LEADING FROM AMONG: A reflection on how Catholic School Leaders in secondary schools can be effective leaders in the light of the leadership of Jesus Christ

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ABSTRACT

Catholic schools are in great demand, but leading them is no easy feat if they are to remain distinctive to Catholic education. This study is a reflection on how Catholic school leaders in secondary schools can be effective leaders if they model their leadership on that of Jesus Christ. It is written in the context of Catholic education in Malta, where lay principals in Church schools are on the increase. The study attempts to determine the importance of distributed leadership for effective leadership, how listening can be an effective tool in leadership and how Catholic school leaders can imitate Jesus as a leader among His people. Structured interviews with two female head teachers, one lay and one religious, questionnaire responses from teachers, learning support assistants and pupils from the Student Council provide the backdrop of this study. Results of the research of the two schools under study also give an indication of how a lay principal can still maintain the distinctiveness and charisma of a Catholic Church school. Further findings will be presented and discussed. In conclusion, recommendations are made on how one of the schools can ameliorate its distributed leadership by improving middle management to enhance departmental and school effectiveness.

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Final thanks go to those who have put up with me on a daily basis: my husband, my children and my father for their kind patience and understanding. Without their help and support in a multitude of ways, this dissertation would not have materialized.

To my dear ones

My husband Alfred
My children Robert and Diane
My father Joseph

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Chapter 1 — Introduction

Aims and Objectives

> But among you it will be different.
> Whoever wants to be a leader among you
> Must be your servant.[1]

There is no better quote to introduce this dissertation which is to be written in the context of Catholic Education.

My aim is twofold: to analyse the term 'community of leaders' and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of distributing leadership across a secondary school and to understand how leadership can be modelled on that of Jesus Christ.

In order to achieve this aim, I intend to work through the following objectives:

1. To review the different types of leadership.

2. To examine the roles of the headteacher, assistant head, teachers and LSAs.[2]

3. To examine the importance of *listening* as a means of communication.

4. To study Jesus as a leader among His people.

Rationale

As a member of the SMT[3] in a Church school, I feel that the concept of Catholic Education and leadership is worthy of study since, in Malta, Church schools with lay head teachers are on the increase. This could be because of either lack of suitable

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[1] Matthew 20:26
[2] LSA meaning Learning Support Assistant
[3] SMT meaning Senior Management Team

applicants within the religious communities or because of the decrease in the number of people entering these communities. I write this dissertation as a recently appointed assistant head of a girls' secondary school where I have been teaching for thirty five years. Throughout these long years, I have applied the principles of teaching and have gained a good understanding of the students' need. I have had a passion and vision for Catholic Education since then and still have.

Having been brought up and taught in one of the schools under study, I feel I lack ways and means of how to pass on to others the distinctiveness of a Catholic Church school. This is the reason for my enrolment in the CSL[4] course. The studies that I have followed in this course has helped me to keep focused on Catholic Education and has prepared me further as a Catholic school leader. In addition, I believe that the results of the research carried out in the two schools, St Martha and St Jude may contribute to the improvement of the schools.

The National Context

> The roots of the term 'Church Schools' are to be found far back to the old days; indeed even as old as the history of modern civilisation. Teaching, education and culture were, for long centuries after the Fall of the Roman Empire, imparted solely by the monastic Orders.[5]

This fact is also true for Malta. In fact, in the same book, Father D. Scerri refers to Mgr. A. Mifsud who states that members of religious Orders have taught in their monasteries as far back as the 13th century. Before the arrival of the Knights of St John in 1530, there was already a school in Mdina run by the Cathedral which had Augustinian and Carmelite religious as teachers. Then during the last five years of

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[4] CSL meaning Catholic School Leadership
[5] Scerri D., *The Saga of the Church Schools in Malta,* p. 13, (2000)

the 16th century, the Jesuits opened a college in Valletta, the capital city of Malta while in the beginning of the 17th century, it was the Dominicans who opened a convent in Valletta. This meant the foundation of a new school.

So until the beginning of the 19th century, education in Malta was in the hands of the religious.

> By the time the British set foot in Malta in the beginning of the 19th century, apart from having our own University which knew its origin to the Jesuits, all primary and secondary education was practically run by religious and diocesan priests who took great care to assure the best possible standards of instruction.[6]

Education in Malta flourished considerably after the arrival of the British. They opened what are known as 'popular schools' which gave rise to government schools as we know them today. Yet Church schools still kept operating and were still in great demand.

The birth of St Martha and St Jude, the two schools under study, took place in the middle of the 19th century when their Foundress was caught in a storm which forced her to Malta. She was on her way to Algiers in 1858. St Martha initially opened in Valletta but in the early 1960's eventually moved to its present position to a much larger and more modern school. St Jude was opened in 1856 in another locality north of the island. In the meantime other female religious gave, and still offer valid and sterling contribution to education.

No Maltese can deny the Church's contribution to Catholic Education. Although they enjoy a considerable amount of autonomy, Catholic Church schools in Malta have to abide by the official Education Act and the National Minimum Curriculum. There is,

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[6] Ibid p. 16

however, the Secretariat for Catholic Education that is part of the Maltese Roman Catholic Church organisation and administration. Although this entity, to a certain extent, monitors what goes on within Church schools, the latter are still self-governing.[7]

The Local Context

St. Martha is a girls' secondary Church school located in the south east of Malta, an island in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. Presently there are 394 students on roll, 37 teachers, 12 learning support assistants and 20 students as members of the school council. The headteacher is a religious. It is essentially a non-pluralistic school because less than one percent is non-Catholic. The girls, whose ages vary from eleven years to sixteen years, are of mixed ability with no streaming in the classes. They come from all spheres of life burdened with all their attributes and problems. Only two percent of the pupils have some degree of special education needs and these are usually catered for by the learning support assistants.

The mission statement of the school is:

> Inspired by Gospel values and the teachings of St. (Martha), our school aims at creating a team of dedicated professionals to give our girls a holistic education, developing their individual, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, creative and physical potential to the full, in the knowledge that such gifts come from a loving God who asks us to use them for our good and that of others.[8]

The school motto is *Believe and Achieve.*

The 2008 non-state school section report stated that St. Martha boasts an excellent safe, welcoming and technology friendly school environment which is fundamental

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[7] Cauchi Cuschieri R., *Looking Through The Eyes of The Leader,* in *Educational Leadership:nurturing meaning in a context of change,* p. 133, (2009)

[8] School Staff Handbook

to a modern dynamic learning organisation. This is achieved thanks to all the members of the staff (teaching and non-teaching) for their dedication in giving all students the care and support needed to progress in a holistic manner. The team of inspectors commented favourably on the spotless and attractive school environment, the newly refurbished library, the well equipped Science and Computer laboratories and the Media room. They were highly impressed with the sense of dedication and attention to detail which each member of the staff was giving for the benefit of the students in order to achieve the noble aim of a holistic education in a pleasant way.

An open type of servant leadership is made use of even though in the end leadership is focused on the Headteacher who is the main decision-maker in the school. The senior management team also consists of two assistant head teachers who manage the day to day running of the school. Middle management functions informally while planning of the curriculum is usually the job of the senior subject teachers there being no official subject coordinators. During the course of this study I will be checking how effective leaders of the school can be while working with such a system.

St Jude is another girls' secondary Church School forming part of the group of schools of the same congregation as that of St Martha. It is, however, located more to the north of the island. There are 283 students on roll with only 4 students being non-Catholic. 26 of the students have a learning disability that allows them some form of access conditions for exams with 17 of them being statemented to receive help from an LSA. There are 31 teachers, 9 LSAs and 13 student council members. The headteacher is lay.

The mission statement and motto are identical to that of St Martha. Both schools are bound by the same Charter and have the same board of governors. There is no difference whatsoever between St Martha and St Jude. When the latter was inspected by the Education Department in 2008 the comments were just as favourable as those of St. Martha.

An Overview of the Study

Reflecting on the number of years of teaching experience and the recent present leadership role, I intend to try to understand how Catholic school leaders in secondary schools can be effective leaders in the light of the leadership of Jesus Christ.

The dissertation will attempt to answer questions like

- Who are the school leaders?

- How can leadership be distributed?

- Is 'listening' essential as a school culture?

- What can we learn from Jesus as He leads among His people?

- Do Catholic Church schools benefit better from a religious or a lay principal?

In conducting the research, I am aware that it is critical to choose the right method and design to arrive to possible answers to the above questions. An action research approach is intended. The plan is to work with three stakeholders ─ The Student Council, the teachers together with the learning support assistants and the head teachers from the two secondary schools, St Martha and St Jude. My intention is to

prepare a questionnaire for the Student Council members, a different questionnaire for the staff and a structured informal interview for the head teachers.

Through the proper design, data collection and data analysis, I hope to test the aim of this dissertation. I then wish that the process and resulting outcome can have a significant influence in the practice and life of the two schools.

The chapter which follows encompasses an extensive literature review. Leadership, listening as a means of communication and Jesus as a leader are the major topics which are researched.

Chapter 2 － Literature Review

Introduction

> God chose David and took him from the sheep pens; from tending the sheep he brought him to being the shepherd of his people….And David shepherded them with integrity, and with skilful hands he led them.[9]

The end of Psalm 78 is introducing this literature review as I believe that leading with integrity is how effective leaders should lead in the light of the leadership of Jesus Christ. To explain how this can be achieved the literature review covers a number of aspects. First and foremost, it seeks to spell out the difference between leadership and management but then evidence is sought out to prove that both are necessary for effective leadership. It then suggests different leadership styles pointing to the one most appropriate to a Catholic school. At this point, it tries to evaluate the nature of this leadership and how it is unique to the Catholic system. As a result, transformational leadership, distributed leadership and servant leadership are described and critically explored.

Distributive leadership is explained in detail. In it 'peer leadership' is introduced while mention is also made of the challenges and difficulties involved. However, it is servant leadership which ideally applies to a Catholic Church school. Therefore, the literature review explains how this type of leadership is modelled on the life of Jesus Christ. It then moves on to examine how listening was part of Jesus' own style in His role as 'servant leader'. The review then ends with a section on how Jesus was a leader as He dwelt among His people.

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[9] Psalm 78:70 -71

Leadership and Management

Leadership in schools is a difficult undertaking because it is a complex and ongoing process. It takes exceptional, sometimes heroic people to do it well. There is no perfect model for examining it and no exact criteria. It may be so complex that, at best, even studying the different styles will only lead us to partially understand it.

To make matters worse, the terms 'leadership' and 'management' are sometimes interchanged. This is not surprising as both are carried out in the daily work in schools. The distinction made by Bennis and Nanus[10] is the generally accepted one. To them, management is 'doing things right 'while leadership is 'doing the right thing'. However, today we tend to distinguish between the two concepts. The paper *Leadership and Our Schools* points out that "leadership relates to vision, direction and inspiration while management is about planning, getting things done and working effectively with people."[11] Leadership is therefore linked to vision and values, while management deals with processes and structures. But aren't they both equally important for educational effectiveness? According to Sullivan

> Management without leadership is sterile and lifeless and can become mechanistic and bureaucratic. It becomes disconnected from what the institution is *for*. Leadership without management loses touch with reality and dashes the very hopes it arouses. It ultimately frustrates because it is careless about *how* to move towards its espoused goals.[12]

The same paper *Leadership and Our Schools* explains clearly this dual management/leadership role.

> The headteacher needs good management skills to bring order and consistency to key dimensions of the school like the quality of teaching and learning. There is also a need to complement these skills with good leadership skills in order to inspire and motivate the whole school community in the pursuit of learning and to plan and manage change.

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[10] Bennis, W. & Nanus, B. *Leaders. The strategies for taking change*, (1985)
[11] Sin Research Matters. *Leadership and Our Schools*, p.1, (1998)
[12] Sullivan, J. *Leadership and Management,* Chap. 6 p.92 in *Contemporary Catholic Education* (2002)

Marianne Coleman agrees: "A headteacher or college principal is the leader of the institution, with the appropriate management responsibilities, but also maintains a role as a professional in education".[13]

Bill Robinson, is my inspiration for this dissertation. His words resonate in my ears as he admits:

> Good management comes less easily to me than leadership. I know this, and the people who report to me know this. So I work hard on managing. When I get sloppy on agendas, individual meetings, performance reviews, and other managerial activities, the people who report to me lose direction and my big picture gets blurred. I can't lead well without managing adequately.[14]

In fact,

> Where leadership and management are weak or ineffective in a school, it is so much harder to do a good job as a teacher. Where it is effective, then not only can teachers teach, but staff and pupils are better motivated, student behaviour and attendance is good, people know what is going on because communications are clear and everyone feels they are pulling together and working towards shared goals.[15]

One therefore tends to conclude that it cannot be denied that both effective leadership and management are necessary to generate school improvement. However, for the purpose of this dissertation it is leadership that provides the focus.

Leadership Styles

Different leadership styles exist. They "may be labelled as autocratic or authoritarian on the one hand and democratic or participative on the other."[16] But these are the two extremes. We may, in fact, have experienced other styles that may find place in

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[13] Coleman, M. *Leadership in educational management,* Chap. 3 p. 63 in *The Principles of Educational Manageent* (1994)

[14] Robinson, B. *Leading People from the Middle,* p.3, (2009)

[15] NCSL *Learning-centred Leadership:Towards personalized learning-centred leadership,* p. 3, (2003)

[16] Bush T. & Coleman M. *Leadership and Strategic Management in Education,* (2000)

between, depending on the individual leader. If we then tend to simplify matters, we may divide the different styles into two groups, those which are 'task' or 'results' oriented and those which are 'people' or 'relationship oriented'. It should be made clear, however, "that different leadership styles (may) suit different groups in differing situations."[17] Yet there exist, in principle, some traits common to leadership in an educational environment. Bush and Coleman suggest the following:

1. The importance of vision and mission for a school
2. The benefits of transformational leadership
3. The ability to handle strategic issues
4. The moral or ethical dimension[18]

All four are equally important in an educational context but points two and four will be dealt with in detail further on in this work. At this point one might just mention that transformational leadership is the motor for change and that moral values also play a part in leadership. Supporting the latter claim is the "Work by NCSL's[19] research associates (which) shows that what sustains school leaders in difficult times are their core values and moral purpose"[20]. This is even truer in a Catholic school.

Leadership in a Catholic School

In order to understand what it means to be a leader in a Catholic School in the 21st Century, one must first understand the wider social context in which such leadership must operate.[21] Our modern world is well known for family instability, broken lives, moral failure, nihilism, poverty in all senses and relativism rather than being based on a true understanding of the purpose and dignity of the human being. This is also felt in education, right in the heart of our own schools. The Congregation for

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[17] Ibid p.22
[18] Ibid p.22
[19] NCSL meaning National College for School Leadership
[20] NCSL, *What we know about school leadership,* p.7, (2007).
[21] Bonasera, R. *Leadership in the Catholic School in the 21st Century,* p. 1, (2008)

Catholic Education warns us about this. *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* speaks of the consequent "tendency to reduce education to its purely technical and practical aspects"[22] and warns against forgetting the 'essence of education'[23]. We must admit that this is a crisis which has affected our Catholic schools directly. Members of the staff in a school may have varied and mixed opinions and though Catholic may belong to that group who, as Pope John Paul II points out in *Eccelesia in Oceania*, question the Church's teaching authority[24]. Principal leaders in Catholic schools have to keep this in mind. Their task is to act as both "an agent in the direction of change that is taking place"[25] in today's world and as an imitator and follower of the Person of Jesus Christ with Gospel values in mind.

So it is natural to stop to ask at this point: but what exactly is the nature of this leadership and in what way is it unique to the Catholic system? Pope Benedict XVI posed similar questions in 2008 when he received in audience participants in the plenary assembly of the Congregation for Catholic Education. He asks "What is the purpose behind Catholic schools? What is our mission?[26] And then adds "If a Catholic high school is no more Catholic than the public high school down the road, then what is the point of its existence?"

Consequently, leadership in schools can be either State/Government based or religiously based as in Church schools. There is then a minority of Private schools who have their own agenda. At least, this is how it is in Malta. When the source of

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[22] Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, # 10 (1998)
[23] Ibid #10
[24] John Paul II. *Ecclesia in Oceania, # 18, (2001)*
[25] Kelly, T. *Leadership in Catholic Education,* (1990)
[26] Pope Benedict XVI. *Catholic Schools must have a Catholic Identity,* (2008).

authority is the Government then the main aim is to produce functional citizens dictated by agreed upon standards. However, when the source of authority is Jesus, through Catholic school leaders working for the Church, then leadership has a more elevated meaning. It transforms itself into discipleship where leaders become servants guided by the unchanging principles of Christ. As a result, the school becomes unique and distinctive in nature because "it provides a religious community within a learning community……………. called to follow Jesus".[27]

The job of leaders in Catholic Schools goes beyond their duty or just getting the job done. The management skills of such leaders should be a means to a noble end. With their presence and example they should be a model to their staff and youngsters so that they too can develop the will to serve as Christ did. So Catholic school leaders have the duty to

> Ensure that students receive instruction in Catholic doctrine and practice. This requires that public witness to the way of Christ, as found in the Gospel and upheld by the Church's Magisterium, shapes all aspects of an institution's life, both inside and outside the classroom. Divergence from this vision weakens Catholic identity…[28]

Leaders in Church schools must be personally convinced that Catholic Education is a gift both to the Church and to society in general. In Malta, all those who have Catholic Education at heart understand this very clearly. Many of us my age still remember the heartaches we endured in the 1980s when the Government ordered the closure of all Church schools. Brother Martin Borg emphasizes with conviction the mission and purpose of such schools when he wrote:

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[27] Moore, L. *Staff Development in the Catholic School: The Caring response of a Community*, (2000).
[28] Pope Benedict XVI. *Catholic Education must be Catholic,* (2008).

