I attempt to tell a "story" about the events by relating them to a context of "mutually interdependent contingencies" (Elliott, 1978), that is, events which hang together because they depend on each other for their occurrence. I endeavour to interpret what goes on from the point of view of those acting and interacting in the school situation; in particular my professional and governor colleagues (and sometimes the students).

Since this research seeks to look at situations from participants' points of view, I try to describe and explain what goes on in the same language they use; namely, the common-sense language used to describe and explain everyday human actions and social situations. The point is illustrated, and given a particular context, by reference to an entry in my research diary, 1 which I state that:

"The notion of writing an account of the various happenings in the language in which they occurred was a revelation to me, and only discovered after a number of false starts at writing up this project.

My supervisor, Professor Len Barton, made it clear that a research report couched in the language of abstract disciplines is unlikely to be a convincing product of genuine practitioner research."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 22nd September 1995)

Since this research looks at the problem of managing innovation from the point of view of those involved, I understand that ideally it can only be validated in unconstrained dialogue with them. Since, in theory, this type of research involves unconstrained dialogue between researcher and other participants, efforts were made to facilitate a free flow of information between participants. In practice this proved problematic. The following reference is offered by means of illustration:

"Since this research endeavours to look at situations from participants' points of view, and describes and explains what goes on in the same language they use, I believe that accounts of such research is best validated in dialogue with them.

However, the nature of data collected, and the daily pressures under which we all work, sometimes militates against this ideal."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 15th November 1995)

Throughout the progress of this project I acknowledge that this kind of qualitative research is necessarily concerned with everyday practical problems experienced by colleagues and myself as practitioners, rather than theoretical problems defined by academic researchers within a discipline of knowledge. It is also acknowledged that understanding (diagnosis), referred to above, does not dictate specific responses, but indicates more generally what sort of responses are appropriate. Understanding does not determine appropriate action, but appropriate action is grounded in understanding.

The "*story*", referred to above, is often referred to as a "*case study*". The mode of explanation used in this case study is "*naturalistic*" rather than "*formalistic*". Relationships are illuminated by concrete description rather than by formal statements of causal laws and statistical correlations. This case study attempts to provide a theory of the situation but it is a "*naturalistic theory*" embodied in

"narrative" form, rather than a *"formal theory"* stated in *"propositional"* form. In this case study, events are interpreted as human actions and transactions rather than natural processes subject to the laws of natural science. Actions and transactions are interpreted as expressions of colleagues' understandings of, and beliefs about their situations; and their choosing of appropriate courses of action in response to those situations.

There is support for the notion that practitioner research is best done in collaboration with others who have a vested interest in the problems under investigation. Because teachers' problems are often shared by other teachers, it was intended that this research should be based on co-operative, collaborative and collegiate approaches involving as many colleagues as possible. This is illustrated, and qualified to some extent, by the following reference, in which I state that:

"I wanted the project to be the result of a co-operative and collaborative effort. I saw this as essential to the development of teamwork within the school, and in particular in the SMT. I came to realise, however, that this principle could not be extended to embrace all staff.

There remains a challenge, as the work instigated in this project continues, to involve and embrace those who have become marginalised to both the project and to developments within the school."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 22nd September 1995)

A number of influential writers argue for collaborative approaches to practitioner research in schools. The following quotation from Hill and Kerber (1967), in support of this notion affirms that:

"Action research functions best when it is co-operative action research. This method of research incorporates the ideas and expectations of all persons involved in the situation. Co-operative action research has the concomitants of beneficial effects for workers, and the improvement of the services, conditions, and functions of the situation.

In education this activity translates into more practice in research and problem-solving by teachers, administrators, pupils, and certain community

personnel, while the quality of teaching and learning is in the process of being improved.”

(Hill and Kerber, 1967, in Bell *et al.*, 1984, p. 45)

Similarly, the following extract illustrates that Anderson *et al.* support the notion of collaborative action research, but offer an alternative approach to solving the problem of isolation, by stressing that:

“It is believed that practitioner research is best done as part of a collaborative effort. Ideally, collaboration is done with others who have a stake in the problem under study; however, it may also be done with a group of other practitioners who are also engaged in research. These other practitioners may or may not work at the same site, but they provide the practitioner researcher with an emotional support group, a group of critical friends who can critique one’s work within a context of support.

Although we do not wish to discourage isolated practitioners, many of whom may have limited access to other practitioner researchers, from engaging in research, the many advantages of collaboration are becoming increasingly apparent. In fact, many practitioner research projects have emerged unexpectedly from teacher study and support groups (Saavedra, 1994; Short *et al.*, 1993).”

(Anderson *et al.*, 1994, p. 7)

As seen from the reference above, such collaborators can include other educational practitioners in the school, students, parents, or other members of the community. Sometimes collaboration involves consultants, or professional researchers who have relevant skills or resources at their disposal.

In this study, collaborators include professional colleagues, in particular members of the SMT, together with an LEA inspector-adviser and appropriate members of the governing body. The following reference illustrates the nature of collaboration in this project, together with a caveat regarding the handling of sensitive findings:

“This research has involved me, together with colleagues, in self-reflection about our situation, as active participants in the study. My sharing of the accounts of dialogue with colleagues, and the interpretations and

explanations emerging from the research, forms an integral part of this process. Where judgements form part of the analysis, however, it is not always prudent to share sensitive findings.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 15th September, 1995)

Likewise, in the following reference, Elliott refers to difficulties in identifying individuals as opposed to protecting their identities. Whilst offering no solutions, he calls for progress in terms of the change in culture necessary in facing such dilemmas, to ensure the usefulness of the ensuing case study:

“Action research involves the collection, analysis and reporting of case data. The more useful the case studies, the more they will need to document practices in context, and this imposes limits on the extent to which personal identities can be hidden.

The individual’s right to privacy just doesn’t appear to be consistent with the methodological requirements of a collaborative reflective practice grounded in action research. Within a reflective professional culture ‘teacher’ and ‘researcher’ are two aspects of a single rôle in which teaching constitutes a form of research and research constitutes a form of teaching.

Resisting the temptation to embrace quantitative research methods, in order to accommodate a right to privacy within the methodology of insider research, does not imply that teacher researchers have an automatic right to collect, document or report insider information.”

(Elliott 1991, p. 64)

Hodgkinson (1957) indicates that teachers taking part in practitioner research are generally enthusiastic. They often feel, that as a staff they work more as a unit than before the research, that they are drawn closer together with the knowledge that they share problems and goals, and that respect for individuals, both teachers and students increases.

In the context of collaborative effort, Elliott argues that participants should have free access to the researcher’s data, interpretations and accounts, and that the

researcher must have free access to what is going on and their interpretations and accounts of it.

It is recognised that collaborative effort involves conflicting experiences, differences of viewpoint and contrasting interests. An additional factor, relevant to my relationship with colleagues, is that this research has been carried out within the constraints of a doctoral research programme. In this context, the following reference identifies another dilemma:

“Whilst I subscribe to the general principles of Elliott’s argument, in practice, in a busy developing school, the reality seems different.

Some of the data are of a personal and sensitive nature, and had they been released into the public arena of the school, the repercussions could have put the whole project in jeopardy.

In illustrating the dynamics of the relationships at play, it is necessary to allow some sensitive material to enter the public domain. This is not without risk, even when identities are protected by the use of pseudonym.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 22nd September 1995)

This practitioner research has differed from academic research, even though it has borrowed appropriate methods from such research, in that it represents “*insider or local knowledge*” about the school. Whilst there are advantages in being a practitioner researcher, it is often difficult for such researchers to step back and take a dispassionate look at the school. This subjectivity is a reason for the recommendation that practitioners do research in collaboration with outsiders or with a “*critical friend*”. This critical friend might also be an insider, but one who plays a devil’s advocate rôle. A major discussion of the differences between insider and outsider research is considered to be beyond the scope of this study.

Suffice it to say that these "*epistemological issues*",² are fundamental to the outcomes and currency of the resultant findings.

It has become clear, as this research has progressed, that no research is politically neutral. The progress of this research has dispelled naïveté about how it might be received within the school. Practitioner research often threatens vested interests and ideological commitments of some groups and some individuals in organisations being studied. This situation has been exacerbated at Bishop Lindis School by virtue of my dual rôle as head and practitioner researcher.

There are books that deal with epistemological and political issues of doing research, but some excellent accounts that are valuable resources for academics, tend to be less useful for practitioners, because their discourse is pitched at academics rather than practitioners (e.g., Carr and Kemmis, 1983; Kincheloe, 1991; Winter, 1987).

As a practitioner it is important that language serves as an aid rather than an obstacle to understanding. On the other hand, it is disturbing that there is a growing anti-intellectualism on the part of some, who assume that educational practitioners only want a "*nuts and bolts*" approach to their professional rôles. Anderson *et al.* make it clear that some (professional and academic) researchers:

"...assume that educational practitioners only want a nuts and bolts, 'what-can-I-do-on-Monday' recipe for answering *safe* and narrow questions limited to the four walls of a classroom or school. We find this trend toward "deskilling" insulting to educational practitioners, who, in our experience, desire a better understanding of their practice and its social effects....

² How we acquire and share knowledge.

...we are also beginning to understand, thanks to Argyris and Schön (1974), **that there is no such thing as practice that is non-theoretical.** Many of the recipes and tips for teachers that appear in practitioner journals are dripping with theoretical and ideological assumptions of which even their authors may be unaware.

Part of the task of practitioner research is to strip away the unexamined theoretical baggage that has accumulated around almost everything we do in schools. To do this, we must make the familiar seem strange, the very task of much qualitative research.”

(Anderson *et al.*, 1994, p. 5, *my emphasis.*)

An implication of the point emphasised above, attributed to Argyris and Schön, is fundamental to both action enquiry and action learning, since theory is understood to be developed *in situ* or on-the-job, so to speak. Theoretical implications of one's practice or actions undertaken as a practitioner, previously unrecognised and unanalysed, are necessarily integral to practitioner research.

As this research progressed, I discovered the process has potential to empower colleagues, and include a greater diversity of their involvement in educational policy and social change. Practitioner research provides an opportunity to make the voices of those who work closest to students heard. This can include students themselves, together with others who live in the school's community.

It is possible to view practitioner research, not merely as a means for individual practitioner's to improve practice, but as part of a larger social movement challenging dominant research practices that emphasise outside-in, top-down approaches to educational change. There is support in some relevant literature for the notion that empowerment can begin with educational practitioners, who view themselves not merely as consumers of someone else's knowledge, but as knowledge creators in their own right. In this context, Anderson *et al.* stress that:

"Unless educational practitioners who are committed to empowering themselves and their students begin to take over school reform movements, practitioner research will be co-opted by those very movements, which are led by special interests more concerned with 'national competitiveness' than with the welfare of children."

(*ibid.*, p. 6)

There are some authors who view the closing years of the millennium as exciting times for practitioner research. They argue that practitioner research has the potential to bring to light theories about educational practice that have been long discredited as informal theory or "*teacher lore*" (*ibid.*, p. 7).

According to Anderson *et al.*, the process of practitioner research can empower school practitioners:

"...by helping them discover their voices and resist attempts at deskilling. It can build collegiality and a common community of learning among practitioners, which in turn provides a model of inquiry for students.

On the other hand, it can also become one more teacher in-service scheme that can be packaged and taken on the road; another implementation strategy cooked up by management to "build ownership" in schools for the latest centrally mandated reform. It can become just one more expectation-one more thing teachers are expected to do."

(*ibid.*, 1994, p. 7)

There is evidence that some enthusiastic practitioners are building their own research networks. It is understood that when they invite experts to participate, it is increasingly on their own terms. It is also stressed by Anderson *et al.*, that "*it remains to be seen whether this movement will lead to empowerment or be co-opted as the latest teacher in-service scheme by a top-down reform movement*".

(*ibid.*, p. 8)

3.6 Opportunities and Dilemmas associated with Practitioner Research:

In this section I attempt to analyse some opportunities and dilemmas experienced by practitioners in carrying out research in their own schools. There is also discussion of ways in which dilemmas need to be addressed *if* practitioner research in schools is to play a transformative rôle with respect to professional culture.

With regard to dilemmas, it is understood that they might properly be considered as problems which have become internalised. Elliott explains the phenomenon in the following way:

"Dilemmas for *practitioner researchers* can arise from a clash of professional values between those which underpin the traditional craft culture and those which underpin an emergent culture of reflective practice. This clash occurs not so much between as within individuals.

A situation in which a group of teachers unambiguously embraces the values of collective practice and as a result is opposed by others who unambiguously embrace the values of the craft culture, constitutes a problem for both groups but a dilemma for neither"

(Elliott, 1991, p.57-58)

Elliott's explanation is congruent with my own leadership experience which I had not thought of explaining in these terms. Elliott continues by providing an analysis which also resonates with my own experience when he states that:

"Dilemmas arise when individuals experience the clash of cultures within. They may not be consciously aware of these internal contradictions, in which case dilemmas can manifest themselves as interpersonal conflicts in which each party projects one of the clashing sets of values on to the other and thereby *'disowns'* it.

This enables the members of one group to view themselves as an enlightened elite and of the other to cast themselves as the guardians of common sense. It is not a very productive state of affairs with respect to any radical transformation in the professional culture of teachers more generally."

(*ibid.*, p. 58)

The foregoing analysis is so relevant to my understanding of a situation at Bishop Lindis School as to have been a revelation. These few short sentences represent an insight into what I had perceived as a problem, being transcribed into a dilemma, and thereby made accessible and amenable to change.

Both Simons (1978) and Elliott *et al.* (1979) have formulated hypotheses about dilemmas in practitioner research in schools following courses they mounted to support and facilitate such activity. James and Ebbutt (1980) have also written about dilemmas they experienced as insider researchers prior to becoming university-based researchers.

I have already referred to difficulties regarding the time-consuming nature of research and its associated activities. It is comforting to know that this problem is repeatedly cited by teachers and other practitioners. Simons (1978) points out that teachers involved in *"insider research-evaluation"* activities see themselves first and foremost as classroom teachers. As such:

'Their first loyalty, in primary schools, is to the pupils and in secondary schools to their subjects.'

(Simons, 1978, in Elliott, 1991, p. 66)

It appears that the problem of time for practitioner research tends to be viewed as a *"teaching-professional activity versus research"* dilemma which often gets resolved in favour of the former. In discussing their personal experience of the problem, James and Ebbutt (1980) are sympathetic to such a resolution.

In wondering where motivation for organisational change can come from, I believe it is appropriate to look more frequently to heads and principals. It may be, that

although such suggestions are not implicit in Elliott's analysis, he recognises that pressures he perceives being applied to teachers, are also inherent in the rôle of the head. He does not specifically address issues of the head as researcher, and were he to do so, it might be possible to demonstrate that heads are uniquely placed to help achieve the very conditions and changes in professional culture he seeks.

Some practitioners are understood to feel blocked from doing research because they have a particular image of it, acquired from studies undertaken in undergraduate or post-graduate courses. In all likelihood, these studies taught students to do quantitative, statistical research in which representative samples, significance levels, and confounding variables were the order of the day. It is only in recent years that some introductory courses have presented students with a fuller range of research traditions. Elliott makes the point that:

"Teacher researchers, with the exception of those linked to award bearing courses in institutions of higher education, are reluctant to produce case studies of their reflective practices.

From my experience of working with teacher researchers in schools, I would argue that the reluctance paradoxically coincides with a strong desire for professional acknowledgement from within and beyond their institutions, of their rôle as reflective practitioners.

...Teacher educators from higher education can do much to support and sustain the growth of a reflective professional culture in schools, which includes fostering the methodological self-reflection so essential for resolving dilemmas of insider research in ways which transform the professional culture rather than reinforce its traditional values and norms."

(Elliott, 1991, p. 67)

Methodologies developed on the presumption that the researcher's rôle is that of an impartial spectator do not easily fit the logic of reflective practice or action

research. Practitioner research is a *"murky and messy"* business. It is personal, political, intrusive, challenging and risky.

The head of a school is often cast in the rôle of gatekeeper, particularly where access to do the all important fieldwork is concerned. It is suggested by Elliott that heads can more easily be persuaded to provide access for outsiders than their own colleagues. Heads are also considered gatekeepers of change, and as such are viewed in much contemporary literature as cautious and reactionary protectors of traditional craft culture:

"James and Ebbutt (1980) argue that the head is as much of a gatekeeper when it comes to insider researchers' access to parental data as (s)he is to outsider researchers' access."

(*ibid.*, p. 59)

Elliott would tend to argue that the head's power with respect to the former is far greater than it is with the latter:

"The head who sees his/her rôle as facilitating reflective practice would value the critical openness implicit in teachers' attempts to elicit parental views and support such attempts with positive guidance and help. Now I am not naïve enough to believe that headteachers generally have the vision, courage and social skills which characterise the qualities of leadership in reflective professional communities."

(*ibid.*, p. 59)

This research project might be considered almost unique in that through it access is provided to a wealth of fieldwork data, the gatekeeper being the researcher himself as head of the organisation. It is recognised, of course, that for heads, the governors of the school are also gatekeepers. The difference is that they are the gatekeepers *"in absentia"*, since whilst invariably they give their consent for

necessary access, they do not operate *"in situ"*, and do not oversee the daily activity of the researcher in ways that are possible for gatekeeper-heads.

What appears not to be recognised is the extent to which a head's colleagues also act in the capacity of gatekeepers to both access to the field, and to the process of change itself. Whilst they might not have formal authority as gatekeepers, it is understood that an informal network can come into play which has the same inhibiting and detrimental effects. In more creative terms, such gatekeeper colleagues provide both challenge and points of reference for consultation prior to engaging in fieldwork associated with research or in the implementation of particular innovations.

3.7 Quality in Qualitative Research:

When first considering the possibility of doctoral research, it was perhaps inevitable, together with most others in a similar situation, that I should come with a quantitative agenda. It is in this context that I understand issues about *"validity"* and *"reliability"* to be paramount. I also recognise that there are some tried and tested ways of establishing them in a research study. Questions like, *"Can this be replicated?"* and *"Is this a representative sample?"* are familiar questions from my previous research experience.

I discovered on setting out on this new journey of qualitative research, that whilst issues about *"reliability"* and *"validity"* apply to both quantitative and qualitative research, they are conceived of, and arrived at, in different ways. It seems appropriate, that whilst these concepts are paramount, the use of different terms has sometimes been substituted. It is for this reason that terms like

"trustworthiness", "credibility", "transferability", "dependability" and "confirmability" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), or of *"authenticity criteria"* (Guba and Lincoln, 1989) are viewed as more fitting. An important criterion in making this piece of qualitative research authentic, is in acknowledging that the substitution of these terms is not merely a matter of inventing different ways for the qualitative researcher to say the same things the positivists say. They indicate real differences.

Bell (1985), for example, in advocating a form of action research which he calls *"action inquiry"*, and which is the result of merging elements from both action research and case study approaches, develops a more coherent strategy in assessing professional knowledge. He outlines four criteria of rigour:

- *"Credibility* - the study must be believable by those who are competent to judge the subject of investigation;
- *Transferability* - the study must be able to promote the exchange of experience from one practitioner to another; lessons must be capable of being learned from the evidence provided;
- *Dependability* - the study must be trustworthy through having gathered evidence by reliable procedures;
- *Confirmability* - the study must be capable of being scrutinised for absence of bias by making its evidence and methods of analysis accessible."

(Bell, 1985, p. 181, in Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989, p. 217)

With regard to *"credibility"* Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that a credible piece of research is one which can be believed by the people who were studied as well as by the readers of the subsequent report. They also suggest that to be credible a researcher must:

- "have prolonged engagement in the field;
- do persistent observation;
- triangulate;
- search for negative cases;
- determine referential adequacy;
- experience peer debriefing; and

- check with the people one studied.”

(Lincoln and Guba, 1985 in Ely *et al.*, 1991, p. 95-96)

Lincoln and Guba (1985) do not see findings as merely generalisable, but rather as transferable from a sending context to a receiving context. In relation to “*transferability*” they suggest that:

“If there is to be transferability, the burden of proof lies less with the original investigator than with the person seeking to make an application elsewhere. The original inquirer cannot know the sites to which transferability might be sought, but the appliers can and do. The best advice to give anyone seeking to make a transfer is to accumulate empirical evidence about contextual similarity; the responsibility of the original investigator ends in providing sufficient descriptive data to make such similarity judgements possible.”

(Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 298, in Anderson *et al.*, 1994, p. 33)

Qualitative researchers tend to view “*dependability*” (Watkins, 1991), which is a form of process validity (Anderson *et al.*, 1994), as a fit between what they record as data and what actually occurs in the setting under study, rather than consistency across different observations. Two researchers studying a single setting, for example, might come up with different data and produce different findings. Both studies can still be dependable. The dependability of one or both studies might only be questioned if they yield contradictory or incompatible results.

In addressing the concept of “*confirmability*” qualitative researchers ask to what extent the research is acceptable to those with whom it has been done in collaboration. This form of democratic validity (Anderson *et al.*, 1994) is sometimes called “*local validity*” (Cunningham, 1983) and equates with “*relevancy*” and “*applicability*” (Watkins, 1991).

3.8 The Ethnographic Nature of the Research:

Whilst the terms *“fieldwork”* and *“ethnography”* are used interchangeably in social research, for the purposes of this study *“fieldwork”* is understood to refer to the means by which the product, the ethnographic description of Bishop Lindis School, its groups, its organisation, its culture, its micro-politics and its set of practices develop. Fieldwork is the primary means by which data which informs and illustrates the ethnography are obtained.

The fieldwork for this study involved my prolonged, intensive and direct involvement as practitioner researcher, in the lives and activities of the members of Bishop Lindis School. Data collection was achieved through longitudinal fieldwork between September 1991 and July 1995.

One of the difficulties of discussing the term *“ethnography”*, is that it can be used, and confused, with other terms like *“participant observation”*, *“qualitative methodology”*, *“case study”*, and *“qualitative action research”*. Ethnography is not easy to define precisely for these reasons. This being the case, in trying to understand the essence of the approach, it is probably better that I should focus on the kinds of features which are characteristic of ethnography as used in this study.

One of the most striking features of ethnographic research is its use of a wide range of sources of data. Whilst observation, interviewing and the study of documents are main sources of data, this study aims to focus upon the micro-level of human interactions and social processes, including the micro-politics of the school, and their relationship to its changing culture.

Thus, the development of this ethnographic case study has resulted in:

- an initial description of the historical development, culture, and micro-politics of Bishop Lindis School as an educational organisation pre-September 1991 (Chapter One);
- a contribution to the development of theory, with regard to both organisational analysis and the management of innovation within Bishop Lindis School as a developing organisation in a post-industrial, post-modern, technological environment, through the development and application of cultural and political prisms, and autocratic, bureaucratic, adhocratic and reticular-democratic lenses (Chapter Two);
- a description and analysis of the developing culture and micro-political activity prevalent at Bishop Lindis School, and the provision of insider accounts, primarily those of the participants and myself as practitioner researcher, between September 1991 and July 1995, from the point of view of the actors playing out social dramas, through the application of both cultural and political prisms as described in Chapter Two (Chapters Four to Eight).

The resulting ethnographic case study is the realisation of encounters and experience of extensive fieldwork. It formalises my overt involvement as researcher and as head of the school, and the data obtained over the longitudinal period of the study, September 1991 to July 1995.

3.9 Narrative Story:

The device used to write up this ethnographic case study of Bishop Lindis School is that of the narrative story. Justification for the approach, which does not easily transfer from the positivistic empirical approach adopted in my previous research, emanates from encouragement from my supervisor, Professor Len Barton, and from quotations such as the following:

“Social scientists probably have a lot to learn from novelists and essayists. They’d best not set themselves apart, but rather try to understand what it is that they can learn from them to improve their own trade.”

(Bogdan and Biklen, 1982, in Ely *et al.*, 1991, p. 173)

I have become aware that many researchers combine a number of approaches to the final presentation of their ethnographies. Each individual researcher often brings a particular shade of newness to writing. It may be in colour, or order of presentation, or in a particularly vibrant way of using quotations, or in presenting a new narrative device.

The approach adopted for this case study can be summarised as:

- a *case study* of Bishop Lindis School as a bounded system, in order to illuminate important findings about the management of innovation, manipulation of culture, and micro-politics within the entire social arena of the school;
- a *composite* which describes the findings as they apply to a group of people from the perspective of those participants as understood by the practitioner researcher as a leader of that group;
- an account which includes descriptions of *critical incidents* from the data collected in the fieldwork, representing *hallmarks* of the findings;
- an account which includes presentations of *snapshots, moving pictures and re-runs*, each depicting a "*captured totality*" of particular data under scrutiny; and
- a study in *contrasts and contradictions*, which focuses on *congruencies and convergences*, as well as *differences and dissonances* in leading, and in managing the process of innovation at Bishop Lindis School.

It is believed that this approach has fitted with prevailing practitioner culture in which, whilst less systematic, stories are shared daily among teachers, as part of an oral craft tradition. In relating this phenomenon to naturalistic research, Holland (1992) states:

"Stories have their own kind of power to engage the mind of the reader or the listener. As Bruner (1986) has described it, this power resides in the ability of narrative, as a distinct mode of cognitive functioning, to establish "not truth, but verisimilitude" (Bruner, 1986, p. 11)

(Holland, 1992, p. 200)

The resultant ethnography is the product of continual revision. In spite of a series of revisions, it is perhaps inevitable that the final text does not do justice to the magnitude and significance of the study either to myself as researcher, or to Bishop Lindis School as an organisation. Most importantly, the process is a learning one, in which knowledge associated with the rôle of the practitioner researcher is accrued, evolved and developed. The following extract provides affirmation of the methods adopted in continually revising the text:

“Revision is commonly regarded as a central and important part of writing. It may powerfully affect writers’ knowledge. Revision enables writers to muddle through and organise what they know in order to find a line of argument, to learn anew, and to discover what was not known before.”

(Fitzgerald, 1987, p. 480)

3.10 Procedural Stages of the Research:

Preliminary work at the commencement of this project necessitated discussion and negotiation with interested parties: the SMT, other professional colleagues, an LEA inspector-adviser, and the governors of Bishop Lindis School.

Preliminary work also included the preparation of some statements of the sorts of questions to be explored. Before this was possible it was necessary to identify some issues for consideration. For example, what kind of questions can be posed by adopting a qualitative approach to research? What new ways of looking at the social world does this approach engender? What is involved in the contention that researchers need to be self-critical? What does it mean for the researcher to capture the authentic voice of particular subjects of study?

The main stage of the research embraces the implementation of the project itself. It includes the various conditions and methods of data collection. These comprise

regular meetings; keeping of records; interim reports; submission of self-evaluation and group-evaluation reports; submission of external evaluation reports from the inspector-adviser; monitoring of tasks; transmission of feedback to colleagues and to governors; and classification and analysis of data.

The nature of a busy school means that these processes were not uniformly carried out during the four years of the project. There were periods of intense activity followed by diversions of one sort or another. Reference to some entries in my research diary serve to illustrate this point:

“Over the last term or so the events that have taken place in school provided a rich source of data for the research. However, life is so busy that much of those data remain in a raw state, and there seems to be little prospect of working on them or analysing them in the foreseeable future. I must not let some of these gems evade me!”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 12th April, 1993)

“At last an opportunity has arisen to reflect upon the various notes in my research log and diary. Some of the accounts following interviews and meetings need to be typed up and categorised for future reference. It’s difficult to see the relevance of some of this material to the project at this stage. There seems to be so much - enough for more than one research project!”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 21st July 1993)

The final stage of this project is concerned with evaluation procedures, the significance of the evaluation in this context being continuous. It also involves interpretation of data through inferences drawn and an overall evaluation of the project; discussions about findings in the light of previously agreed evaluative criteria; consideration of errors, mistakes and problems which were encountered; and a review of outcomes of the project.

A general summing up with the SMT, governors and the local education authority inspector-adviser followed in which outcomes of the project were reviewed, recommendations made, and possible arrangements for dissemination of results to interested parties discussed.³

Whilst this has been the basic framework of the research project at Bishop Lindis School, activity of an incidental and ad hoc nature has taken place in and around it. It has comprised discussions among teachers, the governing body, the local education authority inspector-adviser and myself; regular, but not always frequent, meetings among interested parties which have been used to discuss progress and problems, and to exchange information; and Saturday Conferences for both the SMT and members of the Pastoral Board.⁴

3.11 An understanding of Innovation as it relates to this Research:

This case study is essentially about innovation and the process of change. It is set in a period of turbulent change following a number of governmental initiatives including the introduction of the GCSE, TVEI, the National Curriculum and LMS. During the period in which the project is set, the Dearing Committee was active in developing a number of aspects of the National Curriculum both at KS3 and KS4. It is therefore important to understand how the term innovation has been used, and should be understood in the context of this study.

³ These were also recorded in the minutes of the appropriate governors' committee meetings.

⁴ Following this research project, the successful nature of the Saturday Conferences, which had initially involved only the SMT and subsequently the Pastoral Board, led to their being extended to include other groups from within the school.

"Innovation" as it relates to this study should be understood to mean the on-going process of change. The term has been used in different, and specific ways, and is often used to mean *"the introduction of an individual and particular new practice into a social situation"*.

It is important, in understanding the position adopted in this study, to register that innovation has been used generically, to embrace those major and minor changes introduced into the social situation, *"the sum of which formed the ongoing developing milieu"*.

3.12 Conclusion:

In this chapter, I have attempted to develop a methodology commensurate with, and complementary to, the theoretical framework developed in the previous chapter. It began with a discussion and comparison of quantitative and qualitative approaches to the research. Following this, an exposition of *"practitioner research"* and *"action research"* included attempts at definitions of these concepts as they relate to this particular research project. The opportunities and dilemmas of practitioner research were discussed prior to a more detailed account of the methods used in the fieldwork stages of the project.

A feature which makes qualitative and reflective practitioner action research a suitable procedure for this work has been its flexibility and adaptability. These qualities have been revealed in the changes that have often occurred during its implementation and in the course of on-the-spot experimentation and innovation characterising the approach.

This study has relied chiefly on collecting, sharing, discussing, recording, evaluating and acting on observational and behavioural data over the whole period of the project. From time to time, this sequence of events has formed the basis of reviews of progress. Progress has been reported to the student committee of the governing body at varying intervals throughout the period September 1991 to July 1995 and has been documented in the official minutes of the meetings. This process has often been problematic, rarely straightforward, and not without both misunderstandings and misgivings on occasions. Descriptions and illustrations of the nature and substance of reviews of progress are related in findings as and when deemed appropriate.

This methodology is considered appropriate, because specific knowledge was required to address specific problems, in a specific situation in which new approaches were grafted on to previously existing systems. This research has investigated problems relating to the management of innovation identified in my rôle as head of Bishop Lindis School, and it has been essentially directed towards greater understanding of, and improvement of, practice over the period of the research. In short, it has documented and analysed various changes in the culture of the school. It is hoped to demonstrate how this has been achieved, at least to some extent, in the findings, which form the basis of Chapters Four to Eight. When the project concluded, the important work begun, continued!

The following chapter provides an analysis of Bishop Lindis School as an organisation at the outset of this research in September 1991. The analysis should be understood in the context of the historical and philosophical background to the

study provided in Chapter One, together with the theoretical and methodological frameworks provided in Chapter Two and in this chapter.

Chapter Four

Contextualising the School: Aspects of Bishop Lindis School as an Organisation in September 1991

4.1 Introduction:

Following chapters outlining the historical, philosophical, theoretical and methodological bases of this research, this chapter sets out to describe and interpret significant aspects of Bishop Lindis School at the inception of this project in September 1991 in order to provide a context in which the subsequent process of innovation might be set.

As a contextualising chapter, the emphasis is on describing and interpreting key elements and issues apropos the culture of the school: its leadership, its organisation, its groups, its beliefs, its values, its customs, its practices, its rituals, its priorities, and its coping strategies by applying a *"cultural prism"* as a tool for organisational analysis.

In addition, through the application of a *"political prism"*, I describe and interpret some of the micro-political activity prevalent in the school at the time: the ideologies, power struggles, conflicts and interests represented amongst its members.

Both cultural and political aspects of the school are discussed in terms of its organisational mix as viewed through appropriate multifocal *"autocratic"*, *"bureaucratic"*, *"adhocratic"* or *"reticular-democratic"* lenses as described in chapter two: the theoretical framework of the study.

This initial analysis of the prevailing cultural mix and micro-politics of the school is, of course, partial and focuses on only those aspects which are understood by participants to characterise its organisation at that time. However, this analysis is believed to be crucial in forming the basis of any subsequent understanding of the school's development during the four cycles of innovation which took place over the following four academic years.

4.2 Bishop Lindis School in September 1991:

The main measuring instrument by which the organisational analysis was carried out has already been acknowledged as a *"blunt instrument"*, since as practitioner researcher, and in effect the chief research instrument, I had no previous experience of qualitative research. Nevertheless, a degree of confidence is placed in the findings which follow, since the involvement of colleagues has supported conclusions drawn, through regular processes of peer referencing and triangulation.

A local perception of the school in September 1991 was that it was both popular and successful. In order to illustrate how well the school was perceived in the community, the following extracts are cited from letters received following my appointment as head:

".....the school is highly respected in the area and the choice of many people who really live much closer to other schools."

(Letter from the Principal of a local Sixth-Form College, 13th June, 1991)

".....the school has a reputation for excellence in all spheres and I was always proud to be associated so closely with it."

(Letter from a former Chairman of Governors, 4th July, 1991)

Other comments relating to the high esteem with which the school was perceived resulted in the following research diary entry.

“Following my appointment, a number of governors and parents commented that Bishop Lindis School was at the peak of its success. They also suggested that there was only one way for it to go in future: into decline!”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 30th September, 1991)

In attempting to discern the culture of the school on appointment, I accessed a number of sources and analyses of school culture, and studies of schools as organisations. In particular, the following helped form the basis of an initial, tentative understanding. I tried to understand the school in the light of the following quotation from Goulder:

“During periods when the main purpose of education is the transmission of the culture from one generation to the next, when schooling must reflect the norms of society, the prevailing assumption is that man (sic) is simply a ‘reactive man’. Not only do the curricula, teacher rôles, discipline, rules and decision making processes reflect prevailing social values, but also the development of social theories comes from the sentiments, concepts of reality and ‘background assumptions’ of society.”

(Goulder, 1969, in Dalin, 1978, p. 40)

I came to an initial understanding that the school was successful, primarily because it was recognised and acclaimed as such by the community in which it was established. The school’s curricula, teacher rôles, discipline, rules and decision making processes were generally understood to reflect the social values of the community in which it was set, though, of course, this was not universally the case.

For much of the previous twenty-eight years of the school’s history, the main purpose of education appeared to be understood by many teachers, though they

may not have expressed it thus, as the transmission of the culture from one generation to the next. Certainly, some teachers and governors believed that the school reflected the norms of society, its organisation predominantly reacting to those norms. There were others who saw the rôle of the school in different terms. Some believed that, far from reflecting the norms of society and reacting to them, the school's mission (and practice) was to protect itself from, and reject such norms. There was a particular attitude prevalent amongst some members of the school which is encapsulated in the following reference:

"The strength of this school is that it has not been tainted by the deplorable lowering of standards in other places; particularly towns and cities. Discipline is the key to this school's success. We stand apart from what is going on elsewhere. The "bridge"¹ is our protection from these malignant forces."

(Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th September 1992)

I also considered the following extract relevant. It is from one of the books that had a formative influence on my previous study of educational research and innovation:

"We have seen rather dramatic changes in the *'regularities of schooling'* caused bya growing understanding that the norms of society have so shifted that it is only through shared responsibilities, real participation and two-way communication that schools will survive.Schools are clearly dependent upon adaptive behaviour in relationship to the environment, but they also necessarily must be a creative and challenging element in society because they, more than any other institution, represent the future."

(Dalin, 1978, pp. 40-41)

In developing his ideas further in a later study, Dalin (1993) provides a theoretical framework in which it is possible to analyse the culture of a school. I saw it as

¹ The reference to the bridge underlines the importance of the toll bridge which had to be crossed when approaching the area from the south. It was seen by many to protect the particular character and ethos of the area.

important to establish an understanding of the culture of the school at this point, since I understood the change process to unfold differently within different cultures.

In Dalin's terms, one understanding of the school was that it was fragmented, being loosely coupled, with little (or no) common innovative experience among the staff. Another inference was that there was little (or no) common understanding of needs; little formal discussion; and a norm that it was up to each person, *"to look after himself (sic)"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 14th November 1992).

Many teachers felt there were limited initiatives for improvement and renewal. It was believed by some that those initiatives that did happen were often hidden within *"a one teacher or one classroom"* context. (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 10th January 1992). In spite of being understood as a fragmented school by a number of teachers (though not specifically in those terms), others believed that some of the school's classrooms functioned well and that there were pockets of excellent teaching. However, one teacher in particular saw these as: *"coincidental to the school and not an integral part of it"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 23rd March 1992). This was understood to mean *"coincidental to the culture of the school and not embedded within it"*.

Most teachers recognised that the only initiatives for change within the school had come through nationally imposed changes such as the GCSE examination, the introduction of LMS (which was generally acknowledged as slow to become established at Bishop Lindis School) and the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI). It is seen as both relevant and important to this project to acknowledge Dalin's recognition that major institutional and cultural change are

possible through a change of leadership, but that they seldom result from a joint staff initiative.

Following these initial and tentative attempts at organisational analysis, it became clear that my methodology, and the theory upon which it was based were inadequate. Consequently I worked towards the development of both theoretical and methodological frameworks for the study, the course of which is charted in the relevant foregoing chapters. Approaches developed in those chapters form the basis of the ensuing, albeit partial organisational analysis.

4.3 The Spectrum of Bishop Lindis School through a Cultural Prism:

As discussed in chapter two: the theoretical framework, Beare *et al.* (1989, p. 186) suggest that school culture is mediated in a **tangible** way firstly, through conceptual or verbal manifestations; secondly, through visual or material manifestations and symbolism; and thirdly, through behavioural manifestations.

To summarise, before any attempt can be made to change or reshape these symbols and manifestations which express what a school stands for, it appears essential that meaning is ascribed to them and that thereby they are understood as fully as possible.

Figure 4.1, cited earlier as figure 2.4, illustrates one way in which a cultural prism might thus be applied to Bishop Lindis School as an organisation in September 1991:

summative statement were also widely recognised as appropriate, and therefore accepted as such by most members of the school's community.

The process through which the aims had been constructed, however, was believed not to have involved any other members of the organisation, and therefore, there were issues of both ownership of, and commitment to, those aims for some people. It was for this reason that the first major action of this research was to address these issues. This action became known as the *"aims exercise"*.³

As might be expected in a Church of England comprehensive school, the prime aim of the school was *"to be a caring and ordered Christian community devoted to the full intellectual and spiritual development of all members of the school"*. The extent to which the school achieved this aim, particularly with regard to students' care and their intellectual and spiritual development was a matter of debate amongst some of the teaching staff.⁴ Rarely contested, however, were claims regarding the ordered character of the school as perceived by its members.

The next five aims were similar to those found in many secondary schools at that time, and to that extent were uncontroversial. The seventh aim, *"to promote the spiritual development of our pupils through the teaching of the Christian faith within the context of the doctrine, rites and practices of the Church of England"*, was understood as a clear reflection of the school's denominational character and therefore seen as distinctive. The eighth and ninth aims were similarly oriented.

³ The Aims Exercise is described and documented in Chapter Five: The First Cycle of Innovation 1991-92, and the aims are listed in Appendix B.

⁴ This will be discussed later in this chapter, when analysing the school as an *"Instrument of Domination"*.

That there appeared to be a narrow and particular understanding of spiritual, even within the limits implicit in the *“rites and practices of the Church of England”*, was not widely believed to negate the emphasis placed on this aspect of the school’s commitment.

The twelfth and thirteenth aims provided for the technological and international aspects of students’ development, and whilst there was evidence of clear commitment to internationalism, several teachers and governors believed there to be less commitment to the technological dimension of education.

A number of teachers detected a contradiction between the sixth aim as stated, and the prevailing practice in the school, namely, *“to create a secure and happy environment in which each pupil will acquire and develop positive attitudes, values and standards, which will in turn promote self-confidence, self-discipline and an awareness of the needs of others”*.⁵ In brief, self-confidence was understood to be developed in some students, for example, through participation in worship by reading in the morning assembly. The notion of self-discipline, however, was not believed to be reinforced merely through the application of the school’s code of conduct. Some teachers suggested that the school provided a *“well-controlled”* environment, where the particular understanding of *“discipline”* prevalent did not call for the co-operation of students in becoming self-disciplined, but rather their *“unquestioning obedience to rigid and manifold rules and regulations”* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 9th October, 1991) prevailing at the time.

⁵ This will be discussed later in this chapter, when analysing the school as an *“Instrument of Domination”*.

My initial understanding of the way in which the aims provided both inspiration and challenge to the developing organisation is illustrated by the following reference:

"I see the aims, whilst worthy of their purpose, as not being firmly embodied in the practices of the school in every respect, and to that extent, paradoxically providing both inspiration and challenge to the developing organisation."

(Personal Reflection, Research Diary, 23rd November, 1991)

My understanding, supported by similar positions held by some colleagues, was that strongly expressed Christian rhetoric providing the main theme underpinning the school's espoused aims, was not matched by any similarly strong and observable practice to support it. There was some agreement amongst colleagues that this issue needed addressing. Therein lay a challenge, which I understood to be fundamentally characteristic of Christian vocation.

4.3ii The Curriculum:

The curriculum of the school, being "*the prime vehicle for conveying its educational purposes*", (Beare *et al.*, 1989, p. 187) was understood by a small number of teachers as characterised by "*elements of élitism*" (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 4th April, 1992). It was perceived that these elements of élitism were manifested through "*streaming throughout the school*", (ibid.) together with an inequality of access to all areas of the curriculum, particularly first and second modern foreign languages, as illustrated by the following extract:⁶

"Only the bright kids do French *and* German. Until recently the weaker ones didn't do languages at all."

