

**RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY IN THE SPACES OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL:
SOCIAL & POLITICAL EXPLORATIONS**

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds
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September 2009

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Acknowledgements

Thanks, first and foremost to all of the children, parents and teaching staff who contributed to my research, both in the two main study schools and the two pilot study schools. Without their involvement, the production of this PhD thesis would simply not have been possible and I will be eternally grateful to them for their contributions.

Thanks to my lead supervisor, Gill Valentine, who has given me first class mentoring and support during my time at Leeds and from whom I have learnt an awful lot over the last few years. Thanks also to my second supervisor, Sarah Irwin, who has provided sound academic advice throughout the PhD process, and my examiners Claire Dwyer and Fiona Williams. I am also grateful to other academics, both at Leeds and elsewhere, who contributed to my research in some way, including Catherine Burke, Engin Isin, Lily Kong, Kim Knott, Karen Nairn, Bren Neale, Janice Ogilvy, Toni Tidswell, Robert Vanderbeck and Nichola Wood.

Thanks to all of my family for their support and encouragement. Particular gratitude must go to my Mum, from whom I seem to have inherited a reflective nature and a natural ability to organise myself and to my Dad, with whom I share a stubborn focus and determination to see a task through to the end. Without these particular attributes, I doubt this thesis would ever have been written. Thanks also to Timothy, my Brother, for requesting a mention in the acknowledgements.

Thanks to Rachael Dobson, Laura Sheard and Nancy Worth for their invaluable friendship, advice and support during my time in Leeds. Thanks also to my friends Anna Evely, Emily Lambert, Marianne Lemond and Nichola Longdon, who all helped me to maintain my sanity from a distance while completing the PhD.

Thanks to all of the people who inspired my interest in Geography, Sociology and religion in education, including my teacher Jane Haresnape, my lecturers at the University of Sheffield, everyone who was involved in my teacher training in Brighton and Sussex, and my former pupils and colleagues at Southover C of E Primary School.

Finally, thanks to everyone who contributed to my time in Leeds and the PhD experience, particularly Max Andrucki, Thomas Beardmore, Hannah Burman, Kotomi Carr, Scott Carr, Shanthini Cowley-Sathiakumar, Matthew Cox, Victoria Cook, Christopher Dye, Jennifer Hide, Matthew Higgs, Daniel Khammo, Katherine Ludwin, Rosa Mas Giralt, Robert Sugden, Christopher Till and Eleanor Wilkinson.

Abstract

This thesis explores the issue of religion and spirituality in the spaces of the primary school through the employment of a mixed-method, qualitative approach. It includes a comparison between two case study schools – a Community primary and a Roman Catholic primary – both in multi-faith areas of an urban location in the North of England. By using a spatial and child-centred focus, the research investigates the social and political role and significance of religion and spirituality for children, parents and teaching staff in the study schools. This is achieved through attention to four different spaces and their interconnections with institutional space. The first is the nation, where the thesis explores how the two different schools advocated distinct types of religious citizenship and approaches to accommodating religious minorities on an everyday basis. The second space is the community, and the various ways in which the schools promoted social cohesion through the encouragement of positive encounters between children from different religious backgrounds, and the development of a sense of embodied togetherness. The third spatial focus concerns the extent to which religion inhabits public or private space in school ethos. The caring nature of school ethos in the two different contexts is also explored and the consequences for child participation in school life. The fourth and final space is that of the body within informal school spaces, where the focus is on the role of children's embodied religious and spiritual practices for re-envisaging understandings of school ethos and practice. The thesis makes original contributions to theoretical, methodological and empirical knowledge, including the significance of emotions and spirituality, understandings of children's agency, the use of child-centred methods as part of a mixed-method approach, and the role of religion in secular space, education and wider society.

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List of Abbreviations

Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PSHCE	Personal, Social Health and Citizenship Education
RE	Religious Education

1) Introduction

Religion is currently on the social and political agenda like never before. Whether it be reports of terrorist attacks by religious fundamentalists, disputes over religious dress and jewellery worn at work, political debates over issues such as abortion, or the establishment of 'faith foundations' by former British Prime Ministers, it is impossible to go for very long without hearing about religion in the news and the media. Back in the 1990s, Kepel (1994) and Casanova (1994) both argued that we were seeing a 'deprivatisation of faith' and this process appears to be accelerating as we reach the end of the first decade of the 21st Century. For example, incidents such as the race riots in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley in 2001, where there was violence between White and Asian gangs, are now understood to have been stoked by anti-Muslim rallies from the Far Right (see BBC News Online, 08/07/01, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1428673.stm>). Such events have refocused policy debates onto the issue of religion and social cohesion. Government race relations departments have been renamed race, faith and cohesion departments (Communities and Local Government website, www.communities.gov.uk) and more attention has been directed towards defining national identity and citizenship (Brown Speech, 27/02/07, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2007/feb/27/immigrationpolicy.race>).

Education has been no stranger to the increased visibility of religion in social and political life and debates continue around the world about the role that religion should play in children's schooling. In Britain, the Labour Government's strong support for state-funded faith-based education from 1997 (e.g. see Department for Children Schools and Families, 2007) has led to heightened awareness and concern about the place of religion in English schools. Concerns about social cohesion have certainly been present in recent policy debates over faith-based schooling. The 2001 Home Office Community Cohesion report argued that there was a need to develop links between schools so that pupils encountered children from other cultures and that faith schools should admit more children from different religious backgrounds. To this end it proposed an admissions policy that would include 25% of pupils from other cultures or religions (Home-Office, 2001). The then Home Office minister, John Denham, was forced to defend the Government's policy of faith schools, arguing that racism and division was just as prevalent in non-faith schools (BBC News Online, 16/12/01, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/1714404.stm>). Despite this, the Government finally agreed in 2006 to prepare voluntary guidelines on admitting 25% of pupils from other cultures to apply to all new faith schools. A move to make this compulsory was, however, dropped by the Government following concerns from the Catholic Church and

a belief that new state Muslim schools would be unattractive to parents from other faiths (BBC News Online, 26/10/06, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6089440.stm>). Other measures such as making links with pupils from other schools have been trialed and promoted (Barker & Anderson, 2005; Coles, 2006; Raw, 2006), but concerns have continued to be expressed about racial segregation in schools, for example by the former Commission for Racial Equality, now part of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (BBC News Online, 26/07/07, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6594911.stm>).

Despite all of the frenzy about citizenship, social cohesion and the perceived problematic nature of religion for social policy, many of the roles that religion plays in the English schooling system is actually quite mundane and of an everyday nature. My own interest in religion and its place in education, stems from my background as a primary school teacher. I undertook my teacher training in a state-funded Quaker school and a Catholic school, and I taught full-time for two years in a Church of England school. In these contexts, Religious Education, prayers in assemblies and songs of a spiritual nature were part of the everyday reality of school life and were not viewed as particularly problematic by most parents and teachers. However, it was these experiences that led me to believe that there were clear issues for researchers to explore regarding religion and spirituality within the school environment. Two particular incidents were important for prompting my thinking on the issue. The first was an incident with two of the boys in my class, who had failed to sit quietly during prayers in assembly and so led me to speak to them about this on returning to the classroom. They claimed that they did not believe in God and so did not think they should be required to pray. I responded by suggesting that if that were indeed the case, it would be more respectful for them to sit quietly during the prayers so as not to disturb others. The incident did make me think about how other teachers in similar or different contexts might have responded to such a situation. The second occurrence was a conversation I had with my Head Teacher about spiritual experiences in assembly. I voiced my thoughts about the way that spirituality was confined to formal prayers and hymns in the school, and how it might be more inclusive to think of spirituality in a broader sense alongside these more formal provisions. I was told that those opinions would best be kept to myself in a church school. Both of these experiences inspired me to apply to study a PhD on the issues of religion and spirituality in the primary school context.

In the remainder of this chapter, I explain why the topic of religion and spirituality in the primary school is an important area for geographical and sociological enquiry, before

outlining the research aims and objectives and overall structure of the thesis. However, first it is necessary to provide some historical context on the role of religion and spirituality in the English schooling system.

1.1) Context and History of Religion and Spirituality in English Schooling

The place of religion in the English State has a long history. The existence of the established church in England dates back to the Reformation and the split away from the Roman Catholic Church towards Protestantism. The Church of England, as the established Church, is effectively part of the country's constitution, with the sovereign as its Supreme Governor and positions for Church of England bishops within the House of Lords (the upper legislative body at Westminster). The Government also has power over the Church, with the Prime Minister still holding a veto on appointments for Archbishop of Canterbury and the Church of England laws part of the legal system. It is against this backdrop of religious involvement in matters of the State that issues of faith-based schooling must be considered.

The partnership between faith groups and the State in providing education in Britain, and the existence of a 'dual system' has important historical roots. The 1870 *Education Act* introduced the idea of state-funded education, but the Church was an integral part of the development of schools, fuelled by a Christian desire to provide education for all. The *Education Acts* of 1902 and 1906 then established the dual system of church schools and state schools, in order to provide a national education system (Commission for Racial Equality, 1990). Baumfield (2003) explores how the incorporation of church schools into the state system was a matter of pragmatism rather than design. The State began funding its own schools when it became apparent that the Church would be unable to provide universal education for all, due to lack of finance and clergy to teach. By the turn of the 20th Century, it was not considered possible for the State to take control of the vast numbers of church schools, and so it was these conditions that led to the establishment of the dual system.

Despite this, the State still considered the provision of moral and spiritual values in state schools to be essential for safeguarding democracy against communism and fascism. This link between religious values and schooling was very controversial at the time, with commentators arguing that religion was a private affair and should not be addressed in schools (Baumfield, 2003). Despite this, the existence of faith schools continued, as well as provision for collective worship in state schools, which still

remains to this day (see p.14). Faith has therefore been intertwined with both faith-based schooling and state schooling in Britain since the beginning of compulsory primary education. Debates about religion and its role in citizenship matters and conceptions of the State in the context of education have existed for just as long.

The *Education Act* of 1944 clarified the dual system of schooling by categorizing schools into 'County schools', which were entirely funded by the State, and 'Voluntary schools'. Schools from the latter category had originally been funded by religious bodies, but from this point established a partnership with the State. These schools were designated 'Voluntary Controlled', 'Voluntary Aided' and 'Special Agreement'. Those that were Voluntary Controlled had some church governance but were no longer funded by the Church of England. Voluntary Aided schools were funded 50% by the religious body, and 50% by the State, although this was reduced to 15% funding by the religious body in the 1960s. The 1944 act therefore established the existence of Church of England, Roman Catholic and a small number of Jewish schools, either fully or partly funded by the State (Jackson, 2001). Since the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, schools are now categorized as Community (former County), Foundation (former Grant Maintained), Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided.

In addition to the different funding arrangements, there are other key distinctions between Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided schools. In the case of Voluntary Controlled schools, the religious body usually owns the building and the land, and there will be a number of church/religious governors appointed. The school does not receive any funding from the religious body, although there may be attempts to support a religious ethos and maintain close links with the local place of worship. Crucially, the school is obliged to follow the Local Education Authority agreed syllabus for Religious Education, which includes provision for study of a wide range of different religions. In the case of Voluntary Aided schools, the 15% funding from the religious body affords them a greater degree of power over the running of the school, and more church/religious governors will be appointed. Again, the religious body will usually own the buildings and grounds of a Voluntary Aided school and the 15% funding will often be used to help maintain these. The governing body is responsible for employing staff and so will usually seek out teachers who will support the religious ethos of the school. In addition, there may be limited selection procedures in place to ensure that pupils from the particular faith that the school represents gain priority admission. Religious Education is not required to follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus, but the Church of England syllabus does still include other religions. This contrasts with Catholic schools

and other Voluntary Aided schools from minority faiths, which tend to focus much more on teaching pupils about their own religions (Bailey, 2002; Jackson, 2001).

Attempts in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s to establish Voluntary Aided schools from minority religions such as the Hindu and Muslim faiths met with failure, despite the right of these groups to seek Voluntary Aided status already enshrined in law. From 1997 however, the Labour Government supported applications from such groups where there was a clear demand from a particular community. This led to the opening of a number of Muslim, Sikh and Hindu Voluntary Aided schools, as well as an increased number of Jewish Voluntary Aided schools. The same Labour Government also made a commitment to raise the number of faith schools in the secondary sector, which has traditionally included a smaller proportion than the primary sector (e.g. see Cush, 2005). In 2009, Government figures show that there were 3,715 *Voluntary Aided* faith-based primary schools in England (including 1,947 Church of England; 1,685 Roman Catholic; 31 Other Christian; 29 Jewish; 6 Muslim; 2 Sikh; 2 Other) and 2,522 *Voluntary Controlled* faith-based primary schools (2433 Church of England; 53 Other Christian). In addition, 42 Church of England schools and 1 Other Christian school were listed under the 'Foundation' category, reflecting changes that gave some schools more independence from the Local Education Authority after 2006. In total, 6,231 out of 17,064 or 36.5% of state-funded primary schools in England had some kind of religious status.

Such state-funded faith schools should not be confused with private faith-based schools. There is a completely different schooling sector including independent evangelical Christian schools and private Muslim schools in Britain, and these are frequently confused when the media reports Muslim schools as problematic (Dwyer, 2006). Hall *et al.* (2002) use Leeds and Oslo as case studies to examine the other model of supplementary schooling. These are voluntary schools run by parents and the community that meet outside of normal school hours and include 'mother-tongue schools', 'religious schools', those concerned with non-Eurocentric 'history and culture' and 'supplementary mainstream' schools to enhance achievement and confidence.

Faith schools are able to gain support from many on both the Left and Right sides of the political spectrum. For the Right, faith schools offer greater parental choice and Religious Education as a source of moral guidance, whereas for the Left, they contribute to a pluralistic society and cultural identity of ethnic groups (Kay, 2002). New Labour centrist policies from 1997 were widely understood as based on the notions that faith schools outperform community schools academically, provide positive and

supportive environments for learning through their religious ethos and represent a response to minority religious community's arguments that standard community schools do not cater for their needs. Faith schools are also seen to be consistent with the Government's wider choice agenda and its commitment to promoting diversity in the education system (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2007; HM Government, 2005; Jackson, 2003).

Various publications have listed arguments for and against faith schools (Commission for Racial Equality, 1990; HM Government, 2005; Jackson, 2003; Pring, 2005) and these are summarised in Table 1.1. Despite current mainstream political support, the debate over faith schools is by no means closed. The Labour Government's policies resulted in a renewed interest in the issue, and new questions over the likely impact of extending the faith school sector. The issue is still one that cuts across traditional positions of Left and Right, and divides members of faith communities (Cush, 2005). Moreover, polls have indicated that the British public is less supportive of faith schools than politicians often assume. For example, a 2005 Guardian/ICM poll showed that 64% of respondents were against the State funding any type of faith school, whereas only 25% felt that faith schools of all major denominations were an important part of the education system (Taylor, 23/8/05, www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2005/aug/23/schools_faithschools).

Faith-based schools are not the only school institutions where religion and spirituality have a significant role to play in the curriculum and school life in general. The 1988 *Education Reform Act* states that all state schools should 'promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children'. All primary schools have a legal obligation to provide daily collective worship that is 'wholly, or mainly, of a broadly Christian character'. 'Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development' has continued to be a cross-cutting element of the National Curriculum (see National Curriculum Online, www.nc.uk.net). The spiritual and moral elements of school life, in particular, date back to the historical involvement of the churches in schooling discussed earlier. Schooling was seen as an explicit way in which to improve the moral and spiritual nature of pupils and prevent childhood innocence from corruption. Key figures in 19th Century Public schools such as Thomas Arnold at Rugby and William Temple at Repton provided a model for practices such as daily prayers, Bible reading, collective worship, community service and the development of a Christian ethos. These encouraged a vision of education that was broadly spiritual in nature and promoted distinctively Anglican Christian values as part of everyday school life (Copley, 2000).

<i>Arguments in Favour of Faith Schools</i>	<i>Arguments Against Faith Schools</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social cohesion can be promoted by involving minority religious communities in the democratic system; 2. Religious needs, including single sex education, are better catered for in faith schools; 3. Faith schools are consistent with choice for parents and a diversity of provision in the education system; 4. Faith schools represent justice and fairness for members of different religions; 5. Faith schools provide better standards of education; 6. Faith schools foster a positive ethos and supportive religious values; 7. Faith schools can offer a good response to experiences of racism in community schools; 8. Education should be provided from parents and the community more than the State. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social cohesion is eroded by division and ignorance of other religions and cultures; 2. Faith schools limit pupil individual autonomy and rational decision-making; 3. Faith schools promote indoctrination and a restricted view of their religion; 4. Faith schools work against holistic and diverse educational aims and equal opportunities; 5. Faith schools use selection procedures that effectively disadvantage other schools by selecting the best pupils; 6. Other schools will have no need to provide effective anti-racist education or take racism seriously; 7. Pressure could be exerted on parents from within ethnic communities in order to encourage them to use faith schools; 8. The state should not fund religion because it is a private matter.

Table 1.1: Arguments For & Against Faith Schools

The State became increasingly involved in education as a result of the 1870 *Education Act* and although Religious Instruction (Religious Education) and Religious Observance (Collective Worship) continued in many schools, they were required to be at the beginning or end of the day so that parents could withdraw without affecting the rest of their children's schooling. Collective worship traditionally involved prayers, hymns and

some kind of religious teaching. The 1944 *Education Act* clarified the dual system of Church and State, but also made Religious Instruction and Collective Worship compulsory in all state schools (with the right of parents to withdraw children), even though most schools had been practising both before the introduction of the act in any case. Debates at the time about the role of religion in public life stressed the importance of spirituality and morality as elements of citizenship (Copley, 2000). In the 1970s, the notion of spiritual development started to become prominent again, particularly in discussions about what the curriculum should contain. New approaches to spirituality in schools that emphasised the increasingly plural nature of religion in Britain led to local and national tensions on this issue in the early 1980s. Religious Education in particular, evolved from a confessional approach based on instruction and knowledge from scripture, to education about religions (Copley, 1997). These tensions contributed to Mrs. Thatcher's Conservative Government's attempts to 'tighten' the concept of spirituality in the 1988 *Education Reform Act*, returning to a more traditional emphasis on Christianity (Gilliat, 1996; McCreery, 1993).

With the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988, Religious Education and Worship were excluded from this educational framework, but retained as separate elements. The 1988 Act had originally been planned to maintain the current arrangements on worship, but an influential group of Conservative peers in the House of Lords pushed for more recognition of Christian worship, rather than plural approaches and expressions of shared values that some schools had started to adopt. The Act eventually passed with the phrase worship 'wholly or mainly of a Christian nature' which meant that over 50% of assemblies were required to be Christian-based. Pupils or schools could only be exempted from this requirement through application to the new Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), in cases where very large numbers of children from non-Christian family backgrounds would make this approach unworkable (Copley, 2000; McCreery, 1993). A later government circular (1/94) attempted to make a distinction between corporate assemblies and collective worship, the latter which was described as children taking part in active Christian worship. This was immensely controversial and attracted criticism from the National Association of Head Teachers, Local Education Authorities, religious groups and even the Church's Joint Policy Committee and the Church of England. An argument for the replacement of worship with generic moral/values education has continued to gain in strength since then (RE Council of England and Wales, 1996).

The 1992 *Education Act* established a remit for the new Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspectorate to assess Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural

development. This meant that the Government needed to make more explicit what it actually meant by 'spiritual development'. The National Curriculum Council published a discussion paper in 1993 (National Curriculum Council, 1993:2-3) that defined spiritual development as 'beliefs'; 'a sense of awe, wonder and mystery'; 'experiencing feelings of transcendence' (divine or own experiences); 'search for meaning and purpose'; 'self knowledge', 'relationships'; 'creativity'; 'feelings and emotions'. It was recognised that for some this might be religious and for some it might not be. Ofsted (1994) explained that inspections would specifically look at values that schools fostered, whole school ethos, Religious Education, collective worship and the whole curriculum to assess provision for spiritual development. More recently, Ofsted (2004) have refined their definition, stating that:

"Spiritual development is the development of the non-material element of a human being which animates and sustains us and, depending on our point of view, either ends or continues in some form when we die. It is about the development of a sense of identity, self-worth, personal insight, meaning and purpose. It is about the development of a pupil's 'spirit'. Some people may call it the development of a pupil's 'soul': others as the development of 'personality' or 'character'" (2004:12).

The re-emphasis on spiritual education in the National Curriculum resulted in a significant increase in academic debate and publications on the issue in the 1990s. Debates have raged over the place of spirituality in the curriculum (e.g. Bigger, 1999; Lambourn, 1996; Marples, 2006; Priestley, 2000; Rose, 1996), the extent to which spirituality should be seen as religious or secular (e.g. Copley, 2000; Thatcher, 1999; Watson, 2000; Wright, 1999) and whether or not spiritual education can be inclusive or exclusive in schools (e.g. Adshead, 2000; Erricker & Erricker, 2000; Isherwood, 1999; Watson, 2006b; White, 1996). Furthermore, there have been concerns about the levels of attention that Ofsted inspectors actually give to spiritual education and the quality of judgements based on such vague definitions (Wenman, 2001). Despite this, spiritual development remained on the statute books under the preceding Labour Government, although the official emphasis shifted substantially towards citizenship, personal, social and health issues. This shift in emphasis was highlighted by Watson (2006a), who pointed out that the term 'spiritual development' was completely omitted from the Government's flagship 'Every Child Matters' agenda, which aimed to develop a holistic approach to children's services and well-being (Every Child Matters Website, www.everychildmatters.gov.uk). It is against this historical backdrop that I devised my

research approach and my aims and objectives, which are outlined in the next two sections.

1.2) A Geographical and Sociological Approach

An obvious place to study a PhD on religion and schooling might have been in an Education department, or perhaps in Religious Studies, yet I strongly believe that the study makes a worthwhile contribution to recent academic debates and issues in both Sociology and Human Geography. Whereas many of the studies in Education on religion and schooling have focused on theoretical, philosophical or pedagogical issues, approaching this topic from a sociological and geographical angle has allowed for an empirically-based study that views everyday school life from a unique perspective. This has meant engaging with work from the new social studies of childhood, that sees children as social actors in their own right, and their concerns and experiences of real interest for making sense of social processes. It has entailed viewing the issue through a spatial lens, and giving serious consideration to the role of space and place in making sense of religion and spirituality in school spaces. Finally, it has enabled an engagement with other key debates and developments in the two disciplines, as outlined below. All of these issues will be explored in more depth in Chapter 2. Of course, the thesis also draws heavily on literature from both Education and Religious Studies to supplement the overall sociological and geographical approach. In short, the study takes an interdisciplinary approach in order to explore an interdisciplinary question.

As well as a useful contribution to the disciplines of Sociology and Human Geography, the study is also timely because it links well with other recent work in both of the subjects. Firstly, research on religion is increasing in prominence in both arenas and in the UK this has been reflected through the establishment of the large-scale Religion and Society research programme, funded jointly by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (Religion and Society Website, www.religionandsociety.org.uk). Sociologists are questioning the traditional secularisation thesis and a resurgence of the sub-discipline of Sociology of Religion is underway (e.g. see Davie, 2007). Similarly, the 'New' Geographies of Religion are now an established part of the sub-discipline of Social and Cultural geography (e.g. see Kong, 2001). Secondly, both Sociology and Human Geography have developed a concern for the study of children's lives and experiences over the last decade or so. Interest in children's experiences of living, learning and playing in both the global North

and South has meant that our knowledge of children's lives and the subsequent implications for adults has been drastically improved (e.g. Holloway & Valentine, 2000; Wyness, 2006). Thirdly, geographers have begun to recognise the importance of education spaces for an analysis of social and cultural life (see Collins & Coleman, 2008) and sociologists are rediscovering some of their classic interest in education, which has traditionally been a key part of the subject (e.g. Christensen & James, 2001; Irwin, forthcoming; Reay *et al.*, 2007). Studying the spaces of the primary school from a social, rather than an educational perspective, is therefore a key part of this agenda. Finally, a study on religion and schooling can both draw on and inform wider debates in both subjects, on themes such as emotions and citizenship, and these will again be explored in Chapter 2. I now move on to outline the aims and objectives of the study.

1.3) Aims and Objectives of Research

Aim: *To investigate the role of religion and spirituality in the social dynamics of everyday primary school spaces, and its significance for children, parents and teaching staff.*

All of my research questions were investigated through a focus on seven substantive themes, identified from the previous literature on religion and schooling examined in Chapter 2 and throughout the thesis. These included:

- School ethos and values
- Curriculum delivery and content
- Collective worship and assembly
- Celebrations, food, dress and prayer needs
- Spiritual and special places
- Religious difference and social cohesion
- Links with home, community and national issues.

The research objectives and questions are listed overleaf:

Research Objectives and Questions

1) To investigate similarities and differences between understandings and experiences of the religious and spiritual aspects of school life in a Community primary school and a Voluntary Aided Catholic primary school, both in similar multi-faith areas.

2) To investigate key experiences and dimensions of the religious and spiritual lives of children aged 8-11 years, in different spaces of the two primary schools.

- *How do children interpret and experience school ethos and school life and how do they participate in it?*
- *What are their experiences of Religious Education and other subjects with a spiritual content?*
- *What do children like and dislike about collective worship and assembly?*
- *What are children's experiences and knowledge of religious issues involving food, dress, festivals and prayer needs?*
- *What special places do children have around school and what is their religious and/or spiritual significance?*
- *How do children understand and perceive religion and religious difference in school?*
- *How well do children from different religions live and work together in school?*

3) To explore the ways in which teaching staff in both contexts interpret and negotiate spiritual and religious policy and guidance from the Government, Local Education Authority, and/or Religious Body (as appropriate), in terms of both rhetoric and practice.

- *How does the school create a distinctive ethos in theory and practice, how does this link to religion and spirituality, and how do children participate in its existence?*
- *In what way does religion and spirituality feature in Religious Education, Citizenship Education and across the curriculum?*
- *What is the purpose of assembly and worship and how does it cater for different children's spiritual and religious needs?*
- *How does the school accommodate and/or celebrate pupils' different religious and spiritual needs, such as celebrations, food, prayer and dress?*

- *Does the school aim to provide informal spaces for children's spiritual experiences and how are they defined?*
- *To what extent does the school work to ensure that children from different faith backgrounds play and work together harmoniously?*
- *What is the school's role in the community and what links does it maintain?*

4) To explore parents' views and experiences of the religious and spiritual aspects of school life and how they perceive these aspects to link with their children's religious lives at home.

- *How do parents describe the school ethos, what do they like about it and do they feel it has a particular religious or spiritual dimension?*
- *What are parents' views on the role of religion and spirituality in the curriculum?*
- *What are parents' views on assemblies and collective worship and how well it caters for their own children and other children in school?*
- *To what extent do parents feel that the school is successful in catering for children's religious and spiritual needs, such as food, celebrations, prayer and dress?*
- *How well do parents feel that the school prepares children for living in a multi-faith society and how successful do they think the school is at promoting harmony between children from different backgrounds?*
- *How does provision for religion and spirituality in school compare or link with children's religious lives at home?*

These questions were used as the main framework for data collection, whereas the data analysis provided the foundations for the organisation of the thesis (see Chapter 3 for details on data collection methods and analysis). The thesis structure is outlined in the next section.

1.4) Organisation and Structure of Thesis

The thesis makes an original contribution to theoretical, methodological and empirical knowledge in both Sociology and Human Geography. In Chapter 2, I outline the academic and theoretical foundation for the empirical study, through reference to literature on children, religion and space; faith and schooling; bodies, emotions and affect; and spiritual and emotional practice. Chapter 3 then sets out the methodological approach to the study, including research design, sampling and the particular methods

I used to collect the data. I also reflect on some of the ethical and methodological issues that were raised during the fieldwork and consider my own positionality in the research. Chapters 4-7 then focus on the role of religion and spirituality in a number of different spaces, intersecting with the school institutional space.

The first space - in Chapter 4 - is the nation and in this chapter, I explore how the two different schools promote distinct types of religious citizenship and approaches to accommodating religious minorities on an everyday basis. The second space - the community - is the focus of Chapter 5, where I outline the various ways in which the schools promote social cohesion through the encouragement of positive encounters between children of different faiths, and the development of a sense of embodied togetherness. The third space - in Chapter 6 - is concerned with public and private space, and the extent to which religion is a public or private affair in school ethos. In this chapter, I also examine the caring nature of school ethos in the two different contexts and the consequences for child participation in school life. The fourth and final space is that of the body within informal school spaces and in Chapter 7, I focus on the role of children's embodied emotional and spiritual practices for re-envisaging understandings of school ethos and practice. This approach is important for drawing out some of the interconnections between the school as an institution and other spheres of social life.

Finally, Chapter 8 acts as a conclusion to the thesis. In this chapter, I bring together the threads of each of the analysis chapters to build an overall summary of my main findings. I then draw out some wider implications for academic and policy debates, particularly regarding children's agency, the significance of emotions and spirituality and the role of religion in secular space, education and society as a whole.

2) Literature Review

Durkheim (1961:15, cited in Turner, 1991:243) defined religion as “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden – beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them”. This definition is useful because it emphasises the importance of religious practice and ritual alongside religious thought, belief and values. The word ‘Church’ is of course used in its wider sense to denote a universal religious community, highlighting the collective aspect of religion. However, this definition does have drawbacks, in that it fails to adequately take account of individuals’ subjective experiences of the sacred or recognise more informal modes of religion (see Turner, 1991). This failing can be addressed through reference to the concept of spirituality, where a focus on the inner self, the non-material, the emotional, the relational, and the transcendental is better able to understand and explain such subjective and informal experiences (see Copley, 2000). The concept of spirituality will be explored in more detail later in this chapter. In addition to beliefs/values, practices and spirituality, the term ‘religion’ can also refer to identity. Religion has recently become more important as a social identity, with questions about religious affiliation included on the 2001 British census and increasing numbers of research studies with religious identity as their primary focus (e.g. C. Dwyer, 1998; Hopkins, 2006). These four elements of beliefs/values, practices, spirituality and identity will form the basis of my understanding of religion throughout this chapter and the rest of the thesis.

In the introduction, I highlighted the current relevance of religious issues in the social, political and educational arena and sketched out a brief explanation of why a geographical and sociological approach was a useful one for studying the role of religion and spirituality in the primary school. In this chapter, I now go on to explore in detail the academic foundations for such an inquiry and hence frame the thesis through attention to gaps in the current literature in this area. Throughout the analysis chapters (Chapters 4-7), I draw on a number of key concepts and ideas in order to interpret the empirical data generated as part of the research process. This chapter therefore provides an opportunity to explore some of these key concepts and the academic debates surrounding them. I then refer back to these ideas throughout the thesis and particularly in the conclusion (Chapter 8) in order to draw out the academic implications of the research.

The first section of this chapter begins with a review of the literature on children and religion, noting the limited amount of research in this area and making a case for the

child-centred study of this important aspect of social life. The employment of a spatial approach is offered as a useful way of undertaking this task, and I explore a number of 'spatial tools' that can help towards making sense of the social aspects of religion and spirituality. In the second section, I move on to consider the space of the school and how the role of religion and spirituality within education spaces can be investigated through this spatial framework. This encompasses a consideration of the aspects, dimensions, properties and dynamics of school space. The body and spatiality will be the focus of the third section, where I explore in more depth the concepts of embodied practice, emotion and affect. In the final section, I consider the role of embodied emotions for making sense of religion, and develop an argument for the widening of this approach to encompass the spiritual domain. The chapter ends by drawing together these four threads in order to make a case for the overall approach I have taken in this research.

2.1) Children, Religion and Space

Research on children and religion is surprisingly scarce, with articles questioning the continued marginal place of children in Religious Studies and Theology published only very recently (e.g. Bunge, 2006). This is despite articles of a similar nature in Sociology and Geography - drawing attention to the lack of interest in children and childhood in those disciplines - published as long ago as the late 1980s and early 1990s (e.g. James, 1990; Qvortrup, 1987; Sibley, 1991). Even the Religious Education literature has been criticised for not looking at the category of childhood in a more critical way, and often being more interested in adult concerns (Miller-McLemore, 2006). A large amount of the work on children and religion has taken place within the Piagetian developmental paradigm, with scholars such as Goldman (1964) and Elkind (1964) developing key stages at which children are supposed to understand religion and religious identity in different ways depending on their age and development. For example, Goldman (1964) argued that children aged 5-7 would understand Bible stories at an abstract and much less detailed level than children aged 10-14, who would start to relate them to their own lives. Criticisms of such approaches include the fact that childhood 'development' is socially, culturally and historically specific, and that de-contextualised laboratory experiments cannot accurately represent children's capabilities (e.g. see Hay & Nye, 1998). Recent work in the 'new social studies of childhood' reject many of the ideas from the developmental paradigm that see children as merely adults in the making (e.g. see Holloway & Valentine, 2000).

New understandings of childhood in the Social Sciences tend to acknowledge the socially constructed nature of childhood and the way that perceptions of this stage in the life-course have varied immensely across time, space and cultures (see Ariès, 1960; Hendrick, 1990; James *et al.* 1998; Jenks, 1996a). Children are now increasingly viewed as a variable of social analysis in their own right, rather than merely subsumed as part of the family (see Qvortrup, 1987), and as social actors and agents who are actively engaged in constructing their own life worlds (Prout & James, 1990). Mayall (2002) argues that children can be seen as a minority group whose power can only be understood in relation to that of adults. She advocates the development of a sociology *for* childhood, rather than *of* childhood. In creating a space for children's views and experiences to be heard, Mayall (2002) suggests that a sociology for childhood can both deepen our understanding of social processes and be transformative for social change. Similar debates have ensued in Geography, where there has also been an engagement with the concept of spatiality and its significance for making sense of children's contextually specific lives and the spaces through which they are played out (see Holloway & Valentine, 2000). There has been very limited engagement to date with these issues from scholars of religion, not to mention more recent debates on the importance of the life-course (e.g. Elder, 1998) and intergenerational relations (e.g. Vanderbeck, 2007).

Moving on from the developmental paradigm, there have also been a number of quantitative survey approaches to the 'scientific study of religion', some of which have dealt with the area of children's and young people's religious views and values (e.g. Engebretson, 2002; Torstenson-Ed, 2006; Walshe, 2005). Key authors in this area include Kay & Francis (1996), who developed an attitude scale of 'religiosity' to examine views on Christianity. Key variables influencing attitudes towards religion included gender, age, generation, personality type, home and school values and particular spiritual experiences or 'events'. Such work is helpful for identifying important variables in research on children and religion, such as the significance of social identity for making sense of religious experiences (see also Eaude, 2004). It also points to some important geographical spaces, such as the home and school, that researchers should be interested in exploring in more detail. However, by attempting to 'measure' religion using quantitative methods, such research necessarily simplifies an extremely complex phenomenon, reducing it to objective markers and neat packages. This means that it is ill placed to explore the depth and the contradictions of children's religious meanings and emotions. The work also has drawbacks in the way that it has been interested solely on Christianity, and particular analytic frameworks based on Christianity, rather than taking other religions into account (Hyde, 1990).

It would be wrong to suggest that qualitative researchers have completely ignored children and religion, as there have been a number of studies in this area. However, these have generally been part of the body of work on children and spirituality. Eade (2003) has highlighted the problems in *defining* 'spirituality' because it tends to mean different things to different people, but Hyde (2008:23) points to a number of ways in which the term has been *described*, including "interior life, religious experience, the search for meaning and purpose, expressions of relatedness, transcendence, immanence, ultimate values, integrity, identity, connection to something greater [and] awareness." O'Murchu (1997) argues that spiritual practices have historically existed for much longer than organised religion and so the two concepts cannot be assumed to be one and the same. Although Christianity has traditionally been the main vehicle for expressing spirituality in the Western world, it now finds itself competing with other ways of searching for meaning and engaging with the non-rational and immaterial aspects of existence (Tacey, 2000). While some of the work on children and spirituality has operated within a religious framework (e.g. Adams, 2001; Coles, 1990; Heller, 1986; Mountain, 2005; Rymarz & Graham, 2005; Worsley, 2004), other studies have therefore focused more on a broader understanding of spirituality in children's everyday lives (e.g. Champagne, 2003; Hart, 2003; Hay, 2000; Hay & Nye, 1998; Kibble, 1996; McCreery, 1996; Reimer & Furrow, 2001).

Although most of the above studies adopted a qualitative and child-centred approach, they generally set out to explore spirituality in a general, rather than a contextual way. Two exceptions include ethnographic studies by Erricker *et al.* (1997) and Nesbitt (2004). Both works highlight some key issues about children's spiritual beliefs, practices, traditions and celebrations from a range of different religious backgrounds at home, school and places of worship; and examine children's ideas about 'big questions', spiritual experiences and special places. They also go some way to questioning adult assumptions about children's religious and spiritual lives through the employment of a child-centred approach. While it is true that the studies offer up detailed ethnographic material, their analyses often go no further than to highlight the complexity of religions to be portrayed in Religious Education lessons, rather than contributing to wider academic and political debates. They also fall a little into the trap of looking at children's views and experiences in a vacuum, rather than alongside adult concerns and understandings of school spaces. There is therefore a need for more qualitative child-centred studies on religion and spirituality that take a contextual and theoretically rich approach, in order to make a contribution to both academic and policy debates.

Having made a case for more contextual child-centred qualitative research on children and religion, I now move on to consider the importance of space for making sense of social processes relating to this topic. Knott (2005a:156-166) draws on the work of Foucault and Lefebvre to outline five theoretical and methodological tools or resources that can be used to view religion through a spatial lens, all of which will be drawn upon throughout this chapter. The first of the resources identified by Knott (2005a) sees the body as a source of space, whereby we understand and produce space corporeally as well as the body itself existing as a social space. The second resource takes as its focus the three different dimensions of space. These include the crosscutting and interlinked dimensions of physical space (the physical environment), social space (social relations and power) and mental/cultural space (representation and imagination). The third resource is concerned with the properties of space, in terms of its multidimensional nature and the way that power is caught up through its extensions, linkages, intersections and scales. The fourth resource draws on Lefebvre's aspects of space, specifically perceived, conceived and lived space - the way that space is understood and used by actors in their everyday lives (spatial practice), the way space is seen from the ideological viewpoint of planners and architects (representations of space), and the way that people live space through images and symbols for the purpose of resisting dominant orders and discourses (spaces of representations; third space). The fifth of the resources highlighted by Knott (2005a) refers to the dynamics of space and the way in which it actively influences people, social process, practices and discourse, rather than existing as a passive container and product of these elements.

Knott (2005b:61) argues that "religions in their conventional forms are active in a variety of places, sacred and profane, public and private. They inhabit spaces, but also transform and create them". This particular way of looking at religion and space has also been one of the foundations of the 'new geographies of religion', which Kong (2001) helpfully sorts into two main categories – studies that have considered the spatial 'politics', and those that have looked at the spatial 'poetics' of religion. By 'politics', Kong (2001) refers to the way that sacred space is tied up with social and political relationships, and therefore can be understood as contested. In contrast, 'poetics' refers to the substantial and essential character of religious space and people's experiences within them (Chidester & Linenthal 1995, cited in Kong, 2001: 213).

In the section on the spatial 'politics' of religion, Kong (2001) reviews work concerned with secular-religious and majority-minority relations and representations. Studies of this type include research on the location, extension and perception of religious buildings (e.g. Kong, 1993; Naylor & Ryan, 2002); the planning and establishment of minority faith schools (e.g. Dwyer & Meyer, 1995); debates over the sacred sites of indigenous peoples (e.g. Jacobs, 1993); contested pilgrimage routes (e.g. Graham & Murray, 1997); national and international values and conflicts (e.g. Bowman, 1993; Shirlow & McGovern, 1998); representations of national identities (e.g. Kong, 2005a, 2006); issues concerned with social identities (e.g. Nagar, 1997) and the politics of religious communities and community boundaries (e.g. Dwyer, 1999; Nye, 1993; Vertovec, 1992). In the section on the 'poetics' of sacred space, Kong (2001) discusses studies such as those that aim to capture the 'spiritual essence' of particular sacred places (e.g. Hume, 1998); how everyday spaces can be made sacred through ritual (e.g. Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 1993); representations of sacred landscapes (e.g. Lilley, 2004; Palmer, 2002; Pan, 1995); and the attachments that people may develop with sacred spaces (e.g. Kong, 1992).

Among the suggestions that Kong (2001) makes for furthering the study of religion in Geography, is a call for more research that considers both the politics *and* the poetics of religion, spaces that go beyond the 'officially sacred' and studies that examine the dialectics of public and private space. Knott (2005b) goes further than this, calling for more research on religion within *secular* space and Holloway & Valins (2002) also call for geographers to engage with the importance of religion for making sense of the secular. Taylor (1998) outlines how the idea of secularism is something that originated in Western Christianity, as a rather Christian way of dealing with the emergence of liberal democracies. Put another way, "in the course of modern history, confessional allegiances have come to be woven into the sense of identity of certain ethnic, national class, or regional groups" (Taylor, 2002:77). There is a growing acknowledgement in the Social Sciences that the two concepts of 'the secular' and 'the religious' are in many ways implicated in each other, despite often defining themselves in contrast to one another (Asad, 2003; Carrette, 2000; Jantzen, 1998; Taylor, 2002). They can therefore be understood as "two sides of a coin" (Jantzen, 1998:8). or "historically enmeshed and philosophically, legally and ethically intertwined" (Knott & Franks, 2007:224). Knott (2005b) argues that using the five spatial resources outlined earlier in the chapter, researchers are able to 'locate' religion within spaces otherwise assumed to be secular.

An example of using a spatial methodology to 'locate' religion within the secular is discussed by Knott & Franks (2007) and concerns an English medical centre, a seemingly overtly secular institution. It was chosen in order to explore how the secular can be 'broken open' to reveal values that are intertwined in complex ways with its binary religious opposite (Knott, 2005b). In this case, the authors drew on the following spatial tools: body as space, dimensions of space, properties of space and spatial dynamics. The specific focus was the doctor-patient relationship and the use of complementary and alternative medicine. The doctor-patient relationship was understood as a social space (the playing out of inter-relating social identities), physical space (in the surgery) and mental space (the gaze of government, science and technology) and how all of these aspects interacted. The way in which the body was involved in making time-space for complementary and alternative medicine was another aspect of the study, particular the knowledge-power struggle between different staff. Both of these issues highlighted the importance of post-secular values, involving the continued importance of religion and spirituality, rather than secular ones (see Taylor 1998, cited in Knott, 2005b:61). The significance of religion in seemingly secular space will be a key theme of Chapter 6 in this thesis, but in the context of an educational rather than a medical institution. It is to the theme of educational institutions than I now turn in the next section.

2.2) Spaces of Faith and Schooling

The study of faith and schooling fits rather nicely into the agendas I have outlined above. The school as an institutional space has increasingly been studied in Geography and Sociology as part of the 'new social studies of childhood' (e.g. Christensen & James, 2001; Evans, 2006; Fielding, 2000; Holloway & Valentine, 2003; Holt, 2004; Hyams, 2000; Mayall, 2002). It therefore offers an interesting arena for child-centred research on the spatial politics and poetics of religion and spirituality. Recent research on school spaces has included a variety of themes, including the production and regulation of bodily identities and social norms (e.g. Holt, 2007; Newman *et al.*, 2006; Rawlins, 2008), the operation of technologies of discipline and citizenship (e.g. Gallagher, 2005; Hemming, 2007) and the struggle over control for formal and informal spaces (e.g. Catling, 2005; Thomson, 2005). There have also been a number of studies that have considered the place of school spaces within wider social landscapes (e.g. Butler & Robson, 2001; Witten *et al.*, 2003). Although this body of work has engaged with a wide range of subject areas including gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, learning, play, bullying, health and community, there has been little

attention from the geographical or sociological literature on religion and spirituality in school spaces.

Because of the historical connection of religion to the English state schooling system (see Chapter 1), it offers a fascinating geographical space for the study of religion and spirituality in a supposedly 'secular' space. Faith schools in Western democracies, in particular, occupy an uneasy position between the liberal dichotomy of public (secular) and private (religious) space (see also Chapter 6). This is a dichotomy that is made unstable by increasing religious influences in the public and political sphere (e.g. see Casanova, 1994; Kepel, 1994). Faith schools and religion in schooling have clear political support at present from both main political parties in England and there is recognition from much of the academic world that they are here to stay. Many authors have therefore tended to argue about how the present system could be improved, rather than endless debating about the merits of different schooling models (e.g. Jackson, 2003; Parker-Jenkins *et al.*, 2005). There is recognition that much of the work on faith and schooling has been based around theoretical, political, theological, or pedagogical stances, rather than empirical research, and there have been calls for more empirical work on the issues (Grace, 2003; Lawton & Cairns, 2005).

There have been a number of educational studies that have looked at particular elements of religion and spirituality in the school (e.g. Gill, 2004; Ipgrave, 1999; Kay, 1996; Short, 2002) and these will be discussed in more detail in the chapters that follow. Only one study to date, however, has considered a range of processes relating to religion and schooling in a holistic manner. Smith (2005) carried out qualitative interviewing, discussions, worksheets, questionnaires and observation with children in two church schools and a community primary school, in diverse areas of London and the North West of England. Although reporting some interesting findings (outlined as part of the appropriate chapters later in the thesis), the study did not explore in any depth the views of the school and parents, and could have benefited from a more theoretically rich analysis. Smith (2005) also tended to rely on a rather narrowly defined concept of religion; one that privileged religion as social identity over religion as practice, belief/values and spirituality. A consideration of these other aspects of religion and their social significance in the school could have been beneficial. In order to outline the ways in which space can be made central to a wider and more theoretically rich analysis on children, religion and schooling, I will return to the spatial tools outlined by Knott (2005a) and discussed earlier in the chapter.

The first issue to address is the wider context in which school spaces are studied. The third and fifth of the spatial resources identified by Knott (2005a) – the properties and dynamics of space – are based partly on the work of Massey (1999), who describes space as socially constituted, as a product of interrelations and multiple narratives and as a forum of disruption. In her definition:

Space/spatiality [...] is the sphere of the meeting up (or not) of multiple trajectories, the sphere where they co-exist, affect each other, maybe come into conflict. It is the sphere both of their independence (co-existence) and of their interrelation. Subjects/objects are constructed through the space of those interrelations (Massey, 1999:283).

Massey (1999) argues that modernist conceptions of the world see space simply as a surface on which temporal processes take place, but that space is in fact a product of social relations and practices. It is always in the process of being made and therefore eternally unfinished. There are always other links to be made and loose ends present in space. Space is characterised by chaos, juxtapositions and disrupted trajectories, just as much as, if not more than, order and neatness.

Massey (1993) illustrates some of these ideas through her work on globalisation and time-space compression. Rejecting the idea that these processes are merely about economics and capital, Massey (1993) argues that social relations are essential for making sense of globalisation, including where different groups and individuals are placed in relation to these flows and interconnections, and whether or not they are in charge of them, affected by them, initiating them, or imprisoned by them. She calls this 'power-geometries' and urges us to consider how the mobility of one group may affect the mobility of others. In order to do this, Massey (1993) argues that social relations need to be viewed as wider than a single locality. Places cannot be bounded but are inexplicably linked to wider scales, with particular interactions and articulations of social relations, through a mixing of local and larger scale processes. In other words, "place is constructed out of a particular constellation of relations, articulated together at a particular focus" (Massey, 1993:64). Place can therefore be understood as a process rather than an object, surface or container.

These ideas are important for how we make sense of particular localities, and also the applicability of case studies to wider social processes. Massey (1993) gives the example of a road near to her home, with a shop selling Asian clothes, a train bridge, a commercial billboard and various other phenomena that could not be properly

explained without reference to wider processes operating at different scales away from the road itself. Equally, the road as a locality helps to illustrate and make sense of wider processes working at a regional level such as migration, transport links and cultural hybridity. Holt (2004) has made use of this same logic in order to explore processes in the primary school classroom regarding disability. She argues that wider societal discourses of disability strongly influence the way in which children are disabled in the classroom. The study of micro-spaces within schools can therefore be useful for understanding intersecting social, political, economic and cultural processes that operate at a variety of different scales, thus revealing wider understandings of society (see also Holt, 2007). Institutional space cannot, therefore, be considered in isolation from other spaces, such as national, community, public, private and corporeal spaces. The ways in which these different spaces link and intersect with institutional spaces are important for understanding social processes, and it is for this reason that I have taken a spatial approach to the organisation of the analysis chapters in this thesis.

Next, I turn to the fourth of the spatial resources highlighted by Knott (2005a) - the three aspects of space – spatial practice (perceived space), representations of space (conceived space) and spaces of representation (lived space). These aspects are taken from Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) spatial triad, developed in order to make sense of the many intersections that make up the constituents of space. Perceived space is understood through the everyday embodied practices, performances, networks and social realities of individuals who use it. This could include how space is used in the taken-for-granted daily routines of a tenant in a high-rise council flat, or the experience of a business worker flying through the air on route to a meeting in New York. Conceived space is linked more to the dominant hegemonic order and is saturated with ideology. It includes representations of space employed by planners, scientists and government agencies and is closely linked to the mode of production. Finally, lived space represents a form a resistance and force for change through creative works such as art, writing, performances and philosophical thinking. It uses ideas, symbols, signs and images to code spaces in alternative ways to dominant orders or discourses. It is the idea of lived space that Soja (1996) appropriates for his concept of third-space, which is presented as part of an analysis of the post-modern urban condition.

One of the key points regarding Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) spatial triad is the range of ways in which space can be understood and lived, and the complex constellations of power that this implies. Research into children and religion in the spaces of the school therefore requires attention to the ways in which educationalists, politicians and

theologians conceive school space, but also the ways in which it is perceived and lived by teachers, parents and pupils. This might include everyday spatial practices within institutional space or resistance to institutional power through discourse or practice. In particular, different groups may have different understandings of the significance of various spaces in schools and this may lead to resistance and negotiation of institutional power through spatial practice and lived space. It also highlights the importance of a focus on both discourse and practice, or what people do as well as what they say, for making sense of school, and other institutional spaces.

Voyt (1997) points to the influence that educational institutions have over student's beliefs, attitudes and values, whether implicit or explicit, arguing that "education not only gives students new information, it can change how they think, alter their personalities, and provide them with new social experiences" (Voyt, 1997:246). Institutional structures work to control, design and produce improved bodies and minds (Philo & Parr, 2000) so children's bodies in school can be understood as social spaces, upon which cultural values and norms are inscribed (see Grosz, 1992). However, as Saugeres (2000:589) points out, "individuals are not passive recipients of [...] structural constraints, they are themselves active agents in the reproduction and negotiation of institutional reality and structures". Children therefore challenge institutional power through discourse and practice, reformulating school structures on their own terms.

Previous studies have demonstrated how competing notions of gender and disability in the school construct the classroom as a permeable accomplishment and as a forum for cultural discord (Holloway *et al.*, 2000; Holt, 2004). Children in these studies negotiated their way through dominant constructions of social identity in school, demonstrating how they were able to challenge institutional spatialities. Similarly, in my own work (Hemming, 2007), I have shown how children's understandings of sport and exercise in primary school spaces differ considerably from institutional concerns with health, instead emphasising emotional geographies of pleasure and enjoyment. This again highlighted children's ability to modify and reconstitute institutional power through their own agency. Equally, parents may be involved in developing understandings of school spaces that differ from official institutional discourses. For example, in a study on Jewish schools, Valins (2003) found that most parents emphasised the importance of academic standards and Jewish ethos, in contrast to school and religious leaders, who focused more on the need for specific teaching about the Jewish religion. An awareness of different understandings of school space and a focus on resistance to spatial power from different groups is therefore useful for research on this topic.

I now move on to the second of the resources that Knott (2005a) considers useful for investigating religion and spaces – the physical, social and cultural dimensions of space. Lefebvre (1991 [1974]:11-12) referred to these three dimensions as 'fields' and suggested that we should be "concerned with logico-epistemological space, the space of social practice, the space occupied by sensory phenomena, including products of the imagination such as projects and projections, symbols and utopias". While physical space refers to the solid realities of the cosmos, mental and cultural space exists through concepts, representations, symbols and ideas, but "may provide a means of imagining and giving expression to human possibility, cultural difference, the imagination itself, as well as social relations" (Knott, 2005a:159). By considering the ways in which social space may be dominated or appropriated, and hence become implicated in reproducing social relations, Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) draws to our attention the significance of power for making sense of this dimension of space. He argues that "social relations [...] have no real existence save in and through space. *Their underpinning is spatial.*" (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]:404, emphasis in original). The key point that Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) makes is that all three of these dimensions need to be considered together rather than separately, in terms of the ways in which they inter-relate and work in unity.

We can see how these three dimensions have been used to make sense of other social issues in school institutions. Gordon *et al.* (2000) explore citizenship and difference in school, in relation to the official school (mental/cultural space), the informal school (social space) and the physical school (physical space). They employ a comparative approach between high schools in Britain (inner London), Finland and the United States. In the section on the 'official school', the authors discuss the way that the school attempts to produce 'professional pupils' who behave appropriately and possess neo-liberal skills, of co-operation, knowledge and respect. They were expected to show individuality to a certain degree but not so much that it challenged school authority. Pupils also reflected this tension between control and individuality when they stressed how they were normal and average rather than different to others. The authors argued that the school also worked implicitly to produce gendered citizens and reinforce other social identities.

In the 'informal school', friendship and relationships were highly significant, including the extent to which individuals were included or excluded from various groups depending on their different social identities. One of these identities was age, which was important in school as a hierarchical segregator. Gordon *et al.* (2000) show how in their multicultural study schools in London, friendships tended to be ethnically mixed,

but often students would choose their best friends from within their own ethnic or cultural group. Gendered differences were also important where friendship groups were concerned, and boys and girls would relate to each other in different ways. For example, where girls tended to support each other in closely-knit groups, boys were more likely to interact in more aggressive and competitive ways. However, a range of different femininities and masculinities were present in school. Bullying and teasing related to difference was a common occurrence and could make pupils' time at school unpleasant. All of these aspects highlighted the extent to which schools were involved in constructing pupil subjectivities.

The buildings in the 'physical school' represented particular ideologies about learning and reflected hierarchies of power. Pupils would usually talk about physical spaces associated with the informal school when they mentioned what they liked and spaces connected with the formal school when discussing their dislikes. Gordon *et al.* (2000) explore the way that teachers controlled school space and students were expected to adhere to strict space-time regulations throughout the school day. Pupils challenged these rules by absconding from school, breaking the regulations, secretly redefining space through prohibited activities or stretching their work space physically and mentally (e.g. by tapping, throwing objects or daydreaming). The authors discuss how physical space was used less by girls than boys, unless girls were in a group. Boys were more likely to move around the classroom and less likely to be challenged by teachers for doing this than was the case for girls. In this way, a focus on the three dimensions of space revealed a range of diverse social processes relating to citizenship operating within the study schools.

As well as a focus on mental/cultural, social and physical space, Gordon *et al.* (2000) also refer to the centrality of the body in school life. They discuss the difficulties that pupils experienced keeping their bodies motionless in the classroom and the ways that they challenged this requirement through activities such as drawing, sharpening pencils, snoozing, checking the time, fidgeting, talking, stretching, swinging on chairs and visiting the toilet. School uniform and hairstyles were significant in the ways that they were used to transgress school rules and maintain gendered boundaries. Within friendship groups, bodies were central to peer interaction. The authors observed girls "move their desks together, hold hands, comb each other's hair, lean on each other, hug, write notes to each other, quietly make funny faces egging each other on, wave fingers, clap hands, hum tunes, whisper, giggle, talk" (Gordon *et al.*, 2000:118). In contrast, many of the boys interacted through pushing, slapping and shoving. When explaining about their experiences of school, pupils referred to a range of negative

emotions, including “torture, nervousness, fear, horror, loathing, disgust, bitterness, uncertainty, spite, anger, panic, shock, sadness, being scared, shame, envy, self-pity” (Gordon *et al.*, 2000:125). It is to the body and the first of Knott’s (2005a) identified spatial resources that I now turn.

2.3) Bodies, Emotion & Affect

The human body has been famously described as ‘the geography closest in’ (Rich 1986:212 cited in Valentine, 2001:15) and can be viewed as both an entity within space, but also as a social space in itself. The body can be understood as a boundary between the self and others; a place where emotions are experienced; a location for the constitution of personal and social identities; or as a site of struggle and resistance (Valentine, 2001). But bodies are also *in* space, and they provide the basis for our experience of the multiple dimensions, aspects, dynamics and properties of space. Bodies both allow us to understand space relationally and spatially orientate ourselves both physically and mentally (Knott, 2005a). Moves away from the Cartesian dualism of mind and body and the emphasis on rational thinking above corporeal experience, has led to a re-engagement with material bodies and embodiment in the Social Sciences over the last few decades (e.g. Longhurst, 1997; Shilling, 1993; Turner, 1996). Embodied experiences of the social and the spatial are now viewed as legitimate ways to further our understanding of these domains.

The body and embodiment is central to Simonsen’s (2007) outline of a ‘geography of practice’. She draws on a number of theorists including Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Bourdieu and Lefebvre to outline the significance of practices for constituting and maintaining subjectivity and meaning, alongside their close connection to language, which is also produced through the doing of particular activities. Simonsen (2007) goes on to highlight the importance of the body in everyday practices, in the way that lived experience can be understood as located between the mental and the physical. We also relate to other people somatically, through ‘inter-corporeality’: shared sensual experiences and the way in which we perceive the meanings attributed to other bodies. This concerns embodied identities such as gender and ethnicity, but also acknowledges that “the body is always in a process of becoming, marked by contextual circumstances and by our shifting and fluctuating experiences of ourselves in the world” (Simonsen, 2007:173). The final element of Simonsen’s (2007) ‘geography of practice’ concerns the significance of emotions and affect, an area which I will now go on to explore.