> As we marched in protest and preached in the nineteen-eighties we must continue to inculcate in our parents and teachers that the true purpose of Church schools is embedded in their spiritual, sacred, religious and Catholic roots. Anything that invalidates, threatens or undermines these roots will cause profound disturbances and eventually, the demise of Catholic education. The vision and purpose of Church schools must be co-owned and co-nurtured by parents, administrators, teachers, students and the wider Catholic public. This shared mission will transform into passion and passion into commitment.[29]

Hence all stakeholders must be involved to uphold Catholic education. It is the job of the headteacher to choose a type of leadership that complements the culture and ethos of the school. Recent studies have shown that transformational leadership could be an option.

Forms of Leadership

Transformational Leadership

Having agreed that leadership and management go hand in hand in any organization it is now well understood why a headteacher has a dual management and leadership role. He/she has to be a good manager in order to keep order and consistency in matters that affect the quality of teaching and learning and also have good leadership skills to be able to inspire and motivate the whole school community especially when managing change. In fact, two contemporary models of educational leadership which are found useful when changes are necessary in a school context are transactional and transformational leadership. The former is based on the exchange relationships between the leader and the follower while the latter is based on the ability of the individual to communicate his vision to his followers and see it being carried out. It is not my intention to distinguish between these two models of leadership. Instead,

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[29] Borg, M. *Church Schools – the Future is now,* (2000)

focus is kept on transformational leadership as this leads to distributive leadership and further on to servant leadership.

Although the definition of transformational leadership is still vague, Leithwood realised that transformational leaders pursue three fundamental goals:

1. They help staff develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture.
2. They foster teacher development.
3. They help teachers solve problems more effectively.

He found that transformational leaders worked smarter rather than harder when using practices which dealt with transformational leadership. He concludes that such "leaders shared a genuine belief that their staff members as a group could develop better solutions than the principal could alone."[30]

Transformational leaders use several and different strategies in collaboration with the school community to improve the standard of the school. Richard Sagor says that in transformational leadership,

> The issue is more than simply who makes which decisions. Rather it is finding a way to be successful in collaboratively defining the essential purpose of teaching and learning and then empowering the entire school community to become energized and focused. In schools where such a focus has been achieved, we found that teaching and learning became transformative for everyone.[31]

Dan Bragg is of the same opinion when he states

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[30] Leithwood, Kenneth A. *The Move Toward Transformational Leadership* in *Educational Leadership* p. 49, (1992): 8-12.
[31] Sagor, R. in *Transformational Leadership, ERIC Digest, Number 72* (1992)

> Transformational leadership is not about getting things done through people or creating a great institution, building buildings, or making a profit. Transformational leadership partners the leader and the follower together as both grow and become better in the pursuit of a worthy and valued mission. This leadership changes the people involved and the pursuit becomes bigger than the personal goals of the individual. Grasping the big ideas and pursuing something that contributes to society and helps people, drives an organisation that is led under the transformational leader.[32]

The Catholic school is in great need of leaders who align themselves and believe in the mission of Jesus Christ and His principles. Transformational leadership focuses on such a mission and vision connecting the leaders with the teachers so they can work together for the success of the students.

Sergiovanni also suggests that student achievement can be "remarkably improved"[33] by transformational leadership. However he firmly believes that school leadership can be best effective, if applying transformational leadership, if the school is made up of a community of people rather than behaving as a formal institution. He convincingly believes that the best pathway to school effectiveness is to strive to make schools communities of responsibility.

Members in a community share understandings and form meaningful relationships but members in a community of responsibility go beyond this. They build "into their cultures a capacity for self-regulation that ensures both internal and external accountability. Not only do members of the community share a common focus, they also feel morally obliged to embody this focus in their behaviour."[34] This is contrary to a bureaucratic or personal leadership which is primarily motivated by self-interest.

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[32] Bragg D. *The Application of Transformational Leadership among Christian School Leaders in the southeast and Mid Atlantic Nord Regions*, (2008)
[33] Sergiovanni, Thomas J. *Adding Value to Leadership Gets Extraordinary Results* in *Educational Leadership* p.47, (1990): 23-27.
[34] Sergiovanni T., *Leadership: What's in It for Schools?,* p.61, (2001)

In a community of responsibility, leadership encourages us to respond from within and become self-managing. "Instead of follow me, the emphasis is on following communities, promises, obligations, validated research, sound principles, agreed upon standards and other ideas."[35]

Sergiovanni is implying nothing different from what has been already stated. He promotes learning organisations and learning communities who share common goals and promote creativity and thinking. In this way school leaders actually empower their staff to manage change naturally hardly realising that they are actually moving away from their comfort zone.

Distributed Leadership

Transformational leadership should not be seen as only one part of a balanced approach to creating high performance in schools. School leaders can be more effective if transformational leadership is applied within the context of distributed leadership. In fact

> In order to ensure the school can offer the curriculum and care that is right for its pupils, the head has a key role in identifying talent and appointing the right people to take the school forward, ensuring depth and breadth of capability and know-how.[36]

This is true because no matter how effective transformational leadership is, it cannot be implemented alone by just one single person. The idea that a single leader can lead and transform a school single handed has become obsolete. Leading today's schools has become so complex that it is impossible to expect one single person to

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[35] Ibid p.62
[36] Hay Mc Ber, *Transformational Leadership,* National College of School Leadership (2000) www.ncsl.gov.uk

accomplish the job alone. So many researchers are of the opinion that school leadership today should be distributed throughout the school rather than being focused on a single individual. Moreover, there is a growing confidence that distributed leadership does contribute to the effectiveness of the school even though there are still doubts to how much it is linked to improved influence on pupil outcomes.

Christopher Bezzina believes in the connection between transformational leadership and distributed leadership. He is convinced that "successful improvement depends on the transformational leadership that is based on a clear and unifying vision, an emphasis on learning, a commitment to teamwork and staff development and time for reflection and research".[37]

However, notwithstanding the present interest in distributed leadership, there seems to be little agreement as what it actually means. In fact a widely accepted definition is lacking. In their review of the literature for NCSL, Bennett et al conclude that "distributed leadership is not something 'done' by an individual 'to' others…….rather it is an 'emergent property of a group of network of individuals' in which group members 'pool' their expertise".[38]

This type of leadership is still emerging and there are still school leaders who experience a dilemma as to which type of leadership to apply. Grace observes that "leadership in many Catholic schools has, in the past, reproduced the sense of

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[37] Bezzina C., *What Works? The Road to Improvement in a Maltese Catholic School*, p. 84, (2006)
[38] Bennett et al, *Distributed Leadership,* p. 3, (2003)

hierarchy and authoritarianism characterizing the institutional Church."[39] However, today, schools like the Church, acknowledge the Catholic Social teaching of the Principle of Subsidiarity which implies that responsibilities are to be carried out without undue interference from above. The hierarchical model hardly leaves room for the dignity of teacher or pupil because none would have a say in the process of school policies, school curriculum implementation or in the day to day teaching and learning. With such a model, school leaders are liable to meet opposition all the way, apart from swaying away from Gospel values. With distributed leadership, the situation tends to be different. A greater sense of collegiality exists because this type of leadership emphasizes a greater degree of participation. Yet, the critical issue is not that leadership **is** distributed but **how** it is distributed. The SMT may become caught up with a number of queries: What are the boundaries of distributed leadership? Should everyone in the school community be involved? Does this include the student body? In fact, tensions mostly arise because distributed leadership revolutionizes the traditional concept of leadership roles especially those of headteacher and assistant heads. It is a way of thinking about leadership rather than a way of practice.

Analysis of Distributed Leadership

There is much that could be said about distributed leadership but following in the footsteps of Brent Davies, I shall restrict myself to just three points, some of which have already been acknowledged earlier in this dissertation. Davies's reflections are:

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[39] Grace G., *Missions, Market and Morality*, p. 143 , (2002)

1. "*We need to move away from thinking of leadership in terms of one individual*".[40]

It has already been agreed upon that sole leadership is no longer in fashion. If a school is to function as a professional organization it requires a number of effective leaders among which are heads of departments, teachers and learning support assistants in conjunction with the heads and assistant heads who work in harmony together utilizing what Davies refers to as "peer leadership".[41]

2. "*If leadership is to be more widely distributed than in the past, what is it that is to be distributed?*"[42]

Distributed leadership should not be any type of leadership but must be particular in nature. It should be more learning-centred and more widely dispersed. Since the learning centres of our schools are the classrooms then the leaders, in this case, are the teachers. They are the ones who can "make a positive difference to what happens in the classrooms"[43] and who can teach the pupils to become responsible of their own learning. This could be regarded as an advantage of distributed leadership. West-Burham agrees when he states that

> One of the most powerful potential benefits of distributed leadership is to increase a sense of personal responsibility and accountability – to remove dependence on school leaders and so create a culture of interdependent learning. Personalizing learning involves leadership being widely available in every aspect of the school's life.[44]

3. "*There are challenges in moving towards more distributed forms of leadership*".[45]

These challenges arise because senior leaders have to let go without abdicating from their responsibilities. It is not an easy task as they have to learn to take up new roles

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[40] Davies, B.*The Essentials of School Leadership*, p. 108, (2009).
[41] Ibid p.108
[42] Ibid p.108
[43] Ibid p.108
[44] West-Burham, J. *Leadership for personalizing learning,* (2008)
[45] Davies, B.*The Essentials of School Leadership*, p. 108, (2009).

while all stakeholders remain accountable to them. They are the main promoters of distributed leadership as they coach such leadership supporting collegiality as they do so. This wider role of senior leaders entails more responsibility for planning and coordinating and for building culture and managing change. So much so, that it is the least to say that such leaders must be fully prepared for this leadership role. Leithwood et al also point to some difficulties associated with actually distributing leadership in schools. They quote Colwell & Hammersley-Fletcher stating that

> While distributed leadership among teachers may be desirable, some caution needs to be sounded about the potential difficulties involved. Although formally appointed leaders do not automatically command respect and authority, teacher leaders may be particularly vulnerable to being openly disrespected and disregarded because they do not carry formal authority. On the other hand, nomination of teacher leaders by colleagues may not realize potential expertise within the group because colleagues may select their leaders using other criteria.[46]

So research is indicating that distributed leadership is not delegated leadership but one which involves interrelationships whereby senior leaders act as "inspirational leaders who get others to believe in what they can achieve themselves."[47] Teachers must, therefore, be encouraged to be leaders of their classrooms because

> Leadership today must be a shared responsibility which creates a culture of initiative and opportunity, in which teachers of all kinds propose new directions, start innovations, and perhaps even challenge and create difficulties for the formal leaders of their institutions in the interests of the common good. In its fullest development, such distributed leadership extends beyond the staff to the students and the parents who all take responsibility for sustainable improvement.[48]

Recent evidence also indicates that

- Leadership distribution is common in schools but patterns of distribution vary
- The distribution of leadership responsibility varies according to the local context.[49]

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[46] Leithwood , K et al *Successful School Leadership. What it is and how it Influences Pupil Learning,* p. 55, (2006)
[47] Davies, B.*The Essentials of School Leadership*, p. 193, (2009).
[48] Ibid p. 193
[49] Day, C. et al *Seven Strong Claims about Successful Leadership. P. 17, (2010)*

The latter is so true when the schools in question are Catholic in nature because if a system of distributed leadership is to be applied then Catholic school leaders feel they should opt for a servant type of leadership in the light of the leadership of Jesus Christ.

Servant Leadership

It is not uncommon to be told, in an educational environment, that effective leaders concentrate more on doing the right thing rather than on doing things right. In other words, in the midst of difficult ethical dilemmas a principal must not only behave responsibly as an individual but also ethically. No matter what, in the end, he/she must act with authority. However Sergiovanni claims that "the source of authority for leadership is found neither in bureaucratic rules and procedures nor in personalities and styles but in shared values, ideas and commitments."[50] In fact, the leadership that comes close to Sergiovanni's statement and which would ideally apply to a Catholic Church school is 'Servant Leadership'. This type of leadership is a unique style of leadership that is modelled on the approach of our Lord Jesus who said He came to serve and not to be served.[51]

Robert Greenleaf, who is the major proponent of this type of leadership, in his book *Servant leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* describes a servant leader as "The servant-leader is servant first …..It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings

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[50] Sergiovanni, T.J. *Leadership as pedagogy, capital development and school effectiveness* in *International Journey of Leadership in Education,* p.43, (1998)
[51] Mark 10: 42-45

one to aspire to lead."[52] In other words, Greenleaf is emphasizing that the leader

should be a servant first. However there are writers who are critical of this; for

example Punnachet quotes Bradley who argues that "Greenleaf did not make any

attempt to explain how the notion of servant hood is related either directly or even

indirectly to the characteristics of leadership that he outlines."[53] Grace goes even

further as to criticize Greenleaf for the secular context of his work. Nowhere did he

make reference to Jesus Christ as the original servant leader. Grace argues that

"when neglecting the cultural and spiritual context of educational settings,

educational leaders could merely become 'chief executives, market analysts and

public relations specialists." In fact, in her paper *Catholic servant-leadership in*

education: going beyond the secular paradigm, Punnachet refers to other critics and

questions "whether or not the theory of servant-leadership needs to be reconstructed

in order to go beyond these criticisms."[54]

Consequently, Punnachet refers to Blanchard and Hodges and Convey who refer to

servant leadership as was taught and made manifest by Jesus Christ[55]. In a nutshell,

we can, therefore, say that to become a servant-leader as modelled by Jesus Christ, a

leader must put the needs and interests of others above self-interest. The leader must

learn to take decisions based on the needs of others and not on personal agendas. In a

Catholic school, in particular, he/she must be equipped with sound theological and

moral values and have good knowledge of the Church's Catholic Social teaching

especially regarding the principle of the Dignity of the Human Person, the Common

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[52] Greenleaf, R.K. and Spears, L.C. *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate Power and Greatness,* (2002).
[53] Bradely, Y. quoted in Punnachet, p. 118, (2009)
[54] Punnachet, T.K. *Catholic servant-leadership in education:going beyond the seclar paradigm,* p.120, (2009)
[55] Ibid p.121

Good, the Preferential Option for the Poor, the right and duties of all stakeholders in the school and about Solidarity and Stewardship, among other things. It is through these Catholic Social Justice themes that Catholic principals and Catholic schools distinguish themselves from other principals and public schools. In fact, those Church schools which are today being administered by lay principals and future similar schools which will soon follow suit need to be well grounded in these moral principles.

So unlike leadership approaches with a top-down hierarchical style, servant leadership emphasizes instead, collaboration, trust, empathy and the ethical use of power. As leaders look to Christ as an example of servant leadership, they learn that serving everyone does not mean pleasing everyone, but rather it means pleasing God first. What better example do leaders have to serve as leaders then the example of Jesus washing His disciples feet and ultimately dying on the cross for the people He loved? Besides teaching us how to be of service to others, Jesus also taught us a very important skill which is indispensable to an effective leader. This is the art of listening.

Listening as a means of communication

During the weeks that I took to ponder whether to make the move from teacher to assistant head, I was given several tips and advice for the new and challenging job, one of which was that one of the most important skills one needs as a leader is the ability to listen, especially during times of crisis.