(Teacher Comment, Research Log, 17th October, 1991)

⁶ These issues were identified by some students in the aims exercise, and are addressed in Chapter Five: The First Cycle of Innovation September 1991 - July 1992 and the aims are listed in Appendix B.

The distorted emphases and balances within the curriculum perceived by some teachers were understood to be manifested through courses they believed had been designed to fill spaces in the timetable for *"less able"* students, whilst their counterparts were engaged in academic study *"deemed too challenging for the less able"* (ibid.) (e.g. swimming, woodwork or metalwork alongside a modern foreign language). This particular understanding and interpretation of the emphases and balances within the curriculum was not universally held, and there were some teachers who defended the practices implied above, whilst others saw no issue requiring defending at all.

It was readily acknowledged by most teachers, whatever their particular political or philosophical ideology, that curriculum is much wider than either the National Curriculum (NC) or formal timetabled subjects, and includes all aspects of students' experience throughout the school day. Within this context, it was suggested by a small number of teachers that the school struggled to provide the breadth of extra-curricular activity to which it aspired, since it was still in the process of recovering from a spate of teacher industrial action in the mid to late 1980s. Other teachers pointed to the school's geographical location, which, they believed, necessitated over dependency on school transport for a large proportion (more than 50%) of students, as the major factor which affected extra-curricular provision.

Some aspects of the school's hidden curriculum were widely recognised, both within and outside the school, as powerful and positive influences on students. In particular, the minimal occurrence of vandalism, graffiti and litter, together with unrestricted access to open cloakrooms, were seen to embody powerful messages about behavioural expectations. High standards expected of students with regard

to the care of the physical environment, and the inherent responsibility demanded from them for the safety and security of each other's property was widely understood both within and beyond the community of the school.

4.3iii Language:

It is appreciated that the language used inside a school, and the ways in which it is used, *"reflect both directly or indirectly, and intentionally or unintentionally, the values inherent in its organisation"* (Beare *et al.*, 1989, p. 187). It has been argued that the *"insider-language"* which develops in any human group, provides a means for dividing those who belong to the organisation from those who do not. Alternatively it might also provide a means of highlighting some of the tensions within the staff. Whilst language is the chief means by which we communicate with each other, not all communication is verbal. For this reason, analysis of language might profitably be extended to include body language, gestures and eye contact.

At a formal level, there were a number of aspects of the use of language which characterised the culture within the school in September 1991. Some of these aspects have continued in use, whilst others have become extinct. For example, National Curriculum labelling for each year group (*"years seven to eleven"*), was not in use at that time, and the more traditional language of *"first year to fifth year"* was commonplace. Children were referred to almost exclusively as pupils (sometimes kids) and rarely as students. The head was known as the headmaster (or the boss), and two of the senior staff were known respectively as the senior master and the senior mistress. The daily act of worship was referred to as an *"assembly"*, a practice which has continued into and beyond the research project.

A small number of teachers regretted the use of this term, the significance of which is related to the assumed centrality of the act of worship in a Church of England Voluntary Aided School. Neither technology, nor design technology appeared on the timetable in September 1991, rather woodwork and metalwork were the subjects offered (mainly for boys), whilst home economics (not food technology) was taken predominantly by girls.

At an informal level, the language of the school was a source of rich data which provided colour and perspective to otherwise monochrome findings. For example, nicknames were used extensively throughout the school by certain (usually male) members of the staff. They were used in referring to both students and colleagues. On a professional level, however, there was an expectation by several teachers, of being addressed formally by surname prefixed with the appropriate title. The following extract serves to illustrate my confusion at these inconsistencies:

"It seems ironic that some teachers who have happily used nicknames for both colleagues and students, have found my introduction of Christian names when addressing them intrusive.

One male colleague insists on addressing me formally several times in one sentence."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 16th June, 1992)

4.3iv Metaphors:

Bishop Lindis School had been considered a *"family"* for several years, even to the extent that the founder head was known as *"father"* by some of the staff, and referred to openly as such by a former caretaker. At first sight the metaphor appears entirely appropriate, particular with regard to its use within a Church school. It was suggested by one colleague that the reality only matched the rhetoric insofar as families are sometimes characterised by, *"falling out with each*

other and being at each other's throats", (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 27th April, 1992). This is understood to mean that, in his opinion, relationships within the school were characterised by conflicts, interests and power struggles amongst its members.

The more positive notion that *"families embrace human qualities at their finest"*, and that their members *"show consideration in all things towards each other"*, (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 14th May, 1992) was only understood by a small minority of staff to be a strong, inherent characteristic of the school.

A general belief amongst its teachers was that the school had rarely, if ever, embodied a strong emphasis on individuality and creativity, but to the contrary had usually emphasised and promoted *"compliance and uniformity"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th December 1991) amongst its members. A number of teachers appeared to believe, and one articulated, that it did *"not generally display flexibility and tolerance within its ranks"*, and as an entity appeared *"more ready to condemn than to condone aberrant behaviour"* (ibid.).

Few teachers suggested there was a strong emphasis on interpersonal relationships, or of encouragement for self-direction and self-motivation. The *"stick"* was perceived by many teachers as a stronger motivator than the *"carrot"*. The leadership of the school was regarded by some teachers as both directive and coercive. One teacher indicated that in his belief all members of the school, both professional and student, were *"expected to meet rigidly set deadlines and meet unrealistic levels of efficiency"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 19th October,

1991). These criteria, which were accepted as present by many teachers, were perceived generally as not being strongly familial in character.

Other metaphors considered appropriate in describing schools, might profitably be used as tools of organisational analysis through multifocal lenses referred to in chapter two. One such metaphor is that of the school as a machine. In viewing any organisation as a machine (or more formally as a mechanistic, bureaucratic organisation) many aspects of human life within it might be characterised as being *"routinised and mechanised"*, often resulting in *"an erosion of the human spirit and the capacity for spontaneous human action"* (Weber, 1947 in Morgan, 1986, p. 25). Viewing schools as machines through a bureaucratic lens brings into focus aspects of organisation characterised by expectations of:

"precision, speed, clarity, regularity, reliability and efficiency through the creation of rigid divisions of tasks, hierarchical supervision, and detailed rules and regulations."

(Weber, 1947 in Morgan 1986, p. 24)

Whilst a number of both teachers and governors had recognised the need for *"leadership, initiative, benevolence, equity, and esprit de corps"* (ibid., p. 29) amongst other factors, as a means of influencing human motivation, the organisation of Bishop Lindis School, as viewed through this particular lens, might be understood merely to be a technical problem.

Further, in seeking to understand the organisation of the school as, *"a rational, technical process,"* (Morgan, 1986, p. 34) mechanical imagery implicit in viewing it as a machine tends to *"underplay the human aspects of its organisation"* (ibid.). This, in turn, overlooks the fact that:

"tasks facing organisations are often much more complex, uncertain, and difficult than those that can be performed by most machines".

(ibid.)

Viewing Bishop Lindis School as a machine might best be understood as viewing it as a type of organisation:

"generated by, and only partially suited to, the requirements of a former mechanical age. On entering a new, more technological era, which has drawn heavily on the capacity of micro-electronics, new organisational principles have tended to become of increasing importance. It is in recognition of this technological revolution that new organisational models and structures are considered to be more appropriate in addressing new and challenging problems in society in general and in education and schools in particular."

(Morgan, 1986, p. 38)

Some of the school's former management practices were seen by some teachers to be based upon the assumption that they performed their jobs better when those jobs were clearly defined and structured. In general terms, many teachers believed that they knew what was expected of them, and consequently worked to fulfil those expectations. Formal channels of command and information flow were understood to be characteristic of the school's approach. The head's primary concern was understood to have involved *"formal authority and responsibility relationships, unity of command, and span of control"*. Some of those teachers who criticised his approach suggested that his management strategy amounted to *"organisation without people"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 15th November, 1991) or at least to organisation in which people were secondary to the rôle which required performing (Rôle Culture, Handy and Aitken, 1986).

Some staff saw the adoption of this approach as tending to create an organisation which they described as *"stiff, rigid and inflexible"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th January, 1992). On taking up the headship I believed that this approach had tended to inhibit both initiative and creativity in the school. Conversely, and more positively, I also acknowledge that this approach was probably responsible for establishing Bishop Lindis School as a *"stable, orderly and rational organisation"* (Personal Reflection, Research Diary, 24th April, 1992). At least it gave this impression at the observable level.

4.3v Organisational Stories and Organisational Heroes:

It is inevitable in a history spanning nearly three decades, that a repertoire of organisational stories should emerge, and through them the developing culture of the school might be mediated across generations of both students and teachers. Such stories tend to form the basis of an organisational mythology, in which organisational heroes and anti-heroes may be seen to surface and submerge from time to time.

Such stories in schools are often associated with caretaking staff, and in this context it is often said that caretakers are amongst the most colourful and powerful people on the staffs of schools. According to one informant, in the early days of the development of Bishop Lindis School there had been a caretaker who typified the *"dictator-like"* characteristics of the most notorious of such rôle-incumbents. It was he who often referred to the head as *"father"*. The staff deferred to him as readily as they did to the head, and only *"crossed him at their peril"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 15th September 1991). Apparently the significance of his power lay in the *"rank"* he held as a member of the local Masonic Lodge. He

outranked even the most senior of professionals in the district, and on occasion, it is claimed, had been witnessed "*wagging his finger*" at some of them, including his superiors at the school (Teacher Observation, Research Log, 15th September 1991).

Another mythological character on the school's teaching staff, contemporaneous with the notorious caretaker, had been known as "*the duchess*" at her previous school. It was claimed by a small number of staff still in post, that she was respected as a "*lady*" by both staff and students. She is reported to have married a Polish pilot during the second world war. On his death, some years later, a newspaper announcement made it clear that he had been a Polish Count. Apparently, as a consequence, Battle-of-Britain day was commemorated every year as part of the school's routine worshipping life, and whilst appearing to be an anachronism to those not privy to the events surrounding its significance, the mythology gives the story an enduring quality.

4.3vi Organisational Structures:

Whilst the nature of organisation is understood to be complex and does not surrender readily to superficial analysis, two predominant organisational structures appeared to prevail on applying an autocratic lens focusing attention on the mechanistic-person domain. The first, a club culture, has been likened to a spider's web (Zeus: Handy, 1978, p. 18), and the second, a rôle culture, to a traditional bureaucracy, or Greek temple (Apollo: Handy, 1978, p. 20).

Evidence for the existence of a club culture within Bishop Lindis School prior to September 1991, is founded on both personal observation and the comments and

statements made by fellow participants in the research. On visits to the school prior to taking up my appointment, I became aware that a great deal of the school's activity revolved around the personage of the head, and that he was widely considered the reference point for all major, and even some minor decisions.

The existence of a club culture was not formally or widely recognised of course, at least not in such specific terms. It was clear, however, following discussions with both junior and more senior colleagues, that informal authority had been vested in some individuals by virtue of their particular relationship with the head rather than by virtue of their position of seniority on the school's hierarchy. Conversely, it was claimed by some, that not all senior staff had authority and power vested in them appropriate to their rôle. This was understood to be a reflection of the strength (or weakness) of the relationship between them and the head which also varied from time to time.

Following a process of peer referencing and triangulation, I came to an understanding that the club culture prevalent at the school was characterised by ever changing relationships of a number of individuals at various levels of the hierarchy with the head, at different times and in differing situations.

Discussions with some of the longest serving staff, together with data collected from some former staff indicated that the school's culture throughout the period 1963-1991, had placed emphasis on the power and authority of the head and to a lesser extent on organisational structure. The following extract from a policy document provides illustration of this claim:

"Confidentiality. All information about children and their backgrounds should be treated as confidential and must not be discussed with or divulged to anyone, except on a professional basis to colleagues. The confidence and co-operation of children and their parents is built upon this bond of confidentiality being maintained. Any requests for information by individuals, officials or departments should **be referred to the Headmaster.**

Records, reports, notices or similar documents should always be kept LOCKED away and never left lying about in classrooms or the staffroom. Such documents should always be passed by hand and never via children - no matter how senior they are. ALL consultations with parents, whether by letter, telephone or in person, must in the first instance **be referred to the Headmaster.**

Any parent who seeks out a member of staff, either at home or in school should **be referred immediately to the Headmaster.** Information which concerns the welfare of children which comes to the notice of a form teacher (e.g. home circumstances causing concern, this is particularly important in instances where abuse of the child may be a factor), should **be passed to the Headmaster and Deputy Heads immediately.**

If any member of staff is approached out of school by parents, in person or on the telephone, usually to complain about some incident - they should not get involved, but point out that school affairs should be referred to school and the teacher concerned should **report the matter to the Headmaster at the earliest opportunity."**

(School Policy Document, the Rôle of the Form Teacher, pre-September 1991, *my emphasis.*)

It was through the existence of such emphases implicit in the school's documents that parents had become used to approaching the head in the first instance, even when, in organisational terms, some teachers believed he was not the most appropriate person to deal with their individual problems. Whilst it is understood that the head had introduced such practices in an attempt at securing his position and protecting his power, some teachers and governors understood the reverse to have been the result. It appears a contradiction with which one might not concur at first. Paradoxically, some teachers and governors believed that his power and position might have been just as strong had he not placed himself so obviously in the "front line" (Teacher Observation, Research Log, 28th October, 1991).

There are also paradoxes and clear contradictions in identifying both club and rôle (classic bureaucracy) cultures⁷ coexisting within the school. On the one hand, a club culture might endow an individual with more power or authority than his or her position on the hierarchy might normally attract, whilst on the other hand a rôle culture determines the power and authority of that same individual by virtue of the position (s)he holds.

4.4 Visual, Material and Symbolic Manifestations of Culture:

Having established that school culture can be mediated in a tangible way through conceptual or verbal manifestations, there follows some consideration of how school culture can be mediated through visual or material manifestations and symbolism. Figure 4.2, cited earlier as figure 2.5, illustrates one way in which a cultural prism might thus be applied to Bishop Lindis School as an organisation in September 1991:

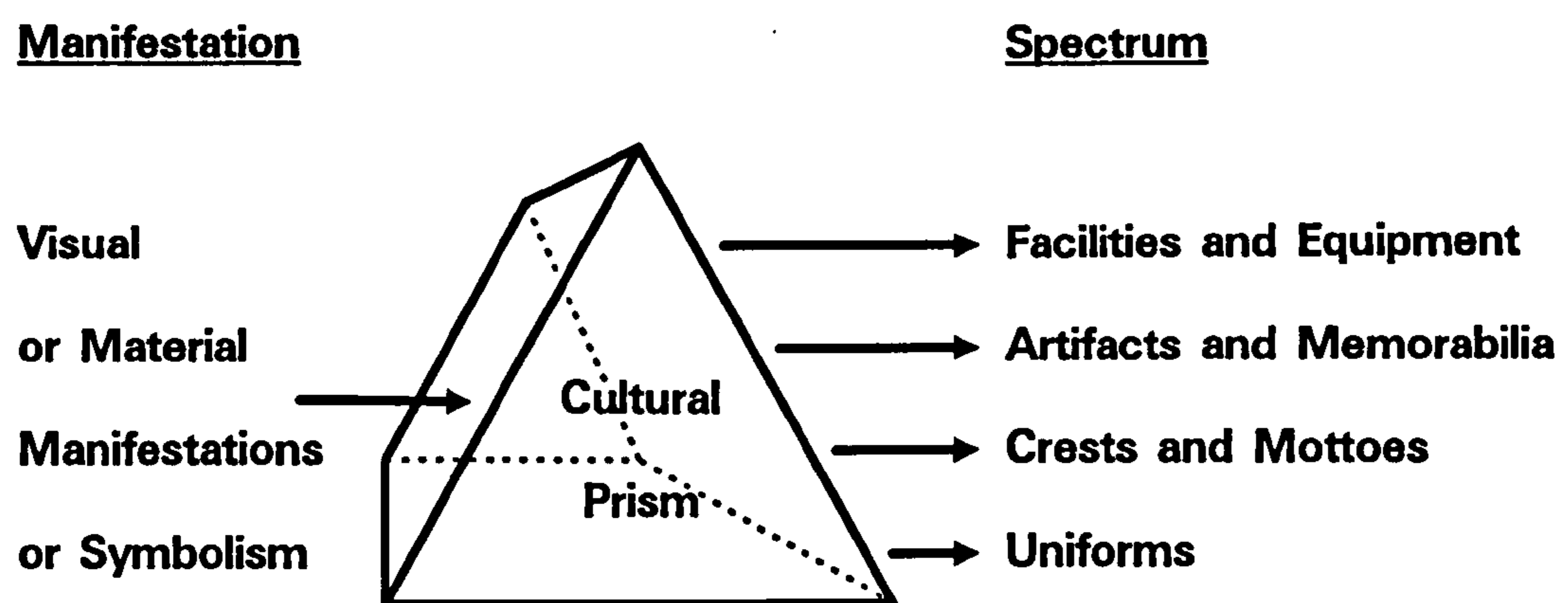


Figure 4.2 A Spectrum of Visual, Material or Symbolic Manifestations

⁷The concept of a rôle culture is described and discussed in chapter two: the theoretical framework.

4.4i Facilities and Equipment:

Discussions with many teachers and governors revealed that the school was not considered to be well equipped by comparison with many other schools; especially with regard to audio-visual equipment and computers. The school's capitation allowance for departments, under the arrangements for LMS, was doubled in April 1991 by comparison with previous years. There was unease amongst some senior staff about the way in which some departments spent their newly found wealth. It was widely acknowledged by teachers that the previous emphasis throughout the school was on didactic approaches to teaching, and that it was resourced accordingly. A senior member of staff believed that departmental capitation could be spent more imaginatively and for the greater benefit of students, had different emphases and priorities been applied (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 12th December, 1991).

Another senior colleague was particularly concerned at the way in which rooms were traditionally allocated to departments, and suggested that in the main it was the result of patronage. (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 24th November, 1991) Certainly, there appeared to be no overall suiteing rationale to address departmental needs except in science and technology. The science laboratories, although close to each other, were situated on two different floors, there being no scope for creating shared preparation rooms between any two laboratories. It was also perceived that there were insufficient science laboratories to enable the school to deliver NC science at KS3 and double balanced science at KS4.

A number of teachers, including all of the technology staff, perceived the technology wing of the school to be poorly equipped, and whilst it was suite-ed,

the technology department, shared its resources with the art department and a number of other departments which used its rooms as over-spill accommodation. The music room was situated in a wing of the school in which both modern languages and personal and social education (PSE) were taught. There was a clear, perceived and expressed need for separate specialist music accommodation.

The lack of a separate specialist gymnasium was unique in a school of its size within the particular LEA. The school hall served the function of both assembly hall and gymnasium, having been built for the original school of only two hundred 11-15 year old pupils. The hall was often required for the administration of examinations, for the staging of school productions and for special events when visiting speakers were booked to address large numbers of students. Despite co-operation between the diocese and the LEA, neither had succeeded in making this much needed facility available.

It was widely recognised by both staff and governors that a restrictive feature of the school, which resulted from its original conception as a small rural secondary modern school, was the limited size of both classrooms and circulation areas. Classrooms built for around twenty pupils, were subsequently expected to accommodate nearly thirty and occasionally up to thirty-three students where large top streams dictated this to be necessary.

4.4ii Artefacts and Memorabilia:

Discussions with one of the longest serving, and more senior teachers revealed that the school had accumulated a considerable mass of archive material in its relatively short history. Photographs, newspaper cuttings, logs and minute books formed the

basis of this collection of memorabilia. The school also acquired a large quantity of trophies over the course of a number of years. These were displayed prominently in the main entrance foyer. The founder head left direct instructions on retiring, that no further donations of trophies should be accepted, there being more than adequate for presentation at each of the three annual speech days and presentation evenings.

Some of the walls of the school's main corridors were adorned with the founder head's art work, which was of a very high quality, and charted the history of both "*Bishop Lindis*" and the spread of Christianity in the North of England. There were also examples of maps of the area in which the school was situated illustrating its historical development. These were also prominently displayed.

It was regretted by a notable number of teachers that these excellent, albeit isolated, examples of display material were not complemented by displays of students' work. A few teachers acknowledged that the physical environment of the school could be perceived as both arid and clinical. Others were apparently unaware of the sparsity of display work by comparison with most other schools of its type both locally and nationally.

4.4iii Crests, Mottoes and Uniforms:

The school had a collection of crests, each of which was designed especially for its use by the founder head. None of these was in current use in the school uniform, but one example had been used as a school badge on both boys' caps and pupils' blazers when they had formed part of the uniform in former years. Another crest was used on specially over-printed school envelopes, and a third,

ornate example provided a centre-piece for the main entrance foyer display area. This particular crest provided the only occurrence of the school's motto in Latin: "*Ut vitam habeat et abundantius*", which in translation means, "*That they might have life in all its abundance*". The motto is based on words from the tenth verse of the tenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John.

An important "*badge*" worn only by selected senior students was the proctors' (prefects') badge, based on St. Cuthbert's cross. These badges were used to distinguish those students who were honoured by the school as worthy of this particular high office. The most senior proctors, known as "*school officers*" and comprising head and deputy head boys and girls in addition to the librarian, sports captains and the assembly warden, also wore specially designed academic gowns for ceremonial occasions.

During 1988, the year in which the school celebrated its Silver Jubilee, a new sweatshirt was introduced as an item of school uniform. Another new crest, especially for the jubilee year was designed by the head, and pupils were encouraged to purchase the new garment. The result of its introduction provided further diversity to what some teachers felt was an already in-cohesive uniform, in which boys dressed differently from girls, and the fifth year had distinctive attire.

Teachers and governors acknowledged that whilst everyone complied with the school's uniform requirements, a single distinctive uniform with which students, parents and the local community could identify, was not in existence. A number of teachers reported that the school had a long history of introducing and abandoning different uniforms.

4.5 Behavioural Manifestations of Culture:

Having discussed that school culture is mediated in a tangible way firstly, through conceptual or verbal manifestations, and secondly, through visual or material manifestations and symbolism, it is now intended to address how the culture of Bishop Lindis' School was mediated through behavioural manifestations.

Figure 4.3, cited earlier as figure 2.6, illustrates one way in which a cultural prism might thus be applied to Bishop Lindis School as an organisation in September 1991:

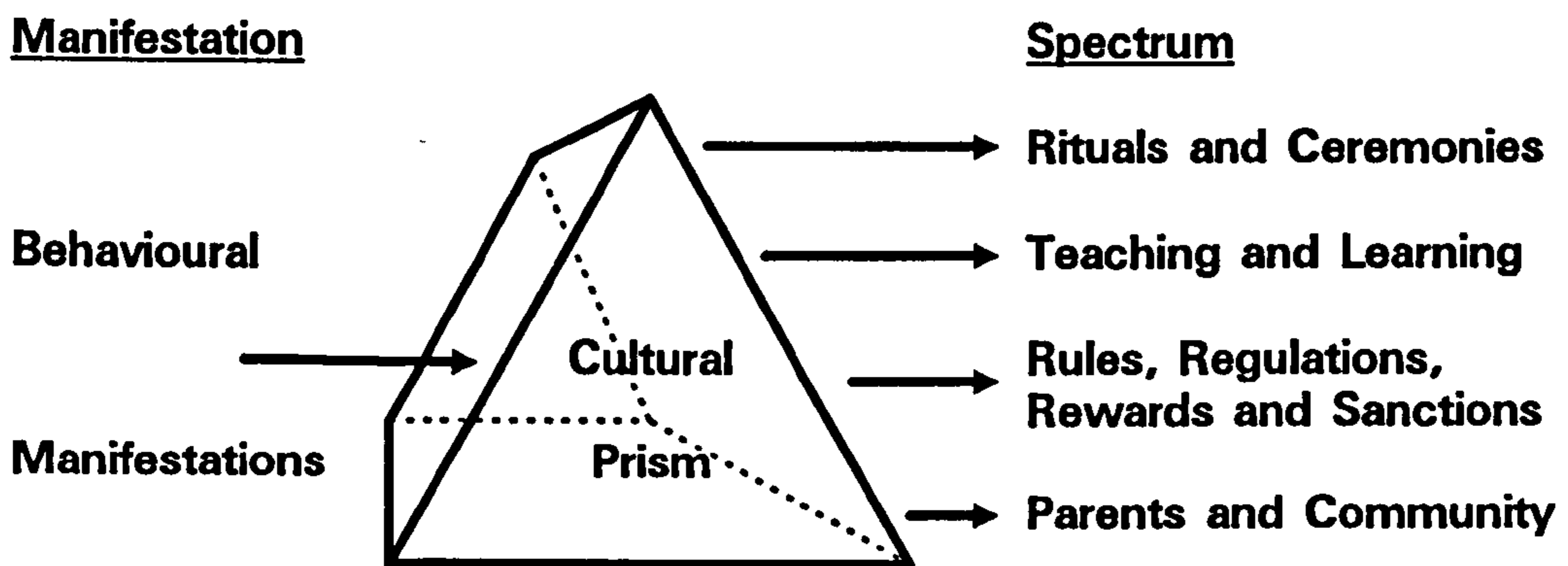


Figure 4.3 A Spectrum of Behavioural Manifestations

4.5i Rituals and Ceremonies:

One of the first rituals of the school with which I was confronted on taking up my appointment was the weekly submission of teachers' record books for marking: a ritual introduced by my predecessor. I understood this practice to be a tangible expression of power, control and regulation at play (see political prism). Reference to my colleagues and their understanding of the practice reinforced my conclusions. This practice also reinforced an understanding I had gained of the school as an instrument of domination, which had been informed by interviews

with both teacher and governor colleagues. It also reinforced my particular understanding of the hierarchical nature of the organisation following similar processes of peer referencing and triangulation.

I discovered that there was an expectation that the head should check the daily postal delivery and open appropriately addressed letters to himself or to the organisation in general, before the remainder was distributed by office staff. The views of both teaching and non-teaching staff were congruent with my own in believing that alternative, widespread and well-established office management practice should be introduced to the school.

It was well established that the head boy and head girl met daily with the head, and were given some small administrative tasks to perform; a practice, which, with widespread support from colleagues, continued throughout and beyond the period covered by this research.

A doormat was placed at the head's office door, which I understood to be both a status and a threshold symbol. Reference to colleagues revealed an array of different understandings as to the relevance, appropriateness and significance of its presence. Some teachers attached no symbolic significance to it at all. Others recognised it as having a purely practical function. A third perspective was represented by those who saw it as highly significant, and representative of a particular, traditional and hierarchical understanding of the rôle of headship, which one teacher stated, *"had been carefully cultivated and nurtured for more than a quarter of a century"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th November, 1991). Some teachers believed that the doorbell, and traffic lights system at the doorway

of the head's office, similarly served to reinforce the experience of, *"entering the inner sanctum of power and authority"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 17th December, 1991) vested in the incumbent of the office of headship.

Each year during ceremonies which constituted the school's senior speech day, the head boy and head girl, appropriately robed in aforementioned academic gowns, were invested with *"Rotary-like"* chains of office (Governor Observation, Research Log, 12th November 1991), and staff were expected, though not all agreed, to wear academic dress. The use of ritual and ceremonial was also extended, though at a lower level, to the daily acts of worship, or assembly, at which the head invariably wore an academic gown.

Periodically, ritual and ceremonial were extended, as part of school assemblies, to the appointment of proctors, when their names would be announced and they would be awarded the much coveted proctors' badge.

The significance and appropriateness of the school's many and various rituals and ceremonies, as outlined above, was understood in different ways by different people. One governor believed, perhaps because of his particular political allegiances, that such practices were, *"seen by the parents as very silly"* (Governor Interview, 28th August, 1991). Some other governors, teachers, parents and students viewed the rituals and ceremonies of the school to be in keeping with *"the school's cultural heritage and religious affiliations"* (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 14th December, 1991).

4.5ii Teaching and Learning:

As already stated, there was considerable evidence, supported by data collected as a result of teacher and governor interviews, that the school placed a predominant emphasis on didactic approaches to teaching. *"Chalk and talk"* were considered by many teachers to be the order of the day. The notion of a variation and extension of both teaching and learning styles was only just beginning to impact on schools generally under the auspices of TVEI. Very able students were perceived to be achieving well at Bishop Lindis School, and it was understood by many teachers and governors, that it was on the basis of this achievement that the school had developed a reputation for excellence. There were some perceptions amongst teaching staff that those students in the middle ability ranges, and those with special educational needs (SEN) were less well served and there was speculation, reinforced by some professional colleagues within the LEA, that there were quite high levels of underachievement, particularly amongst boys. Paradoxically, there was also evidence, and acknowledgement by some teachers that some SEN groups performed particularly well under the instruction of, and with the support of one particular teacher.

4.5iii Rules, Regulations, Rewards and Sanctions:

Perhaps surprisingly, few teachers appeared to recognise that by comparison with many other schools of its type, the school at that time could be described as overly controlled and regulated. It was only seen to be significant and unacceptable by a small minority of teachers that there was an expectation of a strict adherence to rules. However, it was acknowledged by a few teachers that some of these rules were no longer appropriate in encouraging students to develop self-discipline. It was perceived by one teacher in particular that some

students *"resented the imposition of a set of expectations to which they did not subscribe"* (Teacher Interview, 3rd March, 1992), and that they were *"counter-productive"* (ibid.) to desired, stated and published organisational goals.

On appointment, my assessment of the use of exclusion, nominally the ultimate punishment, by comparison with many other similar types of schools, was that it was over used. Students, usually male, exhibiting even mild aggression towards a teacher or another student found themselves excluded for a few days. Where parents were not prepared, or not immediately able to co-operate with the school in providing guarantees about their offspring's subsequent co-operative behaviour, an indefinite period of exclusion was the order of the day. Minor theft, name calling and some bullying offences were met with a similar response. I believed, therefore, that exclusion had not always been used as a last resort. My judgements were at odds with the more general understanding prevalent across the teaching staff. Prevailing teacher attitudes might be summed up as *"the bad apple"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 19th September, 1991) needing to be removed for the greater good of the remainder, for fear that the one might *"infect the rest"* (ibid.). I found it difficult to equate this response with the school's expressed Christian aims.

In contrast with the foregoing findings, there was also evidence of positive reinforcement through the use of rewards for both effort and achievement. Certificates of Excellence were awarded annually at the appropriate speech day, on the basis of form tutor recommendations.

4.5iv Parents and Community:

The school's Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association (PTFA) had traditionally been chaired by the head, and it was clear, both from observation, and from comments made by teachers and parents, that parents were used to deferring to him, and *"colluded in perpetuating perceptions of power and authority vested in his rôle"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th December, 1991).

The local community was perceived as conservative by some teachers, particularly those who lived outside the immediate area served by the school. Both teachers and governors pointed to some examples of its displaying defensive behaviour, particularly when suggestions of change were made by newcomers, and those from outside its ranks. *"Why choose to come here if you don't like it and want to change it? We like it as it is!"* (Parent Comment, Research Log, 23rd March 1992), was a comment which typified an attitude perceived to have been held by many different members of the community over a number years.

4.6 The Spectrum of Bishop Lindis School through a Political Prism:

Figure 4.4, cited earlier as figure 2.8, represents a spectrum of political concepts resulting from the application of a political prism to a particular aspect of school organisation or activity. It is a development of concepts identified by Wallace and Hall (1994, p. 24), which in turn have been developed from a conceptual framework originally offered by Ball (1987).

Political Activity

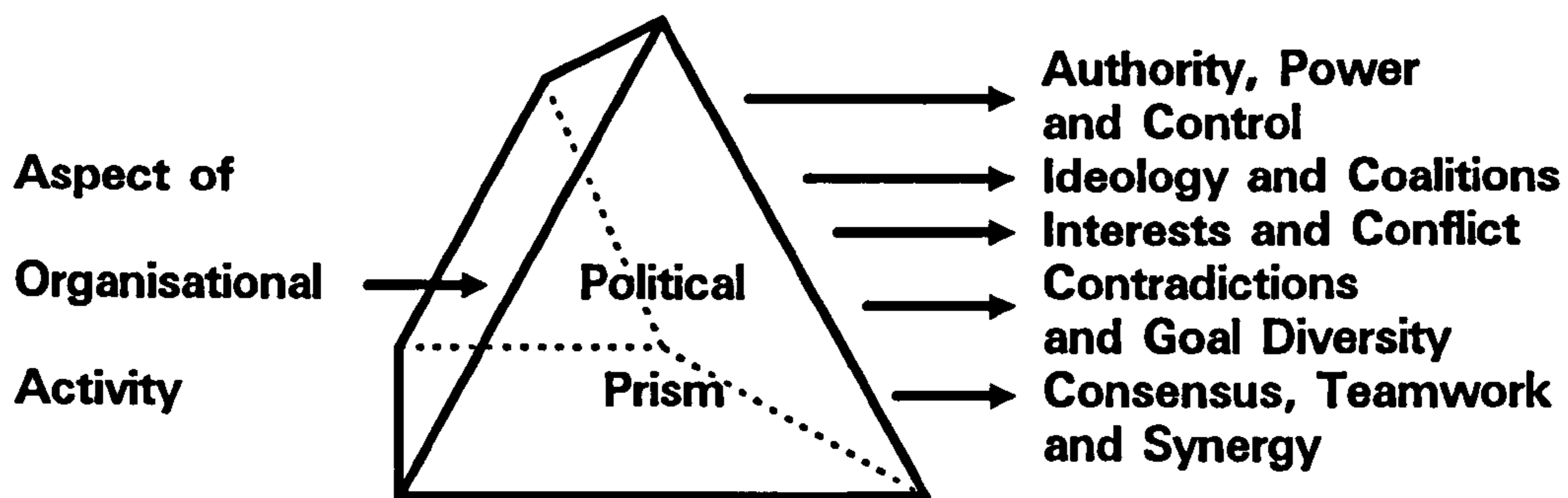


Figure 4.4 A Spectrum of Political Activity within the Organisation

4.6i Authority, Power and Control:

Viewing Bishop Lindis School as an instrument of domination through an autocratic Lens, as described in chapter two, provides an opportunity to focus on potentially exploitative aspects of school organisation. It is possible, in focusing through this lens, to observe how schools' leadership might use governors, fellow teachers, students, parents, local communities, and even the national and local economy to achieve its own ends. It is also possible to observe how the essence of school organisation and leadership might rest in a process of domination where certain people impose their will on others. The image of domination can inform an understanding of aspects of school organisation that have radicalised teacher-SMT relations in some schools.

Following a series of initial interviews with several of my new colleagues, various pictures began to develop, and scenes, initially hazy and misty, began to clarify. Whilst it was difficult to ascertain how much of what I was told was accurate, and how much was adapted for dramatic effect, in applying triangulation I came to some tentative understandings which formed the basis of the following reference:

"There appears to be a feeling amongst some staff that they were subject to a regime of direction, coercion and criticism. They, in turn, in some cases, seem to have less than positive relationships with some students."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 12th October, 1991)

There was a belief amongst some teachers and governors that elements of the former management approach were founded on the understanding that people wanted, and needed to be told what to do. It was also understood that members of the management believed that, by virtue of their seniority, they were in a better position to make decisions than junior colleagues.

This management ethos appeared to permeate inter-personal relationships throughout the school, including those between staff and students. There were some significant pastoral issues requiring addressing as a result. For example, issues apropos the development of mutual respect between staff and students, understood to be the bedrock of good teaching and learning, needed addressing. Further evidence for this understanding was gathered from direct observation of events, resulting in the following research diary entry.

"I have come to the conclusion that one of the characteristics of the school is the use of the entrance foyer, a main thoroughfare, as a place of public barracking and public admonishment of students.

Some staff tend to shout, prod, ridicule and humiliate students there, and appear to gain an element of admiration for doing so from some colleagues.

Apparently there was another motivation behind this ritual in the past, related to the proximity of the head's room. It was understood by some teachers that this public admonishment of students was both approved of and welcomed, and was seen, therefore, as a way to curry favour with the head."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 28th October, 1991)

The new fifth year (year eleven) students were reported as being the worst on record. This belief was widely acknowledged within the staff, and governors were informed of this directly by the former head. The previous year's fifth year were acclaimed as, "*the best for many years*" (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 13th December, 1991).

The year eleven group appeared to resent some ways in which they were treated, and the resultant non-cooperation was a product of a vicious circle set up between some staff and the majority of students in the year:

"There was not only evidence of repression in the way in which this new fifth year group were (metaphorically) beaten into submission, except that they seemed disinclined to submit!

....It is not surprising that my first dealings with these youngsters, in a positive and understanding way were perceived by many staff and some parents and governors as signs of weakness.

....The students did not seem to see it that way, and I felt more secure in my dealings with them than with the adults associated with the school.

There were some students who took advantage of my inexperience as a new head, however, and in spite of my having dealt with some quite difficult situations previously in urban and inner city schools, I initially dealt with some of these rural youngsters quite naively."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 20th December 1991)

A contemporary of mine was one of the first staff to indicate that one of the year eleven students had been smoking "*under my nose*" at the gates of the school. I made a costly mistake by believing the student, who denied the charge. This teacher was incensed and stored the event for future airings. In the course of time I was to discover that this particular student was capable of some determined anti-social behaviour. I was also yet to learn that my early mistakes were to be costly with regard to my relationship with this particular teacher.

4.6ii Ideology and Coalitions:

One of the main coalitions within the school's teaching staff was mediated through a bridge club which met daily during the lunch hour in a corner of the staff room. It was exclusively male, and was the source of some "*sexist attitudes and behaviour*" (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th October, 1991) inherent in the ideologies it perpetuated. It is not surprising that coalitions also existed, therefore, amongst some female staff. Reportedly, the strongest of these was a coalition between two senior female staff who shared two different offices situated in different wings of the school. It was clear, in applying Morgan's "*psychic prison metaphor*", as discussed in chapter two, that each of these groups was locked into particular attitudes and behaviours which resulted from factors other than those which were overtly organisational. In some cases ideologies implicit in observed and reported behaviours developed in previous posts in other schools. In others, ideologies attaching to individuals resulted from particular understandings of the values, customs and practices of Bishop Lindis School over a long period of time.

4.6iii Interests and Conflict:

The deliberate and documented process of reflection, upon which the methodology of this research is founded, resulted in the following research diary entry. It highlights my initial understanding of the micro-political climate prevalent in the school at that time, together with the dilemma I experienced in deciding how to handle the ensuing data:

"I feel that I have inherited a deeply divided staff and an SMT which has had little experience of working as a team. The chairman of governors⁸ has verified this view, and appraised me of some of the interactions and

⁸ The chairman of governors is regarded as a key informant in the early stages of this research. Sadly, he died in August 1993.

'political' activities that occurred during the lead up to my appointment as head".

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 23rd October, 1991)

In reporting details of various *"conflicts"* occurring in the school, there is of course an ethical dilemma, which may best be illustrated by reference to the following experience of a researcher in an similar situation:

"The data were showing Christopher's as a divided school. Everyone in the field gave clearance but exposure of those controversial data in the written case story could have been harmful and hurtful to some. I hesitated over constructing a text which could reflect back that divided reality to participants. Whose responsibility would it be if the text caused further divisions and hostilities?"

(Dadds, 1995, p. 5)

It was clear from the outset, that I was to come under the influence of major *"interest groups"* both inside the school and in the local community, each of which had its vested interests and own agenda. In some cases, these groups of parents, governors, and teachers had only limited influence on the growth and pattern of the school, its structure, and its relationship with the community and other schools over the previous twenty-eight years of its development.

The way in which the school was structured, the emphasis it put on various aspects of the curriculum, and the ways in which students, parents, teachers and governors related to each other reflected the *"political choices"* made as a consequence of decisions taken over a very long period of time.

Issues identified at this early stage were in the main related to teacher morale and motivation. I felt that teachers' expectations and complacency and their use of

praise, or lack of it, needed to be addressed, as did their explanations of students' underachievement. Some saw low student motivation as a result of a "*non-existent work ethic*" (Teacher Observation, Research Log, 28th January, 1992) amongst the students from the foundation parishes. There was also an issue about favouritism within the school, particularly by some female staff towards female students, and the perpetuation of these attitudes, I believed, stemmed from the heart of the school's management. Some staff differentiated between what were considered girls' activities and girls' subjects, and those which they considered to be within the boys' domain.

Some staff delineated clearly between their own time and the school's time, by leaving the school site as early as practicable. The car park was often empty half an hour after school ended. It was significant, however, that even in the early days of the new leadership, such behaviour was not prevalent amongst members of the SMT.

As the process of data collection gathered momentum, I began to come to some initial and tentative understandings about the organisation, and looked for ways in which to test them out. Therein lay a dilemma. I had to face the possibility that the SMT was projecting some of its internal problems onto the rest of the organisation. It appeared to me that some of the patterns of behaviour exhibited in the SMT were reproduced lower down the organisational hierarchy. The dilemma I faced lay in how to test my opinion by obtaining reactions from those involved. Some members of the SMT would not wish to accept explanations of the kind proffered above.

Amongst teachers most highly regarded by their colleagues, though not universally so, was a teacher who excelled at motivating and engaging students in exciting and inspiring learning activities. Amongst the least popular, though sometimes with a significant following, were those who used sarcasm and public spectacle in admonishing their students.

4.6iv Contradictions and Goal Diversity:

Bishop Lindis School was not unlike many organisations, in that contradictions existed between what was overtly or explicitly expressed in organisational rhetoric and what was implicitly expressed through observed organisational practices. The most obvious examples were in terms of organisational control versus self-discipline, and expressed organisational achievement versus evidence of underachievement in some ability ranges.

There was also evidence of goal diversity, since not all teachers shared a common vision of what the school stood for, or what it purported to wish to become. There was evidence of a "*gender agenda*" (Teacher Description, Research Log, 13th December 1991), which through the promotion of female expressions of success and attainment, in practice militated against male achievement and progress. This in no sense represented overt feminist activity, or the promotion of feminist values. Paradoxically, the pro-female agenda was more covert than the more usual overt feminism which recently prevailed in some LEAs and some schools. It was perceived by some as perhaps more sinister in operation. It was easily denied. Denial was readily accepted as sincere. Complexities and contradictions implicit in verbal, visual and behavioural expressions of goal diversity of this type beg questions related to Morgan's "*psychic prison*" metaphor, and

justify further investigation. Some colleagues, with opposing views appeared locked into understandings and behaviours which also influenced ways in which the organisation operated.