Recently in the Social Sciences, greater attention has been paid to the significance of emotions in understanding social processes, for example in the area of 'embodied geographies' (e.g. Dias, 2003; Longhurst, 2001). This development has been described as constituting an 'emotional turn' in Geography (Bondi *et al.*, 2005) and reflects similar developments in other subjects such as Sociology (e.g. see Barbalet, 2002a). Previously viewed as irrational, private and hence not a suitable area for intellectual endeavour, there had existed a large gap in our understanding of the way in which emotions structure our everyday lives (Anderson & Smith, 2001; Lupton, 1998). This neglect has, however, been challenged by post-modern and feminist critiques of modernist perspectives, including through the notion that knowledge is actually constructed emotionally (see Lupton, 1998). Anderson & Smith (2001:8) have called for the emotional nature of "knowing, being and doing" to be recognised, along with the way in which social relations are lived through emotions.

Bondi *et al.* (2005) document the increasing significance of emotions in recent geographical research. They argue for "a non-objectifying view of emotions as relational flows, fluxes or currents, in-between people and places rather than 'things' or 'objects' to be studied or measured" (Bondi *et al.*, 2005:3). The utilisation of emotion in Geography is categorised into three main approaches. The first is 'locating emotion' and refers to research on embodied emotions and its role in the fluidity of bodily boundaries, and emotion as constituting place through emotional attachments. The second is 'relating emotion' and refers to the relationships between people and people, and between people and their environment. It includes feelings towards those who we hold dear and also the 'other', and our relationships with our surroundings, including responses to art and music. The third approach is 'representing emotion', which includes how we report and describe our emotions and how this may mobilise and shape them in different ways. This might involve drawing on non-representational, performative or psychoanalytical approaches (see later in this chapter).

Davidson & Milligan (2004) argue that emotions are relevant to geographical study at a variety of scales. They are important for bodily geographies because "our first and foremost, most immediate and intimately felt geography is the body, the site of emotional experience and expression par excellence" (Davidson & Milligan, 2004:523). Similarly, emotions are important for making sense of the home, institution, community, city, and nation. A number of studies are cited that consider the significance of emotions for understanding social inclusion and exclusion, identity and everyday life within these spaces (e.g. Fielding, 2000; Rose, 1990; Sibley, 1995a, 1995b; Valentine,

1996). A focus on the scales of the home and school also links well with some of the sociological work on emotions. Writers such as Allat (1993) and Reay (2004) have shown the material value of emotions in these spatial contexts through the concept of 'emotional capital'. This is something that will be explored further in Chapter 6, in the context of caring in school.

Lupton (1998) outlines two main approaches to the academic study of emotions. The first sees emotions as inherent, as internal feelings that pre-exist *within* the individual's biological capacities. These can either be expressed as instinctive responses, such as the 'fight or flight' reflex when confronted with danger, or alternatively through cognitive processes, whereby an individual actively appraises environmental conditions before recognising a particular emotion from the bodily response that the event triggers (e.g. see James 1890, cited in Lupton, 1998:13). The second sees emotions as socio-cultural constructions, whether based on a number of 'core' natural emotions or as completely constructed through social and cultural forces. Lupton (1998:2) argues that "emotions are phenomena that are shaped, experienced and interpreted through social and cultural processes", so making a case for the social-cultural approach. She nevertheless emphasises the importance of the body and embodiment for making sense of emotions, as she argues that the body cannot be separated from subjectivity and bodies themselves can be understood as constructed through discourse.

Within this social-cultural approach, Lupton (1998) identifies a number of key traditions. *Structuralism* understands emotions to be "shaped by social institutions, social systems and power relations" (Lupton, 1998:18). Emotions are therefore seen as maintaining the social order, but are also employed as part of 'emotion work, where individuals actively manage their emotions in order to comply with social norms (e.g. see Hochschild 1979, cited in Lupton, 1998:19). In contrast, *Phenomenology* is interested in how individuals interpret their bodily sensations, subjective experiences and interpersonal contexts. Emotion is therefore seen as relational, inter-subjective and produced through interaction, hence investing in the idea that *all* emotions are socially constructed (e.g. see Denzin 1984, cited in Lupton, 1998:22). *Post-structuralism* makes sense of emotion through language and discourse, which work to construct emotional states. People are also involved in producing and resisting these processes through their own emotional responses. For example, Ahmed (2004b) argues that emotions can be involved in discursive processes to construct and maintain various ideals of citizenship (see Chapter 4). Finally, *Psychodynamic* perspectives see emotion as more than a result of rational and motivational processes. Emotions may be felt at the unconscious level, such as individuals' responses to the 'other' (e.g. see Sibley, 1995b).

Although the above traditions all have different philosophical underpinnings, they nevertheless have a contribution to make to our understanding of the role of emotions in social processes. However, some may be more relevant in particular contexts than others. For example, at the micro-scale of a relational space between people and other people or their environments, the phenomenological approach may be useful for investigating individual experiences of such relationships. Alternatively, psychodynamic perspectives may be helpful for exploring some of the unconscious emotions that individuals feel but are unable to represent, as in the case of non-representational approaches (see later in this chapter). At the institutional level, structuralism may offer a useful way of understanding how emotional agency can be restricted or encouraged by dominant norms and power dynamics, whereas post-structuralism may help in exploring the role of discourse in emotional responses to collectives and localities. For this reason, I have adopted a contextual approach to emotion in this thesis and while following Lupton's (1998) embodied social-cultural orientation, I have drawn on the various traditions in order to develop an appropriate analysis for the different spaces of inquiry.

An engagement with the concept of 'affect' has also been central to recent academic conceptualisations of emotion. In Human Geography, understandings of 'affect' have been heavily influenced by non-representational styles of thinking. Non-representational geographies are a set of approaches developed over the past decade or so, aiming to address Social Science's preoccupation with representation and interpretation, and its tendency to try and package the messiness of social life into neat parcels of meaning. The concept of representation can be defined as either speaking about something or speaking on behalf of something (Spivak, 1988), and non-representational styles of thinking try to reach beyond this, to what Lorimer (2005) refers to as the 'more-than-representational'. Representations are still taken seriously (at least this is the claim), but approached more critically, in terms of how they are produced and reproduced. Embodied practice and 'thought-in-action' are therefore considered to be more important than linguistics, texts and cognitive rational explanations (Thrift, 1996, 1999, 2000). 'The moment' and 'the event' are given particular significance in these approaches, because of the political potential of the temporal spaces between events and our representations of what we think happened during those moments (Dewsbury, 2000; Thrift & Dewsbury, 2000).

For Lorimer (2005), work on the 'more-than-representational' has involved moving away from the politics of categorical identity and discursive texts, where meanings and values are 'discovered', in order to focus more on the momentary elements of everyday

life, particularly in the form of encounters and practice. He argues that it is not always obvious what these apparently insignificant everyday occurrences will become, but they are nevertheless important in understanding our experiences of space and place. Lorimer (2005:84) provides a review of this diverse body of work in Cultural Geography, suggesting that studies tend to focus on "how life takes shape and gains expression in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions". He focuses on the spaces of the garden, the home and the workplace to draw out a number of common themes, including intimate, material and affective encounters with environments; explorations of how repetitive practice and habitual performance allow for creativity and expression; and investigations of how embodied experiences could be both moral and political. Lorimer (2005) also points to the potential for new methods of data collection to capture such everyday encounters and practices. These include following people closely and recording their mundane actions and interactions with their environments.

Returning to the idea of 'affect', there are a plethora of different meanings and definitions attributed to the concept, from diverse academic disciplines and theoretical approaches. As Thrift (2005:138) points out, "affect can be understood as a simple or complex biological drive, a pragmatic effect of the pre-cognitive or cognitive interactions of bodies, a set of capacities for affecting or being affected by, the communicative power of facility, and so on." He does, however, go on to present his own definition, arguing that "affect [...] acts as the corporeal sense of the communicative act" (Thrift, 2005:139). Thien (2005:451) also points to the diversity of definitions given to affect, including those of Freud, who understood it as an instinct, impulse or drive; Matthis, who describes affect as a type of organisation or matrix of feelings and emotions; and Sedgwick, who sees it instrumentally in terms of how it attaches to objects, people and ideas as a result of specific aims. However, Thien (2005) argues that the *how* of affect is essentially the same in these definitions - "affect is used to describe (in both the communicative and literal sense) the motion of emotion" (Thien, 2005:451).

Also a matter of debate is the distinction between emotions and affect. Conradson & Kay (2007:170) follow Thrift in describing affect as an embodied state or an energetic outcome that results from encounters with other people or the environment, and as a type of non-reflective somatic thinking. They argue that affect is something that emerges through interaction and engagement, but that emotions, in contrast, are the conscious perception of affects. The way in which these emotional experiences are

then interpreted and represented is a matter of local vocabularies and cultural contexts. This conception of affect has been criticised by Thien (2005), who argues that concern with the transpersonal qualities of affect actually shifts the focus away from people's everyday concerns and issues of subjectivity and 'relationality' (see later in this chapter). Another criticism of this version of affect is directed from Tolia-Kelly (2006), who argues that it fails to adequately contextualise affective processes and does not recognize that unequal access to power will determine the affective capacities of different bodies. She contends that it is "critical to think plurally about the capacities for affecting and being affected, and for this theorization to engage with the notion that various individual capacities are differently forged, restrained, trained and embodied" (Tolia-Kelly, 2006:216).

Simonsen (2007) offers a different two-part understanding of emotional spatiality and affect. The first part sees emotions as active, performative and an 'expressive space' of the body. Emotional meanings take form through practice and are shown through communicative corporeality. The second part sees emotional spatialities as affective – a passive space for experiencing the emotional affects of the world. Bodies can therefore express, articulate and become possessed by emotion, as well as actively performing them. This active-passive duality of emotional spatiality contrasts with the distinction that non-representational theorists such as Thrift (2004, cited in Conradson & McKay, 2007:170) make between unconscious or barely conscious affect and emotional representations of affect, in order to avoid the limitations of this conception. Simonsen (2007) argues that these limitations include the tendency to ignore the influence of past experiences on the unconscious (such as the issue of power that Tolia-Kelly (2006) refers to) and the risk of divorcing emotions from individuals' lived experiences of embodiment (related to the argument that Thien (2005) makes). Simonsen's (2007) version of affect does, however, maintain the importance of affect as a mobile and relational force with the capacity for affecting change, including through changes in bodily capacities to act. The significance of encounters between individuals and other people, objects and the environment remains.

The way in which emotional spatiality can break down boundaries between the 'inside' and 'outside' of bodies is another important point about affect, and one that is explored by Ahmed (2004b). She rejects the psychological idea that the individual has internal feelings that move outwards to other people and objects, what she terms the 'inside out' model, and also ideas about the sociality of emotions, originating from outside the individual and moving inwards, or what she terms the 'outside in' model. Both of these models see emotions as something that we 'have', but she argues that "emotions

create the very effect of the surfaces and boundaries that allow us to distinguish an inside and an outside in the first place” (Ahmed, 2004b:10). Put another way, “emotions are not ‘in’ either the individual or the social, but produce the very surfaces and boundaries that allow the individual and the social to be delineated as if they are objects” (Ahmed, 2004b:10). For Ahmed (2004b) it is not emotions themselves that ‘circulate’, but rather the ‘objects of emotion’.

The value of affect as a force is described by Ahmed (2004b), through an employment of David Hume’s (1964, cited in Ahmed, 2004b:6) term of ‘impression’ to make sense of the effect that things or people have on individuals’ emotions. Objects and subjects make ‘impressions’ on us as we can make impressions on them. In other words, “emotions are relational: they involve (re)actions or relations of ‘towardness’ or ‘awayness’ in relation to such subjects” (Ahmed, 2004b:8). It is therefore affect that may form the ‘impressions’ on us, or surrounding people, objects and environments, or the affective responses that signify the mobilisation of emotion. In making sense of hate and fear for example, those emotions can be understood as “shaped by the ‘contact zone’ in which others impress upon us, as well as leave their impressions” (Ahmed, 2004b:194). These emotions may then accumulate over time to create ‘affective economies’ and emotions become a type of capital: “affect does not reside positively in the sign or commodity, but is produced as an effect of its circulation” (Ahmed, 2004b:45) and “the accumulation of affective value shapes the surfaces of bodies and worlds” (Ahmed, 2004a:121).

The impact of emotions and affect on other people and the environment is a key aspect of all of the definitions explored above, and this makes geography central to understanding the affects of emotion. A number of writers have explored the ways in which emotions and affect can help to structure our relationships with others, giving examples of musical performances (Wood & Smith, 2004) and dance movement therapy (McCormack, 2003). Research from this body of work will be covered in more depth in Chapter 7 in terms of children’s affective relationships in the informal spaces of the school. Some geographers have pointed to the potential of everyday encounters between people for facilitating understanding and challenging prejudice, through affectual and relational forces (e.g. Laurier & Philo, 2006; Thrift, 2005). These ideas will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5 as part of a discussion on community cohesion. A number of writers have also considered how individuals relate affectually to their environments, particularly homes and landscapes (e.g. Conradson, 2005; Rose, 2004; Urry, 2005; Wylie, 2005). This work will again be explored further in Chapter 7.

I mainly draw on Simonsen's (2007) and Ahmed's (2004b) conceptualisation of emotions and affect throughout the thesis, as the active-passive duality of emotional spatiality, and the attention to how affect can work discursively to reflect geometries of power will be particularly useful. However, it will also be important to attend to both the discursive and non-discursive in considering emotional and affective processes. This is something that non-representative styles of thinking and versions of affect direct attention towards, despite the problems discussed above by Thien (2005) and Tolia-Kelly (2006). I argue in this thesis that the power of the emotional and the affectual can only be fully comprehended with reference to both the representational and more-than-representational, and the way in which they are closely linked (see also Bondi (2005) for an attempt to find a 'middle path' for making sense of emotions and affect). Only then can we start to realise the potential of some of these approaches for contributing to social policy and praxis, alongside deepening our understanding of the social world.

An interesting study on the relationship between the representative and non-representative is offered by Wood (2007). She explores the role of emotions and music in nationalism, specifically in the context of Scottish music festivals. She points out that academic understandings of nationalism have often treated it as a rational process, in order to move away from previous essentialist work. Wood (2007) argues, however, that emotions are an essential part of nationalistic feelings and sentiments and so cannot be ignored. In the music festivals in her research, audiences experienced affective forces from the performances, but made their own interpretations of this emotional power, often assuming it to be about 'Scottishness'. Individuals, speaking immediately after the concerts, therefore explained these experiences through reference to 'essential' bonds and ties. Later, participants often modified these explanations and were sometimes shocked by what they had said in the earlier interviews. Wood (2007), and some of her participants, point to the potential for such immediate emotional sentiments to be harnessed by particular political forces. I would argue that this work starts to point to an important role for research on the non-representational elements of social life for engaging with social problems and issues. In this thesis, I will show how children actively reformulate school ethos through the way in which their practices and emotional experiences interact with the textual and the discursive. This will focus particularly on the strong connection between the 'spatial poetics' and the 'spatial politics' of religion and spirituality, as I now go on to explore in the next section.

2.4) Religion, Spirituality and Emotional Practice

So what of religion and spirituality? How do they fit into all of the above debates on emotions and affect? The importance of embodiment and emotion to religious and spiritual experience and education has recently been highlighted in the academic literature. In *Religious Studies and Theology*, Götz (2001) argues that matters of spirituality have traditionally been viewed as separate to those of the body and matter, based on Augustinian dualisms of matter and spirit. These are now starting to be challenged by recent scientific approaches to invisible realities, leading to a post-modern spirituality that is more accepting of the material. Götz (2001) uses some examples to show how the two are intertwined, including the Christian Eucharist (bread and spirit), sacramental objects, the connection between love and sex, Hindu Tantra, spirituality and sport and meditation. The significance of emotion and feelings in religious experience is highlighted by Carr (2005). Through an examination of religious narratives and the discourses and expression within these, he underlines the significant role that emotion plays in religious texts and classic mythology.

The Religious Education literature has also had a few things to say about bodies and emotions. Torevell (2000) argues that debates over spiritual and moral education have emphasised the importance of stimulating cognition over emotions and embodiment. This is as a result of rationalism in modern society taking precedence over other bodily elements, hence manipulating human emotions. He writes about how affective imitation of Christ, ritual enactments and contemplation were all ways in which corporality was expressed, before the development of Elias's 'civilized body'. For spiritual and moral education, he argues that "clearly those methods which maximise the potential of emotionally embodied experience and attempt to engage pupils' fleshy bodies through affective imitation, ritual enactment and contemplation will be correcting, not before time, a wrong-headed bias which suggests that moral formulation is best served by cognitive stimulation" (Torevell, 2000:35). Similarly, Morris (2001) critiques the lack of connections between spirituality and sexuality, based on the same body-spirit dualism where the body is viewed as an object to escape. He argues that the two concepts are mutually enriching for the whole person and so schools should offer spiritual exercises and massages to encourage children to feel comfortable with their bodies and develop embodied spirit.

An interest in the centrality of the body for making sense of the sacred is also currently being rekindled by Neo-Durkheimians such as Mellor & Shilling (1997) in the fields of Social Theory and the Sociology of Religion. They have built upon Durkheim's analysis

of the social function of religion by re-emphasising the significance of individual and collective sacred experiences for understanding society. Mellor & Shilling (1997) explain how the concept of 'collective effervescence' is important because of its potential for transformation of individuals' experiences of their bodies and its surroundings. Specifically it encourages a corporeal sense of the sacred and as a result, works to form bodily cohesion, binding individuals together as part of a social collective. The authors outline three religious re-formations of the body in society, roughly associated with pre-modern, modern and late modern time periods. They then go on to link these three bodily types to different forms of sociality, and the extent to which they are characterised by the sensual, somatic and emotional or the mental, rational and contractual. The social bonding forces that these approaches allude to will be useful for making sense of community building processes in the primary schools in this thesis as part of Chapter 5.

Finally, the concepts of emotions and embodiment have been used in the 'New' Geographies of Religion to make sense of specific religious practices and sacred spaces (e.g. Holloway, 2003; Slavin, 2003), and these will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. Holloway (2006) has called for geographies of religion to engage with the idea of affect, and think about how religious, spiritual and sacred spaces are performed through affectual forces. According to Holloway (2006), this will not only help us to understand forces of affect themselves, but also come to a better understanding of how sacred space produces, or challenges societal discourses. He uses the case study of the Séance in 19th Century Britain to illustrate these arguments. Embodiment was central to the event of the Séance, for example through holding hands, changing the normal relationship between bodies and objects, and bodily contact with spirits. Bodies were both disciplined, but also feeling and experiencing. As part of these practices, socio-cultural discourses of gender were both transgressed (e.g. by sensuous interaction between bodies of different genders) and re-produced (by defining the female medium's body as passive). This further illustrates the way that affective forces may work on both a discursive and non-discursive level, and how the non-representational may feed into processes of representation.

While the work described above on religion and spirituality has started to take emotions and affect seriously, the Emotional Geographies literature and the body of work on non-representative styles of thinking have, in contrast, failed to treat religion and spirituality as a central concern. This is curious given that many of the definitions of spirituality, in particular, contain ideas that are closely aligned with an interest in the emotional, the affectual and the more-than-human. Copley (2000) collects together a

number of definitions of spirituality, including those that focus on the immaterial, the mysterious, the relational and the inner self. Beck (1991) defines spirituality as characterised by awareness, wonder, hope, energy and love; while Evans (1993) focuses on trust, humility, friendliness and contemplation. However, one of the main concepts conveyed by this diverse literature is that of 'relationality'. Many of the religious and secular conceptions of spirituality view the individual's relationship with self, other people, other things, the environment and God or the divine as central to understanding this dimension of human life (Champagne, 2003; Hay & Nye, 1998; Hyde, 2008). Others take this idea further, suggesting that the blurring of boundaries between self and other (Hart, 2003), or the journey towards unity with the 'other' (de Souza, 2004) is key to understanding spiritual experience. These ideas will be explored more extensively in Chapter 7.

The argument I wish to make here is that the concept of spiritual 'relationality' and the literature on emotions and affect share very similar characteristics. I would argue that 'relationality' is inherently affectual because of the way in which other people, things and environments leave emotional impressions upon individuals, which may or may not be possible to consciously describe or represent. Individuals therefore experience affect in the passive way that Simonsen (2007) outlines in her definition of affect. The idea of unity and blurring of boundaries between self and other links well with Ahmed's (2004b) argument about the ability of affect to break down the boundaries of the inside and outside of bodies. The concept of 'relationality' is clearly a useful one for considering how spirituality can be included in an analysis of the emotional and affectual elements of social life. It is therefore something that is important for making sense of children's religious and spiritual experiences in my research. What all of the above observations point to is a clear spiritual component in the concept of affect, yet despite the obvious connections, the term 'spirituality' is scarcely used in the geographical literature on emotions and affect. However, the work of Rudolf Otto should leave the reader with no doubt as to the strong links between spirituality and affect, and it is to this work that I now turn.

Otto (1958 [1917]) believed that religious experience, or what he termed 'the Holy' was the result of a balance between the rational and the non-rational. He argued that the non-rational had been mostly ignored in Theology and Religious Studies and aimed to provide a better understanding of the inner experience of 'the Holy'. Raphael (1997:61) explains how "in order to isolate the mysterious, awesome, fascinating, and overwhelming essence of the holy for analysis without the moral and rational elements it has accrued, Otto coined the word 'numinous' from the Latin *numen*, a deity or

localised power". Otto (1958 [1917]) insisted that the 'numinous' itself could not strictly be defined, because it could not be compared to any other object or phenomenon, but it did have a number of definable elements. These included awe, wonder, power, energy, mystery, fascination, and a sense of wholly-otherness. Experiencing the 'numinous' was transcendental and could encourage spiritual development through feelings of awe and wonder, but also more disturbing feelings such as terror. These could be expressed through a variety of means, including art, buildings, places, music, chants, silence or darkness (Copley, 2000).

Otto's (1958 [1917]) work reflected his wide travels and encounters with a range of religions rather than merely Christianity, particularly his search for a common religious essence that might underlie all faiths (Copley, 2000). Raphael (1997) argues that Otto's work is particularly useful for making sense of holiness in later modernity, where individualised religion and spiritual experience is often considered more relevant than formal religious membership. Because the work attempts to be non-exclusive to Christianity through the way in which the 'numinous' may be interpreted via a range of different religious frameworks, it is also useful in a multi-faith context. I would argue that the work is also useful for making sense of religion and spirituality in an emotional and affectual sense, through the way that it "refuses to suppress explosive, primal religious emotion, making unorthodox comparisons between religious and sexual instincts and attempting to release religious feeling from the constraints of tradition" (Raphael, 1997:4).

The concept of the 'numinous' also links very well to some of the issues on emotions and affect discussed earlier in the chapter. Firstly, the concept is consistent with a breaking down of boundaries between the inside and outside of the body. This is achieved through the way that the 'numinous' refers to both a divine object external to the individual, but also the state of body and mind that occurs as a result of its presence. In this way, the 'numinous' can be understood as affective, because it leaves an impression on us. It could also be argued that the external spiritual source might be interpreted as wider than merely a divine object to include other people and places, and the affectual response that they evoke. Otto (1958 [1917]) was, after all, exploring quite a narrow version of religious spirituality, and a secular interpretation of the 'numinous' could take a different external referent as the spiritual source. The second link with theories of emotion and affect concerns the element of the 'numinous' that is 'wholly-other'. This draws attention to the way in which human or environmental 'otherness' might evoke a transcendental experience, particularly in the context of a wider conceptualisation of 'the spiritual' as discussed above. Finally, Otto's (1958

[1917]) work engages with the link between the representational and non-representational elements of the spiritual. This is achieved through his conceptualisation of how the non-rational 'numinous' becomes understood rationally as religion. The quote below explains this link particularly clearly:

Holiness, in Otto's work, is a combined category. That means that it contains two sorts of elements: rational and non-rational. The primary element, or 'moment', of holiness is a pure reaction to the divine, which is, like its object, unthinkable and unspeakable, because it is unlike any other possible experience. The state of mind and the object of this experience are characterised by the word 'numinous' to denote that they refer to an as yet unspecified divinity – a numen. But as the numinous emotions are thought through, they are gradually accommodated in the religious scheme whose experiential foundations they have provided. The numinous is schematised or completed as the holy when it has become sufficiently delineated to give a structural and moral dynamic to a given religious system; that is, when numinous consciousness has been replaced by the content provided by collective – 'natural' that is – ordinary, rational intramundane consciousness (Raphael, 1997:8-9).

The relationship between the spiritual and the religious; the emotional and the textual; the non-representational and the discursive; and the realm of practice and the sphere of meaning, will be of central concern to the thesis. This will further consider the processes explored by both Wood (2007) and Holloway (2006), in terms of the way in which the emotional and affectual takes on a political significance as it impacts upon the discursive realm (see earlier). However, my research will highlight the ability of *children*, as active social agents and spiritual beings, to impact upon the political domain through their bodily practices and emotional/*spiritual* spatialities. I will be particularly interested in the way that the 'spatial poetics' of children's spiritual experiences influence the 'spatial politics' of religion in the school, adhering to Kong's (2001) call for more research into how the two are related to one another. This will be apparent in the way that children influence models of religious citizenship in school, modes of social cohesion in education space, the texture of the school ethos and the dynamics of their own informal spiritual spaces around the school.

2.5) Conclusion

In this chapter, I began by highlighting the lack of research on children and religion, and the large amount of existing literature that draws on approaches that are inconsistent with viewing children as socially competent actors, and understanding childhood as socially and culturally constructed. Where research has taken a more quantitative colour, it has been ill placed to investigate the more subjective and contradictory elements of children's religious and spiritual lives. I therefore suggested that research on children and religion needed to move forward in a more qualitative and child-centred way, by taking seriously children's own opinions and experiences. This approach would broaden the qualitative body of work that already exists on children and spirituality. The importance of space in the 'New' Geographies of Religion was then considered, particularly the way in which space is entangled with religious processes (Kong's (2001) spatial politics and spatial poetics), and the religious nature of secular space. Although I pointed to a number of studies that have researched school spaces, there is a marked lack of work on religion and spirituality in schools. Where there have been studies in this area, they tend to be quite limited or de-contextual in focus, do not engage extensively with social theory, adopt a narrow definition of religion (rather than beliefs/values, practices, spirituality *and* identity) and sometimes exclude children's voices. I suggested that the five theoretical spatial tools highlighted by Knott (2005b) - the properties, dynamics, dimensions and aspects of space, and the body - could provide a useful way of considering religion and spirituality in children's everyday school spaces.

The second part of the chapter was concerned with the body, emotions and affect and their significance for making sense of religion and spirituality. I began this section by outlining the Emotional Geographies literature and some of the ways that emotions have been viewed in the Social Sciences. While a socio-cultural approach has been common to a range of literatures on emotions, within this approach, a number of traditions including structural, phenomenological, post-structural and psychodynamic influences have produced useful ways of making sense of emotion and its significance for social processes. The body of work on non-representational thinking was then introduced, particularly the conception of affect that authors associated with these approaches have espoused. I argued that Simonsen's (2007) concept of emotional spatiality as active-passive duality and Ahmed's (2004b) work on the relational aspects of affect could improve on non-representational definitions of affect by attending more effectively to the issue of power and accounting for individuals' lived experiences of their bodies. However, I also pointed out the need to retain an interest in the non-

representational elements of emotion, particularly the way in which they connect with the discursive realm. The final part outlined a number of ways that work on religion and spirituality have drawn on ideas about the body and emotions, but suggested that this was an area in need of development. I argued that the concept of spiritual 'relationality' and Otto's (1958 [1917]) work on the 'numinous' both demonstrated ways in which the spiritual domain could be incorporated into emotional approaches to social issues. This again drew attention to the relationship between the discursive and non-discursive and the significance for children's spatial politics and poetics in the primary school.

In conclusion, I have drawn together a number of disparate threads of literature on children and religion, religion and space, schools and space, the body and emotions, geographies of affect, religion and embodiment, and theories of spirituality. The purpose of this was to provide both a framework and a justification for the research study of which this thesis is concerned, through the identification of clear gaps in the literature and the outlining of particular concepts and their relevance to the topic under investigation. In doing so, I have suggested that a focus on religion and spirituality in children's everyday school spaces should take a child-centred approach, take seriously the role of space (particularly secular space), engage appropriately with social theory, and attend to the significance of bodily practice, emotion, and affect (including spirituality), in making sense of related social processes.

3) Methodological & Ethical Issues

In the previous chapters, I outlined a rationale for a child-centred study on religion in the primary school, but such research requires the adoption and development of appropriate methodological approaches and techniques to adequately address the questions posed. In this chapter, I outline the research design, methods and ethical issues that were relevant to the research project on which this thesis is based. I begin by explaining the qualitative case study approach including sampling and access. Next, I present each of the relevant methods used in the fieldwork along with a discussion of how the data was analysed in the mixed-method context. Finally, I consider some of the ethical issues that arose during the research process as well as some reflections on my own positionality. In the conclusion, I draw out some of the main practical implications of the insights gained during my research, as well as a theoretical argument about the nature of power in research with children.

3.1) Research Design, Sampling & Access

The research in this thesis was based on a case study approach, in order to achieve a depth of understanding not possible using other methods. Case studies allow the researcher to “retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (Yin, 2003:2) and so allow a considerably detailed focus on underlying social processes within a particular context. In qualitative research, cases are often chosen with theoretical reasoning in mind and the need to highlight particular issues in order to answer research questions and make a well-grounded argument. Jennifer Mason (2002a) refers to this as ‘strategic sampling’, but it can also be described as purposive sampling. In my research, I chose two ‘instrumental case studies’ in order to provide a greater insight into the issue of religion and spirituality in the primary school. According to Stake (2000), the ‘instrumental case study’ can illuminate wider ramifications than merely a better understanding of the single case itself, as I will explore later in this section.

I decided to carry out the research in a Community primary school and a Voluntary Aided Catholic primary school both within similar multi-faith locations in an urban area in the North of England. This allowed for a comparison between schools with a different emphasis on serving the wider community or a particular faith community (see Bailey, 2002), while enabling a focus on issues raised in multi-faith educational settings. It was also designed to avoid some of the problems that could have arisen comparing an

inner-city and a suburban school, where class differences may have been significant. In the context of these criteria, the two schools were chosen using a 'typical case sampling' approach (Flick, 2002) from a target list of institutions that met the purposive sampling criteria above. There were a number of schools on the target list, identified using ethnic diversity mapping data from sources that cannot be disclosed due to reasons of school anonymity. All of the schools on the target list were sent official letters from the university with slips to return if they were interested in participating. Of the schools that responded, two were chosen to create a meaningful comparison and agreed to take part following one-to-one meetings with the teachers involved.

Both of the schools that participated in the research therefore had multi-ethnic and multi-faith pupil intakes, reflecting the similar localities they were present in, but the Catholic school was a little less diverse because of its Catholic status. Although this school was not using selection procedures at the time of the study due to under-subscription, its religious make-up nevertheless reflected the preference of Catholic families to send their children there. The study schools both had similar scores on their Ofsted inspection reports for their overall standards and had identical grades for children's 'personal development and well being'. The Community school was a larger institution than the Catholic school, but given the real life constraints of empirical research, the two schools did, nevertheless, offer the best possible comparison in the context of the urban area studied. For the purpose of this thesis, I have given the Community school the pseudonym of 'Rainbow Hill Primary School' and the Catholic school will be referred to as 'Holy Cross Primary School'. Further details of religious make-up, intake size and standards at Rainbow Hill and Holy Cross are available in Appendix A.

Flick (2002) points out that negotiating access to institutions is a more complicated process than in the case of an open field, because there are both the people responsible for authorising the research, as well as the individuals who will actually be involved in the research. In the case of research with children in school settings, this process is even more complicated, because the researcher must negotiate access with a range of adult gatekeepers, including school managers, teachers and parents before even coming into contact with the children. Valentine (1999) describes this process as working through a 'chain of negotiation' and can involve careful management of self-identity and presentation of purpose. The challenge is to provide enough information to gatekeepers to maintain research integrity, without overloading them with so much detail that they are discouraged from taking part (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). In order to encourage a favourable response, I offered to use my teaching qualification to work as

a volunteer teaching assistant while conducting the research and promised to send findings reports to the schools at the end of the research. This also ensured a reciprocal arrangement that avoided exploiting the schools or research participants by 'giving something back' (see Eder & Corsaro, 1999).

Once access to the institutions had been negotiated, the fieldwork took place for approximately 10 weeks in each school, for 3 days a week, in order to allow time to process and begin analysing the data. I undertook the research during the Autumn term in the case of Rainbow Hill, and the Spring term in the case of Holy Cross, so that I would be present for a range of religious festivals in each. My original plan had been to work mainly with Year 4 and Year 5 children (age 8-10) in both cases. This age group was identified for a number of reasons, including the desire to work with an under-researched group that are often ignored because of hidden assumptions about children's developmental stages (James *et al.* 1998), while at the same time ensuring that the children had enough experience of school to develop their views and opinions of relevant events. In addition to this, Year 6 (age 10-11) is usually a year group to avoid in education-based research in the UK, because of national testing that discourages schools from committing these classes to anything other than curriculum-based activities.

In practice, I actually undertook parts of the research with children from various points of Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6; age 7-11) in order to meet the wishes of the study schools. In Rainbow Hill, I observed a mixed age Year 5/6 class and conducted the child-centred activities with them, but also included some children from another Year 5 class in the paired interviews. This was because there were not enough children from the Year 5/6 class who had obtained consent from parents to take part in the study (see later). In Holy Cross, I was only able to observe a Year 3 (age 7-8) class and also ran the photography activity with them, but I conducted the other child-centred activities with the Year 5 class, and the paired interviews with children from the Year 5 and the Year 4 class, again because of numbers. This achieved the best case study comparison possible, working within the constraints of the schools' wishes.

The comparative value of the approach described above can be demonstrated through its ability to produce certain generalisations from the research findings. Jennifer Mason (2002a) points out that qualitative researchers are unable to make empirical generalisations because they do not usually study a statistically representative sample of the population. Instead, it is possible to make theoretical generalisations, such as a consideration of the implications that a set of processes in one context might have for

other settings, or comparing particular strategically chosen cases to consider the wider resonance of any explanations developed during analysis. By examining the similarities and differences between the role of religion and spirituality in social and political processes in my two study schools, this research has the potential to contribute to wider debates in two ways. Firstly, because each school represents a 'typical case' of a Community and a Catholic school within a multi-faith locality, there is reason to assume that equivalent processes could well be operating in other similar contexts. Secondly, by offering empirical material to the wider academic debates on a range of issues, this research can offer support to, or call into question, theoretical stances developed in previous literature. Both of these points also highlight the ability of the case study approach to act as a foundation for further qualitative or quantitative research on associated themes and to link with other studies that have developed empirical generalisations.

Finally, the research design described in this section was improved through the use of a pilot study. This process is essential for testing the usefulness of the research questions and the appropriateness of the research methods and gaining access to and familiarity with the research setting (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Sampson, 2004). To this end, I organised two pilot studies in state-funded Church of England primary schools, both in multi-faith locations of the same urban area in the North of England. The first was for a period of 10 days and involved working with a Year 4 class (age 8-9) and the second was for a period of 5 days with a Year 5 class (age 9-10). The studies were useful for trying out and adapting the interview schedules and the child-centred methods. They also gave me the opportunity to practise how to present my research, and myself, as I had not anticipated how much suspicion would arise or how many questions I would be asked. In the next section, I will go on to describe the research methods used in more detail.

3.2) Methodology

In each of the case study schools, I undertook mixed-method in-depth qualitative research. This included participant observation, semi-structured qualitative interviews with teachers, parents, and children, and a suite of participatory child-centred activities also with the children. In this section, I will outline each of these methods along with any key areas of discussion that arose as part of the fieldwork. I will then move on to consider the process of analysis, and any issues that arose as a result of the mixed-method approach. Key to many of the discussions in this section is the issue of power,

particularly the unequal power relations between me as an adult researcher and the child participants, and some of the implications of this differential (James *et al.*, 1998).

3.2.1) Participant Observation

Brewer (2000:6) defines ethnography as “the study of people in naturally occurring settings or ‘fields’ by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally”. Participant observation therefore involves the researcher immersing him or herself in the social setting and recording through field notes and ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973), interesting observations about the area of study (Pole & Morrison, 2003). More recent understandings of ethnography have moved away from the aim of accurately reproducing the experiences of the ‘insider’ or the ‘other’ (Brewer, 2000), instead viewing reality as something constructed through the process of participation and research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995).

In my research, I used ethnographic methods to help build up a detailed understanding of social interactions in school (Davis *et al.*, 2000), particularly relating to the seven focus themes of school ethos; curriculum delivery; collective worship and assembly; celebration, food, dress and prayer needs; special places; social cohesion and difference; and links with home, community and nation. Volunteering as a classroom assistant allowed me to observe and participate in children’s everyday experiences of school, both in the classroom and assembly hall, but also the more informal spaces of school such as the playground, dinner hall, corridor and cloakroom areas. Denscombe (1998) outlines three possible positions for participant observers: total participation (covert), participation in a ‘normal’ setting (only certain gatekeepers know) and observer (overt to all). Acting as part observer and part classroom helper, I steered a course between the last two positions, where I was completely overt but also participated in the social setting.

Central to participant observation is the development of relationships between researcher and participants, through everyday events and interaction (Burgess, 1984; Van Maanen, 1988). In the case of research with children, ethnographers have in the past attempted to remove power differences in these relationships by trying to ‘blend in’ with children’s worlds (e.g. see Mandell, 1991). Increasingly, however, the complexities of the power relations between adult ethnographers and child participants are being

accepted as inevitable and unavoidable (James, 2001). Instead, researchers are adopting a reflexive approach to ethnographic research on children, including considering their own role in the field and its impact on children's everyday worlds (see Emond, 2005). This has included the practice of adopting semi-adult roles such as 'adult friend' (see Fine & Sandstrom, 1988) in order to reduce power disparities, while still accepting their existence. Swain (2006) coins the phrase the 'least-teacher role', in order to describe his attempts to distance himself from his former authoritative position as a primary school teacher while undertaking ethnography in the classroom.

In the case of my research, I maintained a mainly passive participant observer role in the classroom (see Corsaro, 2003). During the observation, considerable time was spent helping in the class so that children would feel comfortable around me, partly in preparation for the other research methods, and also to reduce the impact of my presence on children's usual behaviour (see also Mayall, 2000). Anxious to avoid being seen as a teacher, I adopted Swain's (2006) 'least-teacher role' by deliberately dressing more casually than the teachers in the school and trying to distance myself from any situations where an authoritarian stance might have been required. The outcomes of this approach were illustrated through the way that children in the class felt willing to confide in me, for example about friendship issues, or made distinctions between me and other teaching staff.

INTERVIEWER:

Is there anything that you don't like about your class so far?

JOHN (White Agnostic Boy, Rainbow Hill):

Too many teachers: there's about four that come in every day.

INTERVIEWER:

What, you mean including me?

JOHN:

No.

BILLY (White Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

(laughs)

INTERVIEWER:

No 'cos I'm not really a teacher so.. (laughs)

JOHN:

No because you don't tell us off.

There were occasions, however, when my role as a teaching assistant inevitable involved dealing with some disruptive behaviour and in these situations it became a challenge to maintain the balance of ethnographic researcher and teaching volunteer. This also included managing teacher expectations that, as a former teacher, I would attempt to uphold good behaviour in class. Such experiences point to the way that power relations between adults and children are always in continual flux in the field. Researchers may find themselves adopting multiple positionings (Swain, 2006) and the balance of power between adults and children may constantly change. Despite the limitations of the 'least-teacher role', I found the approach to be quite successful and my various relative positions of power did not prove an obvious hindrance to the fieldwork. This was, I believe, because of the exerted effort I made to develop positive research relationships with the children in spite of these power differentials. In fact, in some ways it was *because* of my position that I was able to develop these relationships in the first place and hence gain insights that would otherwise have remained elusive. All of this points to a rather more nuanced conception of power than has previously been assumed in debates over ethnography with children, something I will return to during discussions of other methods below and in the conclusion to this chapter.

3.2.2) *Semi-Structured Interviews with Adults*

Semi-structured interviews can be defined as "conversations with a purpose" (Burgess 1984:102 in J. Mason, 2002a:62), and generally start from a number of pre-determined questions or topics, but then adopt a flexible approach for discussion with the interviewee. Kvale (1996:1) argues that "the qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the subjects' points of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations". Recent conceptions view the interview as an active social encounter, where knowledge is constructed through the interaction of interviewer and interviewee (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Kvale, 1996).

In my research, I interviewed three staff members in each school, and undertook ten parent interviews per school. The staff members comprised the Head Teacher, and two class teachers, including the teacher of the focus class that I conducted the majority of the observation and child-centred activities with. The composition of the staff interviews is shown in Appendix B and the staff interview schedules are available in Appendix C. I was also able to talk to one more staff member informally in each school and record

the conversations in my research diary. This ensured that I had spoken to the Religious Education co-ordinator and also the Personal, Social and Citizenship Education co-ordinator in both of the schools. School policy and practice, as articulated by the staff participants, was supplemented with a literature search of relevant documentary and policy literature from the Department for Children, Schools and Families, the Catholic Education Service and the schools themselves.

In the case of the parent interviews, participants were chosen primarily to reflect the religious make-up of the focus class as closely as possible, and mainly comprised one parent in each interview, although there were a few joint parental interviews as well. This approach was most closely aligned with the use of a quota list sampling strategy (J. Mason, 2002a). The exact composition of the parent interviews are again shown in Appendix B with the parent interview schedules in Appendix C. Parents were recruited through letters delivered from the school and also particular teacher contacts. Thomas *et al.* (2007) have noted the 'emotional labour' inherent in recruiting participants, in terms of the human interactions required to persuade potential interviewees to take part in a study and dealing with the inevitable incidents of rejection. Finding enough parents to interview became a matter of perseverance in my study, particularly in Holy Cross, where the smaller number of pupils meant that the letter call was less productive and every possible contact or lead needed to be exploited. One of the unintended consequences of this approach was the recruitment of a number of parents who also worked in the school as teaching assistants. This group provided one of the best sources of information about what was actually happening in school, because they were present on an everyday basis in a way that other parents were not, but often did not feel a need to tow the official line, or reiterate school policy. These experiences suggest that support staff should be viewed as an important participant group in social research in educational settings.

In both of the staff and the parent interviews, I encountered a certain amount of difficulty trying to elicit people's views about school values and religion. This may also have been a factor in the difficulty I experienced in recruiting enough parents to interview. For some of the interviewees, religion was not something that they considered to be important in everyday school life and they could not really understand why I would want to ask about it. Others found questions about abstract values and school ethos difficult to answer and not something that they had previously considered, or that was part of their everyday experience. For this reason, I encouraged participants to talk more generally about their experiences of school, and also to discuss more specific events such as assemblies, nativities and open days that could

act as conduits to accessing their views on more abstract issues. I was then able to use techniques such as following-up on comments that were made earlier, or circling-back to similar issues from a different angle later (Adler & Adler, 2002; Esterberg, 2002). Once I had established a number of key values in earlier interviews, I was able to specifically ask about those values in later ones depending on how interviewees had responded to the initial open-ended questions (Johnson & Weller, 2002). In future research, such abstract issues could perhaps better be accessed through the use of more sophisticated techniques such as relevant vignettes and case studies related to actual school practices (e.g. see Schoenberg & Ravdal, 2000).

The issue of values and religion was further complicated in the case of some of the interviewees who spoke English as an additional language. I did not use interpreters in these cases because all of these interviewees could speak English well, and it would have been insulting to offer this service to them. However, speaking a language well on an everyday basis is not the same as discussing difficult abstract concepts such as values and religion in an interview context (see also Temple & Young, 2004). Ryen (2002) points to the way in which meaning and understanding in interviews are constructed in the same interactional and collaborative ways as misunderstanding in cross-cultural research. On some occasions, I was unable to understand what interviewees were saying because of pronunciation and had to ask for clarification. There were other occasions when they did not understand what I was asking about, and I was required to rephrase questions in different ways.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok. I'm looking at school ethos, in terms of, kind of the values that the school puts across to children, and what it kind of puts across to them as being important in life, and things that they need to do in life. I wondered if you, what values you think the school is kind of giving to your children, if you like? Do you see what I mean?

SHABINA (Asian Muslim Mother, Rainbow Hill):

Is it just like the education?

INTERVIEWER:

I suppose it's kind of the things as well as the education, so there's the education side, but there's also kind of all the personal side and the social side, and all that kind of stuff. And I wondered how you thought they were doing with that? I mean, you know, you might not have an opinion.

SHABINA:

I'm not sure, I mean just whatever they, they write newsletters or anything, I mean they do get the kids to join in with whatever they do, and let them participate.

The language issue also caused problems recruiting parents for the interviews, some of whom had filled in the slip from the letters sent home from the school because they did not fully understand what was written. When contacted by telephone, they then declined to be interviewed. The above problems again point to the benefits of using real life situations and examples to elicit views and values on complex issues. They also highlight the need to provide some information on research projects in languages other than English when appropriate. While this might not always be strictly *necessary*, it may still be useful for interviewees to help prepare them for the kinds of issues they will be discussing in English during the interview.

3.2.3) Paired Interviews with Children

The relationship between the researcher and the participant is considered just as important in semi-structured interviewing as in ethnography (see Oakley, 1981) and its significance has increased following the acknowledgement that the data itself is constructed as a result of this relationship. Power is again under the spotlight, particularly in the case of research with children, where culturally constructed power differentials are usually present. Like in ethnography, researchers have attempted to find techniques to lessen these differentials, while still acknowledging their existence. Aware of the uneven power relations in her own research, for example, Mayall (2000) developed a technique of 'research conversations', where children chose partners to be interviewed with, giving them more confidence to make inputs into the interview agenda. Similarly, Westcote & Littleton (2005) discuss the need to empower children during interviews so as to avoid the usual model of teacher initiation - child response - teacher feedback process that children expect from adults.

In my research, I interviewed eleven pairs and a group of three in Rainbow Hill and ten pairs and a group of three in Holy Cross. The reason for these slightly irregular numbers was that I had aimed to interview ten pairs in both of the schools, but more children wanted to take part and I felt it would be unethical to exclude them. In most cases, the first child from each pair was taken from the pool of consenting children, to

reflect the religious make up of the class and a gender balance, again through the use of a quota list (J. Mason, 2002a). These children then chose their own interview partners from the remaining consenting children, for similar reasons outlined by Mayall (2000) regarding power relationships. The exact composition of the child interviews is shown in Appendix B. I interviewed child participants for around 20-30 minutes, mostly during lesson or assembly time, in private locations around the school, such as the library, computer suite or learning support room. The difficulty of finding appropriate spaces raised ethical issues that are discussed later in the chapter. The conversations were taped and children had the opportunity to control the interview through the use of traffic light cards. These included green for go, amber for pause and red for stop and were in fact used by some of the participants (Alderson & Morrow, 2004). Please see Appendix C for the child interview schedules.

Conducting the interviews in this way, by working to reduce adult-child power differentials, provided a space where children felt able to express their views and opinions. Some children also felt comfortable enough to discuss some of their experiences of bullying, and these incidents are explored further in the ethics section. Kitzinger (1994) points out that group interview situations can produce complex meanings and understandings through dynamic social interactions. During the interviews, children used short conversations between themselves to construct a more thorough picture of what they were telling me about, whether that meant correcting or adding to each other's stories. Children felt able to use these short conversations in order to move the interview on to different topics, thus disrupting the usual model of adult-directed interaction typically found in school. Power relations between myself and the child participants did not remain fixed but were constantly changing in the spaces of the research (see also Christensen, 2004). In the quote below, my attempts to draw the interview to a close were thwarted because the interviewees had other views and experiences they wished to share with me.

INTERVIEWER:

Right, that's great, well unless there's anything else you want to tell me about school that you haven't said yet? Then we'll stop.

VINCENT (Mixed Race Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Them two walls up there. Them two walls, see that wall.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh in the entrance?

VINCENT:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

What about them?

VINCENT:

They need to be much wider because when, like this van goes down really, really fast down that hill.

HOLLY (White Catholic Girl, Holy Cross):

No it doesn't go fast, it comes up and there's always a car up there and the car alarm goes off just 'cos it goes right near it.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh so that's a problem.

HOLLY:

And on our playground we don't have anywhere to sit and we're not even allowed to sit on the wall.

Power relations in flux were also apparent in my research when one child interviewee in Holy Cross gave rude and inappropriate answers and swung on his chair, even though he had expressed a strong desire to take part in the interviews. In such situations, it was necessary to temporarily depart from the 'least-teacher role' in order to maintain a safe and productive interview environment for both participants. Similarly, Swain (2006) felt the need in his research to maintain a certain amount of distance between himself and the child interviewees in order to avoid losing their respect or allowing the interview to degenerate. In some ways, it was my position of power that enabled me to develop these positive interview relationships with the children in the first place and create a space where they were able to both express their views and also negotiate some of these power dynamics.

Power is also present in relationships between child participants as well as between adults and children. Denscombe (1995) highlights the need to watch for interviewees who might dominate within group situations, leading to the inhibition of other participants in expressing their own views and experiences. I generally asked children to try and avoid speaking over each other and if one child was contributing less, I made sure they were had the opportunity to voice their opinions on a topic if they so wished, by asking them directly. There was one occasion in Rainbow Hill when one half of the pair gave very few answers even when asked directly, and I took this to be a subtle withdrawal of consent (see ethics section). Such events again point towards a more complex understanding of power than has been recognised in much of the work on interviews with children.

3.2.4) Child-Centred Methods

Participatory research is effectively a hybrid of different research methods that have been developed for diverse purposes (Pretty *et al.*, 1995). Kemmis & McTaggart (2003) characterise such research as practical, collaborative and emancipatory. Pain (2004:653) argues that “participatory approaches lend themselves to research where people’s relations with and accounts of space, place and environment are of central interest”, so highlighting their suitability for research in Social Geography, particularly in giving voice to marginal groups and challenging social exclusion. Cornwall & Jewkes (1995) emphasise the way that participatory research works much more as a ‘bottom-up’ process, with participants contributing their own local priorities and perspectives. Pain & Francis (2003) make the distinction between ‘participatory diagramming’, which involves the use of participatory methods of data generation, and ‘participatory approaches’, which aim to transform power relations between researchers and participants.

In participatory research on children and childhoods, this concept has been illustrated through the idea of rungs on a ladder, with each rung indicating more involvement and participation for children (Hart, 1992). At one end of the continuum is the use of creative child-centred research methods. These methods are generally aimed at reconstituting power relations between adult researchers and child participants at the data generation phase. Veale (2005:254) defines creative methods as “those that draw on inventive and imaginative processes, such as storytelling, drama and drawing”. These have been developed alongside a general growth in the use of visual methods, which are used as a way to avoid an over-reliance on the spoken word, and to appreciate the centrality of the visual and ‘seeing’ in social life (Flick, 2002; Jenks, 1995; J. Mason, 2002b). Punch (2002) has argued that child-centred methods should be combined with more traditional methods to generate a wide range of data, and to avoid patronising children or creating an image of them as incompetent ‘others’ who require ‘special’ techniques. Both Nesbitt (2001) and Erricker (2001) discuss the importance of using a range of methods with children when researching religion, including creative methods such as photographs, artwork and a flexible and sensitive approach to interviewing.

Some participatory methods go beyond child-centred methods however, by involving children in different parts of the research process. Alderson (2000) points out that

children have extensive experience of undertaking small research projects at school, and there are examples of studies where children have been involved in different stages of the research process such as planning, analysis, and dissemination (e.g. Jones, 2004; Jones *et al.*, 2002). These situations require the researcher to adopt a different role, involving the development of new skills in order to manage and facilitate the research (Boog, 2003; Chataway, 1997; Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). For O'Kane (2000), participatory techniques with children imply a more defined relationship between researcher and research subject, a more delineated time period and a more transparent process than in ethnographic research. In theory, they therefore offer greater potential for a destabilization of adult-child power relations than in ethnographic or semi-structured interview research.

In my research, children from the focus class took part in three specially designed child-centred creative methods. The first can best be described as a vignette drama activity. A number of researchers have used vignettes with children and young people in order to access values and beliefs (e.g. Barter & Reynold, 2000; Smart *et al.*, 1999), but more recently, Frankel (2007) has used this technique in the context of drama discussion groups to explore children's moral decision-making processes. Drama is also kinaesthetic in nature and so offers an opportunity for children to express themselves in non-verbal ways. The vignette drama activity in my research was quite similar to Frankel's (2007) approach and involved groups of between four to six children aged 9-11. Each group was asked to act out a particular scenario that could have occurred in an everyday school context, followed by a discussion about the rights and wrongs of the characters' actions in the drama and their feelings and decision-making processes. These discussions were led by me and I asked some of the questions during the drama itself, whereby children would halt the scene in a freeze-frame.

The first vignette involved a Muslim girl who was being teased in the dinner queue because she was wearing a hijab, the second was concerned with a group of boys from one particular cultural group who would not let others join in their games on the playground, and the third entailed a girl who was trying to pray or reflect during assembly but was being distracted by two boys on the row behind (see Appendix D for the full vignettes). The whole-class discussions following the drama performances were then recorded and transcribed in a similar format to a focus group. The method required quite strict ground rules regarding no physical contact, stopping and listening on oral signals given by me, and raising hands to make a contribution to the taped discussion. Because the activity was run as part of a Personal, Social, Health and

Citizenship Education lesson with the whole class, it was necessary for me to bring the children back 'on message' at the end of the discussion, in terms of what the school would have expected them to do in each situation.

The second method was based around photography and aimed to find out more about spirituality in children's everyday spaces in school. Photography has increasingly been used as a research method with children in recent studies (e.g. Newman *et al.*, 2006; Strack *et al.*, 2004; Young & Barrett, 2001) and Einarsdottir (2005) points to the way in which such methodologies may empower children to frame pictures of their choosing, act as effective facilitators for accessing their perspectives, and offer an alternative to verbal research methods. Children in my study were invited to use disposable cameras to take photographs of two special places around school of their own choosing. Initially, 'special places' was left as a vague instruction, but if children struggled to decide on what this meant, I suggested that such places might include somewhere they went to be on their own, or somewhere special they went with friends, or somewhere they particularly liked for whatever reason. In Rainbow Hill, this method was undertaken with pairs of children aged 9-11, following the paired interviews. For logistical reasons, this was not possible in Holy Cross, so instead groups of four children aged 7-8 took part in the same activity.

Scratz & Steiner-Loffler (1998) point to the need for careful organisation and management of such photographic activities with children to ensure their success. I had originally planned to ask children at the time of the photograph why they had chosen their special places, what they did there, and who they took part in those activities with, in the style of a walking interview (Kearns *et al.*, 2003; Kusenbach, 2003). This turned out to be difficult, however, because children found it difficult not to run around and become consumed in taking the photographs rather than listening to my questions. For this reason, I asked the children to answer those questions before we went to take the photographs and this also made managing where to go around school much easier. The photography approach worked much better than asking children to draw their special places as I did in the pilot study, as the smaller groups encouraged them to think of their own places rather than borrowing ideas from their neighbours. These experiences point to the need for thorough piloting of such methods, particularly to practice the managerial aspects of working with large groups of children.

The third activity was a drawing and story task aimed at eliciting children's ideas about what it meant to be religious. A number of previous studies in different topic areas have

used the method of drawing people or characters in order to focus on the various attributes that certain individuals might possess (e.g. Burrows & Wright, 2004; Wetton & McWhirter, 1998). The version in this research was based on a method that I pioneered in an earlier study on health and exercise, whereby children designed a Mr or Little Miss Healthy and Unhealthy, based on the popular 'Mr Men' and 'Little Miss' children's book series by Roger Hargreaves (see Hemming, 2007). This included a picture of the character, a setting and associated objects around the picture. Children were encouraged to use written labels in order to clarify the content of the drawings and avoid misrepresentation of ideas during analysis (Hart, 1992; Punch, 2002).

The above method was adapted in the context of this study to Mr or Little Miss Religious characters and participants were also asked to include a simple cartoon strip story that aimed to draw out the character's behaviour and interactions in addition to his or her personality traits. The children were introduced to the activity using a few examples from the Roger Hargreaves books, but the term 'religious' was left for participants to interpret in whichever way they chose. The activity required a certain amount of classroom management skills in order to ensure that children knew what was expected of them and stayed on task, but was generally easier to organise than the drama activity, where the physical nature of the tasks meant there was more potential for problems of this kind. Because each child took a different amount of time to complete their character and story, for some children it was necessary to have an extension activity prepared, where as others did not finish colouring their work. By asking participants to complete their drawing before their colouring, this ensured that all of the pieces had enough information on them to be analysed.

These three methods did involve children fully in the data collection stage, but were not fully participatory at the other stages of the research. They were therefore located nearer to the child-centred rungs of Hart's (1992) ladder of participation. This was mainly due to the practical and time constraints of undertaking a small-scale research project, the complexity of the topic under investigation and the inherent difficulties in involving children from schools in planning and dissemination, such as the nature of the research planning process and gaining access through gatekeepers (see Pole *et al.* 1999). Despite this, the participatory style of these methods should in theory have offered the children more involvement in the research process and therefore a more powerful position than in the observation and interview methods. However, there have been a number of critiques of participatory approaches, including the often unrecognised complex nature of the researcher-participant relationship and the difficulties that the researcher faces in order to place him or herself in an appropriate

position to empower participants (David, 2002). In reality, this position depends on the context and goals of the research, as well as the organisations and individuals involved in participating in and directing the research. In the case of participatory research with children, I would argue that this relationship is actually much more dependant on these contextual factors than some accounts might suggest (e.g. O'Kane, 2000 above).

In my research, I found that adopting a co-ordinating role in order to facilitate and manage children during child-centred methods actually required a *more* authoritarian approach than the quite passive participant observer role, or the relaxed interviewer who aimed to create a comfortable environment for children. Adopting this authoritarian role during the child-centred research methods raised issues about the extent of empowerment that such methods actually offered children, in the context of the classroom and discourses of education and schooling. David *et al.* (2001) outline how their attempts to give children the opportunity for informed consent in a classroom context resulted in reinforcing unequal adult-child power relations through their use of implicit pedagogic techniques. While this example refers to the debate over whether children can 'consent' or merely 'assent' in social research (e.g. see Cocks, 2006; Valentine, 1999), it also highlights some of the power issues that may arise when participatory researchers work in institutional contexts.