Listening may appear to be easy but it is often hard work. Perhaps that is why we have two ears and one mouth because listening may be twice as hard as talking. True listening requires you to give the other person your full attention and possibly to change your attitudes as you listen. This is how a good relationship can be built between the listener and the other. However good listeners are not born; they are made. In *Leading by Listening,* Mary Parsons quotes Colin Riches in his chapter on *Communication* who proposes that the listener will "understand more closely the receiver's needs, attempt to predict the impact on a receiver's feelings and attitudes and adjust it to attune with their vocabulary, interests and values."[56] This, I believe, is how Jesus used the skill of listening throughout His three years of being among His people. Even the Old Testament states "He who answers before listening…that is his folly and his shame."[57]

Bezzina also enlists listening as a requirement for a culture of collaboration. He believes that many see collaboration as the key to success in the present changes taking place in our education system in Malta. He admits that "Listening is a demanding skill that needs time to nurture." Yet "it is important to create opportunities for collaborative learning situations so that participants learn to appreciate and value the varied opinions, ideas and values other members uphold." He continues, "We are often only interested in hearing ourselves speak and not very willing to be influenced by others."[58]

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[56] Parsons, M. p. 20, (2007)
[57] Proverbs 18:13
[58] Bezzina , C. *Building effective teams,* p.71, (2011)

We must not confuse listening with hearing. Hearing only exchanges facts while true listening builds trust. Tate and Dunklee write extensively on how strategic listening can build trust leading to better co-operation and motivation stating that "Without trust, people will not share enough information to allow you to expand your understanding and help them provide solutions to problems or develop new possibilities for expediting change."[59] Coleman in an NCSL paper also lists listening as one of the ten factors influencing trustworthiness for school leaders.[60]

Listening is one of the basic skills for good communication. Leaders who communicate effectively "listen, probe, read, study and respect their various audiences."[61] Robinson continues:

> The best listeners are always skilled questioners. They've come to terms with the shortcomings of words and with the way their own filters can tweak a message. They don't assume they have grasped your meaning, so they probe and clarify.[62]

This means that effective school leaders are actively involved in the communication process and not just listen passively. This is why teachers, who are the leaders in class, are advised to develop listening skills to improve teaching and learning. Christians believe that man is made in the image and likeness of God, so he is to be treated as such. Consequently, the dignity of the pupil in class has to be respected. Teachers are to listen attentively to the 'student voice' and not just issue orders without reason. The student in class is not just a mere object for academic achievement only but is human in all respects. Listening to the student can give a

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[59] Tate, J. and Dunklee, D. *Stragetic Listening for School Leaders,* p.72, (2005)
[60] Coleman, A. *Trust in collaborative working: the importance of trust for leaders of school based partnerships,* NCSL p. 14, (2007)
[61] Robinson, B. *Leading People from the Middle,* p.51, (2009)
[62] Ibid p. 54.

totally different perspective of school than what school leaders may be expecting.

Ronald Nuzzi et al believe in this because they too think that teachers

> are directed to develop listening skills, to not look upon achievement of pupils with condensation and not to issue orders, rules and restrictions without giving reasons. They are reminded that the dignity of the student demands respect for free choice and the responsibility associated with it, for authentic freedom is an exceptional sign of the divine image within the human person.[63]

Teachers and all school leaders need to listen and respect the views of the learners themselves in order to be more open to their suggestions. This involves creating opportunities for the pupils to talk about themselves as learners, what best supports their learning and anything that may be getting in the way of their learning. School leaders must be prepared to listen with the intent to understand not to listen with the intent to reply.

This is more than true for Catholic school leaders if they are to maintain the identity and vision of Catholic schooling. Gerald Grace points out that the "voice of contemporary Catholic schooling is now more directly challenged by individualistic and market values than ever before in history"[64] so it is necessary for school leaders to develop the skill of listening not only to listen to the pupils but perhaps, more important, to listen to all the stakeholders of the school. Regarding this fact, John Sullivan suggests that only by actively listening to the members of the stakeholder groups, understanding their points of view and responding to their concerns can we hope to be effective in our mission as school leaders.[65] In fact, Jesus should be our model for such leadership. A careful reading of the Gospels indicates that while leading He was always a strong listener.

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[63] Nuzzi, R.J. et al *Handbook of Research on Catholic Education,* p. 56, (2004)
[64] Grace, G *Catholic Education in England and Wales,* p.7, (2002)
[65] Sullivan, J. *Leadership and Management,* p.92, (2002)

Jesus leading from among

Jesus led by example. He was a natural leader. He was a strong decisive leader. He confronted what was wrong or harmful and led by action as in the incident of the money changers in the Temple.[66] He led by the quality of His life and spoke with authority not like the Scribes and the Pharisees.[67] He showed compassion when His friend Lazarus was declared dead.[68] This was no weakness on His part but instead this incident enhanced and balanced His strength of character and dynamic leadership. He dwelt among His people while still leading them. He never exercised His leadership position from the top of the mountain. Therefore, if we hope to become Christ-like leaders, it will mean narrowing the gap between us and those we lead. Bill Robinson states

> I am convinced that the place from which Christ would have us lead is not above our people, not in front of our people, not under our people, and not by cell phone with our people. The most powerful position of leadership is *beside* those God calls us to lead.[69]

Yet Robinson believes that a paradox may exist when leading from among. He asks

> How do we exercise leadership from the middle of the pack? How do we know when to lead the group one moment and then to defer to the next group? How can we, at once, be the player and the coach? How do we know when to be which?[70]

The answer is in the art of listening. Through experience I have learnt that when I am with my students long enough to listen, they tell me how to lead them. Even Jesus had the ability to observe and to respond to the needs of His followers. Listening is, in fact, an important characteristic of servant leadership. When He appeared to two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus He walked with them listening attentively to

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[66] Matthew 21:12
[67] Matthew 7:29
[68] John 11:35
[69] Robinson , R. *Incarnate Leadership. 5 Leadership Lessons from the Life of Jesus,* p.36,(2000)
[70] Ibid p. 35

what they were discussing.[71] He neither preceded them nor followed them but instead walked among them.

Jesus never expected people to come to Him. He went to where the people were and met them at their point of need in life. He intentionally went to the markets, sea shores, synagogues, to the people's homes, to the countryside and towns. He was always at the service of others. Such type of leadership is best manifested in a school context when "leadership is an expression of a relationship of love between master and disciples."[72] Just as Jesus loved His disciples, likewise senior leaders should love their colleagues and all the pupils entrusted under their care. Jesus dwelt among His disciples. They could sense that He loved them. In the same way students sense when they are loved by their school leaders and their teachers and when they desire to be among them. Don Bosco is noted to have said that "young people need to know that they are loved."[73]

Once, I read that those entrusted to lead others must first love the people they are called to lead. How true! How can we lead and guide our students if we did not love them? After all, the student is made in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, we should love our students just as we love God. In so doing, a Catholic school leader must change the orientation from self to others. Only in this way can an effective school leader become a servant leader as modelled by Jesus Christ. Leadership therefore begins with personal transformation described as "being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the

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[71] Luke 24: 13-35
[72] Treston K. *Spirituality for Teachers and Catechists,* p.10 in *Readings Module 3,* (2008)
[73] O'Malley David, *Christian Leadership in Education,* p8, (2007)

Spirit."[74] The good news is that anyone who has experienced the strength of the Holy Spirit, as St Paul is telling us, can acknowledge that the beauty of leading like Jesus is that it can be applied in any leadership situation.

Conclusion

This literature review has helped me to understand the meaning of transformational leadership, distributed leadership and servant leadership. However, servant leadership seems to be most appropriate to a Catholic Church school. Notwithstanding this, I will aim to check the validity of this statement in the research methods that follow.

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[74] II Corinthians 3:18

Chapter 3 ─ Methodology

Introduction

It took me many months of thought until I finally formulated my research statement. It had to motivate me, keep me interested and be relevant to school improvement. As a member of the SMT in a Church school, I felt that the concept of Catholic Education and leadership was worthy of study since locally Church schools with lay head teachers were on the increase ─ hence my research statement.

Leading from among: A reflection on how Catholic school leaders in secondary schools can be effective leaders in the light of the leadership of Jesus Christ.

My focus in this study is threefold:

- To find out if distributed leadership is a requirement for effective school leaders.

- To determine how important listening is as a means of communication for effective school leaders.

- Whether Catholic school leaders model their leadership on that of Jesus Christ.

The context will be in a Catholic Church girls' secondary school, St. Martha, where I am employed as assistant head and where the headteacher is religious and in a similar school, St. Jude, where the headteacher is lay.

In this chapter I will outline the basic principles of research and different research methods. Then I will justify my choice of research and explain how it was carried out, including any ethical issues.

The Research

Research Methods

In conducting any research it is critical to choose the right method and design to study the research problem. Basically, the researcher identifies the question or problem he wishes to investigate, then sets forth a plan of action and finally collects and analyses the data.

There are different methods that can be used for research. The researcher should keep in mind the best approach for his research problem. "The approach adopted and the methods of data collection selected will depend on the nature of the inquiry and the type of information required."[75]

Coleman and Briggs[76] explore three methods:

- The survey

- The case study

- The action research.

I chose to use the survey strategy with the knowledge that each method had its own advantages and disadvantages. It would be enlightening to discuss at this stage each method in detail, but it is not within the scope of this research project. Bell points out that

> In most cases, a survey will aim to obtain information from a representative selection of the population and from that sample will then be able to present the findings as being representative of the population as a whole[77]………….The main emphasis is on fact-finding, and if a survey is well structured and piloted, it can be relatively cheap and a quick way of obtaining information.[78]

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[75] Bell, J. *Doing Your Research Project,* p. 6, (1999)
[76] Coleman, M. & Briggs, A. *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management,* (2007)
[77] Bell, J. *Doing Your Research Project,* p. 11, (1999)
[78] Ibid p. 12

Educational research

Educational research, like all research can be qualitative or quantitative.

> Qualitative research involves several methods of data collection, such as focus groups, field observation, in-depth interviews and case studies. In all of these methods, the questioning approach is varied.[79]………… Quantitative research also, involves several methods of data collection, such as telephone surveys, mail surveys and internet surveys. In these methods, the questioning is static or standardized ─ all respondents are asked the same questions.[80]

However, in education, surveys may also include the popular self-administered questionnaires.

"Quantitative research requires that the variables under consideration be measured."[81] In other words, in quantitative research the data are numbers and measurement, while in qualitative research, the data are narrative descriptions and observations. Another difference is that qualitative research occurs in less controlled research settings and in a more natural environment unlike quantitative research. In qualitative research few people take part in the research but the contact with these people tends to last a lot longer than quantitative research which reaches many more people and requires less contact time.

Choosing the research tools

Choosing the best research tools was a bit of a problem. I was advised not to fall into the trap of thinking that quantitative research is better than qualitative research. They both have their strengths and weaknesses. Neither is better than the other. They are just different. So I decided to follow my instincts and try to use both.

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[79] Wimmer, R. & Dominick, J. *Mass Media research. An Introduction.*, p. 48,(2006)
[80] Ibid p. 50.
[81] Ibid p. 50.

My plan was to work with three stakeholders ─ the student council, the teachers together with the learning support assistants and the head teachers from two secondary girl's schools, St. Martha and St Jude. I explained the aim of the research to both head teachers and permission to proceed was granted immediately. In return they both expected to receive feedback after the final analysis of the surveys, provided confidentiality and anonymity is retained. My intention was to prepare a questionnaire for the student council members, a different questionnaire for the teachers together with the LSAs and a structured informal interview for the head teachers.

The Instruments

In any research project, collecting the data for analysis requires the appropriate instruments. Within the survey research method, the questionnaire and the interview are the two instruments which are commonly used.

The Questionnaire

> The questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher and often being comparatively straight forward to analyse.[82]

Researchers need to plan the questionnaire carefully if they wish to encourage respondents to complete it and give in the necessary information. It should be appealing, easy to understand and reasonably quick to complete. It can be posted,

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[82] Wilson and McLean quoted in Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrisson, K. *Research Methods in Education,* p.317, (2009)

self-administered, e-mailed or done through the telephone. The nature of this dissertation favoured the use of a self-administered questionnaire.

The Interview

Moser and Kalton[83] "describe the survey interview as 'a conversation between interviewer and respondent with the purpose of eliciting certain information from the respondent'". Questions are usually pre-prepared but the respondents are given freedom to talk about the topic and give their views in their own time. The interviewer might need to probe at times being careful not to prompt too much. Analysing an interview might be more difficult than analysing a questionnaire. However, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to distinguish between the two types of instruments.

My Approach

The teachers' and LSAs' Questionnaire

Designing and constructing the questionnaire for this group of stakeholders required care in selecting questions that were concise, efficient and relevant to the aim of the survey. With this in mind, I was hoping for a good response rate.

No covering letter was to be used. My intention was to give out the questionnaire myself at the start of an SDP[84] meeting. A verbal introduction was to be sufficient whereby I would explain how their participation would be an asset for school improvement.

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[83] Moser and Kalton quoted in Bell, J. *Doing Your Research Project*, p. 161, (1999).
[84] SDP meaning School Development Plan

The self-administered questionnaire was divided into four parts ─ an introduction and three sections which included the following points:[85]

- A brief introduction in bold italic print explaining that the questionnaire formed part of my Master degree research and that all the data would be treated in confidence with no contributors being identified. My name was then disclosed.

- Section one asks about the number of years in the current school and in other schools, if applicable. Although some might argue that this is a sensitive type of question it is important for me to get an indication of the teaching experience of the participants. I was not interested in the age or gender of the respondents.

- Section two of the questionnaire is highly structured including closed questions which "are useful in that they can generate frequencies of response amenable to statistical treatment and analysis."[86] This means that the data can be easily analysed, quicker to code and is often "directly to the point and deliberately more focused than open-ended questions."[87] However, respondents are unable to add remarks and explanations so there is the risk of bias and lack of in-depth views. Equipped with such knowledge, I still opted for closed questions ─ 42 in all.

- In the interest of clarity and logic, then I decided to break down section two of the questionnaire into subsections with section headings, namely:

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[85] Appendix 1
[86] Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrisson, K. *Research Methods in Education,* p.321, (2009)
[87] Ibid p. 321

1. The Senior Management Team

2. The Teachers and Learning Support Assistants

3. The Parents

4. The Students

5. The School

These headings were printed in a different type face from the questions. I thought that this would make the headings stand out and could help the final layout of the questionnaire. My aim was to check how much leadership was distributed in each school, the extent of the pupils' voice and the degree of spiritual health of the schools.

- Prior to section one, I politely pointed to what I wanted them to do explaining clearly that they had to tick the column that most closely approximated their feelings. Verbally, I reminded them that sincere answers were appreciated if the results were to be used for school improvement and the enhancement of their profession as a whole.

- I chose a Likert scale using

> Strongly agree
> Agree
> Not sure
> Disagree
> Strongly disagree
> Not applicable

'Not applicable' is usually absent from the scale. Yet, I chose to include it for further distinction. I quote Cohen et al "rating scales

(are) particularly useful for tapping attitudes, perceptions and opinions."[88] They form part of ordinal data.

- The last section consists of two open ended questions which form part of what is known in data analysis as word based data. In this way, I intended to give a chance to the respondents to voice their own opinions and reply in their own terms, hoping that I might catch further information that might not have been caught elsewhere in the questionnaire. Yet, "open-ended questions make it difficult for the researcher to make comparisons between respondents."[89] Moreover, it takes much longer for the respondent to think out, articulate an answer and put it down to paper than just ticking in a rating scale response box. This is the reason why I chose to end the questionnaire with only two and not more open-ended questions.

No formal pilot study was carried out because of time restrictions. Only one close friend, in the teaching profession, was asked to attempt the questionnaire to time it and to check whether it was too long or too short, too easy or too difficult. No flaws in questioning were detected and the time registered for completing it was approximately 13 minutes.

The Pupils' Questionnaire

This questionnaire[90] was intended for council pupil members only. Schools may have different set-ups for their council but the one at St Martha is actually a collection of

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[88] Ibid p. 328
[89] Ibid p. 331
[90] Appendix 2

students from the different classes, from Form 1 to Form 5, who are voted into office by their classmates. It is made up of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, two teachers as advisers and the rest of the pupils as members. They meet monthly as a group to discuss school issues, fundraising and provide suggestions to the school administration. They are the voice between the students and the SMT.

Since the number of respondents was 20 or less, it was designed with open-ended questions only ─ 10 in all. My aim was to check how much school leaders listen to the pupils' voice.

The Head teachers' Interview

I intended to proceed with a one-to-one interview with each headteacher from St Martha and St Jude. 17 open ended questions[91] were carefully prepared which, I hoped, would give me a good insight of each headteacher and her style of leadership. I was looking forward to the interview because they were two different people, one religious and one lay, of a totally different age, heading two schools which had a different catchment of students.

Data Collection

Data from St Martha

A total of 47 questionnaires were collected from the teachers and LSAs, 20 from the student council members and one from the headteacher. That of the teachers and LSAs was administered after school hours at the start of an SDP meeting. I courteously explained the scope of the survey and how important it was for them to

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[91] Appendix 3

participate. This allowed for a 96 per cent response since only two teachers were absent from the meeting. I had convinced my head that this was the best way to administer the questionnaires if I was hoping for a good response rate, even at the expense of sacrificing a quarter of an hour from the SDP meeting. A previous small scale research with the staff had left me disappointed with the response. This time I was determined it would turn out different.

At a first glance, some of the teachers complained that the questionnaire seemed too long. Although they may have been reluctant to start off, they all finished it within 15 minutes with none of the respondents reacting to any "item to be offensive, intrusive, misleading, biased, misguided, irritating, inconsiderate, impertinent or abstruse."[92] Only one participant, a male teacher, asked for further clarification to the statement *'Teachers are given opportunities to chair meetings'*.

I was aware that

> The questionnaire will always be an intrusion into the life of the respondent, be it in terms of time taken to complete the instrument, the level of threat or sensitivity of the questions or the possible invasion of privacy.[93]

However, these were colleagues, some of whom I had been working with for more than 20 years. Until last year, for most of them, I was the senior teacher in the staffroom, now in a post of assistant head. They respected my integrity and were glad to be of help. They also understood the importance of the analysis for school evaluation and were pleased that they were being consulted.