4.6v Consensus, Teamwork and Synergy:

There was little (or no) tangible evidence of organisational consensus being used as a development mechanism, or of synergistic activity characteristic of teamwork within Bishop Lindis School in September 1991. These notions were, however, identified as important areas for future development.

Within the context of these desired practices, I believed there was scope for development of Bishop Lindis School as a *"task culture"* (Handy and Aitken, 1986); a *"project school"* (Dalin, 1978 and 1993); an *"organism"* (Morgan, 1986); a *"person culture"* (Handy and Aitken, 1986); a *"brain, or holographic spirit"* (Morgan, 1986); or a *"systemic learning organisation"* (Dalin, 1978 and 1993). Each of these metaphors might be applied to the school as viewed through adhocratic and reticular-democratic lenses as previously discussed in chapter two. To do so provided scope and ideas for the school's further development and a basis for its subsequent innovatory experience. These metaphors, therefore, constituted methods of re-conceptualising aspects of school organisation, and ultimately the school, in holistic terms, itself.

4.7 Conclusion:

This chapter has provided a context for ensuing chapters which report findings of the action enquiry project subsequently carried out at Bishop Lindis School. The form the chapter has taken is that of an initial description and interpretation of key

elements and issues within the school identified on taking up my appointment as its head in September 1991.

I have initially used concepts developed by Dalin (1978 and 1993), and Burns and Stalker (1966) in discussing the fragmented and mechanistic character of the school as an organisation at that time, but have also developed this initial analysis by applying a cultural prism to verbal, visual and behavioural aspects of the school's culture (Beare *et al.*, 1989). The influence of Morgan (1986) may be perceived particularly with regard to the application of metaphor to aspects of the school's organisation.

I have also delineated the micro-political context (Wallace and Hall, 1994 and Ball, 1987) within the school, by applying a political prism, in preparation for a more detailed and searching enquiry into the micro-politics of cultural change as experienced by colleagues, the participants in this study.

The school in September 1991, was not unlike many traditional school organisations, which were predominantly bureaucracies under the direct manipulation of autocratic control from above. This conclusion was not only verified by participants in the study, but was also verified indirectly by the founder head who publicly described himself as a "*benevolent dictator*". He was also proud of having run a "*tight ship*", which in organisational terms, is understood to mean an efficient bureaucracy (Personal Observations, Research Diary, 25th October, 1991).

It is important to stress at this point that the type of organisation, and the style of leadership at Bishop Lindis School prior to September 1991, and for most of the previous twenty-eight years, are understood to have been entirely appropriate, given particular understandings of the rôle of education prevalent at that time, and the nature of management tasks inherent in such understandings.

Reference, once again, to Goulder (1969), cited at the beginning of this chapter, informs this understanding, since he concludes that:

“During periods when the main purpose of education is the transmission of the culture from one generation to the next... ...the curricula, teacher rôles, discipline, rules and decision making processes reflect prevailing social values...”

(Goulder, 1969, in Dalin, 1978, p. 40)

Not only were the school's curricula, teacher rôles, discipline, rules and decision making processes generally understood to reflect the social values of the community in which it was set, but also the prevailing type of organisation and leadership style were commensurate with the *“ideal type”* characterised as a formal and traditional school.

The next chapter is the first in a series of four chapters which provide the main findings of the research by focusing on cultural characteristics and micro-politics of the four cycles of innovation at Bishop Lindis School, in the period September 1991-July 1995, during which the fieldwork for this study was undertaken.

Chapter Five

The First Cycle of Innovation: September 1991-July 1992 Developments in the SMT and the Aims Exercise

5.1 Introduction:

The first three chapters delineate some historical, philosophical, theoretical and methodological underpinnings to this study. Chapter four, a contextualising chapter, advances an initial, albeit partial, organisational analysis of Bishop Lindis School in September 1991.

This chapter focuses on emerging processes comprising a cultural and political reconceptualisation of the school. This initial twelve month period is understood to constitute the first cycle of innovation. On the one hand, that it fits neatly into one year appears contrived. On the other hand, a full academic year viewed as a complete and unified component in the development of a new genus of organisation seems appropriate. Consequently, this first cycle of innovation covers the period September 1991-July 1992, and for convenience, subsequent cycles are assumed to coincide with each following academic year.

Any apparent logicity outlined above belies the nature of the substantive process as experienced, encountered and confronted during fieldwork. It is only subsequently that fieldwork activities can be viewed in a logical sequence, the nature of qualitative research being ad hoc, messy, disturbing and often influenced by events beyond the control of the researcher.¹

¹ The nature of qualitative research as experienced in this study is documented in Chapter Three: The Methodological Framework of the Study.

This chapter initially focuses on mapping formative developments within the SMT. The second and third parts of this cycle are characterised respectively, by an *“aims exercise”* involving both the school and some of its contributory community, and by framing an incipient agenda for change. The former informed the latter. The latter comprised a number of mechanistic and incremental developments, as a prelude to more radical and wide ranging changes in the school’s organisation. It was proposed that the implementation and institutionalisation of these developments should signal the onset of organic characteristics embedding in the school’s culture.

An integrating theme, across innovations constituting the focus of this study, centres on leadership activities and management strategies developed within the SMT. This theme embodies the SMT’s cultural and micro-political development apropos teamwork, consensus and synergy, as understood through the application of aforementioned lenses and prisms. Consequently, it is understood to be appropriate that subsequent analysis of innovatory activity at Bishop Lindis School is set within the context of the developing rôle of the SMT as a major change agent. The centrality of this thematic approach, together with the application of lenses and prisms which focus attention, renders subsequent analysis and understanding of the organisation necessarily partial.

5.2 Development of the Senior Management Team:

The following diagram, figure 5.1, based on figure 2.8 and figure 4.5, represents a spectrum of political concepts resulting from the application of a political prism to aspects of school organisation or activity. It is a development of concepts identified by Wallace and Hall (1994, p. 24), which in turn have evolved from a conceptual framework originally offered by Ball (1987). For the purposes of this

analysis, the component of the spectrum which will be addressed is that of consensus, teamwork and synergy.

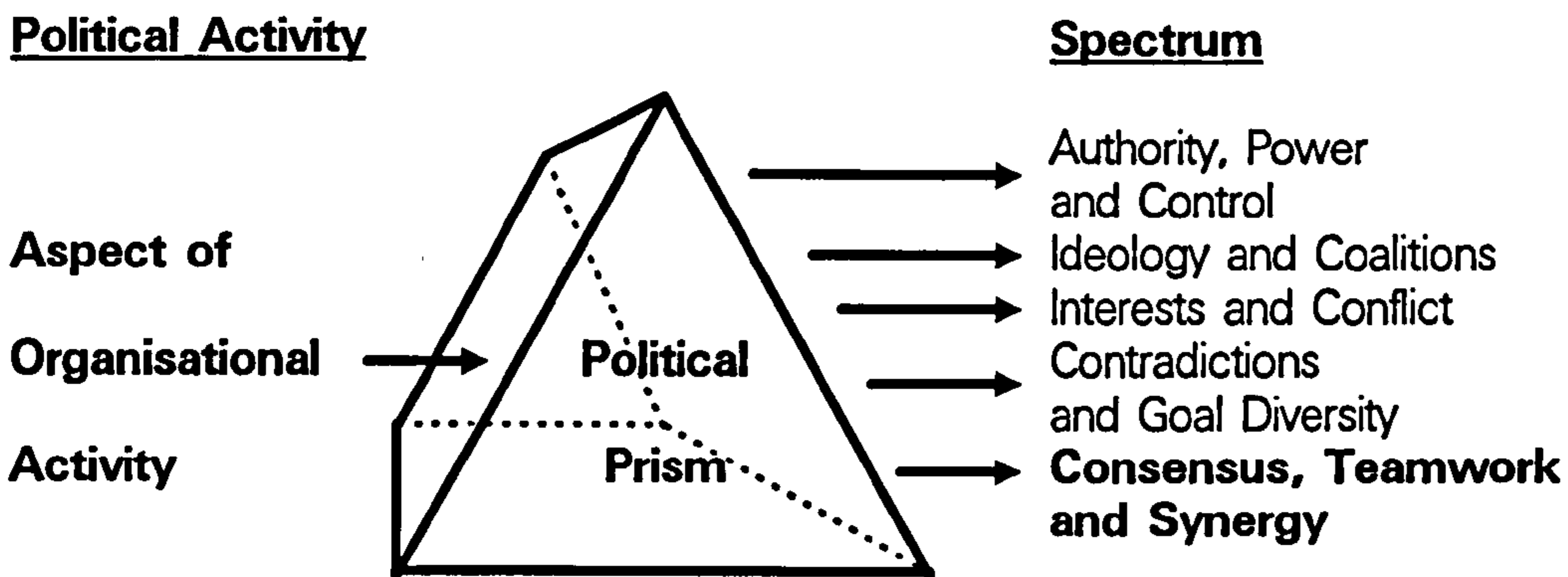


Figure 5.1 A Spectrum of Political Activity within the Organisation

On visiting the school before formally taking up my appointment, I met with senior staff, subsequently comprising the SMT. I discovered that this group of senior people, *“had little previous experience of working together as a team”* (Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 15th July 1991).

These senior staff were to provide, and be provided with, a challenge in the early years of our working together, as we tried, with varying degrees of success, to mould ourselves into a team. Research undertaken by Wallace and Hall (1994) focuses on attempts by SMT members to work together within their conception of teamwork. Their research informs subsequent analysis of initial work undertaken in developing the SMT at Bishop Lindis School. The following broad definition of a team offered by Larson and LaFasto (1989), also informs analysis of initial developments, since their definition is believed to be a useful starting point in considering problems facing SMTs in introducing team approaches:

"A team has two or more people; it has a specific performance objective or recognisable goal to be attained; and co-ordination of activity among the members of the team is required for the attainment of the team goal or objective."

(Larson and LaFasto, 1989, p. 19)

The above definition presupposes that there is a *"specific performance objective"* or *"recognisable goal to be attained"*. However, difficulties faced in developing the SMT at Bishop Lindis School lay in the diverse nature of opinions, objectives and ideologies held by its members. These ranged from the *"overtly élitist"*, through *"particular understandings of teachers' rôles in control and discipline"*, to *"more egalitarian"* modes of thinking (Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 20th September, 1991).

I believed that harnessing the complementarity of approaches and attitudes prevalent could create a coherent team: *"a team which could be formidable in furthering the school's development"* (Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 20th September 1991). Therein lay a challenge.

The table overleaf makes it clear that the development of a team approach within an SMT can disempower the head, and proportionally empower other members of the team. That *"this was not universally acclaimed and welcomed"* (Personal Reflection, Research Diary, 20th September 1991) was enigmatic.

Figure 5.2, below, provides a basis for discussion about the rôle of the SMT and compares and contrasts some of the potential strains and potential gains of team approaches to school management as identified by Wallace and Hall (1994).

Potential Strains	Potential Gains
Disempowers head to act unilaterally	Empowers head through support of other SMT members
Disempowers SMT if unresolvable internal conflict	Empowers all SMT members if operate synergistically
Head risks greatest loss of credibility if teamwork fails	Enhances all SMT members' job satisfaction
Drains resources since time consuming	Mutual support constitutes a resource for all SMT members
SMT divorced from other staff	SMT enhances possibility of creating school-wide synergy
Management hierarchy inhibits contribution of SMT members	Equal contribution maximised for all SMT members
Makes SMT members more accountable to each other	SMT members' development enhanced by learning from each other

Figure 5.2 Teamwork: A Balance Sheet for SMTs (Wallace and Hall, 1994, p.197)

It was only in acknowledging that we each came to membership of the SMT from different directions, carrying our own particular *"baggage"*, and with individual and particular mind-sets, that we were able to begin the process of team formation. Even then, the notion of each team member being accountable to each other demanded new modes of operating. These were particularly difficult for those who had previously *"worked together"* for a number of years at the school, and had *"particular understandings of each others' pre-dispositions"* (Teacher Interview, 19th October, 1991), which was understood to include their basic ideologies and philosophies.

Wallace and Hall make the point that an effective team consists of more than just the sum of its parts. Where a team achieves more than the aggregate of what its members could do as individuals, it achieves *“synergy”*. Spencer and Pruss (1992) provide a route to understanding this concept through the following definition, in which they state that:

“Synergy can be summed up as 2 plus 2 equals 5. In other words, when two or more talented people come together they can often produce an energy and creativity that is beyond the simple combination of them both.”

(Spencer and Pruss, 1992, p. 12)

That the team was talented, I believed indisputable. In the ensuing analysis the particular strengths of each of its individuals is analysed and discussed. That it had difficulties in creating *“synergy”* I also believed indisputable and problematic. These problems provided both focus and challenge during the first cycle of innovation. That a team needs to be led is rarely contested, and in the case of the SMT it is the head who leads for most of the time. It is to Wallace and Hall that I turn again for a definition of *“leadership”* appropriate to a school, and to a small team, such as an SMT, within it. They claim that:

“Leadership may be definedas actions which set the course for maintaining the status quo and change within an organisation or a team within it. These actions include making strategic plans; stimulating and inspiring others to act, and creating conditions favourable to action; and monitoring progress.”

(Wallace and Hall, 1994, p. 4)

In considering leadership, it is important to provide a context in which to discuss power plays, interests and conflicts which seem inevitable in developing team approaches. This is especially the case within a group previously practised in, on the one hand and at one level, autonomous classroom activity, and on the other

hand and at another level, submission to both direction and coercion within an autocracy. It is therefore appropriate to look at the composition of the embryonic team.

The prospective SMT consisted of two deputy heads, together with a senior mistress, and a senior master. The structure was strongly hierarchical, and at the zenith of the school's rôle culture (Handy and Aitken, 1986) with the first deputy head (female) at the top, and the senior master, whose rôle was *"almost indistinguishable from any other senior head of department"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th September, 1991) at the bottom.

Some understanding of the prevalence of the senior master and senior mistress rôles, and factors which influenced their introduction into some schools may be gained by reference to Burnham (1968) who states:

"The post of senior mistress became established, in many cases to accommodate the obsolete headmistress, and some authorities stated that where the head was a man, the senior assistant must be a woman, and vice versa. Her function was to watch over the girl pupils. ...This dilemma of having a senior mistress as deputy head was increasingly circumvented by the appointment of a senior master as well as a senior mistress; a ruse to avoid the necessity of men having to serve under a woman."

(Burnham, 1968, p. 176)

Whatever the original rationale behind the particular appointments and gender mix of the senior staff at Bishop Lindis School, it was the first deputy head, a female, who *"exercised a considerable degree of influence over the management of the school, especially in the final two years of the former head's leadership"* (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 20th October, 1991). The other senior member of staff

"who supported and defended her in the power struggle at the top" (ibid.) was the senior mistress. They formed a coalition.

By comparison, *"the second deputy head and the senior master were not always fully aligned with their female colleagues"*, (Personal Observation, Research Diary, 24th August, 1991) and in effect constituted a similar, but looser coalition. There was also evidence of *"incongruence of both aims and methodology"* (ibid.) between the two deputy heads.

It is also understood that the senior master and the former head did not agree on a number of issues. Apparently the senior master *"was elected"* as a teacher governor in order that he might *"have influence in governors' meetings"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 21st September, 1991). It was claimed that he had tried unsuccessfully to influence the former head on a number of issues, including grouping arrangements in the school, and the allocation of rooms to departments. (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 26th September, 1991)

By comparison, the first deputy head and the senior mistress influenced and supported many of the policies promulgated by the former head. He, in his final years at the school, left more and more of the curriculum decisions to his first deputy. She, a modern linguist, was placed in the rôle of curriculum manager. It was perhaps inevitable that the curriculum should develop a linguistic, and higher ability bias. Equality of educational access and opportunity were understood by

some teachers as issues needing addressing, as was students' entitlement to curricular breadth and balance.²

In order to understand tensions, contradictions and ambiguities encountered within the SMT, whilst also honouring the contribution each member made to the school's developing culture, it seems appropriate to discuss and analyse their particular strengths and characteristics. The following typology of managers (Hannan, 1992) provides an initial, albeit crude, analytical tool with which to categorise members of the SMT as individual managers.

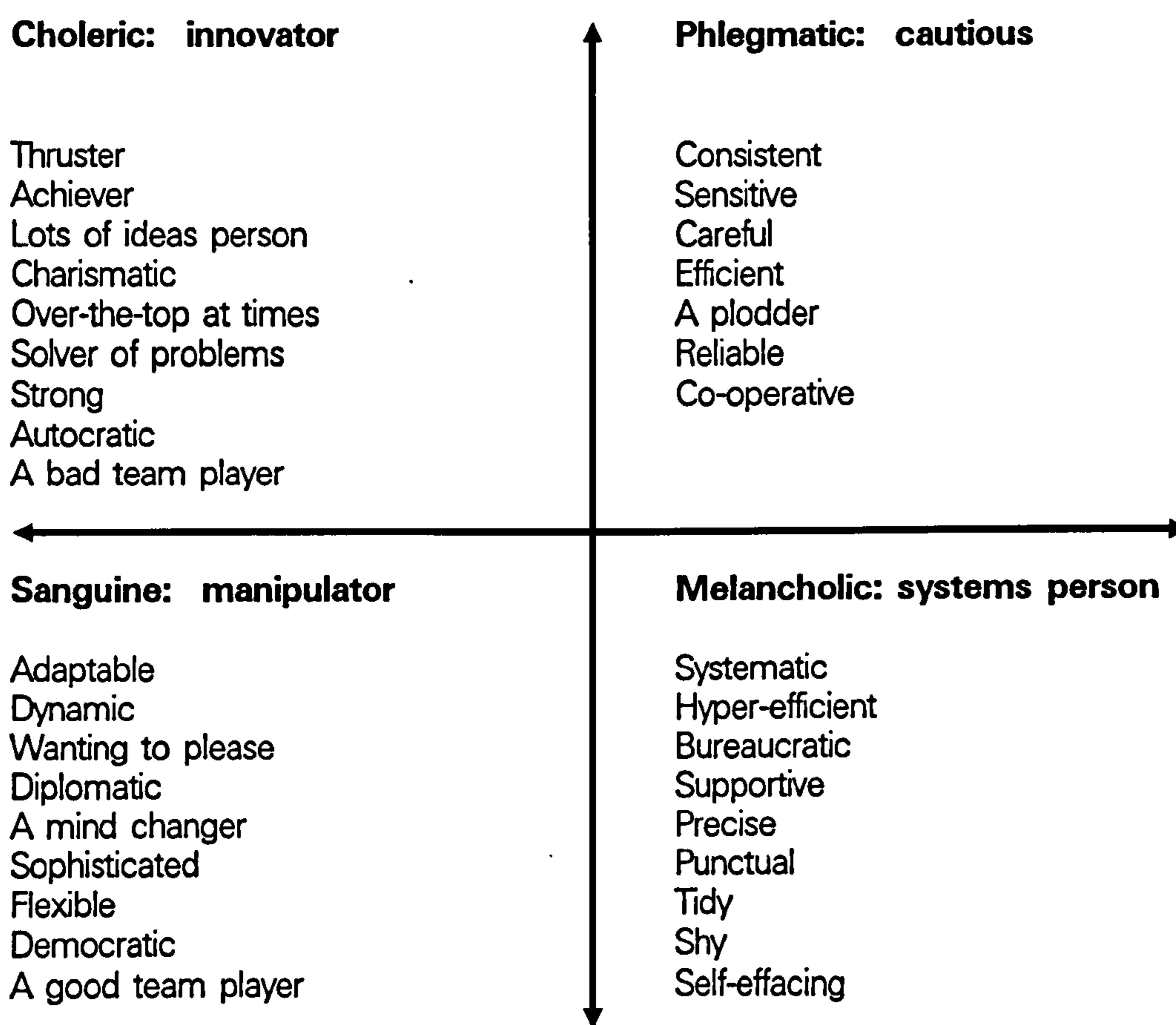


Figure 5.3 A Typology of Managers, (Hannan, 1992 p. 8)

² Teacher and non-teacher responses documented as part of the process forming the Aims Exercise provide both illustration of and evidence for these claims.

Whilst none of the descriptors provide an exact match for individual members of the SMT, it is possible to categorise each manager in broad terms under one or other of the types. Regrettably this schema does not provide congruence with the foregoing analytical tools provided by the Elliott-Kemps (Figures 2.1 and 2.2), or Blase and Anderson (Figure 2.7).

The first deputy head both by her own analysis, and by that of her SMT colleagues, seemed most appropriately categorised as *"Melancholicthe systems person"*. For example, it is significant on being asked which type of manager she thought she was, that she responded, *"Let me see how many ticks I can put in each box"* (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 21st January 1992).

She excelled at systematic approaches to tasks. It was important to her that she was given long-term goals, which had been fully negotiated. She needed to work in a calm and harmonious situation, which was not always possible *"within the cut and thrust of a lively and intelligent staff"* (Governor Observation, Research Log, 12th May 1992). She worked best when given a detailed brief with full explanations of reasons for particular actions and decisions, and she flourished when given delegated responsibilities.

Significantly, she required more time than some of her SMT counterparts in completing tasks. Her working practices kept her *"burning the midnight oil"*, (Deputy Head Interview, Research Log, 24th January, 1992). She did not enjoy early starts, and therefore did not favour the continental day approach to some staff INSET days which was the choice of a majority of teachers. She was a perfectionist. The quality of her work, and the comprehensive way in which she

completed tasks was very important to her and a source of both pride in her work and her own self-esteem. When asked to categorise herself, she was reluctant to choose a single category. She stressed that there were attributes which related to her as a manager across the typology, as indeed there were for all other members of the SMT.

The senior master and senior mistress appeared to display some similar characteristics in their management styles. It is recognised, however, that in many ways they also displayed differences in approach. Both might be loosely categorised as *phlegmaticthe cautious*, and again flourished when provided with long-term goals, and careful and periodic reviewing. They both preferred to be told what was required of them, and it was difficult to establish whether this was as a result of inherent characteristics, or learned behaviour from their former experience, they having been the longest serving teachers subsequently comprising the SMT. They benefited from sensitive handling and time to explore their real feelings. They also needed stability and importantly, time to adapt and to come to terms with change.

The second deputy head exhibited characteristics of the *cholericthe innovator*, but was less confined to one category than other SMT colleagues. He also exhibited traits associated with the *sanguinethe manipulator*. He therefore flourished when set short or medium term goals. He required merely consultative guidance and did not respond positively, or take kindly, to direction. He thrived on public recognition of his achievements and liked to receive both encouragement and praise. He enjoyed opportunities to develop new skills and interests, but in forming a relationship with him, it was vital that there was sensitive monitoring and

occasional correction of the course that was being followed. He enjoyed being involved with different people in a variety of different activities. He was the most gregarious member of the SMT.

Following a period with SMT colleagues in which there were notable successes in working as a team, I was nevertheless disappointed at the inconsistent progress we enjoyed in achieving *"synergy"*. Synergy became a transient, intangible quality which, the more we strived for it, the more it eluded us. I was less discouraged on learning that whilst Wallace and Hall (1994) recognise that SMTs have arrived, at least in name, and look to stay for the foreseeable future, they also recognise that it is not easy to make team approaches work. They state:

"Two-fifths of heads in the research by Weindling and Earley (1987) reported problems with the rest of the SMT. Heads commented on *'personality clashes'* and difficulties with senior staff who were defensive and interpreted their tasks narrowly, near the end of their career and *'burned out'*, promoted beyond their ability and unable to cope, or disappointed internal candidates for the headship. On the other hand few deputies complained about domination of the SMT by the head."

(Wallace and Hall, 1994, p. 12)

Initially, I viewed the following Secondary Heads Association (SHA) *"recipe for successful team approaches to the task of the SMT"* positively, with both anticipation and expectation. It is part of a report following a survey of deputy head members. Subsequently, I came to understand that its conclusions are both simplistic and overly optimistic. It states:

"Take collaboration, complementary skills and temperaments, add common values, flexibility and far sightedness. Stir well with a good head who provides clear rôles and regular meetings and here we have a management team that feels ready for the future".

(SHA, 1992, p. 9)

In supporting the following view promulgated by Wilson and Corcoran (1988) in a large scale study of effective secondary schools in the United States, I had to confront my own inadequacies in leadership, and my lack of success in facilitating SMT colleagues in attempts at creating a synergistic team. Wilson and Corcoran concluded:

“...leadership in secondary schools tends to be dispersed. Seldom do all of the desired qualities or all of the required energy reside in one person. In most of the schools there are a number of people who can take and do take leadership rôles at different times. ...However, the principal is always a key actor, developing and supporting these other school leaders, and orchestrating their efforts into a harmonious whole that moves the school closer to its goals. At the heart of this harmony is the ability of formal leaders in these schools to recognise the strengths of a diverse set of people and to encourage those people to make maximum use of their skills. Good leaders develop other leaders.”

(Wilson and Corcoran, 1988, pp. 81-82)

It is apparent from the description of the SMT above, that the structure of Bishop Lindis School at that time was hierarchical, as illustrated in the following reference:

“The team I had inherited was strongly hierarchical. I hoped to mount an initiative to produce a more cohesive and collaborative team.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 20th November 1991)

The SMT was large for the size of the school and in addition, senior HoDs were paid a *D allowance*. I had recent experience of a school twice the size, where senior colleagues on the same scale were leading larger departments and managing sixth-form curricula and students.

It was my understanding that this situation was unsustainable, and the development of HoD rôles was to be an early priority. The consequent development in the structure of Bishop Lindis School, was subsequently to effect a change in the

culture of the school. An SMT Saturday Conference³ provided an opportunity to set out an agenda for change. Ideas, subject to detailed work within the SMT were adopted by the team. That is, with the exception of new rôles, and new titles proposed for two members.

Plans, for agreement by senior staff, and subsequently by the governors' personnel committee, involved modifications to the SMT structure with effect from 1st January, 1992. An initiative, mounted in recognition of smaller differentials between senior staff salaries which came into existence nationally on 1st December 1991, recognised the changing nature of work involved at SMT level. It was proposed that the following designations should apply, and full job descriptions developed in consultation with holders of the new posts:

"The first deputy to become deputy head responsible for curriculum and staff development.Her duties to include time-tabling, staff development and responsibility as the school's staff appraisal co-ordinator.

The second deputy to become deputy head responsible for finance and administration.His duties to include the rôles of TVEI co-ordinator, examinations secretary and responsibility as the school's computer administration system co-ordinator.

The senior mistress to become assistant head responsible for student development.Her duties to include headship of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) department, leadership of the school's pastoral care and guidance system and responsibility as the school's ROA co-ordinator.

The senior master to become assistant head responsible for resources development.His duties to include the headship of the mathematics department, the management of resources and responsibility for the co-ordination of the use of the site and premises as a resource."

(Extracts from a Consultative Document, November, 1991)

All SMT colleagues deputised as head when required, and undertook a teaching commitment. They also shared responsibility for the tone and ordering of school

³Details of the Saturday Conference may be found in Appendix C.

life through the generation of *“consistently high standards of discipline, and scrupulous attention to the spiritual, moral, physical and social well-being of the students”* (Extract from SMT Job Descriptions, Research Log, November, 1991). They contributed to school policy and assisted in recruiting and appointing staff, joining interview panels as required. They led school worship on a rota. They shared in the oversight of lunch-time arrangements and the work of mid-day supervisors.

Deputy heads whilst in favour of re-designating the senior master and mistress, and of assigning new rôles to the whole team, felt the title *“assistant deputies”* was more appropriate. This example of conflict of interest was resolved by my acting autocratically and moving the process on to the governors’ personnel committee arguing that the senior master and senior mistress becoming assistant deputies would perpetuate the hierarchical nature of the SMT and the school. However, whilst new titles and job descriptions advanced a flatter structure, the prevailing bureaucratic rôle culture was unwittingly sustained and reinforced.

Subsequently, new SMT rôles and titles were introduced and established with a mandate from the governing body. A new culture of senior management responsibility evolved within the school. The SMT met daily for coffee, both at morning break and during the closing minutes of the lunch hour, and has continued to do so throughout the period of this research. My room took on a secondary function; that of senior common room.

“Our initiative not only flattened the hierarchical nature of the SMT, but also elevated it. Potentially, the rôle and status of the SMT collectively, were commensurate with, and equated to the rôle and status of headship as previously exercised by an individual.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 20th November 1991)

In hindsight, not all aspects of this development can be celebrated as positive factors in the development of the school. For example, and paradoxically, whilst the initiative achieved a flatter structure at the top, a gulf was created between the SMT and the rest of the staff. The team became more exclusive than had been anticipated, and consequently power plays and conflicts were fuelled in a wider staff arena.

5.3 The Aims Exercise:

Transformational leadership, whether invested in an individual or team approach, is understood to have a responsibility to develop, maintain, and reshape characteristics and symbols which express what the school stands for. It is implicit that transformational leaders become sophisticated about cultural symbolism and how to manipulate it. An SMT purporting to be serious about personal and organisational excellence, and about worthy teaching and learning outcomes, is obligated to address issues facilitating sympathetic organisational development. The aims exercise was designed, therefore, to inform a process of reconceptualising and subsequently manipulating culture to address issues directly relating to school effectiveness.

A school's aims tend to be broad and express intentions that go beyond its resources or capacities. In the course of this research it was intended that they should inspire endeavour and focus effort. Most importantly, aims are understood to embody a school's values. They constitute a statement which demand widespread commitment from its members.

The following diagram, figure 5.4, based on figures 2.4 and 4.1, provides a context for the ensuing description and interpretation of the aims exercise. It focuses, attention through the application of a cultural prism, on a spectrum categorised by Beare *et al.* (1989) as conceptual and verbal manifestations of school culture.

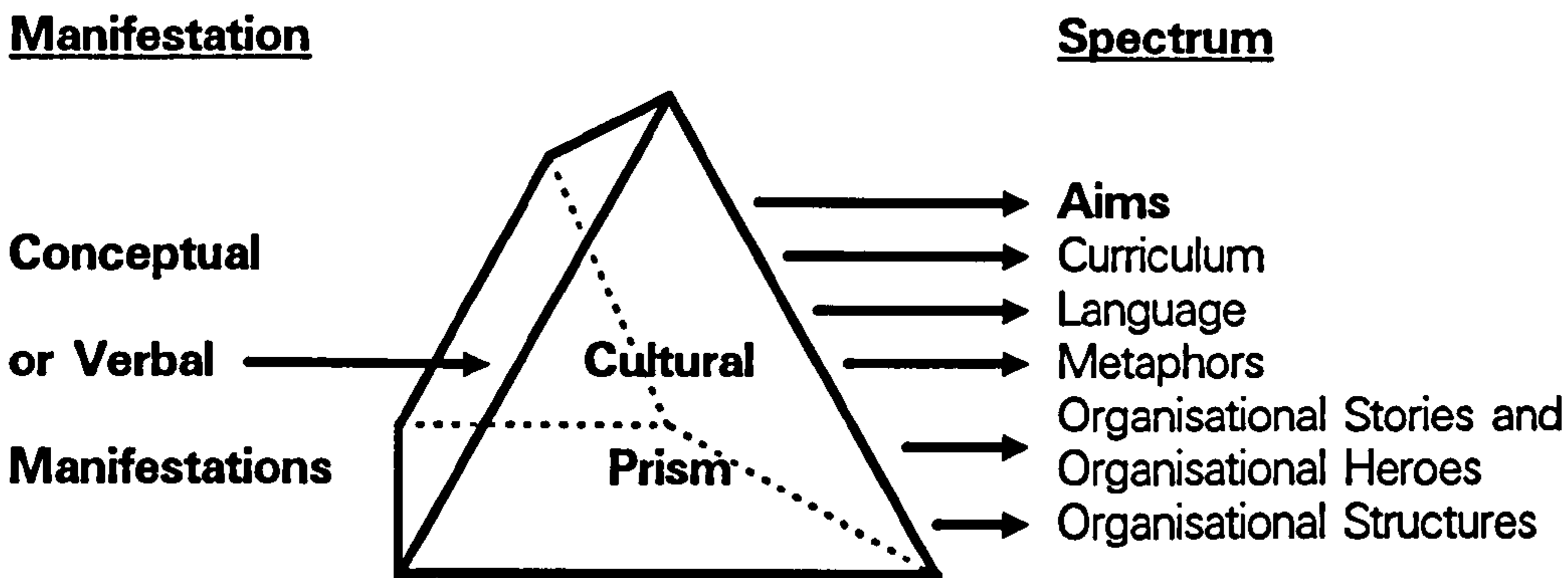


Figure 5.4 A Spectrum of Conceptual or Verbal Manifestations

An aims exercise would appear to be a clear and logical way to begin any mandated change programme. The method was not chosen for ideological or philosophical reasons but rather that it seemed a *"natural and sensible place to begin"* (Deputy Head Comment, Research Log, 24th September, 1991).

The process was not characterised by autocratic or bureaucratic activity, rather it extended opportunities to develop understandings of relationships between different people, at different hierarchical levels, in different situations within the school. In other words, the process itself extended new possibilities for understanding developmental potentialities within the organisation as viewed through an adhocratic lens. It also extended opportunities to view the organisation as a task culture (Handy and Aitken, 1986) or as a project school (Dalín, 1978 and 1993).

As head I believed it important that I should not lead the aims exercise. This decision was intended to signal new possibilities for diversity of leadership, and commitment to the notion of empowerment. Paradoxically, the decision to empower others was itself interpreted as autocratic. It is understood that many colleagues did not relish the prospect of accepting responsibility for either their own actions, or for the future development of the school. They appeared more comfortable with the prospect of continuing to be directed. The following reference serves to support my own tentative conclusions:

“People were very comfortable you know. They knew what was expected of them, and in the main were happy to be told what to do. When you came along, you upset the apple cart for some. The demands you were making on us, far from endearing you to us, caused a backlash. People became defensive because they felt under threat.”

(Teacher Interview, Research Log, 25th November 1995)

Nevertheless, the exercise designed to develop and establish a new set of aims was a potentially powerful force in changing the culture of the school. It gained its propulsion from the involvement and participation of members of the school and local community in a process understood to be more important than the outcome. A secondary purpose of the exercise was to fuel a number of initiatives, and inform the development planning process in which the SMT was beginning to engage.

The aims exercise was undertaken in five distinct parts, each managed slightly differently. The process “gave voice” to many individuals, notably students, who had previously not been consulted; the school’s published aims having been formulated by the former head during the previous academic year.

To launch the exercise, stage-managed and led by members of the SMT, both staff and students were asked whether they were aware of the content of the school's aims. One of the deputy heads announced that to move forward and develop as an entity, and to tolerate and assimilate external pressures more easily, all members of the school community should formulate shared aims to underpin an implicit basic shared philosophy. It was suggested that both staff and students become involved in this process in order to increase the possibility of a sense of shared ownership of the outcome.

Swift action was considered essential. A short planned assembly, led by a deputy, focused on the theme of the school's aims. This was followed by a tutor period in which students were asked, *"What should this school be about?"* (Aims Exercise Process Documentation, Research Log, 28th September 1991). Specifically, and in summary, the aims exercise was prefaced with the following points setting out its rationale:

- The school has a set of aims formulated by the former head during academic year 1990-91.
- How many staff and students are aware of the content of these aims?
- If we are to move forward and develop as an entity and if we are to tolerate and assimilate external pressures more easily, we must have some shared aims that underpin the philosophy of the school.
- Staff and students should be involved in the creation and stating of these aims thus creating a sense of ownership by all.

(ibid., 2nd October, 1991)

It was suggested that tutor groups split into small groups for fifteen to twenty minutes and brainstorm the issues. Tutors were asked to reassemble their forms in order to draw together the diverse sets of statements that were anticipated. Representatives of tutor groups were requested to present some formulated aims

on paper. In view of inadequacy of available time, representative groups were asked to complete the exercise during the lunch-time. This novel departure from established practice symbolically envisioned subsequent cultural change. The formulated aims were displayed prominently along a main school corridor, thus concluding the first phase in the exercise.

The same exercise was repeated, with some modification, at a meeting of the pastoral board (18th November, 1991), a newly formed ad hoc group (project or task force). Following the production of their aims, heads of years repeated the exercise with tutors in their respective year groups. Finally, a summary of the staff's aims was constructed as a composite of contributions from individual year groups and the pastoral board.

The parents exercise was handled differently and involved members of the Bishop Lindis Association who met in January 1992. They were each asked to complete the following short questionnaire:

- When you were looking at local high schools for your child's secondary education, what did you want the school to offer?
- What was it that attracted you to Bishop Lindis School?
- What improvements do you think should be made to enhance your child's education?
- What do you understand education to be about?

(ibid.)

The governing body met for their second statutory meeting of the academic year in February 1992, and each member was asked to complete a similar but slightly different questionnaire. Finally, the SMT asked a local Rotary Club (the one the former head had founded twenty six years previously) to take part in the exercise.

Data collection was accomplished for the aims exercise by posing a new set of similar questions to the club during a business meeting at the end of March 1992.

Initial analysis revealed a remarkable degree of congruence between the responses from the various groups. However, student responses were different from others, both in detail and in requests that were made for changes. The Rotary Club, in representing the community, was more traditional and conservative in its approach than any other group (as might have been expected). In particular, the club's responses tended to perpetuate an agenda in which the 3Rs were seen to equate with good educational practice; discipline, which was often equated with control and punishment, was seen to have fallen into disarray; and attention paid to vocational training was seen as insufficient.

The degree of correlation with the published aims was also remarkable, and at first analysis, it would have been understandable to suggest that the exercise had been a waste of time. The SMT was not inclined to view it thus, and placed more emphasis on the *process* involving about a thousand people, and less on the *summative results* which were not as significant as some hoped. Notwithstanding, that the process involved so many people connected with the school, and that it resulted in a greater awareness of what it stood for and what it was trying to achieve, was understood to reinforce the school's potential for innovation. Paradoxically, the process also provided a means for communicating what the school was not concerned with, and thereby addressed some misconceptions about the rôle of one particular comprehensive school in the early to mid 1990s.

Responses from year seven and year eight students revealed that they were concerned that school was *"as enjoyable as possible"*, and that they were keen *"to develop self-discipline"*. They disliked *"sexist teachers"* and *"being outside in the cold"*. They were keen to *"develop equal opportunities"*, *"develop relationships with other countries and cultures"*, *"promote a sense of regard for the environment"* and *"develop a sense of right and wrong"*, thus embracing attitudes representative of the full political spectrum. They were keen that the school should *"make learning an enjoyable experience"*, and *"give pupils more choice, especially regarding a second foreign language"*. These responses from the most junior members of the organisation, were understood to express a maturity which some teachers claimed was intrinsically linked to the school's emphasis on discipline and standards. Conversely others believed their mature responses were declarations of, *"overdue opportunities for expression and involvement"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 17th November 1991).

Year nine students were keen that, *"changes should be democratic, sensible and not too often"*. Some responses indicated that students and teachers should *"be aware of the equality of people; equal opportunities for all"*, and should *"care about people and the environment"*, in order to promote *"a more sociable teaching atmosphere"*. One year nine student was particularly keen that, *"pupils should be able to speak more openly to teachers, with teachers listening to pupils' points of view"*. Another felt that, *"teachers should take more notice of pupils in lower groups"*. Again the maturity of response was noted by the SMT, whilst some other staff were dubious about an exercise which, *"implicitly encouraged criticism of teachers by students"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th November, 1991).

Year ten students also had concerns about choice, about equal opportunities, and about the environment, to the extent that a number of students believed that, *"there should be a bottle bank and waste paper collection"*. One student could be considered prophetic in proposing, *"one-to-one staff-pupil liaison over progress"*, since one-to-one mentoring and reviewing was not common practice in many schools at that time.

Year eleven students were outspoken with regard to teachers who they considered, *"biased - if teachers respected students, students would respect them"*. Some proposed there should be, *"more enjoyable topics to work on, which would motivate students"*. One year eleven student believed there should have been, *"a happier environment - teachers should be happy not grumpy"*, whilst another believed there should have been, *"greater encouragement to the positive aspects - less attention drawn to the negative"*.

The upper school responses voiced many of the concerns that had been discussed within the confines of SMT meetings. In hindsight, that students made these concerns public, can be understood to be tantamount to empowering the SMT to address the issues. It is paradoxical that the SMT, having emerged from an autocracy, might be mandated to act by students, traditionally understood to be outside the sphere of influence or control. These developments represented potential shifts in the power structure of the school, as understood on subsequently applying a political prism to focus attention.

Responses from the teaching staff were diverse, as might have been expected. A wide spectrum of opinion was represented within responses from the pastoral

board, ranging from the most radical, *"to provide a ...dynamic environment where students and staff can undergo (sic) learning and personal development"*, to the most traditional, *"to promote physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social development of students and staff so that they might have life and have it in all its abundance"*. The latter statement contained a word-for-word extract from the school's motto (John 10:10).

A year ten teacher, in suggesting that we should, *"see 'Aims of Bishop Lindis School' booklet, especially the concept of a disciplined environment without which no progress can be made"*, was understood to be using code to voice his (or her) disagreement with the process we were pursuing, and a concern that standards of discipline were under threat.

Some teacher responses might reasonably have been dismissed as empty rhetoric, and were interpreted as, *"just playing along, and saying what they think is expected of them"* (Deputy Head Comment, Research Log, 12th December, 1991). Others took the process more seriously and were prepared to voice concern about the school, as a Christian community, *"not living up to its ideals and expectations"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 15th November 1991) as expressed in its official rhetoric. For example, issues of equality of opportunity voiced by some students were echoed in some staff's responses, though less strongly. Conversely, pastorally oriented responses from across the spectrum of teacher opinion are encapsulated in the following extracts: *"to develop a sense of charity, thought for others, and consideration for the community"* and *"to create a happy working environment where students can live and work together, encouraging friendship and teamwork"*. Reference to teamwork raised questions which proved

problematic and contradictory. On the one hand, teamwork was at the top of the SMT's agenda, whilst on the other hand there was little evidence of any substantial experience of working in teams amongst the staff, the governors or the students. The SMT was struggling with the notion, and was attempting to address issues of consensus and synergy. The SMT was also struggling with multiple and contradictory understandings of its own inherent power struggles, conflicting ideologies and coalitions.