During my study, I did not consider the participatory child-centred methods to be particularly more empowering for the children than the adapted ethnographic and interview techniques, because of my more authoritarian role. Although this perception may have been affected by the lack of children's involvement in other stages of the research process, I found that the child-centred methods were merely a different way of co-producing data with children than the ethnographic and interview techniques. It was therefore a case of different forms of, rather than different levels of, participation and empowerment for children. This distinction between different researcher roles for different methods also had practical implications for undertaking the research. Aware of the difficulties of juggling these roles, I decided it would be most appropriate to carry out observation and interviews *before* the child-centred activities. This helped to avoid the more authoritative co-ordinator role undermining my efforts to observe children in their everyday contexts or to encourage children to feel relaxed and comfortable talking to me during interviews. Issues of power were again quite complex in the context of research with children and I will return to this issue at the end of the chapter.

3.2.5) *Analysis of Mixed Methods*

I chose to take a mixed-method approach in order to investigate the topic from a number of different angles, what is sometimes termed triangulation. This is a technique that emerged as a response to criticism of qualitative approaches from positivist researchers, particularly the charge that such approaches lack appropriate validity (see Blakie, 2000). The concept draws on the metaphor from surveying and navigating, where a single unknown location is found at the point where the trajectories from three known locations meet (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Denzin (1989) argued that using triangulation could improve the validity of research findings by directing a range of different methods at the same problem, and checking whether or not they all returned similar results. This conception of triangulation has been criticised by writers such as Flick (2002), who points out that different methods have developed from different ontological and epistemological traditions and so cannot necessarily be used together to investigate the same dimension of a problem. Richardson (1994) adds a post-modern twist to this, arguing that because of the constructed nature of reality, any employment of mixed methods can only ever produce a partial view of the research topic. She prefers the use of the term 'crystallization', rather than triangulation, in order to recognise that there are more than three sides to the world, and that mixing methods can only produce a deeper and more complex view of the issue under investigation, rather than improve validity.

Darbyshire *et al.* (2005) consider whether or not using crystallization does in practice offer deeper insights and increased complexity by reference to an empirical study on children and physical activity in place and space. They found that the different data methods of focus group interviews, mapping and photography actually worked to complement each other and build up a more holistic picture of children's perspectives, rather than merely duplicate findings. For example, some important physical activities for children were only identified in certain methods and children's feelings and emotions were better represented in some sets of data than others. In contrast, researchers may find that data generated through the use of different research methods actually contradict, rather than complement each other. Instead of viewing this as a negative feature of mixing methods, the scenario offers an opportunity to better understand the complexities of social life, and avoid the presentation of 'easy' conclusions that 'gloss over' some of the hidden difficulties that mixed methods may reveal. It may also point to the need for further research that attempts to untangle some of the multifaceted social processes revealed in the original study (see also Hemming, 2008). Combining participant observation, semi-structured interviews and

child-centred methods in research with children is a good way of working towards the aim of crystallization, as it allows the researcher to investigate both the 'doing' and how children represent these 'doings' through talk and other mediums of communication (Atkinson & Coffey, 2003).

My treatment of the data sets in this research was heavily influenced by their mixed-method status. Qualitative data analysis can include a range of processes, including looking for patterns and themes (categorical indexing), theory building directly from the data (as in grounded theory), holistic and contextual analysis, narrative analysis approaches and semiotic approaches (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; J. Mason, 2002a). Although my data could be analysed in many different ways, the methods chosen reflected Silverman's (2001) argument that analysis should serve the practical purpose for which the study is being carried out. In the case of the participant observation and interviews, analysis was an ongoing process with the development of conceptual frameworks before fieldwork, to the emergence of themes and patterns during and after the data generation phase (see Becker 1966, cited in Pole & Morrison, 2003:74). The method used could best be described as 'thematic analysis', which Braun and Clarke (2006) have argued can be understood as an approach to data analysis in its own right. It involved searching and identifying themes and patterns across the data set and applying the 'thematic networks' technique outlined by Attride-Stirling (2001).

Once interviews had been transcribed from tapes, the transcripts and research diary were coded and organised to establish classifications. Guest *et al.* (2006) argue that working with six to twelve interview transcripts is enough to establish the majority of initial codes, before these can then be applied to the remainder of the transcripts. In my case, I took down the majority of significant points from all of the transcripts and the diary in note form before starting on the official coding exercise, in order to produce reports of the research findings for each of the study schools. I was then able to use these two documents to generate my initial codes before applying them to the interview transcripts. This approach was very successful and only a handful of new codes were generated during the second phase. Once all the transcripts and the diaries had been coded, these initial groups of codes were then built up into networks of associated categories placed around organising themes, before several organising themes came together around global themes (see Attride-Stirling, 2001:288). The process helped to identify patterns, themes, regularities and variations, establish connections, and then move towards developing a theoretical approach to the data by connecting these themes to key concepts identified in the original research questions (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Dey, 1993; Emond, 2005). Throughout this process, I made certain that the

analysis adhered to guidelines for ensuring quality, such as inclusion of all sources and maintaining a close fit between themes and data sets (see Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The actual process of coding itself was facilitated through the use of the Nvivo qualitative analysis software package. Crowley *et al.* (2002) point to a number of limitations of using qualitative analysis software, including potential loss of data and the unintended modification of the abstraction process. Flick (2002) highlights concerns about the way that such software may force a particular display structure or quantitative framework onto the data in a way that manual analysis would not, hence disrupting the usual reflexive approach to qualitative analysis. However, both authors argue that the extent to which these problems arise tend to depend on the user. In my case, I used the software package to organise and code the data in a similar way to how I have previously coded manually, except that Nvivo saved time and energy. This was because it was much easier to analyse data both within and across the different participant groups in each of the schools, and rearrange themes and categories as appropriate. I did not attempt to use any of the advanced analysis tools because I found them to be too quantitatively orientated for my particular purpose.

In the case of the visual data from two of the child-centred methods, I needed to think carefully about how these would be analysed. Although writers such as Prosser & Schwartz (1998) argue that clear analysis procedures are required to maintain the validity of using visual methods, others point to the socially embedded nature of visual images and the fact that they must be viewed as particular and partial representations of the world (Ball & Smith, 1992; Banks, 2001; Pink, 2007). Pink (2007) calls for a reflexive and flexible approach to conducting and analysing visual data in order to take account of this. Rose (2001) outlines a number of approaches to the analysis of visual images, including a focus on *sites* (the production of images; their social contexts; audiences) and *modalities* (technological design and compositional strategies). In qualitative social research, Emmison & Smith (2000) give a range of practical tools for analysing visual data, including looking for binary oppositions, contextualising different parts of the image, identifying genre, thinking about how audience relate to images, looking for narrative, decoding the image, looking for signifier and signified, and identifying particular identities in images.

Despite the wide range of approaches that can be used to analyse visual data outlined above, images may also be analysed using a more qualitative version of thematic coding. Rather than counting frequency, as in content analysis, researchers may assign themes and codes in a more flexible way that takes account of the relative

significance of themes and the context surrounding them. This may involve reflexivity and creativity in order to construct analytical systems that are both suitable for the specific research project in hand, as well as open enough to avoid isolating particular themes from their wider context and interconnecting linkages (see Ball & Smith, 1992; Pink, 2007). It may also make use of techniques such as considering binary opposites and discourses. The major advantage of this approach, however, is that it can be easily integrated with data from other qualitative methods, including codes and themes generated from interview transcripts and fieldwork diaries. Jennifer Mason (2002a) highlights the need for different methods and sources to be integrated at the analysis stage. She argues that different data must be technically, ontologically and epistemologically consistent in order to be meaningfully integrated during the process of analysis. For this reason, data from the visual child-centred methods were also analysed thematically, in a similar way to the interview and participant observation data. This process included the construction of tables where particular themes and criteria were compared across the different data items (see Appendix E). I will now go on to discuss some of the ethical issues relevant to the research in the next section.

3.3) Ethics and Positionality

Published ethical guidelines are an important part of risk management in the field, particularly for research participants, and social researchers have a number of guidelines to draw on, for example from the Economic & Social Research Council. However, while these guidelines may provide frameworks within which to undertake research, they are not context specific and cannot provide any easy answers to particular problems. It is therefore important to examine real ethical problems at various stages of the research process and how researchers have dealt with them using a reflexive approach (Burgess, 1984; Christensen & Prout, 2002; J. Mason, 2002a). In this section, I will outline some of the ethical issues and dilemmas faced in the area of informed consent, privacy and confidentiality in order to manage the risk of harm to participants. This will include steps taken to secure ethical research as well as issues that emerged *in situ* and how these were dealt with. My attention will then shift to my own experiences as a researcher in the field, including managing various types of risk and the issue of positionality.

3.3.1) Informed Consent

Informed consent is the cornerstone of ethical research and all research participation needs to be voluntary, even if this conflicts with the pursuit of knowledge (Babbie, 2005). Silverman (2005:258, drawing on Kent, 1996) explains that consent should involve providing participants with enough relevant information for them to decide whether or not to participate, making sure that this information has been fully understood, gaining written evidence of voluntary participation and taking appropriate steps to gain consent from others if the participant is not fully competent to give consent. All adult participants in the qualitative interviews were given information leaflets (see Appendix F), opportunities to ask questions, and consent forms to sign (see Appendix G). It was also made clear to them that they could decline to answer any questions where they would prefer not to. It was important to go through these processes verbally for participants with English as an additional language.

Consent in the case of research with children needs to be dealt with especially sensitively. In order for children to give properly informed consent, they must be able to understand exactly how they will be involved in the research and what it is about. Alderson & Morrow (2004) stress the importance of information leaflets in 'child friendly' language for this purpose and Tymchuk (1992) discusses the potential of educational strategies for the consent process. In my research, children were provided with leaflets (see Appendix F) but also watched a visual presentation and took part in discussion and questions. Participants were able to consent at different levels, from basic involvement in the research to interview participation and were given time to think through their intentions before being asked to sign the consent forms (see Appendix G). Those who did not want to take part in the study were still required to participate in the child-centred activities, as part of the school curriculum, but their work was not used in analysis.

Valentine (1999) points to the fact that the consent process is a continual one and this is particularly relevant in an educational setting where children's right to consent can be compromised if they feel that they must consent because their classmates have done so, or adults in school have asked them to (Ireland & Holloway, 1996). Children must therefore be made aware that they may withdraw consent at any time and this was made clear to them during the consent process and before paired interviews. Subtle signals, such as refusing to answer questions, may point to a withdrawal of consent and this occurred in one of the paired interviews in my research. The situation

required a balanced approach between ensuring that the girl in question was given the opportunity to respond alongside the more dominant participant, while avoiding applying any pressure if she did not wish to answer.

Research with children, who are legal minors, often requires more than consent from the children themselves. Their consent can only be seen to be legally valid in the UK if the child 'achieves sufficient understanding and intelligence to understand fully what is proposed' and has 'sufficient discretion to enable him or her to make a wise decision' ('Gillick competence' quoted in Morrow & Richards, 1996:95). Often it can be helpful to gain consent from both children and parents, because of the subjective and 'fuzzy' nature of this requirement. In my research, parents were given the opportunity to opt their children out of the research through letters sent home from school and the schools themselves were also required to give consent for the research project (see Appendix G). Alderson & Morrow (2004) point to the difficulties of deciding how best to deal with situations where parents decline to consent when children do, or vice versa. Because children were all asked for their own consent, the latter situation did not arise in my research, but there were a few occasions when children wanted to be interviewed but their parents or guardians had refused. In these situations, I emphasised the child's opportunity to be involved in the child-centred activities, even if their data contributions were not analysed.

Central to the consent processes is the importance of honesty and integrity. In the case of my research, all of the data collection was conducted using an overt approach. Bulmer (1982) argues that covert social research can be harmful both to research participants and the reputation of the Social Sciences generally, because of its use of deception. However, as Denzin (in Denzin & Erikson, 1982) points out, there is often a degree of deception in all research. Although I tried to be as honest as possible during the fieldwork, I did not always disclose all of my research interests in detail. This was partly because my exploratory approach meant that I did not know what all them were and also because being too explicit about intentions could have impacted on behaviours in the field to an unnecessary extent. Murphy & Dingwall (2001) also point out that it can often be impractical to gain the consent of everyone in an organisation. This was the case with observation on the playground and in assemblies, where it would have been very difficult to gain consent from all of the children in the school.

3.3.2) Privacy & Confidentiality

Protecting the privacy and identity of participants, both during the data generation phase and the publishing and dissemination phase is generally agreed to be essential for managing risk to research subjects (Homan, 1991). To achieve this, care must be taken to ensure data generation is as private as possible and identifying information must be removed from the data as soon as possible. For this reason, parents and teachers were interviewed in private locations and transcripts were stored in a locked filing cabinet and will be destroyed on completion of the dissemination process. Before analysis, real names were replaced by pseudonyms and these remained in the data used in the writing process. The identity and location of the two study schools also remained undisclosed throughout the research and writing process. Qualitative methods can offer specific challenges for protecting privacy and confidentiality, particularly when the researcher observes everything that is happening within a particular setting, or interviews respondents in a pair or focus group (Babbie, 2005). This was illustrated through an incident during a parent interview, where the father had agreed to talk to me, but the mother joined in of her own accord after failing to leave the room where the interview was taking place. At the end of the interview, she was happy to give consent for her comments to be used in the research, but had not been aware that the interview had been taped. It was therefore necessary to spend extra time explaining the confidential nature of the data collection process.

Research with children, who may be at more risk of harm than adults, raises particular ethical issues in the case of privacy and confidentiality. For this reason, interviewees in my research were invited to choose pseudonyms to replace their real names and maintain the anonymity of their responses. Valentine (1999) points to the problem of finding a private space to conduct interviews with children, which is a particular issue in schools. During my research, use was made of empty classrooms, learning support rooms, cloakrooms, computer rooms and even corridors. In the course of an interview it was sometimes necessary to move one or more times to maintain privacy and interviews in corridors required pauses when other people walked past. The use of paired interviews again raises issues of confidentiality if one child reveals facts about the other child that they may not have chosen to volunteer themselves. In my research, one of the interviewees in Holy Cross made a point of asking the other child not to repeat his revelations about experiences of bullying in school.

Children often sought reassurances that their views and opinions would be kept confidential, particularly from teachers. This became an important issue when teachers expressed interest and suspicion in what children were telling me in interviews and this required care to ensure that my answers were general enough to maintain confidentiality. One of the teachers specifically requested that I should inform her of any issues that the school needed to deal with because she did not wish me to consider myself 'a spy'. This example touches on the limits of confidentiality that can be offered to child interviewees, particularly regarding child protection issues. Williamson *et al.* (2005) argue that these limits need to be explained to children before research commences, and for this reason I made clear that all information would be kept confidential unless I felt that children were in any kind of danger. In such a situation, I explained that I would discuss with the child why it was necessary to tell someone. These procedures followed the child protection policies in the schools and therefore avoided giving promises of confidentiality that could not be kept in certain circumstances. This was important in one situation where a girl in Rainbow Hill revealed that she was being bullied. I explained to her why it would be a good idea for me to speak to her teacher about the problem, and she consented for me to do this. However, if she had not consented, this may have resulted in a difficult ethical dilemma.

3.3.3) Managing Researcher Risk

Traditionally, discussions of ethics and managing risk have tended to focus more on research participants rather than researchers, but increasingly the risks for researchers are being recognised. Lee-Treweek & Linkogle (2001) and Morse (2001) outline a number of risks that social researchers may face. These dangers broadly fall under the four categories of managing the potential for physical harm, dealing with emotions in the field, risks to the professional reputation of the researcher and ethical challenges that researchers may face in managing their role in the field. My research did not entail a great amount of physical risk, but it was useful to maintain a system of telephone calls to colleagues before and after interviews at parents' homes. This was particularly important when conducting interviews during the evening in locations with high crime rates. However, there were a number of emotional, professional and ethical risks that were more relevant in my research.

A number of writers have pointed to the way that 'scientific method' has traditionally excluded emotions from the research process in the Social Sciences, in favour of

'objectivity' and masculinist knowledge (Barbalet, 2002b; Blee, 1998; Widdowfield, 2000). They argue that emotions are in fact integral to the research process, including the construction and interpretation of knowledge between researcher and participants. In my research, I experienced a range of different emotions, including enjoyment and interest when listening to interviewees' views and opinions or co-ordinating creative activities, and feeling that I was making a difference to children's learning when working as a teaching assistant. On the negative side, I experienced boredom at the effective demotion from my previous role of class teacher to my researcher role of teaching assistant and sometimes felt foolish in front of other playground supervisors when undertaking observation on the playground. At times, this activity also left me feeling extremely cold! Finally, being in school as an outsider was sometimes emotionally challenging, as can often be the case with ethnography (Loftland & Loftland, 1995). Although both schools were quite welcoming, teachers were understandably a little suspicious as to what I was actually looking at, and at times this led to feelings of unease and not fitting in. These feelings were also related somewhat to issues of positionality, explored in the next section.

In the area of research with children, particular as a male researcher, risks to professional and reputation relating to child protection issues are forever present (e.g. see Horton, 2001; Scourfield & Coffey, 2006). Working with children presents the risk of false allegations and the destruction of personal and professional reputations, even when these accusations are proven to be false (BBC News Online, 21/04/06, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/4928868.stm; National Union of Teachers, 2000, <http://www.nut.org.uk/story.php?id=873>). During fieldwork, I endeavoured to take every precaution to avoid any kind of bodily contact with children or any situations where I would be alone with a child (this is another reason for using paired interviews). In order to work in school, I required a police clearance, but I was still questioned on several occasions by staff on the playground as to who I was and why I was there. One of the teachers also warned me not to enter any of the children's changing rooms when assisting a Physical Education lesson. Another potential problem arose when one of the boys in Holy Cross persisted in touching my hand and my leg. I needed to work quite hard to discourage him from doing this in order to abide by my rule of no physical contact with the children.

Researchers in the dual role of researcher and practitioner can face ethical challenges as the result of competing ethical responsibilities with each role (e.g. see Bell & Knutt 2002, Huber & Clandinin 2002). Sometimes I found myself in situations where my skills as a teacher were required, such as dealing with disruptive behaviour in my small

teaching group, responding to tales of disputes on the playground or supervising the class while the class teacher went on an errand. In these situations, I did do all that I could to ensure that children in my care were on task with their work and a safe environment was maintained in the classroom or playground. However, I tried to avoid adopting an authoritative presence so as not to compromise the positive research relationships I was building with the children (see earlier). A similar dilemma that confronted me was how to deal with a teacher's offer of socialising after the school day was over. In this situation, I decided that while it had been good to build a positive working relationship, it might be best to maintain a certain amount of distance from the research field and so declined the offer. This also related to some of the positionality issues that I will now turn to.

3.3.4) Positionality

Following calls for reflexive considerations of researchers' own positionality in the field (e.g. Jackson, 1993; Rose, 1997), I will end this section with some reflection on how my own social positioning affected the data collection during my fieldwork. Unsurprisingly for a project on religion and spirituality, my religious identity and religiosity were important during data collection and were placed under a certain amount of scrutiny. Schweber (2007) outlines some of the issues that arose in her fieldwork in devoutly religious schools, including how levels of access and trust were affected by her religious identity. Although my research took place in much more moderately religious settings, in both of the schools, children, teachers and parents were all interested in my religious position and how this compared with their own. It seemed that many of the teachers in Rainbow Hill were concerned that I was religious and would criticise the lack of religious practice in school, whereas teachers and parents in Holy Cross hinted at opposite concerns.

Like Hopkins (2009) in his work with young Muslim men, I found myself giving different answers to different audiences when questioned about my religious identity. To Rainbow Hill audiences, I was agnostic or not particularly religious, whereas at Holy Cross, I emphasised my Anglican upbringing. While neither of these were untruths, I chose to highlight certain aspects of my religious identity in different contexts so as to allay unfounded concerns about hidden motivations or agendas. Similarly, children in Rainbow Hill asked if I was a Christian and in Holy Cross, if I was a Catholic. By answering these questions truthfully, children were encouraged to say more about their own religious lives because they knew that they were the experts, rather than me. In

the case of the pilot studies in Church of England schools, which were somewhat more 'close to home', such questions led me to reflect on issues I had not considered for a long time. There were some similarly challenging incidents during parent interviews, where participants recalled personal spiritual experiences, or challenged me on my own lack of religiosity.

Schweber (2007) also refers to some of the dilemmas she faced in deciding whether to take part in religious rituals in each of the schools she worked in. In my case, I was required to make decisions as to how I should behave during the religious rituals in Holy Cross. During prayers, I decided that it would be most appropriate and respectful for me to stop what I was doing and sit quietly with my head bowed, even though I did not actually take part in the prayers. This was proven to be the right decision, when a non-Catholic student teacher who was visiting the school did not take this approach and continued to write his notes while the class was praying. Afterwards, the teacher expressed displeasure at these events and asked my advice on how best to ask him to refrain from these behaviours in future.

During the morning, the teacher commented to me that she was worried that the new student was writing during the children's prayers and I suggested that it would be fine to ask him not to but she was worried to do this. We reflected that although I wasn't a Catholic I had bowed my head when they were praying out of respect. Thank God I had done that!
(Research Diary Extract, Holy Cross)

However, my approach to singing in assembly was different. Although I did not always feel comfortable singing overtly religious hymns, I ensured that I did sing in order to provide a role model for the boys in school. This is something that I always did in my role as a primary school teacher, in order to challenge popular discourses that construct singing and the arts as inappropriate for males. There were a few occasions when I simply did not know how to act, such as the class Mass, where I could not decide whether I should stand when everyone else did as a mark of respect, or stay sitting in my role as observer.

Some of the other social positionings also interacted with my religious identity. My White ethnicity no doubt provided me with a particular lens through which to view issues of religion in both of the schools and to some degree affected my interactions

with children and adults from similar or different ethnic backgrounds. I was also marked as different from most of the other people in the study schools purely through my male adult status and this will have impacted upon the research relationships that I developed (e.g. see Archer, 2003; Connolly, 2008; Corsaro, 2003). However, it was my sexuality that revealed itself to be one of the most important factors in making sense of my interactions with and experiences in the field, and the data that was generated as a result.

La Pastina (2006) discusses some of the issues facing gay and lesbian researchers in the field, particularly when undertaking fieldwork in socially conservative settings. As a gay man, I have never felt comfortable being open about my sexuality in the largely heterosexual family-orientated environment of the primary school. These feelings were further exacerbated by spending time in religious environments and with religious participants whose doctrines are not well known for their sympathy towards sexual orientations that do not fit within hetero-normative models. Consequently, like La Pastina (2006), I remained firmly in the closet during my time in both of the schools in order not to put at risk my access to the schools or to potential research participants. This inevitably meant that I was less comfortable particularly with adult participants and often needed to work hard to build rapport while at the same time closely manage my identity (for example by avoiding socialising with one of the teachers as mentioned earlier). Vanderbeck (2005) discusses how non-hegemonic masculine identities may come under scrutiny by research participants and this was also the case for me during my fieldwork in school. The most obvious example was when a boy in Rainbow Hill, aged 10, asked me whether or not I was gay. My frown and furrowed brow may have put a stop to that particular episode, but the incident points to the way in which sexuality will inevitably affect relationships in the field, even if undisclosed (see also La Pastina, 2006).

My social identity and religious positionality was therefore integral to the research process through the similarities and the differences that I shared with child and adult participants (Hopkins, 2007). The concept of 'betweenness' (Nast 1994, cited in Hopkins, 2009:6) can be useful for making sense of the fact that there will always be both similarities and differences with participants, as our social identities are complex and cross-cutting. While I may have been an adult and some of the participants were children, I still shared an interest in their religious experiences. While I may have been a gay man in a hetero-normative environment, I still shared a common Christian upbringing with many of my adult and child participants. While I may have presented myself as a researcher, I was still a trained primary school teacher bringing all of my

teaching experience to the role (see also Hopkins, 2009; Mohammad, 2001). Moreover, it is not always possible to know the full impact that such cross-cutting identities will have on research encounters. As Rose (1997) points out, the production of knowledge in research takes place within a fragile space, where performances of identity are uncertain and contain the potential for multiple readings and configurations of power. It was the nuances of these positions and relationships that resulted in the data generated in this research project.

3.4) Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined a range of methodological issues, including the research design and case study approach, discussions on ethnographic, interview and child-centred methods, a focus on mixed-method analysis and consideration of relevant ethical explorations. As a result of these discussions, I have identified a number of important practical tips for researchers engaging in similar empirical inquiry. These included the potential benefits of using vignette and case study approaches when exploring complex issues and values, the importance of support staff for gaining insight into educational institutions and the need for multi-lingual information for participants with English as an additional language. In addition, I have documented the development of three original child-centred methods involving both visual and kinaesthetic activities, and pointed to some of the organisational issues inherent in using them. The analytical value of these methods will be illuminated throughout the thesis.

A key point running through the discussion on research methods with children was the inadequacy in the way that power has been conceptualised in many of the previous debates on ethnographic and interview methods in particular. Gallagher (2008) has recently highlighted similar issues with participatory approaches in research with children, particularly in response to concerns over whether such methods can reinforce or challenge power relations. He argues that these debates have often drawn on an oppositional model of power, which views it as a commodity to be given away to children (or not), rather than recognising its more complex and fluid nature. Gallagher (2008) draws attention to the fact that researchers cannot avoid becoming caught up in the existing power dynamics of a particular fieldwork site and so can only hope to intervene in, rather than transcend strategies of adult domination. However, power does not need to be viewed in a negative way, because both child participants and

adult researchers can develop subtle tactics to confront power dynamics and resist wider domination.

My own observations regarding the child-centred methods in this research highlighted the limitations of such methods for 'transferring' power to children within an educational context, precisely because of its complex nature within pre-existing institutional power strategies. However, this did not need to be understood in a wholly negative way, because I was still able to use my own tactics to create a space for children to co-produce knowledge with me. Children did, therefore, experience a certain amount of participation and empowerment through the research relationships that we developed in that context. But the same could also be said of the ethnographic and interview techniques that I used with the children in my research. My power tactics were able to create a space for positive interview and ethnographic relationships with children and also to maintain them. In other ways, children used their practices and tactics to negotiate power dynamics and contribute to these research relationships on their own terms. All of the methods therefore enabled the co-construction of data through various forms of empowerment and participation for children. In my view, researchers should focus more on developing these positive relationships within particular contexts and less on the idea of 'giving power away' to children, in order to recognise and work productively with the nuanced nature of power dynamics in the field.

4) Religious Citizenship - Spaces of National Identity & Difference

In the summer term of 1998, the Islamia primary school in Brent, North West London became the first Muslim school to adopt Voluntary Aided status and join the state education system. Since then, a number of other state-funded schools with minority religious character have been established, and in 2009, there were 6 Muslim, 2 Sikh and 1 Hindu primary school within the Voluntary Aided sector. Despite lively debates over the impact of such developments for citizenship and national identity, these school numbers are still very small and are geographically confined to London and Birmingham. The majority of British pupils who come from minority faith families therefore do not attend these schools. Instead, parents are generally left to choose between Community schools or Christian-based schools if they wish their children to remain in the state sector. Issues concerning citizenship and national identity are therefore also relevant in these contexts. In this chapter, I begin by outlining the models of citizenship that were promoted in each of the two study schools, before considering the ways in which they related to wider national conceptions of citizenship. Next, I explore how these models influenced how religious minorities were catered for in each of the schools and the resultant religious citizenship they were defining. Finally, I examine some of the ways that parents from the majority religious communities responded to these arrangements and the significance of constructions of national identity for making sense of them.

4.1) School Citizenship Models

Marshall (1950 [1973]) originally defined citizenship in terms of civil/legal, political, and social rights, including aspects such as freedom of speech, the right to vote and access to the welfare state. Turner (1993) argues that a wider definition is required: one that sees citizenship as economical, legal, political, social and cultural *practices* rather than merely rights and responsibilities. He suggests that this definition is useful for identifying citizenship as socially constructed and as inherently sociological in the way that it encompasses social inequality and power differences. It also focuses our attention onto the role of the body in defining citizenship (Turner, 1996) and the importance of everyday citizenship practices that transcend the scalar boundaries of the global, national, regional and local (Dickenson *et al.*, 2008). While citizenship has for a long time been defined in the context of the nation state, forces of globalisation are increasingly challenging national sovereignty and redefining modes of citizenship (Delanty, 2000). Religious citizenship has also become increasingly significant in the

context of globalisation and international migration. For example, in the 2001 Census, at least five per cent of the population of England and Wales defined themselves as Muslim, Sikh, Hindu or Jewish (National Statistics website, www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/census2001.asp). It is against this social backdrop that English schools are charged with producing young citizens who are prepared for adult life in contemporary Britain.

The role of the institution as a mechanism for controlling and producing particular kinds of bodies, has long been recognised (e.g. Foucault, 1977; Philo & Parr, 2000). Given the widely accepted need to socialise and prepare the child for the 'adult world' it is unsurprising that the school is viewed, alongside the family, as a means to achieve this. For governments, the school is a way to intervene in a process of socialisation based primarily in the private sphere led by parents, families and peer groups (e.g. see Epstein, 1988 on gender). Aitken (1994:89) underlines the institutional nature of school space when he points to the way that "schools are teaching and judging children by a set of criteria reflecting the status quo and designed to maintain it." Practices in school can therefore be understood as attempts to create particular kinds of citizens. Examples include the way that health programmes have aimed to create responsible citizens who take individual health decisions for the good of society as a whole (see Rawlins, 2008), or the way that classroom strategies are used by teachers to inculcate good behaviour in children, in order to produce disciplined citizens (see Gallagher, 2005).

The introduction of Citizenship Education in England and Wales can also be seen as an attempt to create improved and more active citizens, capable of making individual decisions for the sake of the 'common good' (Parry, 2003; Ross, 2002). The Crick Report (QCA Advisory Group on Citizenship, 1998) provided a blueprint for the establishment of Citizenship Education from 2002 in England and Wales, constituting an attempt by the State to encourage individuals to adopt predefined values of citizenship and national identity, in response to concerns about the ways in which young people were participating in society (Crick, 2003; Lawson & Scott, 2002). This stemmed from a perception that young people were becoming increasingly apathetic, politically ignorant, anti-social and disengaged from their communities (Osler & Starkey, 2006). Although the citizenship curriculum is not compulsory at primary school level, elements of it are taught in many schools through the non-statutory Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education curriculum (PSHCE) (see QCA schemes of work website, www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/ks12citizenship/?view=get), and classroom activities such as 'Circle Time' (see Chapter 5). Elements of

Citizenship Education can also be found in other curriculum subjects such as Religious Education (RE), History and Geography (Claire, 2005; Gates, 2006; Watson, 2004; Young & Commins, 2002).

Despite this investment in curriculum-based Citizenship Education, everyday practices and discourses as part of the school ethos, and the kind of informal citizenship education that they convey, can be just as important as what is taught through the official curriculum (Brown, 2000). In the two schools in my research, these everyday practices and discourses were effectively constituting and promoting particular models of religious citizenship to children, as part of an informal Citizenship Education. In Rainbow Hill, the prevalent discourse was a citizenship based on an ethic of inclusion, tolerance, diversity and respect for difference. This was regularly reflected in interviews with teachers and staff at the school, who stressed the idea of tolerance, inclusion, respect and diversity as central to what the school was about.

INTERVIEWER:

I just wanted to start really by asking about the school ethos generally, and how you would describe the school ethos from your perspective?

CLASSTEACHER (Female Christian, Rainbow Hill):

Right erm, the school ethos is total inclusion. It's just that we, we look at everybody being a part of the school, whatever race, colour, religion, ethnic background, disability, erm every conceivable way, these children are welcome here. That's, that's our whole being. That's what we're about.

[...]

INTERVIEWER:

So how would you say the school, as part of its place in the community prepares children for living in a multicultural society?

CLASSTEACHER:

Ah this is my little hobby horse this one (laughs). I think that what we give the children is an understanding of world citizenship, because we are a microcosm of that here.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

CLASSTEACHER:

You know, we are not a one and two based religious establishment here. We have children from everywhere, every conceivable place. I mean, what do we call it, 22, 23 home languages spoken by our children?

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

CLASSTEACHER:

I mean that's huge, it's huge, and I think that's just wonderful, because within a class, children mix totally and utterly, because, why not? And I think that's an ethos that we can send our children out with...

The promotion of inclusion and tolerance was so central to school life, that children also reflected these discourses in their own accounts of school experiences. This included their desire to learn more about different people and their cultures and an awareness of the diverse character of humanity. Jeffrey also reflected recognition of the need to respect others during one of the interviews.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok but you did pray did you Jonathon [in assembly]?

JEFFERY (White Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill)

I'm not religious but...

JONATHON (Black Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill)

No but they just said that you should say Amen after they said.

JEFFERY:

To respect.

INTERVIEWER:

So you did?

JEFFERY:

To respect what they're doin' and stuff and respect the religion.

Although this citizenship ethic was something expressed by both teachers and children, it was the parents at Rainbow Hill who were most enthusiastic about it, particularly the idea of tolerance and ethnic and religious diversity. Reay *et al.* (2007) have explored the values of White middle class parents who choose to send their children to multicultural secondary schools located in inner-city areas. Parents in their study felt that children attending such schools would appreciate the importance of tolerance and understanding, and develop a commitment to civic responsibility. Additionally, they would also develop the ability to relate to other types of people, and gain in confidence and self-esteem. There was therefore a perceived material value in

children attending such schools, and the authors refer to this as 'multicultural capital'. Reay *et al.* (2007) argue that ethnic minorities were often seen as possessing similar shared values to White middle class families regarding the value of education, therefore distancing their children from White working class pupils. Ultimately, the 'darker shade of whiteness' still worked to privilege the White middle classes, although 'respectable' ethnic minorities could benefit from it too, at the expense of those working class children who were 'too' White or 'too' Black.

The parents in Rainbow Hill were generally not middle class, a fair number were non-White and many were not in a position to actively choose a school because of its multicultural character. Irwin (forthcoming) has questioned the reductionist and static account of class given by some qualitative educational researchers such as Reay *et al.* (2007), and points to a diversity of values and attitudes towards education within class groups. Despite the majority of parents in the school coming from backgrounds that were not middle class, they all expressed a similar ethic of tolerance and diversity, raising it as an aspect of school they were particularly impressed by. This was true of interviewees from all ethnic and religious groups, not just those White Christian parents. Indeed, many of the parents from minority faith backgrounds gave tolerance and diversity as a reason why they would not wish to send their children to a state-funded Muslim or Sikh school. Some of these parents also identified similar personal and material benefits that they felt their children would enjoy because of the multicultural nature of the school.

INTERVIEWER:

What do you particularly like about the school?

MONA (Asian Muslim Mother, Rainbow Hill):

Probably the tolerance levels of the teachers and also it's quite a mixed bag here.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah so...

MONA:

You've got people from different ethnic groups. I think that's what he could have more exposure to.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah, why do you think that will be a positive thing for him?

MONA:

I think getting to know different cultures really will broaden your horizon, getting to know more about other people. I think it will help them in the long

run, with regards to, you know, not discriminating against and being helpful and stuff like that.

Although the ethic of tolerance, inclusion and respect for difference was built around a rational understanding of a particular model of citizenship and a certain type of school community, it would be wrong to suggest that non-rational processes did not also play a part in the construction of this citizenship ethic. Ahmed (2004b) has pointed to the potential for emotions such as love and shame to be mobilised in support of normative concepts and ideals, including particular national models of citizenship such as multiculturalism. Alternatively, certain emotions may be viewed as inconsistent with good citizenship. Hughes (2007) has highlighted the way that envy over the unequal distribution of resources in society is morally condemned as inconsistent with national ideals of meritocracy and opportunity. An emotional aspect to the citizenship ethic promoted in Rainbow Hill was evident from the remarks of teaching staff. Statements such as 'this is my little hobby horse' and 'I think that's just wonderful', as in the class teacher's interview excerpt earlier (p.82-83), revealed an emotional component to these views. The enthusiastic tone in which many of the interviewees talked about the school's work in this area, also demonstrated a strong support for its citizenship ethic that reached beyond rational thought processes. Similarly, one of the staff at Holy Cross pointed to the emotional investment that she possessed in what her school was trying to achieve.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah so thinking about the classroom environment and the ethos generally, how important do you think emotions are in that, like children's emotions and your emotions for example?

CLASSTEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

I think it's hard if you obviously believe in something quite a lot, 'cos then you are sort of emotionally attached to it, it's not like when you're teaching them Numeracy and you're separated from it. When you're teaching them RE and things like that, it's things that you believe in isn't it.

In the case of Holy Cross, the citizenship ethic promoted was even described in emotional terms. Rather than inclusion, tolerance and respect for difference, the prevalent citizenship discourse in Holy Cross was one based on a love of God and the

belief that everyone was loved equally in God's eyes, regardless of their background. Christ and a love of Christ was understood to be central to everything that the school was about (see also Stock, 2005). This model of citizenship was therefore based on a strong Christian ethic.

INTERVIEWER:

I wondered if there were any other [values] that you'd like to add to that list?

HEAD TEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

Whenever I have a parent who comes in, or a new member of staff, I always say to them that the fundamental, one of the, or the key thing is that, it comes down to respect, in that I am no different in God's eyes than the youngest child who walks into nursery or the oldest member of staff, or the cleaner or whoever, or anybody who walks through the door. And that's where we have to come from as a school, so if we all actually believe that everybody is completely and unconditionally loved by God, full stop, then the principle thing then is that you have to respect that person, so I would hope that all the staff give as much respect to a child who comes from a dysfunctional background, with a parent who comes in and screams and f's and blinds at them, than they would to a really nice parent who's a lawyer. So it's that sort of thing, and that has taken quite a lot of work with the staff, that they can't, they have to talk about everybody they come into contact with in school, as if that person, because that person is unconditionally loved by God, so that's the way, the way it works, so that is yes quite a fundamental principle.

The idea that God loves everyone equally, regardless of their background was something that was reflected in children's and parents' comments during the interviews. Children of all religious backgrounds tended to de-emphasise the importance of differences between them, focusing instead on the way in which they were all part of God's family and would all be treated equally.

INTERVIEWER:

What makes all of you the same though?

JACK (Mixed Race Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

That, I think most of us believe in God.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

ADAM (*White Catholic Boy, Holy Cross*):

And how like we're all friends and we are part of God's family.

A number of adult interviewees in the school also talked about their support for tolerance and respect for others in the same way as in Rainbow Hill, and respect was certainly a key component of the Christian ethic expressed in the Head Teacher's quote earlier. However, diversity and difference only tended to be mentioned by staff members who were non-Catholic, or parents who were not so involved in the school. While these ideas were certainly not incompatible with the model of citizenship promoted by Holy Cross, the Christian ethic tended to emphasise sameness and equality a little more than individual differences. Such views were also consistent with the idea of gaining value from such informal citizenship education, and the concept of multicultural capital discussed earlier (see Reay *et al.*, 2007).

INTERVIEWER:

And at the end of Year 6, when [your son] finishes in school, what skills, values and outlooks would you like him to go away with?

SALLY (*White Christian Non-Catholic Mother, Holy Cross*):

I'm hoping that he grows as a person, and he believes that you know, there's more to life than just, you know, English and Numeracy and things, like you know, people are important and that basically he must treat everyone in the same way as he would like to be treated and you know, not to disrespect other people, whether they're you know, Muslim or Hindu, everyone is treated as equal. But yeah I mean that he should love everybody basically, I mean that's how I want him to grow up.

It is useful to think about the models of citizenship promoted in the two schools in terms of liberalism, civic republicanism and communitarianism. While liberalism holds the rights of the individual, autonomy and justice as fundamental tenets of society, civic republicanism and communitarianism both place group rights before the individual. Collective rights can be observed through the encouragement of civic participation for the 'common good' in society, as in civic republicanism, or through the promotion of particular community rights, such as ethnic and religious minority communities, as in

communitarianism (Dagger, 2002; Delanty, 2000; Low, 1999; Schuck, 2002). Writers such as Fukuyama (2006) point out that Western democracies have historically failed to resolve the potential conflicts between individual freedoms and the rights of cultural and religious groups. Faith schools are generally accepted as representing a compromise between the rights of the individual as in liberalism and the rights of the minority religious group as in communitarianism. Burtonwood (2003) argues that this can be beneficial for minority groups in society, if the model of faith schooling is 'moderate' rather than extreme. Flint (2007) suggests that the current growth of state-funded Muslim schools in Britain represents an attempt from the state to accommodate a minority religious group along with its communitarian values within the liberal schooling system. He compares this to the growth of state Catholic schools in the 19th Century, which also had similar political objectives.

Unsurprisingly, Holy Cross in my study promoted a model of citizenship that leaned towards the communitarian end of the spectrum. The Christian ethic, with its emphasis on a love of God and everyone being equal in the eyes of God was more concerned with teaching the collective values of Catholicism rather than focusing on individual rights and differences. In contrast, the emphasis on an ethic of inclusion, tolerance and respect for difference in Rainbow Hill, tended to lean more towards the liberal end of the spectrum. However, these differences were not definitive but more a matter of emphasis, as both schools were part of the state sector and therefore heavily influenced by national citizenship discourses. Kong (2005b) has illustrated how faith schools may both conflict and converge with state citizenship discourses through a case study of Muslim schools in Singapore. She shows how practices within these schools were able to simultaneously contradict and complement national agendas concerned with multiculturalism and modernity. The schools in my research also maintained a complex relationship with the State, particularly Holy Cross, which as a jointly funded institution, was required to balance its communitarian responsibility towards the Catholic community with its liberal responsibility towards the State.

A number of authors have pointed to the influence of neo-liberal state values in education (e.g. Gordon *et al.*, 2000; Mitchell, 2003), and although there were slightly different models of citizenship promoted in each of the study schools, the influence of neo-liberal citizenship values was very strong in both schools. This included the promotion and celebration of individual achievement, as well as the development of individual responsibility through the informal curriculum. The current citizenship education agenda includes elements of civic republicanism alongside liberalism (Lockyer, 2003a), and in line with this, there was also a certain amount of civic

republicanism apparent in the non-curriculum practices of both schools. Indeed, the Catholic education documentation makes constant reference to Catholic schools contributing to the 'common good' (Stock, 2005), in the same way as the general Citizenship Education guidance for all schools emphasises active participation in society (National Curriculum Online, www.nc.uk.net). These neo-liberal and civic republican influences were demonstrated through events such as charity appeals and involvement in community events. They were also reflected in tasks that the children were required to undertake in the classroom, or through reward assemblies, where individual children were handed certificates and prizes or school sports teams were congratulated on their successes.

After break, in class, the teacher went through the ethos statement, which was 'I know when to ask for help and who to go to'. They had a long discussion about the need to listen and try things out for themselves, rather than asking for help straight away. The example of the 1950s school room trip was given, when they really did have to listen. As they were now in upper Key Stage 2, they needed to show more individual responsibility, and ask a partner or think for themselves instead of relying on teachers. They were asked to think quietly and make comments about what they would personally do to improve on this, and the teacher said the 'star of the week' on Friday would be someone who had tried hard to show independent working, individual responsibility and initiative. The teaching assistants also added comments about it being children's responsibility to make sure they brought their PE and swimming kits and that this was part of growing up (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill).

In summary, there were two different models of citizenship promoted in the study schools. While Rainbow Hill encouraged an ethic of inclusion, tolerance and respect for difference, Holy Cross focused on a love of God and the way that God loves everyone equally, regardless of their background. Rainbow Hill therefore leant more towards the liberal end of the citizenship spectrum, compared with Holy Cross, which was placed nearer to the Communitarian model. However, these differences were a matter of degree, and both schools were heavily influenced by State neo-liberal and civic republican citizenship practices. Both of these models received ample support in school, and teaching staff demonstrated an emotional investment in what they were trying to achieve. So far, I have not discussed religion extensively, but the way that

both of the schools approached the accommodation of minority religious pupils was strongly influenced by the above models, and determined the type of religious citizenship they were promoting. This will be explored in the next section.

4.2) Recognising and Accommodating Pupils from Minority Religions

Earlier in the chapter, I discussed how citizenship has traditionally been associated with the development of a set of rights for individual citizens (see Marshall, 1950 [1973]). In Western democracies, these rights have gradually been extended to minority groups such as lesbians and gay men, disabled people and members of diasporic communities, as a result of decades of political campaigning (Valentine, 2001). In the case of immigrants and ethnic/religious minorities, different citizenship models have developed through time as a means of accommodating these groups. For example, access to citizenship rights can be explained by the principle of *jus soli* (law of the soil), where individuals gain automatic citizenship in the country they were born in, or by the principle of *jus sanguinis* (law of the blood), where individuals gain national citizenship rights based on ethnic ancestry (Cesarani, 1996; Weil, 1996). Similarly, states may expect immigrants to adopt the cultural identity of the host society and population (integration/assimilation), or create policies to allow different cultures to co-exist without favouritism (multiculturalism) (Entzinger & Carter, 1989). While Britain has often taken a broadly multicultural approach to minorities in the past (Bryant, 1997), several writers have noted the move away from multiculturalist policies in favour of integration in recent years (e.g. Joppke, 2004; Mitchell, 2004).

Debates in England over Muslim schools in the 1990s drew on these competing constructions of citizenship, proponents emphasising the rights of minorities to maintain their cultural values and opponents emphasising the responsibility of minorities to 'integrate' into 'mainstream culture' (Dwyer, 1993). Similar debates have taken place over the school curriculum and the extent to which multiculturalism should play a role in education. In the 1970s, multicultural education aimed to increase tolerance and sensitivity to other cultures, but was heavily criticised for treating minority cultures as fixed and restricting lessons to superficially celebrating diversity and difference (Gillborn, 2004; Jackson, 1997). Since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988, schools have been required to promote children's 'cultural development' and the most recent guidance makes reference to pupil's understanding of their own and other cultures and the need for schools to promote cultural diversity and anti-racism (Ofsted, 2004). However, critics have maintained that this aspect of the

curriculum now has a much lower profile than in the 1970s (e.g. Ogden, 2000). Mitchell (2003) argues that neo-liberal education systems have increasingly aimed to produce 'strategic cosmopolitan' citizens, who possess knowledge about other cultures, but only in order to successfully compete in a neo-liberal global economy rather than develop a commitment to the redistribution of power.

According to Kymlicka (2007:80), multiculturalism pursues both the 'politics of identity' and the 'politics of interests', or to put this another way, through recognition of minority cultures on the one hand and accommodation of minority groups through the redistribution of power on the other. At the level of nation states, recognition might include publicly valuing the contributions of minority groups to world history, ensuring that members of the group are visible in media programming, or making particular efforts to avoid negative stereotyping. Accommodation and redistribution of power might include the revision of discriminatory institutional rules or practices such as dress codes, language requirements and public holidays. Historically, where recognition for minority groups has finally been achieved, this has often been used as a springboard for the subsequent development of appropriate accommodations for these groups (Kymlicka, 2007). The distinction between 'recognition' and 'accommodation' is useful for making sense of the way that the two schools in my research catered for their religious minorities and to identify where they were positioned on the continuum of multiculturalism to integration.

At the study schools in my research, there were a number of everyday contexts and practices through which minority faiths and religious diversity could be recognised and acknowledged. In Rainbow Hill, the model of citizenship that promoted an ethic of inclusion, tolerance, diversity and respect for difference was further reflected through the recognition of other faiths in contexts such as RE lessons that covered a range of religions alongside Christianity. Nesbitt (2004) reports that multi-faith schools increasingly celebrate a range of religious festivals such as Diwali and Eid, although they may create multiple meanings in the way that they either perpetuate or modify traditions of celebration. The significance of non-Christian festivals was particularly well covered in assemblies and informal RE input in the study class I observed. These were a common theme across many of the interviews and provide a useful case study into some of the citizenship issues under consideration.

INTERVIEWER:

Festivals - you said Harvest Festival and Christmas. Do you celebrate any other festivals?

CLASSTEACHER (Female Agnostic, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah we celebrate Diwali, not always as a whole school but certainly at the time of Diwali, there might be, you know, lower down the school there might be doing some sort of art work or the, I can't think what they're called now.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh the lamps?

CLASSTEACHER:

Yeah and at the end of Ramadan, we've had Eid parties in the past. We have a Christmas celebration and an Easter, like an Easter assembly. I mean, there are sometimes other things that come in as well. We might have a, one of the ethos statements is like stories from other faiths and other festivals and things, so different things come up, but I'd say that they're the main...

INTERVIEWER:

So I mean is that generally decided on the basis of what would be meaningful for the children? So I mean, you do kind of festivals from the school community, so they wouldn't be celebrating something that's not part of the school community?

CLASSTEACHER:

Yeah. No, for example, during Ramadan, some of the children have brought in their prayer mats and showed the other children those and sort of talked about why they pray and why they're fasting. Not a big special assembly, but part of a normal week, as that's important for the children to explain why things might look a bit different in school.

In the interviews, children also reflected on how they had learnt about religions such as Islam, Judaism and Christianity in past RE lessons and also celebrated various festivals in different ways.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok do you ever celebrate other religious festivals like Diwali?

MARY & KAVITA

No.

KAVITA (Asian Sikh Girl, Rainbow Hill)

Yeah.

MARY (Black Christian Girl, Rainbow Hill)

Diwali, we do celebrate Diwali sometimes.

INTERVIEWER

But not many others?

KAVITA

No, but Diwali we just did once I think, because when these, yeah in my country, from my religion these people came who dressed up like my God, like we do, these two people they told us about the story, how they make Diwali, what they do in the streets and all that.

Although both of the above quotes indicate the acknowledgement of a range of non-religious festivals in school, they also point to the limits of this approach in school. Diwali and Eid were marked and discussed, but were not celebrated to the same extent as the Christian festivals. The Head Teacher insisted that the lack of whole school celebrations for these festivals was down to lack of organisation, rather than deliberate omissions, but Christmas was a much bigger event and it seemed unlikely that this would have been forgotten due to lack of organisation. The Christmas celebrations in school were high in profile and Christmas trees and decorations were present in some of the classrooms. At the start of one of the nativity plays, the Head Teacher made a point of saying that the school would not be cancelling Christmas as the media had reported other schools had done that year. Despite the lack of religion in school generally, and the desire to value diversity, Christianity still took precedence to a certain extent.

INTERVIEWER:

I know this sounds kind of an odd question really, because there isn't much religion in school, but the extent to which there is, would you say that Christianity still has, as the school is kind of not really Christian, would you say that Christianity still has a bit of a kind of top place above the others in some way?

CLASSTEACHER (Female Christian, Rainbow Hill):

Yes I mean it would do in the sense that we celebrate the two major festivals, throughout the school in some way, so I suppose it has, and most

of the teaching staff are White and with Christianity in their backgrounds probably somewhere, so it is perhaps the default level for school isn't it?

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

CLASSTEACHER:

So I suppose in a sense it is, it is of higher, no, no no, no, no. It's where the staff's knowledge is, but having said that I know that there are White staff here, who will come and ask because they don't know something that appears to me to be particularly basically Christian knowledge.

[...]

INTERVIEWER:

I mean, I know that you had a Christian group in last week in assembly, I mean do you have groups from other religions come in for example?

CLASSTEACHER:

I haven't seen any come in no, not for a whole assembly no. No they come because, well they come every term. They ask to come, we don't ask them, they ask to come to us, and they, you see they run for this neighbourhood and the Kidz club and so on like that, but no they, no not on the whole. If there's anybody that comes in from another faith, they will come into a class or a year group, during their RE time, or children will go to Mosque, visit a Mosque, you know those sorts of things, so you know we do have resource, you know resourcing in that way, but not visiting.

Many of the children also discussed the merits of celebrating minority religious festivals more in school during the paired interviews. While some were in favour of doing so in order to experience what their friends participated in, others felt that it was more appropriate for children from minority religions to celebrate them at home because the festivals were more meaningful for them. The issue of religion in public and private space will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok. Do you ever celebrate say Eid or things like that in school?

BILLY (White Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

Not in school, they do it outside school.

[...]

INTERVIEWER:

Do you think that you should, that it would be nice to celebrate Eid or Diwali in school, or are you not bothered?

JOHN (White Agnostic Boy, Rainbow Hill):

They told us to be, but it's boring a little.

INTERVIEWER:

It gets a bit boring. What do you think Billy?

BILLY:

Well school?

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah 'cos you celebrate Christmas, and you do harvest festival and Easter, so do you think you should do Eid and Diwali and things like that from other religions as well, or not?

BILLY:

I think for the people who are celebrating Eid, they should just do it for them.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok.

BILLY:

Because the others, other people don't celebrate Eid.

As well as acknowledging different religions in school, the institution also catered for and accommodated particular religious needs. Smith (2005) found that lunch times in school can be a time when difference is reinforced, due to religious food requirements, and Nesbitt (2004) has highlighted the significance of food for the negotiation of children's religious identities. Some of the children only ate Halal meat or were vegetarians due to their religion and this was catered for through the school dinner service. Other religious requirements included dress needs, where for example, Sikh children were permitted to wear religious bangles and many of the Muslim girls wore headscarves to school. An attempt was also made to cater for prayer needs, for example through allocating the school library as a Muslim prayer space during Ramadan. Another aspect of religious needs involved withdrawal requests. Parents had the right to withdraw their children from assemblies, RE lessons and Sex and Relationships Education (see Epstein & Johnson, 1998), and such requests were always respected, although they were generally quite rare. Children from minority religions would take the day off school on festivals such as Eid and Ramadan and this was accepted as a legitimate reason for absence. Rainbow Hill therefore tried to take

an open and accommodating approach to these needs as part of their commitment to an ethic of tolerance and respect for difference.

INTERVIEWER:

In terms of religion, in terms of a more formal thing. Do you think that, I mean have there been any kind of issues, where parents haven't been happy with particular things that have gone on the curriculum because of their religion? Perhaps they have particularly strong beliefs that they don't...

CLASSTEACHER (Female Agnostic, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah. I mean, I think we're always really careful about that and it's something, I mean I think almost looking at different religions and beliefs, whether it's looking at books with multicultural images and things like that, we'd always try not to sort of offend people. So it doesn't happen very often. When we go up to church, like at Christmas, if we're doing, like a nativity or something, then, I was going to say Muslim children, but children of all religions have got the option to opt out if they don't want, you know.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

CLASSTEACHER:

And occasionally that does happen. On the other hand, you know, we've had Muslim kings and I think we had a Muslim Joseph, so you know what I mean? We really want all religions to be included, so whilst we give people the option, or parents the option of keeping their children out, we also want to be inclusive, and there's no reason why, if it's a Christian theme, that you can't have children from other religions taking part as well. In the past we've had Jehovah's Witnesses who have gone out, come into assembly but just before we sing a hymn or say a prayer or whatever.

[...]

CLASSTEACHER:

Most children sort of accept that we've got children from all over, so at certain times, there might be children fasting, and you know, we make allowances for that. But I remember, you know, we've been doing food things and it's happened to be when children are fasting and you know, they just haven't been able to taste things. But I mean, you try and work round that if you can, but you know, I don't sort of change the curriculum round to sort of fit in with children who are fasting, but then that's their

choice. And I mean, I know a parent last year who came and said oh her daughter had said that I'd been really kind and kept asking her if she was alright when she was fasting. So you know, we try to be caring in that respect. The library is available for children to pray as well, I don't know if you might have seen some of the Muslim children coming up as well [...]. Some Muslim children have come up to pray, and we have done that at the old school as well, so you know it's important.

Children showed a good awareness of others' religious needs in the paired interviews and many of the parents were also happy with the school's provision for these requirements.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok do some of the children in school eat different foods at lunchtime, or wear different things because of their religion?

NICOLE & BETTY:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah? Can you think of any examples?

NICOLE (Black Christian Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah Aisha.

BETTY (Mixed Race Christian Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah Aisha, she wears a, I've forgotten the name.

NICOLE:

It's kind of a cloth that covers her hair.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh the hijab?

NICOLE:

Yeah the hijab. She wears that, 'cos, she told me that she wears that because that shows, when you are about seven in the [Qu'ran], it says that every single woman should cover her hair.

BETTY:

Erm, anybody else have something different? (to Nicole)

NICOLE:

Ahuh, [Aisha] as well (laughs), she doesn't, she doesn't eat meat.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok, do you think that the school provides for your children's religious needs in terms of food and things like that, eating the right kind of food?

SHABINA (Asian Muslim Mother, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah they do because I put them down as vegetarians, because we only eat meat if it's Halal, and they have done, and when they started school meals, I did fill in the form that they get vegetarian meals yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok, I don't know whether [Mahir] took part in the prayers during Ramadan, as I know they had them in the library at lunchtime.

SHABINA:

Yeah he did yeah. He went to that for prayer. I was happy with that yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

So you were pleased that.... they put that provision on?

SHABINA:

They did that yeah.

Again, this provision for religious minorities within a Christian secular schooling context (see Chapter 6) could only go so far, as there will always be a certain amount of incompatibility between liberally influenced education and values of particular religious communities (Archard, 2003; Kymlicka, 2003). Staff explained that while they tried to be respectful of difference when it came to religious jewellery and Physical Education, health and safety would always need to come first in such situations. Similarly, on the issue of religious festivals, while children would always be permitted to take the day off school in order to celebrate with their family, the school would not be changing its year structure to build these festivals into the holiday calendar.

INTERVIEWER:

Right ok, and where say children are having the day off on those days, do you think that all pupils in the school should be given the day off on celebratory days that aren't Christian?

HEAD TEACHER (Male Agnostic, Rainbow Hill):

No (laughs).

INTERVIEWER:

Can I ask why that is?

HEAD TEACHER:

Oh it would, because where do we draw the line? And whose festivals? I know as a point of principle you could say well yes everybody should. Practically, the impact you know, I don't think would have the effect, or the desired effect that you would want it to.

Similar limitations in accommodating minority religious needs were also highlighted by children and parents in the interviews. Interestingly, these included the religious requirements of minority Christian families who complained about the lack of prayer space and respect for the Friday Sabbath, as well as Muslim children who complained about the lack of choice they experienced on restricted school dinners, or problems with bringing in prayer mats to school. Some Sikh and Muslim parents also suggested that the school could celebrate religious festivals in a more prominent way, or provide classes for languages such as Urdu.

INTERVIEWER:

When you're praying in the library, how do you feel when you are doing that?