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[92] Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrisson, K. *Research Methods in Education,* p.318, (2009)
[93] Ibid p. 318

To be present as the questionnaire is being administered is an asset since it enables any queries or uncertainties to be addressed immediately even though some respondents may have felt my presence as threatening. Another advantage is that I could gather the data from a good number of respondents in one place simultaneously while I could also observe the attitudes of those present. Everyone seemed to be focused.

The questionnaire for the Student Council members was administered on another day. The council at St Martha is made up of 20 representatives from 16 classes of Form 1 to Form 5 with ages ranging from 10 to 16 years. It would have been impossible, because of time restrictions, to be able to analyse the data of the questionnaire if it had been administered to the whole school totalling 394 pupils. I consider the School Council as being a good representative of the school population since it covers the whole range of ages of the pupils.

The council members attempted the questionnaire during one of the break sessions. All members were present. After a brief introduction, I explained very slowly and clearly why they were asked to participate. They all eagerly accepted. It took the upper seniors only 6 minutes to fill the questionnaire while the younger ones required the whole 15 minutes. The latter also asked for assistance in questions 7, 8 and 9. A good pilot study would have helped here since I was not experienced in teaching the lower seniors. These were minimal problems, though, which were solved instantaneously since I was present during the survey.

The head teacher's interview turned out different from what I had intended it to be as the head preferred to hand in written answers to the prepared questions. I was pleased, in a way, because I was afraid that our 35 year employer-employee relationship may have had an influence on the outcome of the interview. The head teacher may have felt more at ease answering the questions privately and calmly having more time for more thoughtful and reflective answers. However, I was aware that the answers would be less spontaneous this way and that no supplementary questions could be asked.

Data from St Jude

The same procedures were followed at St Jude but I was absent when the questionnaires were administered. The headteacher also preferred to take her time to write down the answers to the interview. This was good enough for me as probably she might have felt uncomfortable in my presence since we were already acquainted with each other. The data collected from her school was accompanied by the following feedback:

> I must confess to you that I felt a bit uncomfortable about giving them to the staff because they are obviously rating me and my assistant head in a lot of the questionnaire. So I told them to hand it in anonymously at reception. But I know that some staff members grumbled that they are giving information to St Martha about St Jude in a way that can identify them even though their name is not on the questionnaire. The number of years of service gives them away. Also, the fact that I asked the receptionist to make sure everyone handed it back means that they may have felt they didn't have the option of not filling it in.

It was suggested that the question re number of years of service could have been worded more generally; for example, 'more than 5 years, more than 10 years etc'. No doubt, this way, would have eliminated any risks of anonymity. Some teachers may have opted to leave this section out deliberately. The percentage response rates are

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95 per cent for the staff and 77 per cent for the student council. No feedback was passed on to me about the pupils' questionnaire so I cannot exclude the possibility of some questions not being attempted.

Conclusion

The next step, following the research methods, is the data analysis. This is explained in full in the next chapter. All throughout, my aim will be to determine whether the results of the research agree or deviate from the literature review, namely whether school leaders are effective enough when leadership is distributed and if a culture of listening is employed, both in the light of the leadership of Jesus Christ.

In the next chapter which follows, the analysis and my conclusions will, I hope, address these aims. Suggested recommendations are then presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4 – Analysis

Introduction

This chapter constitutes the analysis of a questionnaire which includes 42 statements and two open-ended questions which was administered to teachers and LSAs,[94] a set of open-ended questions answered by student council members[95] and a written down interview of two heads of two Catholic Church schools, St Martha and St Jude respectively[96]. In the research, I focused on distributed leadership, listening as a means of communication and Jesus Christ as a model for effective leadership.

The analysis is divided into three parts. In the first part I summarise the main findings of my research. In the second part I compare the findings of the students, teachers, LSAs and the headteacher within the same school first and then between the two schools while in the third part, I interpret the results of the research in the light of the literature review.

Classification

Data Analysis of the Teachers' & LSAs' Questionnaire

The aim of the questionnaire was to enable me to obtain a useful insight into the thinking and perceptions of the staff regarding Catholic School Leadership. The data collected was inputted in an excel sheet and percentages were calculated.[97] Cohen et al believe that "percentages on their own mask the real numbers, so the reader needs

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[94] Appendix 1
[95] Appendix 2
[96] Appendix 3
[97] Appendix 4 & 5

to know the real numbers."[98] Charts were then plotted as "some readers may find charts more accessible and able to be understood more than tables of figures."[99] The following pie charts show some of the results:

<u>St Martha</u>

Statement 7: As a Church school, the SMT emphasises prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils.

94% Agree   2% Disagree   4% Not Sure

Statement 2: The SMT listens to the 'Teachers' Voice'
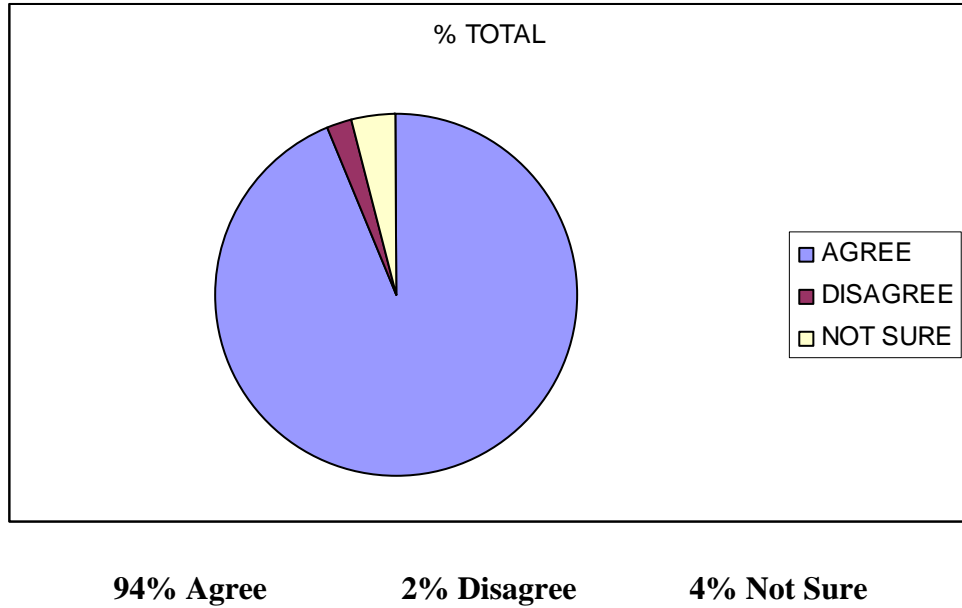
76% Agree   4% Disagree   21% Not sure

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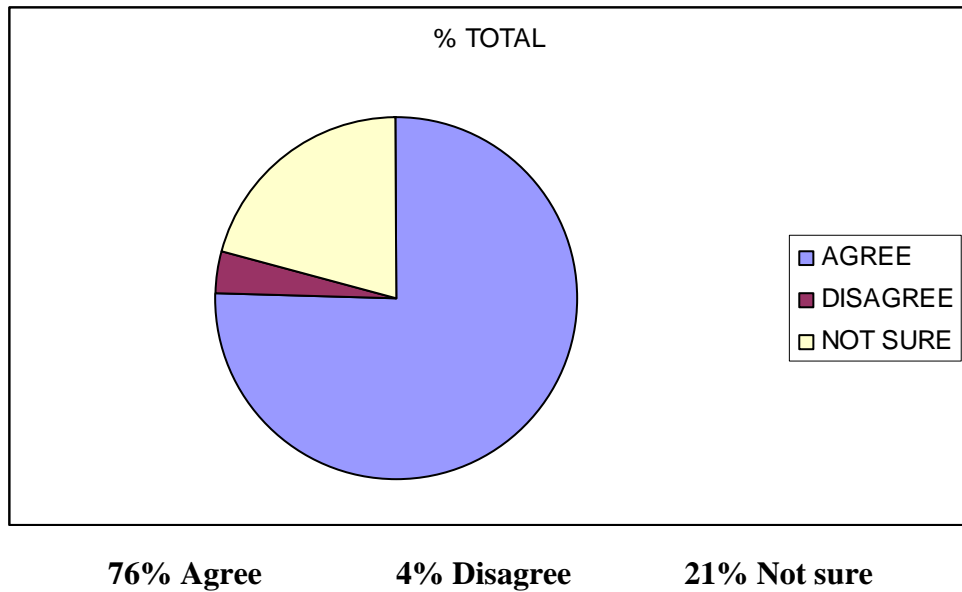
[98] Cohen et al, *Research Methods in Education,* p. 509, (2009)
[99] Ibid p.507

Statement 22: The School listens to the 'Students' Voice'.
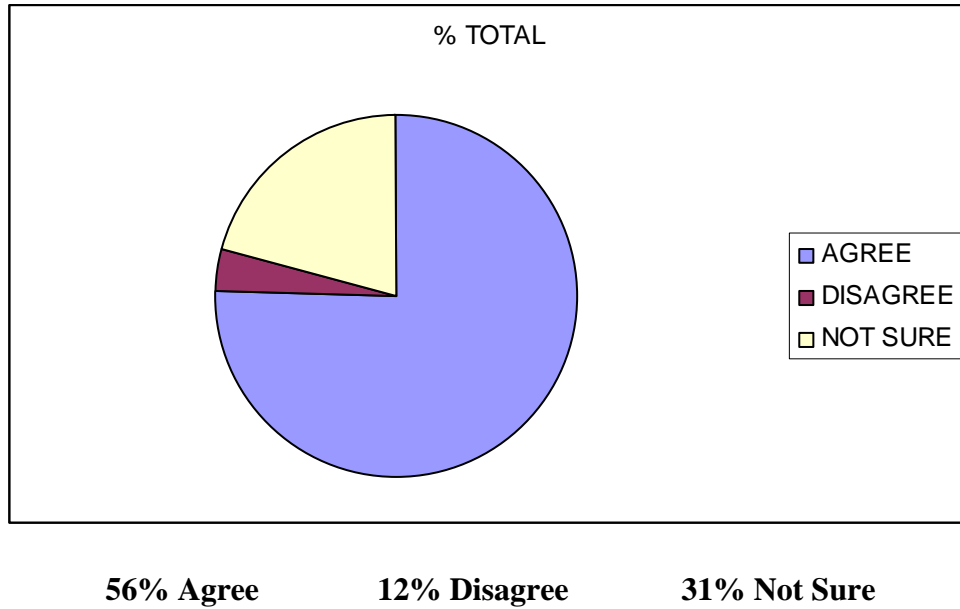
% TOTAL

AGREE
DISAGREE
NOT SURE

56% Agree   12% Disagree   31% Not Sure

Statement 33: Students get an opportunity to make suggestions about their learning (e.g. subject choices, approaches to assessment, the learning environment).

% TOTAL

AGREE
DISAGREE
NOT SURE

40% Agree   39% Disagree   19% Not Sure

Statement 3: The headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership

% TOTAL
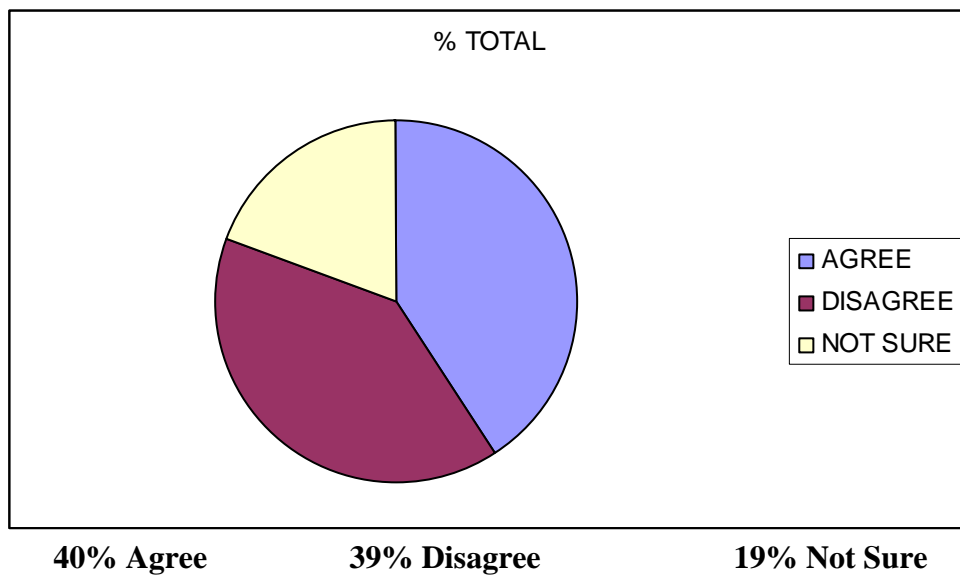
AGREE
DISAGREE
NOT SURE
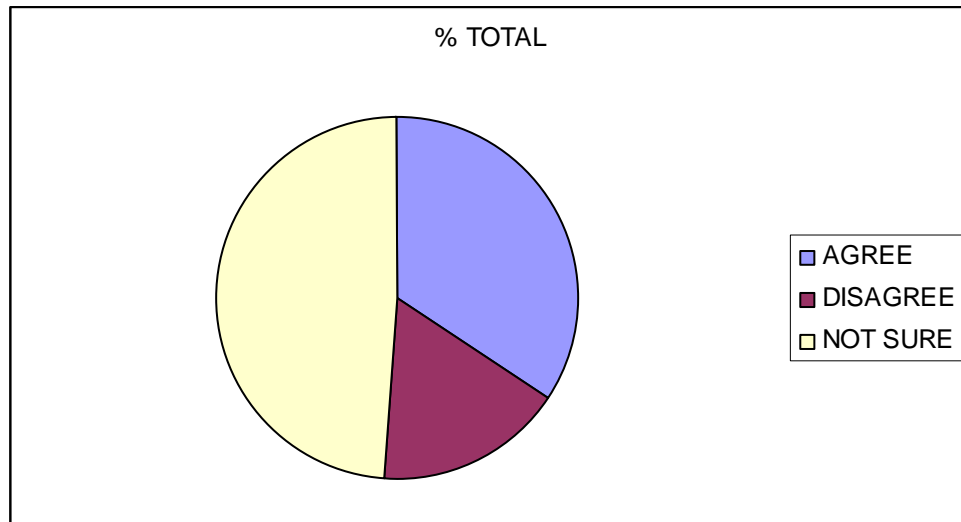
31% Agree   **15% Disagree**   **44% Not Sure**

Statement 36: The School values and acts upon what the pupils tell.

% TOTAL

AGREE
DISAGREE
NOT SURE
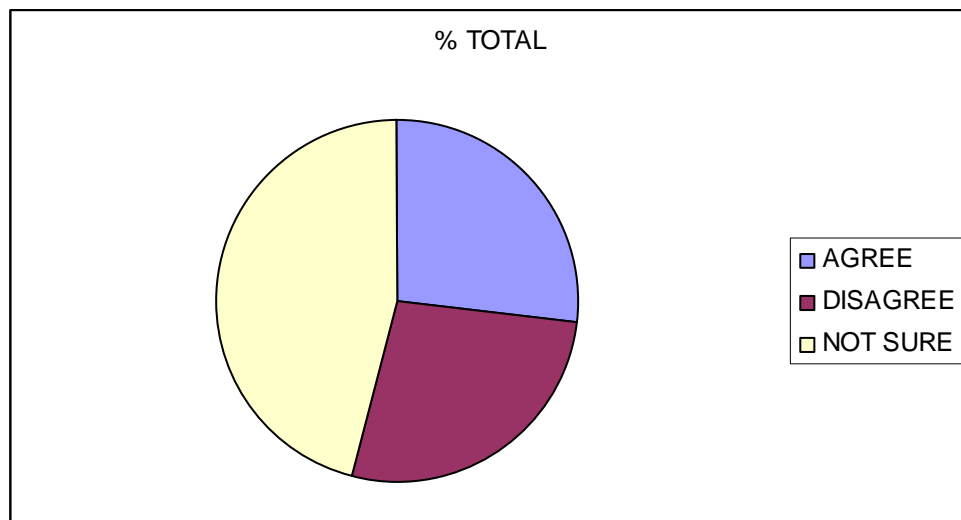
27% Agree   **27% Disagree**   **46% Not Sure**

St Jude

Overall, the results of this school indicate a high percentage of agreement in most of the statements.[100] All the teachers agree that, as a Church school, the SMT emphasizes prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils. They also agree that the SMT encourages teachers to exemplify the school ethos and values in the classroom.

Some other results are shown in the following pie-charts.

Statement 3: The headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership.