Responses from parents focused on, *"good standards of discipline"*, *"moral discipline"*, *"good academic achievement and discipline"*, and *"more old fashioned discipline without stifling initiative"*. Some supported the, *"cleanliness of the building"*, the *"clean bright and friendly school"*, the *"general environment"*, and the *"standard of the school building"*. The *"good reputation"* and the *"high academic standard"* were also seen as hallmarks of the school's success by some parents. Many identified the need for, *"a gymnasium separate from the assembly hall"* or a *"sports hall"* and *"the provision of a sixth-form"* as areas for development.

Few parents formulated aims that were considered comprehensive enough to publish without editing. Rather, they made partial contributions, which when combined, provided clues and prompts for further development. However, one parent who did try to fulfil the former purpose believed it was necessary for the school:

"to develop the potential of the whole child in order that he/she will leave the school as a mature, educated young person ready to meet the needs of the world with confidence",

whilst another thought:

"education should equip children for life in the real world - not just academic qualifications but all round education, getting along with other people, and working together".

The most traditional aim was couched in the following terms:

"Education should provide the individual with as much knowledge as he (sic) is capable of receiving, aiming to equip him/her with the necessary information and learning to lead a worthwhile life. I want the best possible education for my children".

The following comprehensive, albeit socially oriented, approach saw the task of the school as:

"producing a confident happy child who can read, write, discuss, communicate and face, and fit into the world; a child who has social skills and discipline".

The governor exercise produced some similar responses to the parents', with, *"well looked-after buildings"*, *"cleanliness and attractiveness of buildings"*, and *"well-maintained buildings"*, seen to be important characteristics worth preserving. *"Sound moral standards"*, and *"sound discipline"* also scored highly in the governors' responses. The provision of a sports hall and a sixth-form were similarly considered areas for future development. The most stark of all governors' responses was:

"Making a good man or woman of the material you get".

Community responses included calls for *"stricter discipline in class"*, *"an educational standard which is at least equal to the best of our industrial competitors"* and for *"schools to be run as businesses"*. There was also a call for *"sound 'old-*

fashioned' methods giving (sic) learning to a good moral standard". Some members of the local community demanded, "a grounding in basic subjects", or "a good standard of 3Rs" whilst others believed we should "give as broad an education as possible and instil a desire that one is never too old to learn".

One member of the community suggested that it was the school's job, *"to prepare children for the life they want, not the life the rich want them to live"*, whilst another believed it was, *"to prepare a pupil to put more into life than he (sic) takes out"*.

The most comprehensively formulated community aim was:

That every child leaving school at sixteen can, and knows how to read and write, do mathematics and be able to apply for a job. They are not prepared enough to go out into this world; many have not a clue of what is involved and what they can do; they need more help through this very difficult period".

The staging of the aims exercise connoted a developing rôle for the inchoate SMT. It began to emerge and transfigure, its metamorphosis signalling possibilities for team and collegial approaches within concurrently emerging and developing organic characteristics in the school's organisational culture. Conversely, there was an awareness of disparate understandings of authority, power and control, and how as leaders we should make use of them. There was also strong evidence of goal diversity, and consequent coalitions and allegiances within the SMT. Conflict, whilst inherent in any changing situation, proved particularly problematic, since we did not know how to handle it, and on occasions it became a destructive, disunifying and disintegrative force.

5.4 An Agenda for Change: "Strategic Termite Activity"

Strategic termite activity (Morgan, 1993, pp. 41-61) is understood to be set within the context of a reticular-democracy ("*reticulocracy*" - Elliott-Kemp and Elliott-Kemp, 1992), "*person culture*" (Handy and Aitken, 1986) or a "*systemic learning organisation*" (Dalin, 1993). Viewing such aspects of school organisation through a reticular-democratic lens focuses on the organic-person domain.

A negative response from some colleagues, to the SMT's published agenda for change⁴ at the beginning of the Spring Term, was stronger than expected. Some changes occurred in spite of opposition, indicating management practices understood to characterise an autocracy. Significantly, by contrast, and resulting from opposition, some proposals were not taken forward. Morgan (1993) recognises dangers in publishing plans and agendas, and warns against such activity in the following extract:

"In times of change, plans and planning often prove ineffective because they create rigidities. In highly politicised contexts, they often serve as magnets for political opposition, catalyzing and crystallizing the views of those who do not want to travel in the planned direction. This creates an enormous dilemma for would-be leaders or managers, because they have to find ways of planning without plans or, at least, of creating some kind of visionary framework that can evolve and adapt as circumstances require."

(Morgan, 1993, p. 41)

Morgan's solution to this particular phenomenon is to utilise a process which he describes as strategic termite activity.⁵ In brief, the approach is characterised by emergent as opposed to rational, pre-planned aspects of strategic management (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985). It also links with the concept of normative

⁴The details of this agenda for change are documented in Appendix D.

⁵Strategic Termite Activity is described and discussed in Chapter Two: The Theoretical Framework.

incrementalism (Pava, 1980), which stresses how coherent strategy can evolve from systematic small steps.

In endeavouring to be open and accountable, we naively published an agenda for change, having no knowledge of planning dangers identified by Morgan. This was in spite of it being well documented, and widely accepted that practitioner researchers, are often ill-prepared for even passive resistance. Hutchinson and Whitehouse (1986) describe the encounter between practitioner researcher and institutional politics in the following terms:

“While action research fosters collegiality, informality, openness, and collaboration, action researchers have to contend with formal asymmetrical relations of power and responsibility. These, seen as polar tendencies, contribute to the struggle between two *“political”* realities where, usually, the action research project is ...emasculated, neutralised, cut down to size by and within the institution.”

(Hutchinson and Whitehouse, 1986, p. 85)

Also, because of only partial understanding of the process in which we engaged, the SMT unwittingly both supported and reinforced the bureaucratic rôle culture of the organisation by prioritising the establishment of job descriptions. In retrospect, though neither overtly creative nor liberating the organisation for future innovation, it signalled the introduction of a new genus of management and heralded an expectation of new modes of organisational behaviour.

The SMT's process of preparing job descriptions continued in consultation with colleagues in readiness for the introduction of appraisal and the first phase of appraisal interviews. Following discussions about appraisal, in common with other schools, there was *“a very uncomfortable feeling about it”*. (Teacher Interview,

Research Log, 26th April, 1992) Some colleagues felt threatened in spite of attempts at justifying it as a professional development tool.

I favoured a model of *"peer appraisal"*, broadly in line with my philosophy as previously outlined. I also saw peer appraisal as a means of changing the organisational culture of the school, having the advantage of being non-hierarchical. I hoped that it would prove to be a motivator of colleagues, whilst complying strictly with both the spirit and letter of the law.

The curriculum deputy, who held responsibility for professional development and as appraisal co-ordinator, favoured a hierarchical approach. Following discussion within the SMT, opinions polarised between the extremes represented. That there was both conflict and compromise present in our interchanges, represents contradictory and paradoxical elements of the experience. Consensus within the SMT appeared unattainable. Subsequently it was agreed to consult colleagues and pursue consensus within a wider arena.

I chose to be absent from colleagues' appraisal training, seeing no rôle for myself in the process. My own appraisal, based on a peer model, was undertaken by a fellow headteacher together with an LEA inspector-adviser, and comprised a separate training schedule. A peer appraisal model was subsequently chosen by the majority of the staff; the following reference affirming the nature of the consultative process:

"At first, half the staff were in favour of being appraised by their heads of department, and the other half favoured peer appraisal. Then we arranged some triads. They found these to be a positive experience. When we took a confidential vote, the majority opted for peer appraisal."

(Curriculum Deputy, Research Log, 12th March 1992)

Three important aspects inform an understanding of the changing culture of the school at this stage. Firstly, the introduction of peer appraisal represented a move away from previous hierarchical philosophy. Secondly, it constituted an introduction to more collaborative and collegiate modes of decision making encouraging consensus. Thirdly, it symbolised a change of heart vis-à-vis the school's preferred solution to a management problem. It represented a sea change, an about-turn, a "*metanoia*" (Senge, 1990, p. 13). The remainder of the SMT's agenda for change exhibited piecemeal, fragmented and mechanistic attributes. Quite unwittingly, we were to embark upon a process described by Morgan (1993) as strategic termite activity, that is, piecemeal and incremental changes which collectively form radical organisational or cultural change.

Both a book inspection and an initiative to shadow selected students floundered for different reasons. The former proved too time-consuming given other priorities. The latter, chosen in order to experience the curriculum as delivered to students, was also not accomplished within the period of the research. It was opposed by one teacher, supported by several colleagues. The following reference illustrates some tensions present:

"This teacher was aggressive in suggesting that nothing could be gained by shadowing a student for a day. Attempts at justifying the exercise fell on stony ground.

In abandoning it, the SMT lost an important opportunity to see the school in action, and perhaps influence some of its academic and learning activity.

In abandoning it, we also signalled our preparedness to listen, and be influenced by colleagues; something that my predecessor had been accused of not doing."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 28th January, 1992)

The incident proved rich in political data. To achieve the aim as articulated in the SMT's agenda would have required an autocratic decision, followed by the wielding of authority and power vested in our rôles, expressed through the school's hierarchy. The SMT in choosing such a course of action would demonstrate a contradiction between expressed preference for collaboration and collegiality, and disregard for the consultative process. In hindsight, one of the consequences of this decision was to adversely affect the pace of change necessary in introducing a greater range of teaching and learning styles into classrooms. Another consequence was manifested in the relatively slow and small advances made initially with regard to raising student achievement within the school.

Initiatives to seek charity status; to establish the school as a registered charity; and to change from special agreement to voluntary aided (VA) status were tedious and time consuming. Benefits were not immediately obvious to colleagues or governors. The initiatives were not motivated by an expectation of benefits subsequently enjoyed by the school. Rather it was ideological motivation, embracing qualities associated with independence and self-governance, which was the driving force. These initiatives proved more important than initially acknowledged, for three reasons. Firstly, they indicated development as an LEA self-governing school (a term borrowed by the LEA from the GM movement). Secondly, they subsequently qualified the school to apply for TC Status, a major governmental initiative.⁶ Thirdly, further advantages became apparent on seeking sponsorship.

⁶ The TCI is discussed in Chapter Seven: The Third Cycle of Innovation.

Two incremental advances were made in relation to the school buildings. Firstly, the school, committed to an extension under the LEA's basic need provision estimated at £250,000, procured progress from the Department of Education and Science (DES). The first phase began with the release of £14,000 for planning and site development.⁷ The building subsequently became the school's music and drama facility and was named in honour of the founder head. Secondly, following pressure on the LEA to re-finance 1988 plans to extend and refurbish the school's main kitchen, work was eventually completed in September 1995.

Plans to introduce an academic board under the chairmanship of the curriculum deputy, to function as a curriculum and staff development committee, met with little initial opposition. However, indicating the presence of some overt political activity, one teacher took his concern, unofficially, to one of the governors. This traditional governor was already concerned about changes introduced at the school, in spite of his involvement in the headship interviews at which it had been a conscious decision to appoint "an innovator", (Governor Comment, Research Log, 12th August, 1991). The teacher, whose political affiliations differed from the governor's, voiced concern over the creation of the academic board and apparently convinced him of a *prima facie* case against the SMT. The governor discussed the matter with me, doing little to disguise the source of his information. The SMT understood the teacher's dissatisfaction to lie in his non-appointment to the academic board. His philosophical justification for opposing the initiative was understood to be emotional rationalisation. His political behaviour, indicating a

⁷ At the next meeting of the governing body I proposed naming the building after the founder head, in recognition of his contribution to the school's development.

conflict of interest, was understood to disguise an ambiguous interrelationship between espoused personal ideology and expressed institutional policy.

For the first time, the SMT, in continuing to work towards a whole school assessment policy, the most problematic of all school policies to formulate, exhibited embryonic characteristics of synergistic activity. Initial difficulties encountered in the process were epitomised by the dichotomy inherent between academic and pastoral domains, characterised by assessment, recording and reporting (ARR) on the one hand and records of achievement (ROA) on the other. The process was a long, tortuous and laborious one in which much consultation took place. The outcomes of the consultation process provided contradictory and paradoxical responses from colleagues. The policy document, therefore, took a further three and a half years in its development, and culminated in a joint enterprise between a deputy and an assistant head. That these colleagues were previously inexperienced in working collegially is understood to indicate both a development of positive interpersonal relationships within the SMT, and a shift to adhocratic and reticular-democratic *modus operandi*. A subsequent and significant initiative, to review the rôle and function of the form tutor, formed the next priority, and became a major focus of the research process.⁸

Re-suiting of rooms in curriculum areas, was understood to be a productive early innovation. There was widespread acceptance of the final schema, with the exception of one teacher who opposed the changes. This teacher was expected to move from a room having extensive views across open countryside, to an

⁸ An analysis of this development forms part of the Second Cycle of Innovation reported in Chapter Six.

inferior room in the RoSLA wing. Whilst it was understood how this teacher felt, the plan had been agreed following extensive consultation; there being strong consensus in favour of the proposals. Once again, there was conflict between emphatic individual interest and established institutional benefit.

The main school building was to accommodate the core subjects of the National Curriculum; English, mathematics and science. Other wings were to accommodate technology, humanities and modern foreign languages respectively; the new wing being earmarked as a music and drama facility. It had been claimed that the former head allocated rooms on the basis of patronage (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 24th September 1991). It was also generally understood that there was little logic in the prevailing arrangements. The initiative was understood to have moved the school forward through a radical, logical process. The governing body supported the innovation, its curricular implications facilitating improvement in learning activity across all subjects, all ages and all abilities.

The first cycle of innovation concluded with plans for temporary TVEI funded promotions. The exercise was characterised by strategic termite activity (Morgan, 1993) though this was not appreciated at the time. It was intended, subject to TVEI management approval, to use allowances as follows:

- HoD technology from B to C.
- to support a part-time technician, thereby strengthening the technology department
- Assistant ROA co-ordinator from SNS to A.
- Librarian from A to B - establishing Library as open learning resource.
- Assistant head of vocational guidance appointed on A.
- Science teacher from SNS to A - implementation of KS4 and promote departmental links with industry.
- Modern language teacher from SNS to A.
- HoD art department from SNS to A.

- HoD music from SNS to A.
- Full-time library and resources assistant appointed. The appointee had responsibility for both the running of the library, and in servicing the careers library thus creating a broader base of learning materials within it. Following interviews, the appointee performed *"like a second teacher"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th June, 1992) with classes timetabled in the library for academic work.

The collective effect of these posts was to achieve both a measure of morale boosting, and a flattening of the hierarchy. These plans came to fruition at the conclusion of the first cycle of innovation.

5.5 Conclusion:

This chapter has focused on the initial twelve-month period understood to comprise the first cycle of innovation. It has aimed at charting some emerging processes constituting a reconceptualisation of the school both culturally and politically. It covered the period September 1991-July 1992 and initially focused on mapping formative developments of the SMT. The second and third parts of this cycle are characterised respectively, by an *"Aims Exercise"* involving both the school and some of its contributory community, and by framing an incipient agenda for change.

This chapter initially focused on mapping formative developments within the SMT. The second and third parts of this cycle are characterised respectively, by an *"aims exercise"* involving both the school and some of its contributory community, and by framing an incipient agenda for change. The former informed the latter. The latter comprised a number of mechanistic and incremental developments, as a prelude to more radical and wide ranging changes in the school's organisation. It was

proposed that the implementation and institutionalisation of these developments should signal the onset of organic characteristics embedding in the school's culture.

The integrating theme embodying the SMT's cultural and micro-political development apropos teamwork, consensus and synergy, has informed an understanding of some of its leadership activities and management strategies, as viewed through the application of particular lenses and prisms as described in chapter two.

Consequently, subsequent analysis of innovatory activity at Bishop Lindis School is set within the context of the developing rôle of the SMT as a major change agent. The centrality of this thematic approach, together with the application of lenses and prisms which focus attention, renders subsequent analysis and understanding of the organisation necessarily partial.

The following chapter aims to describe and interpret some of the processes of innovation encountered in the second cycle of the project.

Chapter Six

The Second Cycle of Innovation: September 1992 - July 1993 Saturday Conferences and Pastoral Developments

6.1 Introduction:

This chapter sets out to be both descriptive and interpretive. It relates to the second cycle of innovation and focuses on the initiatory rôle of the Saturday Conferences and on some initial developments of the Pastoral System. The centrality of the SMT's management rôle in innovative processes provides an integrating theme. For convenience the second cycle of innovation is deemed to equate with the 1992-93 academic year. It is understood, however, that cycles of innovation are complex, overlap, and vary in length. Resulting analysis is essentially partial.

My understanding of the period of activity to which this chapter relates emanates from, and is coloured by, apprehension about my rôle as both researcher and change agent. My conclusions are coloured as the result of having engaged in a period of self-doubt in my first year of headship. Sometimes I questioned my ideologies, values and perspectives. As I prepared for the new academic year I asked myself questions of the sort:

"Was I right to want to modify the grouping arrangements of the school which I saw as rigid and élitist; the practice of exclusion, which I saw as overused and sometimes inappropriate; and the nature of discipline, which I saw as overly controlled and not conducive to the development of students' self-discipline?"

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 26th August, 1992)

Struggling with some of these questions constituted a learning experience for the SMT. For example, we struggled with the contradiction inherent in the use of exclusion in punishing recalcitrant students whilst simultaneously rewarding them with holidays. Whilst, on the one hand, the school appeared to be providing strong discipline, on the other hand, exclusion could be understood to represent ineffectiveness and failure.

In the midst of reflecting on the paradoxes, inconsistencies and contradictions of the previous year, my second year of headship began with a staff meeting on Tuesday 1st September, 1992. An extract taken from my research diary of that date, was written at a time when I was reflecting both on the previous year and on the task ahead. I was mindful that inevitable subsequent innovations were to bring with them particular demands previously outside my experience as either a head or a deputy. The following extract makes it clear that I was apprehensive. Perhaps because I had some, albeit little, appreciation of the problematic nature of the ensuing task, I recalled:

“Last year I experienced one of the most difficult years in my professional career, and I had thought that things could only improve. Following today’s staff meeting, and as a result of trying to interpret my colleagues mood and actions I cannot help feeling that my optimism was not entirely justified.”

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 1st September, 1992)

Within the context outlined above, this chapter relates to management of human resources. It focuses on concern for effective deployment of colleagues, for their preparation for performing particular rôles and for their ability to carry out particular functions inherent in their individual contributions. This chapter also emphasises the rôle of the SMT in recognising colleagues’ potential for fulfilling specific functions.

and in engaging in the process of developing their professional competencies in preparation for performing such functions.

6.2 The SMT Saturday Conference:

It was symbolic, in cultural terms, that the new term began with the introduction of a modified school uniform for the lower school, based on the traditional school colour and crest. It was intended that various anomalies, discussed in chapter four, would disappear in subsequent years. The new uniform was introduced in order to project the school's corporate image. It retained a formal crest, designed by the former head; it being intended to protect the school's cultural heritage and reinforce its traditional character. It had previously been suggested that the school:

“...had been searching for an identity through a plethora of different uniforms which had been introduced at different times throughout its history.”

(Teacher Comment, Research Log, 28th April 1992)

The introduction of a more cohesive dress code was designed to herald a new era in which the school was to “*come of age*” (Staff Comment, Research Log, 3rd September 1992). If the school was to come of age, it was to do so with a new understanding of its aims, its mission and its identity as a “*centre of learning in which it was intended that tradition and innovation would be interwoven and complementary*” (Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 15th August, 1992). Such changes are often dismissed as cosmetic, trivial, or as part of a process of “*tarting the place up*” (Governor Comment, Research Log, 12th September 1992). The process and outcome are understood to be more important than the governor's comment suggests.

Reflecting on this innovation led to an understanding that the school's changing culture was, in part, being mediated in a tangible and powerful way through material or symbolic manifestations of its new uniform and traditional crest (Beare *et al.*, 1989).

Another potentially potent device for communicating the changing culture of the school; its corporate mission and vision, was to take form in Saturday Conferences centred around the rôle and activities of the SMT. The Saturday Conferences are understood to have advanced and fortified the "*task culture*" of the school (Handy and Aitken, 1986) or "*project school culture*" (Dalin, 1993). In doing so, activity is understood to have shifted into the focus of an adhocratic lens, as discussed in chapter two.¹

That the nature of activity in the school had shifted along the mechanistic-organic continuum, is understood to indicate the innovatory nature of the process undertaken. Prior to the commencement of the research, it is believed that the school's management activity had principally focused within the mechanistic domain, and had been mediated predominantly through both autocratic and bureaucratic procedures.²

The SMT Saturday Conference on 14th November, 1992 was the first significant event in the second cycle of innovation. It was attended by all five members of the SMT, augmented by an LEA inspector-adviser and a fellow diocesan

¹ Adhocracies, task cultures and project schools have been discussed in previous chapters.

² These concepts are explored in Chapter Two: The Theoretical Framework.

headteacher. Guests shared the task of my appraisal. My performance at the conference formed a major aspect of the appraisal process.

Some concepts and theories of educational management and the management of change were tentatively introduced into the conference.³ These topics emerged from reading undertaken at the time, and whilst some were related to activities reported directly in this thesis, others were abandoned or superseded having outgrown their usefulness. The decision to include any particular management activity was based on my knowledge and understanding of its relevance at that particular time, in that particular place, and with that particular group of people. For example, there was an attempt at applying Maslow's hierarchy of needs, discussed in chapter two, to our own situation. One objective was to draw attention to the rôle of management in developing positive approaches to creating caring relationships with and between colleagues. We asked ourselves whether we were satisfying their needs.

In a rôle play exercise in which we played HMIs visiting another school, we adopted each of the levels of Maslow's hierarchy as criteria for assessing quality of management. It was suggested that we might pose the question to an HoD, *"What support do you provide for members of your team who find class control to be a problem?"* We also identified three or four new things we would do as managers to help satisfy needs in our own teams.

³ Details of the conference are documented in Appendix E.

Having emphasised that one objective was to draw attention to the rôle of the SMT in creating a caring relationship with colleagues, we addressed the following key questions⁴ based on Maslow's hierarchy:

- Do we trust colleagues with enough responsibility to develop them professionally, or do we err on the safe side?
- Are we over reluctant to delegate important tasks and goals?
- Do we do too much for them?
- Do we over support as opposed to challenge?
- Do we allow them enough space to act on their own initiatives?
- In difficult situations do we take over too soon?

In studying a list of colleagues, we attempted to identify those people who could take on higher levels of responsibility. We also identified which of those same people were ready to be entrusted with developing a new initiative within the context we had been considering.

As the exercise developed, SMT colleagues took more responsibility for both the process and direction of the discussion. Subjectively, for me, the process became a tangible expression of colleague empowerment,⁵ by which I mean a move to shared leadership in recognition that colleagues, as professionals, deserve a greater voice in educational decision making. Notwithstanding, there was an unease, reflecting different perceptions of shifts in power and authority within the SMT, and consequent different levels of commitment to collegiality. Wallace and Hall (1994)

⁴ The relevance of these questions may be demonstrated by reference to Chapter Two: The Theoretical Framework.

⁵ Blase and Anderson (1995, pp. 110-112) suggest that there are seven major strategies that enhance teacher empowerment. They are: demonstrating trust in teachers; developing shared governance structures; encouraging and listening to individual input; encouraging individual teacher autonomy; encouraging innovation (creativity/risk-taking); giving rewards and providing support. In addition the following five personal characteristics of principals are understood as crucial to teachers' sense of empowerment. They are: caring; enthusiasm; optimism; honesty and friendliness.

shed light on possible explanations for the particular dynamic, as experienced in the SMT at that time. They suggest that:

“A new head may introduce parameters for teamwork reflecting a greater emphasis on the norm of contributing as equals; where an SMT member other than the head does not accept a commitment to teamwork, the head is likely to be more directive with respect to this person, interaction between them becoming more hierarchical.”

(Wallace and Hall, 1994, p. 37)

The SMT persisting with its developing agenda, and the notion of survival in the context of the school, posed the following questions which were the result of a brainstorming session:

- Does the present structure provide sufficient support for teachers who are struggling?
- Are colleagues encouraged to admit that they have problems?
- Are colleagues encouraged to voice any concerns they might have with the SMT?
- Does our staff development programme cater specifically for the needs of the low-skilled and the highly motivated?
- Do teachers on the main scale have sufficient access to all members of the SMT including the head?
- Do we have a sufficiently effective feedback mechanism for soliciting the views and ideas of teachers on the main scale?
- Should the main scale teachers have separate meetings?
- Do we support women teachers sufficiently and encourage them to seek professional development?

In preparing to involve colleagues in subsequent initiatives and innovations, and in applying each of the above questions to particular situations we had experienced or were likely to experience, we attempted to address the further question, *“if we risk it, what is the worst that can happen?”* We concluded that if we could live with the worst scenario, then it was likely that the risk would be worth taking. On the one hand we, as a team, thus empowered ourselves to take risks. On the other hand, that we rarely chose to do so, but rather perpetuated norms and

practices reinforcing cultural stability, emphasised fragile and illusive characteristics of change. That we rarely chose to take risks in the early years of our development as an SMT is indicative of our inherent mistrust of each other, and our ambivalence towards risk taking processes. On the one hand we were convinced, as a team, that risk-taking was an essential part of our innovatory rôle. On the other hand we were aware that risk-taking could be a costly enterprise which might leave individual team members feeling vulnerable.

The conference proceeded to focus on issues related to pastoral organisation, in which a number of changes had already been made, some of which, to a greater or lesser degree, had been forced on us. The activity, we accepted, had been more reactive than pro-active.

In reviewing the prevailing situation we noted that the head of year ten had taken up a secondment in June and could return the following April; the head of year seven had become the head of years seven and eight; the heads of years eight and nine had moved up with their years; and, the head of year eleven, having been taken ill, had been replaced temporarily by a colleague who had previously spent two years on secondment at the LEA's School Support Team.

Faced with the head of year nine's resignation with effect from 31st December 1992, we discussed how we should proceed with her replacement, both in the short and long term; and, the sort of pastoral system we envisaged in place one year hence, five years hence and ten years hence. We thus engaged in a process of *"reflective envisioning"*.

In order to distance ourselves from problems facing us at Bishop Lindis School, but in order to involve ourselves in processes needed to address them, we participated in a simulation exercise. The exercise required that we select, or invent a major policy or change in practice that we would wish to facilitate. We also chose something to consolidate and develop; an initiative already undertaken of which we had gained some experience.

The arrangements for pastoral care, including structures which provide for pastoral organisation, were explored and a number of options considered. It became clear, in spite of a carefully managed agenda, that the SMT at that time was not of a mind to take risks. The composition of the SMT, in addition to the characteristics of each of its members, conspired against explorations of creative possibilities for implementation. Even members who were most amenable to change showed reluctance to pursue ideas which were anything other than mainstream.

The dynamics of the day, and the personal interactions between *"insiders and outsiders"* to the school, had an effect (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 14th November, 1992). The involvement of an LEA inspector-adviser and a diocesan headteacher colleague at the conference, because of their rôle as appraisers, adversely affected discussions and their outcomes, and inhibited progress. However, some foundations for subsequent development were laid.

From the perspective of this research, the day provided a wealth of data which were duly logged. The material and concepts with which we engaged were not equally relevant to all colleagues. Further progress in developing pastoral structures

was potentially a lengthy process. Developing rôles and responsibilities to affect change in the human relations dynamic would likely prove problematic.

Although goals were set for developing pastoral care, the necessity to temper aspirations for change became clear. Whilst having major plans, it would be necessary to settle for small gains. Whilst it is understood that a characteristic of change is that it is often incremental, paradoxically, the intention of making incremental changes is rarely successful. The ensuing exploration of prevailing thinking in pastoral systems provided the SMT with substance for further deliberation.

As a result of responses from colleagues, I experienced a degree of ambivalence towards the process with which I was grappling, and the nature of my rôle within it. On the one hand I was trying to introduce democratic practices, and flatten hierarchies thus limiting my own contribution to one of influence. On the other hand, I found myself leading the SMT in a directive and autocratic manner at times. The paradoxical nature of the rôle of the head in leading innovation through team approaches is most eloquently illustrated by reference to Hughes (1976) who suggests that:

“The innovating head, it appears, relies partly on exerting influence on staff colleagues as a fellow professional; equally, however, he (sic) accepts his position as chief executive, and uses the organisational controls which are available to him to get things moving. Professional and executive considerations reinforce each other as complementary aspects of a coherent and unified strategy.”

(Hughes, 1976, p. 58)

I resolved the ambiguity of my rôle, though by no means immediately or easily, by reminding myself that no leader operates totally within one domain. Even

democratic leaders act in autocratic ways on some occasions. I believed that to balance these extremes was important. That the organisation and I were operating in more organic modes was understood to be crucial to the school's preparedness for initiating, implementing and institutionalising planned organisational change. The importance of staff attitudes, staff morale and staff motivation in embarking upon, and sustaining programmes of innovation, led to the introduction of a discussion on individual and organisational motivation together with individuals' and the organisation's perceived needs.

6.3 Pastoral Developments viewed through a Reticular-Democratic Lens:

The following diagram, figure 6.1, focuses on the school as a person (or support or existential) culture (Handy and Aitken, 1986) in relation to the function of pastoral care and guidance, though the application of a reticular-democratic lens. Pastoral structures, are, of course, mediated through a rôle culture, are bureaucratic, and as such are not the focus of this chapter. By contrast, a person culture or "*systemic learning organisation*" (Dalin, 1993), is understood to be characterised by attributes associated with reticular-democracies, and in this study is viewed through the application of a reticular-democratic lens to focus attention.

In addressing pastoral issues, predominant organisational activity is understood to have shifted from the left to the right side of the diagram. It also shifted from the lower to the upper part of the diagram. The significance of this shift lies in the nature of activity having moved not only from mechanistic to organic modes, but also from being task or rôle oriented to becoming person oriented. This shift in focus is understood to reflect attributes and characteristics of the affective domain

of education. In summary, and in applying this particular analytical tool, the “organisational shape and position” of the school is understood to have shifted.⁶

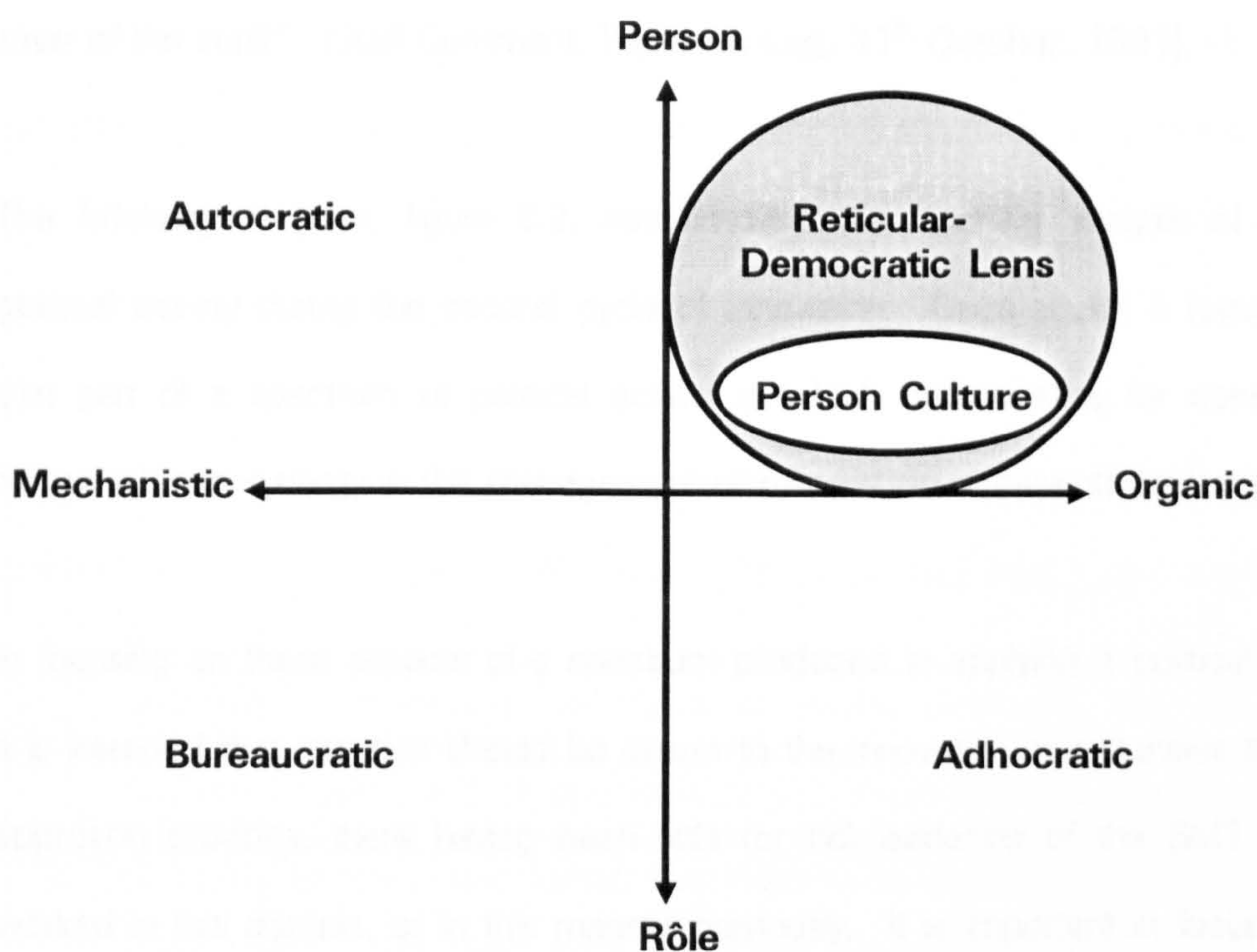


Figure 6.1 Bishop Lindis School seen as a Person Culture through a Reticular-Democratic Lens, September 1992 -July 1993

The structure in which the pastoral system operated lacked a clear and logical rationale.⁷ In functional terms, the heads of years had formerly been told to: “*make what you can of the job*”, (Assistant Head Comment, Research Log, 28th September, 1991) and as a result were considered to have “*disenfranchised the form teachers of their rôle*” (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 19th March, 1992). The primary function of the heads of years had tended to be punitive and

⁶ The concept of a shift in “*the organisational shape and location*” of the school is fundamental to this thesis.

⁷ The head of year eleven was paid on a B allowance (2 points). The heads of years eight, nine and ten respectively, were each paid A allowances (1 point). The head of year seven, who was also responsible for liaison with the feeder primary school, was paid a C allowance (3 points).

disciplinary, since this was seen as the prime management and power function in the school. The rôle of *"disciplinarian"* was perceived as a high status rôle. Both the former head and some members of the SMT had been perceived as: *"the axe men of the outfit"*. (Staff Comment, Research Log, 11th October, 1991).

The following diagram, figure 6.2, contextualises the ensuing analysis of micro-political activity during the second cycle of innovation. Once again, it focuses on that part of a spectrum of political activity in which opportunities for consensus, teamwork and synergy in the management of pastoral developments took place.

In focusing on these aspects of a spectrum produced in applying a political prism, it is intended that attention should be drawn to the innovative opportunities that the approach provides, there having been little (or no) evidence of the SMT having worked in this domain, or in this manner previously. It is important in focusing on these aspects of the work of the SMT to be aware of the nature of activity, relationships, power struggles and the micro-political milieu in which we were operating, which loses dynamic in the writing.

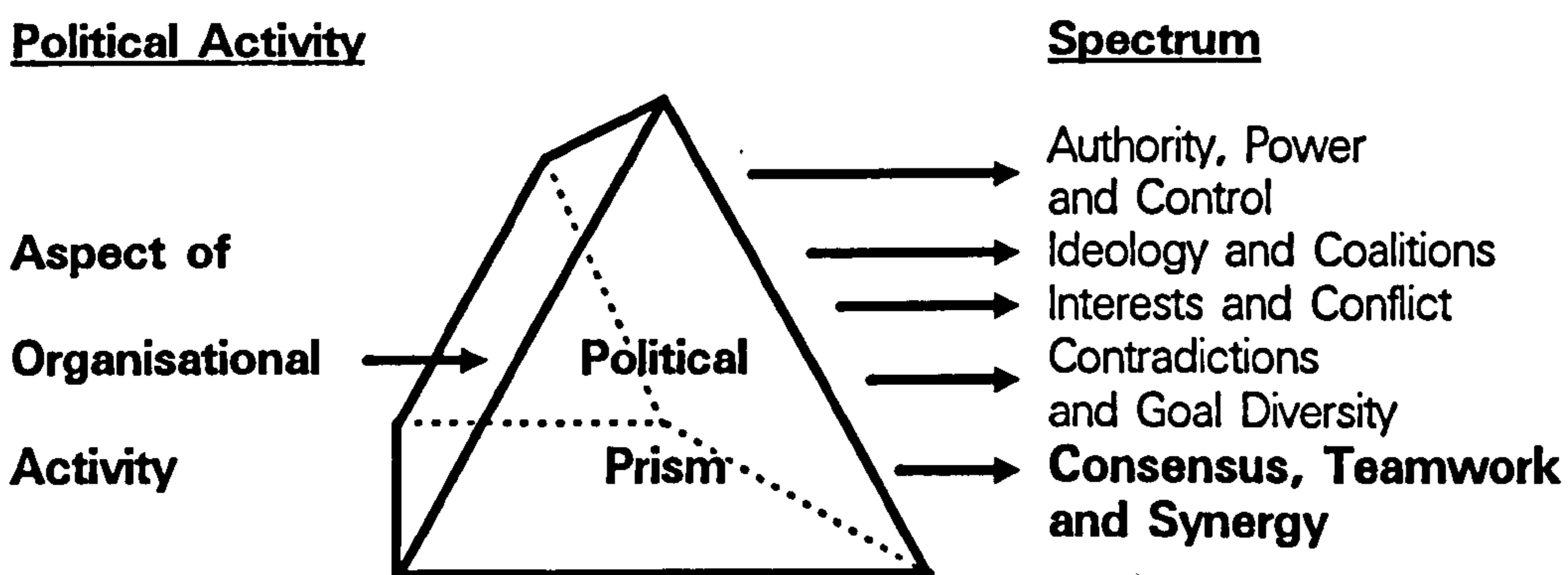


Figure 6.2 A Spectrum of Political Activity within the Organisation.

Teamwork sounds cosy. It gives the impression of everyone pulling in the same direction, which, of course, is the objective. Often, in reality, it felt like a tug-o-war. To apply another analogy, our small steps forward in working together were often taken on slippery stepping stones. Cabinet responsibility was a concept with which we struggled, and through our struggles came to understand as delicate, fragile and precarious. Accounts in the literature rarely acknowledge the reality of team dynamics as we experienced them.

For example, Best *et al.* (1995) in addressing issues of school management for pastoral care and PSE, provide some guidelines for working teams, and argue that:

“The pastoral work of the school can be effective only if done in teams, in partnership. Identifying the needs of pupils, generating the information which will allow teaching to respond, support and guidance for pupils, fostering a caring and orderly environment: these are all the tasks of many members of staff. In order for these different people to work together effectively for the pupils’ benefit they need to be organised into teams.

These teams need clear goals, tasks and responsibilities and resources. It would be possible to draw up a team job description in the same way as for an individual post-holder. ...The teams also need leadership, and someone to take responsibility for keeping the team on track, monitoring the work done and being accountable to others for that work. Team leadership is becoming more recognised as an important skill for schools.”

(Best *et al.*, 1995, p. 32)

Their matter-of-fact description, its implicit anticipation of success, and its recipe-like approach, belies the reality, as we experienced it, within SMT activity at Bishop Lindis School. However, in spite of reservations, with such guidelines in mind, an agenda was set for the development of the pastoral system based on team approaches. It was felt that collegiate and collaborative possibilities of team approaches might promote change in both the learning and human relationships dynamic of the school. In pursuing pastoral innovation we were mindful;

- firstly, that we should not reinforce or perpetuate a dichotomous relationship between pastoral and academic domains of education (Power, 1996);
- secondly, pastoral care could devour material and human resources; and,
- thirdly, there had been little in-depth research on issues and problems arising from management in this aspect of schools' work, or its relationship to other major task areas; especially curriculum management.

It is widely accepted in the literature (Marland, 1974; Haigh 1975; Hamblin, 1978; Marland in Glatter *et al.*, 1988; Griffiths and Sherman, 1991; McLaughlin *et al.* 1991; Best *et al.*, 1995, Best, 1996; and Power 1996) that pastoral provision has often been an area of considerable ambiguity, on which much research remains to be done. It is acknowledged that there is a need for large-scale surveys in this field of investigation, and that more detailed case studies of individual schools and comparative analyses of various approaches and practices are equally necessary.

Within the context outlined above and within the theoretical framework outlined in chapter two, this research has aimed, to some extent, to fill the gap identified below by Marland (1988), who states that:

“The common fallacies of pastoral care ...leave it without the research base it requires. We need pastoral procedures which enable tutors and class teachers to understand motivation and to know how to ensure pupils learn how to succeed. There is little research on the structure and responsibilities for pastoral care within schools.We simply do not know enough about pastoral care structures to adapt, service or rebuild them. We hope there will be an upsurge of research to help the next generation of pupils more than their predecessors.”

(Marland, 1988 in Glatter, R. *et al.*, 1988, p. 259-260)

Pastoral care, the term first introduced into schools in the 1960s to embrace responsibility for the welfare and personal development of students, might be

understood as a response to particular difficulties experienced in society at that time. The development of specific pastoral care systems might largely be viewed as a product of the emergence of comprehensive schools in the 1960s, since:

“Comprehensive Schools were generally larger and more complex than their predecessors. ...They usually found it necessary to institute pastoral and administrative sub-divisions in the form of year or house systems.”