VANESSA (*Black Muslim Girl, Rainbow Hill*):

We feel normal, we just pray like normal.

ZAM (*Black Muslim Girl, Rainbow Hill*):

And there's sometimes, we're supposed to bring our mats, but sometimes we don't have those big bags to bring our mats so we bring those [pillowslips] and they don't [stay clean], 'cos everyone sits on it.

VANESSA & ZAM:

(laughs)

INTERVIEWER:

Ok, oh so everyone sits on the bag?

ZAM:

Yeah.

VANESSA:

Yeah and sometimes so we're worried that it might not be.

ZAM:

[Clean]

VANESSA:

[...] They might, so sometimes we're worried that it might not be clean. Some people sit on it, maybe they step on it.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh.

VANESSA:

And in our prayer mat, it's supposed to be clean.

HANNA (Black Pentecostal Mother, Rainbow Hill):

And the other thing, I don't know it was one day at school. There are certain times when they are supposed to go and pray, but being children, I don't think they're really following it.

INTERVIEWER:

So maybe the school could encourage them to do that?

HANNA:

Yeah, 'cos Muslims they do go and pray.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah during Ramadan they go to the library.

GAMBA (Black Pentecostal Father, Rainbow Hill):

During Ramadan yeah, during Ramadan.

HANNA:

But with my children, yeah, with my children, I don't think they, they do it. 'Cos it's one of them is that each and every, after every three hours, you should go and pray from 6, 9, 12, 3, 5 of which I don't think the children manage to do it. If myself I find it really difficult to do it at work.

In summary, Rainbow Hill, with its liberal-influenced model of citizenship based on an ethic of inclusion, tolerance, diversity and respect for difference made many attempts both to acknowledge other faiths and to accommodate minority religious needs. This meant that the everyday citizenship practices that took place within the institution effectively positioned the school more towards the multicultural end of the multicultural-integration spectrum. The link between the liberal and the multicultural models of citizenship is quite unsurprising, given that multiculturalism has generally been developed in liberal democracies by liberalising political forces (Kymlicka, 2007). Rainbow Hill in my study certainly went further than the superficial approach of some

traditional multicultural education (see Jackson, 1997), and also represented more than education for 'strategic cosmopolitan' citizenship (see Mitchell, 2003), but there were also limits to this multiculturalism. The school was effectively constructed around a Christian secular model of citizenship that accommodated minorities to a certain extent, but was unable to elevate these religions to the same status as Christianity. The values and legal rules of the State, such as health and safety legislation and school attendance requirements, also placed restrictions on how far these accommodations could go. However, there were some moves that the school could have made without too much difficulty to improve provisions for religious minorities. These included finding the time to organise whole school celebrations during non-Christian festivals and talking to children about how their prayer mats should be stored.

The situation in Holy Cross was very different, and this was partly related to the fact that the school population was less diverse than in Rainbow Hill, but also the different model of citizenship offered, with its communitarian characteristics based around a love of God and an equal love of others regardless of their background. Similarities were emphasised much more than differences, and this impacted upon provision for minority faiths. This approach therefore positioned the school much nearer to the integration end of the multicultural-integration spectrum, in comparison with Rainbow Hill. Teaching staff in Holy Cross made efforts to highlight its multicultural and multi-faith credentials during interviews, but in reality, recognition of minority religions was restricted to limited weeks in the curriculum and isolated events in school, unlike the more regular coverage in Rainbow Hill. This included a new event called 'One World Week', which the school was organising for later in the year, to include work on different cultures and faiths and link with Christian charity appeals. In the curriculum, there were some efforts to include multi-cultural themes, such as Aboriginal art, but these were quite superficial in nature, in tune with criticisms of multicultural education from previous decades (see Jackson, 1997). Minority religious festivals were occasionally mentioned in passing if a child in the class had celebrated one at home, but this was much less thoroughly applied than in Rainbow Hill. There was certainly no question of minority religious festivals being celebrated on a whole school basis, as the calendar was completely dominated by Catholic festivals.

INTERVIEWER:

How are you kind of preparing children for living in a multicultural society?

You'd started to talk about big cultures week, or big world week?

HEAD TEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

Yeah we've got 'One World Week' coming up, that's our first year that we're doing that. One of the things that I think really just goes a long way for us is that we naturally have a balance of different faiths and cultures and that are actually quite a good reflection of the country. So the majority are White, but we have a good smattering of ethnic minorities and also the travelling community, so there's no, it is truly multicultural within school in terms of what the country is like, so that, I think that helps. Of course again it goes back to the principles of respect, you know, if everybody is totally loved by God then, you know, everybody is exactly the same in terms of how God feels about them and therefore we should feel about them in the same way if we want to be more like God.

The limited extent to which the school acknowledged other religions, compared with Rainbow Hill, was underlined well in RE. Bailey (2002) points to the different approaches to RE in faith schools. Church of England Voluntary Controlled schools will usually teach the Locally Agreed syllabus with 50% coverage of non-Christian religions in the same way as Community schools, and Church of England Voluntary Aided schools will typically spend 20%-50% considering how other religions compare to Christianity, as part of a local diocese syllabus. In contrast, Catholic schools focus primarily on the confessional sharing of the Catholic faith. Rainbow Hill followed a syllabus that focused on knowledge and understanding of different religions, alongside the promotion of social cohesion and respect, and the encouragement of individual spiritual development (Everington, 2000). However, approaches to RE that consider different belief systems from a critical perspective are often unpopular with some faith groups (e.g. see Copley, 1997), as it tends to portray religion as a private choice and some parents believe that this encourages scepticism among pupils (Ipgrave, 1999). Subsequently, RE in Holy Cross focused much more on children's own religious knowledge of Catholicism and only included a few isolated weeks for the study of other religions. This is despite research that has shown school RE to be one of the most important sources of information on other religions for children and young people (Baumann, 1996).

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah, there's kind of a big debate nationally about RE in community schools about the extent to which they, which agendas they have. Whether

they teach knowledge about religions, tolerance between different religions, or personal development of the spirituality and I wondered how you felt kind of the Catholic RE fits into that?

CLASSTEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

I feel that, I feel we could do more, within Catholic schools to learn about other religions. We only have, we have two, two separate sets of weeks, world faith weeks, where we do Islam, we do Judaism, where we learn about other faiths and I feel that obviously other schools get, give their children more knowledge. They do a different topic all the time, so they probably do six in the year and learn about lots of different religions.

In the paired interviews, children also reflected on the lack of coverage of other religions in their experiences of RE.

AHMED (Mixed Race Muslim Boy, Holy Cross):

I don't, something I don't like about RE is because, 'cos it's supposed to be like a multicultural school, rather than just Catholic and sometimes we, we usually sometimes we only spend like a couple of weeks on something like Islam or Judaism or Hinduism, and we spend the whole rest of the so many weeks on Christianity and stuff.

Similarly, on the issue of religious minority needs, Holy Cross demonstrated that it would make some moves towards accommodating such requirements, but only to a certain extent. This generally meant that children would be given the opportunity to opt out of taking part in various activities, such as school prayers and services, rather than the school proactively making provision for extra needs. This contrasted with Rainbow Hill, which had made efforts to provide Muslim prayer space and inclusive whole school activities. One example of this restrictive approach to accommodating the needs of religious minorities was the school's policy on assemblies and collective worship. Webster (1995:35) points to three main models for collective worship that schools may adopt: 'Christian', 'Secular' and 'Inter-Faith'. While some limited engagement with secular and interfaith models might have allowed for a more inclusive approach to minorities, Holy Cross stayed very rigidly to a Christian confessional model, meaning that religious minorities were required to abstain from taking part in sections of them.

INTERVIEWER:

So with the children from other religions that you've had in school, how are they, how do you kind of deal with, because it's a Catholic school, how is that dealt with in terms of their kind of religious needs, in terms of prayers and dress, food...?

CLASSTEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

I think we've taught them to, sort of quietly respect our religion, join in the things that they want to and they're allowed to. Like for example in RE, I had some Muslim children in my class last year and they weren't allowed to draw pictures of God. So it just means you just make allowances, so say you are going to do this work, because obviously you've chosen to come to this school, but obviously it's against your religion to draw God so they don't do that. Or they normally come to the services but don't take part in them, like we've got Ash Wednesday Mass next week so they'll come to the Mass but they won't go for the ashes.

Children also had a certain amount of awareness about minority religious needs and differences, not quite to the extent that children in Rainbow Hill did, but certainly indicative of the fact that they were used to being around children of different religions and cultures. Some of the interviewees mentioned how their Muslim classmate would fast during Ramadan and would not join in with the Catholic prayers in the classroom and assembly. However, children often downplayed the significance of religious differences in the interviews, showing consistency with the idea of everyone being loved equally in the eyes of God.

INTERVIEWER:

So I suppose the last question is then really, does it bother you that you're not a Catholic in a Catholic school?

LOUISE (White Agnostic Girl, Holy Cross):

No.

LUKE (White Agnostic Boy, Holy Cross):

No.

JAMES (White Christian Non-Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

No not really.

LOUISE:

It doesn't really bother people, we just get on with each other.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

LOUISE:

We don't really think about our religions, we try to get on with each other in school.

In the staff interviews, I got the distinct impression that while the school obviously did make allowances for minority pupils when necessary, the issue was not seen as a particularly easy one to deal with and sometimes even an unnecessary distraction from the values and purpose of Holy Cross. For example, if a family wanted their child to be withdrawn from assemblies, the Head Teacher said this would be strongly discouraged for practical reasons of supervision.

INTERVIEWER:

You said something a minute ago about parents who hadn't been happy with things that have happened in the school because of their beliefs, and particularly in the curriculum. And it can go either way I think with people perhaps being very religious and not happy with something or the opposite, I mean do you have, does that happen very often in school?

HEAD TEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

No. It happened a lot when I first came because the school was, was falling apart and for the school to function, I had to get the numbers in and I just, anyone who walked through the door, we'd give them a place, 'cos we had to have the money, we had to survive. The last two years, I'm very, very clear with parents before they come in about what this school offers. So I would say to them quite categorically, this is what we do, this is how we do it, this is how we integrate children from other faiths, and you are very, very welcome to come to our school, because we have people from all cultures, faiths, but if you don't like what you're hearing, then please go to another school, you know find out what it's like at another school, because there is absolutely no point in having somebody here who is going to be actively against the, what we're trying to do.

The only Muslim child involved in the interviews told me that this lack of provision for his religious needs was not something that he was overly concerned about. It was generally accepted that the school was a Catholic school and so would not be expected to provide for his inclusion in all of the activities. Teachers in the interviews also pointed out that the handful of parents from religious minority families who had chosen the school had done so because of its strong emphasis on moral codes of behaviour and the high regard for religion in general (see also Q News 1993, cited in Halstead, 1994:321), while accepting that their child's particular religious needs might not be catered for in the same way as at home.

INTERVIEWER:

Right I should have, I didn't ask this earlier, but when you are in assembly and you're not able to pray, and also you don't pray in the class, do you mind not praying, does that bother you because you're the only one not praying? (to Ahmed)

AHMED (Mixed Race Muslim Boy, Holy Cross):

Well, it doesn't really bother me 'cos it's not like an Islamic school or something like that, so it doesn't really bother me and I can pray whenever I want at any time. I feel like I can just pray.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok, are there any places where you go to pray if you want to pray on your own?

AHMED:

I think...

INTERVIEWER:

I mean at school.

AHMED:

I think, I think [the Head Teacher] once said we were getting a prayer garden soon, or something like that, or when you just sit in a corner, or in the, in like the seating area.

Although the model of religious citizenship at Holy Cross, with its emphasis on similarities and integration, did not create too much concern for Ahmed, these findings do still raise questions about how well religious minorities are catered for within Christian schools. Bloemraad (2006) has drawn on empirical evidence to argue that migrants are more likely to flourish in countries with strong multicultural policies than

countries that focus more on integration. If pupils from minority faiths experience less recognition and fewer accommodations in school, then it is not unreasonable to consider whether or not their education and wellbeing could also be affected. Clearly this is an area that requires much more research, but it is likely to become more and more relevant as migrant communities continue to grow (see BBC News Online, 21/10/07, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7055285.stm>) and increasing numbers of state-funded faith schools are encouraged to admit a proportion of children from different faith backgrounds (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2007). In this situation, Catholic and other Christian schools will also need to grapple more with the reaction from their parents to provisions for minority faiths. It is this issue that I will explore in the next section.

4.3) A Christian Country and a Catholic School?

The concept of national identity is an important one in citizenship debates. Although national identities can be understood as imagined and constructed (Anderson, 1983; Sharp, 1996), they are more than just distant ideas. Nationalism engages the corporeal non-rational self as well as the reasoned imagination, as a powerful and emotive force (e.g. see Ignatieff, 1994; Wood, 2007). Politicians and the media often portray 'Britishness' as a fixed and unchanging cultural identity, which immigrants should integrate into. This is often presented as a responsibility that immigrants must take on in return for the rights that accompany British citizenship. In actual fact, national cultures can be understood as heterogeneous and complex traditions in a constant state of flux (Chambers, 1993). An understanding of space and place as fluid and interconnected also problematises the idea of a bounded national culture linked with a particular location and insulated from the rest of the region, country and world (see Massey, 1993). Isin & Wood (1999) argue that the idea of a homogenous national culture with a set of common values is a fallacy, and those who advocate it are attempting to suppress diversity in order to maintain social power structures. Despite this, the idea of common national identity remains salient (see Valentine, 2001) and is often developed in opposition to what is deemed incompatible with these values.

Following the classic study by Said (1978) on Western societies and their construction of the Orient as something different and exotic, we have been more aware of the importance of the 'other' for making sense of ourselves. For centuries, Western societies built their identities in asymmetrical opposition to the imagined idea of uncivilized foreign countries overseas. But 'dangerous others' are not only imagined in

opposition to national groups, but also as present within nations themselves, resulting in political oppression towards different minority groups at different times (Gilroy, 1990; Parker *et al.*, 1992). Though in reality, minority cultures are also extremely fluid and heterogeneous, particularly in the context of the diaspora, where hybrid cultures develop through merging processes (Bhabha, 1994; Dwyer, 1999). The Christian nature of British society has been reflected throughout history in the entwining of Church and State (Aldridge, 2000; Davie, 1994), and against this backdrop, a range of religious 'others' have historically been singled out for various types of persecution, including Catholics, Jews and Pagans. Currently, the religious 'other' is much more likely to be defined as Muslim, both in terms of perceived threats from Islamic states such as Iran, and the fear of terrorism often associated with members of diasporic Muslim communities within Britain (e.g. see Daily Mail Online, 23/02/07, www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-438060/Iran-vows-continue-nuclear-programme-bitter-end.html; Taylor, 2006). Modood (2005) has highlighted how Muslims can be differentiated from other Asians in selective 'othering' processes that focus on particular cultures being incompatible with 'British culture'.

Fears about particular minority religious groups and the impact that accommodating them could have on the host culture were widely, if subtly, raised by Christian or White Agnostic parents during the interviews in Rainbow Hill. While parents were generally keen to emphasise that they were in favour of their children learning about other faiths and cultures, particularly in the context of the School's ethic of tolerance and respect for difference, concerns were also raised about achieving the right balance. Kymlicka (2007) points to the power of multiculturalism to transform and renegotiate the cultural identity of both the dominant and the subordinate group, requiring the adoption of new relationships and concepts. Such changes can sometimes create a backlash from the dominant group and similar processes, albeit at a smaller scale, were apparent in some of parent responses at Rainbow Hill. Their concerns were generally expressed in terms of the dangers of 'going too far' with the accommodation of minorities, and the need to remember and demonstrate Britain's Christian heritage in school, for example through maintaining the primacy of Christian celebrations.

INTERVIEWER:

You talked about when they looked at different festivals. Actually, I mean they do have a big kind of celebration at Christmas as you know, and Easter. At Diwali and Eid, generally, classes might talk about those festivals

in the class, but they wouldn't have quite such a big, kind of school wide festival. I mean do you think that's the right balance?

SARAH (Black Christian Mormon Mother, Rainbow Hill):

I do, simply because this is England and it's a Christian country.

INTERVIEWER:

And the school needs to reflect that?

SARAH:

And I think that you can't take that out of the school completely. I think that it does need to have a bigger kind of celebration than the other religions, because, and that's what I always say to people that say, oh well it shouldn't have any place in there it all, it's like "this is England!". If I went to another country to live for a while, I would expect them to big up their beliefs at that particular time, and it'd just be you know, the Christian faith would probably just be mentioned in passing. So because we live in England, and because it's a Christian country, I think that yes it's right, in my opinion.

Kymlicka (2007) highlights the potential of wider geo-political threats to reduce support for multicultural policies aimed at particular groups. He argues that concerns about terrorism have increased opposition in Western states to recognising and accommodating Muslim groups for this reason. Some of the parents in Rainbow Hill were concerned about particular events where they had felt that the tolerance and respect extended to minority religions had not been reciprocated. Unsurprisingly, it was the Muslim community who bore the brunt of this resentment, and several anecdotes painted Muslim pupils as 'the other' for failing to support the school's ethic of tolerance, inclusion, diversity and respect for difference. One of these examples related to a particular incident during a whole school assembly. Previous research has shown that Christian parents have often expressed unhappiness about material on other religions betraying their 'cultural heritage' through inclusion in multi-faith assemblies (McCreery, 1993), and the assembly hall was also an arena for tensions in my research. Sarah recalled a time when she had attended an assembly and Muslim pupils had reportedly disrespected the Christian worship that took place. She explicitly drew on the binary of 'us' and 'them' to express the view that these particular children had been ignorant towards British culture.

JANE (White Christian Mum, Rainbow Hill):

[...] I think if it got too religious, as in every assembly we had to bow our heads and pray, it wouldn't always go down very well with other cultures, other backgrounds, religious cultures, to be quite frank with you.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

JANE:

And I've seen it happen, on the odd time we've had the vicar come in, you know from [the local church]. I think she came once while you were here.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah she did yeah.

JANE:

I forgot her name even, but when that lady came in, the vicar stood there, and I think she said something about praying and bowing your head.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

JANE:

Well, I'm not slagging any group off, but a lot of the Muslim children wouldn't bow their head, but yet I feel that just my daughter for example, if we had to do something, or get down on our knees and pray for them, she would do that. I know she would, but that to me was quite ignorant towards our culture.

Catholic parents also expressed similar concerns about accommodating pupils from religious minorities at Holy Cross. Rather than drawing on the argument that 'this is a Christian Country' to articulate why 'going to far' would be inappropriate, they instead used the phrase 'this is a Catholic school', as in the case of Margaret below. Similar processes appeared to be operating in both of the schools, but with the unease about changing cultural identity articulated at the scale of the community rather than the nation.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you think it creates a problem if you've got kids from other religions and kids that aren't believers, when you're trying to kind of promote the Catholic ethos in the assembly like prayers and things?

MARGARET (White Catholic Mother, Holy Cross):

Well it could, it could do, but my argument, whatever you want to call it, is that at the end of the day, it's a Catholic school.

INTERVIEWER:

So if people have chosen to do that?

MARGARET:

So when parents send their children, you know, be it Muslim, be it whatever, they are sending them to a Catholic school, and it should be said well we know you're Muslims and fair enough, but today we're doing this, and if you don't want your child to come to school, don't come to school.

Although the statement 'this is a Catholic school' might seem rather unsurprising given that the school was indeed Catholic, the frequency with which it was used by interviewees and the way it was always employed in discussions about minority religious provisions led me to believe that it represented similar feelings to those expressed at Rainbow Hill. The 'othering' of minority groups, particularly Muslims, was also part and parcel of this discourse and some of the parents again reported anecdotes of times when they felt Muslim families and children had not supported the citizenship ethic of the school, with its love of God and insistence that all are equal in God's eyes. These incidents were sometimes linked to wider fears about the changing nature of the school and a lack of support for Catholic culture and values from families whose children attended. In the quote below, Janet refers to two examples of situations where she felt individuals from minority faiths had acted in a way that was inconsistent with the school's citizenship ethic. The example of the pupil refusing to stand during prayers is eerily similar to the assembly anecdote from Rainbow Hill, and Janet also makes clear references to the national cultural context in her comment about schools cancelling nativity plays for fear of offending religious minorities.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you think that the school, do you think the school prepares kids for living in a multicultural society? Do you think it's the school's role to do that?

JANET (White Catholic Grandmother, Holy Cross):

Yes definitely, because we've got children from all countries, races, religions here and people think Catholics are funny creatures, and yeah we defend our faith to the hilt, but again, you can also go too far the other way, when you're too busy pandering maybe to other religions, that you forget your own.

INTERVIEWER:

Right. I mean do you feel that the school has gone too far the other way?

JANET:

Not at the moment, but I think again, from on high, it might do. I mean we've already got one child who's been through this school from nursery that told me the other day, I'll say he, it might be a she, who decided he wasn't going to stand up during prayer time because he isn't Catholic.

INTERVIEW:

Right.

JANET:

Now that would never have come up, and again you, if it's his choice not to say the prayers, fine, but it was an out and out challenge and this is a Catholic school. That worries me, that worries me a lot, because I turned round to this particular child and said well if I went into whatever, your religious building shall we say, because I don't want to mention any names or any religions, I would show respect. I think maybe we need to pull a little bit back to say yeah, everybody's welcome, they always have been, but ultimately this is a Catholic school.

[...]

JANET:

Well it's already happening in other faiths: things like you don't put on a nativity play at Christmas, in case you offend people.

INTERVIEW:

Right.

JANET:

It's started happening here. We've got certain books that have pigs in as a character. We've had to take them out. I don't, I honestly don't believe that most of the Muslim parents even give it a second thought.

INTERVIEW:

Yeah.

JANET:

That's been done. Thinking it's acceptable to, you know possibly for people not standing up for prayers.

INTERVIEW:

Right.

JANET:

It's very, it's a very subtle shift. But I always thought in the prospectus it said that no child is excluded from any form of worship, because we, you know, and think that then, maybe that will happen, because some children maybe won't be able to go into assemblies because it's Catholic based and

that's sad, because if I went say into a Jewish temple, I would love to observe their, their ways. I think it's a respect thing again, and the danger is you pander to one and everybody else loses.

Such views were strongly felt and their emotional nature was conveyed through some of the language used and the tone of the remarks. Comments such as "and that's sad" from Janet above, and the exasperated way in which Sarah exclaimed "this is England!" illustrated emotional discontent towards the perceived excesses of minority religious accommodation. Ahmed (2004b) has argued that emotionally powerful language and representations about minorities can circulate emotions such as hate and resentment, 'sticking' signs to particular bodies and 'othered' groups of people. In my research, it was the emotional investment that the interviewees had in their own static constructions of national or community cultural identity that led to concerns about the effect that catering for these 'others' might have. As Janet explicitly stated in the above quote, the situation where the pupil in question refused to stand during prayers 'worried' her. The fears and prejudices of parents were closely entwined with their feelings of belonging to the nation or to their faith community and could not be understood in isolation from them.

4.4) Conclusion

In this chapter, I have considered religious difference in the context of the kind of citizenship promoted in the study schools. Both of the primary schools put forward a slightly different model of citizenship through official discourses and everyday practices, and this had particular significance for how pupils from religious minorities were catered for. Rainbow Hill promoted a model of citizenship that was based on an ethic of inclusion, tolerance, diversity and respect for difference and drew strongly on liberal ideals in order to do this. Children and parents also reflected this model to a certain extent, parents often seeing value in the experiences that their children were gaining in a multicultural environment. When it came to religious minorities, the school demonstrated how it both recognised other faiths as a normal part of everyday school life, as well as made efforts to accommodate specific religious needs, such as prayer space and food needs. There was a good awareness of religious diversity among children in school, and many of the parents were happy with the provision for religious needs. There was a limit to this accommodation however, as school life was still loosely based on Christian secular and liberal traditions and not all religious needs

were catered for. Despite this, Rainbow Hill generally presented a model of citizenship that drew on multicultural ideals.

In contrast, Holy Cross promoted a model of citizenship that drew on a Christian ethic that emphasised a love of God and an understanding that everyone was loved equally in God's eyes. This drew strongly on communitarian ideals in order to construct a tight community with common Christian values. Although some of the interviewees did talk in favourable terms about tolerance and diversity, as in Rainbow Hill, the emphasis from children and parents tended to highlight the importance of equality and everyone being part of God's family. This different emphasis at Holy Cross also impacted upon how pupils from religious minorities were catered for in school. Although there were a few examples of recognising other religions in everyday school life, they were less significant than in Rainbow Hill. Similarly, religious needs were accommodated to an extent, but this tended to focus more on pupils withdrawing from particular religious activities rather than the school making available special provisions. This approach was generally accepted by interviewees as something to be expected from a Catholic school, and marked a style that favoured integration over multiculturalism. Both primary schools therefore taught informal Citizenship Education through everyday practices and discourses, something that is not fully recognised by the official Citizenship Education curriculum.

One of the key points raised in the chapter was the complex way in which conceptions of the nation were linked to religious citizenship practices. The models of citizenship in the two schools could not be made sense of without reference to the Christian nature of British identity. Similarly, both schools were influenced by state neo-liberal values of individual achievement and responsibility, and civic republican values of charity and participation in society from the Citizenship Education agenda. Parents in both of the case studies expressed concern that the schools might have become too accommodating towards minorities and in the process could be in danger of losing Christian culture or identity, whether nationally or institutionally based. They also gave examples of incidents where they felt religious minorities, particularly Muslims, were not carrying out their responsibility to follow the models of citizenship that the schools were promoting. This was interesting given that they also voiced support for the idea of a multicultural education in principle, particularly the value that it could accumulate for their children. Christian parents appeared to be in favour of a risk-free version of multiculturalism, which did not include the inevitable transformation of the host culture, whether at the national, community or institutional scale.

A second key point relates to the way in which religious minorities were accommodated in Holy Cross and the implications for a widening faith school sector. If the State is to provide equality of opportunity and fair treatment of religious minorities, then it needs to take seriously the fact that many of them do attend Christian schools. The authorities may need to provide guidance for such schools in multi-faith areas, on how they can accommodate religious minorities appropriately while maintaining their distinctive religious character. This might encourage state schools to take a more consistent approach to these issues. Although Holy Cross in my study was in some regards quite strong in promoting social cohesion between children from different faiths (see Chapter 5), there were clearly areas that it could improve on concerning provision for religious minorities. Parent attitudes to this issue were also relevant here. Although each of the schools took a different approach to catering for pupils from religious minorities, in terms of the balance between multiculturalism and integration, this made little difference to the levels of concern felt towards such policies. The finding would therefore suggest caution to policy makers who adopt the simplistic belief that integration is a better way forward than multiculturalism for accommodating religious minorities generally, as in this case it made little difference to the attitudes of parents from the host communities. Education policy may need to take more account of attitudes towards religious minorities in homes and communities, as well as in school spaces. This could lead to a stronger focus on facilitating changing values both within and outside of school walls (see also Chapter 5).

Finally, I wish to draw attention to the importance of emotions for making sense of citizenship and national identity in my two study schools. Interviewees in both of the schools demonstrated an emotional investment in, and a clear enthusiasm and pride for, the models of citizenship that were being promoted through everyday practices and discourses. Indeed, the Christian ethic in Holy Cross was even framed in emotional terms, as a love of God and a belief that God loved everyone equally. Similarly, the concerns expressed by Christian parents about the perceived excesses of accommodating children from minority religions, conveyed emotions of fear and anxiety about the potential impact of such practice on school ethos and wider culture, whether at a national or community scale. These accounts also reflected a certain amount of frustration and resentment towards minority religious groups. The importance of emotions will also be of central concern to my analysis of social cohesion issues in Chapter 5.

5) Social Cohesion & Encounters – Spaces of Community Building

One of the key charges against state-funded faith schools is that they contribute to ethnic and religious segregation. Following the riots in the North of England in 2001, as mentioned in Chapter 1, the government-funded report into factors leading to the urban unrest identified that faith schools were indeed contributing to the 'problem' of racial division (Ouseley, 2001). It is certainly the case that there exists a moderate amount of ethnic and religious segregation in many British cities, both residentially and educationally (Burgess & Wilson, 2005; Burgess *et al.*, 2005) and it is often suggested that schooling children separately militates against learning to co-operate and interact with others from different backgrounds (e.g. Kymlicka, 1999). Complex factors such as the need for cultural, religious and social support to combat racism and constrained choice due to economic disadvantage are often given as reasons for segregation of minority ethnic and religious groups (Phillips, 2006; Robinson, 2005). However, geographical processes such as 'White flight' are also understood to exacerbate such segregation, where White parents move their children away from schools with large proportions of pupils learning English as an additional language, due to the perception that such schools maintain poor standards. This then results in the segregation of White families and Dench *et al.* (2006) highlight how Roman Catholic schools in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets could be described as 'White citadels' due to the fact they select by religion and so very rarely admit Muslims.

In contrast to the picture painted above, another argument suggests that faith schools actually work to improve community relations by helping to maintain cultural identities and including minorities in the democratic system (see Parker-Jenkins *et al.*, 2005). Faith schools are said to reduce educational inequalities between ethnic groups, reflecting the fact that many religious minorities such as Muslims, generally do worse than their White counterparts in mainstream schools (Gillborn & Mirza, 2000). Moreover, incorrect assumptions are often made about faith school intakes. For example, Ofsted data shows that on average, Catholic schools actually have a *higher* proportion of pupils from ethnic minorities than Community schools, although this consists of more Black pupils and less Asian pupils and so represents lower religious diversity (Catholic Education Service, 2006). This data contrasts with the above construction of Catholic schools as 'White citadels', when this is not always the case.

Many of the above debates have focused on the macro-scale of the community, namely residential segregation and school selection procedures, often ignoring the

micro-scale of the educational institutions themselves. At this level, the issue is more about whether preparation for life in a multicultural society requires real interfaith and intra-faith encounters within schools (e.g. Nipkow, 1999), or whether good teaching can be just as effective in fighting prejudice (e.g. Short, 2002). Since 2007, all state maintained schools, regardless of their secular or religious character, have been required to demonstrate how they are promoting social cohesion to the school inspectorate. Despite this, recent work has indicated that some faith schools have failed to make this issue a priority and engage with community cohesion initiatives such as interfaith partnerships (Berkeley & Vij, 2008). The significant diversity in the community school and the faith-based school sectors is such that it is impossible to say whether all community schools or all faith schools will be good or bad at promoting social cohesion (Baumfield, 2003; Cush, 2005; Jackson, 2003). What is required, therefore, is an examination of the micro-spaces within schools, in order to focus on the socially cohesive (or divisive) processes operating within them and the educational contexts in which these occur.

This chapter aims to focus to on these everyday processes, in order to examine how they might make a useful contribution to understanding community relations in the context of education. This will highlight some of the fluid connections and linkages between school and community as social spaces. I begin by discussing the concepts of 'social cohesion' and 'meaningful encounters', before outlining two sets of processes operating in the two study schools that worked to foster cohesive school communities. These include the significance of 'emotion work' for facilitating positive encounters between children from different backgrounds and the importance of embodied rituals and events for developing a sense of togetherness. Both sets of processes are examined in the context of previous research on values, encounters and belonging within primary school spaces, while also highlighting the centrality of bodies and emotions. As part of the discussion, I consider similarities and differences between the two school models, as well as some of the consequences of the success or failure of such processes for social inclusion and wider community cohesion.

5.1) Encouraging Positive Encounters

Recent work in social policy has attempted to embrace the idea of 'social cohesion' or 'community cohesion' in order to address some of the problems facing many urban communities in Britain today, such as ethnic and religious segregation, crime and social unrest (see Robinson, 2005). The Government's current social cohesion agenda

is based around five basic elements, outlined by Forrest & Kearns (2001). These include 'common values and a civic culture'; 'social order and social control'; 'social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities'; 'social networks and social capital' and 'place attachment and identity' (Forrest & Kearns, 2001:2129). This definition encompasses aspects such as social interaction between groups, respect for difference, absence of conflict and civility towards others. Social capital is also a key concept in this agenda and refers to the significance of relationships and networks between individuals and groups for facilitating action (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 2000).

Putnam (2000) makes the distinction between *bonding* social capital among members of the same social group and *bridging* social capital between members of different groups in a community. Although bonding and bridging social capital can both be understood as positive forces for society, if creating bonds does not leave enough energy for building bridges, this may create problems for relationships with other communities. This is clearly a significant issue for ethnic and religious harmony in urban settlements. For Flint (2007), the question for faith schooling is whether or not such a system works to bond social capital within faith groups, at the expense of bridging social capital between different faith communities. Despite the large amount of interest in the idea of social capital from both academics and policy-makers, the concept is so widely encompassing and poorly defined that it has been denounced in some quarters as useless as an analytical concept (Middleton *et al.* 2005).

Recent work in Social and Cultural Geography has focused instead on the small events and occurrences that may lead to the development of social cohesion in everyday contexts. The idea of 'encounter' has been employed by geographers as a way of thinking through how citizens can learn to live with cultural difference by showing civility to others. For example, Laurier & Philo (2006) focus on the low-level interactions involved in sharing seats and holding doors for facilitating civil engagement, whereas Thrift (2005) argues that everyday acts of kindness and friendliness in the city can be fostered to create a successful affective force to combat and heal urban conflict and decay. However, Valentine (2008) draws on empirical research to point out that while civil encounters may well be positive and polite in the public arena, this does not necessarily mean that individuals will not express prejudice in their own homes. In other words, affective micro-encounters are still a reflection of wider power relations and they cannot be disconnected from the politics of 'race', ethnicity, gender, class and other social divisions (see also Tolia-Kelly, 2006).

Many of the arguments about ethnic and religious segregation seem to assume that merely encouraging people to mix in the same urban context will automatically result in cultural integration, through the kind of momentary encounters championed by Thrift (2005) and Laurier & Philo (2006). However, for Amin (2002), it is the *type* of encounter between cultural groups that matters. The ethnic composition of a neighbourhood may tell us little about what actually occurs there. For example, Asian Muslims and White Brits living in the same street may never talk to each other. Rather, Amin (2002) argues that it is the *meaningful* interactions in everyday life that are important and can make a difference. The same logic can be applied to children and schooling. Merely placing children of different ethnic and religious backgrounds in the same institutional context will not necessarily result in a cohesive school community. Rather, it will depend on the kind of embodied encounters occurring within schools and whether or not they could be described as positive and meaningful. Amin (2002) suggests that schools *can* be appropriate contexts for meaningful interactions, whether through everyday school life and events, or links between different schools, while Flint (2007) argues that effective Values and Citizenship Education can also make a contribution.

In the two study schools in my research, there were a number of processes operating to facilitate positive and meaningful encounters between children of all backgrounds. Although these processes were not just limited to ethnic and religious identities, they did nevertheless encompass them. Central to these processes was the teaching of 'socially cohesive' ways of managing bodies and emotions as part of everyday encounters. The institution has historically sought to "restrain, control, treat, 'design' and 'produce' particular and supposedly improved versions of human minds and bodies" (Philo & Parr, 2000:513) and Fielding (2000:231) describes the school as "a 'hot bed' of moral geographies – of moral codes about how and where children ought to learn and behave". Watson & Ashton (1995:14) point out that schools "convey values everyday, knowingly or unknowingly, both at the more explicit level of what is taught, and the less openly acknowledged level of how the school is administered". Both schools in my research therefore sought to teach children how to demonstrate 'civilised' bodies, through their internalisation of acceptable ways of using their bodies to interact cohesively with each other and enactment of 'morally good behaviours' (see Elias, 1978 [1939 original]).

One of the main techniques used to achieve the cultivation of socially cohesive bodies involved the teaching of 'emotion work'. The term 'emotion work' was coined by Hochschild (1983) who argued that individuals actively shape their own private emotions into socially acceptable ones. This is in order to comply with implicit 'feeling

rules' within particular social and cultural contexts. Emotions are therefore managed to maintain a suitable outward appearance through two types of acting – 'surface acting' and 'deep acting'. 'Surface acting' is when particular socially acceptable feelings are displayed through deception, even though they may not be genuinely felt, and 'deep acting' is when emotions are internally induced or suppressed as a result of social interactions with others, again to comply with 'feeling rules'. Hochschild (1983) argued that within institutions, part of the work of emotional 'acting' is replaced by institutional mechanisms to arrange 'proper' ways to feel. Both of my study schools employed institutional mechanisms through the teaching of 'emotion work' as part of PSHCE and Values Education in school.

PSHCE is a non-statutory part of the primary school curriculum, but had a presence in both schools. The suggested curriculum guidance for schools includes learning about emotions and how to manage them (emotional literacy), understanding other people's experiences and points of view, and learning about different religious and ethnic identities, values and customs (see Department for Education and Skills, 2005; McCarthy, 2000; QCA schemes of work website, www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/ks1-2/citizenship/?view=get). PSHCE lessons in the study schools often took the form of Circle Time, which is designed to act as a 'safe space' where children sit in a circle and discuss their thoughts and feelings as a whole class. Circle Time provided opportunities to address issues relating to friendships, co-operation, conflict resolution, self-esteem and promoting kindness and empathy (see Mosley, 1996; Tew, 2000). It was therefore an ideal opportunity for both schools to take emotions seriously and teach 'surface acting' and 'deep acting', through ways in which children could manage their feelings. These messages worked alongside those given in other contexts such as in whole school assemblies and focused on issues such as avoiding retaliation or showing kindness to children they did not get on with. The same themes were reinforced in teacher responses to incidents, where for example, children were asked to stand in a corner and calm down when they had become involved in angry disputes.

CLASSTEACHER (Agnostic, Rainbow Hill):

I mean we'll often talk about how we feel and often start Circle Time with, you know, how children are feeling, and if there have been particular problems. We sometimes, well I know we did at the end of last year, we had a whole week where children put down on a scale of one to five how they were feeling, and so children who registered on, you know, a four or five as feeling unhappy, then we sort of followed that up to see how they

were. And we do, you know children with behaviour issues, talking about their feelings and I know, one child in particular very much at the moment to manage and er, sort of letting them know what their feelings look like, 'cos sometimes, do you know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER:

Yes they don't realise.

CLASSTEACHER:

So you say "oh you look really cross" and they don't realise, you know, but when you are standing there with like your fist clenched, that actually says to me, "I am really cross", or, and you know and it's sort of matching the children's behaviour up with their feelings. But we're quite often in circle time, you know, "I feel happy when..." or "I feel upset when..." and children get the chance to sort of talk through those, you know and, "ooh a few children are feeling a bit unhappy at the moment", you know and why that might be. I also, I've got – it's not actually in use so far this year – but you see the little box over there, the little fancy box?

INTERVIEWER:

Oh yeah.

CLASSTEACHER:

It's got a notepad in there and at any time, if children are worried or, you know, feeling really unhappy about anything, then...

INTERVIEWER:

They can write stuff down.

The prevalence of such techniques in everyday school life was apparent in some of the comments made by children in the paired interviews. Nathan talked about a few of the activities that he had experienced in circle time.

INTERVIEWER:

What did you do when you talked about [your feelings in circle time]?

NATHAN (White Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Well, it were I think it were about 'I try to keep people, like, happy'.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

NATHAN:

And we all had to go round and say like, no we had to go round and say how you're feelin' and people just said sad, people said happy and some people just said they're feelin' a bit cross 'cos they might not have had a good lunch time.

The schools were also concerned with teaching children values of kindness, respect and empathy towards others. There is a whole body of literature on Values Education in schools, all advocating the teaching of these particular values, albeit using different approaches (e.g. Jarret, 1991; Ling & Stephenson, 1998; McLaughlin & Halstead, 2000; Nash, 1997; Watson & Ashton, 1995; Wringe, 2006). Similarly, Warnock (1996) argues that despite the existence of moral disagreements between different groups in Britain, there is still a clear consensus for teaching civilized behaviour in the classroom and in social situations. Values Education was present in both schools, despite the fact that pupils came from a range of different home backgrounds with potentially different values promoted there.

A number of studies have considered how particular values are communicated through aspects of school life such as ethos, collective worship, religious symbolism and adult behaviours (e.g. Colson, 2004; Johnson, 2001, 2002; Johnson & Castelli, 2000). Key elements in my study schools were the weekly 'ethos statements' that encouraged children to demonstrate particular values, the school rules that rewarded and punished various behaviours, and everyday teacher responses to personal and social incidents. The staff in both schools talked regularly in both the classroom and the assembly hall about the need for children to be kind and treat others with respect. They visibly enforced school rules to ensure that children were co-operating with each other and did not become involved in fights or disputes. Children were also encouraged to take part in this process as 'playground friends' at break and lunchtime. These individuals, usually from the older year groups in school, would walk around the playground in yellow bibs, ensuring that all of the other children were co-operating nicely with each other, and assisting any who did not know how to use the equipment properly.

CLASSTEACHER (*Female Catholic, Holy Cross*):

I think we try to instil in them different various things by the ethos statements that we use, and try to instil in them, like, a caring nature and how they be aware of how they treat other people, and that's how... It's

linked in with our school rules as well, 'cos it's not just, you know, "do as I asked first time", it's, you know, "listen to each other, take turns with each other, be kind to one another" and they're, like, really important principles within our school that help them to develop in lots of ways.

INTERVIEWER:

So when you try to get the kids to do all of these things, can you think of any kind of day-to-day examples of how you try to do that?

CLASSTEACHER:

It's just things like asking them to share, asking them to, even little things like go and help somebody find their pumps or go and help somebody do this, or can you work with this person and help them to read. You know, something that they find difficult, or we try and do it, that's why we have Circle Time really I suppose. [...] They have that weekly, and they understand that, you know, that when they pass the speaking object, they're only allowed to speak then, they've got to listen to each other. They're not allowed, we have rules like, you know, no put-downs, don't laugh at each other's suggestions, things like that. And from that, I try to inject that all the time with everything they do, and always constantly reminding them you know, "that's not a very nice thing to say", or you know, "there's a nicer way to say that", or "do you think you should be doing that?" Not in a telling-them-off kind of way but in an educating them kind of way.

Children also recounted their experiences of such techniques in school during the child-friendly paired interviews, such as Kavita in the quote below. They also discussed how they would enact such values, for example caring for other children who fell over in the playground (see also Chapter 7).

INTERVIEWER:

Do you ever talk about how you can get on better with other children during Circle Time?

KAVITA (Asian Sikh Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah sometimes to explain, in Circle Time we say that how you should encourage each other; how you should be nice to each other. So if something's wrong, don't just say it back to them. If they're saying something bad to you, you go and tell the teacher, because the more you say it, the more they will bully you back.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok.

KAVITA:

And how to encourage each other.

Both of the above techniques – teaching emotions management and values of respect and kindness - were linked to the desire and necessity in each school to create an environment where bullying and racism were deemed socially unacceptable. Tackling bullying is a current priority for English schools, and the Department for Children, Schools and Families has approached the issue by promoting social and emotional learning and investigating children and young people's views and experiences of bullying (Department for Children Schools and Families Behaviour Website, www.dcsf.gov.uk/ibis/departement_policy/behaviour.cfm; Oliver & Candappa, 2003; Teachernet Bullying Website, www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying). Both schools had won recognition for their multicultural and anti-racist work through various awards or prizes. Anti -racist and anti-bullying messages were an everyday presence in school assemblies and the classroom, as well as on display boards around the school corridors. During the research period, Rainbow Hill held an 'Anti-Bullying Day', and a separate racist incident was dealt with in a very serious manner by the Head Teacher.

CLASSTEACHER (Christian, Rainbow Hill):

But there are, there are still children who dislike other children, and usually you'll find that that dislike is racially based, but it's not, we don't have a huge number of children that fall in that category.

INTERVIEWER:

Right so I mean how does the school deal with that when those situations arise?

CLASSTEACHER:

Generally, they go first of all to, you know obviously it comes into a class teacher say, if something, or outside on the playground, and it generally goes straight to the Head. It's not tolerated, it's not thrown under the carpet, it's actually taken out and looked at hard, and there is now a policy where parents will be informed, if a child has been involved in a racial incident in some way or another.

Children also reflected the unacceptability of such behaviour when they talked about the school's reaction and their own reaction to individuals who had displayed racist or bullying behaviour. Jack explained this in a particularly revealing way.

INTERVIEWER:

So what happens when people are racist?

JACK (Mixed Race Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

People won't be friends with them any more.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah and what do the teachers do?

ADAM (White Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Well.

JACK:

You get sent to [the Head Teacher] and your Mum or Dad gets phoned.

ADAM:

Yeah.

Although most of the practices discussed so far were very much adult-led, the above quote also points to the role that children played in contributing to these processes. The responses to the values and vignettes research activity, outlined in Chapter 3, showed the reliance that children had on adults to resolve some of their disputes, but also examples of their ability to sort out some of these problems themselves. This was particularly true in the case of the playground games vignette, which involved a group of boys from one particular cultural group who would not let others join in their games on the playground. A number of adult-free solutions were acted out or suggested during the discussion, including ways of encouraging the boys to include others in the games, or creating different games to play instead. There were also examples in the paired interviews of children resolving their own disputes, or comforting others who had experienced bullying or unkindness.

FACILITATOR:

In your drama the others went away and played their own game, and what would you have done if you were one of those children and they weren't letting you play? What would you have done in that situation?

CRAIG (White Catholic Boy):

I'd be quite upset and angry.

FACILITATOR:

And what would you do though?

CRAIG:

Go and tell a teacher or say can, I'm really sorry.

FACILITATOR:

So you'd go and tell a teacher. I noticed that you didn't tell a teacher when you acted this out in your drama, but that's one, another thing that you could've done, go and tell a teacher.

LAURA (White Catholic Girl):

I would say yes you can play for me and my friends.

FACILITATOR:

Ok, anyone would have done anything different from those things? Is there anyone who's not had a go yet?

NATHAN (White Catholic Boy):

I might have ignored 'em, 'cos they didn't let you play, but I might've just went away and told some other friends and then they could play with you as well.

(Extract from Values and Vignettes Drama Activity in Holy Cross)

INTERVIEWER:

And how you might, sort out if you have an argument and things?

LISA (White Agnostic Girl, Rainbow Hill):

We sort it out, we sort it out ourselves mostly, but teachers help us sort it out sometimes.

INTERVIEWER:

So when you're sorting it out yourself, when you've had an argument and you sort it out yourself, what kind of things do you do to sort out the argument?

LISA:

We have a talk and like get friends again.

ZOE (White Christian Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Say sorry.

Parents were also generally aware of the school's efforts in promoting social cohesion through these methods. Many of the parent interviewees, such as Shabina, specifically mentioned these as aspects of school that they most liked or were most impressed by. However, as the quote below illustrates, there were still incidents of racism and bullying occurring in the schools and this will be explored further in the next section.

SHABINA (Asian Muslim Mother, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah I mean they did, there was a time when they had those bands out as well, and they gave them to the children.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh right?

SHABINA:

Stop racism and bullying, yeah. And then, I mean, not all of them we bought them a few years ago, they had different colours for each thing, I mean I bought them. I remember my son telling me that he was learning stop bullying and everything yeah, so he did tell me.

INTERVIEWER:

So do you think that when there has been bullying, the school has dealt with it well?

SHABINA:

Yeah they have, 'cos that was an issue I've had as well. Another child was picking on my son, and I did go in and they did do, they went and told his parents as well and they dealt with it, and in the classroom they separated them. They were saying that they did have some problems with the other child as well, but I mean they dealt with it fine.

Although both of the study schools engaged in the same processes of teaching values of kindness, empathy and respect, emotions management, anti-racism and anti-bullying, there were different motivations in each of the schools. Holy Cross gave religious scripture and the word of God as a reason for teaching these values and skills. Specifically, staff emphasised that it was written in the Bible that people should love others and show kindness and respect. This was all part of their 'Christ-centred' approach to education (see Stock, 2005). In contrast, Rainbow Hill was following 'Every Child Matters' national guidelines (see Every Child Matters Website, www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) and staff felt that the values and skills they were teaching

were generically good moral and humanistic ones and were essential for successful learning to take place.

HEAD TEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

[...] Everybody, yes, wants children to achieve well, they want everybody to be kind and caring and they want all current and modern behaviour policies, so the best way forward is to start afresh the next day, and all these sorts of things. But in terms of a Catholic school, it has to come from being Christ-like, we are trying to be like Christ and he has a higher authority than any of us [...].

CLASSTEACHER (Agnostic, Rainbow Hill):

[...] Most of the religions teach the same sort of ideas of respect and caring and sharing, you know, giving part of what you earn to, to the poor, or you know, respecting others, loving others, whether you're Sikh, Muslim, Christian, or whatever. And I think to say that we do this because it says so in the Bible, I think it's more we do this because that's how we want to treat each other and that's what's going to, sort of, solve problems and stop arguments and things [...].

In this first section, I have outlined some of the techniques that both of the study schools used to help encourage positive encounters and facilitate social cohesion between children from all backgrounds, including from different ethnic, cultural and religious groups. These included developing 'common values and a civic culture', 'social order and social control' and 'social networks and social capital', to borrow terms from the Forrest & Kearns (2001) definition of social cohesion. These methods can all be described under the heading of 'emotion work' and included the teaching of both 'surface acting' and 'deep acting'. In the next section, I will explore the extent to which such methods were successful in promoting the kind of social cohesion and meaningful encounters they were aiming for.

5.2) Encounters in Practice

The techniques that both schools used to encourage positive encounters between all children, of whatever background, showed a certain amount of success. One of the

ways this was demonstrated was how children of all backgrounds, cultures and religions would play and work together on an everyday basis. Smith (2005) found in his study on multi-faith primary schools that children would make friends with other pupils of different religions and ethnicities in school, despite the fact that there were sometimes racist tensions between pupils. This was also the case in both of the study schools, where children in the interviews all reported that they had friends from backgrounds other than their own. These encounters could, therefore, be described as 'meaningful' following Amin's (2002) observations, because children from different religions were developing friendships and social networks outside of their own ethnic or religious groups, or bridging social capital in Putnam's (2000) terms.

INTERVIEWER:

But think about when you're in school, do you have, are you friends with lots of different children, or does it tend to be...?

ISABELLE (White Catholic Girl, Holy Cross):

I'm friends with [boy from a different background], I'm just friends with everybody, even if they're not my religion.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok so it doesn't really make any difference what religion they are?

ISABELLE & CASSIE (White Catholic Girl, Catholic School):

No.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. When you're on the playground, do you play with children from different religions and cultures on the playground?

NAKEEBA (Asian Muslim Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah I just play with my friend.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

NAKEEBA:

And she's a Christian.

AMBER (Asian Muslim Girl, Rainbow Hill):

I play with all kinds of people, Jewish, Christian, all sorts of people.

Smith's (2005) study found that the child interviewees would rarely meet children of different religions and ethnic backgrounds outside of school. This was because friendships out of school were influenced by parents, some of whom discouraged mixing with children from different religious cultures, or because much time was spent in particular religious activities outside of school. In the case of Rainbow Hill and Holy Cross in this study, there was a mixed picture regarding friendships out of school. Some children did have friends from other backgrounds and cultures, but some did not. It was clear, however, that school played an important role in facilitating positive encounters between children from different cultures and religions. One of the parents from Rainbow Hill also pointed out the positive effect that this contact between children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds could have for creating an environment in school free from racism.

INTERVIEWER:

I mean you talked about bullying earlier and that they dealt really well with that. I mean have you been aware of any tensions or bullying between different cultures or different religions or different types of children?

BRENDA (White Christian Grandmother, Rainbow Hill):

Not in this school.

INTERVIEWER:

No, I mean do you think, do you think that's because the school actively discourages it?

BRENDA:

Well probably, and also the kids mix, they play together, they're in the same class, and if they come in and they can't speak a lot of English, and ours are talking to 'em, they pick it up.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah, so it's almost just because everyone's together it doesn't happen anyway as much?

BRENDA:

I would say.

Despite this, children did not always follow the behaviours that the schools prescribed. Although bullying and racist incidents were not necessarily common occurrences, they were certainly present in both study schools to a certain extent. The way in which children challenge institutional rules are well documented (e.g. Gordon *et al.*, 2000;

Hemming, 2007; Thomson, 2005) and some of the pupils in the study schools did not follow all of the rules because they did not perceive them to be fair, or did not wish to follow them. Others described how difficult they found it to manage their emotions, especially when in conflict with others. One boy at Rainbow Hill, Mahir, explained how he had experienced racism from another pupil, but it had not stopped after following the school's 'feeling rules' and reporting it to the teachers. In the end, Mahir had resorted to hitting the other pupil in order to stop the racist bullying. Another example is shown below, illustrating the potential clash between the school's teaching of 'emotion work' and popular discourses about how males should resolve disputes through aggression (e.g. see Swain, 2003).

INTERVIEWER:

Ok. So when those things do happen, how does that make you feel, when people are being nasty to you like that?

JONATHON (Black Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

It makes me feel upset, because they don't really want me to, when I tell they have to let me play so it makes me feel upset.

INTERVIEWER:

David?

DAVID (Mixed Race Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

It makes me feel angry, and when I'm angry, the only way to get me anger out is to do the same to them.

A similar story was apparent when it came to children's developing values. In the vignette drama activity, children were often quick to state socially acceptable discourses and the 'right' values that the schools were teaching. This included discourses on antiracism, respect and fairness, for example in the situation where the Muslim girl had been bullied in the dinner queue because of her headscarf (see below). Despite this, children did not always show the same socially acceptable behaviour out on the playground, where fights and disputes did sometimes occur. Similarly, some of the child interviewees told me about incidents of bullying or racism that they or others they knew had experienced. Research on racism in education has often highlighted the difference between what teachers say and what they actually do (e.g. Gillborn, 1990; Sewell, 1997). In my research, a clear gap was demonstrated between discourses on the one hand, and behaviours on the other (also see Lupton, 1996; Warwick *et al.*, 1999 on the health knowledge/behaviour gap).

FACILITATOR:

Right, why was it, so why was it important, why was it important that Gemma wasn't like that to Leena?

AMY (White Catholic Girl):

It could have hurt her feelings really badly, I mean it might not have been her fault she had to wear a scarf.

FACILITATOR:

Ok, anyone else? Why was it a bad thing? Why shouldn't, was it a bad thing for her to do?

LOUISE (White Agnostic Girl):

Because it's not the person's fault that they've got to wear a scarf, and maybe it's, they should just forget about it, and just 'cos they might not look like each other, it doesn't mean they can't be friends.

FACILITATOR:

Ok and anybody else?

VINCENT (Mixed Race Catholic Boy):

Because it's racism and it can really upset your feelings.

FACILITATOR:

Ok right. So why was it better, why was it better that they were friends at the end? That's the last question.

ROSIE (White Catholic Girl):

Because when you're not friends, you're like upsetting people really much, and it's better when you're friends 'cos you can play really nicely and things.

FACILITATOR:

Ok.

HOLLY (White Catholic Girl):

Because, like, they have to respect each other's religions and they can always be friends, because they go to the same school and everything.

(Extract from Vignette Drama Activity at Holy Cross)

The extract above also shows the limitations of teaching values of respect in such contrived ways. The comment by Amy and Louise about it not being Leena's fault she wore a headscarf, showed that giving the 'right' answers did not necessarily imply a full

understanding or respect for another culture. Even the earlier quote with Isabelle and Cassie was significant, in that the girls were both White Catholics and had chosen to be interviewed together, despite claiming that they were friends with children from different backgrounds. In these situations, children were demonstrating a certain amount of 'surface acting' rather than 'deep acting'. They were aware that they needed to give the impression of being kind and respectful to others, even if in practice this was not always the case. The below diary extract is another example of the way that behaviours often differed from discourses on these issues.

Everyone was congratulating the teacher and the children after [the class assembly], and apparently even the youngest children had understood the drama. Unfortunately two members of the class spoilt it at break time by fighting, when the whole assembly had been about not doing such things! I was yet again observing that knowledge/ understanding and behaviour gap (Research Diary Extract, Holy Cross).

Similarly, one of the child interviewees illustrated the complex nature of prejudice when he brought into the conversation of his own accord, prejudiced comments that a member of his family had made about Muslims (see below). Jeffrey had not only learnt to refer to Muslims in a negative way, he had also developed discursive techniques to manage his racist account to make it sound more balanced and reasonable. When asked about Muslims in school however, Jeffrey made a distinction, saying that such individuals were different from other Muslims. Later in the interview, the children talked about how teachers and the school should be harsher on racism, showing clear contradictions on the issue. Valentine (2008) gives similar examples of the complex nature of prejudice and racism in terms of how individuals maintain seemingly contradictory positions, such as combining personal civility to religious others and support for racist organizations. The finding brings into question research on faith schools that have used shallow questioning or attitude scales to draw conclusions about pupils' lack of prejudices (e.g. Grace, 2003; Short, 2002, 2003; Short & Lenga, 2002) and point to a need for more research in this area.

JEFFERY (White Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

My dad, my dad said that erm like too, there's some people that come in from other countries, I'm not sayin' it's everybody, but there's some people like what come in from other countries and like try, what like spoil this country, because they're like goin' round, I'm not sayin' it's just other countries 'cos people who already lived here, probably more often they're doin' it, but more people are comin' in from other countries and like startin' fights, but with our people, with the people who are already living here.

INTERVIEWER:

Right?

JEFFERY:

But the people who already lived here are still doin' it now.

INTERVIEWER:

But that, do you think that happens in your school?

JEFFERY:

No.

JONATHON (Black Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

But normally it's new people who come, come like Muslims say that the Muslims, loadsa Muslims who came to this country and like only Christians were in this country, they'll make this country worse because most Muslims don't like Christians, so they'll try...

JEFFERY:

I know and so they, they end up fightin' and spoiling the country just 'cos of the religions.

The above example also points to the issue of home and school, and the potential values mismatch between the two (e.g. see Talbot, 2000). Such mismatches may occur in multi-faith schools with issues such as Sex and Relationships Education, where different religious groups have different views on its appropriateness. In the case of socially cohesive values, teachers and parents in both schools also mentioned the gap between those promoted in school and homes where similar values were not taught. These gaps could well be highly significant, given that previous research has shown that high levels of inter-ethnic contact during school years can often decline once young people become adults (Back, 1996). Here, the limitations of a study focused on the school institution becomes apparent, in terms of its inability to adequately account for linkages between different spaces and the relative importance

of each for children's developing values. This again points to the need for more qualitative research on these issues.