71% Agree   **11% Disagree**   **18% Not Sure**

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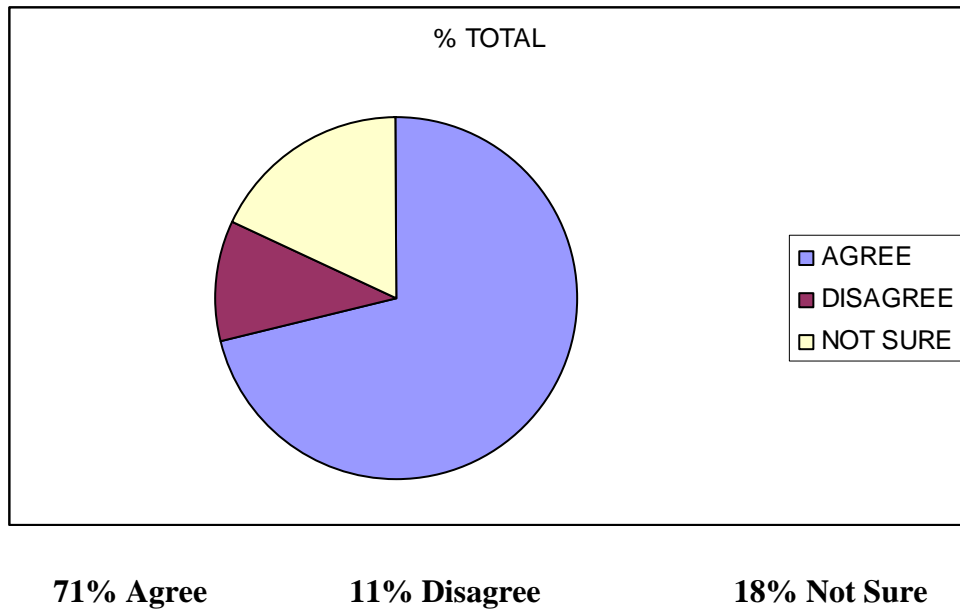
[100] Appendix 8

Statement 22: The School listens to the 'Students' Voice'.

% TOTAL

AGREE
DISAGREE
NOT SURE
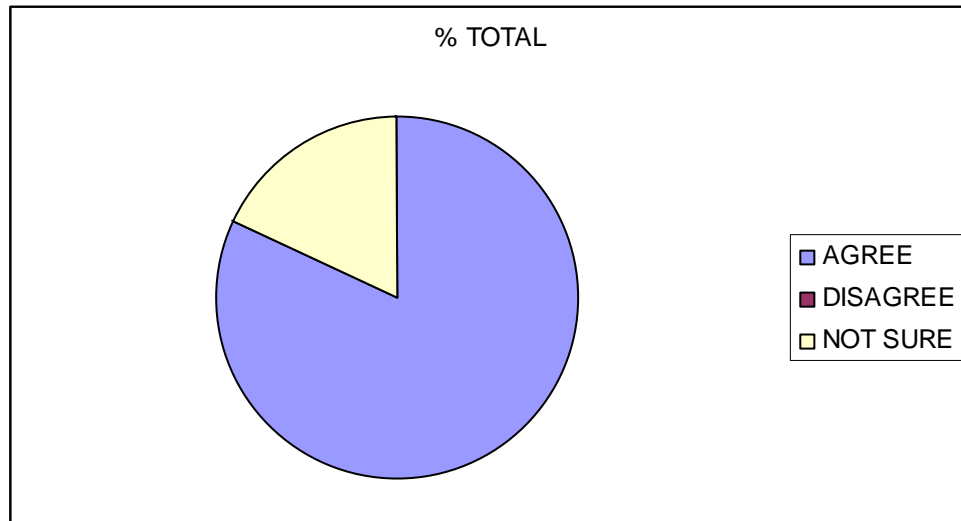
82% Agree   18% Not Sure

Statement 31: The School has channels where parents can voice their feedback.

% TOTAL

AGREE
DISAGREE
NOT SURE
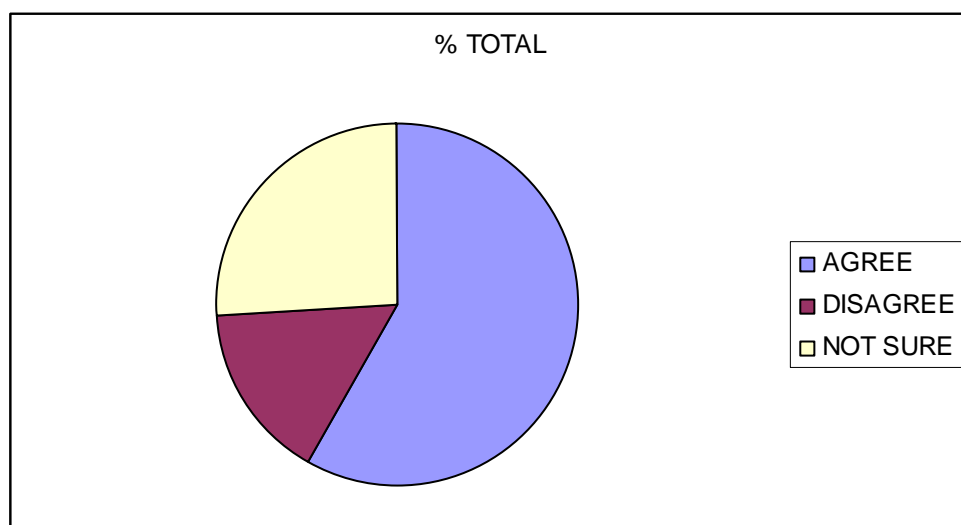
58% Agree   16% Disagree   26% Not Sure

Statement 33: Students get an opportunity to make suggestions about their learning (e.g. subject choices, approaches to assessment, the learning environment).
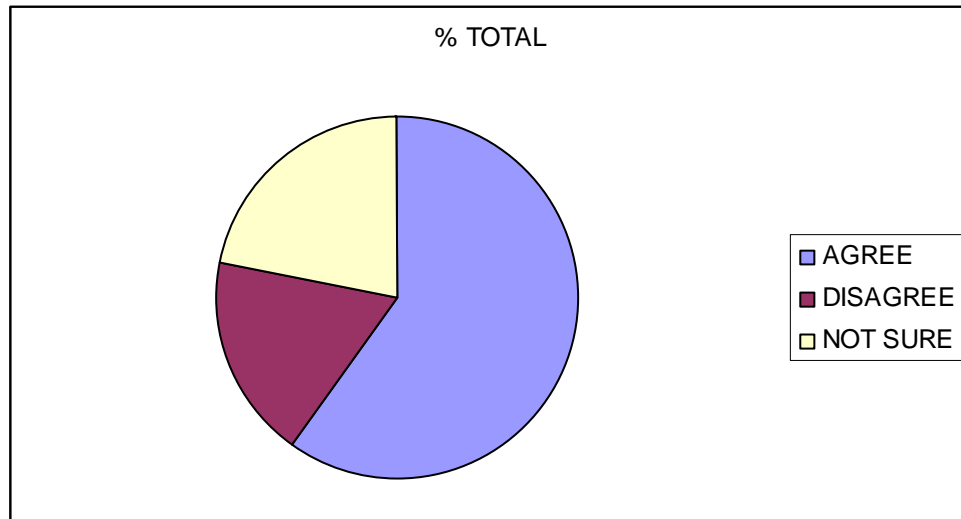
52% Agree   16% Disagree   19% Not Sure

Statement 18: Decisions regarding whole-school policy are made essentially by the SMT
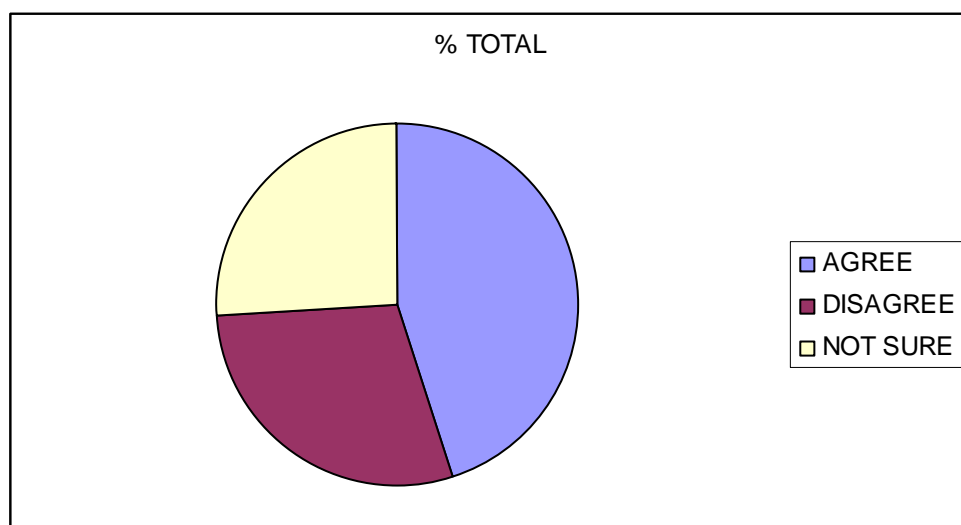
45% Agree   29% Disagree   26% Not Sure

Statement 20: I am not given the opportunity to involve myself in the work of the school.

% TOTAL

AGREE
DISAGREE
NOT SURE

16% Agree   63% Disagree   21% Not sure
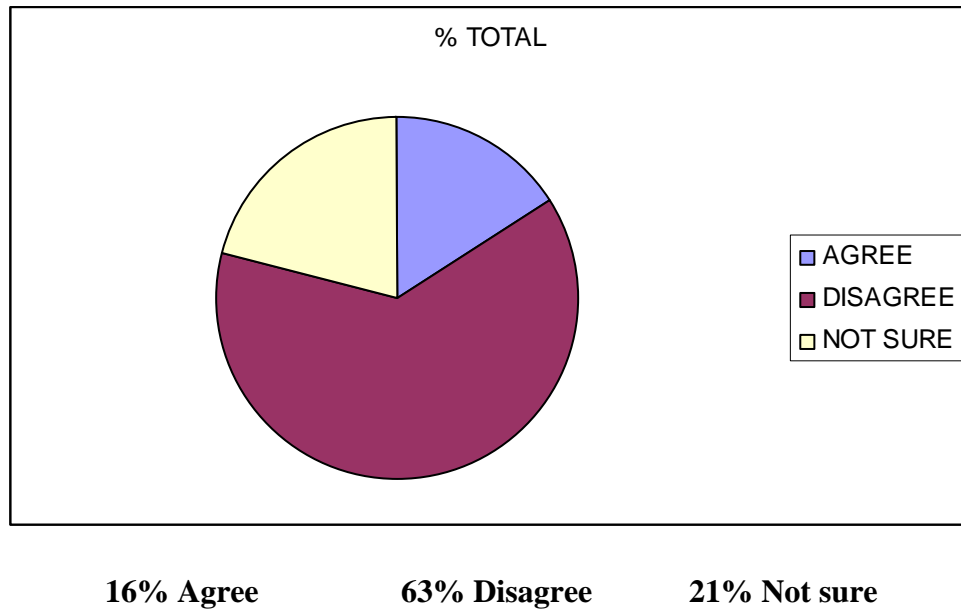
Full results of the Teachers' and LSAs' questionnaire of both St Martha and St Jude can be found in Appendix 7 and Appendix 8 respectively.

The last page of the questionnaire also included two open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are usually included in a questionnaire as an act of courtesy towards the candidates. It gives them the liberty to answer freely and sincerely, either at length or in brief. The responses can be a paragraph long or they can be very short, may be just one word in length.

The two open-ended questions included in the 'Teachers' and LSAs' questionnaire are:

1. What factors enable you to do your job well?

2. What factors inhibit you from doing your job well?

Having read through all the answers first, I then proceeded to structure the material

in tabular format as shown in figure 1

St Martha

Factors which enable the staff to do their job well at St Martha	Factors which inhibit the staff from doing their job well at St Martha
• Support from colleagues	• Too many lessons that are taken up by activities
• Appreciation from SMT	• Stress due to a heavy load of lessons
• A sense of loyalty towards the school	• Frequent distractions during lessons
• On-going training	• Lack of training
• Support from parents	• Parents' dis-involvement
• Co-operation & collegiality in the staffroom	• Better distribution of work among teachers during activities
• ICT in the classroom	• Centralised administration
• A strong sense of community	• Old mentality of some teachers
• A warm, welcoming & pleasant environment	• A feeling of resentment that injustice is being done if some teachers with less qualifications are paid just as much as others more qualified
• Sharing of ideas	• Misunderstanding of role of LSA

• Autonomy in the classroom	• Loads of paperwork
• Being trusted by colleagues	• Not being trusted to do the job well
• Good leadership & management by SMT	• Non-conformity when applying rules
• Receptive students	• Lack of interest of students
• Positive feedback from SMT and colleagues	• Lack of appreciation of work done
• Being motivated	• Extreme abilities of students
• Headmistress always willing to invest in the school	• Overcrowded classrooms in the lower forms
• Well kept disciplined procedures	• Time constraints
• Availability of resources	• Teaching two subjects

Figure 1

Figure 1 is a representation of how the staff at St Martha feels about their teaching profession. The main factor cited which enables them to do their job well is the sense of collegiality and co-operation that exists in the staffroom.[101] A new entry commented on the continuous help she received from colleagues more experienced than her. Trust was another recurrent factor. Trust among staff members but mostly being trusted by SMT was the next most common factor. Both teachers and LSAs

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[101] Appendix 6 - St Martha - Question 1

53

admitted a sense of security when they are trusted to do their job well. They claim that in this way, a happy and pleasant environment reigns in the school. Most of the teachers are also thankful of the number of the resources that are easily available on the premises, from books to ICT equipment to apparatus in the labs etc. A very positive comment was that the headmistress is always willing to invest in the school. One respondent refers to a unique factor which is worth noting. Quoting her she writes, "The factor which enables me to do my job well is my own personal and Christian convictions that I am doing God's work; that the girls I am in contact with at the moment in time might be influenced by what I am capable of giving."

Despite these positive comments, at St Martha, there are still concerns of teachers that need attention. The major factor that inhibits them from doing their job well seems to be the heavy workload they have to keep up with from day to day.[102] Many claim that there is too much paperwork involved nowadays especially for class teachers. Some teachers teach more than one subject and too many different classes. The lower forms are also overcrowded and as one respondent points out "over-populated classrooms inhibits me a lot as it increases the chances that the students talk during the lesson."

The next common factor listed was the frequent occasions when lessons have to be missed because of extra curricular activities. One teacher affirms that "too many lessons are missed due to school activities that syllabus has to be crammed into a shorter period" while another claims that "extra curricular activities on top of the teaching load is a source of stress and distracts from energy needed with students."

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[102] Appendix 6 – St Martha – Question 2

Some members of the staff point out the lack of co-operation of some of the colleagues during such activities. They wish more of the staff could be involved so that the work is more evenly distributed. "So much grumbling could be avoided if we put up with each other when activities arise" is the advice of one particular member of the staff.

The LSAs at St Martha have their own concerns too. These are:

- The misunderstanding of some teachers re the role of an LSA

- Not being informed of changes concerning the student with the LSA

- Lack of understanding by some teachers about the special needs of the student

- Not being given lesson plans in advance by some teachers

- More feedback is required from teachers to support LSAs in the learning process of each subject, taking into account the student's needs.

Other concerns mentioned by the respondents, in general, were individualistic in nature, yet still worth noting. They are:

- Not enough knowledge/training, for example, for mixed ability teaching to do differentiated learning

- Insecurity when instructions are not clear

- When teachers are intolerant to diversity

- Disinterest of parents concerning academic behaviour of their child

- Negative criticisms with no suggestion for improvement

- Decisions taken by SMT prior to consultation with staff

- Lack of consideration of suggestions from the staff

What follows now are the responses of the two open-ended questions of the staff at

St Jude.[103] They are summarised in tabular format as shown in figure 2:

St Jude

Factors which enable the staff to do their job well at St Jude	Factors which inhibit the staff from doing their job well at St Jude
• Good communication with SMT	• Unpredictable reactions from SMT
• Co-operation in the staffroom	• Lessons missed because of activities
• Trusted by SMT	• Not enough appreciation from SMT
• Being motivated	• Too much paperwork
• Modern approach in leadership skills by SMT	• More co-operation between teachers and LSAs
• Autonomy in the classroom	• Overpopulated classes
• A supportive environment	• Classroom too small for the number of pupils in class
• Support from parents	• Time constraints
• Receptive students	• Non-conformant behaviour of students
• Availability of resources	• Limited resources
• Good relationships with LSAs	• Lack of training
• Enough time for organisation and planning	• Unfounded criticism from inexperienced parents
• Realistic time-tables	• Heavy workload

Figure 2

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[103] Appendix 6 – St Jude – Questions 1 & 2

Although 6 out of the 38 respondents chose not to answer the first open-ended question[104] Figure 2 indicates that there are similarities between St Jude and St Martha.

The major factor which enables the staff at St Jude to do their job well is the trust, support, encouragement and appreciation they get from colleagues and students but mostly from the SMT. One respondent writes, "I feel trusted and appreciated by pupils ─ who cannot dissemble, by my colleagues and by SMT who, innovatively, convey their appreciation as and when the circumstances to do so arise. This is a constant incentive to believe that what I do is good and, to believe in myself enough that I can do better, were I to try." Others add, "SMT listens, empathises on a personal basis" and, "The trust given by the SMT that allows me to teach the way I think is best."

An LSA, who refers to the leadership style of the SMT at St Jude points out, "SMT has a very modern approach in leadership skills. As an LSA I am given the opportunity to adopt the best programme for the needs of my student."