(The Open University, 1981a p. 105)

Bishop Lindis School, having opened in September 1963, was embraced within the culture in which pastoral care, and the development of pastoral systems had emerged and prevailed. It was felt that the *“size of the school, and its pleasant rural environment”* (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 6th September 1992) obviated the necessity to develop complex structures for dealing with affective aspects of the educative process.

The effectiveness of care and guidance at Bishop Lindis School initially rested on the rôle of the form teacher as the lynch-pin of the pastoral system. The head and his deputy constituted the pastoral leadership of the school and this minimalist provision was seen to be appropriate given the size and nature of the school, and the nature of the social milieu in which the school operated.

Best *et al.* (1983) offered an explanation for the parallel development of comprehensive education and pastoral care systems, during the 1960s by suggesting that:

“There were many who were concerned about ...the anonymity and rootlessness that large and unselective schools might engender in their charges. The construction of a separate pastoral structure is held to have been a sensible and sensitive accommodation to these fears.”

(Best *et al.*, 1983, p. 15)

This project in the management of change, recognises the relevance of the reasoning inherent in the above reference to the current social milieu surrounding schools. It is relevant to comprehensive schools in an era of rapid change, and may be appropriate to other types of secondary schools which share the inherent problems of the prevailing materialistic, post-Thatcher, post-modern, post-industrial technological society. It has often been argued that every teacher is expected to fulfil a pastoral rôle; never more so than in today's complex and demanding social climate.

Twenty years ago Haigh (1975) suggested that:

"....every new entrant to the teaching profession is persuaded of the need to accept the dual rôle of academic and shepherd."

(Haigh, 1975, p.1)

The dual or multifaceted rôle of the teacher is more important today than it has ever been. The nature of that rôle must be both coherent and cohesive. There is no longer a place for a dichotomy between pastoral and academic domains of education (Best *et al.*, 1995; and Power 1996).

More liberal attitudes of the 1960s had an effect on attitudes and values prevailing in schools. Those changing attitudes and values, combined with major changes in ways secondary education was delivered, through comprehensive, all ability, all through schools, required structures and systems for handling the ensuing problems. Sometimes, exceptionally, these systems included educational and careers guidance and counselling. It is in the foregoing context that Best *et al.* argued that the "*conventional wisdom*" of pastoral care can be summarised as:

"...the institutionalised and altruistic commitment of teachers and schools to the welfare of their charges, a picture in which teachers' interests are always those of the children and for which the pastoral staff of the school have special responsibility."

(Best *et al.* 1983, p. 12)

The authors also indicated that practical experience in schools and with teachers was often at odds with the conventional wisdom. Rivendell School, the subject of the authors' investigation, adopted the following approach in which:

"Pastoral care can be defined as the expression of the school's continuing concern for the individual's integrity and welfare, its development of his (sic) personality and talents."

(*ibid.*, p. 24)

The approach adopted at Rivendell School is congruent with the expressed pastoral aims at Bishop Lindis School, as discussed in chapter four. There was, however, a discrepancy between the rhetoric of stated aims and observed practice, as illustrated in chapter five. This situation was not unique to Bishop Lindis School since the authors cited above also claimed that at Rivendell School:

"...teacher practice squared poorly with both the school's stated aims and the objectives which teachers claimed to be pursuing."

(*ibid.*, 1983, p. 251)

Further evidence of schools not meeting their pastoral aims is cited by Hamblin (1978), who suggested that in practice pastoral care systems in schools often broke down because of inadequate management (or oversight) of form tutors by the house or year head. In supporting his argument he states that:

"The major weakness in the pastoral system often stems from the fact that form tutors have not had the training which allows them to detect and deal with the first signs of stress and difficulty. Obviously, there cannot be accountability when form tutors do not know what they are expected to do, and it is unreasonable to expect the inexperienced teacher to be able

to give adequate pastoral help to his form. In schools where the form tutors are not performing their pastoral rôles efficiently, I have found that there is often a defect in management relating to the year head or head of house, who do not have clear responsibilities for the regular training of their form tutors or for organising the development of materials for pastoral periods."

(Hamblin, 1978, p. 141)

A similar scenario prevailed at Bishop Lindis School, in which tension and contradiction existed between the rôle of the form tutor and that of the head of year. There was both rôle conflict and rôle ambiguity present for many of the incumbents occupying either rôle. In addition, a divergence existed between the espoused aims of the school and the practice of pastoral care, and human relationships in general, adopted within it.

The inconsistencies, contradictions and conflicts evident in these aspects have become important features of this research. In order to identify suitable areas for profitable development it has been necessary to turn to the literature for guidance on what is considered to be prevailing good practice. In a recent study, Best et al. (1995) identified an authoritative definition of good pastoral practice in a report of an inspection of aspects of pastoral care in twenty-seven comprehensive schools, carried out by HMI in 1987-88. In it HMI state that:

"...pastoral care is concerned with promoting pupils' personal and social development and fostering positive attitudes: through the quality of teaching and learning; through the nature of relationships amongst pupils, teachers and adults other than teachers; through arrangements for monitoring pupils' overall progress, academic, personal and social; through specific pastoral structures and support systems; and through extra-curricular activities and the school ethos.

Pastoral care, accordingly should help a school achieve success. In such a context it offers support for the learning, behaviour and welfare of all pupils, and addresses the particular difficulties some individual pupils may be experiencing. It seems to help ensure that all pupils, and particularly girls

and members of ethnic minorities, are enabled to benefit from the full range of educational opportunities which a school has available.”

(HMI, 1989, p. 3, in Best *et al.*, 1995, pp. 4-5)

HMI's agenda for developing pastoral care in schools appears heavily weighted towards students and schools achieving success, thus indicating a shift away from a previous heavily weighted social agenda. It appears that HMI also recognises, that in shifting its agenda, issues of equality of opportunity emerge and need to be addressed.

In response to the situation at Bishop Lindis School as understood by the SMT, together with some understanding of ideas occurring in the literature, management issues identified for further study and subsequent development included:

- the pastoral structure of the school;
- student guidance at key transition points;
- the rôles of teachers with pastoral responsibilities and those of the SMT;
- liaison with external agencies; and
- the relationship between the academic and pastoral curricula.

(SMT Saturday Conference, Research Log, 14th November, 1992)

Whilst, in part, this study focuses on the nature of pastoral care in secondary schools in general and on pastoral care at Bishop Lindis School in particular, the nature of pastoral processes within primary education on the one hand, and at the tertiary stage on the other, provide a wider context for the study and have particular contributions to make.

For example, in primary schools, it is acknowledged that it is unusual to find formal systems for the organisation of pastoral care. This is partly a function of size, but

also reflects organisational considerations. Most importantly, and of particular relevance to this study is the notion that:

“There is a clear difference between the primary and secondary sectors in the emphasis given to the **whole** child, which at primary levelintegrates academic and pastoral elements.”

(The Open University, 1981b, p. 43, my emphasis)

More recent literature (e.g. Best, 1996) translates the concept of the whole child and the integration of pastoral and academic elements to centre stage when considering affective and pastoral domains of secondary education.

The term “*pastoral care*” developed in relation to schools, is not in general use in post-compulsory institutions. Yet it would be incorrect to assert that colleges of FE and HE are primarily academic institutions which make little or no provision for the welfare of their students. Many colleges operate personal tutor systems so that students can have clear points of reference for discussion of problems, especially those that inhibit academic progress. Specialist counselling and welfare staff are also employed at many institutions, and colleges often have highly developed careers guidance services.

In the same way that it is possible to learn from the experiences of primary colleagues and primary school practices, it may be equally the case that teachers in the tertiary sector have something to teach secondary schools in understanding and organising pastoral care, particularly with regard to one-to-one reviewing and the monitoring of progress.

The notion of one-to-one tutoring has taken on greater importance in recent years in secondary schools, particularly with regard to the effects such practices have on student performance in GCSE examinations. Whilst the motives behind such changes in practice are considered "*less than virtuous*" by some (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 15th April, 1994), a major by-product has been a bridging of the pastoral-academic gulf.

The following discussion provides a context for the focus of activity involved in developing pastoral culture at Bishop Lindis School and places strategic termite activity within the domain of a Reticular-Democracy. Morgan (1993) suggests that such activity is useful in particular circumstances, when change is required and the micro-political milieu is not conducive to it. In summary, he believes that:

"In times of change, plans and planning often prove ineffective because they create rigidities. In highly politicised contexts, they often serve as magnets for political opposition, catalysing and crystallising the views of those who do not want to travel the planned direction. This creates an enormous dilemma for would-be leaders or managers, because they have to find ways of planning without plans or, at least, of creating some kind of visionary framework, that can evolve and adapt as circumstances require."

(Morgan, 1993, p. 41)

In such circumstances, as discussed in chapter two, Morgan uses the image of a "*strategic termite*", which whilst a humble metaphor, opens up the possibility of tapping into many of the insights emerging from the new disciplines of cybernetics and chaos theory in an evocative, practical manner.

To summarise, Morgan sees termites as master builders. He sees termite nests as products of random, self-organising activity where structures emerge and unfold in piecemeal, unplanned ways. Morgan sees them as providing inspiration for

developing coherent approaches to strategic management and change, without the strait-jackets and problems imposed by trying to follow predetermined plans.

There is a danger in the approach, since it is possible that strategic termite activity might become a ruse for autocratic behaviour. It is also possible that mere ad hoc arrangements might be confused with termite activity, as might reactive management behaviour. Strategic termite activity is pro-activity. It is collegial and co-operative in character. It emerges out of chaos. It is self-organising, and to that extent *"brain-like"*. Organisations built on the approach have the capacity to re-build and repair themselves. They evolve from random, chaotic activity which is guided by an overall sense of purpose and direction, but in an open-ended manner. Strategic Termite activity is understood to characterise a reticular-democracy, brains, holographs (Morgan, 1986), and systemic learning organisations (Dalín, 1993).

Whilst not aware of the approach at the time, some of the activity leading to fundamental structural changes at Bishop Lindis School were the result of activity and behaviours akin to those described by Morgan as strategic termite activity. In becoming more familiar with the concept as it emerges from Morgan's discourse, it appears to open up more possibilities for change in organisations which have to struggle for survival in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing technological society (society undergoing manifest structural change - Nixon *et al.*, 1996, p. vii).

Sometimes, in making plans public, and attracting the sort of political opposition which Morgan relates to, it was necessary to keep *"nibbling away"* in a particular direction under the surface, even by accepting defeat on some issues as the price

to be paid for the sake of sustaining another, more productive agenda. Such political activity, whilst not planned, seemed inevitable in response to those who did not choose to travel in the intended direction, and who sometimes erected barriers to prevent others from doing so. Such political activity constituted a dilemma, and contradiction between expressed preference for "openness", and coping strategies which sometimes resulted in covert operations.

The first development in the pastoral system followed an SMT Conference. Applications were invited for a new permanent post, initially at incentive allowance A to be reviewed at 1st September 1993. Following the resignation of the head of year nine, the aim was to fill the post with a teacher holding responsibility for student support and guidance.

Candidates were required to show creativity and flexibility in their approaches to student support and guidance within a developing pastoral and student guidance system. In the first instance it was anticipated that the successful candidate would be responsible for duties as a head of year, thus, whilst not having any particular plans, allowing for other developments to take place at some future date.

Candidates were requested to answer the following questions:

- What do you consider to be the relevant issues with regard to student support and guidance in preparing young people for a place in a rapidly changing technological society?
- In your opinion, what steps can be taken to bridge the dichotomy (often believed to be a false one) between the pastoral and academic needs of the students in our care?
- What are the particular strengths that you believe you have to offer in supporting and guiding students in their careers at Bishop Lindis School?
- Outline what you consider to be the most important aspects of being a form tutor.

(Advertisement for Head of Year post, Research Log, 24th November 1992)

The SMT agreed, though not without considerable discussion and conflicting opinions, that the needs of young people as they were educated to take their place in an increasingly changing, technological and challenging world demanded that the school should not only review its curricular provision, a view clearly shared by the government, but also the provision it made for students through its support and guidance arrangements. The necessity for a review of the pastoral system had been discussed widely over the previous few months by both the SMT and at least two of the governors' committees (students and personnel). Ambivalence and ambiguity surrounding proposals to review pastoral arrangements were endemic and are understood to contrast preconceptions of the worth of the prevailing arrangements with scepticism regarding perceived plans.

Because of uncertainties regarding the timing of the head of year ten's and head of year eleven's return, and with the aim of retaining as much flexibility as possible, both the SMT and the governors' personnel committee agreed that a replacement the head of year nine was inappropriate at that time. This left a gap, which could not be filled in the conventional manner. Repair was necessary for the pastoral system to continue to operate. Brain-like holographic solutions were required.

With this in mind the head of years seven and eight was invited, and agreed, to act as co-ordinator of pupil support and guidance in the lower school (years seven, eight and nine). This "*brain-like*" solution (Morgan, 1986), that of taking on the function of a missing element, might also be seen as characteristic of a reticular-democracy. The appointment was made with the aim of reinforcing and extending the rôle of the form tutor in the following ways:

- To develop approaches which *facilitate* the rôle of form tutors as paramount in the care, support and guidance of their tutees.
- To *equip* form tutors with skills and resources to enable them to fulfil a wider rôle with regard to home-school relationships.
- To *foster* relationships between form tutors and the external care agencies, including the schools' psychological service, the schools' support team, the education welfare officer and (occasionally) the police.
- To *re-establish* the form tutor as the linchpin of our care, support and guidance system.
- To *monitor, maintain and promote* the academic, personal and social development of all pupils in the lower school through the ROA system in liaison with the ROA co-ordinator.

(Notice to Staff, Research, Log, 24th November 1992)

The changes taking place at Bishop Lindis School, were gathering momentum, and a consensus was developing within the body of the staff which provided sufficient support for the initiatives to be introduced. It is appreciated, however, that not all colleagues were supportive of the various innovations. It is acknowledged that final consensus is never reached; any level of consensus being costly and a hard earned reward, often not achieved without casualties. The changes, coming in the wake of the nationally imposed changes of the second half of the 1980s, were too much for some colleagues. There were early retirements and retirements as a result of infirmity.

The LEA regarded the changes as healthy, having given a mandate for change at my appointment. Following these, and a number of other changes in the school, a year or so later, an officer of the LEA, who had been on the appointing committee, wrote:

"...I felt I should write a brief note of thanks following the excellent Presentation Evening last Friday. It was a great pleasure to be with you. I did say to you that I was impressed on a number of points, and clearly a considerable amount of thought, planning and consultation has been behind a number of developments that together add up to great progress in a comparatively short period of time.

May I compliment you and the SMT particularly on the noticeably democratic style of management that has been introduced and the excellent way in which relationships with parents, pupils and primary headteacher colleagues are being encouraged, the appropriate and purposeful involvement of the governors, and the sensible physical changes and plans for changes to the fabric of the school.

I sense, too, an ethos that includes openness and which is building on the total involvement and commitment of the whole staff whatever their function. I sense a recipe that will, I feel sure, take the school forward in a strong and positive way.

I congratulate you and your staff on the remarkable achievements to date and do not underestimate the hard work that has been required. I look forward to following the continuing success story in the future."

(Letter from an Officer of the LEA, 11th November, 1992)

The progress of each innovation did not always conform to a smooth and unopposed management strategy. Some colleagues, perhaps by virtue of feelings of inadequacy, or because they felt that the organisation was under threat, or because of sheer exhaustion due to the pace of change, reacted negatively to the introduction of some changes.

The "*dynamic conservatism*" which characterised opponents to the change process, became an obstacle to healthy growth, and the changing culture of the school. I was adversely affected by it on a number of occasions. On one occasion, two years into my headship, when it was perceived that I was encountering a particularly low point, a colleague wrote in the following terms:

"...Because (*your predecessor*) was aggressive, and openly admired as such, few subordinates were prepared to risk decision making and *always* deferred to him, consequently all feelings of hurt and humiliation which are the results of hiding your true opinions went underground as did initiative and healthy growth. Thus you inherited a stagnant school with staff buried deeply in their own corners, fighting aggressively."

After 28 years of the above, it is *unrealistic* to expect 2 years of change to restore a healthy atmosphere (defined as being able to have the right to express opinions assertively and allowing others the right to do the same.)

What you are doing in this school is having a positive effect and anyone who criticises what is going on should go away and find a school where an aggressive tyrant rules, if that is what they feel comfortable with.

P.S. I think the new building should be named after Mother Theresa.

(Letter from a Colleague, 25th June 1993)

6.4 Conclusion:

This chapter began with an expression of understanding of the period of activity relating to the second cycle of innovation, emanating from and coloured by apprehension about my rôle as both researcher and change agent. My understanding was coloured as the result of a period of self-doubt in my first year of headship. Sometimes I questioned my ideologies, values and perspectives, as well as my abilities and steadfastness.

My crisis of confidence, whilst a personal and profoundly solitary experience, was, unbeknown to me, a reflection of a crisis of confidence both within the teaching profession, and within professions generally. Schön (1983) comments on this phenomenon by stating that:

“...when leading professionals write or speak about their own crisis of confidence, they tend to focus on the mismatch of traditional patterns of practice and knowledge to features of the practice situation - complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict - of whose importance they are becoming increasingly aware”.

(Schön, 1983, p. 18)

He analyses the crisis of confidence in professional knowledge in detail in his introductory chapter, and concludes by saying that:

“The events which led from the ‘triumphant professions’ of the early 1960s to the scepticism and unease of the 1970s and early 1980s have been at least apparent to the professionals as to the general public. But the sense

of confusion and unease which is discernible among leading professionals has an additional source.

Professionals have been disturbed to find that they cannot account for the processes they have come to see as central to professional competence. It is difficult for them to imagine how to describe and teach what might be meant by making sense of uncertainty, performing artistically, setting problems, and choosing among competing professional paradigms, when these processes seem mysterious in the light of the prevailing model of professional knowledge.

We are bound to an epistemology of practice which leaves us at a loss to explain, or even to describe, the competencies to which we give overriding importance.”

(Schön, 1983, pp. 19-20)

Notwithstanding the profound effect that both the process of innovation, and the aftermath of the process of change were having on the school and its personnel, the members of the SMT were resolute and pursued our agreed agenda, our declared aim being to continue to positively affect the culture of the school. The tidiness of the foregoing statement belies the struggle with which consensus was purchased. Wallace and Hall (1994) provide accounts of processes similar to those experienced by the SMT at Bishop Lindis School.

If innovations introduced and implemented were to become institutionalised⁸, the school would become more organic and move towards becoming a systemic learning organisation. Each innovation, however piecemeal, incremental or trivial, was moving the organisation in that direction. Unbeknown to us, activity often mimicked strategic termite activity as described by Morgan (1993). It was recognised that a “*sea-change*” or “*metanoia*” was necessary. A paradigm shift in the school’s underlying philosophy was necessary if initiatives were to gather pace.

⁸ Institutionalisation is understood to mean stabilising change following implementation.

This chapter has focused on the growing number of mechanistic and incremental changes which had taken place at Bishop Lindis School during the second cycle of innovation. More importantly it has pointed to the possibility of a new culture within the school: *a culture for change* in which the SMT and some HoDs would view leadership and management of change as natural aspects of their rôles.

The following chapter engages in discussion of advances made possible through the government's Technology College Initiative and opportunities it presented in encouraging a project school culture, in which the SMT and HoDs would become project leaders. It was anticipated that the culture would become more organic, and as a result the process of change more natural and more easily institutionalised. It was hoped that the school's ability to cope with change and to initialise and implement it was to become the bedrock of its developing culture.

Chapter Seven

The Third Cycle of Innovation: September 1993-July 1994 The Project School: School Development Planning

7.1 Introduction:

The third cycle heralds the school's involvement in a national initiative to create Technology Colleges (TCs), funded through private sector sponsorship, matched with similar levels of government funding. The timing of the initiative was fortuitous with regard to the progress of this research, and coincided with the third cycle of innovation in which it was hoped that the SMT and appropriate HoDs would develop a *project school culture* (Dalin, 1993).

The initiative gave rise to an emergent culture, which, viewed through an adhocratic lens to focus attention on the organic-rôle domain, constituted a transformation from the hitherto *fragmented, mechanistic and incremental* stages of innovation. The starkness of this statement masks the complexity of the processes through which the shift in culture was accomplished, some of which will be related in the ensuing descriptions and interpretations.

The centrality of the SMT's leadership rôle in innovative processes continues to provide an integrating theme. For convenience the third cycle of innovation is deemed to equate with the 1993-94 academic year. It is important, however, that this particular cycle of innovation, as it relates to school development planning processes, is understood to be complex. By virtue of diverse and multifarious activities which constitute it, this cycle overlaps other cycles. Resulting analysis is, of course, partial.

Struggling with issues associated with leadership and management of change continued to provide a learning experience for the SMT. Within the context outlined above, this chapter relates to strategic planning activity. It focuses on concern for effective deployment of both human and physical resources. This chapter continues to emphasise the rôle of SMT members as key change agents engaging in the processes of developing a school learning environment commensurate with improved school effectiveness.

Whilst a major thrust of this research has been the implementation of educational innovation with particular reference to the organisation of pastoral care, and whilst this initiative continued throughout the third cycle of innovation, the research focus shifted to the impact of the governments' Technology College Initiative (TCI) on the school.

Action research, by its nature, aims to provide real solutions to real problems in real situations, and much of an *ad hoc* nature can therefore influence its progress.¹ It is acknowledged that, more by necessity than design, the research focus, and the leadership and management strategy shifted in this third cycle. The research broadened to encompass innovation, which, whilst primarily curricular in nature, also had implications for the organisation of pastoral care.

7.2 The TCI and the School Development Planning Process:

The government's initiative to create TCs, as part of its specialist schools programme, was announced in November 1993. It was a result of what some believed to be the failure of City Technology Colleges (CTCs) to achieve the

¹This is discussed in Chapter Three: The Methodological Framework of the Study.

necessary strength to make significant differences to the country's education system. The CTCs, just fifteen nationally, had been created following the investment of millions of pounds from individual sponsors and sponsor companies to address perceived needs of a modern industrial and increasingly technological society. The initiative faltered. It was perceived as failing because the recession had an effect on confidence within the private sector, which was expected to provide large sums of money for small numbers of individual colleges in deprived inner city areas.

The TCI broadened the concept to include existing schools wishing to enhance curricular and resources provision in mathematics, science and technology. An initial and politically sensitive condition, was that only grant maintained (GM) and voluntary aided (VA) schools were eligible to apply. Schools wishing to pursue the new status were required to raise a minimum of £100,000 sponsorship, matched by an equivalent sum from government through capital grants. Revenue funding, via GEST, was made available to individual TCs provided they continued to meet performance indicators they set themselves in development plans.

Data collected throughout this third cycle of innovation, therefore, is rich in its relevance to the management of change relating to the TCI. Detailed analyses of this data, however would result in a deviation from the original purposes of this research. Whilst some degree of flexibility has been both essential and desirable, pursuit of that particular objective is considered to be diversionary. The relevance of the TCI to this third cycle of innovation is understood, therefore, to be twofold, namely:

- that school culture changed as a result of three major departments participating in a national initiative, becoming project departments; and
- that implications for pastoral development, whilst not immediately apparent, were at the foundations of the changing culture of the school, and therefore of relevance to this research.

Consistent with a shift in school culture along a mechanistic-organic continuum, a point was reached which partially equates with *project school* culture (Dalin, 1993).

Whilst this period of the research (September 1993-July 1994) is identified as the third cycle of innovation, it equates to Dalin's second-cycle: the project school. He defines a project school as one which:

"...for some time has been involved in innovative projects, where teams of teachers work closely together, and where management is involved in the initiation and co-ordination of improvement programmes..."

(Dalin, 1993, p. 16)

At its optimum, the project school has more projects than it can cope with, and the drive for change comes from both staff and the SMT.

The development planning process is crucial in bidding to become a TC (or more recently a language college), and the third cycle heralds this process as the hallmark of this stage in the school's development. To summarise, whilst the data relating to this cycle of innovation emanate directly from this process, they neither characterise nor equate with the TCI.

In simple terms, the classic approach to school development planning requires knowledge of where a school is, and where it has come from, in order to ascertain where it is going, and how it is going to get there. The planning process embarked upon at Bishop Lindis School therefore necessitated a whole school

audit,² and a detailed analysis and documentation of progress over the initial stages of the project, some of which has formed part of the first two cycles of innovation.

The school development plan (SDP), constituted a working document throughout this third cycle and eventually became the basis of the TC bid.³ The process heralded a paradigm-shift in leadership and management strategy at the school. There was greater emphasis on placing student learning at the top of the school's agenda and at the heart of its activity. There was also a shift in emphasis in the pastoral system from students' social well-being to academic monitoring, and from "reactive", or crisis management pastoral care to more "pro-active" and "developmental" models (Best *et al.*, 1995, p. 10).

One of the difficulties and dilemmas faced in conducting this research lies in ascribing meaning to everyday seemingly trivial events, as understood by fellow participants, whilst simultaneously pursuing academic rigour in subsequent analysis. Atkinson (1984) in discussing a similar phenomenon in a Kansas medical school ethnography "*Boys in White*", quotes a British sociologist, who says: "Oh yes, *Boys in White*, it tells you everything except what's really going on!" (Atkinson, in Burgess, 1984, p. 175)

Atkinson continues by commenting on the sociologist's observation in the following terms:

² The audit which resulted in the school development plan may be found in Appendix F.

³ The aspects of the bid relating to the industrial sponsors and joint aims and declarations have been omitted for the reasons previously cited.

"Now at first sight, that might appear to be an odd remark. *Boys in White* is a long and detailed monograph, which reports a substantial piece of ethnographic team-work. But what is missing is the detailed treatment of how students learn medicine and how students engage in medical work.there is a lack of documentation of what students do as medical students.Some of these activities, including the most vital aspects of clinical work, are glossed over in just one paragraph."

(Atkinson, in Burgess, 1984, p. 175)

In contrast to the above approach, throughout this study I have tried to incorporate what actually happened, and what actually changed at Bishop Lindis School. In doing so, therefore, this study, to some extent stands against the canon of prevailing educational literature on change and innovation, which in the main adopts a theoretic perspective emanating from academic discourse. A very powerful dilemma I face as a practitioner, it seems to me, is between a "*nut-and-bolts, what-I-do-on-Monday*" approach, and a purely academic analytical discourse examining associated processes without engaging in the substance and outcomes of innovatory activity. To honour both sides of the coin proves to be a challenge and a struggle, particularly when required to justify this study as doctoral research within my particular understanding of the epistemological tradition.

In terms of what actually happened, in seeking to become a TC, the community of Bishop Lindis School (more specifically, the SMT with a handful of governors who were privy to the processes) based its aspirations on its published mission statement. In seeking to pursue the school's distinctive mission and to respond to the needs of students, parents and the wider community, the SMT was particularly self-conscious of the school's commitment to partnership with the diocese, but less so of its commitment to partnership with the LEA; its self-governing agenda militating against a return to its previous dependent relationship.

The process began by our emphasising that the (whole) curriculum aimed to prepare students for life and work in a rapidly changing technological society, by facilitating their highest levels of attainment in a number of key respects:

- “Through a wide and flexible range of academic, vocational and enriching courses, carefully selected, closely monitored and professionally delivered;
- Through the development of students’ perceptions of their historical and cultural heritage;
- Through the promotion of healthy physical and mental development through a comprehensive programme of physical, personal, social and health education; and
- Through the stimulation of students’ creative, aesthetic and social interests which the school hoped would extend into adult life and enable them to contribute to the society in which they were to live.”

(Extract from the Technology College Bid, submitted June 1994)

The statements above culminated from a process of combination and distillation of documents from other schools, advice from an LEA inspector-adviser, official NC and DfE documentation, and colleagues’ contributions. These collectively informed the SMT, whose members in turn brought their own agendas, pre-conceptions and understandings to bear. It is evident from the above extract that the SMT, in reflecting on all contributions to the process they were managing, continued to be committed to *“breadth, balance, relevance and coherence”* in the school’s curricula. Whilst the government’s agenda for the TCI was that it should result in *“specialist schools”*, the SMT, and notionally the staff and governors, remained committed to *“comprehensive principles”* through which they believed every student should benefit from opportunities to develop in both curricular and social terms. That these principles were congruent with my own stated philosophy, and that there were other perceptions and understandings of what constituted comprehensive ideals within the school and the SMT, testifies to ambiguities, contradictions and complexities inherent in the processes in which we engaged. In

reflecting on the nature of these processes, the outcome begs questions about the nature and effect of my own influence on them. It begs questions about how endemic autocratic behaviour had become in the school, and how such behaviour might transfer. It also begs questions concerning my own espoused rhetoric, my perceived practices *vis-à-vis* autocratic behaviour, and the nature of collaborative and collegiate approaches to school management emerging within the school.

As an expression of the school's commitment to its mission and aims, the SMT met, initially to brainstorm, and subsequently to systematically record the following strategic measures which had already been implemented. The process was a "*stocktaking*" exercise in which both major and more trivial developments were called to mind and given appropriate prominence in the subsequent bid to the DfE. Evidence of developments in the first two cycles, some of which have already been discussed, may be perceived within these measures:

- "All students studied mathematics, science and technology for 30% of the KS3 curriculum (years 7, 8 and 9), and for between 40% and 50% at KS4 (years 10 and 11);
- Information Technology (IT) was offered to all students throughout KS3 and KS4, the school was equipped with two specialist IT rooms, and industry standard PCs were in use. Much of its hardware utilised fast, modern 486 processors;
- All departments were actively encouraged to use IT as a natural extension to their learning resources;
- The school had networked all departments (not all rooms) to the upper school IT facility, in order to extend access to the Novell file server;
- All students were taught two modern foreign languages in year 7, and continued with at least one language to examination level at KS4;
- The school management structure and responsibilities were reviewed to reflect the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and balance across the breadth of the curriculum;
- A whole school curriculum, management and quality audit was undertaken as a basis for the future direction and development of the school;⁴

⁴ The results of this audit formed the basis of the school development planning process, and the subsequent 1994-95 school development plan. This plan, in turn, formed part of the Technology College Bid.

- The library and resources facility was developed with the purchase of over seven thousand books, in addition to audio and video tapes. This facility was supported by a computerised catalogue and issuing system. Three multimedia computers were available to complement these resources, and an increasing number of CD roms serviced the growing needs of students, both within the classroom and beyond the normal school day;
- The school held the first in a series of Industry days, involving lower school students, staff, governors and representatives of the local industrial and commercial communities;
- Each student in year 10 engaged in work experience for two weeks in industry or commerce, complemented by follow up work in school, closely monitored by academic, careers and pastoral staff;
- The school was committed to a Teacher Placement Scheme, and recent placements required senior staff to spend a week hosted by both Marks and Spencer, and Safeway Supermarkets. Subsequently, the school hosted a senior member of the TSB from the local area;
- The Art and IT departments had developed a self-financing mini-enterprise scheme which was extended as expertise increased;
- The school was committed to developments in co-operation with Neighbourhood Engineers, and proposed embarking on joint projects;
- Seventy-five per cent of leavers continued in further education. The vast majority proceeded to a sixth form college. No other school in the area matched the percentage of Bishop Lindis School transferring to the college".

(Extract from the Technology College bid, submitted June 1994)

It is evident from above that the SMT was committed to the improvement of resources and facilities across all curriculum areas in order to maximise students' learning opportunities. This was not universally apparent to colleagues, who had neither been privy to SMT activity and consultation leading up to the publication of previous developments, nor had individually or collectively reflected on the advances which the school had made. This only became apparent in the staff consultation process which followed initial internal publication. It was more generally recognised by colleagues that the TCI would provide the school with an opportunity to enhance resources and facilities in mathematics, science and technology. Only a minority recognised that the initiative would also accelerate cross-curricular technological development. There was concern voiced by some

teachers that the TC curriculum would result in their subjects becoming *"the poor relations of the curriculum"* or *"Cinderella subjects"* (Teacher Comments, Research Log, 20th June, 1994).

Having established that the TCI was considered by the SMT to have whole school implications, it was important, in conducting a subsequent whole school audit, to review *every* aspect of the school's development over previous cycles of innovation. The audit involved teaching staff in responding to a detailed audit questionnaire.⁵ The following findings relate to aspects of school organisation resulting from a number of sources. The audit questionnaire, teacher interviews, participant observation and personal reflection informed understandings which collectively contributed to the evolution of the embryonic school development plan. Whilst the process was integral to this research, different outcomes are implicit.

Any impressions gained that the development process in which we engaged formed part of a pre-conceived or pre-designed plan, should be tempered by an understanding that developments were often piecemeal, spur-of-the-moment, and intuitive. For example, involvement in a neighbourhood engineers scheme, the development of a mini-enterprise scheme, and the introduction of both teacher placements in industry and an industry day for lower school students, whilst collectively advancing a new *"industry related agenda"*, were not related in their original conception. That such decisions were sometimes made collectively, and therefore informed by years of collective experience, belies elements of autocracy which periodically crept into the process, as understood in applying an autocratic lens focusing attention on the mechanistic-person domain.

⁵ The Audit Questionnaire may be found in Appendix F.

In writing up this research, ascertaining “*where we were*” in SDP terms by comparison with “*where we had come from*”, it seems appropriate to categorise organisational and cultural changes by applying cultural prisms discussed in chapter two. That no such categorisation took place within the SMT in developing the SDP, serves to emphasise a difference between practitioner practice as then applied, and “*reflective practitioner rationale*” as subsequently understood. Subjectively, whilst the tools of the reflective practitioner have become honed in the process of this research, in preparation for subsequent professional practice, those same tools in subsequent analysis of previous events are merely applied retrospectively. This contrasts with my understanding of the fundamental rationale of the reflective practitioner approach. In turn, and somewhat in contradiction, this testifies to a learning process having taken place within this action research, not only within myself as practitioner researcher, but also within colleagues most closely associated as participants in the study, namely members of the SMT.

7.3 Conceptual or Verbal Manifestations of Cultural Change:

Figure 7.1, cited earlier as figures 2.4 and 4.1, illustrates the resultant spectrum on applying a cultural prism to conceptual and verbal manifestations of school culture. This particular cultural prism is applied to school activity in order to focus attention, and elicit how changes in the conceptual and verbal manifestation of its culture are understood by teacher and governor colleagues in the third cycle of innovation.

Manifestation

Spectrum

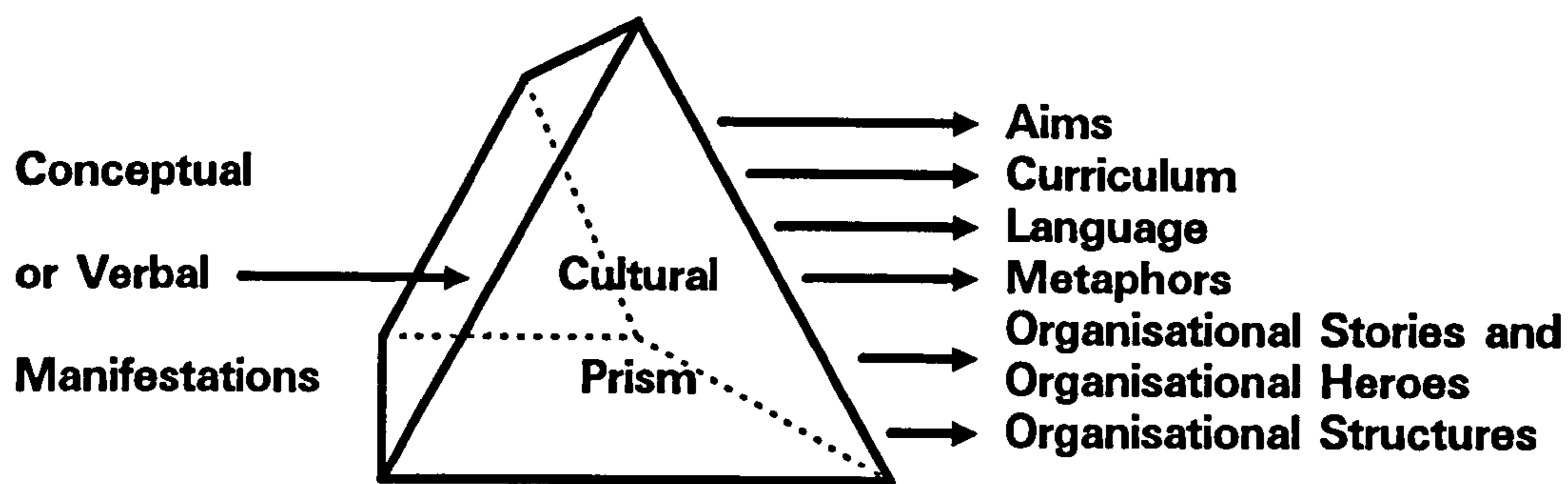


Figure 7.1 A Spectrum of Conceptual or Verbal Manifestations

7.3i Developmental Aims:

In providing a context for the school's developmental aims as a result of the audit and SDP activities associated with this cycle, it is believed important to note that the school was granted Voluntary Aided (VA) Status with effect from 25th August, 1992, following negotiations with the LEA and the DfE. It is also understood to be important that the school was granted recognition as a registered charity with effect from 12th October 1992, following consultation with the charity commissioners. The SDP was the working document from which a bid was subsequently prepared anticipating designation as a Technology College (TC) from 1st September 1994.

The SMT and governors collectively ascertained that continued developments at Bishop Lindis School were necessary to maintain an impetus for change. Consensus was not total however, there being some ambivalence on the part of two SMT members and a few governors with regard to both the pace and the substance of some of the changes that had taken place. Nevertheless, continued progress was understood to be especially important since the school was

scheduled for an OFSTED inspection within the following two years. It was decided that all reviewed documentation should be in place prior to the inspection.

The extension of team approaches adopted by the SMT, governors, staff and students, as understood in applying both a reticular-democratic lens to the organic-person domain and a political prism to the organisation as a whole, was seen to be an important aspect of the school's development. Opportunities were sought to further extend these practices, and establish them as inherent features of the school. These will be discussed later in this chapter.

The building of trust and co-operation between staff, governors, parents and students, was seen, in hindsight, to be vital in changing both the school's culture and its micro-political dynamic, and in particular, in this regard, it was decided that the school should set a priority in working to *Investors in People* (IIP) principles.

As the school developed it was considered essential to review SMT rôles again, constituting a re-conceptualisation of management and leadership rationale. In applying a political prism to the above innovation the resultant spectrum manifested a focus on ideologies and coalitions represented, together with underlying interests and conflicts, and their intrinsic contradictions and goal diversity.

The decision to work towards IIP principles was motivated by a desire to formalise the school's commitment to co-operative, collaborative and collegiate approaches. Two previously influential teachers who had indicated that they were negatively disposed to the innovation were enlisted in support of the initiative in an attempt to demonstrate benefits to them and "*get them on board*" (Personal Reflection,

Research Diary, 15th May, 1994). However, they were openly hostile to most proposed changes, and IIP in particular. Their *"latent"* pre-1991 identities provided a source of *"alternative self-conception and sub-cultural affiliation"* (Child, 1972, pp. 101-2 in Ball, 1987, p. 45) set against an increasingly dominant coalition of teachers and governors in favour of change. Both teachers continued to oppose most proposed changes and became increasingly marginalised to the school's innovatory activity. One colleague subsequently left for a promoted post elsewhere.

In close relationship to the IIP initiative, and as an extension to it, the SDP included proposals for the development of in-house governor training to run alongside the staff development programme, under the direction of the SMT. This programme proved difficult to develop, and faltered on a number of occasions. The needs of individual governors, as perceived by them, did not match the needs of either the organisation or the governors as a body, as perceived by the SMT. This dissonance between governance and management, understood to characterise lay-professional relationships, is also understood to characterise relationships between education on the one hand, and industry and commerce on the other. The TCI, amongst other initiatives has, as a by-product or spin-off, potential for closer co-operation between such agencies, which it is believed will ultimately benefit students.

In attempting to engage teachers who had become marginalised to organisational developments, and in attempting to widen the dissemination of the school's agenda for change, the production of a new staff handbook for distribution the following September, together with an extension to the system of primary-secondary liaison were seen as urgent priorities. Internally, the development of

cross-curricular dimensions; themes and skills were concurrently understood to be important.

SMT activity in developing the care and guidance system of the school by strengthening the rôle of the form tutor with particular reference to continuity and the ROA, was a continued priority and a continued focus of the research. The school struggled with the rôle of the form tutor for a number of years, and whilst there was an eloquent array of published documentation including expressions of preferred practice, the rhetoric was not matched by the nature of everyday events. For example, form tutors' rôles continued to be subverted by activity emanating from heads of years, subsequently resulting in some tutors opting-out of some pastoral and disciplinary duties traditionally associated with their rôle.

Extending lunch-time activities and associated supervision, thus providing a greater degree of open access to activities for students, lay at the heart of the school's changing culture as understood from the SMT's point of view. However, whilst, the emerging open access practices were congruent with the expressed preferences of the SMT and attracted subsequent attention and positive comment both from visiting HMIs and OFTED inspectors, there was considerable ambivalence on the part of some colleagues, who thought open access to be:

"A worthy enterprise, which, of course, brings much acclaim to the school, and in particular to its head, but which has been bought at the expense of enormous extra effort from the staff, who in the main are not convinced that their efforts are sufficiently rewarded. Indeed, it just makes a difficult job even more difficult or even impossible."