School concern with the facilitation of positive encounters between children of different faiths had another consequence alongside creating potential clashes with home values. It meant that other social divisions in school, such as gender, were given much less attention. Flint (2006) and Phillips (2006) have both highlighted the way in which ethnic and religious neighbourhood segregation is often overly-problematised in social policy. This is despite the fact that there are many other types of urban segregation, such as socio-economic, that could be viewed just as negatively. Similarly, social cohesion in the two study schools appeared to be defined in terms of ethnicity and religion, rather than other social differences. Gender divisions were not raised as a problem or issue worthy of discussion by any of the adults I spoke to. This was in contrast to racism and bullying, which were often raised by interviewees of their own accord.

The gendered nature of school spaces has been examined by a number of writers (e.g. Davies, 1989; Mahony, 1985) and the classic study by Thorne (1993) illustrated the way in which schools regularly use different forms of gendered address, and group and organise children according to gender. Particular spaces, equipment and activities would take on gendered meanings both within the classroom and the playground, through teacher language and child peer cultures. All of these subtle processes worked to exacerbate gendered differences and divisions. These processes were still very much in operation in both of my study schools. It was considered acceptable for a teacher to make jokes about gender and group children according to whether they were girls or boys, in a way that would have been completely unacceptable for ethnicity or religion. Similarly, gender divisions were much more obvious in the playground and the dinner hall than ethnic or religious divisions. Despite this, gender segregation did not appear to be problematised by teachers or parents.

The playground looked very different to usual, because the kids were not wearing uniform and I reflected on the importance of gender again for segregation on the playground, as most of the groups of children were single sex, but completely mixed in terms of ethnicity. This continued in PE, when the children were asked to line up in a girls' line and a boys' line, they changed separately, the boys' behaviour was compared to the girls' behaviour and even I commented on the positions in the hockey teams in

terms of the balance of girls and boys without thinking. In contrast, religion and ethnicity was never mentioned and appeared to be the invisible difference. I thought about how controversial it would be if teachers had asked the children to queue up in different cultures or religions instead of gender! (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill).

In summary, the school techniques for promoting meaningful encounters and social cohesion between children of different backgrounds and religions were obviously working to a certain extent, through the development of common values, social order and social interaction between different groups. There were, however, some difficulties evident when children failed to enact the values and emotional management techniques that they were learning in school or demonstrated 'surface acting' more frequently than 'deep acting'. Problems also arose when values from home did not match those being taught in school. Children were in the process of developing their values and associated behaviours and these were clearly influenced by more than what their teachers told them to do. The focus on ethnicity and religion did tend to divert attention away from some of the other social divisions prevalent in school, such as gender. Although these were not considered as problematic in comparison with issues related to ethnicity and religion, they did nevertheless affect the extent to which the school communities could be described as socially cohesive. In the next section, I will turn to the second main set of processes in the school that aimed to promote social cohesion through embodied togetherness and community building.

5.3) Embodied Togetherness & Community Building

Shared identities and a sense of community in educational institutions are often built on factors such as language, culture and religious and ethnic identity. Hall *et al.* (2002) give the example of supplementary religious schools as contexts where collective identity and belonging are of great importance for pupils and parents. However, in the study schools in my research, embodied rituals and routines were also central to the building of a sense of togetherness and community. Recent work on citizenship and national identity has begun to explore the embodied nature of collective belonging, for example through the role of affective musical experiences for fostering nationalist sentiments (Wood, 2007). Geographical research on nationalism has also emphasised the importance of embodied ritual for creating a sense of togetherness. Sharp (1996) draws on Bennington and Renan to argue that:

“The nation is created not through an originary moment or culturally distinct essence but through the repetition of symbols that come to represent the nation's uniqueness. National culture and character are ritualistic so that every repetition of its symbols serves to reinforce national identity. [...] Each drawing of maps of nation-state territory, each playing of the national anthem or laying of wreaths at war memorials, every spectatorship of national sports events and so on represents this daily affirmation of national identification” (Sharp, 1996:98).

Sharp (1996) points to the similarities with Butler's (1990) conception of gendered identity as the repetition of embodied performances. Similarly, Viroli (1995, cited in Turner, 2002:49) has expressed the view that shared rituals, along with a common culture and landscape, are essential for enduring national identities and commitments.

The importance of embodied rituals for 'social cement' is not a new idea or concept, as ritual was central to Durkheim's analysis of the social function of religion for society. Durkheim (1915, cited in Turner, 1991:45-52) used his study of aboriginal Australian totemism to show how symbolic religious practices and rituals, and the emotional states that are influenced by them (collective effervescence), can work to re-establish and cement social relationships within collectives. Neo-Durkheimians such as Mellor & Shilling (1997), have suggested that current sociological thinking has tended to neglect the importance of collective and individual embodied experiences of the sacred. They argue that religious practice, and the influence of religious practice, remains central to the cementing of social relationships within modern Western societies. At the scale of the community, Paolone (forthcoming) has examined how embodied rituals in a central region of Italy serve to teach young citizens membership of their local community. He demonstrates how surviving elements of civic pagan rites and Christian elements intertwine in symbolic processions, where basic values of the local community are displayed and enacted by the whole population.

In the schools in my research, embodied practices and rituals played a major role in building a cohesive school community and a sense of belonging. Both of the study schools used rituals and practices of a non-religious nature on an everyday basis. These included whole school assemblies, where lines of children would file into the hall, sit in rows and listen to stories and announcements from the teachers, and whole school events such as sports days and talent contests. Singing was also a time when children would come together and take part in a collective musical act. The daily ritual

of 'wake-up, shake-up' was an aspect of school life where children participated in physical exercises together on the playground, to the sound of popular dance music. Classroom rituals including taking down chairs from tables, calling out names to the register, and sitting down together on the carpet, all worked to create a feeling of familiarity and community.

It was also quite interesting watching the school take part in 'wake up shake up' to 'It's raining men' on Thursday morning. The whole school came together in the hall and all took part in moving and dancing together in a big corporate, corporeal event. (Research Diary Extract, Holy Cross)

These ritualistic events were a daily part of children's lives in school and they referred to them in the paired interviews, such as Aisha below, who mentioned singing and the daily 'wake-up, shake-up' whole school activity.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you ever do singing in assembly or do you ever have prayers, or do you ever think silently?

AISHA (Asian Muslim Girl, Rainbow Hill):

We don't have prayers, but we like sing when we get there.

INTERVIEWER:

You do have singing? What kind of things do you sing? Oh you mean when you're walking in?

AISHA:

Yeah when we're walking in and when we're sitting down. Mr. W, at the end, the Head Teacher takes a song, like 'wake-up, shake-up', when everybody's tired and all that, we stand up and sing 'wake-up shake-up'. Like in the morning you sing a song.

In addition to the non-religious rituals outlined above, Holy Cross was able to draw on a range of religious rituals for community building, as in Paolone's (forthcoming) work discussed earlier in this section. These included class prayers, which were rhymes that the children knew off by heart and chanted four times a day; class worship, which entailed children sitting together on the carpet around a lighted candle; assemblies,

which contained religious stories and prayers; and services or Mass, which were led by the local parish priest. The prayers in particular were very embodied as they involved chanting in unison as well as making the sign of the cross at the start and the end of each prayer. These religious practices were a major part of daily life in Holy Cross, in contrast to Rainbow Hill, where religious rituals were very rare.

The morning started with the usual prayer, and I reflected how the whole event was completely embodied, from putting hands together, closing eyes, disappearing into that spiritual place, and making the sign of the cross at the start and the end of the prayer. The words were as follows:

*“Father in heaven you love me, you are with me night and day,
I want to love you always, in all I do and say,
I’ll try to please you Father, bless me through the day,
Amen.”*

(Research Diary Extract, Holy Cross).

Teachers at Holy Cross were also quite clear about the cohesive potential of such practices and rituals, pointing to the way that they could help in managing class behaviour. Some of the parents also highlighted this community building aspect of religious rituals.

INTERVIEWER:

I mean with the religious side of assembly as well, do you think there are any other functions of assembly, any other things that you know, that it does apart from promoting the religious side?

SALLY (White Christian Non-Catholic Mother, Holy Cross):

It’s a community. It’s an encouragement of belonging together. Everybody’s included and not felt like they’re left out, you know, people can take part if they wish, you know...

One of the most striking examples of togetherness was the way in which teachers in Holy Cross told children that Jesus would always listen to their prayers when more

than one of them was praying together. This idea was reflected in some of the interview quotes from children at Holy Cross, but also from a number of children at Rainbow Hill, who also referred to some of the few occasions when they had prayed at school.

INTERVIEWER:

Right ok. What about when you do prayers in assembly, do you enjoy doing those?

NATHAN (White Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Yeah.

QUINTON (White Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah what do you like about that?

NATHAN:

You're talkin', you know you're talkin' to God and it says if there's more than one or two people, if there's two or three people, Jesus will be there prayin' as well.

The rituals and practices at Holy Cross went hand-in-hand with more discursive ideas that emphasised the existence of community in school. This was reflected in the way that teachers and parents talked about the community feel of the school and the fact that many of the Catholic children in school came from families with long histories of attending Holy Cross. The concept was also explicitly discussed with the children in assemblies, where their membership in the local community was considered alongside being part of God's community.

The emphasis on community is something that needs to be considered rather more critically at this point. Smith (1999) argues that the concept can best be explained through the existence of common values and bonds between people, in contrast to earlier definitions that emphasise neighbourhood and territory (e.g. see Bell & Newby, 1976). Often these common bonds are produced through appeals to an 'imagined community' at the level of the nation, neighbourhood or institution, that promotes an idealised and romanticised notion of sameness and similarity (see Anderson, 1983; Rose, 1990). Consequently, Young (1990) discusses how the ideal of community can result in the elevation of unity and homogeneity over diversity and difference. The

political dream of community may therefore result in exclusion for individuals who do not share the common interests and values of the collective, or who do not 'fit in' for whatever reason.

The concepts of inclusion and exclusion have been explored extensively by Sibley (1995b), who points to the role of emotions in creating divisions between 'us' and 'them' in the minds of individuals. Often these dichotomies will work to exclude particular minority groups who are constructed as 'inferior' or 'impure'. However, borders and boundaries are continually renegotiated and contested, creating the necessity for continual re-establishment and policing to reflect hegemonic power (see Pile & Thrift, 1995). In the context of education, faith schools can sometimes create clear boundaries between their school community and the outside community in order to effectively promote religious values (Valins, 2003). Such communities and collective identities are often set up in opposition to a 'mainstream' majority White Christian/secular culture that portrays members of minority cultures, and hence associated faith schools, as 'other' (e.g. see Dwyer & Meyer, 1995; Kong, 2005b).

In my research, the concept of community in the two study schools implied both inclusion and exclusion. Smith's (1999) community of common values and bonds was much more apparent in Holy Cross than Rainbow Hill, partly because of the emphasis placed on it as part of the school's religious ethos, but also because of the high frequency of religious rituals enacted on a daily basis. Although Holy Cross did demonstrate a stronger sense of togetherness through those aspects discussed, children who were unable to take part in the religious rituals inevitably experienced a certain amount of exclusion, despite the school's efforts to include them. Pupils in this category (such as Ahmed below) did not necessarily view this as a problem, but it did serve to mark them as different in the context of these daily religious rituals. Similarly, Smith (2005) found that assemblies and collective worship in primary schools were times where religious differences were reinforced through withdrawal or separate worship, despite rhetoric to the contrary. In Holy Cross in my study, children from minority religions were only included in the non-religious rituals such as 'wake-up-shake-up' and singing practise, when the songs were more secular in nature.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok, what about singing? Do you like singing the songs in assembly?

CRAIG (White Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Most of them, 'cos we don't do a lot.

AHMED (Black Muslim Boy, Holy Cross):

It depends what they are. Some of the songs I don't like singing, some of them I do, and some of them I can't sing 'cos I'm a different religion, and some of the things they say inside there, I can't really say.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh so how do you know, do you know which one's that you're meant to be singing?

AHMED:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. Is that just decided before you go in assembly?

AHMED:

Yeah, and if I can't say something, I just won't sing.

INTERVIEWER:

Right so you know which one's you're meant to sing and which one's you're not?

AHMED:

Mmm.

In contrast, Rainbow Hill did not engender such a strong feeling of community and togetherness, as comparative use of religious rituals would not have been appropriate in that context. But the school's emphasis on inclusion as part of its school ethos did mean that children could take part in the majority of events and rituals, unlike in Holy Cross. A good example of this was the school talent contest, and the Key Stage 2 Christmas nativity, which although Christian in nature, was generic enough to allow children from other religions to take part (see diary extract below). The only occasion when children did not take part in an event during the research period was during the Key Stage 1 Christmas nativity, because it was held in the local church and some Muslim parents, in particular, felt uncomfortable about their children attending a church.

The class went down to the hall for [the Key Stage 2 Christmas performance], which was again, an all singing and dancing, costume-laden event. The set was in front of an enormous cross on the wall, covered in flags from different nationalities. The cast was multicultural and the choir and narrators certainly had children from minority religions amongst them, including Muslims and Sikhs. (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill)

Although embodied rituals helped to develop a cohesive community and a feeling of togetherness, they also had the power to exclude. While Holy Cross in my study was able to build a stronger sense of community, its reliance on religious rituals resulted in a certain amount of exclusion for some children. In contrast, Rainbow Hill maintained a slightly weaker sense of community, but was able to include all its pupils in embodied rituals and practices. These community dynamics were also significant for making sense of the way that both schools engaged with their surrounding neighbourhood communities and the implications for building social cohesion on a wider scale.

The concept of community can be understood in a number of ways, as highlighted by Bell & Newby (1976). They outline three definitions of community, including a neighbourhood community based on close geographical proximity, a collection of local social and political systems and institutions, and a body of individuals with close personal ties and obligations towards other members. Wellman & Leighton (1979) prefer to separate the concepts of neighbourhood and community, arguing that neighbourhood community networks have become increasingly dispersed across space. This position is extended by Castells (1996), who maintains that we are now living in a network society, shaped by new technologies and advanced, flexible capitalism. This has also impacted upon the social structure, so that people exist within networks of social connections and interactions, and spaces such as the local neighbourhood become less significant for the formation of relationships and communities. Larsen *et al.* (2006) advocate a 'mobilities approach' to understanding communities and society. Rather than focusing merely on social networks, they instead analyse the embodied practices that form them. As May (2002) points out, real life encounters and pre-existing social networks and traditions are often much more important than digital communication technologies for developing communities. These approaches encourage a re-engagement with the actual physical meetings and practices that take place to develop social collectives, many of which occur within and around community institutions. For example, Witten *et al.* (2003) point to the role that schools have in developing and maintaining social and community networks.

Both of the schools in my research did engage with the local neighbourhood community to a certain extent, through events and community outreach projects. This again highlighted the continued importance of geographical localities for making sense of community. Even if the schools merely acted as loci for social networks, the embodied practices and meetings that occurred within and around the institutions were

important for contributing to the state of the wider community. Acts of engagement with the local community included taking children to distribute food to the needy at Harvest festival and organising pupils to entertain elderly people at a venue near to the school. The study schools also offered breakfast and after-school clubs to local families, invited parents in to school events, and contributed to local festivals and projects. In one of the parent interviews at Rainbow Hill, Mona explained some of the other ways in which the school engaged with the local neighbourhood.

INTERVIEWER:

In your knowledge, is the school active in the local community?

MONA (Asian Muslim Mother, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah I mean I guess so, because, though I've not done anything in that area, I know that Sure Start (Government service for families), I've seen a few mothers carry the stair guards [...].

INTERVIEWER:

Oh right.

MONA:

They were being dispensed here at school for mothers, very inexpensive ones, so very affordable for mothers and I think it means a lot.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh so to stop the children, those guards to stop smaller children going down the stairs?

MONA:

Yes those ones were being sold. And also I think every Monday they have fruit and vegetables that are sold on the campus at reasonable prices for people who can't afford to go to the supermarkets...

The type of community present within each school was important for making sense of the relationship between the institutions and their wider religious communities. Rainbow Hill did have some informal links with the local Anglican Church and the vicar did occasionally take assemblies in school but there were no formal ties with the Anglican community. In contrast, the Catholic priest from the local parish took a central role in services and events at Holy Cross, and parishioners would attend class services and Mass, as well as other religious events in the school building. Rainbow Hill was therefore able to focus more on providing for the neighbourhood community, whereas Holy Cross focused more on providing for the local Catholic community. The links

between Holy Cross and the parish tended to result in more parental involvement than in Rainbow Hill, but were not quite as inclusive because of their different purpose.

INTERVIEWER:

What would you say the school's role is in the local community?

HEAD TEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

[...] We definitely need to be more a part of the parishes that we serve. So we do through sacramental preparation, that sort of thing, get involved in the parishes, we do have services that the parishioners come in and spend time with us, so we need to be seen as part of the parish community and active members of the parish community. We have, we do collections at Christmas, sorry at Harvest that we give, go round to the local community, it's picked up by the church people and they pack it up and take it round to the needy in the community. [...] One of the things we are doing at the moment, I've put in a bid to the national lottery to develop a peace garden, which would be built on that side of the school, and we hope to invite lots of groups, other faith groups to use it, because it will be designed for small meetings and prayer groups and that sort of thing, reflection. So we're starting to sort of branch out into the community, but it's quite difficult because we're next to the community school...

In summary, although both of the schools were in the business of engaging with their local communities, the ways in which they did this were very different. The type of communities that existed within the institutions themselves also closely reflected the kind of relationship that they maintained with the wider community. Whereas Holy Cross focused more on the Catholic community and contributed to its social binding, Rainbow Hill took a more inclusive approach but one that was slightly less salient in terms of its cohesive power. However, these differences had important implications for concerns about social cohesion between different ethnic and religious groups and these will be explored in the conclusion.

5.4) Conclusion

Although much of the concern about social cohesion and education has been focused around the macro-scale of school selection and residential segregation, I have argued

in this chapter that an awareness of the micro-spaces within schools is just as important an area for inquiry. Following that approach, I have outlined some of the processes that took place within two case study schools to promote positive values and meaningful encounters between children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds and develop a cohesive community through embodied methods. Central to all of these processes were bodily emotions, aspects of social interaction and civil behaviour that have not been given enough attention to date and need to feature more prominently in future research on social cohesion. In this chapter, I employed Hochschild's (1983) concept of 'emotion work' to make sense of some of these embodied aspects, particularly the way in which children were expected to display appropriate emotional responses to their everyday school encounters through 'surface acting' and 'deep acting'. I also pointed to the significance of repeated embodied rituals, routines, practices and events for building a sense of togetherness, both in a religious and non-religious sense. A continued interest in encounters and rituals could provide the context for examining the importance of bodies and emotions for cohesive communities more generally, provided that these are not considered in isolation from wider structures of power and inequality as with some of the previous work on geographies of affect.

I have also outlined the extent to which such attempts at promoting social cohesion in the schools were successful and some of the issues that arose as a result. There were many examples of meaningful encounters between children of different religions, including the way they would all work and play together on a daily basis. Although the schools did work very hard to provide these positive opportunities, it would have been impossible to ensure that they occurred all of the time. Consequently, there were occasions when children chose not to follow the 'feeling rules' of the school, or found it too difficult to manage their emotions in ways that they had been taught. There were also examples of gaps between children's developing values and the behaviours that they demonstrated, or clashes between values they were learning at school and at home. Some of these incidents pointed to the limitations of teaching socially cohesive values, when children can merely repeat rhetoric or demonstrate 'surface acting' without necessarily fully understanding their importance. In addition, the focus on social cohesion defined in relation to cultural and religious identities meant that other social divisions such as gender were granted much less attention. In our pursuit of inclusion for pupils from all cultures and religions, we should not forget some of the other differences that structure children's everyday school lives.

Similarly, the embodied community building processes in the study schools had particular consequences for social cohesion. While both schools used non-religious rituals and events to develop a sense of togetherness and belonging, Holy Cross was also able to draw on a wide range of religious rituals for community building. This led to a more tightly knit but less inclusive collective, particularly for those children who were from minority religious backgrounds. In contrast, Rainbow Hill took a much more inclusive approach that, because of the lack of religious rituals, resulted in a slightly weaker sense of togetherness. This pattern was repeated through the ways in which both schools engaged with their wider communities. Holy Cross focused more exclusively on the local parish community, whereas Rainbow Hill had more of an inclusive responsibility towards the neighbourhood community.

These findings have important implications for the social cohesion debate introduced at the start of the chapter. To begin with, they add weight to the argument that it is impossible to claim that all faith schools are divisive and all community schools are not, since both of the schools were utilizing similar strategies to promote meaningful encounters, even though the motivations for doing so were different in each. Here, the commonalities between the two schools were particularly striking. Both of the schools in this study clearly *were* promoting social cohesion in this respect, but then they both had the advantage of multi-faith pupil intakes that facilitated that process. My observations about the limitations of teaching cohesive values to children and the gaps between their knowledge and their behaviour have important implications for schools that do not have religiously diverse intakes, yet claim that they can promote social cohesion through curriculum teaching about knowledge and respect for other faiths. There is an urgent need for more research on such schools without diverse intakes, both religious and secular, which takes a more sophisticated approach to the issues of prejudice and children's developing values. The findings in this section of the chapter also pointed to the limitations of research focused on one geographical space, particularly through the issue of inconsistent home-school values. Further research on this topic that adopts a child or family case study approach (e.g. Pahl 2007) would be much better placed to explore some of the linkages and interconnections between the spaces of the home, school and religious community, and provide additional insights to the ones developed in this chapter. Such research might also point to the extent to which schools could or should become involved in facilitating the transformation of values in the wider community.

The British Government currently remains committed to the role of religion within the education system and is keen to stress the place of faith-based schools in promoting

social cohesion between different ethnic and religious groups (see Department for Children Schools and Families, 2007). While the section on positive encounters has demonstrated that faith schools may well be able to work towards developing social cohesion, this chapter has shown that religion also has the potential to exclude. In both institutional space and the wider community, the Catholic school in my study was much better placed to facilitate a sense of belonging amongst members of the Catholic community than forge networks and connections between members of different communities. Put another way, the Catholic school was better at bonding social capital than bridging social capital (see Flint, 2007; Putnam, 2000). The nature of the qualitative case study approach in this study means that it is not possible to make generalisations about faith schools or community schools and the enormous diversity in the state school sector also militates against drawing conclusions of this kind (Jackson, 2003). However, what this study does show is that a naïve assumption that faith schools are good for promoting social cohesion, as current Government rhetoric appears to suggest, may well be misplaced. The situation is certainly much more nuanced than this and more research is urgently required to unravel some of this complexity.

6) School Ethos & Care – Religion in Public & Private Space

School 'ethos', 'culture' or 'climate' is much discussed in political and educational circles and generally refers to the core shared values, beliefs and practices of an educational community (Hopkins, 2007; Sergiovanni, 1994). It implies a particular feeling and atmosphere perceived by members and visitors, which may not always be easy to describe or articulate (Stevens & Sanchez, 1999). Frieberg (1999:1) describes school ethos as "the heart and soul of a school". Faith schools are often argued to promote positive values through a distinctively religious ethos. In 2006, the then education minister Lord Adonis pointed to inspection results that rated Catholic schools higher in the area of 'positive ethos' (BBC-News-Online, 18/05/06, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/4995054.stm>). However, because of its subjective nature, different groups may hold different perspectives on a school's ethos. Parents of children who attend faith schools may view religious ethos as positive for different reasons to school and religious leaders (e.g. see Küçükcan, 1998; Merry, 2005; Valins, 2003). Similarly, children in school may understand the idea of ethos very differently from adults or be unaware of it (Smith, 2005).

In previous chapters, I discussed how an ethic of tolerance and a love of God were important for the ethos of Rainbow Hill and Holy Cross respectively (Chapter 4). I also explored the significance of particular values and practices for encouraging positive encounters and developing school communities (Chapter 5). In this chapter, I delve a little deeper into the issue of school ethos by exploring the place of religious practices and values in both of the study schools. I begin by considering the extent to which religion contributes to everyday public life in each of the schools, before examining the implications for distinctions between public and private space. This discussion calls into question the assumption that the ethos of faith schools are influenced by religion while the community equivalents are not. In the last section, I specifically scrutinize the issue of care and caring, firstly to further draw out some of the arguments regarding religion and space and secondly to analyse the implications of a caring ethos for children's participation and citizenship.

6.1) Religious Ethos

One of the key arguments over faith schools concerns the extent to which religion should be viewed as public or private, and hence whether or not faith-based education is a legitimate recipient of state funding (Commission for Racial Equality, 1990). The

issue links to wider debates about the role of religion in the public sphere and the religious or secular character of the State. Weintraub (1997) sketches four main ways in which social and citizenship theory has viewed the distinction between the role of religion in public and private space. The first is the 'liberal-economist' model, which draws on rational-choice theory and writers such as Hobbes and Locke (Weintraub, 1997:9), to argue that individuals will attempt to maximise their self-interest at all times, and society is merely an aggregate of individual decisions. Religion generally has a private role within this way of looking at the public and private distinction, but society is still important for upholding and protecting moral values. The second way is the 'republican-virtue' model, which understands the public sphere as a forum for political community and citizenship. Here, consensus is achieved through debate and discussion in the public sphere and religion is consigned to the private sphere to avoid 'irrational' decision-making (Habermas, 1987; Rawls, 2001). The third way is the 'fluid-sociability' model, where codes and conventions in the public sphere ensure civility and a separation between public and private life (see Ariès, 1962; Sennett, 1986). Here, religion may maintain a role in public life through various public rituals and traditions, but this model is viewed as less relevant for modern society.

The fourth model is the 'feminist model', which critiques the distinction between public and private, pointing to the socially constructed separation of family life from wider economic and political life. This approach mainly focuses on gender at the expense of other elements such as religion. The model is a basic critique of the traditional liberal-patriarchal understanding of the private sphere as natural and domestic, compared with the cultural and civil public sphere. Within this traditional understanding, women (as wives) are located in the private sphere and viewed as subordinates to men, who are more associated with the public sphere and the liberal principles of freedom and equality that it represents. The feminist model challenges this distinction by drawing attention to the fact that the economic sphere cannot be understood in isolation from the domestic sphere. Paid work in public space is supplemented and supported by unpaid work in private space and so these two supposedly discrete worlds are in fact intrinsically connected. Feminists have therefore highlighted private space as central to a full understanding of civil society and pointed to the political nature of personal life (Pateman, 1983).

In a neo-liberal society, the 'liberal-economist' model is important for understanding the distinction between public and private space, but tends to overly focus on economics and rationality at the expense of social and cultural life and other bases for understanding society such as religion (Mellor, 2004). Religion has therefore

increasingly been viewed in Western societies as a private affair to be a concern of the individual rather than the collective. State and religious bodies had often been constructed as distinct and separate. This is despite alternative discourses that view religion, particularly Christianity, as maintaining a certain amount of significance in public life, particularly in terms of national identity (Aldridge, 2000; Davie, 1994). Many have argued that faith and religion are now beginning to play a much more important role in the public sphere. Kepel (1994) and Casanova (1994) maintain that we are currently seeing a 'deprivatisation of faith' that can be observed in a variety of contexts. These include the role of religion in national conflicts, political legitimacy, reconciliation, critiques of governments, voluntary sector partnerships and plural representation of minority religions (see also Chambers & Thompson, 2005; Gilliat-Ray, 2004; Southwark, 2005). Globalisation and global politics have contributed to this process, particularly in terms of transnational and diasporic communities, religious geopolitics and concerns about religious fundamentalist terrorism (Arjomand, 1989; Robertson, 1989).

The above arguments make for a much more complex relationship between religion and public and private space than the 'liberal-economist' model provides for. I will argue that Weintraub's (1997) fourth model – the 'feminist model' – is most useful for making sense of religion in public and private space. Although this model focuses primarily on narrow conceptualisations of citizenship based on gender, more recent work in Human Geography has critiqued the public and private distinction in relation to other issues such as sexual citizenship and cultures of childhood (e.g. Bell, 1995; Valentine, 1996; Valentine, 2004). In this section, I will illustrate how the two study schools in my research envisaged different roles for religion as part of school life, in the process constructing public and private space in distinct ways. However, as will become apparent later in the chapter, the distinction between public and private religious space in the schools was not as clear-cut as these constructions implied. I will begin by outlining the place of religion in the public life of Rainbow Hill, before moving on to Holy Cross.

Religion was given a very minimal role in the everyday public life of Rainbow Hill, most clearly highlighted by the place of RE in the curriculum. Before the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988, RE was often not taught in primary schools, because teachers lacked the knowledge to deliver a 'world religions' approach based on the work of Smart (Bastide, 2000). This was due to a shift in the nature of RE away from instruction and knowledge of the Bible towards education about religions, reflecting new educational developments and an increasing recognition that Britain was

becoming a multi-faith society (Copley, 1997). Following the 1988 *Education Act*, RE became compulsory with a renewed emphasis on Christianity, and Ofsted inspections from 1992 meant that much more RE was taught in schools (Brown, 2002). While it may well be the case that RE has increased its prominence in schools following these developments, it still tends to fall into the category of subjects such as Art and Music that are marked on the timetable but are often not prioritised in practice due to pressures on the curriculum from core subjects and national tests (e.g. see Galton *et al.*, 2002).

In Rainbow Hill, RE was not being taught at the upper end of Key Stage 2 (at least not in the form of formal lessons), even though the law states that five per cent of curriculum time should be dedicated to it. The reason given was that the curriculum was too overcrowded because of tests and the need for more PSHCE in a challenging school context. Instead, RE tended to be taught in a less formal way, in assemblies and during small windows of time in the classroom. However, more formal lesson-based RE did feature lower down the school. The omission of RE from the upper school curriculum was reflected by the children's interview answers, some of whom did not even know what RE was, confusing it with DT (Design and Technology) and discussing the times when they had constructed model helicopters. When children did remember experiences of learning about religions, it tended to be memories of lessons they had taken part in at the lower end of Key Stage 2 where there is less pressure on the curriculum from national tests. Parents also reported a similar story about the lack of RE taught in school.

INTERVIEWER:

So do you enjoy it when you talk about Christianity in RE?

BEN (Black Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah? Would you like to talk about Christianity more, or do you think you have enough of it?

LOUIGY (Mixed Race Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

Have enough of it.

BEN:

Talk about it a bit more, 'cos in this class, we haven't even talked about RE that much I think.

LOUIGY:

No we haven't even got RE books.

A similar situation was also evident in other aspects of school life in Rainbow Hill. The 1988 *Education Reform Act* states that all state schools should 'promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children'. All primary schools have a legal obligation to provide daily collective worship that is 'wholly, or mainly, of a broadly Christian character'. 'Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development' has also continued to be a cross-cutting element of the National Curriculum (see National Curriculum Online, www.nc.uk.net) and is assessed by Ofsted. Despite this legally enshrined place for religion and spirituality in the school, recent government initiatives have taken some of the emphasis away from these elements of school life. Watson (2006a), highlights the fact that the term 'spirituality' has been completely omitted from the Government's recent 'Every Child Matters' agenda, which aims to develop a holistic approach to children's services and well-being. Similarly in 2004, the then Chief Inspector of Schools, David Bell, called for the daily collective worship requirement to be reformed, claiming it was an unnecessary burden on schools (Bell, 2004). This move away from a public role for religion in the school ethos was reflected in Rainbow Hill, where staff emphasised the difficulty of meeting the requirement in a multi-faith setting. Delivering Christian worship in a school with a variety of faiths was not likely to be popular with non-Christian parents and so was generally avoided (see quote from Jane in Chapter 4, p.110). The lack of religion was also something that I noticed during observations of assemblies, and contrasted with the school prospectus which had promised broadly Christian ones.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah and would you say that in your assemblies, there is an explicit aim to provide some kind of spiritual opportunity [...]?

HEAD TEACHER (Male Agnostic, Rainbow Hill):

No, I wouldn't actually. I would probably say the opposite - that we don't engage in spiritualness at all, erm and I think it's, it's an awkwardness for, for schools in our circumstance.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

HEAD TEACHER:

Where we've got a multicultural and diverse religious background for many of the children about how we tick that box, because whilst we still have, you know, we're still in a Christian country, and a responsibility to deliver a certain curriculum and have a collective act of worship, how that works in our setting.

In 1993, Ofsted (1993) reported that almost all primary schools complied with collective worship requirements although not all had sufficient spiritual focus. This was in contrast to secondary schools, the majority of which did not comply with the law. More recent reports from the Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education have confirmed that this continues to be the case. Where collective worship does occur, it is reported to be of high quality and is successful in providing for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Only a very small number of exemptions are reported for schools with highly multi-faith or non-Christian intakes (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2002, 2004). Rainbow Hill did not have an exemption from the law, and indeed, the biggest faith group in school was still Christian, but rather an informal 'shying away' from religion was apparent. The way that this contrasted with the past was discussed by one of the class teachers.

CLASSTEACHER (Female Christian, Rainbow Hill):

The hymns that we sing now, at one time, five years ago, five, six years ago, we would sing more overtly 'hymny' songs for school.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

CLASSTEACHER:

And I used to play them on the piano, and we would have a hymn practise during the week and things, and some of those were Christian songs that brought in 'God' and 'Jesus' you know, but mostly they were. You'll find in all the children's assembly books now, there is very rarely a religious content, or very rarely something that's not using 'God' as opposed to, or saying 'Jesus', not making it Christian or Islam.

INTERVIEWER:

Right, so it's just general 'God'?

CLASSTEACHER:

Just general 'Godness' in the hymns, but nowadays we don't really do those at all, apart from seasonal [...] So yes, it's very, perhaps very bland, I don't know, not very bland, just very I don't know how to put it really. 'Goodness' songs perhaps is a better way to put it really, you know, and seasonal songs.

INTERVIEWER:

Quite generic?

CLASSTEACHER:

Yes, yes they are. I mean, the first one that they learnt this year by coming in, was about helping themselves to look after themselves and school rules.

The quote above illustrates well the way in which formal religion was gradually being replaced by a vague non-specific spirituality in school. As highlighted in Chapter 1, the current Ofsted (2004) definition focuses on the non-material aspect of living and the development of self-worth, identity, meaning and purpose. Despite this and other guidance (e.g. National Curriculum Council, 1993; Ofsted, 1994; School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 1995, 1996), Ofsted judgements of the quality of spiritual development have been shown to be questionable in the least. It seems that inspectors are unclear about what they are supposed to be inspecting, do not give RE or collective worship enough attention and are working with a questionable definition in the first place (Wenman, 2001). With such vague definitions in place, it is easy to understand why spirituality in Rainbow Hill tended to be something that was difficult to pinpoint and inconsistently demonstrated. There were some occasions when children would walk into assembly to calming music and be given an opportunity to reflect on the message of a key story, but this very much depended on whether it fitted well with the particular theme that day, or the member of staff leading the assembly. One example was the harvest festival celebration, which included reflection on the awe and wonder of nature (specifically the presentation of a very tall sunflower that one year group had grown) and songs giving thanks for the food that we all eat.

They started off by singing a harvest song in order to practise for the harvest festival, specifically a song about a farmer who gathers his crops, and then how we would offer thanks to 'the One who gives sun and rain', but didn't actually say who the 'One' was. (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill)

Several writers have argued that subjects such as Poetry, Literature, Music, Drama, Dance, and Art all have potential for facilitating spiritual development (Alcock, 1993; Bogdan, 2003; Cottingham, 2005; Green, 1993; Pike, 2002; Winston, 2002). When discussing spirituality across the curriculum during interviews, the teachers tended to focus on the 'awe and wonder' element within different topics like Art and Science, or the spiritual motivations of historical figures. Similarly, a certain amount of morality was

promoted across the curriculum, particularly in subjects such as PSHCE (see Chapter 5), as part of assemblies and discussions on the weekly ethos statements or during informal moments in the school day. One such example occurred after a child reported the mysterious disappearance of part of her lunch from the cloakroom.

The morning began with a talk to the class about someone who had stolen food from lunch boxes the day before. It was made clear that no one had the right to take other children's food if it didn't belong to them, and children were asked to own up or tell the teacher any information that they knew about later on. (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill)

Spirituality and morality therefore tended to be taught in a way that was decoupled from religion, but nevertheless contributed to the development of a general humanism and the promotion of societal norms in school, which still left room for individual values and beliefs. Parent interviewees also made the distinction between religion and a more general and vague morality/spirituality, when they suggested that the school promoted a positive way of life that acknowledged the existence of 'something more' beyond the children's everyday material lives.

INTERVIEWER:

So I wondered if you felt whether religion came into it at all in any way?

BEM (Black Muslim Father, Rainbow Hill):

Well I don't think it has anything to do with religion, it's just a moral, positive way of life. That's what they preach in their own terms, not a religious thing.

INTERVIEWER:

So it's just kind of a general moral thing?

BEM:

It's just general morality, which is more related to than religion, yeah. We just teach the religious values at home, but at school they just teach the moral, morality, good morals.

The situation was quite different in Holy Cross, where religion took a very prominent role in the everyday life of the school in rather a public sense. As discussed in Chapter 4, the ethos of the school was influenced by communitarian values of Catholicism and

these values were demonstrated in a wide range of practices that children were expected to take part in. As the guidance for Catholic schools dictates, “a Catholic school should put Christ at the centre of everything it does by integrating Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church into every aspect of learning, teaching and the totality of school life” (Stock, 2005:5). These included class prayers four times a day, daily worship, school Mass and services, and continual reminders of religion through objects, symbols and displays around the school building. Every single day of my research diary from Holy Cross was full of references to religion in some way.

INTERVIEWER:

So to what extent do you think that like the religious side and the Catholic side is influencing those values and the ethos?

CLASSTEACHER (Female Christian Non-Catholic, Holy Cross):

In this school hugely I think. I think it's a real, it underpins everything, everything you do, it's, you know there's the constant reminders, whether it's the RE board, whether it's the ethos statements that link into the RE, whether it's you know, the prayers during the day. It's just there's constantly something there to remind them of the teachings of the Bible and things, and there's constantly something there for them to be working on and to remind them of and things like that, so it seems to underpin a lot of things in this school you know.

The centrality of religion to everyday school life at Holy Cross was also reflected in interview comments from both children and parents. The religious element was something that children associated with the school, and something that parents particularly liked about it.

INTERVIEWER:

When I say [Holy Cross] Primary school, which is your school, what's the first thing that comes into your head?

NATHAN (White Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Jesus.

RACHEL (White Catholic Mother, Holy Cross):

Yeah I think that we have a wonderful priest, a lovely priest who is really good for the school, and we have some lovely Masses and we do have some lovely assemblies and celebrations and things, so I think that part of it's lovely. I personally really feel that the Masses are important, and you know that to me is an important thing, so I think other schools wouldn't have that.

INTERVIEWER:

So it's that kind of extra spiritual stuff that's going on and the link with the church with the priest and so on?

RACHEL:

Yeah definitely, we're linked with the church and that we have the priest coming in. Yeah I think that's a really nice part of the school.

The situation regarding RE in Holy Cross was also very different from Rainbow Hill. RE was a core subject and hence teachers were expected to spend ten per cent of curriculum time on it, rather than five per cent as in other schools. It was therefore given a much higher priority than in Rainbow Hill. RE in faith schools also differs from community schools in terms of the content covered. Bailey (2002) highlights how RE in Catholic schools tends to be determined centrally by the church, takes a confessional rather than educational character and is based on evangelism and the sharing of the Catholic faith. This contrasts with Church of England schools, where RE will either be determined by individual dioceses or follow the Local Education Authority's locally agreed syllabus and will reflect a more educational character. During my time in Holy Cross, RE was generally taught two or three times a week, always by a Catholic member of staff. The way in which children talked about RE in the interviews was also very different to Rainbow Hill and it was clear that the subject played a much bigger role in their everyday school lives. Parents were also generally very happy with the teaching of RE in school.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok right. What about RE? What do you like and not like about RE, 'cos I know you do quite a lot of RE in this school?

CASSIE (White Catholic Girl, Holy Cross):

I like, like you have Mr. O for like Mondays and I think Fridays and Miss just does a little bit of RE through the week with us, so we kind of get to do

spare time. If we've got spare time we can do RE then. And, that we learn new things, we learn something new.

Rather than a vague spirituality and morality that was inconsistently promoted as in Rainbow Hill, Holy Cross had a clear idea of the kind of moral and spiritual guidance that children should be taught. This was intrinsically linked to the Bible and was said to thread through the whole of the curriculum (see Stock, 2005). However, there are only very limited ways in which state-funded faith schools in England can alter their curriculum to make it more consistent with religious doctrine as all are required to follow the National Curriculum. It is only independent faith schools that officially have the opportunity to allow religious principles to permeate the whole curriculum and such schools vary in their commitment to concepts such as creationism (e.g. see Pike, 2004; Walford, 2002). Despite this, the school included religion whenever there was the opportunity to do so. This was again something that parent interviewees highlighted as being positive about the school, whether specifically from a Catholic perspective or in a more open sense. However, this aspect of school life was something that was not acceptable to certain parents who had sent their children to the school in the past but had since withdrawn them.

INTERVIEWER:

Is there a role for religion and spirituality throughout other subjects in school?

HEAD TEACHER (Female Catholic, Rainbow Hill):

You aim, you aim for that, and that's why sometimes parents have difficulty with the school because, for example, we had a school that closed in the area and some children had to come to our school and I had a lot of difficulty with one particular family. They were quite, quite difficult, challenging and in the end they said look, can't you just keep God out of it, shouldn't God just be for RE? I said well it's not, it's not how it works. God is in everything and therefore if something comes up in English that relates to that side of things then we will talk about it because you aim for it to thread through everything, because it is a part of everything.

During my time conducting fieldwork in school, there were many occasions when children were given the opportunity to engage spiritually or 'develop morally', but they

all tended to be linked to religion in a way that did not occur in Rainbow Hill. This was usually achieved through linking spiritual experiences to prayer and religious reflection and moral discussions to stories from the Bible (see below). Indeed, some writers argue that spirituality cannot be divorced from religion, in contrast to more secular approaches that promote the idea of a generic spirituality (e.g. Copley, 2000; Thatcher, 1999; Watson, 2000; Wright, 1999). One of the class teachers also felt that the school's provision for spiritual and moral development, within the Catholic faith, was what made it distinct from nearby community schools.

The class then discussed the ethos for the week, which was to appreciate the beauty and wonder of the world around them. They talked about how the little things needed to be appreciated and sang a child-friendly Psalm around the lighted candle. They were asked to close their eyes and think about something they thought was beautiful, and then shared answers. These included grass, flowers, frost, fresh air, babies, animals, rain, the sunset, and when they woke to hear birds singing. There was a prayer to appreciate beauty that included asking God to help them take a minute to say 'wow' about all of those things. (Research Diary Extract, Holy Cross)

6.2) Implicit or Explicit Religion?

Interestingly, despite the fact that the spiritual and moral learning experiences described above were always linked to the Catholic faith in some way, they often covered very similar issues to those taught in Rainbow Hill albeit presented in different ways. Examples included an appreciation for nature, awe, wonder and relationships, and moral values of right, wrong, tolerance, respect, caring and honesty. I have already discussed in Chapter 5 how both schools taught similar values for encouraging positive encounters between children, and this cross-over was something observed by one of the teachers in Holy Cross, who had also previously taught in a Community school.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah, so, 'cos you said that you weren't a Catholic yourself, how does that kind of influence the way that the ethos and the values are working do you think, and how that links in with the wider school as well?

CLASSTEACHER (Female Christian Non-Catholic, Holy Cross):

See for me, I must admit it was strange at first, because in some ways it's very similar to the schools I went to, but then in some ways it's completely different, and so it's.. I mean a lot of it is very similar and the thing is, I think in any school you go in, you're constantly gonna have this, "you need to be kind to each other, you need to be... ". It's just a way of delivering it in a way, it's you know, where as we've got the Bible to say "this is what Jesus said", and "this is this parable for this" and "this is that", and in other schools you'll have other stories, you'll have other things and they'll underpin what they're trying to promote. So it's, it's for here it's just a way of delivering the message in a way. I mean obviously it's more than that, you know (laughs), it's a religion and everything, but it's a way of, you know, giving them these stories, giving them something palatable for them and that they can understand, and stuff that helps.

This finding had another interesting connection to the way in which religion played a public or private role in the schools through the balance between RE on the one hand, and PSHCE on the other. As already mentioned earlier in the chapter, RE did not play too much of a prominent role in Rainbow Hill but PSHCE certainly did. In Holy Cross, much more emphasis was placed on teaching RE than PSHCE. The reasons given for these differences were generally related to time restrictions in the curriculum and the particular influences that schools were under, whether that be requirements from the diocese to deliver a packed RE curriculum (Catholic Education Service Website, <http://www.cesew.org.uk/standard.asp?id=99>), or from the Government to promote certain types of citizenship and various political agendas (Osler & Starkey, 2006; Parry, 2003; Rawlins, 2008). What was most interesting, however, was the significant overlap between the two subjects, and the way in which each school often taught the same issues and values through their preferred curriculum vehicle of RE or PSHCE (see also Knott, 2006; Watson, 2004).

At lunchtime, I spoke to the PSHCE co-ordinator before the school council meeting. I asked her what the purpose of PSHCE was in the school and she told me that it was aimed to link with Catholic ethos and values such as love thy neighbour and so on. The first element was a Sex and Relationships Education programme that ran through the whole school and was specifically designed for Catholic schools, in order to focus on creation

and awe and wonder [...]. The second element was the school ethos statements, which [...] were used all week as part of the assembly focus and would include things that were explicitly Catholic. The third element was the Circle Time programme, where the main focus was empathy.. [...] Although Circle Time was not explicitly linked to religion, the themes would be built upon, taken further in assembly and linked with the teachings of Jesus" (Research Diary Extract, Holy Cross).

Next, I went into the Year 3/4 classroom to watch the RE lesson about people that had inspired them [...]. Children were handed their exercise books, and interestingly, they were labelled PSHCE and RE books, which I felt symbolized quite well the closeness of the two subjects. The lesson was about Anne Frank and [...] the class discussed Hitler's arguments about the Jews, including the idea that they stole jobs, money and spread hate. Anne Frank knew that it wasn't right to hate Germans however, as she considered herself to be a German too. The teacher pointed out that hatred didn't depend on group membership, but individual people and their personalities. It wasn't necessarily about religion or nationality she said. [...] The teacher said that you couldn't tell other people what to do or believe and that tolerance meant that we had to understand people were different and we needed to respect them. It was interesting that this point was the same as the PSHCE ethos statement for the week on respecting differences – 'we are all different but also all special'. Was this an RE lesson, or was it a PSHCE lesson, or was it both? (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill).

At this point, while it has become apparent that religious *practices* had a much more prominent role in the public life of Holy Cross than Rainbow Hill, the situation was much more complex than this. Firstly, children themselves challenged the supposedly religious or non-religious ethos in school through their own religious and spiritual practices in and around school (see Chapter 7). Secondly, Spiritual, Moral and Values Education did show more of a consistent presence in both of the schools, even if presented in different ways, and so perhaps religious *values* did indeed have more of an influence on the ethos of Rainbow Hill than was immediately evident. This idea cannot be viewed as that unexpected when considered alongside theories about the role of religion in wider society.

A number of writers have considered the religious basis of Western societies in terms of concepts such as Christian charity (Zizek, 2000) (see later), or universal ethical and human morality (Bauman, 2001). Mellor (2004) argues for a re-engagement with the idea of the sacred and the role of hyper-spirituality for forming human collectives through transcendental forces (see Chapter 5). He argues for an understanding of Western societies that takes into account the way in which "social realities are complex, multi-layered phenomena with religious aspects that are so deeply rooted that they not only tend to be unacknowledged, but may also be expressly denied" (Mellor, 2004:5). This is an aspect of society that is often overlooked in so-called secular states, where the 'liberal-economist' model of private religious freedoms and public non-preferential treatment of religions is officially aspired to (see earlier). However, as discussed in Chapter 2, recent work has shown that the secular and the religious are in fact intrinsically connected, and the concept of secularism itself deeply rooted in Western Christian principles and ideas (Asad, 2003; Taylor, 1998, 2002).

This subtle religious influence Mellor (2004) refers to was also present in the schools in my research through the complex relationship between public and private religious space across the home-school boundary. The nature of religion within public and private space was further complicated by its perceived role in the private space of the home, *vis à vis* the public space of the school. Given the prevalent models of citizenship promoted in each school – influenced by liberalism or communitarian (see Chapter 4) – one would expect to see religious families in Rainbow Hill providing for their children's religious development in the private space of the home, whilst families in Holy Cross would be working in partnership with the school to promote both public and private Catholicism as part of a faith community.

There were indeed examples of families who fitted into the above categories. In Rainbow Hill, some of the interviewees argued that their children's religious upbringing was their responsibility rather than the school. Their comments would support Copley (1997), who argues that the current liberal approach to RE is in tune with the general British population, which increasingly views religion as a private affair. Some children took a range of religious activities out of school, including attending places of worship with their parents, or more child-orientated religious activities, such as religious clubs or classes. To a certain extent, this was true of both majority White Christian parents and those parents from minority religions.

SARAH (Black Christian Mormon Mother, Rainbow Hill):

Even, for us as a family, even if the school does not cover religion, in our home we cover religion, you know. She goes to church on Sunday and we make sure that she is spiritually fed.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

SARAH:

And I think that is our main job as parents. No one can take that away, no one can take that away from us. That it is down to us to make sure that she is spiritually fed, her spiritual needs are met and I think that as a family, as parents, we do that.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

PAUL (White Christian Mormon Father, Rainbow Hill):

It's our responsibility to let her know where she came from, why she's here and where she goes.

INTERVIEWER:

So it doesn't concern you so much if the school was lacking in that, because you know that you're able to do that at home?

SARAH:

Yeah. It would be nice if they did it, but no it doesn't concern us. It's not something that I'm like, "oh the school should be doing this", because it is our responsibility, and I think as parents, it's parents' responsibility to make sure that...

Similarly, there were examples from Holy Cross where parents discussed the way that children experienced religious practices and spiritual values taught in school alongside those conveyed at home and at church. Holy Cross documentation refers to the importance of a home-school partnership, not just in terms of education as in Rainbow Hill, but also in terms of religious values (Stock, 2005). Many of the children also discussed praying at home and attending places of worship in the interviews, and this included non-Catholic families as well as Catholic ones.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you think that the school's effective in helping [your daughter] to understand her religion in Religious Education?

CARLEEN (Black Christian Non-Catholic Mother, Holy Cross):

Yes that's right, you know like I previously said that on a Sunday she goes to church, on a Monday she's maybe in assembly and she, she's singing some Christian songs and she's taught to be good, which she would have been taught at the weekend, so there's continuity.

However, there were also plenty of views and arrangements that did not fit this expected pattern. Despite arguing that it was the responsibility of parents to raise their children in a particular faith, Sarah and Paul from Rainbow Hill (see above quote) later told me that they thought it was a shame that the school did not teach traditional Bible stories, which they believed were part of a national Christian heritage (see also Chapter 4). Some of the less religious parents at both Rainbow Hill and Holy Cross were also reliant on the school to teach about religion. They were very happy for their children to learn about religious teachings or take part in prayers and songs, but would rather not continue this at home. These opinions tended to contradict Copley's (1997) argument somewhat and challenge the neat construction as religion as private, or indeed as religion as a home-school partnership. Both of the interviewees below felt that some religious input would provide their children with a good foundation for life, but were quite apologetic about their own lack of religious observance. Laura described herself as a 'hypocrite' for wanting her children to be Christened but not attending church, while Julie told me that she was too busy to attend church at the weekends and going up and down the stairs to the flat was not as easy as when she was younger.

INTERVIEWER:

I mean in the assemblies in this school, there isn't so much of a religious element.

LAURA (White Agnostic Mother, Rainbow Hill):

No.

INTERVIEWER:

There's only two assemblies and they might kind of reflect and they occasionally have a song that's slightly kind of, might mention God or something, but I mean, how do you feel about that as a parent? Do you feel that's appropriate or...?

LAURA:

I think that's alright yeah. They do have it in the class, so I think that's a good thing as well. But it has changed from when I were at school, 'cos you

used to have a long time ago. Everything's changed, like you say there's more different religions, but personally no, as long as they do know something then I'm quite happy with that. That's fine yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

I mean do you carry on like the religious stuff at home with him? I know you don't go to church, but I mean do you ever like do prayers with him or anything like that?

JULIE (White Christian Grandmother, Rainbow Hill):

No, no, oh no (laughs), no.

INTERVIEWER:

(laughs) So you kind of leave that for the school to do?

JULIE:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

And you feel they kind of get enough from what the school's doing?

JULIE:

Oh yeah. I mean [John] doesn't complain or anything like that, you know.

He doesn't come home and say oh I've got to do this, I've got to do this, you know this, that and the other.

This finding can be explained well through Davie's (2007) concept of 'vicarious religion'. She defines this as "the notion of religion performed by an active minority but on behalf of a much larger number, who implicitly at least not only understand, but quite clearly approve of what the minority is doing" (Davie 2007:127). Davie (2007) uses this idea to help explain why in Nordic countries, people are happy to be members of their Lutheran churches (with confirmation as a normal rite of passage) and pay large amounts of taxes to them, but are even less likely than other Europeans to actually worship in them. Other examples given by Davie (2007) include the question of payment for entry into English churches, and closure of parish churches in Wales, both of which often result in high levels of resistance from local communities who see the presence and use of such buildings as a civil right, even if they hardly ever go into them. In the case of my research, less religious parents were happy for their children to learn about and take part in Catholicism, as they viewed religion as something positive even if they themselves did not practise it. Similarly, many of the parents in Rainbow Hill did not see anything controversial about their children learning about religions and

taking part in prayers and songs in assembly. These kinds of religious experiences were viewed as normal aspects of school life and there were no examples of parents who expressed a desire for a more secular schooling experience for their children.

In order to investigate the phenomenon of 'vicarious religion', Davie (2007) suggests that we pay attention to those situations where normality is put on hold for a while, such as deaths, births or illnesses. It is then, Davie (2007) argues, that the implicit starts to become explicit and we see more of the religious 'iceberg', the tip of which had previously been demonstrated by the religious minority in society. Davie (2007) gives the examples of religious and ritual mourning following the death of Princess Diana in 1997 and the utilisation of the local church for community support and mourning during the murders in Soham, UK of two schoolgirls in 2002. Significant events such as these in the two study schools also resulted in an increase in religious or spiritual activity. At Holy Cross, the 'Our Father' prayer was said with the class when one of the staff members experienced a family bereavement. This demonstrated a more organic and deep spirituality than the usual ritualised rhyming prayers chanted by the children. In Rainbow Hill, one of the teachers recounted the explicitly public spirituality that was present in her classroom following the tragic death of one of the pupils.

CLASSTEACHER (Female Christian, Rainbow Hill):

Children volunteer [religious ideas] sometimes, say in RE lessons when we're talking about something, and I volunteer what I do, you know and I talk about being in church, I talk about those kind of sides of things. But the only time, the only time I have consciously required children to listen with a spiritual content was last year. May this time last year, I had one of our little boys die.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh.

CLASSTEACHER:

He came to school on Tuesday and died on Thursday. Right, you know, bang. And it was my place to tell my children that, and it was my place to explain to them that I didn't believe that that was the end of everything, and that even if what they remembered was his memory, in some way that, that there is a spirituality to that isn't there?

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

CLASSTEACHER:

That his memory was here for us and that he hadn't died end of story, go away, don't think about it again you know. So I think that was the, that was a very open and declared way of doing it at the time.

The idea of vicarious religion, and religion as a normal aspect of everyday life was further confirmed through the way that children perceived religion and religious difference. Previous research has shown that children and young people's conceptions of religious identity can often work to contest dominant societal discourses and expectations, and may have different emphases than those portrayed in the media and other public forums (e.g. C. Dwyer, 1998, 1999; Nesbitt, 2004). Whereas social and educational policy tends to view religion alongside other key areas of social difference defined by equalities legislation (see Equality and Human Rights Commission website, www.equalityhumanrights.com), children in my research viewed religion as a much less prominent aspect of identity. They defined it as just one aspect of difference among a collection of other differences, encompassing a whole range of embodied human characteristics, such as clothing, interests, abilities, attitudes, hair and eye colour and so on.

INTERVIEWER:

You know last week you had an ethos statement that said 'everyone's different but everyone's similar as well'?

LOUISE (White Agnostic Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

What things do you think are different about you and other children in the school?

LOUISE:

Sometimes your personality.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

JADE (White Christian Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Your horoscopes.

INTERVIEWER:

Anything else that makes you different to other children in your class and the school?

LOUISE:

The colour that you are.

JADE:

The religion you are.

The Mr and Little Miss Religious drawings and stories completed by children from both of the study schools also emphasised religion as a normal part of everyday life. In Rainbow Hill, the Mr Religious and Little Miss Religious pictures displayed a range of religious jewellery and symbols, particularly Christian imagery. These included Bibles, crosses, prayer books, candles, a rainbow gown, prayer mats, bishops, angels, halos, fonts, stained-glass windows, a Kofi and the Qu'ran (see Figures 6.1 - 6.8). In Holy Cross, there was a little more emphasis on Catholic imagery, such as rosary beads and a more generous use of the cross. The characters were often located in or near places of worship, particularly churches, or near to religious statues or imagery. The religious identities of the characters were often consistent with the children's religious affiliation, for example Figures 6.1 and 6.5 were both drawn by Muslim pupils and included Islamic symbols and objects such as the Qu'ran, whereas Figures 6.2 and 6.7 focus more on Christian imagery such as crosses, bibles and churches and were drawn by Christian pupils. However, this was not always the case. As Moinian (2009) points out in her study of the ethnic and religious identities of second generation Iranian immigrants in Sweden, children construct their identities in complex ways, resisting oversimplification and displaying processes of hybridity (see also Erricker *et al.*, 1997; Hopkins, 2006; Smith, 2005). There were examples of characters with objects and symbols from more than one religion, or cultural artefacts such as Indian food. Figure 6.3 was one example of this, where one of the White Christian girls from Rainbow Hill included a prayer mat amongst Christian imagery. Similarly, Figure 6.6 from Holy Cross was drawn by a White Catholic girl and shows a rather French looking Little Miss Religious surrounded with Christian symbols but also a bowl of curry.