The staff at St Jude believes that this kind of atmosphere in the school makes it a happy place where they can get good job satisfaction. 39.5%[105] point out the clean and friendly environment that reigns at St Jude while 28.9% mentioned the autonomy of being allowed to do what is best in their subject for the students. Some of the comments are:

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[104] Appendix 6 – St Jude – Question 1
[105] ibid

"The possibility of being able to lead the class and deliver the lessons in any preferred way."

"The leeway and support given to implement new ideas."

 "Freedom to try new approaches."

"Autonomy over what teaching methods to employ in class (however often limited by available resources and physical space)"

At St Jude, one more respondent plus the previous six failed to answer the second open-ended question.[106] The major concerns are due to time constraints, limited resources especially ICT related and limited space in the classrooms. The lack of space is understandable as St Jude is a small school which was built much earlier than St Martha. 13.2% of the respondents also mentioned the crammed time-table which allows less time for better organisation and planning. This is a factor which is found even at St Martha. Missing lessons because of activities is, however, less dominant at St Jude.

39.5% of the staff at St Jude pointed out specific factors which can inhibit them from performing well in their teaching profession. The following quotes represent a few of these:

"Highly structured paperwork that becomes very demanding to keep up with daily."

"A whole-school disciplinary system that doesn't match my preferred means of dealing with students."

"Lack of supportive measures to be able to cater for students with over than average abilities and are not statemented; hence are not assigned an LSA."

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[106] Appendix 6 – St Jude – Question 2

"Lack of familiarity with technological aids, especially IT, that can be used to advantage in the classroom."

Over and above all the comments, one member of the staff felt that being misunderstood and not given the chance to speak out in defence is, in her opinion, a factor which inhibits her from doing the job well.

Data analysis of the Pupils' Questionnaire

St Martha

The questionnaire was attempted by twenty student council members representing a cross-section of the 394 pupils attending St Martha. The aim of the questionnaire was to collect pupils' views on a number of questions related to the to the 'Students' Voice'. They were asked about *pupil enjoyment in school*, *sharing of ideas about their learning and the school*, and *how much they are listened to.*[107] I thought it would be a valuable exercise to discover what the pupils thought on these issues.

On average, the questionnaire had taken about eight minutes to complete by the older students while it had taken a quarter of an hour for the thirteen year olds and under. I was present when the questionnaire was implemented. The pupils tackled it seriously and I could see they were enjoying it. None of them copied. Being consulted made them feel important. As council members they knew that their duty was towards the improvement of the school.

The age groups are as shown in figure 3.

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[107] Appendix 2

Council members at St Martha

Age	No of Pupils
15	7
14	5
13	3
12	4
11	1

Figure 3

Only one pupil noted that she is not totally contented at St Martha because of two girls that annoyed her sometimes. The rest said they were happy because of various reasons. They agreed on the clean, safe, pleasant and disciplined school environment, the presence of their friends and friendly teachers who care about them, almost always interesting lessons and yearly activities. A fifteen year old refers to St Martha and says she is happy because "there is a friendly atmosphere. It is run with a certain discipline which we will treasure later on in our lives! The teachers are friendly and we have a guidance group which may be very useful."

The students point out that they usually share their opinions and ideas about school and their learning mostly with their parents and friends. Most of them affirm with conviction that the teachers listen and try to do something about what the pupils tell

them. The rest say that this only takes place sometimes. Here are some of the comments:

"Some of them do but some of them don't care."

Not all of them; some just say that they will answer in the next lesson but they never do."

The council members believe that this is not the correct approach. It is important that teachers listen to their ideas because

"This is a way to improve our school from the students' point of view."

"After all we are an important part of the school."

"Our ideas are passed on to administration. However we don't always get a fair view from the administration."

In the pupils' opinion, when they are listened to they can obtain new opportunities in activities, ways of school life and the daily routine. It makes them feel that they are someone to the school and not just a number or a name. When teachers listen to them the relationship between student and teacher is enhanced and becomes much healthier. Then learning can also improve because lessons can become more interesting and in turn more positive behaviour takes place. St Martha would be a happier place for everyone, is what the students claim. One student sums it all up, "It improves our way of learning by listening because we feel that we matter and so we can learn more heartily."

The council members at St Martha are aware that they can voice their concerns during the monthly council meetings. But these are usually their concerns and do not

always represent the views of their classmates. Unfortunately, as one student points out, "most students do not take seriously their representatives in the council." A recommendation is that "the school might take each and every class once a month and listen to their opinions and problems they have" or "to have sessions at the end of the year for evaluation so that the year after there will be an improvement." A fifteen year old expects sincerity from the teachers. They should "listen carefully and show they care, but to answer reasonably and show us if they do agree or don't." Some students suggested frequent questionnaires but the majority preferred classroom discussions.

The pupils' responses at St Martha turn out to be interesting eye-openers. As suggested, by the students themselves it would certainly be worthwhile repeating the questionnaire on an annual basis. This is also a recommendation of the pupil council members of St Jude.

St Jude

At St Jude the pupils in the council add up to ten. The smaller number is as expected since St Jude has a lower intake of pupils than St Martha. The distribution in ages is as shown in figure 4.

The pupils' responses at St Jude are not as indicative as those of St Martha. Most of them confessed that they are happy mostly because of their friends and caring teachers who understand them. Only one fifteen year old does not conform. She is happy for the same reasons as the rest but not so contented because, in her opinion,

the school is not that good and she thinks that SMT can definitely make some changes in the school.

Council members at St Jude

Age	No of Pupils
15	3
14	2
13	1
12	2
11	2

Figure 4

Pupils at St Jude also share their ideas about their school life and learning with their family and friends. One pupil pointed out the importance of PSD[108] lessons. They agree that teachers listen to them and try to help them in some way or another. None of them answered negatively. This way they feel respected and confident and can therefore do better in their studies.

The recommendations are similar to those of St Martha. However, one student came up with the idea of having a suggestion box in each class.

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[108] PSD meaning Personal and Social Development

Data Analysis of Head teachers' Interview

The results of the head teachers' interview will now be considered. Two head teachers are involved, one who is religious and is 80 years old, the principal at St Martha who has been leading the school for forty years and the other, a lay principal at St Jude, still in her early forties, with just one year four months of principal ship. Two extremes, I would say and so worth noting. The schools they lead are both Catholic Church schools which have the same Foundress. St Martha is, however, larger and more modern than St Jude.

Indeed the aim of the interview was to examine the concept of Catholic education and leadership in the two schools since locally Church schools with lay head teachers are on the increase. I am aware that my research is only limited to two schools but I thought it would be a valuable exercise to start from two such schools whose religious order I was familiar with. Further study on lay principal ship in other Catholic Church schools with a different charisma can be carried out by other researchers in the near future.

17 questions[109] were put forward to the head teachers who both preferred to answer in writing in their own time. I started off my analysis by obtaining a general overview of the responses. Then I continued by comparing. I had to follow this path to reach my aim.

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[109] Appendix 3

The responses to the first four questions[110] clearly distinguish the two headteachers. At St Martha, the principal had been asked to take up the job by her Superiors. She could not object because of the vow of 'Obedience'. This means she underwent no formal preparation for the post of headship. The situation is different for the head at St Jude. It was a natural progression in her career. Considering headship as a vocation, she is able to implement what she believes in and worked and studied for. She feels it was a tangible chance to make a difference. She is a past-pupil of the school and considers the school community as her second home. She admits that she had worked in state schools but never felt the sense of community there. She feels that the ethos at St Jude is important for her, which is why she chose to work as headteacher in a Church school and not in any other school.

Unlike the head at St Martha, she did have formal preparation for headship. She has a Masters in Education that focussed on qualitative research in the identity formation of adolescent girls and the impact of the formal school curriculum. She also has a post-grad Diploma in Educational Administration and Management. Her diploma thesis was based on reflections and observations of the administrative practices in a large state secondary school in the UK following a two-week visit.

Both heads were then confronted with the issues of distributed leadership. The head at St Martha thinks this means shared responsibilities and the sharing of different talents. For her, the pros of distributing leadership more widely results in teamwork and sharing of workload but the organisation of it all may be time consuming. The leadership at St Martha is distributed in the school according to the demands of the

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[110] Ibid

school. Assistant heads, teachers, Health & Safety teacher, Head girl, Prefects, Student Council and Ancillary Staff all have a good knowledge of their roles and what is expected of them.

The head at St Jude outlines openly what distributed leadership means. Quoting, she writes, "Distributed leadership involves identifying the right members of staff who I feel I can trust to pass on the Catholic vision and ethos of the school together with a level of expertise that I can trust; delegating areas of responsibility that are clearly defined; providing resources; putting into place structures that enable these members of staff to work on their own initiative yet at the same time providing for regular meetings and allocating time for discussion with me and the leadership team." She believes there is a much better chance of success for the school if the 'ownership' of the stakeholders is strengthened. She mentions that if the staff take initiative and feel empowered they would be valued for their contribution. New perspectives and more creative synergy would help with improving practices. She admits it is impossible for the Headteacher to be everywhere, all of the time; by distributing leadership, she claims the day-to-day running of the school is smoother. She continues to write, "It is an excellent example of teaching-by-doing and passing on the message to all stakeholders [students, parents, staff] that the school is a community that depends on teamwork."

The reason against distributing leadership more widely at St Jude is similar to what the head at St Martha stated re time-consuming. The principal at St Jude explains that, "the final responsibility always lies with the Headteacher and a lot of emotional energy and time needs to be invested to make sure that the staff members entrusted

with distributed leadership are mentored well. The Headteacher who believes in distributed leadership must make sure not to simply pay lip-service to this; when things work out differently to what was expected by the Head, and she has to bear the brunt of final responsibility, the load may feel heavier to carry. Nonetheless this should not mitigate against trusting in distributed leadership."

When asked how leadership is distributed at St Jude, the headteacher mentions the separate roles of the Assistant head, the Head of Department, Mistress of Discipline, Health & Safety teacher, Pastoral Team, 'Senior LSA' and the role of three senior teachers, two of which have the mentioned specific duties of discipline and health and safety. These three senior teachers are called upon to take over the daily running of the school on the rare occasion when both the assistant head and head are away from the school premises.

Such claims on distributed leadership by both heads will be tested in the next section when results of all the questionnaires of teachers and LSAs and pupils are compared with the responses of the heads.

Being a religious, it was not necessary for the headteacher at St Martha to have any preparation for spiritual leadership. Yet, she still welcomes any opportunities to enhance this role. She feels comfortable expressing her faith convictions to the pupils and staff and still finds time for her own spiritual growth and development. She adheres to the school's mission statement by keeping in mind the Gospel values of forgiveness and compassion; by observing the values of her Foundress who used to say, " With what I have received I do the good I can" and by doing God's glory. She

tries to be a servant leader with Jesus as her model by being ready to help all those in need and by being ready to undertake any task for the good of others.

The principal at St Jude admits that her formal preparation for headship did not prepare her for the spiritual leadership role of headship. However, she did accept any opportunity to develop this spiritual role. She claims to have attended a workshop with Professor Gerald Grace for headteachers of Church schools. She frequently reads Professor Grace's publications. She also attended other seminars organised by the Secretariat for Catholic Education whenever they were available. She feels she is comfortable in expressing her faith convictions to both the pupils and staff, but she is also conscious that sometimes this has to be handled sensitively because of the difficult circumstances individuals may be passing from. She suggests three ways of how her daily actions may influence the successful realisation of the school's mission statement[111]. She writes:

1. "I plan assemblies three times a week with care, many times closely tied to the Gospel and the writing of the Foundress

2. I do my best to ensure that lesson allocations and class practices are as inclusive as possible

3. I plan space in the school calendar for a number of activities that provide for a holistic an education as possible."

She then cites two examples of how her actions may model those of Jesus as a servant leader. She mentions how hard she works to provide a caring community for

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[111] P.4

the disadvantaged in her community and that she tries her best to create an inclusive community for the staff and students. Both heads definitely agree that the headteacher should strive to be a reflection of Christ in all she says and does but the principal at St Jude admits that being human this is sometimes a tall order and needs constant self-discipline, prayer and reflection on the part of the headteacher.

The two head teachers were also asked to name two or three distinguishing characteristics of an effective Catholic school headteacher. As an answer the head at St Martha mentions justice, dedication and availability while the headteacher at St Jude believes that she can lead her school effectively by

1. Being a *Significant Other* in the lives of the disadvantaged student, i.e. creating structures and spaces to listen to and value the disadvantaged students [be they low achievers, students with difficult socio-emotional baggage, the economically poor] and to make them feel they belong to a community that cares for them.
2. Working for the *Common Good* and not simply individual success
3. Walking the talk … being a *witness* to the Gospel, not simply a preacher.

Finally, in answer to the most rewarding and the most frustrating aspects of their role as heads, the responses were very different. The principal at St Martha considers the spiritual and temporal growth as the most rewarding while the principal at St Jude is satisfied when she sees disadvantaged students feel they belong and have ties to the school even once they leave and when her decisions and actions make a difference. At St Martha the head is frustrated when parents resist her effort to help the children

improve and live their Gospel values and when she hears that some girl went astray. Too much bureaucracy and paperwork, collecting and recording of information is what frustrates the head at St Jude because this results in precious time taken away from contact with staff and students.

Comparison within and between Schools

They say that comparisons are odious. Yet, I believe, a tentative in this direction should help me reflect on the findings of my research. The comparison in this section is carried out with three themes in mind. Namely, *Listening as a School Culture, Distributed Leadership* and *Servant Leadership.*

Listening as a School Culture

In an attempt to find out whether there exists a culture of listening at St Martha, I evaluated and then compared the results of all the research I had carried out.

Figure 5, indicates that 56% of the staff at ST Martha believes that the SMT listens to the 'Students Voice' while 40% claim that the students are given opportunities to make suggestions about their learning. Discussions regarding such matter are usually brought up during the PSD lessons or during the Student Council meetings. At times they may be passed on to the Head girl or prefects. This means that appropriate structures do exist at St Martha whereby students can voice their concerns or ideas about school improvement. Yet only 27% of the respondents in the staffroom are convinced that the School values and acts upon what the pupils tell.

A bar chart titled "Percentage of Respondents" with the following data:

	A	B	C	D	E
St Martha	76%	56%	33%	40%	27%
St Jude	94%	82%	89%	52%	65%
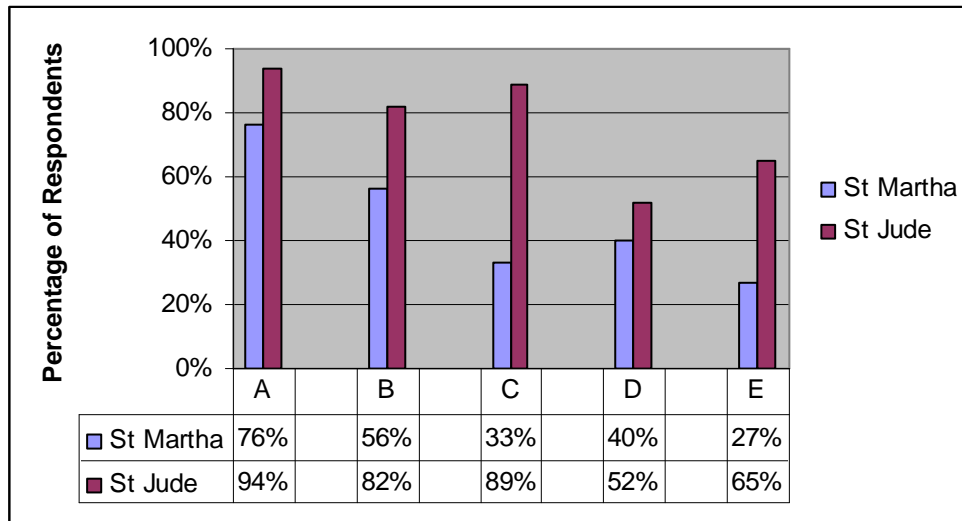
Figure 5

A = SMT listens to the 'Teachers' Voice'

B = SMT listens to the 'Students' Voice'

C = The School takes the feedback of parents into account

D = Students get opportunities to make suggestions about their learning

E = The School values and acts upon what pupils tell

The Council group of students themselves point out in their questionnaire that the administration does not take notice enough of what they suggest, even though most of the teachers do try to listen and help.

As a new member of the SMT myself, this result indicates to me that the School may not value enough the students' input or may be afraid that students may go overboard in their ownership of the school. Consequently, it is clear to me now that students need to see that their suggestions are taken seriously. If the school staff and more

important, the administration does not allocate enough time to consider these suggestions, the students may lose motivation to get involved.

The situation with the parents is similar. Only 33% of the respondents (fig.5) think that the School takes the feedback of parents into account. This is quite a low percentage considering the fact that St Martha is a Catholic Church school which believes in itself to be a community and not an institution. St Martha must find ways and means of how to communicate better with the parents and appreciate their feedback better.

In general, on the evidence of my research, the teachers and LSAs at St Martha (94%)[112] feel that they communicate well with the assistant heads while 76% believe that the SMT listens to their opinions. This is a good percentage which can still be improved. It is vital that the administration listens to the 'Teachers' Voice' because they, the teachers, are the ones who are present in the classroom with the pupils. It is very difficult for the principal to keep in touch with what is happening in the school from day to day unless she relies on her ambassadors which are the teachers and LSAs, council members, Head girl and prefects. Of this list, I would say that the LSAs are the most indispensable. They are the ones who are constantly in the classroom even during change of lessons when undesirable behaviour usually takes place. They are the ones who get to know the pupils best. Therefore, it remains to be seen whether St Martha can improve its listening skills.