(Teacher Interview, Research Log, 14th April, 1994)

The starkness of such dismissive responses was disheartening since they were often felt to be directed personally at me. Subsequent analysis, in micro-political terms informs an understanding of such behaviours and attitudes as entirely consistent with the innovatory processes and everyday flux in which we engaged. In the following reference, Fullan (1991) makes it clear that such conflict and disagreement are inherent in successful change processes:

“Assume that conflict and disagreement are not only inevitable but fundamental to successful change. Since any group of people possess multiple realities, any collective change attempt will necessarily involve conflict.Smooth implementation is often a sign that not much is really changing (Huberman and Miles (1984)”

(Fullan, 1991, p. 106)

7.3ii Curriculum:

Curriculum development during the third cycle was characterised by reviewing provision of time to each subject within the KS3 curriculum and adjusting it to reflect demands of the NC. An advance made in changing the “*élitist*” culture of the school (HoD Observation, Research Log, 12th September 1992), took form through the introduction of flexible grouping arrangements for students in Years 7, 8 and 9. Modified arrangements encouraged new entrants to settle during their first year (year 7) and experience the curriculum within heterogeneous groups. Thereafter selection at KS3 by departments independently of each other was encouraged.

This potential innovation suffered from the “*rhetoric not squaring with actual practice*” (Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 17th July, 1994). In spite of well established understandings between the SMT and HoDs, that the responsibility for selection and setting, including the allocation of specific students to sets, rested

squarely with departments, there were perceived attempts at *"interference by some of the SMT in departmental affairs"* (HoD Observations, Research Log, 12th July 1994). In practice, some members of the SMT lapsed into the conventions of previous selection procedures. Such lapses demonstrated contradictions between expressed institutional philosophy (and policy) and endemic organisational (or individual) behaviour; between the conscious (collective) striving to establish new cultural norms and the deep contradictory pull of (individual) personal history. Lapses of this sort, once again, highlighted the interface between old, unacceptable custom, and new preferred possibilities.

A re-constituted academic board was understood to service the academic work of the school as the main consultative body prior to full staff involvement. Whilst a few colleagues resented changes made, and whilst some perceived (or imagined) hidden agendas, it is understood that the majority of staff felt part of a new wave of *"collectively owned reform"* (HoD Comment, Research Log, 12th July, 1994).

Whole school, cross curricular learning developments were promoted through the conversion of a home economics room to an IT room thus providing a new resource, equipped for upper school students. An associated school computer network was installed, linking classrooms on every corridor with the IT centre.

An indication of the speed with which technology advanced is illustrated by reference to a decision to extend the network at this time. Advice given by the IT department at a local university, necessitated the introduction of a fibre-optic spine to the network cabling. The advice went unheeded because of the high costs involved, only to be taken up later, following the waste of several thousand pounds

on an inferior solution. It was the achievement of TC status and its consequent additional funding that made the scheme possible. A subsequent LEA bid to fund computers for this network was successful. The initiative pre-empted the involvement of colleagues in INSET, which was deemed essential if technological advances were to be made in student learning. In the event, an interesting phenomenon prevailed in which student and teacher rôles were often exchanged, characterising an adhocracy, in which some of the anxiety and threat inherent in introducing computers into classrooms was alleviated. Such activity is understood, subsequently, to characterise activity within *"learning organisations"* (Senge, 1990, Dalin, 1993, Clark, 1996, Pearn *et al.*, 1996), and as such heralded organic modes of operating embedding within the school's culture.

7.3iii Language - Communications:

In September 1991, the school had just four telephones. Only the main school building was connected to the outside world. The four separate wings had neither internal nor external phone communications. A new telephone system was subsequently installed to link the five main wings, facilitating communications within the school and with external organisations and agencies. The developments were understood to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the school's bureaucracy. Implications for pastoral staff, communicating both within school and external to it, were manifold. The staffroom had previously been provided with a pay-phone, professional calls being made from the main school office.

Having joined Bishop Lindis School from a large urban comprehensive school, such minimalist provision seemed strange to me. By contrast, many colleagues, including some members of the SMT viewed the introduction of a new telephone

installation as strange, since it did not square with their particular understandings of the school's rôle and mission at that time. The reaction from colleagues challenged my own understandings, priorities and philosophy. In turn, my agenda for mandated change within the school challenged colleagues' pre-conceptions and pre-dispositions. In some this resulted in a reconceptualisation of their rôles and that of the educative processes in which they engaged. In others, albeit few, it resulted in a fuelling of their opposition to change, whether they deemed it to be of benefit generally or not. Some issues became so fundamental as to dichotomise attitudes with extremes of view polarised, and represented in two camps. For example, traditional and out-moded conceptions of school discipline, as I understood them, contrasted with the liberal, progressive and permissive agenda I was believed to espouse. The *"old school"* appeared to be in favour of maintaining the status quo, come what may. The *"new wave"* was seen by some to represent an *"enforced liberalism"* (Teacher Interview, Research Log, 12th May, 1994) and a *"challenge to what the school had always stood for"* (ibid.).

A daily briefing provided a means of increased communication between the SMT and the school's teaching force and is understood to be characteristic of an adhocracy. This initiative also met with some resistance. Paradoxically, some of the most ardent opposers to the initiative subsequently became some of its most frequent users. The briefing provided pastoral staff with an opportunity to keep colleagues informed of developments in students' family lives. It prepared teachers for possible difficulties, rather than their having to deal with problems without warning. In more negative terms, the briefing also provided a platform for some political activity, and on occasions issues were raised which proved a direct challenge and sometimes an embarrassment to the SMT, and to myself in

particular. The success with which these challenges were met varied. Sometimes under the pressures and stresses of a busy schedule, they resulted in defensive responses and defensive behaviour. At other times issues were left unresolved and may have contributed to further and continued staff related problems.

A systematic approach to meetings, with recorded minutes, was introduced in an attempt to secure the involvement of colleagues in decision making processes. The contrast with previous practice was taken-for-granted as more consultative processes became established. That the effects on school culture, whilst incremental, were to make the environment for change more amenable, belies the nature of the developments as perceived by some colleagues. Developments, intended to increase consultation and participation, were criticised by some, who perceived a hidden agenda. One understanding, illuminated by reference to Blase and Anderson (1995) and Ball (1987), is that some staff might have been so entrenched in their expectations of autocratic and adversarial leadership behaviour, that contrary activity was perceived as a sham, as contrived consultation, as *"only going through the motions"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 13th May, 1994).

It was not always possible to predict outcomes of innovatory activity. In spite of such activity often being recognised as unpredictable, inconsistent and contradictory in the literature, subsequent reactions of the sort described *"still came as a surprise"* (Personal Reflections, Research Log, 17th July, 1994). Changes made in communications within and beyond the organisation are also understood to have

resulted in modifications in behavioural manifestations of the school's culture (Beare, *et al.*, 1989), on application of the relevant cultural prism.⁶

7.3iv Organisational Structures - Management:

SMT rôles were reviewed and adjusted, a detailed description of which formed part of a previous cycle of change. SMT Saturday Conferences were held each term to facilitate strategic planning. They encouraged changes in SMT practices and relationships. Team approaches continued to develop. The process cannot be represented as a linear progression. Advances were followed by periods of regression, particularly when vested interests and "holy cows" were challenged. Examples of, "that is the way we have always done it", and the aggressive pursuit of subject-oriented issues at the expense of whole-school developments, sometimes militated against the development of synergistic activity. Team approaches were promoted, however, in many aspects of the school's work, based on principles and best practice adopted by the SMT and subsequently understood to characterise spider plant activity (Morgan, 1993). SMT members and HoDs were introduced onto appointment panels as advisers, characterising adhoc practices. These initiatives facilitated ownership of decisions and promoted team approaches and synergistic activity following the appointments.

Whole school management rôles for holders of D allowances were introduced. Not all were as successful as anticipated. Resistance to change exhibited by some colleagues necessitated the adoption of reactive management approaches to innovation, when sometimes more pro-active solutions were preferred.

⁶ The focus of such changes was on the spectrum of behavioural manifestations of school culture resulting from the application of a cultural prism as discussed in chapter two.

Changes indicated above were bought, at some expense, through processes involving hard-bargaining and political activity at various levels of the school's organisation, it still being predominantly hierarchical in character. Fullan (1991) stresses that people need pressure to change, even when they recognise the advantages in doing so. He also acknowledges the importance of learning, and re-learning, as integral to successful change. Specifically he states:

"Assume that people need pressure to change (even in directions that they desire), but it will be effective only under conditions that allow them to react, to form their own position, to interact with other implementers, to obtain technical assistance, etc. Unless people are going to be replaced with others who have different desired characteristics, **relearning is at the heart of change.**"

(Fullan, 1991, p. 106, *my emphasis*)

7.3v Organisational Structures - Personnel:

The creation and introduction of job descriptions for teaching and non-teaching staff at all levels provided reinforcement of the school's bureaucracy. Teacher appraisal, understood to be fundamentally bureaucratic, but based on a peer model, thus promoting reticular-democratic characteristics, was introduced and colleagues trained as both appraisers and appraisees. TVEI allowances were made available across a wide range of curriculum areas to promote high teacher morale and to provide an impetus to innovation and change in departmental practice and organisational culture.

A restructuring of office personnel, together with appropriate promotions, also understood to characterise bureaucratic activity, were implemented in recognition of the changing nature of administrative work, and the introduction of new technology. These changes, whilst not directly affecting the school's curricula, should not be underestimated in their contributions to changing school culture.

albeit initially in the mechanistic-rôle domain. Although apparently contradictory, net gains in efficiency and effectiveness within the school's bureaucracy released some members of the SMT from administrative chores, thus promoting their greater involvement in more creative and innovatory activity characteristic of a reticular-democracy.

The school's commitment to children with special needs was strengthened following the appointment of a head of SEN and learning support. This tangible expression of the school's commitment to an SEN agenda, was made in the face of considerable opposition to, and criticism of the school's perceived pre-1991 disposition to students with SEN. Criticism of the school's SEN provision had been voiced by some parents, some primary headteachers and one support teacher working within the school at the time of my appointment. Concerns were based chiefly on the relatively small allocation of time for supporting non-statemented SEN students, and the non-provision of withdrawal facilities from mainstream classes. Whilst the SMT was not prepared to consider any major increase in withdrawal from lessons, we allocated more teaching support time, using existing teachers under the direction of the head of learning support. Further tangible reinforcement of the school's culture visually, materially and symbolically, were also manifested through the appointment of a male non-teaching assistant (NTA) in conjunction with a local SEN school, to support two lower school boys with physical disabilities.

7.3vi Organisational Structures - Governors:

Governors not only enjoyed delegated powers under LMS, but also, during the period of this research project, accrued employers' status as governors of a VA school. However, whilst regular meetings of committees for curriculum, finance,

personnel, students and premises, established over the previous two years, encouraged governor involvement in many of the school's activities, as a body they did not immediately respond to new possibilities and responsibilities inherent in their collective office. Some seemed unaware of ramifications for change in the 1988 Education Act. A few governors appeared unable to come to terms with change either at the micro-level of school innovation, or at the macro-level of national education reform. The inter-relationship between macro and micro levels also eluded some. The development of the rôle of governors provided a challenge to the SMT.

Complexities and contradictions inherent in school governance on the one hand, and school management on the other provided a constant source of conflict between some governors and the SMT collectively, and myself as head in particular. Ways in which conflicts were handled, sometimes creatively, sometimes less constructively, provided challenging, and sometimes painful learning experiences, at the governance-management and lay-professional interface. One parent-governor, for example, did not agree with the upper school options arrangements following a review of provision at KS4 in-so-far as they affected his child and those of some other parents living close to him. He unilaterally called a meeting, through its chairman, of the governors' curriculum committee, at which members of the SMT were present, and challenged the criteria on which we had made our decisions.

We outlined the process, involving consultation with all teaching staff, and suggested that governors' collective, rather than individual, function was to ascertain that management processes regarding curriculum development were

professionally undertaken, there being no rôle for governors individually or collectively in what was indisputably professional domain.

The same governor chose to take issue with the school's performance in subsequent GCSE examinations in which his child took part, and produced an analysis with which he intended to confront departments he considered to be failing. It was necessary, once again, to establish boundaries between school governance and school management at a subsequent governors' curriculum committee meeting.

7.4 Visual, Material or Symbolic Manifestations of Cultural Change:

Figure 7.2, cited earlier as figure 2.5, illustrates one way in which a cultural prism might thus be applied to Bishop Lindis School as an organisation in September 1991:

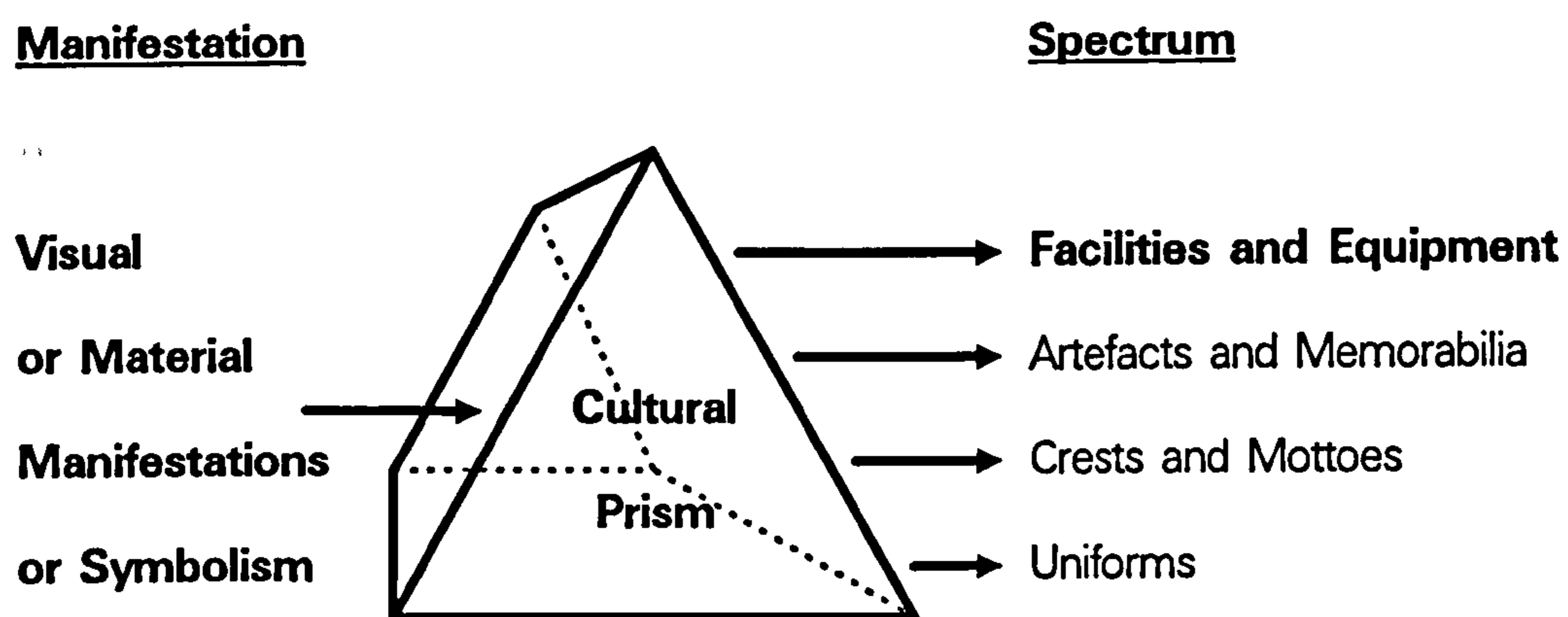


Figure 7.2 A Spectrum of Visual, Material or Symbolic Manifestations

Restocking the library as a learning resource centre together with the introduction of associated technology for both issuing and cataloguing, was understood to be

fundamental in the school's development as a *learning organisation* (Senge, 1990, Dalin, 1993, Pearn *et al.*, 1995 and Clark, 1996). It was not only that learning activities were promoted for both staff and students, but also that the organisation, as an entity, began engaging in learning and transforming activity understood to be characteristic of a reticular-democracy.

The library was serviced by a computerised high technology weather station erected on the roof. Readings were monitored daily by students in a remote data box. A team approach was adopted involving school proctors posting daily weather reports in a main corridor. Team approaches characteristic of spider plant activity (Morgan, 1993) and adhocracies, thus became hallmarks of changing school culture, and began to permeate not only the SMT and teaching staff operations, but also ways in which students related to each other and their teachers.

A school minibus sign-written in Bishop Lindis School livery provided the school with its own transport for sporting fixtures. On purchasing the minibus a teacher commented:

"It has taken thirty years for this school to own a minibus. Something as fundamental as school transport is taken-for-granted in other schools, particularly those in rural locations. For too long this school has stood against many of the trends accepted and welcomed by other schools."

(Teacher Comment, Research Diary, 28th September 1993)

Wherever the minibus was seen it symbolised innovation at Bishop Lindis School, and represented a material, visual and symbolic manifestation of its changing culture (Beare *et al.*, 1989).⁷

Following the formation of an Environmental or *Green Group*, litter bins were strategically placed together with a can recycling bin in the playground. It is understood that this innovation served the hidden curriculum. The triviality of this innovation belies advances that it represented in the changing culture of the school. The introduction of these basic facilities, taken-for-granted in most schools, was the culmination of a hard won battle against small but significant, negative and influential forces at work within the teaching staff.⁸ Paradoxically, on the one hand, consultative processes utilised were understood to characterise a reticular-democracy, whilst on the other hand, culminating decisions were perceived by some as "*abuses of management power*" suggesting autocratic behaviour characterised by perceptions of the SMT "*wasting school money*" (Teacher Comments, Research Log, 14th November, 1993).

As previously reported, a reconceptualising of curriculum-resource provision was accomplished through the rationalisation of rooms allocated to departments, thus providing logical suiteing arrangements to facilitate intra-departmental communication. The introduction of a co-ordinated school colour scheme both internally and externally is understood to have been a visual and symbolic

⁷ The focus of such changes was on the spectrum of visual, material and symbolic manifestations of school culture resulting from the application of a cultural prism as discussed in chapter two.

⁸ The focus of such activity was based on interests and conflicts resulting from authority, power, leadership and control issues as represented in applying a political prism as discussed in chapter two.

manifestation of the changes that were taking place at the heart of the school's culture (Beare et al., 1989, pp. 192-195). It signalled a re-conceptualising of the school in tangible terms (ibid., pp. 42-61).

It was felt by some teachers that the LEA needed *"to redress the balance of years of years of neglect at Bishop Lindis School by comparison with county schools"* (Teacher Observation, Research Log, 18th May, 1994). It was seen by others that in striving to innovate, the school's endeavours *"conflicted with its partnership with the LEA"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th January, 1993). Whilst a third point of view was represented by those who thought that it should *"establish a self-governing and self-determining agenda"* (Deputy Head Observation, Research Log, 19th September 1993). Following changes it secured with the LEA, the school enjoyed greater flexibility in financial organisation and administration by becoming a *cheque book school*. This, together with benefits inherent in LMS, enabled it to progress towards the SMT's goal of self-determination: becoming a *self-governing* (not GM) school characterised by adhocratic and reticular-democratic activity.

The school's computer administration system was considered basic and deficient at the commencement of this project. Its function was to support and facilitate the bureaucracy inherent in school organisation. During the first two cycles of this project it was extended and developed into a network of machines across administration and SMT offices. The advantage to the pastoral organisation of the school, whilst not apparent to all teachers, was in providing high speed access to information for tutors and pastoral staff. Since a major thrust of this action research has been to manipulate school culture, shifting from mechanistic to

organic modes, any reinforcement of the school's bureaucracy might be viewed as contradictory or inconsistent with those objectives. It is understood, however, that all organisations are bureaucratic. The aim of these particular changes was to create a more efficient and effective bureaucracy which supported, but did not impinge on opportunities associated with more creative and organic aspects of school culture. That is, by facilitating more effective bureaucratic procedures, the SMT and other teachers were freed to undertake more ad hoc, creative and synergistic developments.

Changes highlighted above were perceived, both within the SMT and within the standing committee of the governing body, as symbolic of a *"self-awareness"* of operating within new modes of self-governance. The reality, as understood and constructed by the LEA, was at odds with experiences and expectations within the school. LEA procedures demonstrated contradictions between government LMS policy and its own endemic behaviour. The LEA demonstrated its opposition to new cultural norms attaching to LMS, by *"quite subtly making things difficult"* (Deputy Head Observation, Research Log, 19th May, 1994). Some LEA officers were more comfortable with former *"antiquated local authority practice"* (ibid.). These understandings, from the school's perspective, emphasised the interface between old, unacceptable LEA custom, and new preferred self-governing possibilities. In the following reference Evetts outlines some advantages of self-governing status, specifically in relation to grant-maintained status, which have to be set against some of the advantages implicit in remaining in partnership with the LEA. Some of her reasoning is also relevant to tensions which exist in pursuing self-governance within a continued relationship with the LEA:

“Grant-maintained status has increased the business-management aspects of headship.... ..and has accentuated the devolution of power to individual schools. It can be perceived as an additional step, beyond LMS, in increasing the powers, legitimacy and authority of headteachers as managing directors of school enterprises. Headteachers in grant-maintained schools are freed completely from the bureaucratic controls and formula-managed aspects of LEAs. The consequences for the headteacher career and daily work culture of headship are profound.”

(Evetts, 1994, p. 18)

Inevitably, for some of the positive reasons stated above, there was tension between, on the one hand wanting to continue in relationship with the LEA, and on the other hand, succumbing to pressures to become self-governing as a grant-maintained school.

7.5 Behavioural Manifestations of Cultural Change:

Figure 7.3, cited earlier as figure 2.6 and 4.3, illustrates one way in which a cultural prism might thus be applied to Bishop Lindis School as an organisation in September 1991:

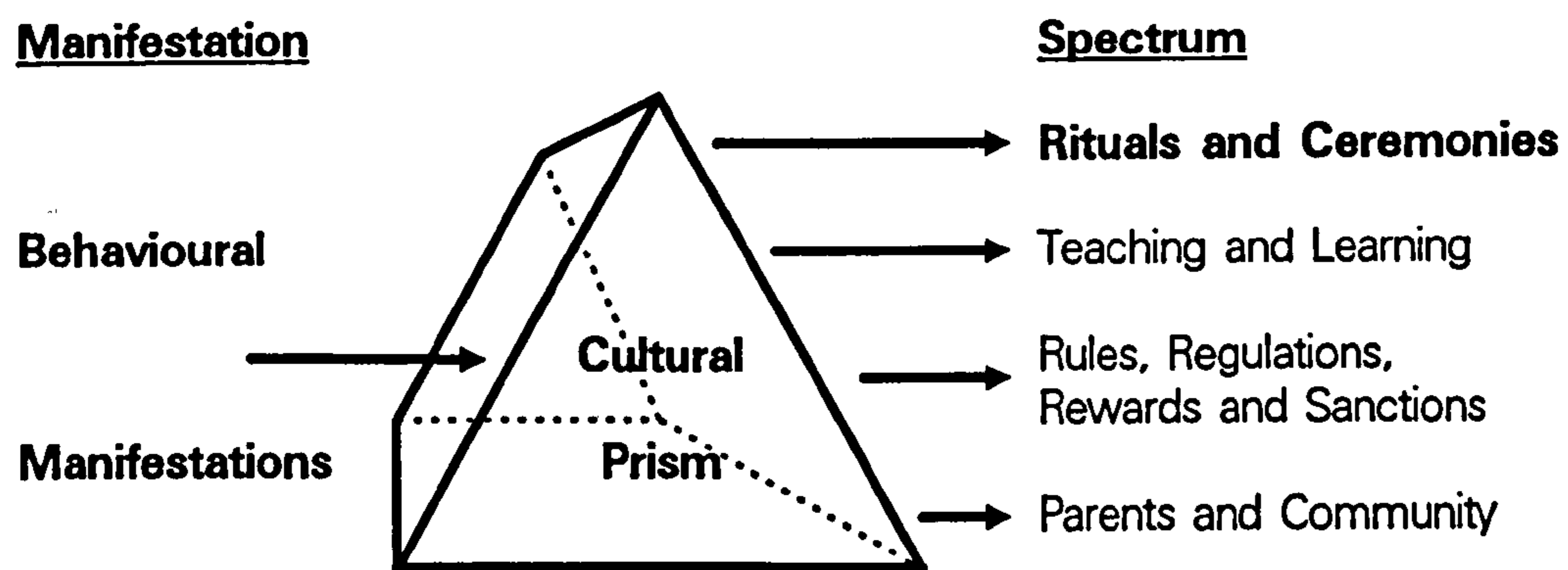


Figure 7.3 A Spectrum of Behavioural Manifestations

The aims exercise⁹, carried out to elicit the school's aims as perceived by its members and the local population, provided evidence of the importance to its community of the school's ethos as a Church of England School. Contributing groups had emphasised the positive influence of Church affiliation on the school's curricular and pastoral organisation. However, some parents chose the school for other reasons, notably academic, and therefore did not attach as much importance to its VA status.

Following the aims exercise, the ad hoc formation of a worship committee under the chairmanship of the head of RE became a priority. More variety was introduced into worship embracing both informal and traditional styles. This variety was understood by some teachers to be crucial in involving as many of the students as possible, in order, *"that they were not merely passive recipients of a daily dose of religion"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 2nd April 1994).

A whole school Eucharist, involving local clergy, was introduced on the last day of each term. As it became established, it became more spectacular (good liturgy being akin to good theatre) and more dignified. One teacher seemed surprised at its development and remarked:

"Everyone takes part. Even unconfirmed children, and those of other denominations receive a blessing, whilst numbers receiving the sacrament have increased. There's a great hush during the communion where previously there was a hub-hub.The Taizé chanting is lovely."

(Teacher Comment, Research Log, 2nd April 1994)

A weekly voluntary Eucharist also became established. These developments are understood to have promoted a shift in school culture in terms of its behavioural

⁹ The aims exercise is discussed in Chapter Five.

manifestations (Beare *et al.*, 1989)¹⁰. Not all members of the school community seemed aware of the significance of these developments. Not all members perceived them as important. Fullan (1991, p. 106) stresses that participants in arenas of change need to work out their own meanings of events and developments. He points to ambiguity, ambivalence, and uncertainty in individuals' conceptions of the meaning of change. He sees effective implementation, therefore, as a process of clarification.

The school, privileged in owning its own communion silver, donated by a foundation governor, also commissioned a new processional cross in memory of a former chairman of governors. The design, by a local silversmith, was based on St. Cuthbert's cross; used in the school's crest, and for proctors' badges since its inception. These symbols and artefacts are also understood to have strengthened the visual, material and symbolic manifestations of the school's developing culture (Beare *et al.*, 1989)¹¹.

The reinforcement of the school's Anglican foundation, and its positive effect on the ethos of the school, was understood by some staff and some governors to have benefited pastoral underpinnings of school life (Parent and Governor Interviews, Research Log, 12th -16th April, 1994).

New appointment procedures were introduced for the appointment of school officers (e.g. head boy and head girl) and proctors. Job descriptions were

¹⁰ The focus of such changes was on the spectrum of behavioural manifestations of school culture resulting from the application of a cultural prism as discussed in chapter two.

¹¹ The focus of such changes was on the spectrum of visual, material and symbolic manifestations of school culture resulting from the application of a cultural prism as discussed in chapter two.

introduced for officers and proctors at all levels. The extension of team approaches, initially adopted by the SMT, to the work of school officers and proctors was fundamental to changing school culture. It was seen as vital by one member of the SMT *"to ensure that these approaches were not only adopted by the staff of the school, but that the students' activities were also centred around co-operative attitudes and processes"* (SMT Comment, Research Log, 15th January 1994).

New gowns purchased for school officers appeared to one teacher *"to perpetuate élitist and ritualistic practices of a former age"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 17th July 1994). Paradoxically, whilst innovatory, they were also understood to reinforce historical aspects of the school's cultural heritage. They simultaneously represented a reinforcement of the school's established culture, whilst heralding a shift in its cultural affiliations. The maintenance of some of the school's traditions was deemed vital if innovation and the new culture were to become established and institutionalised, *"without causing massive destabilisation"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th April, 1993).

7.6 Conclusion:

Following the audit in preparation for the school development planning process and the bid for Technology College status, it was understood by the SMT, that innovations *"should be introduced with sensitivity and with due consideration to the traditions of the school, bearing in mind the need to progress, the current educational culture and market forces"* (School Development Plan, September 1994). The SMT understood that all developments should ensure that the school

continued to be a *"School for the Future founded on time-honoured Traditions"*¹² (TC bid, June 1994).

The essence of this chapter has been in comparing and contrasting *fragmented, mechanistic and incremental* aspects of the initial cycles of innovation at the school with *organic* and *project school* culture which began to develop during the third cycle of innovation.

Innovation was not exclusively within the organic domain, but changes made to mechanistic aspects of school culture, notably within its bureaucracy, were intended to improve efficiency and effectiveness, thereby moving the focus away from the mechanistic-rôle domain, and releasing the SMT in particular for more creative challenges.

Changes documented in this chapter witness to a process of consolidation and review which took place as part of the development planning processes associated with the TCI. In gathering together the advances already made, and producing a *"state of the nation report"* (Deputy Head Observation, Research Log, 15th May, 1994), the school is understood to have mobilised for the next major innovation, namely, becoming one of the first fifty TCs in the country.

This chapter has sought to relate the predominant activities associated with TCI planning processes, whilst the substantive content and associated activity of the TCI development plans themselves have not been addressed, for reasons already cited.

¹² This short motto had been adapted from the slogan of the Technology Colleges Initiative, *Schools for the Future*.

These processes were essentially reflective processes, engaged in at different levels of the school's (flattening) hierarchy, and understood to characterise both adhocracies and reticular-democracies.

The next chapter focuses on a description and interpretation of data collected during the fourth and final cycle of innovation in this research.

Chapter Eight

The Fourth Cycle of Innovation: September 1994 - July 1995 The Technological Revolution, Pastoral Care, Discipline and Discipleship

8.1 Introduction:

This chapter focuses on three aspects of the fourth cycle of innovation. Firstly, it provides a brief description of the early stages of the school's development as a Technology College (TC), its relationships with its new partners, and its innovatory activity at a national level, as a context for ensuing changes constituting the fourth cycle of innovation. Secondly, it offers a description and interpretation of consultative procedures surrounding continued development of the pastoral system and its structures. Thirdly, it advances discussion of the development of a draft discipline policy which was subsequently submitted to the governing body for adoption.

Whilst the fourth cycle of innovation constitutes the final cycle of this research project, it is important that the process of innovation is understood to have continued beyond this research, and whilst cyclical, is not restricted by any imposed limit. On the contrary, it is understood to be an on-going process comprising multiple cycles.

Even the notion of cycles of innovation is considered too neat a concept. The reality, as understood through engaging in multiple innovations in this project, is a series of messy, ambiguous, complex and contradictory experiences and processes which rarely exhibit properties of rational relationship. It is only in subsequently

trying to analyse, provide order and make sense of processes undertaken that categorisation can be attributed, often arbitrarily.

8.2 The Technology College Initiative:

The school opened at the beginning of the autumn term 1994 at the vanguard of national innovation as a TC, the new status having been conferred by the Secretary of State for Education. Development plans were in place following approval from DfE officials. Funding was secured both from sponsors and government, and management plans for changes in science and technology departments were established. Three members of the SMT, invited to the DfE for a conference regarding final details of the submission of the capital bid, received advice about both securing value for money from contractors, and ramifications of tendering processes.

The visit to the DfE at Sanctuary Buildings in Great Smith Street proved an interesting experience for a number of reasons. Architecturally, the centre of the building is in the form of an atrium. Balconies projecting from each floor bedecked with a profusion of plants of both hanging and creeping varieties and known colloquially as the *"Hanging Gardens of Babylon"* (DfE Officer, Research Log, 12th October, 1994), provide a spectacular impression of both opulence and affluence deemed *"inappropriate for the administrative centre of the country's education service"* (SMT Comment, Research Log, 12th October, 1994). Schools in inner cities and small rural communities, by contrast, are understood to be *"riddled with corrosion and decay following decades of neglect by both central and local government"* (ibid.). This sense of inappropriateness is further reinforced on entering mirror-lined and mirror-fronted lifts. It seems ironic that the DfE, the

headquarters of the country's education system, *"suffers from sick-building syndrome"* (DfE Officer, Research Log, 12th July 1994).

Having secured TC status, this final phase of negotiation was more extended than anticipated. It was difficult to remain patient following seemingly endless bureaucracy endemic in government departments. It was perhaps inevitable that a team of people involved at senior management level with the sorts of innovative processes related in this thesis, should reflect on the inherent philosophy and practice of the DfE and make contrasts and comparisons with our own organisation. This process testifies to the SMT's learned behaviours and practices vis-à-vis the modus operandi of the reflective practitioner. This brief glimpse through a chink in the wall of the *"new secret garden"*¹ of national educational reform, provides an insight into a world rich in *"research data"* begging for the *"mundane and familiar to be 'made strange' and reflected back"* (Personal Reflection, Research Diary, 28th November, 1995).

Members of the SMT present at this conference were urged to spend the project's capital funding, have everything in place and be able to account for all expenditure by 17th March 1995, there being a risk that funding would otherwise be lost. Funding, it was stated, could not be carried forward into the following financial year. In the event, Bishop Lindis School had its project in place ahead of schedule, and was understood to be *"the only one of the first fifty Technology Colleges in the country"* (DfE Officer, Research Log, 5th April, 1995) to meet the deadline and comply with the DfE's stringent regulations. The school's success in this matter

¹ This term is used with "apologies" to David Eccles who first coined the phrase in 1960 (Moon and Mayes, 1994, p. 249)

equates with and testifies to greater efficiency and effectiveness in relation to both internal and external bureaucratic procedures. The subsequent official launch of Bishop Lindis School as a TC took place on Friday 7th April 1995. Lord Taylor of Blackburn², chairman of the board of a major sponsoring company³, led the ceremonies.

In addition to its launch as a TC, the day marked Bishop Lindis School's incorporation into the British Aerospace Schools' Network. The school also received the accolade of recognition as an Apricot Centre of Excellence (ACE), by Apricot Computers.

Hitherto the school had well-established partnerships with the LEA and the diocese. Its new status heralded a new relationship with the DfE in which close working relationships were formed, albeit for a short period of time. Other embryonic partnerships formed, and subsequently matured, with three major sponsors, two of whom have already been named. New relationships with schools, having undergone similar processes of innovation, were also forged through membership of the CTC Trust.

Ambiguity and contradiction implicit in the school's quest for greater independence through self-governing aspirations and agendas, whilst simultaneously entering into a series of new partnerships in which inter-dependence was understood to be important, provided leadership and management challenges and dilemmas for the

² Lord Taylor of Blackburn is a Socialist Peer, and author of the *Taylor Report* which led to the introduction of LMS.

³ This major sponsor was the first to commit itself to supporting the school. It is not named, since to do so could identify the school.

SMT. The challenges and dilemmas lie in the tensions inherent in such partnerships with other schools, in which interdependence, co-operation and collaboration are implicit, whilst simultaneously pursuing self-governance characterised by independence and self-determination. For example, choices had to be made about joining initiatives relating to staff development, or alternatively pursuing such agendas independently. On the one hand costs could be shared if agreement was reached about engaging appropriate speakers to lead INSET activities across two or more schools, whilst on the other hand such decisions often amounted to compromising both individual teachers' INSET needs and those of the school as a whole.

In the course of the first year as a TC, the school was invited by Apricot Computers to join the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI's) "*Schools On-Line*" project. The school, as one of sixty schools nationally, set about investigating ways in which the Internet could be used as a curriculum resource for enhancing teaching and learning in modern foreign languages. The initiative added another *project* department to the school's previous experience, and established it more securely as a "*project school*" (Dalin, 1993). The enterprise is also understood to be characteristic of a "*systemic learning organisation*" (ibid.) in the learning opportunities it afforded to both staff and students.

8.3 Pastoral Developments:

Alongside developments associated with the TCI, following news of an impending early retirement, the school advertised internally for a care and guidance co-ordinator (Research Log, 21st June 1994). This initiative was understood to be bureaucratic and appertained to developments in the school's rôle culture. A

replacement was required initially to take responsibility as head of year eleven. Whilst potential applicants were assured of no immediate plans to change existing pastoral structures, the post was designated according to a published whole school structure, keeping a range of future options open for subsequent development. Decision-making processes inherent in the developing situation are understood to be characteristic of an adhocracy.

It also became clear that the head of year ten would not return speedily and another internal advertisement was placed for an acting care and guidance co-ordinator in his absence. Candidates for this acting allowance were requested to write a letter of application with particular reference to the following questions:

- What qualities and expertise can you offer our students as a care and guidance co-ordinator with particular responsibility as Head of Year 10?
- How do you envisage the co-ordination of students' care and guidance developing at Bishop Lindis over the next few years?
- What rôle would you envisage playing in the school's well developed ROA scheme, and how would you see it developing in future?

(Advertisement for Care and Guidance Co-ordinator, 21st June 1994)

The questions had been designed by the SMT with the intention of seeking the views of staff wishing to apply, about potential for pastoral development. The application process, therefore, served a dual purpose; its second, and subsidiary consultative function being integral to the research rationale. The response to the advertisement was not strong, and it was subsequently understood that *"there was some suspicion of and resistance to possibilities of change in the pastoral system"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 12th September, 1994). The response is understood to equate with *"withdrawal"* (Whittaker, 1993, pp. 64-65) in which

colleagues search for ways of avoiding change and endeavour to maintain the status quo.

In the event, both the permanent rôle as head of year 11 and the acting rôle as head of year 10 were fulfilled by one person. Both functions of the new post were subject to development prior to the successful candidate accepting permanent responsibility, on the previous holder's retirement (1st September 1995), with the new title of *"Key Stage 4 Co-ordinator"*. The function and rôle of this new key post shifted emphasis to the monitoring of academic achievement of students at KS4. The shift in emphasis came directly out of the application process, influenced through understandings gained by the SMT as participants in action research processes.

The SMT discussed the possibility of more radical changes in the structure of pastoral organisation at a Saturday Conference in the spring term 1995, following the early retirement of the teacher who had been fulfilling the rôle as head of years 7, 8 and 9. Governors approved a fall back position, and it was agreed that staff would be consulted about the more radical proposals.

The fall-back position, already agreed by governors, to be implemented following the conclusion of this research project in September 1995 was as follows:

- The team to be led by a director of pastoral care and guidance, who in effect would be the assistant head responsible for student development.
- The prevailing system of form tutors to continue, and subsequent developments of the rôle of the form tutor also to continue with the tutor as the lynch-pin of the care and guidance system.
- Each care and guidance co-ordinator, to take responsibility for a year group, and vacant posts advertised accordingly.

A new post for the co-ordination of primary-secondary liaison was also to be established, whilst that of the careers and vocational guidance co-ordinator was to continue. The co-ordinator of learning support was to remain unchanged. These proposals, understood to be uncontroversial, were to reinforce positive aspects of team approaches already developed and, to that extent, advance adhocratic and reticular-democratic development.

8.3i The Vertical Tutor Group and Specialist Team Options:

Fincham (1991), recognises that the most common and popular approach adopted by secondary schools is to organise pastoral care based on a year (horizontal) system in which heads of year have overall responsibility for students in one age group. He suggests, however, that a potential problem of such an arrangement may give rise to an artificial separation of pastoral and academic concerns (Best *et al.*, 1995; and Power, 1996). Fincham proposes that academic and pastoral concerns might be integrated more effectively through a vertical system.

Consequently, in order to investigate this notion, a second option in this research, considered at a staff consultation meeting, was based on a system of vertical tutor groups. Developments were planned perpetuating the rôle of the tutor as the lynch-pin of the care and guidance system. Each tutor group was to belong to a house, and contain 5 or 6 students from each year. Advantages and disadvantages were considered in a brainstorming session at an SMT Saturday Conference. The results of the brainstorming, which follow, were made available to staff prior to their discussions about the merits and de-merits of a vertically grouped pastoral care system.

8.3ii Disadvantages of a vertical tutor group system:

- bad experience for students with less effective tutors for five years
- difficulty of subject teachers communicating with their teaching group
- tutors - information from briefing - 5x information re: room changes etc.
- some siblings - prefer not to be in the same tutor group
- problems - year group meetings e.g. after assembly - untidy group dismissal disruption of lesson 1
- relationships between tutor and group - some tutors relate better to older/younger groups
- personality clashes - more of a problem over five years than one or two (change of face!)
- general confusion among staff - re: who belongs etc. - exploit situation
- far too radical to sell to staff
- current arrangements for exams - impossible
- parents/ in the district- alien system
- SIMS attendance - couldn't cope?
- problems - matters relating to specific options, etc. - GCSE, Year Group, SATs etc.
- Break up of present successful groups
- problems with content of PSE work with forms

8.3iii Advantages of a vertical tutor group system:

- development of House spirit
- improved liaison with parents
- proctors already in tutor group
- older students could help younger ones - more caring
- continuity
- spreads the load of NRA and other issues relating to one year group
- "family" ethos
- a new impetus to the pastoral system
- we could engineer groups and produce potentially successful groups
- would encourage students to be responsible and help one another
- would enable us to reinforce central rôle of the tutor
- could define job specification for Head of House
- each tutor would have a wider perspective of whole school
- scope for more house activities
- each tutor needs to get to know only 5 or 6 new students each year
- every tutor would be equal to every other - equal professionals
- opportunity to break up poor forms
- some siblings would prefer to be in the same tutor group and House
- each group would be "more natural" - mix of age, ability and social background in each group
- greater variety of pastoral work for each tutor
- would make counselling more natural
- easier to keep order

- parents' evenings - each tutor would have less parents of tutor group to see - releasing time for subject reporting

(Brainstorming at SMT Saturday Conference, May 1994)

In order to provide a range of possibilities for consideration, a third option was offered in which development of the rôle of the form tutor as the lynch-pin of the care and guidance system was also a central concern. A team of care and guidance co-ordinators, advancing reticular-democratic processes, was to consist of specialists working closely together, with specific and designated responsibilities. Rôles were to be agreed following appointment, by negotiation at a Saturday Conference with the SMT.

8.3iv The Staff Consultation Meeting:

A staff consultation meeting about the proposals took place with one of the deputy heads in the chair. I was at a conference with the other deputy, believing it appropriate that the staff had freedom to discuss proposals without the possibility of my inhibiting the freedom of their comments. The stance I adopted was thus commensurate with democratic and empowering leadership (Blase and Anderson, 1995).