The theme of normality, of religion as an aspect of everyday life, was present in many of the pictures from both of the schools. Most of the characters wore either conventional smart, or cool and trendy clothes and displayed culturally accepted feminine or masculine appearances, apart from those characters that were constructed from religious imagery such as a walking Bible. This was also apparent from the items surrounding the characters that were not usually directly associated with religion, such as sports equipment. For example, the Mr Religious character in Figure 6.4 is wearing a balaclava, while the drawing in Figure 6.8 shows a Mr Religious with spiky hair and a

fashionable jacket. Similarly, the Little Miss Religious character in Figure 6.1 keeps a Qu'ran on her desk, but also wears a t-shirt saying 'girls rock', owns a modern mobile phone and is busy thinking about chocolate. This finding generally concurs with the idea of 'vicarious religion' (Davie, 2007), where faith is both understood by the majority, as well as generally approved of, even if the individuals themselves do not take part in it. Rather than something strange, incomprehensible, or even dangerous (one of the class teachers suggested that pupils might draw religious fundamentalists), children viewed religion as a normal part of everyday life, if not for themselves then for others.

In the comic strip stories from both of the schools, the characters took part in a range of religious activities, as would be expected, such as working, singing and saying Mass at the church, reading the Bible, praying or attending the Mosque. The Little Miss Prayer in Figure 6.11 was a good example of one of these characters, praying and reading the Bible in church and in the garden. However, normality was again a prevalent theme and characters also visited the supermarket, watched television, walked in the park, ate at fast food restaurants, socialised with friends, exercised at the gym and answered the telephone. The character in Figure 6.12 did not take part in any obviously religious activities at all, despite the original drawing containing crosses and rosary beads. Instead, this Mr Religious preferred to spend his time at the 'tickle factory', the fairground, the swimming pool and the gym. Alongside this theme of normality, was one of caring. Many of the characters showed kindness and wisdom, and cared for, helped or prayed for others who were experiencing problems. For example, the Little Miss Religious in Figure 6.10 prayed for Mr Strong and Little Miss Bossy. The theme of caring is something that I will explore in the next section. A few of the characters, such as the Mr Religious in Figure 6.9, also encouraged others to go to church, thus displaying evangelism. What was most interesting about the pictures and stories was the lack of significant differences between those drawn in Holy Cross and those in Rainbow Hill. Children from both schools had a range of religious perceptions and ideas, which they brought in from home to contribute to the public ethos of the schools.



Figure 6.1 – Little Miss Religious, Rainbow Hill

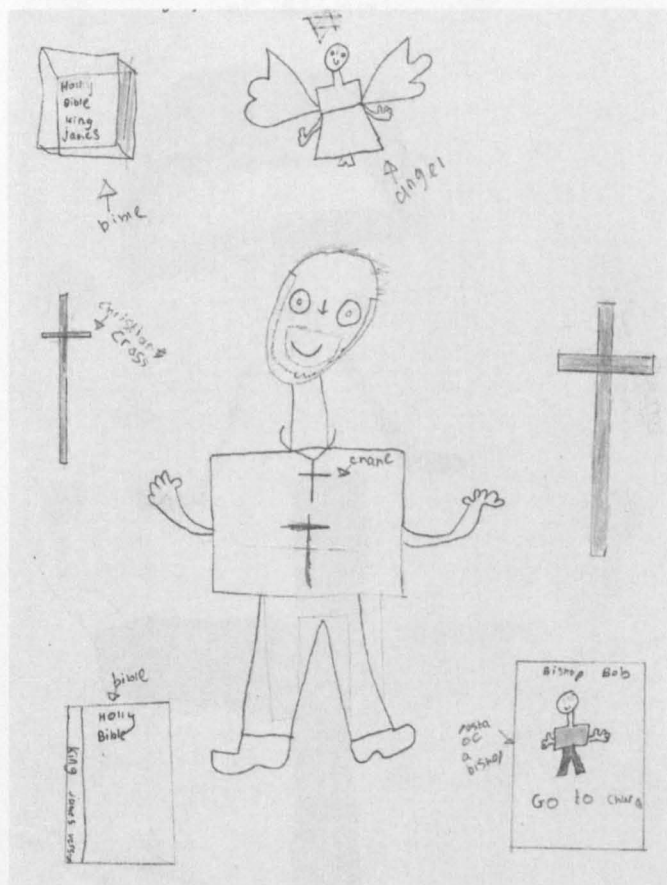


Figure 6.2 – Mr Religious, Rainbow Hill



Figure 6.3 – Little Miss Religious, Rainbow Hill

Figure 6.3 – Mr Religious, Holy Cross



Figure 6.4 – Mr Religious, Rainbow Hill



Figure 6.5 – Mr Religious, Holy Cross



Figure 6.6 – Little Miss Religious, Holy Cross

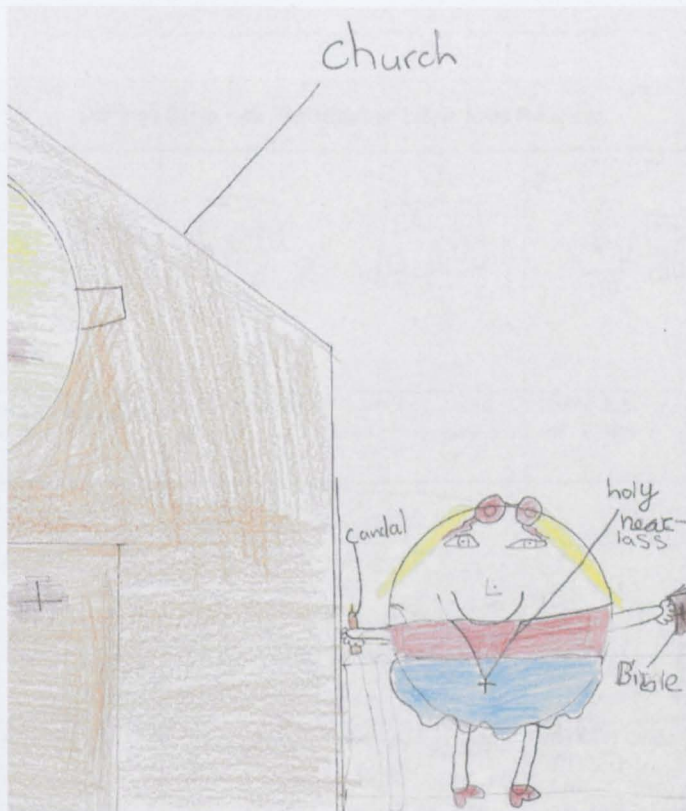


Figure 6.7 – Little Miss Religious, Holy Cross

Figure 6.9 – Mr Religious, Carbon Sing, Rainbow Hill



Figure 6.8 – Mr Religious, Holy Cross

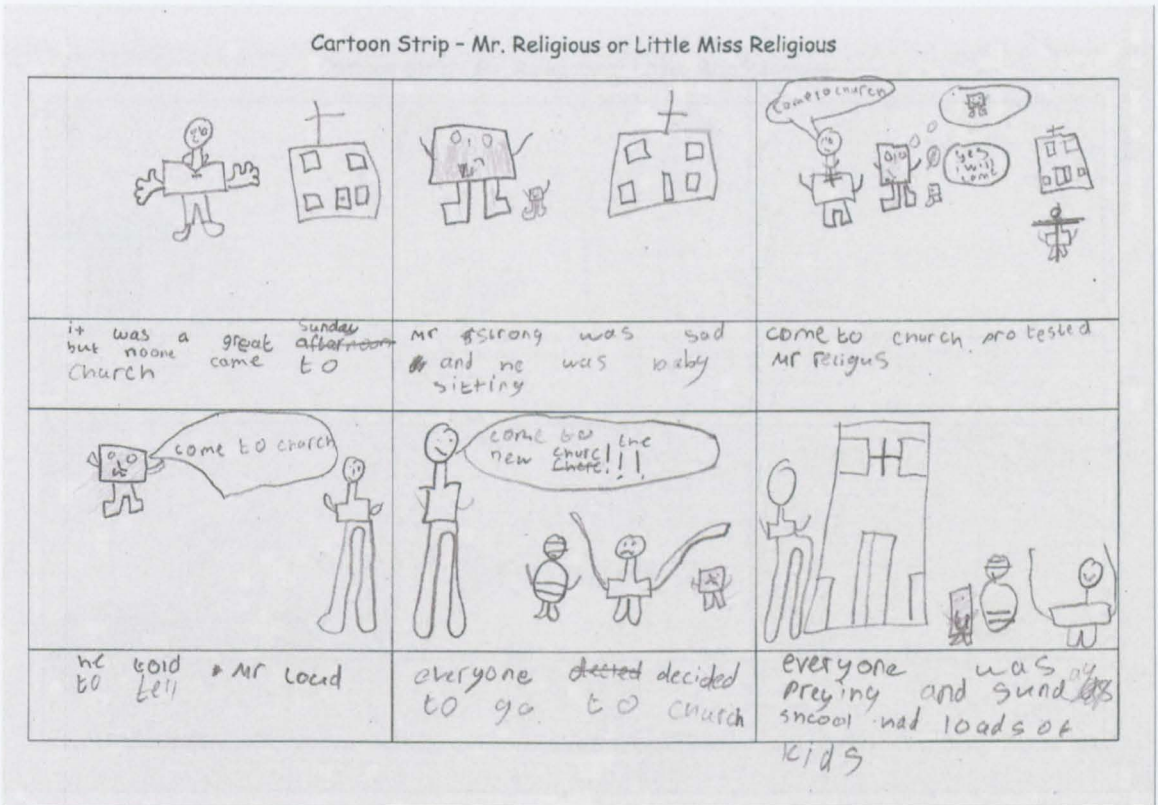


Figure 6.9 – Mr Religious Cartoon Strip, Rainbow Hill

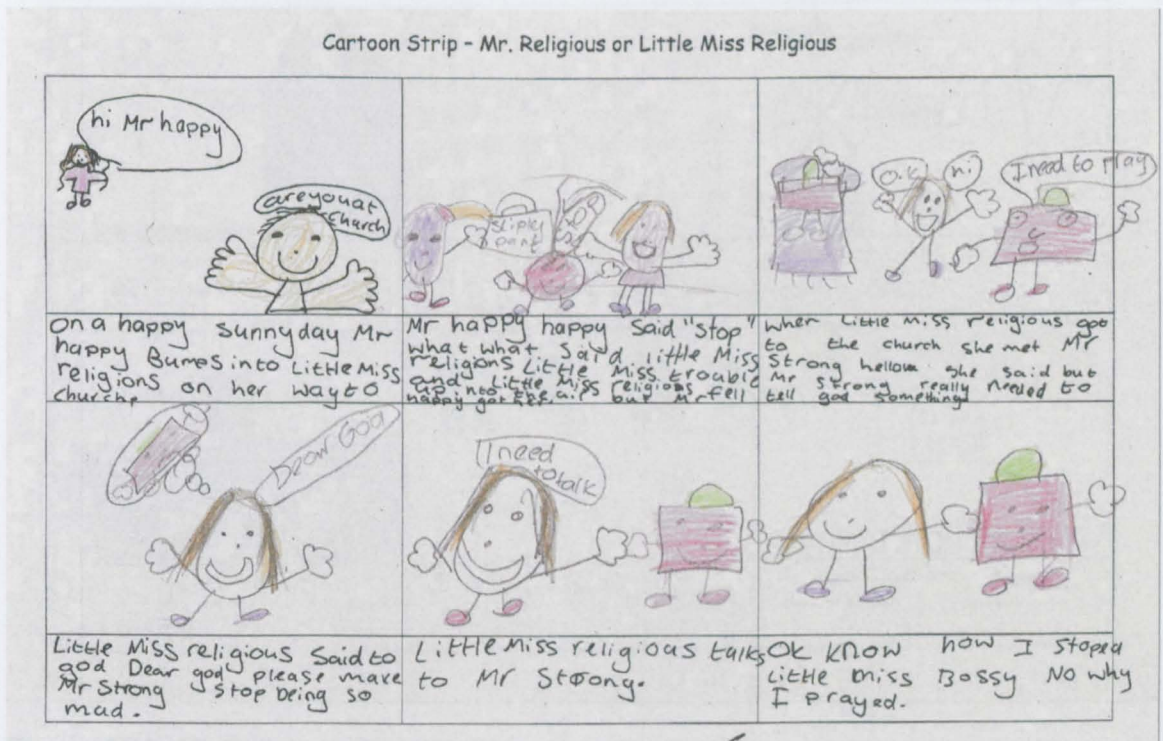


Figure 6.10 – Little Miss Religious Cartoon Strip, Rainbow Hill

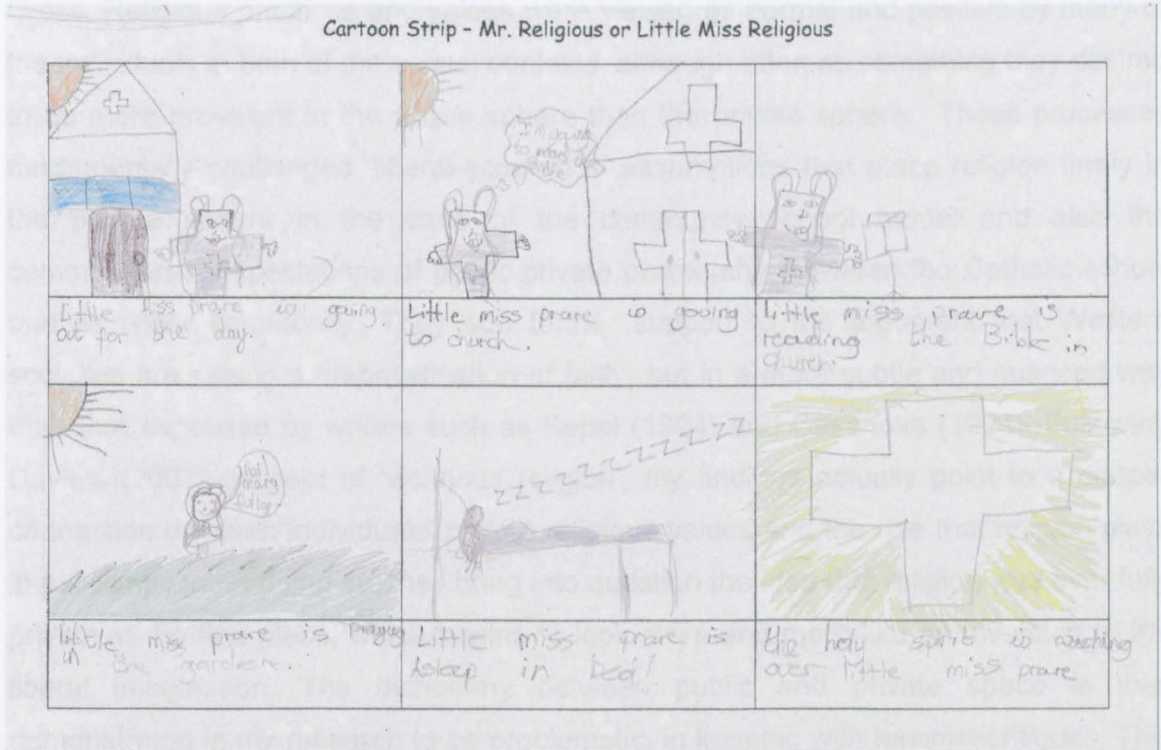


Figure 6.11: Little Miss Religious Cartoon Strip, Holy Cross

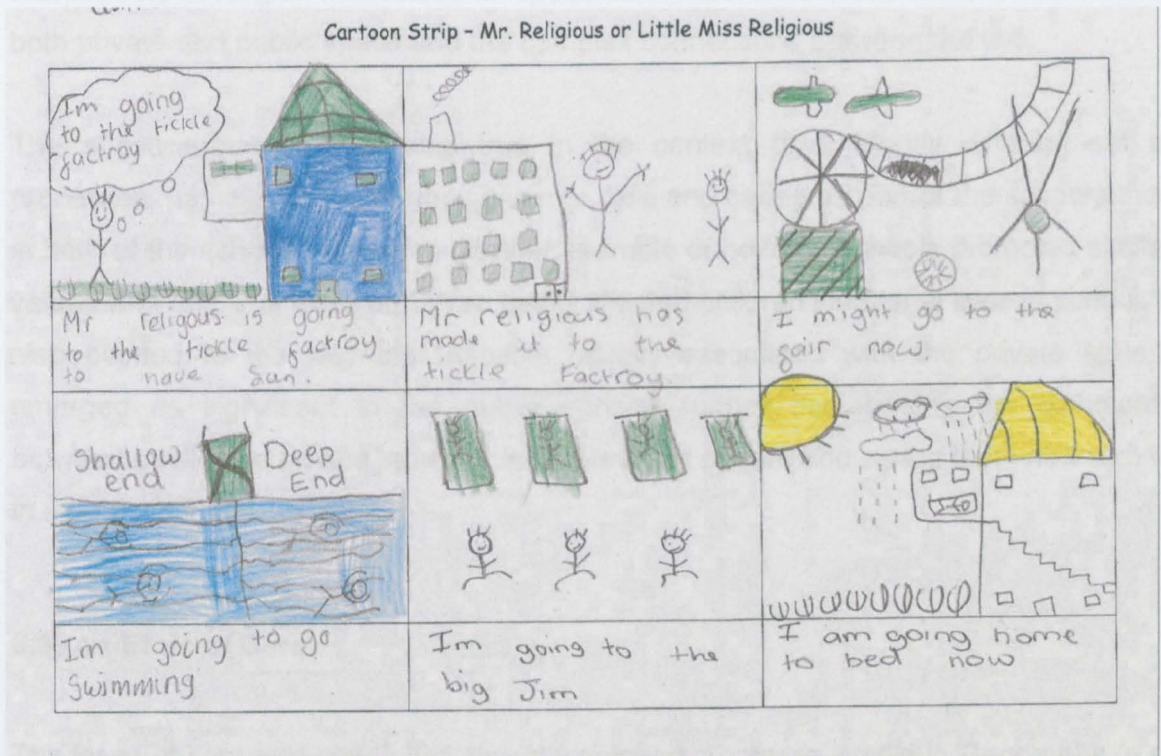


Figure 6.12: Mr Religious Cartoon Strip, Holy Cross

Religion was therefore very much part of the ethos of Rainbow Hill for the range of reasons discussed in the above section, even if it was much less explicit than Holy Cross. Religious practices and values were viewed as normal and positive by many of the individuals in both of the school contexts, although often as something they desired to be more prevalent in the *public* sphere than the private sphere. These processes fundamentally challenged 'liberal-economist' assumptions that place religion firmly in the private sphere in the case of the community school model and also the communitarian expectations of public-private partnership between the Catholic school and its wider community. They add further support to the argument that Western societies are seeing a 'deprivatisation of faith', but in a more subtle and nuanced way than that espoused by writers such as Kepel (1994) and Casanova (1994). Following Davie's (2007) concept of 'vicarious religion', my findings actually point to a deeper connection between individuals' private religious values and the role that religion plays in public space. In doing so, they bring into question the idea that religion was ever fully private in the first place, which begins to look more and more like an invention of the liberal imagination. The dichotomy between public and private space is thus demonstrated in my research to be problematic, in keeping with feminist critiques. This is because private attitudes and behaviours from the private sphere were impacting upon the construction of the public sphere. The evidence from my research suggests that the role of religion in institutional space cannot be understood without reference to both private and public space and the complex connections between the two.

The above argument was also true in the context of a slightly different set of processes, namely the importance given to care and caring as part of the school ethos in both of the schools. This was another example of how the schools promoted similar values with religious roots and in so doing affected children's material lives in school. It also pointed to the way that aspects usually associated with the private sphere emerged as significant in the public sphere, further destabilising the dichotomy between public and private space. It is to this issue of care and caring that I now turn to in the next section.

6.3) An Ethic of Care

The issue of care and caring has recently enjoyed a growing profile in Geography (e.g. see Conradson, 2003a; Milligan, 2007). Popke (2006) reviews how recent work has highlighted the emotional and affectual properties of caring relationships, for example Conradson (2003, cited in Popke, 2006:505) on caring in community drop-in centres

and McCormack (2003) on Dance Movement Therapy as an affective caring and ethical encounter. Geographies of care work have also focused on care homes for the elderly, hospitals and hospices, and caring in the home (Gleeson & Kearns 2001; Milligan 2003; Fanin 2003; Brown 2003; Pratt 2003; McDowell *et al.* 2005, all cited in Popke, 2006:505). Despite this growth in geographical work on care, caring in educational environments has received much less attention than other contexts. In contrast, the importance of care and caring relationships between educational professionals and their pupils and students has been a significant theme in educational literature for some time now (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998; Hargreaves & Giles, 2003; Stoll & Louis, 2007). Sergiovanni (1994:71) presents the 'caring community' as one of six types of school community, "where members, motivated by altruistic love, make a total commitment to each other." Noddings (1992) has argued that the whole business of education, from the curriculum to school organisation, should be organised around the principle of care: care for self, care for intimate and distant others, care for the environment and so on.

Smith (1998) explores the concept of an 'ethic of care', originally introduced by Gilligan (1982) as a feminist perspective, but built upon by Tronto (1993), Hekman (1995) and Clement (1996) to critique more mainstream ideas in moral philosophy. This work focuses more on care, feeling, partiality, and particularism, in contrast to justice, reason, impartiality and universalism. By care, Smith (1998:16) refers to "caring *for* others as well as caring *about* them: the focus here is on *beneficence* as doing good or showing active kindness, rather than on *benevolence* as merely the desire to do good or charitable feeling" (emphasis in original). Children and parents in both of the study schools in my research consistently reported that one of the aspects of school life they were most in favour of was the caring nature of the staff. This was described in terms of individual acts of kindness from teachers and teaching assistants, but also as a general culture, ethos or ethic of care in school (see also Chapter 7).

ZOE (White Christian Girl, Rainbow Hill):

I like that there's nice teachers, friendly children, and everyone's nice and kind.

INTERVIEWER:

Right ok, what do you think makes it a good school?

LISA (White Agnostic Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Because we have a Deputy Head, and she's called Miss T. and we have a Head Teacher and he's called Mr. Y. and we have all kind of other teachers, what can help us.

INTERVIEWER:

Right.

ZOE:

Erm all our, all our friends are nice and we've got teachers that care for us and help us when we're stuck.

INTERVIEWER:

So [when you were at school] you were concerned that the school might not reflect [your values], but now you think that it does?

MARIE (White Catholic Mother, Holy Cross):

Oh yes yeah, very caring, very caring school. I mean the ethos is obviously, it's a Catholic school, but there is a big, you know there is a, it's very loving and I think that's very important, you know.

Caring was not just a co-incidental process taking place in the schools. Rather, an ethic of care was something explicitly fostered by staff in both of the institutions, expressed through school policy documentation and supported by the Every Child Matters agenda (see Every Child Matters Website, www.everychildmatters.gov.uk), and/or religious scripture. The desire to care for pupils was also articulated by staff during interviews. This was sometimes expressed in explicitly emotional terms, highlighting the way that caring can be understood as an affective and relational process (see Ahmed, 2004b; Simonsen, 2007).

CLASSTEACHER (Female Christian, Rainbow Hill):

I think, I think what, what we have for the children, and the way we care, the way we look after them, the way we think of them, the way we love them, is not, I don't think there's any difference in saying, well I would feel different if I was in a class of Christian children, or if I was a Muslim and I was in a class of Muslim children. I don't think I could feel any different towards them, because they, you know it's one of the other things that I actually tell them - that I love them. They are my family, when I'm here all day, you know I love these children, but I don't like their behaviour always, you know (laughs). But that's what I do. I explain to them that there is a bond between us from my side, and you touch quite a few children that way, because they understand that that's where you're coming from,

whatever you do and whatever you say, that that's underpinning it. So I don't think you would find any difference in a church school with that, you know.

Pratt (1994) points to the centrality of caring commitments in the Semitic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) and in Christianity, the concepts of love and charity are particularly important (Williams, 2000). The significance of both love (see quote from class teacher above) and charity (or 'making a difference') were expressed in staff interviews in my research. Cloke *et al.* (2005) highlight how the work of religious or secular organisations providing emergency services for homeless people is often based on certain charitable values that produce a particular ethos. They draw on the work of Coles (1997, cited in Cloke *et al.*, 2005:388) to outline three conceptualisations of charity, two of which are also quite useful for making sense of the caring ethos in my two study schools. The first is 'Christian caritas', which incorporates the dual aims of evangelism and care to different degrees, as part of a strong commitment to the 'other'. The second is 'secular humanism' and is based on the moral codes and frameworks of wider humanist values and human rights, with unselfish behaviour towards the 'other' a core principle. Despite the differences between these models, Cloke *et al.* (2005) point to the difficulty of disentangling the two discourses, arguing that their overlapping roots and discourses often produce similar values. This is further complicated because of the actions and motivations of individual Christians within secular settings. My own research also highlighted the role of individuals in Christian settings operating within secular frameworks.

In Rainbow Hill, 'secular humanism' and the desire to make a difference was expressed by some of the staff, but others talked about the influence of their personal faith on their work in school. In Holy Cross, 'Christian caritas' was the dominant discourse, and teachers discussed how their caring was linked to their personal beliefs and promotion of the Catholic faith. However, the non-Catholic member of staff was more aligned with the 'secular humanism' discourse. In the same way as in the research by Cloke *et al.* (2005), the two discourses were difficult to untangle, because they resulted in very similar practices. Although 'Christian caritas' tended to involve a greater degree of evangelism, both types of charity were promoting particular values and behaviours to children through the actions of teachers and staff members.

HEAD TEACHER (Male Agnostic, Rainbow Hill):

I suppose as a staff, whether we explicitly say it or not, we share a moral purpose in being in this building, because we've all chosen to work in a very challenging part of the city. Ok and although we don't, you know, we don't go 'round telling each other day in day out, that is fundamentally why many people are here, because they feel that they, that they can make a significant difference to some children's lives.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok you've touched on this a little bit earlier, but I was wondering how the relationships between children and staff, and children and children are kind of developed in school? And I think you've started to talk about that a little bit but you might have some more to add.

HEAD TEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

There are lots of ways that's developed. Certainly the key role is, or the key thing, is that staff are role models, so if the children are talking to each other, if staff are caring towards each other and caring towards children, then children become caring towards each other, so actually staff as role models and it's actually within their job descriptions. The first section is all about the mission of the school as a Catholic school and they have to be good role models. Obviously it's taught through areas of [PSHCE], Circle Time, RE lessons, through worship, so there's lots of different ways that, that is actually specifically targeting to help these children.

The ethic of care in both of the schools was very popular with parents, who considered it to be part of a general concern for children's personal and social development, whether or not that included a spiritual element. As mentioned at the start of the chapter, parents often have very different conceptions of why a school ethos is positive to the school itself. For example, in a study on Jewish schools, Valins (2003) found that most parents emphasised the importance of academic standards and Jewish ethos, rather than specific teaching about the Jewish religion as was emphasised by the school staff and religious leaders. Similarly in the case of Muslim schools, studies have shown that although parents are often in favour of a school ethos that teaches children about basic Islamic values, culture and customs, some are wary that schools will only teach a partial or fundamental version of Islam that would not give their children an appropriate education for living in a Western society (Küçükcan, 1998; Merry, 2005).

The number one concern in both of the study schools in my research was that children would be happy, cared for and able to develop in confidence and self esteem. This was viewed as something that would be good preparation for their future lives and was not always consistent with staff discourses of achievement or religious development.

SALLY (White Non-Catholic Mother, Holy Cross):

Yeah so basically with my son, he had a few problems within the [last] school, and I felt that he needed to be somewhere where they would look at him as a person and not as a child who's struggling with academics. He's, instead of being made to feel, as the words 'incapable' or 'a nuisance', "he's not doing his work properly", he's made to feel welcome, he's accepted not just the academic side, he's accepted as a person himself. They, obviously they encourage the positive parts of him, and encourage him, you know, to build his self esteem, which is what he's needing, you know instead of being made to feel like he's a useless child.

Caring in school therefore equated to a kind of 'emotional capital', where children gained value from the positive ethos and environment they were being educated in. The development of the concept of emotional capital began as a way of explaining private and family life, in terms of emotional resources that can be passed on to family and friends. Notwotny (1981:148 cited in Reay, 2004:60) defines emotional capital as "knowledge, contacts and relations as well as access to emotionally valued skills and assets, which hold within any social network characterised at least partly by affective ties". Nowotny (1981 cited in Reay, 2004:60) understood emotional capital to be mainly private in nature and lacking in value for the public sphere because of its inability to convert to other types of capital. In contrast, the emotional capital developed in the schools in my research was constituted outside of the immediate family. It was viewed by parents as something relevant for the public sphere, as a type of cultural capital that would help children to make good progress in life (see Bourdieu, 1986). Religious values or secular values with complex religious roots, translated into caring and emotional capital, therefore made yet another impact on the public sphere in ways not envisaged by models of public life that view religion as a private affair.

In Reay's (2004) work on mothers and schooling, emotional capital was understood in both a positive and a negative sense. She showed how sometimes 'positive' emotions could result in discouraging children to work hard at school while other 'negative'

emotions could spur them on to do better. Mothers and young people also experienced emotional costs as well as benefits from their involvement with the education system, such as anger at negative experiences in school and forfeiting immediate happiness in order to acquire cultural capital for the future. In the same way, care and caring can be seen both as a positive and a negative force. Williams (2001) highlights the political nature of care and caring through an engagement with the disability and 'race' and migration literature. In particular, Silvers (1995, cited in Williams, 2001:479) challenges the false dichotomy between care and carer through a historical perspective that reveals the way that caring can help to maintain power relations and the idea of dependency. Williams (2001) suggests that this work raises issues about the morality of different types of caring, autonomy and respect for individuals and power relations.

Vanderbeck (2009), in reference to his work on Gypsy-Traveller children and young people, discusses how caring services provided by the State and the voluntary sector may actually reaffirm existing power relations through implicit control and containment. Despite the well-meaning and charitable nature of practices undertaken by social and other service workers, schemes designed to help vulnerable or under-privileged groups often re-inscribe the normative values that have contributed to these groups' exclusion in the first place. These two processes of care and control, according to Vanderbeck (2009), therefore work in tandem, with the resultant exclusion creating the need for more care and intervention. In the case of children, caring may contribute to the view of them as passive incompetents in need of protection. Jenks (1996b) suggests that our constructions of childhood are heavily influenced by the dominant characteristics of society at any one time. Where as an ideology of care and protection for childhood developed during the industrialisation and family-orientation of modern times, post-modernity has added a nostalgic dimension that sees childhood as representative of a more stable period before the individualisation of society. Children are now viewed almost as fetishes, whose innocence must be protected and cared for at all costs.

Gill (2007) argues that our hyper-concern for children's wellbeing has led to a situation where they are permitted to take fewer and fewer risks, meaning that children do not experience a full range of opportunities for personal growth, such as developing resilience. There then becomes a greater necessity for children to be cared for, creating a self-perpetuating process. A similar story was also occurring in the study schools in my research, with the desire for children to be cared for strongly linked to fears for their safety. In Holy Cross, a number of parents were concerned about the lack of secure gates around the buildings, whereas parent interviewees in Rainbow Hill

were worried about potential clashes with students from the adjacent secondary school.

INTERVIEWER:

Well you've said lots of really, really good things about the school. You're obviously very happy with it, but if you had to change one thing, what would that be? There might not be anything but...

ANNE (White Catholic Mother, Holy Cross):

I'd change the gates. I'd lock the gates at the front of the school, that's my only thing.

INTERVIEWER:

Right why's that?

ANNE:

I just believe, well the school, I know schools shouldn't be prisons, but today's world unfortunately, children's safety's paramount.

Care and concern for children is obviously a very important aspect of the work of schools, but there are times when too much emphasis on caring may restrict children's opportunities to contribute to decision-making about their own lives. The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has led to new debates over how much participation children should have in their own education. With the recent emphasis on Citizenship Education in English schools and children taking on responsibilities in the community and wider society (QCA Advisory Group on Citizenship, 1998), some writers have argued that we should therefore be taking their rights more seriously as well (e.g. Lockyer, 2003b). Despite this, there is little evidence of the application of democratic principles in schools, which continue to be characterized by authoritarianism. School councils are one vehicle through which institutions can involve pupils and students in decision-making, but their effectiveness, democratic nature and the breadth of the issues they consider can often be quite limited (Osler & Starkey, 2006). In my research, children reported enjoying very few choices at school and in the classroom. They had rarely been involved with devising school rules or deciding which topic areas to study in either institution. Although many were aware of the school councils, these bodies tended to focus on issues such as playground equipment and school lunches, rather than curriculum or managerial issues. My observations also confirmed the limitations of the democratic structures in place, particularly the number

of child suggestions that were dismissed rather than seriously considered by adults in school.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, caring by 'Christian caritas' often involves a certain amount of evangelism and this can also have implications for children's rights and involvement in decisions about their education. A number of writers on faith-based state services have pointed to the potential tensions between caring and charity on the one hand and creating converts and exclusive environments on the other (Cloke *et al.*, 2005; Conradson, 2003b). In my research, this was particularly an issue for Holy Cross, where parents had chosen to send their children to the school rather than the pupils themselves. The very concept of a faith school effectively places the rights of parents to educate their children through particular religious doctrines, above the rights of the child to freedom of religion (J. G. Dwyer, 1998; Parker-Jenkins, 2005). The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that "the education of the child shall be directed to the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups" (Article 29: 1d). Some commentators have argued that faith schools, by their very nature are in the business of indoctrination, rather than encouraging children to think freely (e.g. Hand, 2003; Seigal, 2004) and organisations such as the British Humanist Association have used the rights of the child to argue for a phasing-out of faith schools, to be replaced with inclusive community schools (M. Mason, 2002; 2005). In Holy Cross in my research, there were no examples of children who did not enjoy praying, whether or not they were from Catholic families. However, when quizzed on what would happen if a child *did* refuse to pray in class, teachers made it clear that this would be a difficult situation to deal with and that the rights of the child might not necessarily take priority.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah, just with the praying, either in assembly or the classroom. I once had a situation where two Year 4 boys were messing around in assembly and they weren't praying, and I spoke to them afterwards and they said "well we don't pray because we don't believe in God, so we're not going to pray". I wondered if that ever happens in this school, because I know that there are children who aren't Catholic, and how would that be dealt with?

CLASSTEACHER (Female Catholic, Holy Cross):

I don't think that, it's certainly not happened to me in class. But I think if that was to happen, perhaps I would remind them that they were in a Catholic

school and this was our belief and to respect it, and if they don't respect it and they don't believe it, then to be respectful during assembly time. And perhaps they might have to talk to the Head Teacher, 'cos obviously other children in the school have different religions and they obviously don't believe in the same God as us, but I think it would, it would probably have to go further than me. I'd probably try and talk to them and say "well why do you think that" and, not talk them round, because obviously it depends what they hear at home, but might have to talk to [the Head Teacher].

The findings in this section have pointed to some of the concrete ways that the normal, everyday and 'vicarious' nature of religious values such as love and charity - albeit entwined with comparable humanist values - operated within the spaces of the two institutions. As was the case in Chapter 5, the commonalities between the two schools were again revealed, casting doubt over taken-for-granted assumptions about the differences between community schools and faith schools. The point I have tried to underline, through the use of the caring ethos example, is that the extent to which religion played a role in the public life of the school had real material consequences for children. These were both positive, such as enjoying charitable care from their teachers, but also negative, in terms of the same caring ethos creating limits to their participation and autonomy.

In this section, I have also offered further support for the feminist model that aims to challenge the boundaries between public and private spheres, and hence public and private space. In the first section, I questioned the construction of public and private space and the role that religion supposedly played in each of them in the two study schools. This highlighted the greater significance of religion in public space at Rainbow Hill than 'liberal-economist' models suggest, and the lesser role of religion in private space at Holy Cross than communitarian ideals would lead us to expect. In this section, processes of caring and emotional capital that are usually associated more with the private sphere, were also shown to be of real importance in the public space of the institution. Caring and emotional capital were key components of the package of values and citizenship that the two schools were offering children, alongside those discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, to take into the public sphere with them when they eventually left education. The strong connections between public and private space were again revealed, challenging the supposedly firm distinctions between the two.

6.4) Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored in more depth the idea of 'ethos' and the shared values and beliefs of each of my study schools, particularly in reference to the status given to religious practices and values. I have related this to models of society and citizenship that view religion as inhabiting public or private space to different degrees, arguing that the feminist deconstruction of the public-private dichotomy offers the best approach for understanding the influence of religion in school ethos. In doing this, I have also critiqued the issue of care, including the extent to which it can be understood as possessing religious roots and the positive and negative material consequences for children who experience caring as part of everyday school life. This offers further support to the sociological argument that sees a false distinction between the religious and the secular, instead revealing a much more complex relationship between the two concepts. It also points to the significance of religion in supposedly secular spaces.

The two study schools demonstrated very different public roles for religious practice on the surface, with Rainbow Hill offering RE a rather limited role in the curriculum, and a tendency to offer a vague generic spiritual experience, rather than one directly connected to religious practice. In contrast, religious practice was a major part of everyday life in Holy Cross, both in terms of RE, assembly and across the school in general, through prayer, services, the curriculum, and symbols and displays in the physical environment. Spiritual and moral provision was also much more linked to religious doctrine. Despite this, much of the spiritual and moral education was very similar in both of the schools, even if presented in different ways. Similarly, related values were taught in RE and PSHCE in each of the schools. This pointed towards a certain commonality of values in both of the school types, which brought into question the assumed lack of religion in Rainbow Hill.

Liberal-economist models of society view religion as a private affair, where as types of citizenship influenced by communitarian see religion as part of group rights to be recognised by the State. But where we might have expected to see private religion in Rainbow Hill and a home-school partnership in Holy Cross, the situation was much more complex. The existence of 'vicarious religion' in both of the schools led to support for a greater religious influence in public space (and a lesser prevalence in private space), where parents viewed religion in school as a normal phenomena. This theme of normality was further supported by children's own perspectives on religion and identity in the public sphere, both through their understandings of difference and also the characters and stories they designed. I have therefore highlighted a clear *spatial*

dimension to Davie's (2007) concept of 'vicarious religion', something that was not fully developed in her original analysis. These findings have clear implications for social policy, which has tended to view religion in public life as something of a problematic nature for matters such as social cohesion. In contrast, this chapter has pointed to the need for a more nuanced understanding of religion and the role that it plays in the everyday lives of citizens in order to inform policy debates on a range of issues. This is something that will be explored further in Chapter 8.

The final issue explored in this chapter was the caring nature of the ethos in each of my study schools. This was viewed as one of the most important positive aspects of the school from both children and parents, and was something that staff made a conscious effort to promote and foster. In doing so, they drew on both secular humanist and Christian notions of charity, which had cross-cutting roots, values and results. Caring in school had both positive and negative consequences for children. On the positive side, children acquired emotional capital that was viewed as something worthwhile for later life, but on the negative side, caring threatened to reduce children's autonomy and participation in decisions about their education. In Holy Cross, the more prominent role of evangelism in caring created the potential for tensions between the rights of parents on the one hand, and the rights of children on the other. The issue of competing rights is again one that I return to in Chapter 8.

7) Children & Spiritual Practice – Embodied Spaces of Agency

Research in schools has often tended to focus on the spaces of the classroom, at the expense of the 'forgotten spaces where informal learning occurs' (Hart 2002, cited in Burke 2005:573). As Burke (2005:492) points out, "walls, canteens, corridors, desks and doors do not only act as containers of the school child; they act also as spaces for resistance and sites of contested desires". In Chapters 4-6, I have focused mainly on the institutional or formal space of the school, as Gordon *et al.* (2000) would call it (see Chapter 2), and the way in which this shapes and interacts with physical and social or informal space. In other words, I described the official ethos and practices in the study schools and how these worked in reality to structure children's experiences. In this chapter, however, I take a different approach by exploring the nature of physical and social space and its relationship with formal space. By concentrating more on school life from the perspective of the children who I interviewed and observed, I will highlight the importance of informal spaces within the two schools and how practices taking place within them intersected with official understandings of school space. The informal spaces of the playground, the toilets, the corridors, the assembly hall, the field, the quiet area and the book corner will therefore be central to this chapter, alongside the more formal spaces of the classroom.

My focus on the above informal spaces will allow for a real engagement with children's everyday experiences in the two study schools. Hyde (2008:61) argues that "expressions of spirituality are in essence expressions of human life, often involving awareness and responses to ordinary, everyday phenomena" and this recognition led to his research using everyday activities such as conversation and play to explore the spiritual dimensions of children's lives. Horton & Kraftl (2006) have called for more attention to the everyday aspects of childhood in order to avoid underestimating their importance or the different ways in which children view and experience the everyday. Citizenship, another central concern of this thesis, is also grounded in everyday practices and concerns and can therefore be explored in the informal spaces in and through which children live their lives (Dickenson *et al.*, 2008).

In this chapter, I explore how children's embodied spiritual practices related to the ethos of the schools and the state of affairs described in the last three chapters. With reference to the literature on children and spirituality, I begin by discussing a range of religious and non-religious spiritual experiences that children encountered within school. This focuses particularly on the embodied, emotional and relational aspect of

such events and practices. Next, I outline the spiritual nature of times and places within the school institution, especially the importance of special places for making sense of children's emotional and spiritual relationship with their everyday environments. In the last section, I explore the disjuncture between the school's provisions for spirituality and the way in which children create their own spiritual spaces in school. These expressions of spiritual agency formed the basis of political interventions into the construction of school space. They are illustrated through a focus on playground spirituality, assemblies and collective worship, and religious practice and prayer.

7.1) Spiritual Experiences and 'Relationality'

As explained in Chapter 2, much of the earlier qualitative work on children and spirituality considered spiritual experience and meaning through a mainly religious framework. For example, Heller (1986) investigated children's conception of God and the divine and Coles (1990) talked to Christian, Muslim and Jewish children about their understandings of God, prayers, and the meanings of life, death and the sacred. More recent work has also investigated children's ideas about God and Jesus, sometimes using more quantitative methods in order to achieve this (e.g. de Roos *et al.*, 2001; Torstenson-Ed, 2006; Walshe, 2005). Although some of this research was quite groundbreaking, particularly the child-centred work of Coles (1990), it has tended to focus more on mental understandings rather than bodily practices – on the thinking rather than the doing. As I argued in Chapter 2, recent social theory has emphasised the importance of the body for constituting and structuring meaning (e.g. Simonsen, 2007). Consequently, children's spiritual experiences, even within a religious context, would be expected to demonstrate a clear corporeal dimension. In Holy Cross, the embodied nature of religious rituals such as prayers, hymns and services was apparent both through observation and from comments made in the interviews. This is something I discussed in detail in Chapter 5, in terms of the role of religious ritual in community building. John's comment below illustrates vividly the intensely embodied nature of religious spirituality in school.

INTERVIEWER:

Is there anything you don't like about doing the prayers?

JOHN (White Agnostic Boy, Holy Cross):

Yeah, where you have to put your hands together.

INTERVIEWER:

Why don't you like putting your hands together?

JOHN:

'Cos I broke my wrist and it hurts every time.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh so it really hurts when you do that?

JOHN:

Yeah.

One of the key aspects of embodied practice, according to Simonsen (2007), is the significance of feelings and emotions. As outlined in Chapter 2, many geographers have called for this realm of social experience to be given more attention in academic study (Anderson & Smith, 2001; Davidson & Milligan, 2004). The study of emotions is certainly consistent with an interest in spirituality, and its concern with the non-rational and non-material elements of human existence. Indeed, Tacey (2002:26) goes so far as to suggest that "the deepest feeling of all is religious". In Nesbitt's (2004) study of the spiritual experiences and expressions of children from different faith communities, a number of common threads were apparent even though they were communicated through faith-specific language. These included a range of emotional experiences such as fear, enjoyment and peace, alongside other aspects such as music, collective company, morals, sacred places and spiritual leaders. Similarly, Mountain (2005) interviewed Australian primary children from various faith backgrounds about their experiences of prayer. All of the interviewees saw prayer as a positive and valued experience, particularly during significant moments or to articulate and clarify feelings and emotions. Children in both of my study schools expressed the emotional dimension of their prayer experiences during the interviews, whether these were positive or negative.

INTERVIEWER:

What about when you do prayers in assembly, do you enjoy doing the prayers?

JACK (Mixed Race Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Yeah.

ADAM (White Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

Why do you like doing the prayers?

ADAM:

Because like we get to everybody, we say everybody talk to God.

INTERVIEWER:

Ahuh. How do you feel when you're praying?

JACK:

Happy 'cos you like fill yourself with joy again.

ADAM:

Proud of myself 'cos I'm spending my time praying to God.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. How do you, what do you feel like when you're praying?

LOUIGY:

Erm.

BEN (Black Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

You just feel like, erm, like erm just in my mind, yeah.

LOUIGY (Mixed Race Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

In my mind I feel sad.

INTERVIEWER:

You feel sad in your mind? Why's that?

LOUIGY:

If they're doin' sad prayers.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok so what might a sad prayer be, an example of a sad prayer?

LOUIGY:

Like if somebody dies.

In contrast to this focus on religion, some writers have viewed children's spiritual experiences in much broader terms than through religious frameworks. This has followed the contention that spirituality is a natural and innate human trait that existed long before the development of formal religions (O'Murchu, 1997). Children are said to possess a special capacity to experience and express spirituality in ways that are uncommon for adults because they are only at an early stage of socialisation into a particular culture (Hart, 2003). As Hyde (2008) points out, the argument follows that all children will possess spiritual attributes regardless of their particular faith or non-faith background. Recent research into children and the spiritual domain has therefore tended to focus more on "perceptions, awareness and responses of children" (Hyde, 2008:48) to more mundane and non-religious activities and phenomena. In this framework, spirituality can be understood as referring to a range of experiences. These

could include relationships and connections, silence and solitude, meaning and purpose, joy and happiness, creativity and transcendence (Kessler 2000, cited in Liddy, 2002:16-17). Spirituality might entail aesthetic experiences such as art and poetry, inner experiences such as meditation and prayer, contact with nature, sensory experiences, extrasensory out-of-body experiences, ceremonies and rituals (Suhor, 1998). In fact, a range of research studies point to different descriptions of spirituality, but all focus on the non-material and the non-rational aspects of human existence (Champagne, 2003; de Souza, 2003; Erricker *et al.*, 1997; Hart *et al.*, 1999; Kibble, 1996; Nye & Hay, 1996).

Qualitative research with young choristers has pointed to the spiritual qualities of singing (Ashley, 2002) and this was the focus of some of the interview discussion in my own research. Hyde (2008) identified the importance of physical bodily awareness and corporeal knowledge in children's engagement with various spiritual activities, and many of the children in my study schools reported how singing was an emotional and embodied experience. This was an example of spirituality that did not necessarily fit neatly into an overtly religious framework. In the quote below, John and Billy point to the enjoyment, the volume and the rhythm as key factors in their experience of singing their favourite song 'conkers'.

INTERVIEWER:

What about the singing, you said you do singing. What do you like, do you like doing the singing?

JOHN (White Agnostic Boy, Holy Cross):

No (laughs).

BILLY (White Christian Boy, Rainbow Hill):

If it's a good song, I do.

INTERVIEWER:

You do?

JOHN:

Like 'conkers'.

BILLY:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

What makes it a good song?

JOHN:

I think sort of funny, and it's loud.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah ok.

BILLY:

Rhythm, the rhythm of the music.

Spiritual practices in school, of both a religious and non-religious nature, were therefore characterised by somatic and emotion dimensions. But there was also another key component to children's spiritual experiences apparent in my research. Drawing on the broader descriptions of spirituality outlined above, Hyde (2008:166) argues that "underpinning all of the characteristics of children's spirituality is relationality". The idea of 'relationality' and connectedness, with self or the 'other' is central to much of the literature on spirituality, whether the 'other' is defined as a supernatural or divine power, objects and environments, or other people (Hyde, 2008). Champagne (2003) points to the ways in which children perceive their environment and relate and interact with others within it, as part of her three spiritual modes through which young children act – the 'sensitive mode of being', the 'relational mode of being' and the 'existential mode of being'. De Souza (2004) writes about the spiritual importance of unity and being one with God or the 'other', and Hart (2003) points to the spiritual blurring of boundaries between self and other, giving the example of a child playing in the sea at the beach who described herself as *being* the water as she moved in tandem with the waves.

Particularly influential for making sense of the relational dimension of spirituality has been the work of Hay & Nye (1998) who coined the phrase 'relational consciousness'. Working from the assumption that all individuals have an innate spiritual awareness, as O'Murchu (1997) suggests, Hay & Nye (1998) began their research with three categories of children's spiritual sensitivity. These included 'awareness sensing' (an awareness and focus on the present and the moment), 'mystery sensing' (awe, wonder and fascination for the world), and 'value sensing' (deep emotion and moral sensitivity). Talking to 6-7 year olds and 10-11 year olds of Muslim, Catholic, Anglican and Atheist backgrounds, Hay & Nye (1998) identified particularly unusual levels of perceptiveness and consciousness in specific conversations concerning relationships with things, self, others and God. They termed this sense 'relational consciousness' and outlined some of the ways in which children had described it. This included 'waking up' and 'noticing things', a sense that their brains felt 'scrambled' or particular experiences of trust. Hay (2000) argues that spirituality as 'relational consciousness' can be understood as something that transgresses religious and secular distinctions because it can be part of

both religious and non-religious experiences. He maintains that 'relational consciousness' may be less detectable in adults, because of the intensely individualistic nature of society that can work to subdue this spiritual sense.

The importance of relationships and connections with other people was strongly communicated in the children's paired interviews in both of the study schools in my research. Relationships with teachers and other children were often emphasised as aspects of school life that children particularly valued. A number of studies have pointed to the embodied (and gendered) nature of relationships in schools, such as girls hugging, holding hands, brushing hair and giggling, and boys shoving, pushing, slapping and shouting (Goodwin, 2006; Gordon *et al.*, 2000). Some of the children in the interviews talked about the value they placed on hugs from the teaching staff or sitting in close proximity to their friends in class.

KAVITA (Asian Sikh Girl, Rainbow Hill):

I think someone, everyone should come to this school because teachers are kind like Miss V. and Miss R. I like Miss V. better because she's always been kind and helping each other, and she's just always helping each other, and everybody's always giving her hugs and she never refused for it.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah what's your favourite subject Amy?

AMY (White Catholic Girl, Holy Cross)

It's Art and mine's Literacy 'cos I get to sit next to this person who I really want to sit next to.

Relationships between children and other individuals in school were not only embodied, they were also emotional in character. Interviewees reported how being around particular friends or spending time with certain individuals could affect their emotional being. In chapter two, I discussed how 'affect' has been described as a mobile, energetic and relational force (Conradson & McKay, 2007) and as "the motion of emotion" (Thien, 2005:451). Children would therefore leave affective impressions on each other through the mobilisation of their active emotions, as the result of encounters and interactions between them (see Ahmed, 2004b; Simonsen, 2007). In Chapter 6, one of the class teachers talked about the love she held for the children in her class,

and the affective bond that they maintained (see p.179-180 in Chapter 6). In the below quote, Chloe explains how Ahmed *makes* her happy and causes her to laugh through his behaviours and the communication of his own emotions. Such experiences help to reduce the spiritual distance between individual children and bring them closer together.

INTERVIEWER:

So when you're on the playground, do you again play with lots of different children on the playground?

CASSIE (White Catholic Girl, Holy Cross):

Yeah we like, me and Isabelle are best friends and we play with [Ahmed] because he's kind of funny and he makes the day happy, and he tries to make, when you're upset he tries to make you happy and he kinda makes you laugh and it just makes all the bad memories go away really.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

ISABELLE (White Catholic Girl, Holy Cross):

Sometimes I play with younger people 'cos they can, they can make you feel happy because it just, it makes you feel happy because they're littler, so it makes you happy because you're looking after them.

The comment by Isabelle at the end of the above quote points to the importance of caring as an example of an affective force and the mobilisation of emotion. Smart *et al.* (2001) have documented how children drew on an ethic of care (see Chapter 6), alongside ethics of justice and fairness when grappling with moral questions related to changing family structures. This included thinking about relationships, the importance of avoiding harm and the thoughtless 'doing' of care. Caring is, therefore, not just a product of ethics and thought processes but also of emotions, embodiment and practice. Hart (2003) has argued that children have a natural spiritual capacity to care for others and demonstrate relational understanding through treating others well. As affectual enactments of emotional concern for others, caring of this kind in the study schools acted to achieve the kind of social cohesion promoted by teaching staff (see Chapter 5).

INTERVIEWER:

What do you think makes it a good school?

NAKEEBA (Asian Muslim Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Well there lots of kind, lots of kind people and there's lots of friends that you can, there's lots of clubs and teams that you can join.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

AMBER (Asian Muslim Girl, Rainbow Hill):

And when somebody comes to us, yeah, and he's new or she, yeah we treat them really good.

INTERVIEWER:

How do you treat them?

AMBER:

Help them and give them things, and if they can't speak English, you have to help them where the things are, and if they can't understand, tell Miss.

In this section, I have outlined some of the spiritual experiences that children encountered as part of their everyday school lives. These included religious and non-religious practices and events and the importance of 'relationality', particularly in terms of interactions between children and other children or adults. All of these experiences were inherently embodied in nature and encompassed an emotional component, often encompassing affective forces when interactions with others were involved. Kibble (1996:70) sums up this section well with the observation that "spiritual experience [...] has a lot to do with one's feelings or emotions in the face of events and people. It is an affective and reflective response". While the concept of emotional 'relationality' has been important for making sense of the encounters that pupils had with other people, it is also useful for exploring human interactions with the school environment and how place was experienced and constituted as a result of those interactions. It is to this issue that I now turn in the next section.

7.2) Everyday Spiritual Places

The importance of emotions for understanding space, place and environment has been highlighted by Davidson & Milligan (2004). They argue that:

"[Emotions] have tangible effects on our surroundings and can shape the very nature and experience of our being-in-the-world. Emotions can clearly alter the way the world is for us, affecting our sense of time as well as space. Our sense of who and what we are is continually (re)shaped by how we *feel*. Similarly, the imagined or projected substance of our future experience will alter in relation to our current emotional state" (Davidson & Milligan, 2004:524).

This focus on emotions and space is also reflected in the work of Lupton (1998), who draws on Yi-Fu Tuan to consider our emotional investment in landscapes and home spaces, and the emotions involved in our consumption of leisure spaces such as fairgrounds and restaurants. Tuan (1974) writes about the 'affective bond' that people develop with particular landscapes, forged through their senses and their emotions (see also Rodaway, 1994). He suggests that different landscape ideals might include the seashore, the valley and the island, but shows how such landscapes attract contradictory meanings. For example, the city might be understood as both cultural and civilized, while also polluted and crime-ridden. Emotional responses to environments can therefore be understood as socially constructed, for example illustrated through the changing perception of mountainous terrain as divine and awesome or dangerous (Tuan, 1974, 1979).

The emotional dimension of school space was something discussed in the parent interviews, in terms of the way that the school ethos made people *feel*. The subjective and often indefinable nature of school ethos is something that is often described in the educational literature (e.g. Stevens & Sanchez, 1999). However, many of the parents were able to explain how it made them feel even if they were unable to articulate what it was about in rational terms. Various meanings were then attributed to the school space as a result of these emotional experiences, for example that it was a safe space for parents to leave children for the duration of the school day. For Alison, the feeling of calmness in Holy Cross meant that it was a space that her son wanted to spend time in.

INTERVIEWER:

I wondered you know, what you thought Holy Cross brought that was extra to that, from say a good community school where all those [caring] things are still happening?

ALISON (White Agnostic Mother, Holy Cross):

Again, I'd just say the calmness. There's a difference in the school, there is a, you can tell there is a calmness. You come in...

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah just like a feeling.

ALISON:

Yeah it's a feeling. Like I come to work and I want to come to work, do you know what I mean? My son'll come to school and he wants to come to school, so there's a, it's not that he has to do it, he wants to do it same as I want to do it.

It was not just the school ethos as a whole that was able to evoke particular feelings. Various spaces within school, at different times, were also saturated with emotion. As an observer, there were a few occasions where I was invited to watch religious services or whole school celebrations in the assembly hall. On some of these occasions, I found the experiences very moving, and recorded this in my research diary. Generally, these emotions were due to the affective qualities of the musical performances, the power of which have been described by a number of writers (e.g. Anderson, 2006; Wood & Smith, 2004). At those particular times, the events and emotional responses that they evoked effectively worked to construct the assembly hall as a spiritual space, and myself as more of a spiritual being than I may have acknowledged in other circumstances.

The class went down to the hall for 'Hosannah Rock' (KS2 performance), which was again, an all singing and dancing, costume-laden event. The set was in front of an enormous cross on the wall, covered in flags from different nationalities and the cast was multicultural. [...] The performance included the showcasing of individual pupils' talents, such as a ballet dancer and an amazing singer. The main song 'Hosannah Rock' was full of actions and the children obviously enjoyed singing it. I got shivers again, as the performance was emotional. The last song was about peace and harmony no matter what your colour, and there were lots of flags waving from different countries. (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill).

In the morning the class spent a lot of time preparing for leading the Penitential service and then the actual event began at 10:15. It started with a song and there were introductions from the teacher and the priest. The children read out their parts, there was a talk from the priest about the purpose of the service and the class drama about children falling out and making up again. The whole school then put their slips of paper saying sorry for various things into the priest's basket to be taken away and burnt. There were prayers and another song to finish, and the Head Teacher said thanks at the end. [...] The service was very spiritual and touching and I did get shivers down my spine [...]. (Research Diary Extract, Holy Cross)

The constructive and relational nature of the emotional experiences I have described above point to one of the criticisms of humanist approaches to the study of emotion, such as Tuan's (1974) work explored earlier in this section. Hubbard (2005) argues that these approaches fail to adequately account for the embodied nature of our relationship with our surroundings. Emotions not only help us to make sense of our surroundings but also actively form and constitute both self and environment. For example, Urry (2005) shows how the landscape is actively constructed through emotions, by the way in which the 'romantic gaze' creates both enjoyment and disappointment for viewers. Wylie (2005) documents a walk on a coastal path in Cornwall and shows how the affective experience of different landscapes and the mundane experience of walking itself helped to forge a particular sense of self and environment. The many movements, thoughts and sensations of the walk were integral to this process, including an encounter with a man, whose obvious connection with the natural world impacted upon the author's experience. Similarly, Conradson (2005) discusses landscapes that groups of people visit for their perceived healing qualities. He argues that these therapeutic landscapes are "affective outcomes of relational encounters between the self and the landscape" (Conradson, 2005:104). Individual selves therefore emerge in relation to, and through a moving between, other people, places, things and times. Similar processes also occurred in the home environment, when Rose (2004) found that women's investment of emotion in photographs mobilised affective forces that helped to define themselves, their family and the home itself.