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[112] Appendix 4, St Martha, Statement 4*

The situation at St Jude appears to be different. Figure 5 indicates higher percentages, some of which are significantly different. It appears that this school values much more the students input. 65% of the staff as opposed to the 27% at St Martha claim that the school values and acts upon what pupils tell. There also seems to be better structures and systems of how parents at St Jude can forward their feedback. At least 89% of the respondents think it to be so against the mere 33% response of St Martha. In fact, even the council members of St Jude indicated this positive situation in their open-ended answers of the questionnaire. None of the members complained that the SMT was not receptive to their suggestions.

Hence, these results lead me to think that St Jude must be more opened to 'listening' than St Martha.

Distributed Leadership

The extensive literature on Catholic School Leadership is indicative that schools at present have increased their interest in distributed leadership. This is why I chose to do my research at St Martha and St Jude.

Figure 6 indicates that 50% of the teachers and LSAs at St Martha do not believe that decisions regarding whole-school policy should be made essentially only by SMT. 45% of the staff at St Jude agree on this too. The chart also shows that, with almost equal percentiles in both schools, the majority are given opportunities to show their potential as a leader and to involve themselves in the work of the school. In other words, the results show that most of the staff in both schools endorses the notion of shared leadership and teacher leadership which are essential components of

distributed leadership. In fact, 71% of the staff who took part in the study at St Jude believes that the headteacher makes use of distributed leadership. The responses of the headteacher of St Jude are also indicative of this.

	F		G		H		I
■ St Martha	31%		50%		67%		85%
■ St Jude	71%		45%		63%		81%
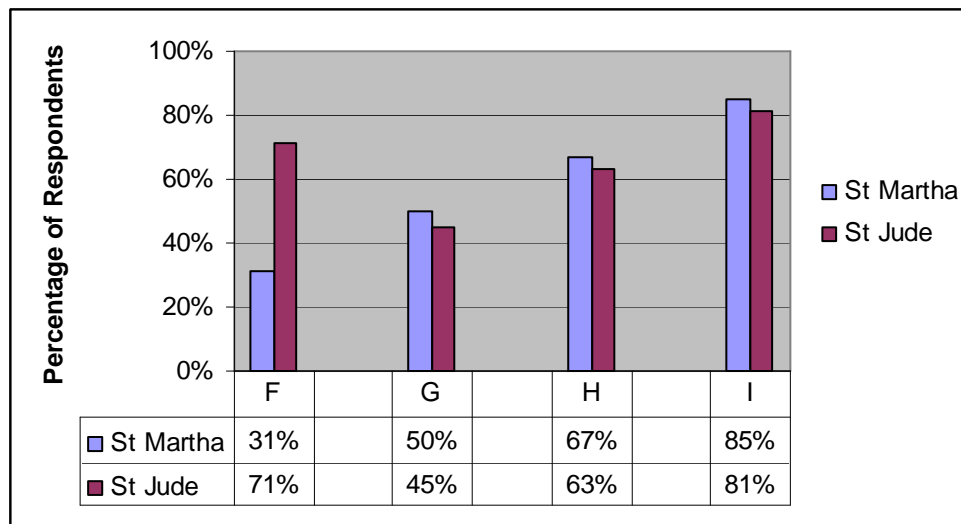
Figure 6

F = The headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership

G = Decisions regarding whole-school policy are made essentially by the SMT

H = I am given the opportunity to show my potential as a leader

I = I am given the opportunity to involve myself in the work of the school

So why do only 31% think that a distributed style of leadership is made use of at St Martha? This finding leaves much to be desired. It seems to say that although leadership at St Martha is distributed, there may be no formal structures as HOW it is distributed. Do middle managers exist? Is there a Pastoral Care/Ministry Team? How formal and useful is the Student Council? Is the Head girl just a figurehead in the school?

Servant Leadership and Lay Principalship

Servant leadership is the style of leadership that is most appropriate for Catholic Church schools. It is a way of life which is practised in such schools based on the Gospel values. An effective school leader who practises servant leadership keeps Jesus Christ as his model of leadership, He who tells us that He came to serve and not to be served. This type of leadership calls for humility that is seldom understood or admired. Although today many consider it strange for a person at the top to show humility, it is this virtue, once transmitted to all stakeholders in the school, which helps to uphold the ethos and values of the school. Figure 7 shows very clearly the strength of Catholic Education, both at St Martha and St Jude.

	J		K		L
■ St Martha	85%		94%		91%
■ St Jude	100%		100%		97%
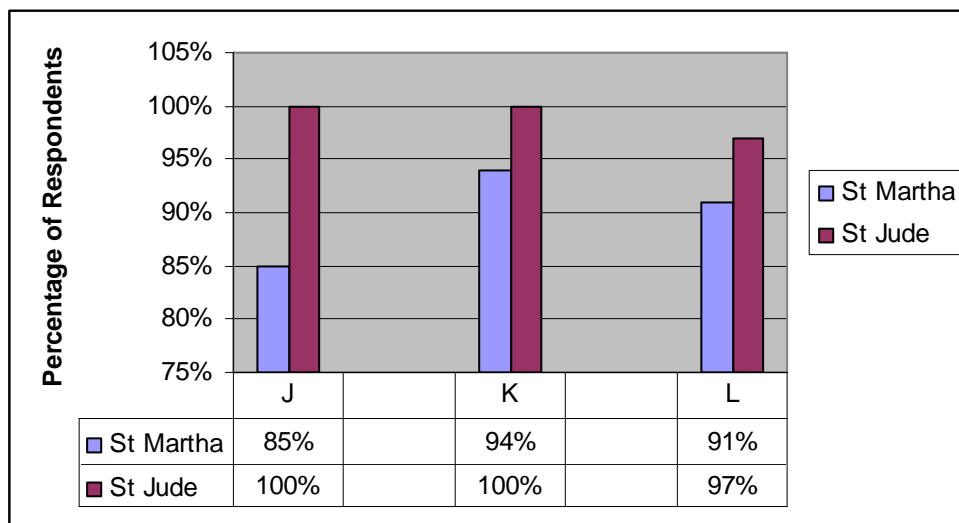
Figure 7

J = The SMT encourages teachers to exemplify the school ethos and
     values in the classroom

K = As a Church school the SMT emphasises prayer, Catholic values
     and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils

L = The Code of Behaviour is based on the school's ethos and values

The respondents in this study definitely agree that being Catholic Church schools they uphold the Catholic ethos of the school according to Gospel values. All percentiles are high in value.

In an independent study a year ago, the teaching staff at St Martha took part in a simple research[113] about the teachers' general perception of the spiritual health of St. Martha. Although only 44% answered and returned the questionnaire, the majority of the respondents believe that St. Martha is a Church school that stands firm in its ideal towards Catholic Education. In fact, 64% listed Catholic values[114] and their belief in Catholic Education as a priority in choosing to teach in St. Martha as a Catholic school. They feel that the majority of the staff is of the same opinion. This fact helps them to work towards a more holistic individualised education of the pupils. 45% feel this is even more possible since St. Martha is a small school where inclusion can be practised with more ease. Community building is therefore stronger, enabling them to feel more part of the school family, a situation which would be lacking in a larger workplace.

Although this simple research was not carried out at St Jude, the results of this dissertation and the percentages indicated in figure 7 show that the situation at St Jude is no different. The responses of the interview administered to the principal of this school leave no doubt about this.

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[113] Appendix 9
[114] Appendix 10

Naturally, at this point I cannot help asking: Are Catholic Church schools just as effective when the principal is lay? The results indicate that there seems to be no difference between St Martha and St Jude. I trust to remind the reader that the principal of St Jude has only been a principal for one year and four months while the headteacher at St Martha is a veteran with 40 years of experience. That of St Jude is lay and in her early forties while that of St Martha is Religious and eighty years old. So I continue to ask: Which determinant factor upholds Catholic education in Church schools irrespective of whether the head is religious or lay? I will attempt to search for an answer in the next section which will include an interpretation of the results of the research in the light of the literature review.

Interpretation

The interpretation of my findings is dealt with reference to three themes: *Listening to all Stakeholders, Style of Leadership* and *Imitating Jesus who leads from Among.*

Listening to all Stakeholders

The results of the research have shown that the principals of St Martha and St Jude both believe that a culture of listening is essential for effective leadership. The SMT of both schools listen to the 'Teachers' Voice' and the 'Students' Voice'. Yet how much do they act on what they listen to? The extensive literature presented to us suggests that effective school leaders should be actively involved in the communication process and not just listen passively. Robinson[115] suggests that leaders who communicate effectively "listen, probe, read, and respect their various

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[115] Robinson, B. *Leading People from the Middle,* p.51, (2009)

audiences." So the two schools in question need to find more time to listen to both the staff and the pupils. The data collected supports this statement.

In particular, pupil consultation offers a rich source of information. The pupils themselves have pointed out that they feel they form part of an important section of the school. Then what about parents? Are they another indispensable group the school should listen to? Unfortunately I have no answer to this question as the group did not form part of the research. However, it could be worthy of note for future study. Each member of the school community can contribute to school improvement. John Sullivan[116] reminds us that only by actively listening to the members of the stakeholder groups (staff, pupils, and parents), understanding their points of view and responding to their concerns can we hope to be effective in our mission as school leaders.

Style of Leadership

Earlier on in the literature review it was mentioned that school leaders can be more effective if transformational leadership is applied within the context of distributed leadership. The data presented in this dissertation is a clear indication that leadership at St Jude is better distributed than at St Martha.

St Martha seems to lack what Davies refers to as 'peer leadership'.[117] This does not mean that St Martha does not function as a professional organization. It just requires formal structures whereby a number of effective leaders, among which are heads of

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[116] Sullivan, J. *Leadership and Management,* p.92, (2002)
[117] Davies, B.*The Essentials of School Leadership*, p. 108, (2009).

department, teachers and learning support assistants are to find more time to work in conjunction with the head and assistant heads.

Research has shown that distributed leadership is not delegated leadership but one which involves interrelationships. As a new SMT member at St Martha, I believe that my school is moving more and more in this direction. In fact, in this year's SDP, the teachers and LSAs divided themselves in four action groups to present suggestions to later implement for school improvement. Each action group was autonomous from the SMT and the other groups. Incidentally, this had taken place after the staff had answered the questionnaire of this dissertation. I do not deny, though, that challenges do exist in moving towards more distributed forms of leadership. Both principals point out that, as stated in the literature review, this style of leadership is more time consuming since it entails more responsibility for planning and coordinating and for building culture and managing change.

Imitating Jesus who leads from Among

In the course of this research, I have come to understand that to imitate Jesus who leads from among, servant leadership is the most appropriate to a Catholic Church school. The results of the interviews with both head teachers have shown that both exercise this kind of leadership. Both believe that an effective Catholic school leader must change the orientation from self to others.

St Martha and St Jude are, first and foremost, Roman Catholic schools based on the Gospel teachings of Jesus but with an added dimension of the charisma of their Foundress. There are twenty similar secondary schools in Malta whose religious are

diminishing from day to day. Naturally, one asks: How will lay principals maintain the charisma of these schools in the future?

The data collected for this research shows that this is not impossible. One may argue that the research was only limited to two schools but the results may still give the reader an indication of the determining factor which may keep the charisma of the congregation ongoing in the school even in the absence of the religious.

In fact, the lay principal at St Jude believes that promoting the charisma of the Foundress and seeing that it remains active is a vital part of her role as head of the school. Being a past pupil herself, it came natural to her. But what happens if the lay principal was never a pupil at the Church school she is heading? How are such principals supported and assessed in their role of maintaining the charisma of the special character of the school? I believe that such a situation requires not only good preparation for principal ship but also adequate preparation in the charisma of the school and ongoing training distinctive of a Catholic Church school. The principals will then have the duty and responsibility for initiating any professional development for the staff in the specific charisma of the school. In my opinion, the charisma of the Order is continued by witness and teaching, which depends on the formation and spiritual disposition of the lay staff.

A scope for further research could be whether lay principals see the charisma as providing a purpose and value in today's world. Grace[118] claims that," the success of the Catholic school leadership appears highly influenced by the cultural and spiritual

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[118] Grace G., *Missions, Market and Morality*, (2002)

capital that a principal brings to the school." Hunt thinks this is not an easy task. He believes that "developing effective faith leaders who will serve as visionaries for each Catholic school is a daunting task for all who wish to see Catholic education flourish into the third millennium."[119]

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[119] Hunt C., Oldenski E. & Wallace J., *Catholic School Leadership, An Invitation to Lead,* p.201,(2000)

Chapter 5 ─ Conclusion

When I began this research study I had just been appointed as assistant head to St Martha. My aim was to reflect on how Catholic school leaders in secondary schools can be effective leaders in the light of the leadership of Jesus Christ by leading from among. I am grateful that during the course of this period of research, I have had the opportunity to reflect on my leadership practice as a new member of the SMT and on the possibility of making a difference to the team which consisted of the headteacher and one other assistant head. Now, I feel I am more knowledgeable in Catholic school leadership and as a consequence can be a better reference point to all stakeholders.

The study has shown that trust and a sense of partnership and community building reigns at St Martha. However, there is room for improvement in distributed leadership. I must admit that, at this point, I now feel part and parcel of the SMT and am just to blame for any deficiencies in leadership and management. The result of my research also indicate that as a team we need more time to listen to the pupils and where possible act on their suggestions. A better effort is necessary to enhance a culture of listening at St Martha. St Jude fares better in distributing its leadership and in listening to its pupils. The data collected is indicative of this.

An interesting point to note is that the results from both schools point out that a principal who has Gospel values at heart, who is well versed in the charisma of the school and who has a passion for Catholic education is qualified enough to lead a Catholic Church school irrespective of whether he she is lay or religious. I must keep

in mind, though, that my conclusions arise from the study of just two local Church schools.

In the next section I will put forward some recommendations which may be of help in future studies and which I hope can address the needs which have been identified.

Recommendations

The Mission Statement

As indicated in the analysis chapter, the spiritual health of St Martha fairs high. The staff is familiar with the mission statement which is usually a statement of the values the school upholds and how committed it is to all the stakeholders of the school.

Our mission statement is printed in bold print on the first page of the school regulations and is revised by the class teacher and her class students during the first week of every scholastic year. I am sure many of the teachers refer to it occasionally, to remind the students of its importance. It appears nowhere in the school building, so I believe some space in a corridor or better still somewhere near the entrance or main hallway of the school, should be found. I consider this as important because outsiders can get a good vision of the school when it is read. As a Catholic school we have the duty to understand the importance of the mission statement which should be reviewed every year especially when there are new recruits. Teachers should help the students familiarize themselves with it. However, the students find the school motto *"Believe and Achieve"* far easier to remember and implement.

Even Jesus had His own mission statement: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."*[120] We notice here that Jesus used words that were very familiar to His crowds because He was quoting from the book of the prophet Isaiah. This teaches us that a mission statement needs to be easily understood, repeated and recited by others as well as ourselves. Jesus also uses verbs to focus on others rather than Him. His mission statement is not passive but calls for concrete action. So Jesus should be an example to us all. We should, therefore, live by our mission statement just as He did and so I recommend that from time to time we ask ourselves, "Are we fulfilling the mission we set out to do?"

Distributed Leadership

It has been acknowledged in the literature review that if leadership is to be distributed we need to move away from thinking of it in terms of one individual. St Martha is past this initial step. I cannot say that distributed leadership is still emerging in the school because there is evidence that the school is functioning well. However, the data indicates that there is room for improvement. Formal structures need to be in place whereby leadership is distributed beyond the SMT to the staff, students and the parents who all take responsibility for sustainable improvement. I understand that there are challenges in moving towards more distributed forms of leadership so I recommend the following improvements for St Martha.

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[120] Luke 4:18-19

A Pastoral Care Team

In my thirty five years of service at St Martha I have felt and witnessed so much pastoral activity. Yet all was carried on in an informal manner. This is no longer sustainable in schools. Schools today face greater challenges to support students at every level, to provide appropriate training to staff and to address particular issues such as bullying, family instability, crisis response, special needs etc. Therefore a formal policy in the area of pastoral care is essential.

To initiate the Pastoral Care Team I would introduce first a network among all stakeholders to explain the true meaning of Catholic Education. This could be achieved through SDP meetings planned for the scholastic year. They could cover both the spiritual and administrative section of Catholic Education. In this way the spiritual and ongoing formation of the staff would be one of my priorities if this team could be set up.

The next step is then to prepare an inventory of all the supportive sectors already working in the school. Although this is surely to take some time, it is both necessary and important. The team should not consist only of school councillors, guidance teachers, PSD teachers and religion teachers but should also include a representative from all stakeholders, the school chaplain being no exception. Once the team is established, a school policy should then be formulated and a three year plan drafted to be reviewed every three years.

Some concrete proposals for the Pastoral Team at St Martha could be:

1. It must have a clear vision approved by all key stakeholders.

2. It must include representatives of all the support services in the school but not exclusive to these, rather open to new and occasional membership.