In the event the teaching staff rejected the more radical approaches and opted for the fall-back position. However, the significance of the process should not be underestimated. There had been a tangible demonstration of the SMT's commitment to staff consultation and democratic processes of decision making. There remained some who were still unconvinced of the sincerity of the SMT, or the purposes and processes of the research project. One colleague asked:

"Are these ideas being imposed on us by someone at Sheffield University wanting to carry out experiments?"

(Teacher Question, Staff Meeting, Research Log, June 1994)

In applying a political prism, it is understood that this teacher, who subsequently left for a promotion, felt marginalised from the school and its innovatory activity, and believed that the organisation was developing in ways which she could not support.

The process, in which the SMT provided a number of options in addition to the possibility of suggestions coming directly from consultation, was used as a means of gauging staff opinion. It is understood to be both inconsistent with and contradictory to the research process and the well-established consultative procedures, that there was a small but significant minority of teaching staff who were suspicious of SMT motives, and in particular my motives as head and as practitioner-researcher.

It is understood, following discussions within the SMT, inevitably informed via *"the grapevine"* (SMT Statement, Research Log, 24th September, 1994) that some colleagues believed that a particular outcome was deemed essential for the success of this research, and that this (my perceived motivation) took preference over the needs, well-being and interests of the school. There was a perception that I was *"prepared to sacrifice the school for the sake of personal gain"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 15th October, 1994).

In applying a political prism to this scenario, the resultant spectrum reveals aspects of authority, power, leadership and control at play within the teaching staff. The

inherent ideologies and coalitions of small numbers of staff were sharpened as a result of a perceived threat to the status quo. Their underlying interests and conflicts surfaced and in some cases emerged in a stream of emotive rhetoric (Teacher Observation on Staff Meeting, Research Log, 15th October, 1994). The intrinsic contradictions and goal diversity amongst members of the teaching staff came into full play. Through these political processes, however, and of particular interest within the context of this research because of its contradictory nature, the staff achieved a measure of consensus, teamwork and synergy.

It was as if there had been a *"joining of forces in the face of adversity"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 15th October, 1995). Inevitably I was uncomfortable, not because of the outcome, with which I was at ease, but that in this process I had been understood to be an *"adversary"* (Teacher Observation, Research Log, 15th October, 1995). That such observation is characteristic of perceptions of the headship rôle, was of little comfort. That it came out of a process in which I had endeavoured to empower colleagues, and encouraged their participation in decision making processes was enigmatic to me. That I responded with a measure of naïveté, in the light of the analytical nature of this research project, and by implication its informing my understandings of both cultural and political aspects of the school's organisation, is also enigmatic. It is another example of my understanding processes in cerebral and academic terms, whilst not recognising those very processes and their likely outcomes in practice. I continued to be surprised by colleagues' behaviours in response to change and proposed innovation in spite of being familiar with accounts in the literature of those very processes and their likely political outcomes.

As a result of the staff's decision, the pastoral care system during the following academic year continued to be essentially horizontal (year structure), with tutor groups based mainly on form groupings. As a pilot exercise on which to base the following year's consultations it was proposed to group year eight into *ten* half-sized tutor groups, which would join with *ten* half-sized year seven tutor groups. This proposal was also unacceptable to an overwhelming majority staff.

Applications were subsequently invited from full-time members of staff to form a new team of care and guidance co-ordinators (including a primary liaison co-ordinator), in the form of a letter outlining strengths and anticipated contributions. A Care and Guidance Conference on Saturday 8th July 1994 at a local hotel, was planned for the SMT and the new team of care and guidance co-ordinators.⁴

At around this time governors met with the staff in an attempt to simplify the school aims and mission statement. The consultation process was an extension to the aims exercise, carried out in the autumn and spring terms of the 1991-92 academic year and reported in chapter five, the first cycle of innovation. In the new phase of discussion, groups of staff and governors met on several occasions and discussions formed parts of agendas for both the governors' curriculum committee and the school's academic board.

The activity, in which I chose to take an interest, but have only minor involvement, is understood to have characterised "*spider plant activity*" (Morgan, 1993). Consequently, the mission of Bishop Lindis School was understood as being:

⁴The appointments to the various care and guidance posts are documented in Appendix G.

“to create a stimulating, secure and caring environment within which all members of the community could develop their potential to the full in the light of the Christian gospel”

(Mission Statement, revised June, 1995).

It also continued to include the following biblical reference:

“That they might have life, and have it in all its fullness.
(John 10: 10)”

(The School Motto, chosen by the founder head, 1963)

No fundamental changes were made to either the mission statement or the school’s aims in the consultation, but rather it was a process of simplification and rationalisation.⁵ In support of its mission statement, therefore, the staff and governors of Bishop Lindis school aimed:

- to promote the school as a centre of learning dedicated to quality and excellence;
- to optimise opportunities and resources;
- to produce confident, well adjusted, spiritually aware members of the community, with a clear sense of right and wrong;
- to encourage students to develop their own special skills and talents, thinking and working both collaboratively and independently;
- to promote a variety of teaching and learning methods where tradition and innovation are interwoven and supported by modern technology;
- to work in partnership with governors, parents, the Church, local industry and the local community;
- to encourage members of the school community to respect their own and other cultures and beliefs;
- to help young people to value themselves and their achievements;
- to facilitate the professional development of the staff to meet the changing needs of the school;
- to prepare students for life and work in an increasingly complex and changing technological society.

(Revised June 1995)

⁵ The pre-1991 School Aims are to be found in Appendix B.

Following the appointment of the new co-ordinators, job descriptions were written as a result of consulting with successful candidates. This activity was understood to reinforce the school's rôle culture. The major function of care and guidance co-ordinators, however, was to support the whole curriculum, and facilitate student learning, and to that extent was understood to promote adhocratic and reticular-democratic activity. Team approaches, founded on consensus and synergy were both proposed and promoted.

An appointment was not made to the post of primary liaison co-ordinator. There was general reluctance to apply for this particular post but interested colleagues were asked to discuss it with the SMT. One teacher, favoured for appointment by the SMT, declined to apply. She felt that we were:

"...looking for a fall-guy to blame if numbers of pupils attracted to the school declined."

(Teacher Comment, Research Log, 5th July 1995.)

This response, one again, is understood to characterise "*withdrawal*" (Whittaker, 1993).

8.4 Discipline Policy:

Some colleagues exerted considerable pressure on the SMT, and me in particular, to revise the school's discipline policy. Some teachers understood this review to be necessary because they perceived a "*relaxation of discipline and a lowering of standards of behaviour*" (Teacher Comment, 24th June, 1995). Others saw the response of their colleagues as manipulative, their objective being to "*have something to beat you with*" (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 24th June, 1995). Conversely, one member of the SMT thought that it was important to have a

discipline policy in order that we should *"have something to beat them with"* (SMT Statement, Research Log, 3rd July, 1995).

There were two other good reasons for formulating a policy, founded on researched, informed, and consultative procedures. The first was in recognition of, and in preparation for a planned OFSTED inspection during the following academic year. It was also understood that no action research based on the development of pastoral care and its affect on changing the culture of the school could ignore this important area.

The previous discipline policy, in the form of separate and disparate documents, lacking cohesion, and under the authorship of the founder head, was seen, *"to relate to a former age"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 24th March 1995). The SMT was concerned that any subsequent document should not form the basis of a ready-reckoner for punishments, there being some colleagues who still equated discipline with punishment. Whittaker (1995, pp. 100-101) acknowledges that discipline is associated with punishment in the minds of students and regrets that each concept has become so closely linked in the wider context of parents, teachers and governors.

It was within this context that the SMT prepared a draft document, following consultation with individual colleagues, and some members of the governing body. We also consulted headteacher colleagues at other diocesan high schools. Consultation of the whole teaching staff at this stage was considered inappropriate because of the perceived sensitivity of the subject. This decision represented a shift in practice from the open consultative style adopted with regard to pastoral

developments, and was a result of the particular political activities previously cited. Paradoxically, whilst intending to provide a smooth passage for the developing discipline policy, we became aware that our decision not to *"go public"* could be considered as *"underhand"* by some colleagues. Nonetheless, the resultant discipline policy was founded on the SMT's understanding of the prevailing new order, and nature of the changing culture within the school at the time. In summary, the process was an example of innovatory activity (action) being informed by research (enquiry), and therefore understood to epitomise this project's rationale as outlined in chapter three, the methodological framework.

It was understood to be important to both teachers and governors that the context of discipline at Bishop Lindis School should be related to the revised mission statement and aims, and should primarily promote the school as a centre of learning dedicated to quality and excellence. The process of re-contextualising and re-conceptualising *"discipline"* into a new policy, therefore, honoured the involvement of professional and governor colleagues in the foregoing formulation of the school's aims. It was understood from the reconstituted aims that the most important aspect of the work of the school was considered to be *"students' learning"*.

Following these developments, and other findings documented as a result of the emerging action enquiry approach to management, it was understood that the school facilitated students' learning by providing *"the best possible resources available"*; *"by developing a quality teaching force"*; and *"by providing a well-ordered and disciplined environment"* (Teacher and Governor Comments, Research Log, 5th July, 1995).

I also believed that key principles within the school's approach to Christian care and concern should be that:

"discipline comes from discipleship; the ultimate aim being to foster self-discipline, both as professionals and in students; self-discipline is a route to personal spiritual growth, dignity and respect - the development of self-respect in students being fundamental to their having respect for others; and discipline is positive not negative - it not only provides the necessary environment in which quality learning can take place, but also provides for the physical and emotional security of students."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 26th May, 1995)

A recurring theme in responses from fellow participants might be summed up in the statement:

"The uniqueness and value of each individual should inform the need to stress the crucial rôle of responsibility both for the individual and other members of the community."

(Personal Reflections, Research Diary, 26th May, 1995)

It was generally believed that a clear definition of Christian responsibilities was required, and needed to be known by all members of the school community. With this in mind responses were formulated in which *"approval, recognition and success"* were highlighted as being amongst our most basic needs (Maslow's hierarchy of needs). A system of rewards and incentives relevant to the different stages of growth from year 7 to year 11, paying due regard to praise and expectation, was therefore seen as essential.

It was understood by many teachers that dealing in rewards should be more frequent than dealing in punishments. It was also believed, particularly by SMT colleagues, that where this was not so; where work and discipline were maintained only by *"frequent recourse to punishment"*, this would be an *"indication of*

something seriously amiss". It was felt that a colleague in this situation should be *"encouraged to seek help and advice"* (Teacher Responses, Research Log, June 1995).

The ethos of the pastoral system was understood as crucial if students were:

"to be helped to appreciate the full meaning of the Christian process of repentance, forgiveness and renewal, and that a constant striving to begin anew is an integral part of the human condition in relation to God."

(Governor Comment, Research Log, 16th May, 1995)

An approach to discipline favoured by the SMT, and some key governors, particularly clergy and those who were chairs of committees, necessitated a reappraisal of some old values and cultural implications. It was noted, for example that, *"some teachers think that discipline is a personal and individual matter"* (Teacher Observation, Research Log, 15th June, 1995). It was understood to be important to make it clear that it wasn't

It was more generally accepted that discipline was a collective responsibility. No-one's problems were seen as unique, and pooled experience was considered, *"a sounder guide than a hasty reaction to a difficult classroom situation"* (Teacher Observation, Research Log, 12th June, 1995). By the same token, a general understanding within the SMT was verbalised by one deputy, who stated that, *"no one can say that discipline is someone else's responsibility"* (Deputy Head Statement, Research Log 1st July, 1995). As a consequence it was agreed that staff should be encouraged to be positive, uniform, firm and fair in their dealings with students. *"Consistency"* was seen as more than a professional obligation: it

was understood to be, *"the cornerstone of the school's effectiveness as a centre of learning"* (Deputy Head Comment, Research Log, 12th July, 1995).

Following individual consultations and interviews, the SMT came to a shared and informed understanding that:

"Good discipline depends on the quality of relationships inside the school and the level of staff expectations and standards, every bit as much as on the sanctions they apply."

(SMT Observation, Research Log, June, 1995)

Problems were understood to occur where adolescents, *"test the boundaries of acceptable behaviour"*, and it was understood that the school's success should be measured, *"not by the absence of problems, but, by the way in which we deal with them"* (SMT Observation, Research Log, June, 1995).

An important outcome of this research was the emergence of a more general belief amongst teachers in the school that, *"discipline should be largely based on mutual respect between staff and students"* (SMT Observation, Research Log, 12th July, 1995). Collectively, the SMT strongly believed that it should not be based on authority, which was seen to characterise previous practice. That was not to say that the staff were not expected to exercise authority. They were encouraged to, *"speak authoritatively, and with conviction about their common mission and shared values in fostering the distinctive ethos of the school"* (Assistant Head Comment, Research Log, 3rd July, 1995). In discussing the implications for classroom activity with colleagues, the SMT believed that:

"the developing culture in which students were working in an environment which aroused their curiosity and interest; in which work was well matched to their abilities; and in which students were pursuing worthwhile activities"

where they were encouraged to take some responsibility for their own learning, encouraged students' positive responses."

(SMT Statement, Research Log, 15th May, 1995)

A number of factors exhibited in lessons where good behaviour was considered prevalent were formulated. These factors, identified and included in the school discipline policy were understood to be:

- "the nurturing of genuine involvement based on an understanding of the concepts which underlie those tasks and examples particular to a given lesson;
- materials and preparation to ensure differentiation within tasks for students of different abilities;
- sustained hard work on the part of students as well as the teacher;
- specific help for individual students without losing sight of the reactions of the whole group;
- the encouragement of students to contribute ideas;
- careful attention to their contributions, with encouragement to refine their ideas in discussion;
- flexibility in adapting a lesson plan to take account of students and the mood of the group;
- variation of the pace of a lesson to keep interest and momentum;
- wit and humour, which help students to enjoy a lesson and can defuse potential problems, without recourse to sarcasm;
- infectious enthusiasm for the subject, and for students and their response to it".

(School Discipline Policy, 1st September 1995)

Consideration of the school's code of conduct was fundamental to the development of a whole school discipline policy. It had been in existence for a number of years and was the result of little formal or informal discussion even at a senior level. It was posted in each form room, representing a verbal and visual manifestation of school culture, and was also available to staff in the staff handbook. It was also seen as the responsibility of form tutors to ensure that members of each tutor group both knew and understood what was expected of them.

It was understood to be important by most members of the SMT to update both the language and the substance represented in the code of conduct. One SMT colleague was not enthusiastic about this particular suggestion. She saw the code of conduct as, *"representing basic and fundamental standards on which the school has stood firm and flourished for over thirty years"* (Assistant Head Observation, Research Log, 20th June, 1995). It was understood to be important, that in rewriting the code of conduct, *"all members of the family of Bishop Lindis School were seen as having a rôle to play in the life of the school community"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 15th June, 1995). In this family, which is understood to characterise a reticular-democracy, everyone was considered as, *"valuable and unique, and as having a right to give and receive respect"* (Governor Comment, Research Log, 16th June, 1995).

The rewritten code of conduct emphasised that in order to achieve these goals all members of the community would be expected to:

- be courteous, kind, honest, and thoughtful in their dealings with each other;
- make sure that attitudes and behaviour in class was positive, giving an equal opportunity for all to learn;
- be properly prepared for all lessons;
- plan and complete homework and course-work on time;
- move around school quietly and sensibly;
- be proud of the school's environment and help keep it safe and tidy;
- wear the correct school uniform with pride;
- eat food in the dining areas only, and not in classrooms or outside.

(Adapted from the School Discipline Policy, 1st September 1995)

It was generally believed, by both staff and governors, as a basic and essential prerequisite to learning that students attended school regularly. Absence, it was understood, should be a rare occurrence. It was believed that quality learning could rarely take place whilst students were absent from school, though there

could be exceptions. For example, following the conclusion of the fourth cycle, one year nine boy having been involved in a car accident, communicated with school from home via the Internet. He used it both as a curriculum resource and as a vehicle for *email* through which he both received and submitted his school work (Research Log, January 1996). The arrangements under which the school was prepared to permit such a relationship, are understood to reflect a shift in culture from the mechanistic to the organic domain, and from rôle-oriented to person-oriented organisation.

Punctuality was also considered to be a basic and essential prerequisite to good learning. The SMT saw it as the responsibility of the form tutor to follow up persistent lateness. Procedures were established whereby serious difficulties could be discussed with the year or key stage co-ordinator who in turn could refer matters to a deputy or assistant head.

In spite of substantial shifts in culture within the school, groups were still expected to line up outside rooms and wait until told to enter characterising bureaucratic and mechanistic aspects of the school's organisation as "*regimented*" or "*military*" (Beare *et al.*, 1989). Paradoxically, this policy was not understood by most teachers to be inconsistent with the more informal arrangements prevalent over the four years of the project, and understood to characterise reticular-democratic developments. It should be recognised, however, that there was some ambivalence within the staff about these matters. Some older and more established staff, and particularly those with little experience in other schools, appeared not to understand exactly what was required of them. It is understood that they felt comfortable with the previous order of things, in which what was

expected of them was spelt out in *"black and white"* terms. Generally, younger and newer staff did not encounter the same problems, since they had been appointed in knowledge of developments taking place, and were understood to welcome them.

Students continued to be required to stand at the beginning of lessons until told to be seated by teachers. They also stood and placed chairs neatly at the conclusion of lessons, ensuring that rooms were left neat, tidy and free of litter before the following group arrived. It was clear to most teachers that only when they were completely satisfied should the group be dismissed. These arrangements are understood to represent some behavioural manifestations of school culture (Beare *et al.*, 1989).

Conversely, since both head and deputies became frequent visitors to classrooms, consistent with developments in the organic-person domain, it was seen as disruptive to ask students to stand every time they entered a room. Respect, it was understood, was best shown to both senior staff and visitors by students being, *"immersed in their work and engaged in activities set by their teachers"* (SMT Statement, Research Log, 15th June, 1995).

Movement around the buildings was impeded by the narrowness of corridors and the multilevel nature of the school site. All members of the community were required to respect the convention of walking on the left on both corridors and stairs, and to expect and extend courtesy to each other. In order to maintain a safe environment, colleagues were required not to permit running within school buildings. The SMT became increasingly aware that these arrangements,

particularly in written form, conveyed overly controlled and mechanistic characteristics of school culture. The ensuing behaviours, in practice, were much more relaxed and civilised than the rhetoric implies.

Civil and decent language was expected, and usually practised between students, and between students and staff, representing positive conceptual and verbal manifestations of school culture (Beare *et al.*, 1989). If a student's language gave offence, it was understood that colleagues should act. In the event of an incident in which inappropriate language was used, it was suggested that it might be appropriate, albeit bureaucratic, to:

- ask students for a transcript of what was said;
- file the transcript in the student's file, with a note of the circumstances;
- refer to the student's form tutor; or
- write to parents expressing concern.

(Adapted from the School Discipline Policy, 1st September 1995)

It was clear to all staff and governors interviewed that abusive language undermined the code of conduct of the school and should not go unpunished. On the one hand the school encouraged relaxed and natural positive relationships between all members of its community. On the other hand, in the event of expectations not being met, there was a range of bureaucratic and punitive procedures set down for staff guidance.

It was understood to be the responsibility of form tutors to ensure that "school uniform" requirements were met by students in their forms. In applying a cultural prism, this activity results in focusing on a component of the spectrum of visual, material and symbolic manifestations (Beare *et al.*, 1989). Form tutors were

expected to, *"make a comment or give a warning in a clear, firm and pleasant manner"* (Discipline Policy, 1st September 1995). It was understood generally, that this was all that was required in most cases *"to bring students into line"* (Teacher Description, Research Log, 28th June, 1995).

It was also accepted by those interviewed, that there could be a very small minority who required further action. In the first instance, *"this had to be taken by the form tutor"* (Assistant Head Statement, Research Log, 24th June, 1995). It was understood by most colleagues interviewed that only rare, difficult cases justified the involvement of other colleagues. Year co-ordinators, and exceptionally deputy or assistant heads might become involved. It was understood that for such matters to reach me, would indicate a serious breakdown in discipline. These procedures were based on a clear understanding of differentiated bureaucratic functioning of colleagues founded on the school's rôle culture.

Bishop Lindis School had traditionally been litter, graffiti and vandalism free. However, staff understood that whilst the school, *"could celebrate one of the most litter free school environments for miles around"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 18th May, 1995), consistent vigilance and the enlisting of student co-operation were considered *"essential if the school was to improve on its long-standing record"* (ibid.).

It was understood by all interviewed that no student should be allowed to walk past litter. It was understood to be good professional practice to end lessons by asking students to ensure that the classroom was litter free and tidy before they were dismissed. Subsequent classes, it was said, *"would then enter a clean*

working environment which would promote pride in the school, and encourage a neat approach to work" (Assistant Head Comment, Research Log, 2nd July 1995).

There was an expectation by everyone that graffiti or damage (whether accidental or deliberate) would be reported immediately.

Neither eating nor chewing was accepted as appropriate in any classroom. The dining room was seen as the only proper place for eating. Chewing gum had no place in the school. Computer generated notices appeared in several wings indicating that the whole school site was considered to be *"a gum-free zone"*. Such notices are understood as visual, material and symbolic manifestations of school culture (Beare *et al.*, 1989). Teachers were expected not to tolerate chewing or eating in any class. *"A non-aggressive, but assertive instruction"* (Discipline Policy, 1st September 1995) was all that was understood to be required in the majority of cases.

As a means of providing guidance, especially with regard to classroom activities, colleagues were reminded of a requirement, *"to sustain a positive, supportive and secure environment for learning"* (SMT Statement, Research Log, 13th June, 1995).

They were also reminded that well prepared, stimulating and participative lessons *"generate good behaviour and earn respect"* (ibid.). Colleagues understood that they were required to:

- arrive before the class and begin lessons on time;
- be well prepared for the lesson;
- keep students involved and interested;
- extend and motivate all students;
- set homework according to the published homework timetable;
- mark all work promptly and constructively;
- encourage creative dialogue - confidence in discussion is important;
- develop an attractive, clean and tidy room;

- mount interesting and stimulating wall displays of students' work;
- provide displays of support materials for learning support;
- change classroom display material regularly.

(Discipline Policy, 1st September 1995)

It became established and accepted practice within the school that all positive informal encounters with students contributed to good standards of behaviour and conduct. Most colleagues understood that they were expected to take the initiative in promoting the *"highest possible quality of student-staff relationships as they moved around the school"* (SMT Statement, Research Log, 13th June, 1995).

Pastoral Care, at its most proactive and developmental (Best *et al.*, 1995, p. 10), was demonstrated by colleagues who, *"made it their responsibility to initiate conversation, using a student's Christian name if possible; praise, and reinforce good conduct; deal with all misbehaviour - to ignore it is to condone it! - and to set high standards of speech, manner and dress"* (Assistant Head Comment, Research Log, 4th May, 1995).

In summary, it was recognised throughout the teaching staff that following considerable advances in shifting the culture of the school, previously characterised as fragmented and mechanistic, it was no longer acceptable to send students out of lessons, unless there was a dangerous situation that justified it. The problem, it was suggested, *"needed solving, not complicating"* (Deputy Head Comment, Research Log, 1st July, 1995). It was widely understood that colleagues should seek help if they needed it.

In disseminating the results of the research project, both colleagues and governors were informed that it was generally understood that good discipline was based on mutual knowledge, respect and the maintaining of established standards. They were encouraged to note that:

- positive reinforcement, praise and reward require emphasising. Emphasising potential is far more of a route to growth than focusing on shortcomings;
- verbal praise and encouragement in lessons contribute to progress as they are very powerful motivators;
- constructive and supportive marking stimulates positive responses. Positive comments should be written on students' work;
- good work should be displayed;
- use of the merit system should reward consistently good effort or service to the school. Certificates, prizes and public praise in assembly all have their part to play;
- newspaper coverage of success can be reported at assemblies;
- a personal meeting with the Head or other senior staff can be arranged to praise individuals or small groups of students;
- congratulatory letters home from form or subject teachers are encouraged;
- recommendations may be made for appointment to high office - Proctorship, etc.;
- high achievers are just as likely to respond to recognition of their achievements as more average performers.

(Discipline Policy, 1st September 1995)

It was widely assumed across the teaching staff that *"most people, old or young, respond better to reward than punishment"* (Teacher Comment, Research Log, 15th June, 1995). It was also accepted that, *"students also respond best to a system that recognises their difficulties and their strengths"* (ibid.). The SMT felt that students needed to know where they stood, however, and that sanctions had to be available and be used when appropriate.

It was argued that sanctions needed both to be known and graduated. Consistency was seen as vital, but the application of sanctions could never be mechanistic or without thought to circumstance and personality, since this would

be contrary to the progress that had been made in moving to a more organic approach to the management of the school.

It was understood that colleagues depended on each other to ensure that high standards of discipline were developed. Some basic sanctions were offered for guidance. Colleagues were urged not to threaten the use of a particular sanction unless they intended to impose it. Immediate action was seen to be the most effective. The key principle was believed to be the recognition of the distinction between the offence and the offender. In particular it was recognised that:

- "Gathering all the information about context, circumstance and the facts is vital before judgement, as is listening to what is being said by the offender;
- Communications with other colleagues is important. School systems should be used;
- Time is well spent ensuring that the student understands why what they have done is unacceptable and how they can put it right or avoid it in future;
- Sanctions should be applied with flexibility and discrimination;
- The application of sanctions seeks never to degrade the person and seeks to minimise the damage to atmosphere and relationships which can occur.
- Punishment after any breakdown of discipline should be corrective not retributive and should encompass help and growth through a re-statement of the school's values".

(Discipline Policy, 1st September 1995)

Classroom discipline was understood firstly and firmly as the responsibility of the subject teacher, then the head of department. In the case of persistent difficulty, the head of department was expected to consult with the form tutor and then the year co-ordinator, who in turn was expected to consult with a deputy or assistant head.

It was understood to be important that all colleagues were aware of factors which were generally accepted as affecting standards of discipline in schools. It was also believed that they could be defined in the following ways:

- “the quality of leadership of the head and senior staff;
- colleagues’ expectations of students and their work;
- lively and stimulating teaching leading to opportunities for achievement and success;
- active involvement of students in their own learning and in the wider life of the school;
- good relationships with mutual respect between staff and students;
- curriculum and teaching methods well matched to students’ needs;
- nurturing of students’ growth to maturity and self esteem;
- clearly understood codes of rewards and sanctions consistently applied”.

(Discipline Policy, 1st September 1995)

The resultant discipline policy only constituted a draft policy, it not having been debated by the staff as a whole. Difficulties with regard to its underlying principles in addition to issues regarding its implementation were not addressed until after the conclusion of this project’s fieldwork. Suffice it to say that all initiatives of this type are inherently problematic.

8.5 Conclusion:

This chapter has chiefly been concerned with three aspects of the fourth cycle of innovation. It began with a brief description of the early stages of the school’s development as a TC, its relationships with its new partnerships, and its innovatory activity at a national level, as a context for the changes which have constituted the fourth cycle of innovation. Secondly, it described and interpreted consultative procedures surrounding the development of the pastoral system and its structures within the school. Thirdly, it has discussed the development of a draft discipline policy which was subsequently submitted to the governing body for adoption.

In concluding this fourth cycle of innovation it is important that nothing in the discipline policy should be interpreted as implying that discipline is an easy matter. For reasons, most of which are outside the control of the school, the job of the teacher is understood generally to have become harder in recent years than it had ever been in the past.

The obligation to support colleagues in their efforts to create a disciplined and well-ordered environment in which students can learn effectively is accepted by most teachers in this study. In this spirit of co-operation, collaboration and collegiality, teachers at Bishop Lindis School were expected to follow both word and spirit of the new discipline policy, and as far as possible take members of the SMT into their confidence before major difficulties arose. The process through which the discipline policy was both formulated and became accepted practice was often complex, contradictory, and ambiguous. It is understood that conflict of understanding, of interest, of purpose and of ideology abound in such processes.

Whilst the fourth cycle of innovation constitutes the final cycle of this research project, it is important that the process of innovation is understood to have continued beyond this research, and whilst cyclical, is not restricted by any imposed limit. On the contrary, it is understood to be an on-going process comprising a multiplicity of cycles and of focuses.

Chapter Nine

The Conclusion

Winston Churchill in his autobiography, *My Early Life*, expressed succinctly the notion that lessons gained from personal experience are more likely to be remembered and internalised, than principles or theories learned by other means, when he said, *"I love to learn but I hate to be taught."*

School organisation founded on principles understood to *"lay foundations for life-long learning"* has constituted a deeply held personal ideology throughout much of my professional career. However, in the process of conducting this research the notion of *"life-long learning"* has too easily and too often become trivialised and trite.

Predominantly, this research has constituted a profoundly personal, painful and disturbing learning experience in which I have endeavoured to question my own subjective dispositions towards situations in which I engaged, and with which I grappled. This has been achieved with varying degrees of success at various times over the last five years. It has been an intensely challenging, albeit stimulating, experience, constituting an encounter with my *"self"* in a continuous process of reflection on, and re-appraisal of, my personal identity and integrity and my professional rôle and responsibilities.

The learning I specifically refer to here has not been acquired from teachers or books, though, of course, both have had major parts to play in the overall process

comprising this project. The most important aspects of this learning experience for me, subjectively, cannot be examined by traditional methods, for they in no sense constitute a process of knowledge transfer. On the contrary, I am less certain of what I "know" at the conclusion of this project than I was at its inception. Only those with whom I have daily personal or professional contact will be able to testify to changes that may have taken place as a result of my engaging in the research act. For learning, in my conception and in my experience, has constituted an intensely emotional process of personal change. Learning, rather than teaching, has been this study's major concern, and having finally brought this research to a conclusion, I subscribe to the notion expressed by "Ian", quoted in Salmon (1992), who states that:

"One model of the PhD process shows how uncertainty reduces with time.... The uncertainty is shown as a triangle which is at its widest at the start of the study and reduces linearly and uniformly to zero when the study is completed. At the stage I am at - writing up - the diagram shows that the uncertainty is nearly zero. Subjectively for me, this is far from the case.My experience of research leads me to see it as the reverse of the triangle.I think it was Robert Owen who said, 'All things I thought I knew, but now confess, the more I know, I know I know the less'. That's certainly the feeling I've got through this process."

("Ian" in Salmon, 1992, p. 54)

I subscribe to Ian's view that a PhD is more a process than a product, and that even in the closing stages of the endeavour there is uncertainty. Uncertainty prevails because research inevitably raises more questions than it addresses. Uncertainty increases about the importance and significance of questions which have been addressed, and the absence of those which have not been. Uncertainty and anxiety accumulate about the project's ultimate importance and significance in general terms, notwithstanding the personal stamina, singularity of purpose, and level of sacrifice constituting its importance in personal terms.

Since this project has wider implications than my own personal learning as a researcher, SMT members were asked about their understandings of its relevance, importance and significance both to them personally, and to Bishop Lindis School. They were asked to provide candid comments in terms of learning, action and change, both within themselves and within the school. One colleague responded with a critical appraisal of the process from her perspective, declaring that:

"...The project has obviously had a lot of relevance to you, and it must have some relevance to the school. I feel relevance to me personally is negative rather than positive, because I think it's encouraged you to put people into pigeon holes: to perhaps project things onto people related to certain management theories."

(Deputy Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

I found this colleague's comments both thought provoking and challenging since I believed I had witnessed a development in her professional expertise. I also understood that her engaging as a participant in this research had made a contribution to that development. I was confronted with the prospect that, contrary to my expectations and understanding, the project had had a negative effect on her.

I was curious about another colleague's comments with regard to the reflective processes in which we engaged, and recognised that she had been more acutely aware of engaging in those processes than some of her SMT colleagues, her response being that:

"...The project has had some relevance because of the changes that have come as a result. It has made individuals and the school *'look within'*. Even though there might not have been much change as a result of the action, going through the process of looking within has put things into perspective. In relation to the pastoral, it was a good exercise, even though no change resulted at that particular time."

(Assistant Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

Finally, a third colleague made the following response, and testified to a particular practical benefit of the research process in my own subsequent professional practice, as he understood it, by stating:

"...I believe this research has enabled you to deal more comprehensively with pressures over the last two years ...serious issues have been looked at in a coherent, cooler and more academic way.It has had less relevance to me ...whilst privy to theories or management perspectives ...I have been interested but treated them flippantly."

(Deputy Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

In the final analysis it is the learning process itself, in which motivation is tacit, and in which the significance of the research endeavour becomes a supremely personal experience, that is all-important. "Ian" in Salmon (1992) articulates it thus:

"My research isn't important to anyone else. As far as academic impact is concerned it's only a small brick in the wall. Extremely trivial and 'academic'. But for me personallyit is vitally important. I suppose the journey is the all-important thing. As Stevenson observed, 'To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour.'

...My research seems to be like walking in an unknown foreign country. Slow, full of surprises, but above all a very different learning experience. Again this is not the scientific impact but the impact on me as a person."

("Ian" in Salmon, 1992, p. 64)

However, learning in this project has not been exclusively personal, since at a second level it has been about managing the learning processes of colleagues and students; and at a third level it has been about managing processes leading to the emergence of the school as a *"learning organisation"*. Establishing the importance and describing the quality and characteristics of that learning is problematic. On being asked to relate personal understandings of the learning process, for them and for the school as an organisation, SMT colleagues, responded with the following comments. The first comments, by a deputy head, do not relate the learning process to this project, but refer instead to the impact of government

initiatives over the last decade. Paradoxically, she also testifies to a deterioration in children's learning capabilities.

"...My learning speeded up from 1988 onwards and ties in with ERA. Really, up till then my learning was in language teaching terms. Since ERA it has been in terms of management. The emphasis has changed. The time I realise what I have learned through experience is when I am observing student teachers.

...Similarly, I think learning in the school speeded up around the time of TVEI and ERA and has been pretty constant over that period. I don't think children learn as well as they used to in terms of sitting down and learning facts. The learning of skills has certainly improved, whilst the learning of facts has deteriorated. This is possibly one reason for under-achievement in some areas."

(Deputy Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

The assistant head, by comparison and contrast saw her learning in terms of a reconceptualisation of her professional rôle within the school, but also, independently, voiced concerns about children's learning capabilities by stating:

"...I've learned more about my own capability, since I've had to do things I previously hadn't done. Previously there didn't appear to be a necessity for more involved learning. In the last five years, I've been more involved in a lot of learning because of the jobs I've been asked to do. I've certainly learned more about managing people.

...I personally don't think that the children's willingness to learn has improved. They are much more reluctant to learn than previously, though it's not school's influence but society's. Facilities have improved but whether they have taken that on board I'm not sure. They are reluctant to learn generally."

(Assistant Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

Another colleague provided a more comprehensive appraisal of learning which, in general terms, is congruent with my own understanding, but was contradictory when compared with other SMT responses about student learning. However, he *also* related to a reconceptualisation of his professional rôle, by stating that:

"...The emphasis within the school has changed from teaching to learning. Previously, any critical observation centred around the activity of teaching

and the ways in which classrooms were organised. Now we are more concerned with learning outcomes.Whilst we have emphasised students' responsibility for their own learning, a lot of students still expect to be taught and do not expect to have to learn.

....I am learning more personally because of my position in taking initiatives forward into areas I do not fully understand. I am concerned, however, that there is no time to consolidate personal learning through INSET for example. I need to explore what I have learned with an accent on targeting future learning."

(Deputy Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

With the notion of the *"learning organisation"* uppermost, the approach adopted in this research has been one of engaging colleagues in research activity through participation. The underlying philosophy has been to create commitment through shared understanding and then equip individuals and teams to use a range of practical tools, which Senge (1990) equates with, *"personal mastery; team learning; mental models; shared vision; and systems thinking"*. Therefore, this research, set in a period of national manifest structural educational change, recognises the school's responsibility to adapt to, and address changes that result from its turbulent environment. It also recognises that addressing change is incumbent upon a school following a sustained period of stability in which little value was placed on personal learning: the workforce having become fearful and reactionary at the prospect of changing its approach to educative processes and practices. Situations of this sort are recognised in the following quotation from Pearn *et al.*, who believe that:

"An organisation which, through its history and culture, has not placed a high value on individual learning may have acquired a workforce which is passive, fearful and reluctant to change."

(Pearn, et al., 1995, p. 22)

It was recognised, by both the SMT and by some governor colleagues, that basic organisational features would need to be disturbed if the quest for organisational development, more amenable to external pressures, and a rapidly changing technological environment both nationally and internationally, was to be accomplished successfully. In disturbing some features of the organisation it is implicit that some of its members were also disturbed, and that I, as a major change agent, also found the process disturbing.

An organisation undergoing change at the pace and of the significance attempted at Bishop Lindis School was required to undergo a process of reconceptualisation. It was required to experience a paradigm shift in structural, organisational and cultural terms in order to meet its objectives. Put another way, the school had to change direction, challenge its underlying rationale, and experience a sea change. The Greek word, *metanoia*, which most aptly describes this process is usually translated somewhat misleadingly as *repentance*. Senge (1990), in providing both description and definition of the term, stresses that:

"To grasp the meaning of *metanoia* is to grasp the deeper meaning of *learning*, for learning also involves a fundamental shift or movement of mind. The problem with talking about *learning organisations* is that the *learning* has lost its central meaning in contemporary usage....

Real learning gets to the heart of what it means to be human. Through learning we re-create ourselves. Through learning we become able to do something we were never able to do. Through learning we re-perceive the world and our relation to it. Through learning we extend our capacity to create, to be part of the generative process of life. There is within each one of us a deep hunger for this type of learning.

....This then is the basic meaning of a *learning organisation* - an organisation that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future.for a learning organisation, *adaptive learning* must be joined by *generative learning*, learning that enhances our capacity to create."

(Senge, 1990, pp. 13-14)

To summarise, the basis of the process of innovation in this study has been that

- changes have been second order (Cuban, 1988), constituting double loop learning (Argyris and Schön, 1974);
- changes have been institutionalised rather than merely implemented;
- a paradigm shift has occurred in school culture (Whittaker, 1993);
- a re-conceptualisation of the school has taken place; and
- an experience of *metanoia* (Senge, 1990) permeates the organisation.

In seeking a response from the SMT regarding the impact of the innovative process within the school, one colleague responded by recounting her previous experience and its relationship to experience within the project, by stating:

"...I've been involved in the management of change for most of my career, beginning with my involvement in changes in communicative approaches to language teaching both in my own school and in the county.Since I came here, I've played a more active rôle in the first five years than in the second five. When I do manage big changes, I have been quite successful in doing that, particularly when left to do it my way.In the last five years things have changed probably more than most schools, because of external influences combined with a change of head."

(Deputy Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

Another colleague responded in more philosophical terms, and related her comments to situations in which she had recently engaged, by stating:

"...Change is inevitable. People who can't change die. Our whole life is about change. Our needs change as we grow older. The dodo became extinct because it could not adapt to changing circumstances. Schools need change. The Archbishop said on Saturday that even stones change over time. Change took place previously, but was not as rapid as it has been over the last five years."

(Assistant Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

A third colleague, in speaking of change, related concerns he held for some time about its challenging nature and his understanding of his colleagues' reluctance to respond to that challenge, by stating:

"...I see change as a challenge. Too many of our colleagues do not want to be challenged, but they would reject the notion of the 'comfort zone'."

(Deputy Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

In order to communicate and realise a vision of an emerging and developing learning organisation, a working action research rationale was required to address these issues. It is for this reason that this study has been founded on a process of "reflection". Consequently, it has employed a process of personal reflection on the leadership rôle in managing change and learning processes; and it has employed a process of reflection on cultural and political aspects of organisational life and resultant manifestations and implications of introducing, implementing, and institutionalising organisational and cultural change. Schön, in describing such processes states that:

"Managers do reflect in action. ...It consists in on-the-spot surfacing, criticising, restructuring, and testing of intuitive understandings of experienced phenomena; often it takes the form of a reflective conversation with the situation.

...When a manager reflects-in-action, he (sic) draws on his stock of organisational knowledge, adapting it to some present instance. And he also functions as an agent of organisational learning, extending or restructuring, in his present inquiry, the stock of future knowledge which will be available for future inquiry.

...The scope and direction of a manager's reflection-in-action are strongly influenced, and may be severely limited, by the learning system of the organisation in which he practices."

(Schön, 1983, pp. 241-243)

In engaging in processes understood to be part of the "tool-kit" of the reflective practitioner, it is understood that this study of Bishop Lindis School has reflected a complex, messy and multifaceted world where things are not always what they seem. In order to focus on specific aspects and components of the cultural and political milieu in which the school operated, a second device, akin to reflection

has been adopted. Consequently, this research has utilised processes of *"refraction"*; that is, convergence and divergence. Firstly, it has promoted divergent and creative ways of organising which have encouraged and facilitated the process of innovation. Secondly, it has employed a process of converging, focusing down, and concentrating on taken-for-granted *"critical incidents"* in the life of a developing school, to elicit meanings of those events as understood by actors in the ensuing social dramas. Thirdly, it has employed a process of applying cultural and political prisms to aspects of school organisation, together with particular autocratic, bureaucratic, adhocratic, and reticular-democratic lenses in order to elucidate important cultural, political and organisational data.

The particular spectra produced on applying specific prisms, and the range of lenses used to focus attention, has each provided a method of guiding understanding by removing unwanted and unnecessary facets of school organisation from view.

Finally, this research has been about *"action"*. It has been about doing, intervening, intending, committing, motivating, accomplishing, fulfilling and achieving. The essential concept and understanding of *"action"* in this research, has been that it should be informed action. The SMT, when approached about their understanding of the nature of action responded in very different ways, reflecting their different characteristics as managers and their different perceptions of action as applied in this research. One colleague, referring to her own practice, responded:

"...With regard to action I'm a doer rather than a thinker. In terms of things happening, I would say the same as I did about learning. It has speeded up."