The special places photography activity outlined in Chapter 3, was an opportunity to investigate the compositional nature of emotions and affect in children's own experience of spaces in school. Erricker *et al.* (1997) talked to a group of children in a Roman Catholic school about the special places that they went to in order to explore

their inner thoughts and feelings. The children listed places such as the garage, under their bed and inside their wardrobe as places where they went to be alone and reflect and enjoy the silence, where as the tops of trees were given as places where some of the children spent time alone with their best friends. Such places take on special spiritual meanings for children that may not necessarily be known to adults. All of the places in the above research were located within home or community environments and Erricker *et al.* (1997) suggest that it can be a challenge for busy, crowded schools to provide such places for children. They did however point to the development of a quiet area in the field of one of the schools they visited, where children could take time out from the hustle and bustle of everyday school life. In my research, children were invited to consider special places in a broader sense so as to encapsulate a wider range of spiritual and emotional experiences, regardless of the particular provision that each school had made for quiet areas or other similar spaces.

The first set of photographs (Figures 7.1 – 7.6) were taken by Year 5 and 6 children in Rainbow Hill (9-11 year olds). Figure 7.1 shows two of the benches provided in the school playground for children to sit on, and was taken by Ben. He explained that this was where he would sit quietly and think about who he would like to play with at break and lunchtimes. Kavita took the photograph of the seats in the classroom book corner shown in Figure 7.2. This was where she would sit and cry when she was feeling upset because of arguments or disputes with her friends. Figure 7.3 is particularly interesting, because it shows Mary's photographic representation of what she referred to as the 'secret path' that weaved through the garden area next to the playground. Mary told me that she would walk on the path with her friends or on her own and that it felt magical when she did so. The veranda wall shown in Figure 7.4 was taken by Nicole and was located in the space between the school building and the playground. This was where Nicole felt happy playing with her friends and performing handstands. David chose to take the picture of the basketball hoop in the school hall depicted in Figure 7.5. This was where his class were taught physical education and he felt happy and excited while playing basketball games. Figure 7.6 shows one of the steps in the school corridor that Jeffrey decided to take a photograph of. This place was particularly significant to him because it was where he had been caught kissing his girlfriend by a teacher. All of the other children had stared at Jeffrey and made him feel very embarrassed as a result.



Figure 7.1 – Playground Benches, Rainbow Hill



Figure 7.2 – Book Corner Seats, Rainbow Hill



Figure 7.3 – ‘Secret’ Path, Rainbow Hill



Figure 7.4 – Veranda Wall, Rainbow Hill

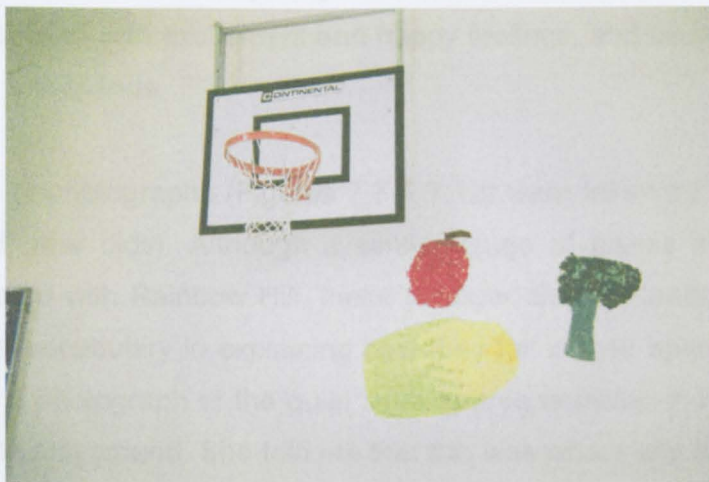


Figure 7.5 – Basketball Hoop, Rainbow Hill



Figure 7.6 – Corridor Steps, Rainbow Hill

There were also a number of other photographs from Rainbow Hill that have not been included in the thesis due to space restrictions. Outdoor places chosen by children in these photos included the veranda, the grassy area, the sunflowers and wall, the low metal barriers, particular areas in the playground, the football area in the back playground, the parasols and the school gate. Inside, they included areas where children sat and read books in the library or corridor, the interactive whiteboard and displays in the classroom, and the changing rooms. In some places, children would sit quietly being calm, reflecting or feeling sad and upset, taking time out on their own from the normal day, recovering from disputes with friends, or chatting with classmates. In other photos, places were marked by anxiety, adrenaline, nervousness, pride or embarrassment, such as going up to the front of assembly or stepping through the school gates for the first time as a young child. Places such as the veranda and football pitch, were associated with excitement and happy feelings, and usually involved taking part in activities with friends.

The second set of photographs (Figures 7.7 – 7.12) were taken by Year 3 children in Holy Cross (7-8 year olds). Although a similar range of places and activities were identified compared with Rainbow Hill, these younger children tended to have a more limited emotional vocabulary in explaining how they felt in their special places. Rachel decided to take a photograph of the quiet seating area depicted in Figure 7.7, located at the edge of the playground. She told me that this was where she felt happy talking to her friends. Figure 7.8 shows the school field and the grassy bank leading up to the school building and was taken by Matt. He would roll down the grassy bank with his classmates during summer, feeling happy as he did so. The school hall is shown in Figure 7.9 and was taken by Katie. When children could not use the playground because of rain outside, Katie would feel excited playing with her friends in this space. Moving back outside, Figure 7.10 shows the low wall at the side of the playground and was photographed by Ruby. This is where she would feel happy chatting to her friends during break time or lunchtime. Dan chose to take a photograph of the interactive whiteboard located in the classroom and this is shown in Figure 7.11. Dan enjoyed being invited up to the front of the class to write on the whiteboard during lessons. The hard football pitch in Figure 7.12 was photographed by Andrew and made up a section of the school playground. Andrew would join his classmates in this space to play football and would feel happy when he did so.



Figure 7.7 – Quiet Seating Area, Holy Cross



Figure 7.8 – Grassy Bank & School Field, Holy Cross



Figure 7.9 – School Hall, Holy Cross



Figure 7.10 – Playground Wall, Holy Cross

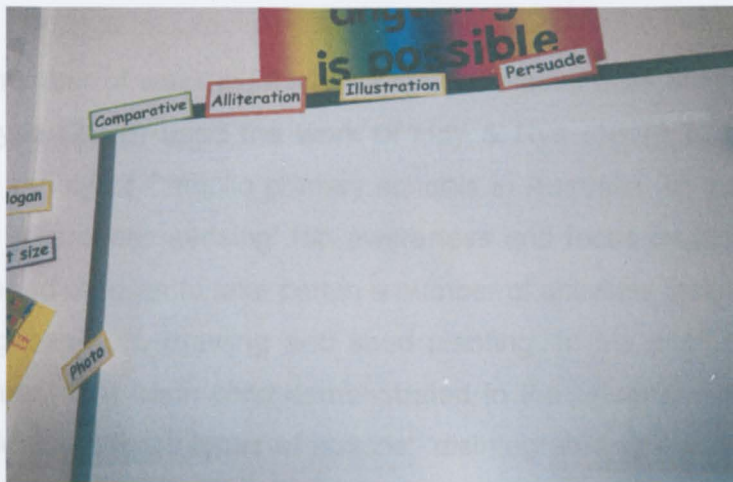


Figure 7.11 – Interactive Whiteboard, Holy Cross



Figure 7.12 – Playground Football Pitch, Holy Cross

Among photos not shown in the thesis, outdoor places chosen by children in Holy Cross included the grass bank by the side of the playground, a second quiet area, and different areas of the playground, including the 'skipping corner' and the rounders area. The school field was also chosen by many of the children, who were only permitted to use the space during the summer. Inside, other special places included the dinner hall, the computer room, the school office and the book corner in the classroom. The majority of places chosen by this class were ones where enjoyment and excitement were important, or where activities with close friends took precedence. In these places, children were rarely alone and the emotions of happiness and excitement were important. There were also a few places where children would go if they were upset, or they needed to be quiet or calm down. Children would generally experience these places on their own, or adults might have more of an importance for helping them to feel better.

There were a number of ways in which the special places from both schools could be categorised. Hyde (2008) used the work of Hay & Nye (1998) to explore children's spirituality in a variety of Catholic primary schools in Australia. In order to investigate the concept of 'awareness sensing' (an awareness and focus on the present and the moment), he asked children to take part in a number of activities including completing a jigsaw, creating bead art, drawing and seed planting. In his analysis of the intense bodily engagement that each child demonstrated in the undertaking of the activities, Hyde (2008) identified three types of spaces: 'disintegrated space' where the intense focus on the activity meant that the child and the object almost became one; 'cocooned space' where children were so engrossed in their tasks they were oblivious to the presence of others; and 'relational space', where children took part in activities collectively and showed unity in their undertakings. These types of spaces were also useful for making sense of children's special places in my own research. However, the special places research method did mean that the activities children described taking part in within these places were less contrived than in Hyde's (2008) research. As a result, there were some other characteristics of spiritual space that I was able to draw out from my own findings.

'Cocooned space' was very much apparent in some of the special places that children chose to photograph, particularly in the form of those quiet places where they went to be alone and take time out of the busy school day. In these situations, their surroundings allowed them to express emotions of sadness or simply reflect on events. These moments illustrated the connection between a special place and the emotional sense of self that children experienced as part of that particular environmental

encounter. Many of the special places identified were also 'relational spaces' because they facilitated emotional 'closeness' and affective relationships between friends and classmates. Some of these 'relational spaces' were also saturated with intense positive emotion such as happiness and enjoyment, particularly where games and sports activities took place. In these situations, the spaces became 'disintegrated' as children totally engaged in the games they were playing and their associated spaces. But all of the special places identified were in some ways '*extraordinary spaces*', something I was able to identify because of the contextual nature of the research method. Although the places were all associated with children's everyday school experiences, they were not part of the majority temporal make-up of the school day. They were instead times and spaces where children took part in more significant events than the mundane routines of timetables and lessons and could therefore be described as spiritual. The majority of these spiritual experiences took place in the informal areas of the school that planners and architects often do not take so seriously.

As is apparent in the above account, children in the research did not all choose the same places to designate as special and different children reported different emotional or affectual encounters with them. However, these variations were not completely random and were strongly influenced by social identity and power. Tolia-Kelly (2007, 2008) reports how images of the English Lake District evoked expressions of fear, terror and anxiety amongst her research participants, all of whom were from Asian migrant communities in urban Lancashire. She argues that 'race' and power are important components structuring affectual encounters, offering alternative readings of English landscape to traditional 'White' images of beauty and serenity. Tolia-Kelly (2007) also points to the influence of religion on individuals' experience of place, particularly awe, wonder and the sublime. Although her research participants experienced the lakes through sensory engagement, their encounters were situated "beyond a universal figure of 'human'" (Tolia-Kelly, 2008:16). Similarly, Milligan *et al.* (2005) point to the way in which space and place can play a role in the facilitation or constraint of emotional expression, in the context of age identities. Elderly people in their study reported positive emotional experiences of social and gardening clubs, in contrast to other public spaces where they felt isolated and marginalised. Both of these studies point to the importance of social identity and power for structuring emotional and affectual encounters with place and space.

In my research, there were a few special places that may have been influenced by gendered identities and expectations, for example boys tended to choose the computer suite and the football pitch somewhat more than girls, while as those children who

reported being upset or crying in particular quiet places were more likely to be girls. Generally, however, there was little evidence of strong preferences along gendered, ethnic or religious lines. In contrast, the presence of power dynamics associated with age were very evident. This was demonstrated through the way that many children chose special places where rights of access were heavily restricted by adults in school. To begin with, children were only able to visit most of the places during their free time, whether that was during break time, lunchtime or at other less directed points of the school day. Many of the participants talked about 'being allowed' to take part in certain activities in their special places, such as using the computer or playing football. The most striking example from Holy Cross was the school field and the grassy banks, which were selected by over half of the children who took part in the activity. Interestingly, these spaces were only made accessible to children during the summer months and using them was seen as a real novelty. It was therefore the impact of adult-child power relations that effectively *made* these places spiritual for children, marking space as *extraordinary* because of the way that power structured affective processes. This is something that a contextual approach to spirituality in the primary school was able to reveal in a way that Hyde's (2008) approach was less able to achieve. Pupil's spiritual relationships with their environment were therefore heavily structured by adults, but children nevertheless found ways to negotiate these power geometries, as I will illustrate in the next section.

7.3) Making Spiritual Spaces

Children's embodied practices proved to be highly significant in both of the study schools in my research. Firstly, they were important because of the role they played in renegotiating the intended spiritual experiences and practices that each of the schools provided and promoted. A number of writers have shown how children use embodied means to challenge institutional power and demonstrate social agency. For example, Gordon *et al.* (2000) point to a range of bodily practices that children in their research used to negotiate the requirement that they should sit still in class, such as stretching, drawing and visiting the toilet (see Chapter 2). In my own work, I showed how children used physical practices to challenge power in the classroom, such as throwing rubbers and playing hockey with rulers (Hemming, 2007). I have already examined some of the potential gaps between discourse and behaviours in Chapter 5 of this thesis, when discussing children's enactment of socially cohesive values. There again, children's practices were, to a certain extent, disrupting the intended outcomes of values teaching

in both of the study schools. A similar use of bodily resistance was apparent in the context of spiritual practices and will be explored further in this section.

There was, however, a second reason why embodied practices were important. Alongside the renegotiation of official school spirituality, new spiritual spaces were also created as a result of children's somatic activity. Holloway (2003) explores the importance of bodily practice for sacred space and the way in which embodied action can challenge the distinction between the sacred and the profane. He argues, using examples from New Age spirituality, that the distinction between sacred and profane space is actually enacted by bodily practice. Participants in his study were able to construct the sacred in the everyday, through bodily practices of ritualised meditation, and the role of the senses and mundane objects in this. Similarly, Slavin (2003) discusses the spiritual qualities of walking as an embodied practice. In his study of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, he explores the way in which the walking body reinterprets space and place, creating an inner spiritual bodily experience. This included the importance of rhythm to create a meditative practice, sociability where walkers would walk alone but alongside others, and the importance of 'the present', where the body was caught up in a continual temporal present for the entire journey. Slavin (2003) argues that the act of walking created an embodied map of the pilgrimage and a new bodily space of spiritual expression.

The renegotiation and the creation of spiritual spaces in school was particularly significant because of the political impact such practices had on the official construction of ethos of each of the schools and on the state of affairs described in Chapters 4-6. In other words, the 'spatial poetics' of children's spiritual practices were also their 'spatial politics' (see Kong, 2001). As with Otto's (1958 [1917]) 'numinous' (see Chapter 2), the non-discursive, emotional and spiritual aspects of children's practices also evolved into more rational and discursive influences through the way they envisaged alternative conceptions of school ethos. In order to illustrate what I mean by this, I will now consider three areas of spirituality that impacted upon official school ethos in subtle ways: playground spirituality, assemblies and collective worship, and religious practice and prayer.

7.3.1) Playground Spirituality

Previous research has shown how children attach their own meanings to spaces on school playgrounds (e.g. Factor, 2004) and take part in imaginative playground games

and folklore involving the spiritual realm, such as God and the devil, witches and magic (e.g. Opie & Opie, 1959, 1969). However, to-date there has been little work combining these two elements, in terms of how spiritual play is expressed spatially. In my research, both of the schools had provided areas in the playground where children could sit quietly and think, reflect and take time out of the busy school day. Although some children did use these quiet areas for their intended use - some of the research participants chose them as their special places as described above - many children renegotiated these spaces into arenas for friendship and enjoyment. Instead of sitting quietly on the seat, they would play noisy and lively games in and around them, crawling and scrambling over the seats and engaging in interaction with their peers. Although this was not the kind of quiet and spiritual experience that the school staff may have envisaged, it was nevertheless relational and embodied. Rather than being restricted by the planned quiet areas on the playground, children would instead create their own 'cocooned space' individually or 'relational space' with clusters of other friends (Hyde, 2008). These could be found on odd patches of grass, around the sides of fences and railings, and in the middle of the concrete playground, where children sat in small groups amongst all the activity. In Rainbow Hill, the 'secret path' identified by Mary as her special place (see Figure 7.3) provided many other children with spiritual experiences, as my own investigations revealed.

Going outside onto the playground, I had a look at the way that children were using their bodies in the more marginal quiet and 'spiritual' places. There was a covered area next to the other building where you could hear your voice echo and a girl kept screaming, obviously enjoying the louder noise that this made. Others were doing handstands against the wall, and the area was quite exciting as it had more of a bunker feel to it. Other children were sitting on the benches around the far side of the playground, underneath the massive parasol structures. They all seemed to be interested in elevating themselves away from the floor, by lying on benches and crawling around their tops. The sunflower area was again hugely popular, with children clearly fascinated by the large natural structures, even though they had been there for weeks. Many sat underneath them on the wall, or played with the thick stems, trying to catch the occasional seed that fell out of them. A group of younger boys were walking slowly around the paths that surrounded the playground. All of these areas were away from the normal hustle and bustle of the ball areas and seemed to be

marked out by a lack of movement and a slower rhythm. (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill)

The rest of lunch was spent investigating the 'magical path' in the playground. I walked down it a couple of times and it did feel a bit like a twisty forest path, without any clear physical boundaries between the tarmac path and the garden dirt. It was also surrounded with plants, grass and trees and was very different to the usual playground area. I could understand why it felt a bit magical to children, like something out of a fairytale. (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill)

The two examples above of children's spiritual practices were important for influencing the construction of school ethos. Where as both Rainbow Hill and Holy Cross provided spiritual resources in keeping with the particular model of religion and spirituality adopted by the school, children were able to introduce many more spiritual practices onto the playground. This further pushed this aspect of children's lives into the public realm and introduced different modes of spirituality that were less recognised by the official school ethos (see Chapter 6). In other words, children's spatial poetics were also political, as the next example also demonstrates.

7.3.2) Assemblies and Collective Worship

In the school context, Webster (1995) argues that collective worship and assembly is one of the places in which spirituality can be found, and this is one of the areas that Ofsted usually considers when assessing provision for spiritual development. As outlined in Chapter 6, while assemblies in Holy Cross were often faith-based, Rainbow Hill offered more generically spiritual gatherings, but both entailed certain embodied rituals such as singing, prize giving, applause and listening to calming music. During one of the assemblies in Rainbow Hill, I recorded in my research diary the extent of the embodied nature of the event.

During [assembly] there was clapping, shuffling, concentrating, sitting up, tapping, fiddling, breathing, looking around, whispering, laughing, watching, listening, and minds wandering - you could tell by the way some of the children's eyes were unfocused (Research Diary Extract, Rainbow Hill).

In both of the schools, assemblies and/or collective worship were part of the everyday school day, occurring at least two or three times per week in the school hall. Previous research on school assemblies has reported that pupils enjoy the moral and corporate dimensions of worship but not always the way assemblies are presented. They feel that sometimes teacher leadership lacks honesty, and there is a gap between what they think would be helpful and what is actually provided, with confusion over the purpose of the spiritual content (Gill, 2000). Research has also shown that children's view of collective worship changes as they become more experienced in the school system. While younger primary children may be happy to accept it and enjoy elements of assembly, older primary children start to resist the idea that they should be pressured into believing particular things (Gill, 2004; Kay, 1996). Although much of this research is concerned with children of an older age to those in my research, it still points to a potential gap between the way that schools view assembly and the actual experiences of children. In my study schools, one of the main complaints about assemblies was the amount of time that children were required to sit and listen to the proceedings and the effect this had on their bodies. These experiences were far more significant for the interviewees than prayers, reflection, singing or any of the other spiritual provisions that were included in the assemblies.

INTERVIEWER:

Ok is there anything that you don't like about assembly? I guess you've just said you feel sad if you don't get the trophy...

AMY (White Catholic Girl, Holy Cross):

Yeah I don't like it 'cos sometimes Miss blabs on - not being mean to her.

INTERVIEWER:

So it goes on for too long?

AMY & CHLOE:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

How do you feel when it's going on for really long?

CHLOE (White Catholic Girl, Holy Cross):

Bored and I just want to, you get pins and needles.

AMY:

Yeah and you get fidgety.

There were also elements of assembly that interviewees talked about in a more positive light. These were generally associated with activities that they considered to be fun or enjoyable, often involving bodily movements during songs, or taking part in activities at the front of assembly. The importance of fun and enjoyment as an emotional aspect of sport and active play experiences in the primary school is something that I have explored in previous research (Hemming, 2007). In that particular study, children's emotional responses to exercise helped to redefine the focus in school away from health concerns towards pleasure and enjoyment. In this present research, the intense emotional spirituality of fun and enjoyment was of more interest to interviewees than quiet reflection, awe, wonder or any of the official aspects of spirituality defined by Ofsted (see Ofsted, 2004). Many of the interviewees also talked about the enjoyment they felt when receiving certificates or prizes, revealing more material motivations. However, the actual experience of such assemblies was also spiritual because of the highly emotional nature of these events. For example, one of the visiting Christian groups - 'Kidz Club' - gave an assembly at Rainbow Hill and sought to capitalise on the enjoyment factor by involving the children in various fun activities in order to convey their Christian message. Although there was also a clear material aspect to this, namely the distribution of prizes for taking part, the enjoyment factor involved in taking part in such activities was also emphasised by children and can be understood as more spiritual in nature.

INTERVIEWER:

Right, assemblies - what do you like about assemblies?

MARYAM (Asian Muslim Girl, Rainbow Hill):

Assemblies I like...

NATALIE (Mixed Race Christian Girl, Rainbow Hill):

I like it when 'Kidz Club' comes, 'cos you get to do erm fun stuff, fun activities and lots of games.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah.

NATALIE:

And you get a prize after, if you complete it and come up at the front of the assembly.

In a similar way to playground spirituality, children's emotional experiences of enjoyment helped to redefine the spiritual aspect of school life as described in Chapter

6. Spirituality was not just about the particular public models that the schools chose to promote, but included children's own spiritual practices. Again, this further blurred the distinction between public and private space within the school institutions. The two examples above have both taken as their focus spirituality in a broad sense, but in the last example, I return to more formal religious spiritual experiences.

7.3.3) Religious Practice and Prayer

Children's spiritual practices within a more religious framework were also important for reformulating the place of religion within school ethos. In his study on primary aged children and spirituality, Hyde (2008) showed his participants a number of photographs of landscapes and people, in order to explore how the children drew on their sense of awe and wonder to develop spiritual meanings. He found that the children in his study, although all attending Catholic schools, deliberately drew on a range of ideas to develop their frameworks of meaning, including their own experience, the media and concepts from world faiths and mythology, alongside Christianity. To make sense of this, Hyde (2008) points to the work of Webster (2004), who argues that spirituality emerges from the tension between cultural and religious meanings on the one hand and personal experience and ideas on the other. The complex ways in which children make sense of religious meanings is also documented by Nesbitt (2004), who explored how young British Hindu's explanations of different religious, cultural, and ethnic issues were influenced by a range of factors such as home and family, religious rituals and personal circumstances. The young people in her study also demonstrated their agency by questioning certain aspects of their religion.

Both of the above studies focus on how children renegotiate religious and spiritual meanings through their thought processes and this was also apparent in my research. For example, one of the children in Holy Cross reinterpreted the story of the 'good shepherd' by suggesting that it was the shepherd who had made a mistake, rather than the lost sheep, by leaving 99 sheep to their own devices merely to find one. Another example was the child who shared with the class how her uncle was a palm-reader during RE in Holy Cross. This was not greeted with enthusiasm from the teacher, who hastily moved on to the next part of the lesson. But in addition to the mental renegotiation of religion, my research also pointed to a somatic and practical aspect to this process. The easiest way for children to achieve this renegotiation was simply to decline to take part fully in the religious rituals. While observing in Holy Cross, there were several occasions when children chatted to each other during hymns or prayer

chants during services or assemblies, and it was very rare for every child to keep their eyes closed during the regular class prayers that took place four times a day. Some of the interviewees told me that other children did not pray properly because they wanted to reach the front of the dinner queue before everyone else, whereas others such as Jake and Marlen suggested that it was because they could not be bothered to.

INTERVIEWER:

Right yeah is there anyone that doesn't do the prayers or the singing?

MARLEN (White Soon-to-be-Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Like new people and people that really don't know prayers.

JAKE (White Agnostic Boy, Holy Cross):

And some people, and some people can't be bothered singing and doing the prayers.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh so even though they're meant to they don't do it?

MARLEN:

Yeah like they just cross their hands and they just pretend they're sayin' it like 'cos there's loadsa noise so like they just whisper and stuff.

Children were also able to renegotiate the terms of prayer in school by creating their own prayer spaces. The social importance of bathroom spaces has previously been highlighted by Lewis (forthcoming), who shows how teenagers establish privacy and manage bodily boundaries by closing the bathroom door in family households. Armitage (forthcoming) has also noted the spiritual significance of toilet spaces in terms of children's folklore about ghostly inhabitants. In his research, a character called the 'White Lady' commonly featured in primary school children's stories about the liminal spaces of school toilets. During one of the interviews at Rainbow Hill, William told me that he had heard other children praying in the toilets when he had been in there. At first I approached this claim with scepticism, but scanning the other interview transcripts, I noticed a small reference to praying in toilets that I had not noticed during the interview itself. I spoke to the girls in question when I next saw them and they had indeed been praying in the toilets. Nicole, a Pentecostal Christian and Aisha, a Muslim, had both been using the toilets as private spiritual spaces in order to satisfy their daily prayer requirements. Muslim interviewees from both of the study schools also constructed prayer space in other ways. Many of them told me that they often

changed the words of the Christian prayers so that they were appropriate for their own religion, or prayed to Allah in their heads, hence creating mental spiritual space.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh ok. So you know when you had that assembly on Friday and that group came in. So when they said at the end, you can pray if you want to, did you not pray then?

AISHA (Asian Muslim Girl, Rainbow Hill):

I did, but I didn't say Jesus, because he's not my God.

INTERVIEWER:

So what did you say instead?

AISHA:

I said Allah.

INTERVIEWER:

So you kind of changed the prayer so that it was ok for your religion?

AISHA:

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER:

So what about when you have prayers in assembly, do you like doing the prayers?

CRAIG (White Catholic Boy, Holy Cross):

Yeah.

AHMED (Mixed Race Muslim Boy, Holy Cross):

Well I don't really say the prayers, so I can't really answer that question.

INTERVIEWER:

So what happens in, do you tend to sit there quietly while the rest do it?

AHMED:

Yeah, I either say my own prayer inside.

INTERVIEWER:

In your head?

AHMED:

Yeah.

The spiritual practices above had quite far reaching consequences. They challenged the schools' efforts to promote a sense of community through the use of rituals (see Chapter 5) because not all of the children were fully taking part in them. They also reconstituted the Christian or secular nature of school citizenship models (see Chapter 4), because children of different religious backgrounds were creating their own prayer spaces in their heads and in the school toilets and expressing their own spirituality within them. Yet again, these examples also further blurred the public and private religious distinction (see Chapter 6) by bringing overtly religious practices into Rainbow Hill, and secular or multi-faith ones into Holy Cross. In this section, I have demonstrated how spatial poetics became spatial politics and children's non-rational and non-material practices redefined the discursive constructions and representations concerned with the role of religion within both of the study schools. This occurred through contestations of spiritual experiences promoted by teaching staff, but also more constructively, through the creation of new spiritual spaces within school.

7.4) Conclusion

In this chapter, I have focused on the everyday informal spaces of the school and the significance of children's spiritual practices within and through them. In contrast to the previous three chapters, this enabled me to examine both social and physical school space from a child-centred perspective and its influence over the official school ethos or mental/cultural space (see Chapter 2 and Gordon *et al.*, 2000; Knott, 2005a). The embodied and emotional nature of children's spiritual experiences was central to both religious practices such as prayer and secular practices such as singing. Interpersonal relationships also possessed embodied and affective characteristics, illustrating a key aspect of relational spirituality, for example through practices of caring. This focus on 'relationality' was also important for making sense of spiritual relationships with the school environment. I documented the ways in which adults in the research, including myself, described the emotional and affective qualities of school space in various contexts, before considering the characteristics of children's own special places in and around the school sites. Children in both Rainbow Hill and Holy Cross chose a variety of places but most of them involved the significance of emotions, solitude or relationships in some way. Power dynamics were also influential, particularly age identities in relation to adults, and the restrictions over use of space that these dynamics encompassed. These findings pointed to the extraordinary nature of spiritual space, albeit in ordinary and everyday contexts.

Exploring children's everyday practices and the spiritual and emotional relationships they held with other people and their environments was a central concern of the chapter, but I was also interested in how children actively created their own spiritual geographies in and around the school. Participants in my research study demonstrated their agency in a number of ways and this was examined through a focus on three examples: playground spirituality, assembly and collective worship, and religious practice and prayer. Existing spiritual provision in school, such as spiritual assemblies, prayer practices and quiet places on the playground, were often renegotiated in order to express different modes of spirituality, more suited to children's own everyday concerns and experiences. Children also created their own spiritual landscapes through the construction of prayer spaces in toilets and quiet areas in marginal zones of the playground. All of these practices were effective in challenging and renegotiating, albeit in very subtle ways, understandings of official ethos in the study schools and the intended place of religion and spirituality within it. The findings of this chapter are therefore important for re-evaluating the conclusions from Chapters 4-6 to include the perspectives, experiences and practices of children whose voices have, as I argued in Chapter 2, long been missing from debates and discussions on religion and spirituality in the primary school.

There are two main conclusions that I would like to draw out from the observations in this chapter. The first is concerned with the role of emotions, affect and spirituality, which proved to be of immense significance for children's everyday lives in school. These non-rational aspects of school life were important for achieving a depth of understanding of the role that religion and spirituality plays in primary school spaces. The affective encounters that children experienced, both with other people and their environments, pointed to the active and embodied nature of spirituality within the educational contexts examined. Affective practices, with both their emotional and spiritual components, and other forms of practices *mattered* because they were able to renegotiate the meaning of school ethos and the place of religion within it. Moreover, this process had a clear spatial dimension. Emotions and spirituality were deeply involved in the construction of space and place in the primary school and the renegotiation of institutional spatialities. In other words, spiritual and affectual forces were political and children's spatial poetics of religion and spirituality were also their spatial politics, transcending the dichotomy that Kong (2001) has highlighted in previous work on religion and space.

The second point relates to children's rights and citizenship and the implications of these findings for faith schools and community schools alike. The focus on children's

agency in spiritual and religious practice has highlighted a clear gap between how adults in school construct and enact religious and spiritual meanings and how children engage in the same process. Based on his own research, Hyde (2008) has argued that the way in which children construct their own spiritual meanings from a range of sources, in a deliberate rather than random fashion, presents an enormous challenge for faith schools. My own research would echo that concern, albeit with an added embodied aspect to the argument. The question is, how can faith schools support children in the development of their own spiritual lives, whilst simultaneously guiding them into the values and beliefs of a particular religious tradition. Failure to respect children's rights to develop their own religious and spiritual lives and contribute to decisions over their own educational experiences would leave such schools open to charges of indoctrination (e.g. see Hand, 2003; Seigal, 2004). I would also argue that community schools face a similar challenge, in cases where their liberal approaches to education do not map neatly onto children's own spiritual values and understandings (e.g. see Pike, 2008). Much of this relates to the balance that is struck between the rights of children, the rights of parents and the rights of the State and this is something that will be explored in more detail in Chapter 8.

8) Conclusion

In 2007, the Government published a document entitled *Faith in the System: The Role of Schools with a Religious Character in English Education and Society*. This was essentially a vision statement produced jointly with the providers of faith schools to defend the “very positive contribution which schools with a religious character make as valuable engaged partners in the school system and in their local communities and beyond” (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2007:1). Despite the positive rhetoric contained within this official document, recent reports published by other organisations such as the Runnymede Trust, have adopted a less enthusiastic tone about the current role that state-funded faith schools play in English education and society, particularly regarding the issue of community cohesion. In *Right to Divide? Faith Schools and Community Cohesion*, Berkeley & Vij (2008) draw on empirical research to focus on the issues of shared values and belonging, appreciation of diversity, commitment to equality and building inter-faith partnerships. They argue that changes need to be made to ensure that children are not just selected on the basis of faith, all young people are valued and provided for equally, RE plays a more central role in the national curriculum and children make a bigger contribution to decisions about their education. Only if these recommendations are acted on, do Berkeley & Vij (2008) believe that faith schools would make a positive contribution to community cohesion.

In this thesis, I have investigated the role of religion and spirituality in the spaces of the primary school in part to contribute more empirical evidence to such debates and discussions. In doing so, I hope to add to the development of a more enlightened position on the place of religion in the schooling system, based on research evidence, rather than theoretical positions or political rhetoric. Such a task will enable the advancement of new policy ideas and recommendations to improve the current system, something that I make a modest contribution towards in this conclusion and in the feedback briefings I provided for the two study schools. However, I have also made a case in this thesis for why religion in education is a significant sociological and geographical issue that should not just be left to educationalists. The role of religion and spirituality in education spaces has key theoretical implications, not just for schools and other institutions, but also society, in general.

In this chapter, I draw together the main findings and conclusions of the thesis in order to reflect on some of their implications. I begin by providing a summary of the research

findings related to spaces of the nation, spaces of the community, public and private space, and spaces of the body and how they intersected with school institutional space. The remainder of the chapter is concerned with a number of key theoretical and policy conclusions from the thesis as a whole. These include discussions on children as emotional and spiritual agents, the emotional and spiritual aspects of citizenship, religion in everyday secular space and the place of religion in the primary school. Throughout this chapter, I point to policy suggestions and potential avenues for future research where appropriate. The chapter ends with a summary of the original contribution that my thesis makes to theoretical, methodological and empirical knowledge in the various sub-disciplines of Human Geography and Sociology.

8.1) Spaces of the Nation

In Chapter 4, I described two models of informal religious citizenship education operating within the schools and influencing the ways in which children from different faith backgrounds were catered for within educational space. Rainbow Hill promoted a model of citizenship based on an ethic of tolerance and inclusion, engendering values of respect for difference and celebration of diversity. Although constituted around a particular intellectual understanding of citizenship, this model also contained an emotional component. During interviews, staff spoke with enthusiasm and pride about the essence of the school and demonstrated both a rational and an emotional commitment to what they were trying to achieve. Teaching staff, children and parents all reflected these discourses, for example by referring to respect for other religions. Many parents also expressed a view that such an understanding of citizenship would be beneficial in material terms for their children's futures. The emphasis on tolerance, inclusion, respect and difference in Rainbow Hill amounted to a form of citizenship strongly influenced by liberalism, with its concern for individual rights, autonomy and justice. This was reflected by the approach taken to acknowledging and accommodating religious minorities in school, including through the marking of non-Christian religious festivals and provision for diverse food, dress and prayer needs.

However, this process of accommodation only went so far and there were examples of children and parents from minority religious backgrounds who felt that such arrangements could be improved. One reason for the limitations to minority religious needs provision could be found in constructions of national citizenship. Teaching staff highlighted the national context in which their model of citizenship was operating within, specifically the Christian influences on British culture that structured the education

system. Many of the White Christian or Agnostic parents also drew on these constructions of national identity to argue that it was right for the school to give priority to Christianity. They also pointed to examples where they felt non-Christian groups, particularly Muslims, had not always acted in the spirit of the ethic of tolerance and respect for difference. Although these discourses were framed in rational terms, they again contained an emotional aspect to them, particularly feelings of resentment towards other groups and fear and concern about the affects that their presence could have on national culture.

In contrast to Rainbow Hill, Holy Cross promoted a model of citizenship built on a Christian ethic that encompassed a love of God and the idea that everyone is loved equally in the eyes of God. Although based primarily on religious scripture, this model was also influenced by teachers' personal and emotional commitments to living by and promoting the religious values contained within it. Children reflected this Christian ethic by explaining how they were all part of God's family and downplaying differences between pupils. The Christian ethic was expressed and supported by parents, but they also tended to emphasise an ethic of tolerance and respect for difference, highlighting a certain amount of compatibility between the two models. However, the model of citizenship in Holy Cross was quite distinct from Rainbow Hill because of its emphasis on sameness rather than difference. This revealed the influence of communitarianism, with its emphasis on group needs above the rights of the individual. In the same way as in Rainbow Hill, the model of citizenship promoted by Holy Cross had implications for the recognition and accommodation of children from minority faiths and to a certain extent, White non-Catholic pupils from other Christian or agnostic backgrounds.

Although efforts were made in Holy Cross to include multi-cultural and multi-faith content within the curriculum, in reality it was given much less priority than in Rainbow Hill. Non-Catholic festivals were rarely celebrated, there was little room made for minority religions within the RE curriculum and making allowances for pupils from non-Catholic backgrounds was sometimes considered difficult to achieve. In justifying this situation, staff would point to the fact that the school was a Catholic school and parents needed to respect that if selecting it for their children. Catholic parents also drew on this particular justification for why the school should not make more allowances for children from other faiths, or give more recognition to other religions. Interestingly, their concerns were conveyed in a similar way to those in Rainbow Hill but at a different spatial scale, as the 'Christian country' argument was substituted with the 'Catholic school' one instead. Similar emotions of fear, worry and sadness were drawn upon to express how some of the Catholic parents felt that over-accommodating minority faiths,

again particularly Muslims, could have negative impacts upon the Catholic ethos of the school.

The two study schools therefore promoted quite distinct models of informal Citizenship Education, but the differences between them should not be overstated. Although Rainbow Hill drew on an ethic of tolerance, inclusion and respect for difference and elements of liberalism, and Holy Cross drew on an ethic of Christianity and a love of God through a communitarian influence, the differences were all just a matter of degree. Both schools were heavily influenced by national conceptions of citizenship, such as those promoted through the Citizenship Education curriculum. This included neo-liberal discourses emphasising individual achievement and responsibility, and civic republican concerns with contributing to the 'common good' through charity appeals and community involvement. Spaces of the community were the main focus of Chapter 5 and it is to this issue that I now turn.

8.2) Spaces of the Community

In Chapter 5, I explored a number of ways in which both schools promoted social cohesion between children of all backgrounds and faiths, through encouraging positive encounters and building a strong sense of community in school. The first set of processes – encouraging positive encounters - was achieved by teaching 'emotion work' techniques to help children manage their emotions through 'surface acting' and 'deep acting' (Hochschild, 1983), developing values of kindness, respect and empathy in pupils, and creating a climate in school where bullying and racism were deemed socially unacceptable. These techniques and methods of promoting positive encounters were communicated to children through a range of means, including PSHCE, Circle Time, classroom displays, assembly and in everyday situations where conflicts or issues arose in school. Children recounted some of these experiences and reflected many of the socially cohesive discourses in the vignette drama activity. The values teaching and anti-bullying work was also strongly supported by many of the parents.

Although both of the schools engaged with similar techniques and teaching methods to encourage positive encounters, the motivations for this differed. In Holy Cross, religious scripture was given as a reason for teaching children to love others and show kindness and respect, whereas Rainbow Hill was following Government guidelines and staff felt that such skills and values were generally positive for life and for creating a

successful learning environment. A certain amount of success in promoting social cohesion was demonstrated in both of the schools, through the lack of religious and ethnic segregation, as children from all backgrounds worked and played together. For some children, school was a key site where they encountered children from other faiths in a way that they would not have done in their local communities or family friendship groups.

However, sometimes these techniques were not so successful. Children did not always follow the prescribed behaviours because they did not wish to or they perceived them to be unfair. Others found it very difficult to manage their emotions during conflicts. A similar situation was apparent with children's developing values where discourses of empathy and respect for others did not always translate into associated behaviours. Often children demonstrated 'surface acting' rather than 'deep acting' in these situations. Another source of difficulty for some children was the existence of conflicting values and prejudice from their home environment. Even when the techniques promoted in school were successful, there were potential drawbacks, particularly through the way in which social cohesion was defined. By focusing primarily on ethnicity and religion, other social divisions such as gender received much less attention and were considered less problematic, even though they were just as salient in the two study schools.

The second set of processes that both schools engaged in to promote social cohesion was the development of a strong sense of community. This was achieved through discourses that emphasised concepts of togetherness, but also through embodied routines and rituals. Both of the schools used non-religious practices such as exercise routines and assemblies to create this feeling of togetherness, but Holy Cross was also able to draw on a wide range of religious rituals, including regular class prayer chants, class worship and Mass. Teachers and parents at Holy Cross highlighted the community building aspects of such practices and pointed to the way in which they also played a role in promoting particular values. Although Holy Cross had more rituals to draw on in creating a sense of community, their religious nature was potentially exclusive for pupils from minority religions who could not take part in prayers or songs. In contrast, rituals and routines in Rainbow Hill were consciously inclusive and generally involved all of the children.

The dynamics of the school communities described above were also significant for interpreting the relationship that each institution maintained with its local neighbourhood community. Both of the schools did engage with their local communities

to a certain extent and this included charity work in the community, involvement in local festivals and encouraging parents to attend school events. However, while Rainbow Hill did maintain informal links with a local Anglican church, Holy Cross played a much more significant role in the local Catholic parish community. Parishioners used the school building for functions, attended the school services and were more likely to be involved with school events. Holy Cross was therefore very much a part of the close-knit Catholic community in the local area. In contrast, Rainbow Hill was able to focus much more on the local neighbourhood community, and while it was not able to contribute to such a strong sense of community as a result, it did tend to be more inclusive in its approach than Holy Cross. As far as the wider community was concerned, Rainbow Hill was therefore better at bridging social capital between different groups while Holy Cross was better at bonding social capital within the Catholic community (see Putnam, 2000). These observations also begin to point to the role of religion in the ethos of the two schools and it is to this issue that I now turn with a summary of Chapter 6.

8.3) Public and Private Space

In Chapter 6, I examined the extent to which religion played an overt or covert role in the ethos of both of the study schools. Rainbow Hill allocated quite a minimal role to religion, at least in overt terms, and this was demonstrated through the lack of priority given to RE, something reported by both parents and children. Teachers also explained how the school tended to avoid explicitly religious or spiritual assemblies because of their multicultural and multi-faith intake. Instead, a vague and inconsistently applied spirituality and morality was apparent throughout both assemblies and the curriculum. Parents referred to this as the promotion of a positive way of life, rather than religious teachings of an overt nature. In contrast, Holy Cross viewed religion as central to its ethos and teachers argued that Catholicism was central to everything that took place within school. The prominence of religion was also reflected in interviews with children and parents and could be seen in the regularity of prayers and worship in class, the services and Mass in the school hall, and objects, symbols and displays around the school building. RE was given a much greater priority than in Rainbow Hill and the teaching staff had a very clear idea of the kind of religious moral and spiritual development they were seeking to provide.

However, delving a little deeper, the situation was much more complex than it first appeared. Despite the differences cited between the nature of spiritual and moral

teaching in the two schools, the issues covered were often surprisingly similar, if communicated in different ways. This dynamic also played out through the priority given to RE and PSHCE. Although Holy Cross gave more priority to the former, and Rainbow Hill to the latter, similar values were taught in both of the subjects. The influence of religious values in Rainbow Hill was therefore much more apparent than the enactment of religious practices. This finding highlighted the way that religion can be understood as deeply rooted in the values of Western societies and was also apparent in the complex relationship between home as private and school as public space. Although some families followed the expected pattern of providing religion at home in Rainbow Hill or working in partnership with Holy Cross to teach their children religious values, some did not. There were examples of parents who were happy to leave Holy Cross to undertake this task and those who did not view the presence of religious prayers or hymns in Rainbow Hill as undesirable.

In both of the schools, parents generally did not consider religion to be problematic. On the whole, they were supportive of a religious element to their children's schooling as part of a traditional form of education that they themselves had experienced. However, many were happy to allow the school to impart these practices and values to children but were not so concerned about participating in this process themselves at home. This implicit support for 'vicarious religion' (Davie, 2007) became more explicit during unusual and significant events, such as the tragic death of a child in school but at other times maintained a more covert presence in Rainbow Hill. These findings challenged the construction of public and private space with regard to religion in both of the school contexts. The theme of religion as normal and as an everyday part of life was continued through children's own perceptions of religion illustrated in their drawings and cartoon strips and their understandings of religious difference. The same drawings also drew attention to the perceived connection between religion and caring, another aspect of school ethos that was influenced by religious values in both Rainbow Hill and Holy Cross.

Caring was identified as an aspect of school life that children and parents viewed as positive in both of the schools. Staff in Rainbow Hill and Holy Cross expressed an ethic of care as an embodied and affective practice and this was supported through official documents. Concepts of love and charity were drawn upon to justify the existence of such an ethic of care, thus highlighting the tangled roots of 'secular humanist' and 'Christian caritas' discourses and the further influence of religious values in both of the study schools. Parents also viewed caring in material terms, as 'emotional capital' that would prepare their children for future life (see Reay, 2004). However, the ethic of care

in the study schools also had more negative implications, including an over-concern for children's safety and a tendency to view children as dependents rather than active citizens capable of contributing to decisions about their own education. This particularly raised issues in Holy Cross regarding children's ability to decide for themselves whether or not they wished to take part in religious practices or adopt religious values. The issue of children's agency is something that was covered in more depth in Chapter 7, and it is to this that I now turn.

8.4) Spaces of the Body

In Chapter 7, I highlighted a number of spiritual experiences and practices that children reported to be of significance to them as part of everyday life in both of the study schools. These experiences included religious practices such as praying and non-religious practices such as singing. They were also characterised by their embodied, emotional and relational nature. Relationships in school, including with adults and other pupils, were important to children and the spiritual, affective and embodied nature of these relationships was apparent in different contexts. The spiritual aspect of school life was also demonstrated through relationships with space and environment. This was the case for parents who recounted the affective nature of school ethos and also for myself as a researcher experiencing the emotional and spiritual power of performances in the school halls of both Rainbow Hill and Holy Cross. Children also expressed their spiritual and affective relationships with their surroundings through their selection of special places to photograph in and around their schools. These places could be found both inside and outside of the school buildings and were characterised by quiet and solitary space, relational space and/or intense engagement and focus. The contextual nature of the research also pointed to the way in which all of these places, and the events that occurred within them, could in some way be described as extraordinary, albeit as part of everyday school life. Children's environmental encounters were often structured by social identities and power, particularly age and the way that adults restricted access to many of these special places, contributing to their spiritual qualities.

In the final part of the chapter, I outlined a number of ways that children's embodied emotional and spiritual practices re-envisioned the ethos of both of the study schools, as outlined in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. This occurred both through resistance to spiritual provision in school but also through the creation of new spiritual spaces. In the playground, children used the allocated quiet areas in creative ways to express their

own spirituality and also created their own relational and solitary spaces in other areas around the play space. In the case of collective worship and assembly, children used embodied practices to disrupt the intended spiritual content and often experienced assemblies with aching bodies from sitting still for long periods and boredom. In contrast, children reinterpreted assembly as spiritual in an emotional sense, specifically in terms of pleasure and enjoyment. Issues associated with religious practice and prayer also demonstrated children's ability to show agency through their spiritual and emotional actions. In Holy Cross, children did not always take full part in religious rituals such as chants and prayers, negotiating their own religious lives in school. In Rainbow Hill, two of the children from minority religious backgrounds created their own prayer spaces in the school toilets, while in both schools, Muslim children prayed to Allah in their heads during Christian prayers.

The spiritual and emotional practices described above had subtle implications for the institutional geographies outlined throughout the thesis. They added a new dimension to the school citizenship models outlined in Chapter 4, when children created their own ways of accommodating their religious needs. The school attempts to build a strong sense of community through embodied religious rituals discussed in Chapter 5 were implicitly challenged. Children's practices also had the effect of recasting the role of religion and spirituality in the ethos of each of the two study schools, as they departed from the officially sanctioned spiritual provisions and further blurred the distinctions between public and private constructions of religious and spiritual space. These findings all demonstrated certain 'hidden geographies' and alternative conceptions of the role of religion and spirituality in school ethos. Children therefore demonstrated their agency in school through embodied, emotional and spiritual means and these findings point to new ways of understanding children's agency, explored in the next section.

8.5) Children as Emotional and Spiritual Actors

The findings in this thesis point to new and more complex ways of understanding the issue of children's agency. Firstly, the spiritual and emotional practices explored in Chapter 7 showed that children demonstrate their agency through different modes, both constructive and destructive. Whereas much of the literature on children's agency in school spaces has often focused on resistance to adult authority and expectations (e.g. Catling, 2005; Thomson, 2005), the child participants in my study also demonstrated their ability to create alternative spiritual realities through their proactive

use of embodied practice. Although children in this research did show resistance to requirements such as daily prayers and reflection in assembly, they also constructed their own spiritual spaces and places on the playground and around the school, and created alternative prayer spaces in the toilets and in their own minds. Secondly, the findings in my research point to a range of different dimensions to children's agency. Intelligence has long been understood as possessing different dimensions, including bodily, interpersonal, verbal, logical, natural, intrapersonal, visual and musical aspects (Gardner, 1993). My findings suggest that agency can also be expressed through a variety of outlets. They show that not only can children be understood as social and moral actors in their own right (Dunn, 1988; Mayall, 2002), but also as emotional and spiritual agents (see also Hemming, 2007 on emotional agency). Children's agency therefore consists of both rational and non-rational components. It also follows from this that there may be a number of other dimensions to agency that could be explored in future research.

Children's agency, in the modes and dimensions described above, was significant in my study because of the way in which pupils' emotional and spiritual practices worked politically to subtly influence conceptions of institutional space and school ethos. In Chapter 2, I recounted Kong's (2001) call for more research that considers both the spatial politics and the spatial poetics of religion. In this thesis, I have pointed to some of the ways in which children's emotional and spiritual practices broke down this dichotomy, including how they redefined particular mundane spaces as spiritual or religious, de-stabilised Christian or secular models of citizenship in school and renegotiated the purpose of the spiritual areas provided for them in the school grounds. These findings also emphasise the need to explore further the role of practice, bodies, emotions and the everyday in understanding children's social worlds (Horton & Kraftl, 2006). My findings suggest this will not just be an exercise in attending to the subjective side of children's experiences, but rather offers the potential to better understand the real political impacts that children may have on their everyday environments.

Emotional and spiritual agency in the context of childhood is of course subject to various limitations and so debates on the extent to which children's agency should be recognised legally and institutionally are just as relevant for these new dimensions (see Vanderbeck, 2008). Specifically, this relates to how far children's moral, spiritual and religious agency should be respected and accommodated in relation to adult authority. There may be limits to how far adults are willing for children to express their agency if doing so would result in moral relativism and a breakdown in agreed values and norms

for the continuation of a particular religious tradition or way of life. This question has also been framed in terms of children's rights and was raised in Chapters 6 and 7 as part of the discussion about processes of caring and religious and spiritual practices respectively. These findings therefore have relevance for assessing whether or not faith and community schools promote individual pupil autonomy or engage in practices of indoctrination and this issue will be discussed later in the policy section of this chapter. However, I now move on to consider the wider significance of emotions and spirituality for defining citizenship.

8.6) Emotional and Spiritual Aspects of Citizenship

One of the key themes running throughout the thesis was the role of emotions in many of the social processes related to religion operating within the two schools. The most obvious example was in Chapter 7, where I highlighted the significance of children's emotional and affective encounters with other people and their environments for the active creation of spiritual space. An engagement with the literature on children and spirituality led to a redefinition of events that might otherwise have been described as affective, as both affective and spiritual. These included relational aspects of children's spiritual experiences, such as enjoyment in assembly, close friendships, and encounters with their special places. This finding is important for the literature on emotional and affectual geographies. To date, the concept of spirituality has not even been mentioned in this body of work and the close association between spirituality and affect remains largely unexplored. The observation opens up the potential for a whole wave of studies, both within Emotional Geographies and 'New' Geographies of Religion, which take seriously the role of spirituality in emotional processes, and the importance of affect within religious experiences. The place of emotional processes in general could also be reconsidered within sociological and geographical research on religion.

In addition, the findings point to an important role for geographies of affect in understanding political processes. Too often, the densely theoretical nature of some of this work has discouraged an engagement with the wider implications of affective processes. The findings of this thesis suggest that the relationship between the rational and non-rational aspects of social processes is paramount for understanding their political significance. The political aspect of emotional and affective forces was underlined in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, where their significance could be considered through the concept of citizenship. The emotional commitments to citizenship models

and practices in the study schools, and the influence of emotions on concerns about national identity, both pointed to a non-rational and non-discursive aspect to these processes. Similarly, school attempts to create citizens able to manage their emotions effectively for social cohesion, highlighted emotional practice as a central component of citizenship. Parents in the study also emphasised the value of emotional capital for developing successful citizenship, gained through affective processes of caring in the schools. Along with the findings in Chapter 7, which demonstrated children's abilities to express their agency as citizens through emotional and spiritual practices with political implications, all of the above underscore a clear emotional aspect to the understanding of citizenship.

Painter & Philo (1995) have previously argued that citizenship has both political and social dimensions, in terms of political rights and interests on the one hand and social identities and belonging on the other. They suggest that these two dimensions of citizenship offer potential for study in both the sub-disciplines of Political Geography and Social and Cultural Geography. I would like to forward the argument that citizenship also consists of a third, emotional component. Following Turner's (1993, 1996) contention that citizenship is defined through the body and through practice, this emotional dimension to citizenship implies that the concept should also be of central concern to Emotional Geographies, alongside Political and Social and Cultural Geography. It is not enough to define citizenship through rational contracts between citizens and the State, when citizenship entails emotional loyalties and practices at a variety of scales, just as much as processes of thought and logic. More attention to the emotional aspects of citizenship will add a new dimension to debates on a range of citizenship issues, such as social cohesion, environmental concerns, social justice and intergenerational relations. This could include investigating emotional attachments to particular behaviours and ideals, the emotional aspect of power dynamics in society, or non-rational responses to particular policy proposals. An example of the importance of emotions to environmental citizenship relates to the strategies that politicians have recently adopted in order to encourage citizens to change their everyday behaviour. Aware that people are generally emotionally unresponsive to appeals from public officials to alter their everyday routines, politicians are instead turning to local schemes that encourage neighbours to convey environmental messages instead (Easton, 25/8/09, www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/markeaston/2009/08/perfect_storm_public_attitudes.html). Geographies of citizenship therefore need to direct more attention to the non-rational and emotional components of human existence to shed more light on the workings of everyday spaces of citizenship. In the next section, I turn to the issue of everyday spaces and the role of religion within them.

8.7) Religion, Secular Space and the Everyday

Throughout this thesis, I have taken a spatial approach to the issue of religion and spirituality in the primary school. This was in part a response to calls from scholars such as Knott (2005b) and Kong (2001) for research to pay more attention to non-sacred and secular spaces and the role of religion within them. Knott (2005b), in particular, argues that a spatial approach can work to 'break open' the secular and expose its true religious character hidden inside. From the findings of my research, I would question whether or not education spaces should be described as secular in the first place, rather than merely *constructed* as secular by liberal models of citizenship. My investigations in Rainbow Hill revealed a clear layer of religion present within school spaces, including values, practices, identities and spirituality. Moreover, there was very little support from children, parents or teaching staff for a completely secular school space where religion was granted no role or recognition whatsoever. Similarly in Holy Cross, the role and significance of religion was much more complex and diverse than reflected in official ethos statements and documents. In this study, religion and spirituality were therefore much more pervasive in the non-sacred spaces of the primary school than the secular label would suggest. There is no reason to assume that other non-sacred spaces in society do not also possess a layer of religion hidden beneath their secular constructions (Knott & Franks, 2007). My research therefore adds more evidence to the argument that we are currently living in a post-secular society, rather than one where religion is no longer of any relevance to social and cultural processes (Taylor, 1998).

Davie (2007) has suggested that in order to investigate 'vicarious religion', we should focus on unusual situations such as births and deaths, where implicit religious influences start to become more explicit. In other words, it is at particular times and during particular events when religion becomes apparent in so-called secular societies. I would argue that researchers should also pay attention to particular spaces and places for revealing this hidden religious layer, specifically spatial intersections and everyday spaces. This undertaking goes beyond the generic focus on non-sacred space advocated by Kong (2001) and adds another dimension to the spatial tools identified by Knott (2005b). In my research, religion was generally of special significance where different spaces intersected with school space and also in those everyday informal and marginal spaces away from the classroom. For example, religious identity was of central concern at the intersection between school space on

the one hand and national, community and home space on the other. Constructions of national culture and the religious 'other' all drew strongly on religious identities and had implications for citizenship and social cohesion in the two primary schools. Similarly, religious values became more apparent at the boundary between home and school space and also where teachers' embodied practices of caring met with official conceptions of school ethos and space. In terms of everyday spaces, religious and spiritual practices and meanings were of real importance in informal and marginal spaces such as the playground, toilet and school field. All of these findings point to the power of spatial intersections and everyday spaces for revealing the presence of religion in the secular and warrant further exploration in future research on secular spaces.

Also of relevance here, was the everyday nature of the religious influences in secular space. At the beginning of Chapter 1, I highlighted the mismatch between the way that religion is often portrayed as problematic in the media and policy debates, and the mundane reality of religion in everyday primary school life. This theme was further extended in Chapter 6, where certain types of religion were viewed by children and parents as normal and commonplace, rather than unusual or out of the ordinary. In my research, the influence of religious values was felt not only in Holy Cross but also in the secular spaces of Rainbow Hill, through everyday processes of caring and morality. Even where schools were making allowances to cater for the needs of religious minorities, as outlined in Chapter 4, the presence of religious dress and food were merely a reality of everyday life for teachers and pupils. Religion and spirituality were central to the everyday working of the primary schools in my study and influenced the values and behaviours that children were taught on a daily basis. My research suggests that despite being constructed as 'secular', schools are actually saturated with religion and spirituality, but in order to locate them, it is often necessary to examine closely the mundane and everyday spaces within institutions. These religious influences reach out much further than the confines of the school walls, impacting upon much broader debates at a variety of scales in wider society. In the next section, I will consider the contributions that my research makes to some of these broader policy debates both in the context of education and society as a whole.