(Deputy Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

Another colleague provided a more comprehensive response in which he analysed the nature of action, both from his own perspective, and that of his colleagues, by stating:

"...With regard to action, we are all doing a lot more, because it is expected of us both in school and nationally. Previously responsibility ceased when you told someone else, and if you were brave, you ventured to offer an opinion about action. Now everyone is expected to act. Some, who spent their formative years in this school, find it impossible to change, therefore they do not act. They still come and tell, and expect me to act. I find that a bind, and should tell them to *'bugger off'*, but it is often quicker to *'bloody-well'* do it myself. I believe that if I told them to go away my credibility would suffer."

(Deputy Head Response, Research Log, 9th September, 1996)

In responding to ambiguity, ambivalence and uncertainty surrounding significant innovation, Fullan (1991, p. 106) sees effective implementation as a process of clarification. He sees, conflict, disagreement and turbulence as fundamental to successful change programmes, and cites Huberman and Miles (1984) when claiming that smooth implementation is a sign that not much is really changing. Fullan stresses the urgency for institutionalising cultural and organisational change in order to address problems facing education in the turbulent closing years of the millennium by claiming that:

"The only solution is that the whole school - all individuals - must get into the change business...."

....current school organisation is an anachronism. It was designed for an earlier period of conditions that no longer hold.The only way out of this dilemma is for individuals to take responsibility for empowering themselves and others through becoming experts in the change process."

(Fullan, 1991, p. 353)

He suggests that people need pressure to change, even in directions they desire, and unless they are to be replaced with others possessing different desired characteristics, relearning needs to be at the heart of change. He proposes the

answer being *"...to redesign the workplace so that innovation and improvement are built into the daily activities of all teachers"* (Fullan, 1991, p. 353).

However, any seemingly slick, tidy or unequivocal conclusions to this project misrepresent the uncertain, messy, complex, disturbing, contradictory and ambiguous characteristics of the research processes, and the findings emanating from them, as experienced and understood by participants at Bishop Lindis School.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Significant dates: pre-September 1991

Nov 36	Meeting about the possibility of forming a new school
1955	Interest in the prospect of a new school revived
12 May 62	Foundation stone laid by Squire's wife
12 Sep 63	School opened with 188 students on roll
29 Oct 63	Dedication Service led by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese
22 Oct 71	RoSLA wing first used
12 Nov 71	Official opening of the RoSLA wing by Suffragan Bishop
1 Sep 73	Raising of the School leaving age (RoSLA)
31 Mar 76	New single storey wing opened
1 Sep 76	Bishop Lindis School goes comprehensive
1 Sep 88	Celebration of Bishop Lindis School's Silver Jubilee

Significant dates: post-September 1991

The First Cycle of Innovation: Chapter Five

1991-92	The Aims Exercise	Appendix B
6 Nov 91	Agenda of an early staff meeting	
6 Dec 91	First SMT Saturday Conference	Appendix C
6 Dec 91	Draft proposals for new pastoral system to SMT.	
1 Jan 92	Re-organisation of SMT - New roles	
6 Jan 92	Head's priorities for Spring term, 1992	Appendix D
28 Apr 92	Pastoral team developments	
April 92	Introduction of temporary TVEI allowances	
July 1992	Head's end of first year staff address	

The Second Cycle of Innovation: Chapter Six

- 1 Sep 92 Pre-term staff meeting
- 14 Nov 92 SMT Saturday Conference Appendix E
- 24 Nov 92 Reorganisation of pastoral system
- 15 May 93 Open access planning meeting

The Third Cycle of Innovation: Chapter Seven

- 1 Sep 93 Head of Year 11's illness began
- Nov 93 TCI announcement by HM government
- 15 Dec 93 School development plan - Audit Appendix F
- Jan -May 94 TCI process begins - sponsor process
- Jun -Jul 94 Bidding process for TCI status

The Fourth Cycle of Innovation: Chapter Eight

- 1 Sep 94 TCI status conferred by Secretary of State
- 1 Jan 94 New head of year 11 temporary post
- 21 June 94 Head of year 11's post advertised
- 1 Sep 94 New head of year 11 permanent post
- 1 Sep 94 Head of year 10's illness began
- 1 Jan 95 New head of years 10 and 11 temporary post
- 19 Jan 95 Head of year 10's post advertised
- 23 May 95 Consultative document about Pastoral Organisation
- 20 June 95 Advertisement for new year co-ordinator posts
- June 95 Revised Mission Statement and Aims
- 10 July 95 Year co-ordinators appointed (From 1 Sep 95) Appendix G
- July 95 New discipline policy in place for Sep 95
- July 95 Conclusion of Research Fieldwork.

Appendix B:

The aims of Bishop Lindis CE High School are:

1. To be a caring and ordered Christian community devoted to the full intellectual and spiritual development of all members of the school.
2. To promote the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills in order that every individual may achieve his or her full potential.
3. To recognise individual achievement at all levels and in every field of endeavour.
4. To be mindful of the individuality of pupils, their needs and capabilities.
5. To further their comprehensive development by challenge, encouragement and support.
6. To create a secure and happy environment in which each pupil will acquire and develop positive attitudes, values and standards, which will in turn promote self-confidence, self-discipline and an awareness of the needs of others.
7. To promote the spiritual development of our pupils through the teaching of the Christian faith within the context of the doctrine, rites and practices of the Church of England.
8. To be involved in daily worship through acts of collective worship and form prayers.
9. To encourage ecumenism and an understanding of all Christian denominations and other faiths.
10. To recognise the partnership between parents and the school.
11. To encourage and develop this relationship in the education and welfare of our pupils through regular consultation and the promotion of the Bishop Lindis Parents' Association as an integral part of the school.
12. To prepare our pupils for life and work after school in a changing, technological society by the acquisition of the best possible academic, technical and social qualifications in order to achieve this purpose.
13. To make pupils mindful of the local, national and international communities of which they are a part and to develop a social and economic awareness which will lead to a mature and responsible participation in community affairs.
14. To ensure that pupils develop a sound perception of their historic and cultural heritage.
15. To stimulate creative, aesthetic and social interests which will extend into adult life and so enable them to contribute to the society in which they will live.
16. To promote healthy physical and mental development through a comprehensive programme of physical, social and health education.
17. To develop the professional skills of the staff.
18. To develop their sensibilities to the needs of pupils.
19. To provide for the exercising and application of personal and professional skills in the academic and social programmes of the school.

Appendix C:

The Bishop Lindis CE High School SMT Day Conference
The Seminar Room, The Grand Hotel
9.00 am - 4.00 pm Saturday, 6th December, 1991

**9.0 am The structure of the working file for the
School Development Plan**

- 9.00 **(a) The Management "Off-prints"**
(1) *Total Quality Management - Education - 22 Nov 1991*
(2) *Making it happen...by Rethinking the Culture of the School*
(3) *Developing Middle Managers*
(4) *Effective Management of Change*
(5) *Competence in Managing Monitoring, Evaluation and Review*
(6) *Team Training for Senior Managers in Schools and Colleges*
(7) *Group Task Management*
(8) *From the Home Group Front*

- 9.30 **(b) Senior Management and Staffing Structures**
(1) *The Job Descriptions - Not yet fully developed*
(2) *Discussion of "new" roles - suggestions for improvement*
(3) *New Titles - rationale and introduction on 1 Jan 1992*

- 10.00 **(c) Ordering Priorities**
(1) *Setting attainable goals*
(2) *The timetable for implementation*

10.30 am Coffee break - coffee will be served in the Lounge.

11.00 am Curricular, Pastoral and Staffing Organisation

- 11.00 **(a) Curricular Organisation**
(1) *Grouping Arrangements*
(2) *TVEI implications in Upper School*
(3) *Impact of ROA on curricular provision in Upper School*
(4) *Ways of achieving delivery of the Curriculum (40 periods?)*
(5) *Circuses in Lower School?*
(6) *Second Foreign Language - Who pays?*

- 11.30 **(b) Care and Guidance System**
(1) *The present Year System/Year Heads*
(2) *Development of the year system to provide continuity*
(3) *Merits of Horizontal/Vertical Systems*
(4) *The development of the House System*
 (a) *As the main Pastoral System*
 (b) *As a secondary system to the Pastoral System*
(5) *Vertical Tutor Groups*

- 12.00 (c) **Staffing Implications and Staffing Structure**
 (1) *Deputy Head: Curriculum to speak to the following papers:*
 (a) *Staffing requirements 1992/3*
 (b) *Staffing considerations 1992/3*
 (c) *Staffing/Curriculum Analysis 1991/2*
 (2) *The staffing implications of changes to the Pastoral Structure*

12.30 pm Luncheon - Hot or Cold Table - Palm Court Restaurant

1.30 pm The Development of the Building as a Resource

- (1) *Senior Management Offices - January 1992*
- (2) *The Boardroom/ Pastoral Heads' Room - Easter 1992*
- (3) *The Interview Room - September 1992*
- (4) *Improvements to the Entrance Hall/Lobby/Foyer*
- (5) *Lancaster Wing - Fire Escape*
- (6) *Lancaster Wing - Upstairs - Corridor and two classrooms*
- (7) *Reprographics facilities? - Cloakroom near Library?*
- (8) *Medical Room facilities? - Reception Office?*
- (9) *The School Kitchen and Dining Room*
- (10) *A Sports Hall and associated changing facilities*
 - (a) *Dual use - Sports Council Sponsorship*
 - (b) *DES and our 15% contribution*
- (11) *Basic need places for 60 students! Two classrooms - usage?*
 - (a) *IT - for both?*
 - (b) *Music in one? - plus practice rooms?*
 - (c) *Two GP rooms?*
 - (d) *Other possibilities?*
- (12) *The future possibility of a block of four classrooms?*
- (13) *The future of the plans for a temporary classroom?*
- (14) *Where do we build? - Remember the neighbours!*

2.30 pm Tea break - tea will be served in the Lounge.

3.00 pm Open Agenda

- (1) *to discuss those matters not previously dealt with*
- (2) *to add new concerns to the development plan*
- (3) *to decide on matters to be taken to Governors for approval*

December, 1991

Appendix D:

Bishop Lindis CE High School Spring Term, 1992

The following is a list of some priorities for this term:

- to interview members of the teaching staff to establish job descriptions, where these are in the process of development. I shall begin with the SMT and progress to the Senior HoDs, holding D and C allowances;
- to continue the process of preparing job descriptions in consultation with all other colleagues in readiness for the introduction of appraisal and the first phase of appraisal interviews;
- to carry out a major book inspection of a sample of students in years 10 and 11, followed by a sample of students in years 7, 8 and 9;
- to shadow selected students for a day so that I might experience the curriculum as it is delivered to them;
- to seek Charity Status for the school from the Inland Revenue, and to establish the school as a Registered Charity with the Charity Commissioners;
- to expedite the process of changing status from Special Agreement to Voluntary Aided. The Authority have already agreed in principle to this change. They are prepared to waive the £25,000 they contributed to the building costs of the school in 1963;
- to pursue every opportunity to ensure that the extension to our buildings under the LEA's basic need provision (estimated at £180,000) will progress as promised by the DES. The first phase should begin this term with the release of £14,000 for planning and site development;
- to continue to exert pressure on the LEA to re-finance the 1988 plans to extend and refurbish our main school kitchen;
- to continue the "School Aims" exercise, by consulting the Governing Body, Parents and representatives of the local and business community;
- to set up a new Academic Board under the chairmanship of Deputy Head: Curriculum to function as a curriculum and staff development committee;
- to continue the excellent work already begun towards a whole school policy on Assessment under the chairmanship of Deputy Head: Finance;
- to review the role and function of the Form Tutor, under the chairmanship of Assistant Head: Student Development;
- to consult colleagues about the best way to suite rooms in curriculum areas for introduction in September 1992. Assistant Head: Resources Development will lead this exercise and chair any discussion groups which may be convened;
- to conclude initial minor developments in the use of our buildings as an educational resource.

The list is not exhaustive. It gives an indication of some of the areas in which the SMT will be involved.

6th January, 1992

Appendix E:

Bishop Lindis Senior Management Conference - 14th November 1992

Session 1:

(I) American Psychologist - Abraham Maslow - Hierarchy of needs:

Objectives:

- (a) To draw attention to the manager's role in creating a caring relationship with staff;
 - (b) To highlight some positive approaches for so doing.
- (ii) Are we satisfying the needs of our staff?
- (iii) Story: (10 minutes)
- (iv) Exercise: (20 Mins) In pairs:
- (a) You are HMIs visiting a school.
 - b) You are using the Maslow hierarchy of needs as criteria for assessing the quality of management within this school.
 - (c) Select one of the headings and devise two searching questions you would ask a HOD to find out whether or not they are helping to satisfy the professional needs of their staff.
 - (d) For example, a HOD would have responsibility for aiding a colleague's survival in the classroom, so you might ask the "What support do you provide for members of the team who find class control to be a problem?"
- (v) (a) Each pair to lay out the responses on the chart under the headings.
- (b) Go round the triangle reading others responses: (10 minutes)
- (vi) Action task: (20 minutes)
- (a) On a piece of paper, note down three or four new things you would do as managers to help satisfy the needs of you own teams (identify teams!).
 - (b) Do this on your own.
 - (c) Discuss results.
- (vii) Each member of the group takes "Key questions" sheet for further consideration.

Bishop Lindis Senior Management Conference - 14th November 1992

Session 2:

- (i) Play the Risk it game (10 - 15 minutes)

Objectives:

- (a) To encourage risk taking;
 - (b) To stimulate discussion on the advantages of risk taking with people.
- (ii) Do we as managers of people take enough positive risks with them?
- (iii) Discussion: (30 minutes) Whole group.
- (a) For example, do we trust them with enough responsibility to develop them professionally, or do we err on the safe side?
 - (b) Are we over-reluctant to delegate important tasks and goals?
 - (c) Do we do too much for them?
 - (d) Do we over support as opposed to challenge?
 - (e) Do we allow them enough space to act on their own initiatives?
 - (f) In difficult situations do we take over too soon?
- (iv) Action task: (15 minutes)
- (a) On a piece of paper write down (after identifying) some of the people you lead in a team.
 - (b) Study the names.
 - (c) Which of these people can take on more responsibility than they currently have?
 - (d) Which of these is ready to be entrusted with developing a new initiative within the particular context you have considered?
 - (e) Ask yourself. "If I risk it, what is the worst that can happen?"
 - (f) If you could live with the worst scenario, the risk is likely to be worth taking!

Bishop Lindis Senior Management Conference - 14th November 1992

Session 3:

- (i) A new 11-16, group 4, five-form entry, mixed, Church of England rural comprehensive school.
- (ii) Staff of 40.

Incentive allowances are as follows:

Head		£34,062
Deputy Head		£27,273
E	SS +	£ 7,692
D	SS +	£ 5,595
C	SS +	£ 4,194
B	SS +	£ 2,097
A	SS +	£ 1,296

Assume all SS teachers are paid at point 10

i.e. £18,837

- (iii) For the purposes of this exercise ignore "on costs".
- (iv) Total budget allocation for staffing £780,000
- (v) Design an allowance structure for this new school bearing in mind that you are obliged to have a head, at least one deputy, at least 4 Ds or above, at least 4 Cs or above, at least 4 Cs or above, at least 4 Bs or above and at least 4 As or above.
- (vi) What are your curricular and pastoral priorities going to be and what organisation will result?

(30 minutes working alone, followed by 30 minutes whole group discussion.)

Bishop Lindis Senior Management Conference - 14th November 1992

Session 4:

- (i) Are there any implications of the previous simulation exercise for the academic or pastoral development of Bishop Lindis? (10 minutes)
- (ii) With regard to the pastoral organisation we have already made a number of changes, which, to a greater or lesser degree, have been forced on us:
 - (a) The head of year 10 took up her secondment in June and may return after the end of March.
 - (b) The head of year 7 has become head of years 7 and 8.
 - (c) The heads of years 8 and 9, have moved up with their years.
 - (d) The head of year 11, having been taken ill has been temporarily replaced by a temporary head of year 11.
 - (e) We are now faced with the head of year 9's resignation with effect from 31st December 1992.
- (iii) How do you feel we should proceed with the replacement of this head of year, both short term and long term? (50 minutes)

What sort of pastoral system do you see in place in:

- (a) a year's time
- (b) five year's time
- (c) ten year's time

Bishop Lindis Senior Management Conference - 14th November 1992

Session 5:

- (i) Exercise: In two groups of three people:

Each group is asked to brainstorm 12 things major change might do to an organisation and its employees.

At this stage you are asked to look at general effects of change in the abstract. (10 minutes)

- (ii) Select, or invent a major policy/practice change you wish (or would wish) to facilitate.

You wish this change to take effect in 12 calendar months from now.

You have thirty minutes to plan what you need to do between now and your target date.

You may find that starting points are suggested by the brainstorming you did....i.e. what do you need to do to enhance the good effects you outlined and mitigate the bad effects? (20 minutes)

- (iii) Using the ladder, place your counter at the starting point.

The ladder game: The desired developmental level in 12 months time is represented by rung 12 on the ladder.

To achieve this development you will have needed, in the 12 months preceding, to have satisfied certain criteria for the successful management of change.

I am going to read out the criteria and see if you have taken them into account in your planning.

If you have, you will be able to move your counter smoothly up the ladder.

If not, you may find yourself stuck or be asked to move down a rung.

After each group has identified the change they have considered, I shall debrief using a specially devised set of criteria.

- (iv) Refer to the "Key Skills" sheet and apply that checklist to your developmental initiative.

It might suggest something else that could be done to consolidate and further develop the initiatives already undertaken.

Appendix F: Bishop Lindis School Development Plan, Audit 1993-94

Adapted from school exemplar, Davies, B and Ellison L (1992)

Name:.....

- The following questionnaire is intended to aid the production of the 1994-95 school development plan.
- The aim is to involve all staff in the consultation process.
- The most important aspect of this consultation is to provide an opportunity to complete the *areas to be developed* sheet. There is no limit to the number of these sheets which may be completed.
- I should be grateful if you would complete the questionnaire as honestly as possible.
- It is not intended that this questionnaire be used as a form of departmental or self-appraisal. All responses should be related to the organisation of the school as a whole.
- I anticipate that some colleagues will have difficulty in making responses to some questions.
- Please feel free to make comments on the reverse side of the sheets. They have been left blank for this purpose.
- Completion of this questionnaire will be deemed to fulfil the requirements of a full day's INSET, in lieu of the day scheduled for 28th March, 1994.
- Completed questionnaires will be processed after the Christmas holiday, and will be required by *morning break on Tuesday 4th January, 1994*. They should be handed in to Heads of Departments who will, in turn, submit them to me by the end of the first day of term.

Many thanks for your co-operation,

15th December, 1993

Introduction:

The construction of the school development plan is a requirement of the government. A significant part of the purpose and process of the school development plan for 1993-94 is to aid the development of areas of the school organisation and practices during the academic year 1994-95, so that we can improve further the education of our students.

The school development plan will be the main factor influencing where we spend money and where we concentrate particular efforts over the next three years; it is, therefore, a very important process. The process of producing the 1994-95 plan will have the following three stages:

Stage 1: This *audit* (An integral part of the 1993-94 development plan), in which the school will review its strengths and weaknesses and then identify which areas need to be developed. (Spring term 1994)

Stage 2: *Plan construction*, in which the priorities for development in the next five years will be identified. Detailed action plans, with targets, tasks and criteria for measuring success will be constructed for the first year of the plan and roles and responsibilities will be assigned. (Summer term 1994)

Stage 3: *Implementation* of the school development plan, which will be put into practice from September 1994.

Stage 4: *Evaluation* of the school development plan, during which the plan will be monitored and updated each year so that it extends for three years.

The purpose of the following *seven* documents is to carry out the audit stage for the 1994-95 school development plan. In each of the aspects of the organisation of the school we are asked to:

- Think about the strengths and weaknesses of the school using the checklist provided.
- Decide which areas should be developed.
- Suggest when each of these developments should be implemented.

Each item may be scored by circling a letter A B C D

- A** represents a *strength* - something we do well
- B** represents something which is *satisfactory*
- C** represents a *weakness* - something we are doing badly and need to improve
- D** represents an *omission* - something we are not doing at all and that we should be doing

The *areas to be developed* sheets may be used to register suggestions for the 1994-95 school development plan.

Policy, Philosophy and Ethos checklist:

1	Statement of general aims	A	B	C	D
2	National Curriculum requirements	A	B	C	D
3	Assessment, recording and reporting	A	B	C	D
4	Organisation of teaching groups	A	B	C	D
5	Children with special needs	A	B	C	D
6	RE and collective worship	A	B	C	D
7	Public examinations entries	A	B	C	D
8	Careers education	A	B	C	D
9	Links with industry	A	B	C	D
10	Homework requirements	A	B	C	D
11	Pastoral care and guidance	A	B	C	D
12	Personal and social education	A	B	C	D
13	Health education	A	B	C	D
14	Sex education	A	B	C	D
15	School discipline	A	B	C	D
16	School uniform	A	B	C	D
17	Equal opportunities	A	B	C	D
18	Education within a multicultural society	A	B	C	D
19	Primary/tertiary transition arrangements	A	B	C	D
20	Staff development and Appraisal	A	B	C	D
21	Links with external agencies	A	B	C	D
22	Links with the wider community	A	B	C	D
23	Admissions policy	A	B	C	D
24	Charging policy	A	B	C	D

Whole School Management Checklist:

25	Whole School Management Structure	A	B	C	D
26	Management structure to audit, prioritise, construct, implement, monitor and evaluate the school development plan	A	B	C	D
27	Decision-making procedures	A	B	C	D
28	Communication of minutes and decisions	A	B	C	D
29	Communication with the Head	A	B	C	D
30	Communication with teachers	A	B	C	D
31	Communication with non-teaching staff	A	B	C	D
32	Communication with governors	A	B	C	D
33	Communication with parents	A	B	C	D
34	Communication with other professionals outside the school	A	B	C	D
35	Communication with students	A	B	C	D
36	Identification of staff development needs for individual's career development	A	B	C	D
37	Identification of staff development needs for individual's career development	A	B	C	D
38	Delegation and areas of responsibility	A	B	C	D
39	Monitoring and evaluation	A	B	C	D

Whole School Curriculum checklist:

Student Learning:

40	Students are able to work collaboratively and independently	A	B	C	D
41	Students are encouraged to develop initiative	A	B	C	D
42	Concentration and attentiveness of students	A	B	C	D
43	Student involvement and appropriate behaviour throughout the school	A	B	C	D

44	Students are able to meet learning demands	A	B	C	D
45	Students are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their own performance	A	B	C	D
46	Students have the opportunity and skills to extend their learning and to define learning tasks	A	B	C	D
47	There is progression and continuity in leaning	A	B	C	D
48	Individual learning needs are being met - ie. match and challenge	A	B	C	D
49	Students receive a wide and balanced range of learning experiences	A	B	C	D
50	The work observed meets required statements of attainment at an appropriate level	A	B	C	D
51	Home and community involvement in learning	A	B	C	D

Teaching:

52	Social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds are recognised and valued in learning processes	A	B	C	D
53	Students experience a balanced curriculum in accordance with the principle of entitlement	A	B	C	D
54	School's curriculum policy	A	B	C	D
55	Requirements of the National Curriculum is planned	A	B	C	D
56	Requirements of the National Curriculum builds on and reinforces existing learning	A	B	C	D
57	Requirements of the National Curriculum meets the learning needs of students	A	B	C	D
58	Requirements of the National Curriculum uses suitable resources	A	B	C	D
59	High expectation of student performance	A	B	C	D
60	Repertoire of professional skills suitable for the particular curriculum area/subject and the context in which learning takes place	A	B	C	D

61	Links within and across subjects and curriculum areas	A	B	C	D
62	Teachers have sufficient knowledge of subject and methodology	A	B	C	D
63	Ordered learning environment which allows curriculum goals to be realised	A	B	C	D
64	Students are given opportunities to develop and practise the skills of independent and collaborative learning	A	B	C	D
65	Teacher-student and student-student relationships are sensitive and sufficiently ordered to allow productive work to take place	A	B	C	D
66	Teachers take account of follow-up, continuity and reinforcement in the learning process	A	B	C	D
67	Agreed scheme for the monitoring, assessment, recording and reporting of students' work	A	B	C	D
68	Cross-curricular school policies	A	B	C	D
69	Subject-specific policies where appropriate	A	B	C	D
70	Relationship with the school's aims and philosophy	A	B	C	D
71	Agreement with national Curriculum/ Governors' policy requirements and current initiatives	A	B	C	D
72	Continuity, progression and differentiation in schemes of work	A	B	C	D
73	Expression of purpose and learning objectives	A	B	C	D
74	Variety of methods and approaches	A	B	C	D
75	Relevant content	A	B	C	D
76	Appropriate resources	A	B	C	D
77	Attention to learning outcomes	A	B	C	D
78	Assessment/evaluation policies	A	B	C	D

79	Recording and reporting	A	B	C	D
80	Procedures for review	A	B	C	D
81	Accessibility of documentation for staff, governors and parents	A	B	C	D
82	Appreciation by staff of the particular contribution of a subject or aspect to the whole curriculum	A	B	C	D
83	Appropriate classroom application	A	B	C	D
84	Resource compatibility	A	B	C	D

Assessment:

85	Appropriate completion and use of internal records	A	B	C	D
86	Appropriate completion and use of external records	A	B	C	D
87	Suitable use standardised assessments eg. NFER and other tests	A	B	C	D
88	Suitable use of statutory assessments	A	B	C	D
89	Effective record keeping using previous records and transfer documents	A	B	C	D

Management of assessment:

90	School and departmental policy statements consistent with school aims and philosophy	A	B	C	D
91	Effective implementation through clear delegation of responsibility	A	B	C	D
92	Effective implementation through manageable reporting system	A	B	C	D
93	Effective implementation through appropriate use of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment	A	B	C	D
94	Effective implementation through strategies for continuity and review	A	B	C	D

95	Effective implementation through communication pertinent to staff, parents, governors and media	A	B	C	D
96	Effective implementation through reports to parents	A	B	C	D
97	Effective implementation through parents' evenings	A	B	C	D
98	Effective implementation through parental consultations/interviews	A	B	C	D
99	Effective implementation through fulfilment of statutory information requirements	A	B	C	D
100	Range of assessment techniques,	A	B	C	D
101	Teacher's knowledge of individual student's ability and progress	A	B	C	D
102	Marking supports learning	A	B	C	D
103	Marking is regular and up-to-date	A	B	C	D
104	Marking stresses positive achievement	A	B	C	D
105	Marking matches curriculum objectives	A	B	C	D
106	Marking actively involves students, where appropriate	A	B	C	D
107	Marking conforms to an agreed school or departmental policy	A	B	C	D

Organisation and management of the curriculum - planning:

108	Pattern of meetings to meet the curriculum and organisational aims of the school	A	B	C	D
109	Decision making involving staff	A	B	C	D
110	Decision making involving short and long term planning	A	B	C	D
111	Decision making involving recording and decisions taken	A	B	C	D
112	Decision making involving implementation of decisions taken	A	B	C	D

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 113 | Effective internal and external communication | A | B | C | D |
| 114 | Realistic job descriptions | A | B | C | D |
| 115 | Long-term and short-term planning | A | B | C | D |

Organisation and management of the curriculum - Student time:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 116 | Reasonable amount of time is allocated for all students to meet the obligations of the National Curriculum | A | B | C | D |
| 117 | Consultation with the HOD or co-ordinator in this allocation | A | B | C | D |

Organisation and management of the curriculum - Space and facilities:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 118 | Facilities and accommodation meet the school's curriculum aims and objectives of the National Curriculum | A | B | C | D |
| 119 | Consultation with the HOD or co-ordinator in this allocation | A | B | C | D |
| 120 | Cost-effective use of space and facilities | A | B | C | D |
| 121 | Delegation of responsibility for the general oversight of space and facilities | A | B | C | D |
| 122 | Optimum use of specialist and non-specialist accommodation | A | B | C | D |
| 123 | Review of the provision | A | B | C | D |

Organisation and management of the curriculum - Material resources:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 124 | Essential resources are available to meet the school's curriculum aims | A | B | C | D |
| 125 | Whole-school system of financial allocation, known and understood by staff | A | B | C | D |
| 126 | Head of department or co-ordinator identifies needs and costs | A | B | C | D |
| 127 | Head of department or co-ordinator records and spends allocation accordingly | A | B | C | D |
| 128 | Head of department or co-ordinator makes resources available and sees that they are used effectively | A | B | C | D |

129	Head of department or co-ordinator monitors and evaluates the use and care of those resources	A	B	C	D
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Organisation and management of the curriculum - Grouping:

130	Student groupings in size and composition reflect the aims and objectives of the school	A	B	C	D
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131	Student groupings in size and composition reflect the curricular needs in the subject or aspect area for all students (eg. those with special needs)	A	B	C	D
-----	--	---	---	---	---

132	Student groupings in size and composition enhance the teaching and learning	A	B	C	D
-----	---	---	---	---	---

133	Student groupings in size and composition are economically viable	A	B	C	D
-----	---	---	---	---	---

134	Arrangements are reviewed regularly	A	B	C	D
-----	-------------------------------------	---	---	---	---

135	Constraints affecting student groupings are understood by staff	A	B	C	D
-----	---	---	---	---	---

Care and Guidance checklist:

Philosophy:

136	School includes a statement on care and guidance within its overall aims	A	B	C	D
-----	--	---	---	---	---

137	Recognition of the importance of care and guidance throughout the curriculum	A	B	C	D
-----	--	---	---	---	---

138	Programme for care and guidance is informed by an awareness of the rights and requirements of individuals and groups in a pluralist society	A	B	C	D
-----	---	---	---	---	---

Organisation:

139	Policy for implementing school's philosophy	A	B	C	D
-----	---	---	---	---	---

140	Effective operation of this policy by staff and students	A	B	C	D
-----	--	---	---	---	---

Recording and records of achievement:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 141 | Developed instruments for collecting, recording, retrieving, and disseminating information including that relating to extra-curricular and extra-mural activities | A | B | C | D |
| 142 | Students are positively involved in processes | A | B | C | D |

External links:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 143 | Links are developed with the home and community including industry and commerce | A | B | C | D |
| 144 | Support services are used effectively | A | B | C | D |
| 145 | Effective links with other phases of education | A | B | C | D |

Transition:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 146 | Systematic approach for identifying and supporting students' needs at transition points, including post-school | A | B | C | D |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|

Cross-curricular issues and themes:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 147 | Appropriately resources programme for PSE | A | B | C | D |
| 148 | Agreed programme of sex education | A | B | C | D |
| 149 | Health education programme | A | B | C | D |
| 150 | Careers education and guidance programme | A | B | C | D |
| 151 | Coverage of gender and multi-cultural issues | A | B | C | D |
| 152 | Attention to the special needs of students | A | B | C | D |

Discipline:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 153 | Effective policy for discipline with procedures for rewards and sanctions | A | B | C | D |
| 154 | Procedures conform with the Governors' statement on discipline where they have chosen to produce such a statement | A | B | C | D |

Attendance and punctuality:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 155 | Policy which encourages high levels of attendance and punctuality | A | B | C | D |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|

Resources checklist:**Site:**

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 156 | Provides a safe environment | A | B | C | D |
| 157 | Site and its layout meet the curriculum and organisational needs of the school | A | B | C | D |

Buildings:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 158 | Provide a clean, healthy environment | A | B | C | D |
| 159 | Meet the curriculum and organisational needs of the school | A | B | C | D |

Furniture and fittings:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 160 | Furniture and fittings are of the suitable type, size and quantity to facilitate curriculum provision | A | B | C | D |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|

Books, equipment and other materials:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 161 | Sufficient books, equipment and other resources to facilitate effective learning | A | B | C | D |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|

Staff: Teaching and non-teaching:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 162 | School has recruited and deployed staff to meet and support the National Curriculum requirements and Governors' recommendations | A | B | C | D |
| 163 | School policy for the use of relief staff | A | B | C | D |

Support:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 164 | Resources for effective administration | A | B | C | D |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|

Health and Safety:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 165 | Health and safety requirements have been considered as part of the development of resources | A | B | C | D |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|

Budgetary decisions:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 166 | School policy to determine the allocation of the budget | A | B | C | D |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|

167	Mechanism for making budgetary decisions	A	B	C	D
168	Documentation to support the budgetary process	A	B	C	D
169	Monitoring of the budgetary process and planned periodic review	A	B	C	D

Personnel checklist:

Management:

170	Effective communication policies and practices with staff	A	B	C	D
171	Effective policies and practices of delegation and accountability	A	B	C	D
172	Effective leadership	A	B	C	D
173	Effective negotiation about the deployment of support service staff	A	B	C	D

Appointments:

174	Documentation concerning selection is consistent with the school policy	A	B	C	D
175	Documentation concerning selection is consistent with the school's budget and requirements of the national curriculum	A	B	C	D
176	Documentation concerning selection conforms to legal requirements	A	B	C	D
177	Documentation concerning selection covers the total selection process	A	B	C	D
178	Documentation concerning selection is available to applicants	A	B	C	D
179	Documentation concerning selection is subject to evaluation	A	B	C	D
180	Selection procedures are consistent with school policy	A	B	C	D
181	Selection procedures conform to legal requirements	A	B	C	D

182 Selection procedures are subject to evaluation A B C D

Induction:

183 School policy exists A B C D

184 Support and development during the first year of appointment to the school A B C D

185 Planned support for supply staff A B C D

Deployment:

186 Effective deployment within the terms of conditions of service A B C D

187 Match of qualifications and experience to responsibilities A B C D

188 Equity of teaching load including non-contact time A B C D

189 Evaluation and deployment procedures A B C D

Development:

190 Existence of staff development and appraisal programme which is integrated within a whole school development plan A B C D

191 Involvement of staff in the formulation of the programme A B C D

192 Effective operation of a programme which incorporates short, medium and long term goals A B C D

Legal responsibilities:

193 School policy which has been agreed by the governing body in the light of Employment legislation, Industrial relations, Equal opportunities, Remuneration of teachers A B C D

194 Awareness and understanding of the relevant codes of practice on discharging such responsibilities A B C D

Constituency (governors, parents and community) checklist:

Aims and Policy:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 195 | School includes within its aims a statement on relationships with other agencies and the community | A | B | C | D |
| 196 | Statement takes account of the role of the local community as expressed in legislation and guidelines | A | B | C | D |
| 197 | Teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of these aims and policies | A | B | C | D |
| 198 | School has a programme to review, develop and promote its reputation within the community | A | B | C | D |

Implementation:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 199 | Effective communication | A | B | C | D |
| 200 | Mutually beneficial relationships with the community | A | B | C | D |
| 201 | Involvement in the school by the community | A | B | C | D |
| 202 | Involvement of parents in the life and work of the school | A | B | C | D |
| 203 | Use of resources and premises by members of the community | A | B | C | D |

Review:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 204 | Evidence of processes of evaluation and any action taken | A | B | C | D |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|

Whole School Quality Audit:

Leadership:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 205 | The Head and Senior Staff are visibly and explicitly committed to developing and delivering a high quality of education | A | B | C | D |
| 206 | The Head and Senior Staff have developed sound systems for setting goals and objectives | A | B | C | D |

207	The Head and Senior Staff have developed sound systems for assessing and reviewing performance	A	B	C	D
208	The Head and Senior Staff have developed a set of clear values and whole school policies	A	B	C	D
209	The Head and Senior Staff have developed a set of clear values and whole school policies	A	B	C	D
210	The Head and Senior Staff have ensured that such values and policies are consistently and widely communicated and shared throughout the school	A	B	C	D
211	Principles of high quality management and leadership are active at all levels of the school	A	B	C	D
212	Leaders, at all levels within the school, have a developed sense of team and school cohesion	A	B	C	D
213	There are well developed systems to monitor, support and remedy areas of under-performance	A	B	C	D
214	The school's values and ideals of quality are actively communicated and expressed outside its boundaries	A	B	C	D

Planning and Information:

215	The school has mastered the task of producing a high quality school development plan	A	B	C	D
216	The key components of the school development plan are clearly identified and well-known to senior staff	A	B	C	D
217	There is a flexible system for reviewing and modifying the school development plan	A	B	C	D
218	Staff and governors play an active part in formulating the medium and long term plans for the school	A	B	C	D

219	The school development plan and other plans are well known to staff and governors	A	B	C	D
220	Short-term plans and day-to-day decisions are made in the light of the school development plan	A	B	C	D
221	Leadership has access to up-to-date information and relevant data on all aspects of the school's life	A	B	C	D
222	The school has a firm base of benchmarks and indicators against which to measure its performance (on both internal and external criteria)	A	B	C	D
223	There is adequate staff knowledge and appropriate technology to make good use of data about the school	A	B	C	D
224	Plans and goals are regularly checked and modified against the changing picture of school performance	A	B	C	D

Human Resources:

225	The school has a well developed policy and system for optimising its use of staff	A	B	C	D
226	There is a regular review and updating of the skills needed by the school from its staffing resources	A	B	C	D
227	There are practical policies in operation for recruiting, retaining, training and motivating staff at all levels	A	B	C	D
228	There is a staff appraisal system which is (or likely to be) supported and viewed positively by all levels of staff	A	B	C	D
229	Whenever possible, significant responsibility is delegated to staff, regardless of their formal status, and seniority	A	B	C	D
230	There is full awareness of stress factors (both work related and personal) which may affect staff, together with systems to prevent and alleviate them	A	B	C	D

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 231 | There are sound and well-used systems for staff guidance and counselling (over and above the appraisal system) | A | B | C | D |
| 232 | There are clear plans and priorities using current staff skills and for developing new ones through INSET and retraining | A | B | C | D |
| 233 | There is an agreed and understood system for monitoring and supervising under-performing members of staff | A | B | C | D |
| 234 | Morale of staff is systematically monitored and action taken to maintain and improve it as appropriate | A | B | C | D |

Quality Culture:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 235 | New courses, curricula, syllabuses or provision are introduced with systematic planning and prior commitment from those involved | A | B | C | D |
| 236 | There is a clear and effective system for reviewing innovation and change | A | B | C | D |
| 237 | Clear benchmarks and performance targets are set across all areas and sectors of the school | A | B | C | D |
| 238 | Leadership is aware of and monitors the effectiveness of "quality control" processes throughout the school | A | B | C | D |
| 239 | There is a clear policy of "continuous quality improvement" so that performance is not merely maintained at current levels | A | B | C | D |
| 240 | There are detailed and specific procedures for assessing the quality of the school's performance and a feedback system to use such information | A | B | C | D |
| 241 | Staff at all levels have a clear picture of and commitment to the quality standards expected of them | A | B | C | D |
| 242 | The school's management sets high and explicit standards in developing a quality culture across the school | A | B | C | D |

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 243 | Care is taken to ensure quality in meeting the requirements of other agencies (Governors, LEA, DFE, SEAC, Exam boards etc.) | A | B | C | D |
| 244 | The quality of those providing services to the school (eg. suppliers of goods and services, feeder schools) is checked and action taken to deal with any problems | A | B | C | D |

Quality Performance:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 245 | The school has a thorough system for monitoring performance across all areas, which is speedy, effective and responsive | A | B | C | D |
| 246 | The school has an effective system for monitoring the performance of individuals and groups, within, across and beyond the curriculum | A | B | C | D |
| 247 | The school's "value added" performance is at least up to expectation, in terms of its own year-on-year trends (say 3 to 5 year run) | A | B | C | D |
| 248 | The school's "value added" performance is at least up to expectation against LEA and national benchmarks | A | B | C | D |
| 249 | The school's progress in the academic curriculum (including the National Curriculum) meets planned targets | A | B | C | D |
| 250 | The school's progress in the pastoral curriculum meets planned targets | A | B | C | D |
| 251 | The "ethos" of the school reaches levels to which the school aspires | A | B | C | D |
| 252 | The community curriculum of the school, reaches levels to which the school aspires | A | B | C | D |
| 253 | Extra-curricular provision reaches levels to which the school aspires | A | B | C | D |
| 254 | There is a high level of mutual understanding with feeder schools | A | B | C | D |

Client Satisfaction:

255	The school has a well developed system for establishing the wants and needs of students, parents and the wider community	A	B	C	D
256	The school maintains high quality in its relationships with all client groups	A	B	C	D
257	There are clear procedures for dealing with external contacts and complaints	A	B	C	D
258	Management has an overview of such complaints and offers support and guidance to contact staff	A	B	C	D
259	Students with problems or difficulties know where to take them and have confidence in doing so	A	B	C	D
260	Senior management is fully aware of the state of client satisfaction, both through personal contact and clear recording	A	B	C	D
261	Specific surveys of client satisfaction (students, parents, employers etc.) are regularly undertaken	A	B	C	D
262	There is a conscious policy of identifying the school with local initiatives and enterprises	A	B	C	D
263	Potential students and parents are given open access to the school and information about its performance	A	B	C	D
264	There is a high level of sympathy among parents for the school's academic, pastoral and extra-curricular values and goals	A	B	C	D

Appendix G:

Bishop Lindis CE High School Co-ordinator appointments

The following appointments have been made by an appointing committee of governors and have been approved by the Chairman of Governors:

- KS4 Co-ordinator - responsible for years 10 and 11
(Total - 2 points)
- KS3 Co-ordinator - responsible for year 7 and with an overview of years 8 and 9
(Total - 3 points)

(The KS3 co-ordinator will continue with an allowance of two points as Head of Learning Support)

- Year 9 Co-ordinator - responsible for year 9 and relating to KS3 and KS4 Co-ordinators
(Total - 2 points)

(Year 9 co-ordinator will continue with a temporary allowance of one point as Work experience co-ordinator, funded by the Technology College initiative.)

- Year 8 Co-ordinator - responsible for year 8 and relating to KS3 Co-ordinator -
(Total - 1 point)

The job descriptions of the co-ordinators will be available in the near future. Their major function will be to support the whole curriculum, and facilitate student learning.

An appointment has not been made to the post of Primary Liaison Co-ordinator. Colleagues who are interested in the possibilities this post offers are asked to speak to the SMT about it.

10th July 1995