8.8) Religion in English Primary Schools and Beyond

In Table 1.1 at the beginning of thesis, I presented a number of arguments that have been put forward for, or against, the existence of state-funded faith schools. At this

point, I would like to reflect on the implications of my research for some of these debates. The first is concerned with the extent to which faith schools promote or erode social cohesion and whether or not they are as effective in teaching values of tolerance and fighting prejudice as their community school counterparts. The findings presented in Chapter 5 pointed to the socially cohesive nature of practices aimed at facilitating positive encounters between children of different backgrounds in both of the schools, but also to the potentially exclusive nature of religious rituals intended to develop a strong sense of togetherness in Holy Cross. I also discussed the way that Holy Cross focused more on promoting social cohesion within the Catholic community, whereas Rainbow Hill catered more for the wider neighbourhood community. My findings have therefore highlighted the nuanced nature of social cohesion issues, and the fact that it is difficult to state with any certainty that all faith schools necessarily exert a positive or negative influence on social cohesion. Both of the schools in my research were more socially cohesive in some ways than others and there will be different issues facing other schools, both faith and community, that are characterised by less diverse ethnic and religious intakes. However, what my findings have underlined is the significance of processes that took place *within* the school institutions for promoting or eroding social cohesion. Everyday school practices therefore have the potential to make a real difference to relations between different religious groups. If pupils from minority religions are excluded from religious rituals in faith schools, this could be compensated for by the development of more inclusive secular rituals and events. Pupils from religious minorities might also feel a stronger sense of belonging in a school community if their religious needs are adequately catered for.

This brings me to the second issue of debate discussed in Chapter 1 – how well different school types are able to provide for children's religious and spiritual needs. This issue also relates to questions about the role of religion and spirituality in community schools, also explored at the beginning of the thesis. Chapter 4 demonstrated that although Holy Cross was clearly better at catering for the needs of its Catholic pupils than Rainbow Hill was for its Christian pupils, it was less adept at providing for pupils from religious minorities. If state-funded faith schools are to admit pupils from religions other than the foundation religion of the school, there needs to be more consistency in how such pupils are catered for in order to lay the foundations for inclusive religious citizenship. This might involve working harder to mark non-Christian festivals and providing prayer space in school for example. In the case of community schools, the evidence from my research in Chapter 6 suggests that there would be little resistance to more recognition of a generic multi-faith spirituality, and time and space for children from different backgrounds to pray or worship in their own way during

assemblies. All schools could give greater priority to RE, but with an honest approach to inter- and intra-religious diversity and adequate time given to non-religious world-views. Finally, schools could pay more attention to the emotional and affective aspects of religion and spirituality, as explored earlier in this chapter, and how these could be nurtured in the school environment. All of these improvements would need to be developed through proper dialogue with children, to avoid such situations where pupils have no choice but to pray in the school toilets. This consultative approach is also a central component of my response to the discussion regarding children's rights, autonomy and the issue of indoctrination.

The debate over children's rights and autonomy in the context of faith schools has focused on the balance between the rights of parents to educate their children within a particular religious tradition and children's rights to freedom of religion. This is often presented as an issue of avoiding indoctrination and the right of children to be allowed to think freely for themselves and make their own decisions on religious and spiritual matters. In my research, the question of freedom of religion emerged in Chapter 6, where I pointed to the potential for processes of caring, particularly with an evangelical element, to undervalue children's ability to contribute to decisions about their own schooling. However, the findings in Chapter 7 also underlined children's ability to negotiate religious and spiritual requirements through their own practices and spiritual agency. The debate about indoctrination and faith schools does need to take account of the fact that children are not religious dupes unable to question what adults tell them. On the contrary, they are both moral and spiritual actors and actively construct their own religious and spiritual understandings through both thought and practice. There are no easy answers to a situation where children's religious and spiritual practices and beliefs do not map neatly onto those promoted by the school and clearly there will be limits to children's moral and spiritual agency in order to avoid the encouragement of relativism. However, a failure to take this agency into account in some way would be to contravene the human rights of the child. A flexible approach to religion and spirituality that recognises its diverse and evolving nature (Geaves, 1998; Jackson, 1997) would be a positive development in all state-funded schools, whether or not they possess a religious character. Such an approach would offer more potential to involve children in the decision-making process, for example regarding the content of religious and spiritual assemblies and the characteristics of planned spiritual places on the playground.

The fourth issue that my thesis has implications for is the debate over whether it should be the responsibility of parents and communities to teach religion and values to

children, or the responsibility of the State. Throughout the thesis, I have demonstrated how institutional space intersects with other spaces such as the community, the nation and the home. Both Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 pointed to the important interconnections between school and home spaces, particularly the potential values mismatch across the home-school boundary. For example, although the study schools were teaching about tolerance and empathy for others, some of the children expressed prejudiced views about other groups, originating from their home environment. This finding suggests that children develop different layers of values, transmitted in the various spaces they encounter in their everyday lives. These competing values may well find themselves in conflict and could help to explain the differences between what children (and adults) say and how they act regarding issues of prejudice. Schools may ultimately be limited in how far they can influence the development of real tolerance and understanding if they are competing against alternative values transmitted in other spaces. The thesis also highlighted the evolving perceptions concerning the division of labour between parents and educators, whether this was in regard to religious teachings and practice as in the case of 'vicarious religion', or more general Citizenship and Values Education. Both of these issues raise questions as to the extent to which the State can or should become involved with facilitating changes in values in the private sphere and the expectations that citizens have regarding this. A research study taking a number of children and families as its main focus would be another way of exploring further some of these connections between home and school.

The final debate to which my thesis makes a contribution is on the place of religion, both in school ethos but also society as a whole. Many of the proponents of faith schools claim that they foster a positive ethos that makes them distinct from community schools. Although it is true that Holy Cross maintained a distinctive and positive ethos, the same could also be said of Rainbow Hill. The similarities between the two schools were much more striking than the differences and this was demonstrated quite overtly in Chapter 6, through the emphasis that both schools placed on the issue of caring. The often unrecognised pervasiveness of religious values in everyday school spaces was highlighted through this issue and relates to a wider policy tendency to underestimate the importance of religion to people's everyday lives. In Britain, religion is something that many people find rather embarrassing to talk about in public life, unless it involves problematic or sensational events such as race riots, work disputes or terrorist attacks. The former British Prime Minister Tony Blair famously commented that he had never referred to his religious beliefs while in office for fear of being labelled a 'nutter' (BBC News Online, 22/12/07, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7157409.stm>; Childs, 9/12/03, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/3301925.stm>). Perhaps

a more sensible and practical approach to religion in social policy could help to avoid some of the aforementioned problematic and sensational events in the first place. This needs to include an acceptance that the liberal model of privatised religion simply does not reflect the reality of British society in the 21st Century. However, it also needs to recognise that the influence of religion on social and cultural life is much more subtle and pervasive than is reflected in current approaches to religion in social policy. For example, the tick box approach to religious identity, as adopted by the 2001 Census, and consultation groups that enlist representatives from the six major world faiths is simply not adequate when the majority of people in Britain tick the 'Church of England' box but never attend a Church. Serious attention therefore needs to be given to the place of religion in social issues and the development of an adequate policy response to this.

8.9) Final Summary

In conclusion, the research I have presented in this thesis makes an original contribution to theoretical, methodological and empirical knowledge in both Sociology and Human Geography. Theoretically, the thesis has contributed to conceptions of agency developed in Children's Geographies and the Sociology of Childhood. It has shown children to be emotional and spiritual actors alongside moral and social ones, highlighting a non-rational aspect to their agency. My research has added to the literature in the 'New' Geographies of Religion and the Sociology of Religion by directing more attention towards the role of religion within secular space. This has involved a focus on everyday spaces and their intersections for identifying the significance of religious influences in a post-secular society. The findings in this thesis have contributed to work in Emotional Geographies by emphasising the spiritual dimension to affective processes and the way that emotional and spiritual practices may have political implications. I have also highlighted an emotional dimension to the concept of citizenship, which has traditionally been constructed in terms of a rational contract between citizens and the State. Methodologically, my research has included the development of three original child-centred methods and a number of guidelines for other individuals conducting research in this area. I have also drawn some general conclusions about the role of power in mixed-method qualitative research with children, focusing on the importance of developing positive relationships with young participants (see Hemming, 2008).

In this thesis, I have taken a sociological and geographical approach to the issue of religion and spirituality in the primary school, in order to add some empirical research to a body of previous work that has been primarily theoretical in nature. This has included the voices and experiences of children, who have often been missing from research on these issues. In so doing, my thesis has contributed to empirical knowledge on religious citizenship and the accommodation of religious minorities, community cohesion and the facilitation of positive encounters (see Hemming, forthcoming-a; Hemming, forthcoming-b), religious values and caring in school ethos, and children's own religious and spiritual practices within the school environment. These findings also have implications for debates on faith schools and religion in education, including social cohesion and prejudice, provision for religious needs, children's rights and indoctrination, the teaching of values at home and school, and the role of religion in school ethos and wider society. In each of these cases, attention to social processes within the micro-spaces of the school institutions shed new light on well-established debates and discussions. Empirically, my thesis therefore makes wide-ranging contributions to Geographies of Education and the Sociology of Education, as well as the discipline of Education Studies. In a broader sense, it also implies that research in Human Geography, Sociology and the Social Sciences as a whole could benefit from approaching the issue of religion and spirituality much more seriously, in order to deepen understandings of social processes and social worlds.

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Appendix A: Study School Characteristics

	RAINBOW HILL	HOLY CROSS
<i>Size of School in 2007</i>	1.5 form entry - 345 pupils on roll (fully subscribed)	1 form entry – 158 pupils on roll (undersubscribed)
<i>Percentage Achieving Level 4 or More in 2007 Key Stage Two National Tests</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 68% • Maths 75% • Science 75% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 89% • Maths 78% • Science 72%
<i>Percentage Achieving Level 4 or More in 2008 Key Stage Two National Tests</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 74% • Maths 70% • Science 70% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 56% • Maths 56% • Science 63%
<i>Overall Effectiveness of School in 2007 Ofsted Inspection</i>	Grade 2 - Good	Grade 3 - Satisfactory
<i>Personal Development and Wellbeing (Including Spiritual Development) in 2007 Ofsted Inspection</i>	Grade 2 - Good	Grade 2 - Good
<i>Religious Make-up of Child Interview Focus Classes (Approximate Percentages)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40% White Christian or Agnostic • 40% Black or Mixed Race Christian or Agnostic • 20% Non-White Muslim or Sikh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% White Catholic • 20% White Christian or Agnostic (Non-Catholic) • 15% Black or Mixed Race Christian (mostly Catholic) • 5% Non-White Muslim

Characteristics of the study schools

Appendix B: Interview Compositions

N.B. All names on this page are pseudonyms

RAINBOW HILL	HOLY CROSS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Head Teacher – White Male Agnostic 2. Class Teacher – White Female Agnostic 3. Class Teacher – White Female Christian 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Head Teacher – White Female Catholic 2. Class Teacher – White Female Catholic 3. Class Teacher – White Female Christian (Non-Catholic)

Composition of Staff Interviews

RAINBOW HILL (all aged 9-11)	HOLY CROSS (all aged 8-10)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aisha & Leyla: Asian Muslim Girl & Arab Muslim Girl 2. Louigy & Ben: Mixed Race Christian Boy & Black Christian Boy 3. Mary & Kavita: Black Christian Girl and Asian Sikh Girl 4. Vanessa & Zam: Black Muslim Girls 5. Mahir & William: Asian Muslim Boy & White Christian Boy 6. Amber & Nakeeba: Asian Muslim Girls 7. Maryam & Natalie: Asian Muslim Girl & Mixed Race Christian Girl 8. Lisa & Zoe: White Agnostic Girl & White Christian Girl 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holly & Vincent: White Catholic Girl & Mixed Race Catholic Boy 2. Craig & Ahmed: White Catholic Boy, Mixed Race Muslim Boy 3. Lucy & Charlotte: White Catholic Girls 4. Isabelle & Cassie: White Catholic Girls 5. Quinton & Nathan: White Catholic Boys 6. Peter & Mark: Black Catholic Boy, White Catholic Boy 7. John & Rosie: White Agnostic Boy, White Catholic Girl 8. Chloe & Amy: White Catholic Girls

9. Billy & John: White Christian Boy & White Agnostic Boy	9. Jake & Marlen: White Agnostic Boy & White Christian Boy (Catholic-to-be)
10. Betty & Nicole: Mixed Race Christian Girl & Black Christian Girl	10. Adam & Jack: White Catholic Boy & Mixed Race Catholic Boy
11. Jade & Louise: White Christian Girl & White Agnostic Girl	11. James, Luke & Louise: White Christian (Non-Catholic) Boy, White Agnostic Boy, White Agnostic Girl
12. David, Jeffrey & Jonathon: Mixed Race Christian Boy, White Christian Boy, Black Christian Boy	

Composition of Child Interviews

RAINBOW HILL	HOLY CROSS
1. Jane: White Christian Agnostic Mother	1. Rachel: White Catholic Mother
2. Laura: White Christian Agnostic Mother	2. Anne: White Catholic Mother
3. Ama: Black Christian Mother	3. Margaret: White Catholic Mother
4. Brenda: White Christian Grandmother	4. Marie: White Catholic Mother
5. Mona: Asian Muslim Mother	5. Julie: White Catholic Grandmother
6. Shabina: Asian Muslim Mother	6. Janet: White Catholic Grandmother
7. Uma: Asian Sikh Mother	7. Sue & David: White Catholic Mother & Father
8. Bem: Black Muslim Father	8. Sally: White Christian (Non-Catholic) Mother
9. Hanna & Gamba: Black Pentecostal Christian Mother & Father	9. Alison: White Agnostic (Non-Catholic) Mother
10. Sarah & Paul: Black Mormon Mother & White Mormon Father	10. Carleen: Black Christian (Non-Catholic) Mother

Composition of Parent Interviews

Appendix C: Interview Schedules

School Staff Interview Schedule

1) School and classroom ethos

- Does the school have a distinctive ethos? How can it be described? How was this decided on?
- What values are promoted in school? Why these? How does this work in practice around school?
- Does the classroom have a distinctive ethos and how does this fit in with the wider school ethos? How does this work in practice?
- Are any elements of this ethos are linked to religion and spirituality? How does this work in practice?
- To what extent would you say that your own religious beliefs or values generally are integral to this?
- How can the school tell whether it's been successful in imparting values?
- How does school foster positive relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils and other pupils? Is caring important in school? Why is this important? How does this work in practice?
- In what ways do children participate in decision-making in school and the classroom?
- When children come to leave the school at the end of Year 6, what things does the school hope to have given them to take away and help them on their way?

2) School Curriculum

- What kind of RE does the school teach? Is it educational or confessional? Does it aim primarily to help pupils develop knowledge and understanding of their own faith, of other faiths, to develop spiritually as individuals, or to promote tolerance between different religions? Does it do all three?
- What role does religion and spirituality play in subjects such as art, dance, music and literacy?
- Are there any tensions between parents who might have particularly strong religious beliefs and the parts of the curriculum, such as Science and Sex & Relationships Education?

- What is the school's attitude towards teaching about different religions from a citizenship perspective? How is that achieved? Does Circle Time in the classroom have a role? Is helping children to manage their emotions an important part of this?

3) Other Practices in School

- What is the purpose of assembly/worship in school? What role does religion and spirituality have?
- Do pupils have the chance to pray, or reflect? Is music an important part of assembly?
- Are these activities compulsory? What happens if children don't want to pray/sing because they don't believe in God? How is this issue dealt with? Is this communicated to everyone or individually?
- Are there functions of assembly that are not about religion and spirituality? Community building?
- How do staff who are not religious negotiate the requirements of leading assembly?
- How does the school deal with religious difference in assembly? Do some pupils have separate arrangements? Are pupils ever withdrawn?
- Which religious festivals are celebrated in school? Does this include festivals from different religions? How does the school decide which ones?
- Which religion would you say has primacy in assembly? Do you think this is appropriate?
- How does the school cater for particular religious needs regarding food, dress and prayer provision?
- You sometimes hear in the media about tensions with parents over religious or spiritual issues in schools? Have you had any experience of such tensions? How were these resolved?

4) Community, admissions and citizenship

- What role does the school have in the community? How does this affect children in school?
- In what way is the school different to a (community/church) school?
- How do the school's selection procedures affect the spiritual and religious make-up of the school? (Is this connected to church attendance?)
- How does the school promote respect for pupils from religious minorities?

- In what ways does the school prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society and a religiously plural society?
- How is racism and differences between different faiths dealt with in the classroom and the playground? Is this a big problem? Is the management of emotions linked to this issue?
- Does the school take part in any multi-faith or interfaith work? Does the school link with other schools of different types?
- Is there any way that the current model of faith schools and community schools could be improved?

Child Interview Schedule

Introductions and names... If an alien landed in the school field tomorrow and came to meet everyone in the class, what 3 things would you tell him about yourself?

1) School and class ethos

- When I say 'School name', what are the first three words that you think of?
- What do you like about being in your school? What makes it a good school to be part of?
- Is there a school motto or saying? Do you say this often?
- Have you always been in this school, or been to another one? Was that any different?
- What do you like about being in your class? What don't you like about it?
- Do you think that your class is different to the last class you were in? What is different?
- Are there any class or school rules that you have to follow?
- Why do you think there are these rules? Do you think they are good rules? Did the class come up with the rules, or the teachers?
- Do you think the teachers are fair? Are there ever any times when they are not fair?
- What kind of things do the teachers do to care for you and make sure you are ok?
- Is there a school or class council? What kind of things does it decide?
- How much say do you think you get over what kind of things you do in the classroom?

2) Lessons, assemblies and around school

- What is your favourite subject and why? What is your least favourite subject and why?
- What do you like and dislike about RE / Religious Education?
- Do you have a religion that you would say you are? What do you do as part of this religion?
- (Have you ever talked about your own religion in RE? Did you enjoy that lesson?)
- (Do you ever talk about different religions or just Catholicism? What do you enjoy?)
- What things do you do in PSHCE and Circle Time? Do you ever learn how to get on better with different people? Do you ever talk about racism?
- Do you ever think about how different people might feel in Circle Time?
- What kind of things do you do in assemblies? What do you like and dislike about them?
- Do you ever have prayers or time to think silently? Do you like doing this? (Does this fit in with your religion/are these similar to prayers you say at home)?
- Do you like taking part in music or singing in assembly?
- How do you feel when you are praying or singing songs in the hall?
- Does everyone in school pray? What time of day do people pray? Do some children pray at different times?
- What celebrations do you have in school? Are they from different religions?
- Do some children eat different foods at lunchtime because of their religion?
- Do children wear different clothes in school because of their religion?

3) Religion and difference

- Is your family religious? What do you do as part of your religion?
- Do you think you are different to children from other religions in your school and community? In what ways? How are these other children different to you and the same?
- (Are there ever times in the school day where you take part in different activities because of your religion? How do you feel about this?)
- (Are there ever times in the school day where some children take part in different religious activities, such as first communion? How do you feel about this?)

- Do you have friends from other religions, or are your friends mainly from your own religion? Is this the same both inside and outside of school?
- Do you play with children from different religions and cultures on the playground? Are there ever times on the playground when children from the same religion or culture go off and just play together? How do you feel when they won't let you play with them?
- Have other children (outside of school) ever been unkind to you because of your religion? How did this make you feel? What did you do to make it better? Have you ever sorted out these kind of things without teachers? How did you do this?

Parents Interview Schedule

Introductions and establish how many children in school and what years etc.

1) General views on school

- Did you have a choice whether your child went to this school? Why did you decide to send your child to the school? What do you like about it?
- How does the school compare with other schools in the area? How is this school better than those?
- Did any of your friends or people you know encourage you to send your child to this school?
- What do you think about your child's teacher this year? Have you been happy?
- What events have you been to in school? What impression did you get about the school from these?
- As a parent, how much say do you feel you get over what goes on in school? What would you like more say over?
- Do you think that children get much say over what goes on in school? What's your view on this?
- Does the school have active links with the local community? Can you give examples?

2) School ethos and citizenship

- Do you think that the school gets particular values across to children? Does it help them to understand what is important in life and encourage them to do or not to do certain things? What's its *about*? Can you think of any examples of how this works in everyday school life?
- How would this compare to if they went to a (community/church) school instead?
- Who in the school do you think is most important for getting the values across to children – is it the Head, teachers, parents, children? Why do you think it's important that the school does this?
- Do you think that the school cares well for the children? Why do you think that this is important? What kind of things do they do?
- How important would you say that religion and spirituality is for what the school is about? Does the school have links with community religious organisations in your knowledge? Do they impact on admissions?
- How well do you feel that the school prepares children for life in a multicultural society and a multi-faith society?
- Are you aware of any tensions or bullying between different religious or ethnic groups in the school or outside of school, or do children get on well with pupils from other cultures and religions? What about outside of school?
- How does the school deal with bullying generally (including above)? Any examples?
- When your child has finished school at the end of Year 6, what would you like them to take away with them? What skills or outlooks on life are most important for you?

3) Religion & Spirituality in School

- Have you ever been to a school assembly? What kind of things happen in assemblies at the school? Is there any religious or spiritual aspect to the assembly? What is your opinion about this?
- Do you know if the school celebrates festivals from different cultures? Do you agree with that?
- Which subjects in school would you say deal with the area of religion? How about spirituality?
- Do you think the school is effective in helping your child to understand their own religion more in the classroom? How about other children's religions?

- Is there anything that the school could improve about its teaching of religion or spirituality?
- Are there any areas of the curriculum that clash with your own religious beliefs, such as Science or Sex Education for example? What about other parents that you know?
- Does the school cater for your child's religious and spiritual needs? What about uniform, dress and food requirements? How about other children's needs?
- Are there any religious needs that the school deals poorly with? How could this be improved?
- (Which religion would you say is the most important in school? How do you feel about that?)

4) Religion at Home

- How would you describe your own faith or religion? How actively religious would you say you were?
- How did this affect your choice of school? (Would you go to a minority faith school if one was available?)
- What kind of school did you go to? Do you think this has affected your views about schooling?
- Do your children go to other supplementary religious schooling, or spiritual/religious activities?
- Would you say that one parent is more responsible for education and religious issues with children or both of you? Which parent is most religious? Do you try and pass your religion on to your kids?
- How does school's provision for your child's religious and spiritual development compare or link with religion/spirituality out of school?

Appendix D: Drama Vignettes

Situation 1

Leena is a Muslim and she has just started at a new school. She wears a hijab headscarf as part of her religion, and although some other girls in different classes wear them too, she is the only girl in her class that does. Another girl in the class, Gemma, has been calling Leena names, and one day she starts doing it again in the dinner queue. Ben is also standing in the queue and he hears Gemma making fun of Leena's headscarf while they are waiting to get served dinner. What should Ben do next? What should Leena and Gemma do next?

Situation 2

Gurdas, Nivair and Jinesh all have families who originally came from the same country, and because their families are friends, they see each other a lot both inside and outside of school. During lunchtime, the three boys usually play games with other children from the class on the school playground. One day, Gurdas, Nivair and Jinesh get out onto the playground a little bit early and start to play a game that they play together outside of school. When other children try to join in, they won't let them, because they say that the game is from their culture and nobody else knows how to play it properly. The other children in the class think this isn't fair, but whatever they say, the boys won't let them play. What should the children do?

Situation 3

Jasmine likes assembly in school because she enjoys singing songs and (reflection time/prayers), where she gets to (think quietly/talk to God) about what has been said in assembly. One day, the assembly is about remembering people who have died in recent wars. Jasmine feels quite upset when she hears the story of another girl in the school who had an uncle that died in the war in Afghanistan. She is trying to (reflect/pray) silently when David and Robert start messing around behind her. Jasmine turns around to ask them to stop but they won't. She tries to ignore them but they are really stopping her from thinking, and the teachers sitting around the hall are glaring at all of them. What should the children do next?

Appendix E: Visual Methods Analysis Grids

Mr and Little Miss Religious Analysis Grid

Name	Ethnicity	Religion	Mr/Ms	Appearance

Attire	Objects	Buildings	Behaviours

Special Places Analysis Grid

Name	Gender	Place	Activities	Who With	Feelings	Code

Appendix F: Research Information Sheets

School Information Sheet

Thank you for your interest in this research project. All the data will be treated in the strictest confidence and we will ensure the anonymity of all of the schools, pupils, teachers and families involved in this research during the analysis and reporting of the project.

1) What are the research questions?

- How do children experience and negotiate their religious and spiritual lives in the spaces of the school? How do their understandings and meanings differ (or not) from adults?
- How does the school interpret guidance on religious and spiritual issues from government and/or religious bodies and put these into practice on the ground?
- What role do parents think the school has in relation to religion and spirituality? How does this fit in to wider social values?
- How do these three elements compare and what are the implications for the role of the school in society with regard to spirituality and religion?
- The above four questions will be considered in relation to the following themes: school ethos; curriculum; collective worship and festivals; spiritual and special places; religious identity and cultural difference; community and citizenship.

2) What methods will be used?

- Observation: of school and child practices such as RE and PSHCE teaching; assembly; playground; dinner hall etc.
- 10-12 paired interviews with children: to discuss experiences of spirituality, religion and some of the practices observed in school (preferably pupils from different backgrounds).
- 10-12 interviews with parents about how they see the role of the school (not in school time but help with contacting them would be useful).
- An activity day aimed at accessing some of children's deeper understandings, including drawing, drama and story: this would be conducted by the researcher
- Interviews with the class teacher, Head Teacher and RE co-ordinator about school practices.

3) What preparation would be required?

- A letter would need to go out to parents a few weeks before the research begins, with a generic 'opt-out' for parents who didn't want their children to be involved in interviews, or their work from the research activity day to be analysed.
- A second letter would need to be sent to parents in the school asking for family volunteers for the research (this would be produced by the researcher).
- On the first day, it will be necessary some time presenting the research to the children and giving out leaflets with child-friendly language explaining the study. They will be asked to consent or not at the end of the day. This would be a fully interactive process.

4) How would the school benefit?

- The researcher would be able to work as a teaching assistant during numeracy and literacy lessons – he is a qualified primary teacher with CRB disclosure
- The school would receive a report of the results of the study.
- Children will be engaged in research methods that have generic educational value e.g. group work and communication, as well as contributing to PSHCE and RE curriculum.

Child Information Sheet

N.B. The original information sheets contained pictures and cartoons but these have been removed for copyright reasons.

For the next few weeks I will be carrying out a research project in your school about your experiences of different parts of school life such as assembly, lessons, and around the school, as well as your ideas about religion.

The project will involve watching what is going on in school and taping conversations with some children in Year 4 and 5. There will also be some activities to help me understand more about your ideas about religion and how you make decisions in difficult situations in school.

You can choose if you would like to be involved in the taped conversations and if you don't want me to use any of your work from the activity day then that is ok.

I will ask you to read through a sheet of paper with me and write your name at the bottom if you agree to take part in the research. You can ask me questions about the project at any time.

What will I be looking at?

- Assemblies and celebrations
- Religious Education (RE) and Circle Time
- Around the school generally

What will I be asking about in taped conversations?

- What do you like and dislike about your school and class?
- What do you think about assemblies?
- What do you like and dislike about RE and other lessons?
- Do you take part in religious activities away from school?
- What do you know about children from other religions and cultures in your school and local area? How are you the same and how are you different?

It's up to you whether you want to take part in a taped conversation. I will ask you to talk to me with a partner, but I won't be able to talk to everyone.

Nothing you say in the conversations will be passed on to anyone else unless I think you are in any kind of danger. If your comments are written in my final research report, I will change your name so that no one will know it was you who said them.

What activities will we be doing?

- Designing a Mr. Religious or Little Miss Religious character and making up a short story on a storyboard.
- Working in groups to act out a short drama about the decisions you make in difficult situations in the playground or around school.
- Photographing special places around school (children who are taking part in the taped conversations).

I will ask you for permission to borrow your work for a while to take home and look at. You do not have to let me use your work if you don't want to.

I will also ask for permission to copy your work in case I need to include some pictures in magazines or books about the research.

Parent Information Sheet1) What is the research about?

- The research is interested in the role that religion and spirituality plays in the primary school, and how important it is for children, parents and teachers.
- The researcher will be looking at, and thinking about the following areas:
 - School ethos, or the 'feel' of the school
 - Lessons in the classroom
 - Assemblies and celebrations
 - Special places in the playground
 - Religious identity and experiences
 - The school community and wider community

2) What research methods will be used in the project?

- The researcher will be watching school lessons, assembly, lunchtime and the playground.
- There will be taped conversations with 10-12 pairs of children about their experiences in school.
- There will be taped conversations with 10-12 parents about their views.
- The researcher will interview teachers and the Head Teacher.
- There will be some drawing, story and drama activities with the children.

3) What questions will be included in the parent interviews?

- Your reasons for choosing the school, what you like about it, and the overall feel to the school.
- Your own religious beliefs and identity and how this links to your choice of school.
- Your opinions about school lessons and the place of religion & spirituality in them.
- Your experiences and views about religion & spirituality outside of the classroom, such as assemblies and festivals.
- Your views about the role of the school in the community and how well it provides for the needs of different children.

Appendix G: Consent Forms

School Consent Form

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We have received a leaflet about the research project and have been given the chance to ask any questions. 		Yes / No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We have viewed the children's consent form and are satisfied that children have been given full information about the project, as well as chances to ask questions. It has been made clear that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the research at any time. 		Yes / No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are satisfied that parents have been given the chance to withdraw their children from certain parts of the research and that these wishes have been respected. 		Yes / No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are aware that participants who take part in the study and the school itself will receive full anonymity in any write-ups or reports. 		Yes / No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We give permission for the project to take place in school as set out in the information leaflet. 		Yes / No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We give permission for any work children produce as part of the project, such as their drawings and photographs (these will NOT include children's faces) to be borrowed for analysis and we give permission for this work to be reproduced in academic publications subject to permission from the child in question. 		Yes / No

Signed:

Head Teacher..... Date.....

Class Teacher..... Date.....

Researcher..... Date.....

Adult Consent Form

Contact Information: Peter Hemming

School of Geography
 School of Sociology & Social Policy
 University of Leeds
 Woodhouse Lane
 Leeds LS2 9JT

Please check the following points and circle 'yes' or 'no' for each

• Have you read the research information sheet?	Yes / No
• Have you had chance to ask any questions about the study?	Yes / No
• Are you satisfied that you have enough information about the research?	Yes / No
• Do you understand that you are free to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time, without giving a reason?	Yes / No
• Do you understand that all data obtained will be held in strictest confidence and if it is used in reports or publications, all personal details will be removed?	Yes / No
• Are you aware that you may ask to see transcripts of the interview at a later date and alter them if you wish to?	Yes / No
• Do you agree to take part in the research interview?	

Signatures Date

Names

Researcher Signature Date

Child Consent Form

Please fill in this sheet to show you understand what the research is about and how you will be involved in it. I would be very grateful if you decide to take part.

Please check the following sentences and tick in the box if they are true:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I have listened to the talk about what the project is about and how I will be involved. I have also received a leaflet about it. ▪ I have had a chance to ask questions about the project and I know that I can ask more questions at any time. ▪ I understand that if I decide to take part in the taped conversations, I may stop it at any time without giving a reason. I know that I do not have to answer questions if I don't want to. ▪ I understand that if I decide to take part in the taped conversation my name will be changed so no one will know it was me who took part in it. I also know that the researcher will not tell anyone at school what I said unless he feels that I am in any kind of danger. ▪ I know that any of my work that the researcher borrows will be looked after and returned to me a few weeks afterwards. 	
<p>Please decide if you agree with the following things and circle yes or no:</p>	
<p>1) Do you agree to take part in the research project?</p>	<p>Yes / No</p>
<p>2) Are you happy for your work from the activities to be borrowed so that the researcher can look at it?</p>	<p>Yes / No</p>
<p>3) Would you like to be considered as one of the children to take part in a taped conversation?</p>	<p>Yes / No</p>
<p>4) Would you be happy for any of your work or pictures to be published in a magazine, booklet, or book?</p>	<p>Yes / No</p>

Name..... Date.....

Religion

Parent Consent Letter

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The school will be taking part in a research project on Religion and Spirituality in the School from Monday 1st October until the end of the Autumn term. Our involvement is through the University of Leeds and the project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The researcher, Peter Hemming, is a former primary school teacher, and will be based in Class ***. He has a full police check and will be working as a classroom volunteer for 3 days a week.

As part of the project, Peter will be watching what kind of things happen in lessons, assembly, lunch time and the playground, and will be talking to some of the children on tape about their experiences of religion and spirituality in school. He will also be carrying out a few activities with the class, such as drawing and drama, as part of the normal school day.

Your child may be involved in the project, but they do not have to take part in taped conversations if they do not want to. Any children who do talk to Peter, will have their names changed in any final reports in order to protect their identity. If any of their work from the activities such as drawings are published, they will not include any names of children for the same reason.

If you are unhappy with your child talking to Peter on tape, or any of your child's work being used for the research, please return the below slip by Monday 1st October. If you need to know any more information about the project, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Sincerely,

-
- I do not wish my child's comments to be taped as part of the project
 - I would not like information from my child's work to be used in the final report
 - I would not like my child's work from the activities to be published in books/reports

Child's Name.....

Signed.....

Date.....

Appendix H: Associated Publications

The attached publication includes a number of sections derived from Chapter 3 of this thesis, albeit with empirical data taken from another research project to support the methodological arguments made.

Hemming, P.J. (2008). Mixing qualitative research methods in children's geographies. *Area*, 40(2), 152-162.

Mixing qualitative research methods in children's geographies

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Revised manuscript received 17 October 2007

Human geographers are increasingly employing mixed-method approaches in their research, including in children's geographies, where 'child-centred' methods are often used alongside participant observation and semi-structured interviews to investigate children's perceptions and experiences. Mixing qualitative methods in this way raises a number of ethical and methodological issues, particularly regarding the changing power relationships between researchers and participants. This article considers the challenges and potential benefits of combining methods from participatory and interpretive approaches through triangulation or 'crystallisation'. The issues are illustrated through an empirical case study on children, health and exercise in the everyday spaces of the primary school.

Key words: qualitative, mixed-method, children, research, triangulation, United Kingdom

Introduction

In human geography, mixed method approaches are increasingly being used to research a wide range of topics (e.g. Bradshaw *et al.* 2001; Madsen and Adriansen 2004; Winchester 1999). Although many of the associated methodological discussions focus on the challenges of combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, the mixing of various interpretive and participatory methods also raises key ethical and methodological issues for researchers. These issues are of current importance to researchers in children's geographies, where 'child-centred' methods are often used in tandem with techniques such as participant observation and semi-structured interviews to capture the complexity and diversity of children's values, perceptions and experiences (e.g. Langevang 2007; Leyshon 2002; Rawlins 2006). In employing such a mixed-method qualitative approach, however, children's geographers often fail to recognise the resultant myriad of shifting power relations between the adult researcher and the child participant. It is therefore important that we reflect on some of the issues that arise for both the researcher

and the research participants when combining methods in this way, as well as the potential benefits of using mixed methods. This undertaking will be useful not only for children's geographers, but also human geographers generally and researchers in other disciplines who wish to make use of mixed-method qualitative approaches.

In this article, I will begin by outlining the nature of power in social research with children, followed by an exploration of the different power dynamics between adult researchers and child participants in ethnographic participant observation, semi-structured interviews and participatory child-centred methods. I will then briefly discuss the concept of triangulation or 'crystallisation', before exploring some of the issues in more depth through reference to an empirical case study on research into children's perceptions of health, sport and active play in the spaces of the primary school. In the conclusion, I will argue that mixing qualitative methods can be beneficial for gaining deeper and more complex understandings of social processes, but that a reflexive approach is required in order to deal with the challenges of combining different methodological approaches.

Power and 'crystallisation' in research with children

Social research with children has tended to 'position' children in different roles as part of the research process, based on particular cultural assumptions about their levels of competence, vulnerability and powerlessness in society (see Christensen and Prout 2002; Morrow and Richards 1996). However, Christensen reminds us that

in the process of research, power moves between different actors and different social positions, it is produced and negotiated in the social interactions of child to adult, child to child and adult to adult in the local settings of the research. (2004, 175)

In other words, power is actually about the process of research and the continually shifting power relations between researcher and research subject. In order to understand these effectively, it is necessary to consider carefully what we actually mean by 'adult researcher' and 'child participant' in different contexts, and to examine the fluid nature of power relations in constructing knowledge using particular research methods. In this section, I will explore these issues in relation to three different research methods: participant observation, semi-structured interviews and 'child-centred' methods, before considering how the methods might usefully be combined using triangulation or 'crystallisation'.

Ethnographic participant observation

Brewer defines ethnography as

the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally. (2000, 6)

Participant observation therefore involves the researcher immersing his or herself in the social setting and recording through field notes and 'thick description' (Geertz 1973), interesting observations about the area of study (Pole and Morrison 2003). The approach is, however, internally diverse and its various versions have been influenced by positivism, humanism, realism and postmodernism. For example, in the model of humanistic ethnographic research, the researcher seeks to accurately reproduce the views of the 'insider' or the 'other' (Brewer 2000). In contrast, postmodern

ethnography insists that reality is constructed through the process of participation and research, rather than merely being 'out there' to collect (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995).

Central to participant observation is the development of relationships between researcher and participants, through everyday events and interaction (Burgess 1984; Van Maanen 1988). In the case of research with children, ethnographers have in the past attempted to remove power differences in these relationships by trying to 'blend in' with children's worlds (e.g. see Mandell 1991). Increasingly, however, the complexities of the power relations between adult ethnographers and child participants are being accepted as inevitable and unavoidable (James 2001). Instead, researchers are adopting a reflexive approach to ethnographic research with children, including considering their own role in the field and its impact on children's everyday worlds (see Emond 2005). This has included the practice of adopting semi-adult roles such as 'adult friend' (see Fine and Sandstrom 1988) in order to reduce power disparities, while still accepting their existence. Despite these different strategies, power relations between adults and children are always in continual flux in the field. Corsaro (2003) discovered this when he was asked by a teacher to carry out the job of 'toilet monitor' and had to find a way to persuade a class of children to follow his instructions when they refused to recognise him as an adult with authority.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews can be defined as 'conversations with a purpose' (Burgess 1984 in Mason 2002), and generally start from a number of predetermined questions or topics, but then adopt a flexible approach for discussion with the interviewee. Kvale argues that

the qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the subjects' points of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations. (1996, 1)

As with ethnography, the approach is internally diverse and has been influenced by a variety of philosophical traditions. More recently, postmodernism has influenced a conception of the research interview as an active social encounter, where knowledge is constructed through the interaction of interviewer and interviewee (Holstein and Gubrium 1995; Kvale 1996).

The relationship between the researcher and the participant is considered just as important in semi-structured interviewing as in ethnography (see Oakley 1981) and its significance has increased following the acknowledgement that the data itself is constructed as a result of this relationship. Power is again under the spotlight, particularly in the case of research with children, where culturally constructed power differentials are usually present. Like in ethnography, researchers have attempted to find techniques to lessen these differentials, while still acknowledging their presence. Aware of the uneven power relations in her own research, for example, Mayall (2000) developed a technique of 'research conversations', where children chose partners to be interviewed with, giving them more confidence to make inputs into the interview agenda. Similarly, Westcote and Littleton (2005) discuss the need to empower children during interviews so as to avoid the usual model of teacher initiation–child response–teacher feedback process that children expect from adults. Again, these power relations are not fixed but constantly changing in the spaces of the research. Christensen (2004) reports how, in her taped interviews with children, they would often disrupt the normal power relations of the interview by grabbing the tape recorder and asking her questions.

Participatory 'child-centred' methods

Participatory research is effectively a hybrid of different research methods that have been developed for diverse purposes (Pretty *et al.* 1995). Kemmis and McTaggart (2003) characterise such research as practical, collaborative and emancipatory. Pain argues that 'participatory approaches lend themselves to research where people's relations with and accounts of space, place and environment are of central interest' (2004, 653), so highlighting their suitability for research in social geography, particularly in giving voice to marginal groups and challenging social exclusion. Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) emphasise the way that participatory research works much more as a 'bottom-up' process, with participants contributing their own local priorities and perspectives.

Pain and Francis (2003) make the distinction between 'participatory diagramming', which involves the use of participatory methods of data generation, and 'participatory approaches', which aim to transform power relations between researchers and participants. In participatory research on children and childhoods, this concept has been illustrated through the idea of rungs on a ladder, with each rung indicating

more involvement and participation for children (Hart 1992 cited in Alderson 2000, 248). At one end of the continuum is the use of creative 'child-centred' research methods. These methods are generally aimed at reconstituting power relations between adult researchers and child participants at the data generation phase. Veale (2005) defines creative methods as 'those that draw on inventive and imaginative processes, such as storytelling, drama and drawing' (2005, 254).

Some participatory methods go beyond child-centred methods however, by involving children in different parts of the research process. Alderson (2000) points out that children have extensive experience of undertaking small research projects at school, and there are examples of studies where children have been involved in different stages of the research process such as planning, analysis and dissemination (e.g. Jones *et al.* 2002; Jones 2004). These situations require the researcher to adopt a new role, involving the development of new skills in order to manage and facilitate the research (see, for example, Boog 2003; Cornwall and Jewkes 1995; Chataway 1997). For O'Kane (2000), participatory techniques with children imply a more defined relationship between researcher and research subject, a more delineated time period and a more transparent process than in ethnographic research. They therefore offer greater potential for a destabilisation of adult–child power relations than in ethnographic or semi-structured interview research.

Triangulation and 'crystallisation'

Triangulation is a technique that emerged as a response to criticism of qualitative approaches from positivist researchers, particularly the charge that such approaches lack appropriate validity (see Blaikie 2000). The concept draws on the metaphor from surveying and navigating, where a single unknown location is found at the point where the trajectories from three known locations meet (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). Denzin (1989) argued that using triangulation could improve the validity of research findings by directing a range of different methods at the same problem, and checking whether or not they all returned similar results. This conception of triangulation has been criticised by writers such as Flick (2002), who points out that different methods have developed from different ontological and epistemological traditions and so cannot necessarily be used together to investigate the same dimension of a problem. Richardson (1994) adds a postmodern

twist to this, arguing that because of the constructed nature of reality, any employment of mixed methods can only ever produce a partial view of the research topic. She prefers the use of the term 'crystallisation', rather than triangulation, in order to recognise that there are more than three sides to the world, and that mixing methods can only produce a deeper and more complex view of the issue under investigation, rather than improve validity.

Darbyshire *et al.* (2005) consider whether or not using 'crystallisation' does in practice offer deeper insights and increased complexity by reference to an empirical study on children and physical activity in place and space. They found that the different data methods of focus group interviews, mapping and photography actually worked to complement each other and build up a more holistic picture of children's perspectives, rather than merely duplicate findings. For example, some important physical activities for children were only identified in certain methods and children's feelings and emotions were better represented in some sets of data than others. In contrast, researchers may find that data generated through the use of different research methods actually contradict, rather than complement each other. Instead of viewing this as a negative feature of using mixed methods, the scenario offers an opportunity to better understand the complexities of social life, and avoid the presentation of 'easy' conclusions that 'gloss over' some of the hidden difficulties that mixed methods may reveal. It may also point to the need for further research that attempts to untangle some of the multifaceted social processes revealed in the original study.

Combining participant observation and semi-structured interviews in research with children is a good way of working towards the aim of 'crystallisation', as it allows the researcher to investigate both the 'doing' and how children represent these 'doings' through talk. Both data types are co-produced and constructed actively through the relationships between researcher and participant (Atkinson and Coffey 2003). Adding the extra perspective of participatory 'child-centred' methods potentially brings more of children's own priorities and interpretations to the data, particularly if they are involved in the planning, analysis and representation stage of the research. In the next section, I explore how combining these three methods worked out in practice as part of an empirical research study, particularly in terms of the changing power relations between adult researcher and child participants, and the ways in

which the different data sets both complemented and contradicted each other.

Mixing qualitative methods in practice

The research project in question aimed to investigate health and exercise in the everyday spaces of a UK primary school (see also Hemming 2007). Participants were aged 9–10 years and the mixed methods included ethnographic observation and interview techniques, which focused particularly on the children's experiences, as well as 'child-centred' participatory methods, which were aimed more at exploring the children's values. The observation took place over a full-time period of three weeks and included spending time with children in both the classroom and the playground. In the classroom, I worked as a general helper, observing lessons and responding to children's queries and requests for help with their schoolwork, while on the playground I tended to wander around watching the activities and chatting informally to the children. The semi-structured interviews were adapted to make them short in length and included visual images to stimulate the children's ideas. Participants were interviewed in pairs (chosen by the children) and they were given traffic light cards to control the progress of the interviews, with red indicating 'stop', amber 'short pause' and green 'go' (see Alderson and Morrow 2004). Alongside these more traditional techniques, two specifically designed creative 'child-centred' methods were used to investigate the children's perceptions of 'healthy' and 'unhealthy'. All three of the different data sets were analysed thematically (see Attridge-Stirling 2001), to allow them to be integrated more easily at the level of explanation (see Mason 2002).

The first 'child-centred' activity was an individual drawing task based on methods from Wetten and McWhirter (1998) and Burrows and Wright (2004) but was given a different twist by using the popular 'Mr. Men' and 'Little Miss' children's book series by Roger Hargreaves as a stimulus. The children were asked to draw a picture of a 'Mr. Healthy' and 'Mr. Unhealthy' or the 'Little Miss' equivalents and included a picture of the character, a setting and associated objects around the picture, and written labels to clarify the content of the drawings. For the second activity, the children were asked to work in groups of their own choosing to think about the five most important places in the school that were 'healthy' and five most important places that were 'unhealthy'.

The children were then asked to take photographs of each place using disposable cameras and then record their reasoning for the choices of the group, as well as an adjective to describe the photograph. This was an attempt to involve children in the initial analysis of the data. The activity was based on ideas from Scratz and Steiner-Loffler (1998), although with a different subject focus. These methods did involve children more in the data collection stage, but were not fully participatory at the other stages of the research. This was mainly due to the practical and time constraints of undertaking a small-scale research project, as well as the inherent difficulties in involving children from schools in planning and dissemination, such as the nature of the research planning process and gaining access through gatekeepers (see Pole *et al.* 1999).

Changing power relations

The data generation stage was the main point at which the three research methods met and where the different relationships between the children and myself had to be negotiated. Maintaining a mainly passive participant observer role in the classroom (see, for example, Corsaro 2003), building up close research relationships with the children in order to facilitate relaxed interviews (see, for example, Mayall 2000) and adopting a coordinating role in order to facilitate and manage the children during 'child-centred' methods (see, for example, O'Kane 2000) are all very different. The latter role in particular seemed to be incompatible with the other methods. Aware of the difficulties of juggling these dual roles, I felt it would be most appropriate to carry out observation and interviews *before* the 'child-centred' activities. I hoped that this would help to avoid the more authoritative coordinator role undermining my efforts to observe the children in their everyday contexts or to encourage the children to feel relaxed and comfortable talking to me during interviews.

During the participant observation, considerable time was spent helping in the class so that the children would feel comfortable around me, partly in preparation for the interviews, and also to reduce the impact of my presence on the children's usual behaviour. Anxious to avoid being seen as a teacher, I deliberately dressed more casually than the teachers in the school and tried to distance myself from any situations where I might have been required to express any authority. The outcomes of this approach were illustrated through the way that children in the class asked me to take part in their playground

games, such as skipping, and felt able to confide in me, for example regarding issues of bullying that were already being handled by the school. It also provided a space in the semi-structured interviews that enabled the children to express their views and opinions. During the interviews, children felt able to use short conversations between themselves in order to move the interview on in creative ways, thus disrupting the usual model of adult-directed interaction in school.

INTERVIEWER: Why don't you play [football] as much as the boys do, do you think?

FLEUR: 'Cos they're boys

ZOE: I do like football

FLEUR: And they like football, and like girls don't. They like make-up and stuff

INTERVIEWER: OK

ZOE: I do play a lot of football with my friends, like friends

FLEUR: Yeah but that's only to attract the boys

ZOE: (laughs) No it's not

FLEUR: That's what some people thought

Once the ethnographic part of the fieldwork and the interviews had been completed, I was able to switch roles for the 'child-centred' activities into a research facilitator. The new role was necessarily more authoritative than the role I adopted for the ethnographic part of the study, as it involved managing a class of almost 30 children to successfully carry out a range of practical tasks both in the classroom and around the school. The decision to separate the two parts of the fieldwork in this way proved to be necessary when, during the 'child-centred' activities, one of the children in the class asked me whether or not I was a teacher. I replied truthfully that I had been in the past, although my admission came after all the interviews were finished, thus avoiding any possibility that this would affect the interview data.

Negotiating the two different roles during the data generation phase was not just about timing. Connolly (2008) has written about how his status as a white male adult in a primary school, populated mainly with children and female teachers, impacted upon the network of power relations in the research space. He explores the way that children in his study responded to his social identity by, for example, sexualising conversations, and renegotiating their culturally ascribed subject status as powerless and incompetent children (see also Corsaro 2003). Masculinity was also central to the way that power

relations between the children and myself were played out in the different research methods used. I found that the observer, interviewer and participatory researcher roles all required different ways of presenting myself, and actually constituted different ways of 'performing' my masculinity. If gender can be viewed as something that an individual *does*, my masculine identity during fieldwork can also be understood as an embodied performance (see Butler 1990; McDowell and Court 1994).

Vanderbeck (2005) discusses some of the issues confronting male researchers who do not conform to dominant masculine ideals, including the way that masculine identities may come under scrutiny by research participants. As someone who also fails to identify with many of the hegemonic expectations of masculinity, I experienced similar scrutiny during the ethnographic research from many of the boys in the class who were shocked that I didn't support a football team and took a rather dismissive attitude towards me after discovering this. On the other hand, I was much more comfortable and relaxed adopting this role in the school context and believe that my 'softer' masculine identity in some ways helped to build up more positive research relationships with the children during interviews, although girls were often much more forthcoming than boys. Taking on the role of facilitator of group activities during the 'child-centred' research resulted in a very different performance of masculinity however. Coordinating a large class of children during group activities requires a certain amount of authoritativeness, and the more hegemonic 'masculine' characteristics that I was required to demonstrate resulted in a more positive response from most of the boys in the class, particularly during the photography activity.

Adopting a more authoritarian role during the 'child-centred' research methods also raised other power issues in the context of the classroom, within implicit discourses of education and schooling. David *et al.* (2001) outline how their attempts to give children the opportunity for informed consent in a classroom context resulted in reinforcing unequal adult-child power relations through their use of implicit pedagogic techniques. While this example also refers to the debate over whether children can 'consent' or merely 'assent' in social research (e.g. see Valentine 1999; Cocks 2006), it also highlights some of the power issues that may arise when participatory researchers work in institutional contexts. During the study, I did not see how the participatory child-centred methods were particularly more empow-

ering for the children than the adapted ethnographic and interview techniques, precisely because of my more authoritarian role. Although this perception may have been affected by the lack of children's involvement in other stages of the research process, I found that the 'child-centred' methods were merely a different way of co-producing data with children than the ethnographic and interview techniques. It was therefore a case of different forms of, rather than different levels of, participation for children.

Complementary and contradictory data

Integrating three data sets through 'crystallisation' potentially offers a more complex perspective on a problem, but data gathered from different methods may be complementary or contradictory, and in the case study, there were examples of both of these scenarios. Standing alone, the 'child-centred' methods indicated that children drew clear distinctions between 'healthy' as positive and 'unhealthy' as negative. For example, 'Little Miss Healthy' and 'Mr. Healthy' for children showed positive physical and mental attributes such as smiles, thin or strong bodies and pretty or trendy clothes, hair and jewellery (see also Burrows and Wright 2004). Similarly, 'healthy places' identified included places where sport and games took place, such as the playground, where healthy food was eaten, or places associated with nature, fresh air and open spaces, such as the garden and field (see Figure 1). Healthiness was thus viewed as a positive virtue that reflected other positive aspects of an individual's personality, or as something connected with the 'rural idyll', where nature is associated with children's health (see Jones 1997).

In contrast, 'Little Miss Unhealthy' and 'Mr. Unhealthy' displayed lazy, untidy and dirty personal attributes such as smelly bodies, stained clothes and messy houses. Similarly, 'unhealthy places' included sites for eating unhealthy foods or doing sedentary activities, and places such as dusty store cupboards, smelly bins and dirty toilets (see Figure 2). The emphasis placed on dirt links with Sibley's (1995) observations on exclusion. He argues that

exclusionary discourse draws particularly on colour, disease, animals, sexuality and nature, but they all come back to the idea of dirt as a signifier of imperfection and inferiority. (1995, 14)

'Unhealthiness' was thus viewed as a 'negative' individual personality trait, and unhealthy people as 'other'.



Figure 1 Healthy people and places

Figure 2 Unhealthy people and places

In some ways, the interviews and observations were able to show how children's everyday experiences helped to reinforce their perception of 'healthy' as positive, thus *complementing* the 'child-centred' methods. Children's encounters with sport, exercise and active play were often reported in the interviews as fun, pleasurable and enjoyable (see also Burrows *et al.* 1999; Mulvihill *et al.* 2000; Tuxworth 1997). My observations also confirmed the way that many of these activities were associated with enjoyment, although this was structured through factors such as gender and peer group influences. Discourses of exercise as 'fun' were often intertwined with ones of health in the interviews (see also Macdonald *et al.* 2005). This again helped to strengthen the idea of

'healthy' as a positive thing that complemented the results from the participatory 'child-centred' methods.

- INTERVIEWER: OK do you do those things because they are healthy or do you do them for another reason?
 CHLOE: I do 'em 'cos they're fun
 INTERVIEWER: OK
 YASMIN: I do them because they are healthy
 CHLOE: Well I do it because it's just kind of
 CHLOE and YASMIN: Fun

In the case of 'unhealthy', however, there was a certain amount of *contradiction* between the data



Figure 2 Unhealthy people and places

sets. In the interviews, children talked about how much they liked taking part in *unhealthy* activities such as eating sweet or fatty foods and playing sedentary video games, and some of these admissions were again backed up by my observations. Children's views on health were therefore somewhat more complex than the participatory data had indicated, because although the pictures demonstrated a good understanding of health issues, children's decisions demonstrated a clear gap between knowledge and behaviour (see also Lupton 1996; Warwick *et al.* 1999). The ethnographic and interview data showed that for children 'unhealthy' was not as negative as the 'child-centred'

visual data had suggested, so highlighting the need for both sets of data in order to reach a deeper understanding of children's ideas and perceptions.

INTERVIEWER: OK so why did you decide to watch the TV or eat chocolate?

STEVEN: 'Cos chocolate's nice

INTERVIEWER: OK

STEVEN: And TV's good

The mixed-method approach, as well as exploring both values and experiences surrounding health and exercise, actually helped to highlight some of the ways in which these values and experiences were

intertwined. Although children's experiences of sport and active play helped to reinforce their idea of 'healthy' as inherently positive, talking about their unhealthy pursuits revealed certain contradictions between their experiences of such activities and the knowledge they had accumulated inside and outside of school about 'unhealthy' as a negative concept. Using the three methods together through the technique of 'crystallisation' created a deeper and more complex understanding of the topic under investigation – something that equalled more than the sum of its parts.

Conclusion

Using mixed methods in children's geographies is an attractive pursuit, potentially providing new insights and understandings into children's worlds and the issues that affect them on a day-to-day basis. This paper has illustrated how using a combination of ethnographic participant observation, adapted semi-structured interviews and participatory 'child-centred' methods allowed for a deeper and more complex understanding of children's experiences and perceptions of health and exercise in the spaces of the primary school. On the other hand, combining methods can also raise ethical and methodological issues, particular relating to the changing power relations between the adult researcher and the child participant. In the example explored in this paper, my role as a researcher, and the way in which the children related to me, continually fluctuated as different research methods and their associated power relations intersected with each other. Each method allowed for the co-production and active construction of data in slightly different ways, with varying forms of participation for children in each case.

Focusing on the mixing of qualitative methods has also highlighted some wider issues about power and the categories of 'adult' and 'child'. The ways that power relations were continually changing, both within and between different research methods, points to the fluid nature of such power relations, and the way that power is actually constituted through relationships (see Christensen 2004; Thomson 2007). It also underlines the way that the social roles and identities of children and adults cannot be taken as given, whether in the context of geographical research, or any other social space. As Thomson argues, 'identities are multiple, fluid in nature and continually negotiated within and through space' (2007, 214), including the performed identities of children and

adults in the research space. This is something that becomes increasingly obvious through the employment of mixed methods in research with children.

As human geography begins to engage more with mixed-method approaches, researchers may well find themselves facing new ethical and methodological challenges in the field, but also opportunities to gain new understandings of their subject of inquiry. As part of this process, it is important that geographers both reflect carefully during the planning stages of their research and act reflexively in the field to overcome difficulties. Recording and documenting these decisions will not only add to the quality of research, but also offer practical advice to others who are working on similar projects. Mason (2006) offers a good general approach to mixing methods in her argument for the 'meshing' or 'linking' of data from different methods in a 'qualitatively driven way'. By valuing the creativity, richness and complexity that mixed methods bring to social research, the reflexivity and flexibility of the qualitative approach offers a framework in which to develop new and deeper explanations from a range of different research methodologies. Such innovative approaches to the mixing of methods promise human geographers the opportunity to gain new perspectives on a wide range of substantive research areas.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Robert Vanderbeck and the anonymous referees for helpful comments on earlier drafts of the article, and Gill Valentine and Sarah Irwin for their advice and support during the research project on which this article draws. I am grateful to ESRC for the opportunity to have undertaken the study. Many thanks also to all the staff and children at the case study school who contributed to the research.

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