3. Clarity regarding the operation of the group.

4. Meeting time put aside for the team with longer meetings at the beginning and end of the year.

5. A good action plan that guides the team from term to term.

6. Review annually the working of the team.

A Pastoral Care Team definitely promotes strong collaborative leadership and involves all concerned in the life of the school. It allows for more leadership to be distributed.

Middle Managers

Middle management has been under the scrutiny of several researchers in the last decade. At St Martha, the so called 'middle managers' are the subject leaders in each department. They monitor the quality of teaching in their curriculum areas during subject meetings, once a week. They are not engaged with coaching teachers in their departments. The norm is normally to coach only newly appointed teachers especially if they are fresh out of university. All of this is carried out on a voluntary basis. There is no remuneration for such work in any Church school in Malta.

At St Martha, monitoring takes place much more than coaching. In my opinion, because schools are becoming so much more complex, the role of middle managers is crucial. Teachers who wish to act as middle managers must be committed teachers.

I suggest that at St Martha, the role of a middle manager is explained clearly to all the staff. This should be done through a whole day seminar as part of the CPD[121] of teachers because I believe that leadership in schools must be seen as an ongoing formation process for teachers. It is unrealistic to expect teachers to take on roles of responsibility without the necessary training. I think that such a seminar should not be one off but should be planned to take place on a regular basis. Hopefully, this will ensure that there will always be teachers ready to move on in their career and to deepen their commitment to Catholic Education especially if some type of subsidy is granted by either the Government or Secretariat for Catholic Education.

At the moment, St Martha needs a Positive Behaviour Co-ordinator and a School Assessment Co-ordinator. These are two middle management posts which two senior teachers can hold after undergoing the necessary preparation and support. The school is presently working towards this aim. It would be one other way of how leadership can be better distributed at St Martha.

Class Teachers

All teachers are leaders in the classroom which means that they need to involve themselves in management processes as well. The staffs at St Martha and St Jude both agree on this. Yet I believe that class teachers have an added dimension to their job; they are the first contact of the pupils at times of crisis especially when a difficulty arises academically or behaviourally. It gives the student the opportunity to deal with the issue before it escalates.

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[121] CPD meaning Continuous Professional Development

Class teachers are also often the go-betweens the SMT and the students and so should be a good resource for distributing leadership. Consequently, as an improvement, I recommend the following for class teachers for both St Martha and St Jude and any other school.

1. They should meet the SMT at least twice a term, at a time that suits most of them. The guidance teacher should attend where possible.

2. They should have registration time with their classes twice a week for ten minutes. I understand that this is difficult logistically because of timetabling if it was to happen at the same time, but this is not a requirement. Class teachers can choose when to use the 10 minutes.

3. Once a month, a class period is set aside for the whole school where each class has a session with their class teacher. The class teachers meet ahead of the session to prepare the agenda for the lesson. They can focus on codes of rule, uniform, spiritual and moral development etc.

The School Management Team

No school is perfect so there is room for improvement even by the SMT at St Martha. These are some recommendations:

1. In view of the external reviews, a self-evaluation process should be immediately implemented.

2. Emphasis needs to be placed on the real thing rather than on the accumulation of paperwork. Although everything needs to be documented for the sake of

the external reviews, the emphasis should be on effective teaching and learning.

3. The school is in need of a homework policy which we are working at. One important point is that homework should be within the limits of every student. This implies that when teachers are planning the lesson they must cater adequately for different cognitive levels, if necessary even setting differentiated teaching.

4. The school may benefit from a system of coaching and mentoring.

5. Since a Catholic school has the further duty to ensure that its curriculum is distinctive in nature, the SMT should dissect the National Minimum Curriculum and see how each part could be applied in the light of Gospel values so characteristic for a Church school.

6. Ideally, adequate time-tabling is necessary to provide time for teachers to attend courses as part of their continuous professional development. However, there may be time constraints that can make this very difficult.

Listening Strategically

In general, on the evidence of this research, I understand that the Learning Support Assistants and the pupils are two of the stakeholders that need more time to be better listened to.

The Gospels point out that Jesus was a strong listener. Likewise, as John Sullivan suggested in the literature review, if we hope to be effective in our mission as school leaders we should not only listen to all stakeholders but also understand their points

of view and respond accordingly. If we learn to listen well we are liable to promote a culture of collaboration.

Learning Support Assistants

The LSAs of St Martha have a number of concerns which were listed in the analysis. Since LSAs form part of an important section of the school, I recommend that adequate time is allotted to them and the teachers to meet regularly in order to plan together and evaluate their work with the pupils. As a member of the SMT I must make sure that the teachers pass on their lesson plans to the LSA at the beginning of each week. If an LSA is present in a class which I am observing, she must be included in my evaluation of the lesson. I should allocate enough contact time with her just as much as I do for the teacher. The LSAs are the ones who are in constant contact with the pupils; their feedback is crucial to the SMT.

Indeed LSAs at St Martha attend all staff and SDP meetings. They are regarded as important members of the staff and are respected for the dedication they show towards those pupils with special needs. However, communication between teacher and LSA is sometimes lacking. The INCO[122] of the Secretariat of Catholic Education is giving a helping hand in this. She is working to set up formal structures to bridge the gap between the teachers and LSAs. Support assistants will then feel more listened to and involved in school improvement.

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[122] INCO meaning Inclusive Coordinator

The School Council

Research shows that the School Council at St Martha is not so much accepted by the rest of the school. Therefore, I suggest that the SMT should promote their presence to a much higher extent within the school during assemblies and any school functions.

The members of the School Council are aware of their responsibility to be a serious voice for their peers at school. I know that we can gain valuable insights if we listen to them and see the school through their eyes, so I suggest that we as SMT meet the Student Council at least once every term. They did make it clear in the questionnaire that they should have a voice in areas of policy which directly affect them. They must understand, however, that quite often, identified problems may remain unsolved, despite being identified. On the other hand, listening to the 'Student Voice' will also empower the school to reflect on the differences between what the students are suggesting as necessary and what the school is actually providing. Such ways can certainly bring about school improvement.

The Head girl Team

St Martha includes another essential student group ─ the head girl and prefects. This group also needs restructuring. I suggest a school policy that improves the presence of the group in the school. The policy should be formulated by the staff with viable suggestions from the group itself. The team itself can administer an annual questionnaire to the rest of the pupils enabling them to formulate an agenda for school improvement which they can then forward to the administration.

The Parents

The parents are a stakeholder group which were not much referred to in this study. Yet, they should not be left unnoticed. Further studies can be carried out to gauge the parents' perception of the school and how much they are listened to. An annual questionnaire is recommended.[123]

The Way forward

Lay Principals

Lay Principals are on the increase in Maltese Church schools. As the literature review suggested, they are to be spiritually and professionally prepared for the job if they are to be committed to the distinctiveness and Catholic identity of the school. For future lay principals in Malta, I suggest that

1. The Secretariat for Catholic Education sets up adequate structures to train potential lay principals for Church schools.

2. When possible, the school itself allocates a transition time for mentoring of the new lay principal by the departing one.

3. A lay principal to a Church school must be familiar and knowledgeable with Church documents on Catholic Education. Consequently, CPD for lay principals in Church schools is essential since they require continuing growth in faith and vision.

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[123] Appendix 11

Final Reflections

In undertaking this research I came in contact with a wide range of literature on Catholic Education. The study is, however, by no means exhaustive especially in the field of lay principal ship. To my knowledge, there is no data available on the implications of lay principals in Church schools in Malta. Further studies can be carried out in the near future. In general, on the evidence of my research, I conclude that for Catholic school leaders to be effective leaders in the light of the leadership of Jesus Christ, they need to find more time to distribute leadership, to listen to all stakeholders and above all, to nurture their spiritual health.

I end with a quote from *Catholic School Leadership* by Thomas Hunt et al:

> From what source does the educational leader draw the courage, strength, and wisdom needed to be an effective manager and leader? What supports and sustains the leader of a community whose job is to inspire and lead? Only the leader, who takes his or her own physical, emotional, and spiritual health seriously, who takes the time to feed his or her own soul and psyche, can be an effective advocate for children and families in need, as well as an effective support and guide to staff.[124]

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[124] Hunt, Oldenski and Wallace, *Catholic School Leadership,* p258 (2000)

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APPENDIX 1

TEACHERS' & LSAs' QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire forms part of my Masters degree research. All data generated will be treated in confidence and no contributors will be identified. Isabelle Farrugia

Number of years in this school including the current school year.	
Number of years in other schools, if applicable	

	Kindly mark ✓ in the column that most closely approximates your feelings.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
	Senior Management Team (SMT)						
1	Educational leadership is the job, primarily, of the headteacher and assistant head.						
2	The SMT listens to teachers' voices.						
3	The headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership						
4	The assistant heads communicate effectively with the teachers and LSAs.						
5	The SMT encourages teachers to exemplify the school ethos and values in their classroom.						
6	The headteacher or assistant heads should take sole responsibility for communicating with parents.						
7	As a Church school, the SMT emphasises prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils.						
8	There is mutual respect and trust between the SMT and the staff.						
9	The SMT empowers teachers to use different teaching strategies to improve teaching and learning in class.						
	Teachers & LSAs						
10	All teachers are leaders in the classroom.						
11	There are opportunities for teachers to lead educational activities beyond their own classroom.						

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
12	Teachers are given opportunities for professional development that enhance student learning in their own subject area.						
13	Individual teachers take responsibility for communicating student progress and achievement to parents.						
14	Teachers are given opportunities to chair meetings.						
15	Teachers have an opportunity to discuss their professional work with the SMT on an annual basis.						
16	Teachers and LSAs are encouraged by the SMT to try out new ideas.						
17	All teachers and LSAs are involved in decisions which affect the whole school.						
18	Decisions regarding whole-school policy are made essentially by the SMT.						
19	When teachers and LSAs attend professional development courses, seminars or conferences they share their learning with colleagues						
20	I am not given the opportunity to show my potential as a leader.						
21	I am not given the opportunity to involve myself in the work of the school.						
22	The School listens to the 'Students' Voice.'						
23	I feel that the school is a satisfying and fulfilling workplace for me.						
24	All the staff contributes in the formation and implementation of the School Development Plan.						
25	There is mutual respect and trust among the staff.						
26	Teachers appreciate the feedback they get after a lesson observation by the SMT.						
	Parents						
27	Parents participate when they are asked to attend school activities.						

	.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
28	There are structures and systems in place for parents to volunteer to help during the year.						
29	The Parents Teachers Association communicates effectively with the school.						
30	Parents are informed regularly about the life and work of the school.						
31	The School has channels where parents can voice their feedback.						
32	The School takes the feedback of parents into account.						
	Students						
33	Students get an opportunity to make suggestions about their learning (e.g. subject choices, approaches to assessment, the learning environment).						
34	Systems are in place which ensures that students are supported in their learning.						
35	Students are empowered to assume responsibility, take risks and respond to change.						
36	The School values and acts upon what the pupils tell.						
	.The School						
37	The Code of Behaviour is based on the school's ethos and values.						
38	We work together, as a school community, to ensure that we are offering the best curricular opportunities for students.						
39	New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at staff meetings.						
40	New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at subject meetings.						
41	Every year the School strives to improve learning by prioritising specific actions.						
42	The School has a clearly written mission statement.						

<u>Open ended questions</u>

1. What factors enable you to do your job well?

2. What factors inhibit you from doing your job well?

APPENDIX 2

PUPILS' QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire forms part of my Masters Degree research. All data generated will be treated in confidence and no contributors will be identified. Isabelle Farrugia

1. How old are you?

2. Are you happy at school? Why?

3. With whom do you share your opinions and ideas about your school?

4. With whom do you share your opinions and ideas about your learning?

5. Do the teachers listen and try to do something about what you tell them?

6. Do you think it is important that the teachers listen to your ideas?

7. What can you gain if the teachers listen to you?

8. Do you feel that your ideas may have some influence over the way the School is run?

9. What might the School do to improve how we listen to your views and opinions?

10. How can listening to your ideas and opinions improve your learning at school?

APPENDIX 3

<u>HEADTEACHERS' INTERVIEW</u>

1. How long have you been a headteacher in this Church school?

2. Why did you become a headteacher?

3. Why did you choose to work as a headteacher in a Church school and not in any other school?

4. Did you undertake any formal preparation for headship?

5. How did this preparation prepare you for the spiritual leadership role of headship?

6. Since becoming a head, have you had any opportunities to develop your role as a spiritual leader?

7. What do you understand by distributed leadership?

8. What do you think are the pros and cons of distributing leadership more widely?

9. How is leadership distributed in your school?

10. Can you name two or three distinguishing characteristics of an effective Catholic school headteacher?

11. How comfortable are you in expressing your faith convictions to the pupils and staff?

12. Can you give two or three examples of how you believe your daily actions influence the successful realisation of your school's mission statement?

13. Do you agree with the statement that: *The Headteacher should strive to be a reflection of Christ in all she says and does*?

14. Can you give two or three examples of how your actions may model those of Jesus as a servant leader?

15. Do you find time for your own spiritual growth and development?

16. What do you consider to be the most rewarding aspect of your role?

17. What are the most frustrating aspects of your role?

APPENDIX 4

Results of Teachers & LSAs Questionnaire

Statement 1:*Educational leadership is the job, primarily, of the headteacher and assistant head*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	2	22	10	10	4	0
% Total	4%	46%	21%	21%	8%	0%

Statement 2: *The SMT listens to the teachers' voices*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	6	30	10	2	0	0
% Total	13%	63%	21%	4%	0%	0%

Statement 3: *The headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	3	12	21	7	5	0
% Total	6%	25%	44%	15%	10%	0%
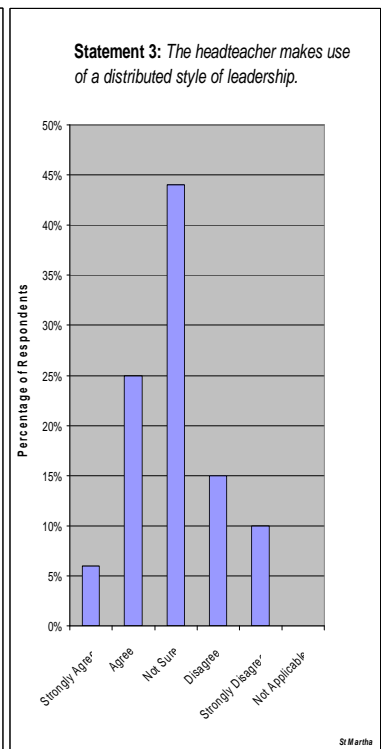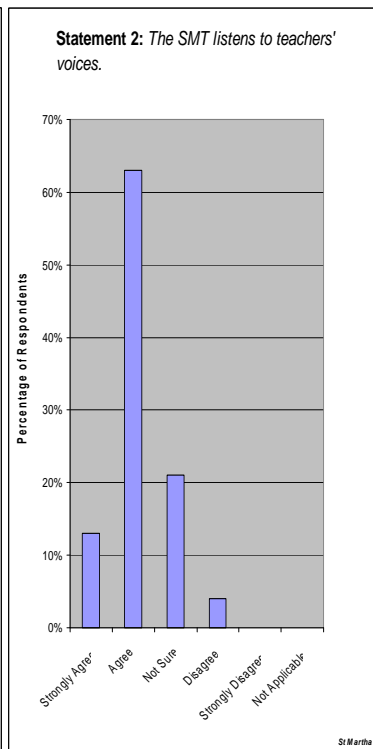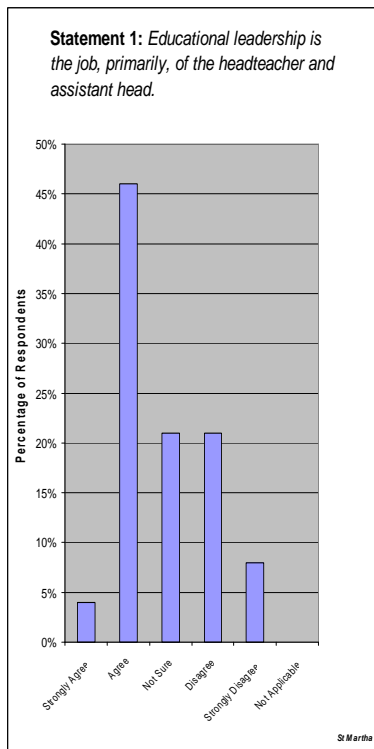
Statement 1: *Educational leadership is the job, primarily, of the headteacher and assistant head.*

Statement 2: *The SMT listens to teachers' voices.*

Statement 3: *The headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership.*

Statement 4 : *The assistant heads communicate effectively with the teachers and LSAs.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	9	36	3	0	0	0
% Total	19%	75%	6%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 5: *The SMT encourages teachers to exemplify the school ethos and values in the classroom.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	12	29	6	1	0	0
% Total	25%	60%	13%	2%	0%	0%

Statement 6: *The headteacher or assistant heads should take sole responsibility for communicating with parents.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	1	7	4	26	10	0
% Total	2%	15%	8%	54%	21%	0%
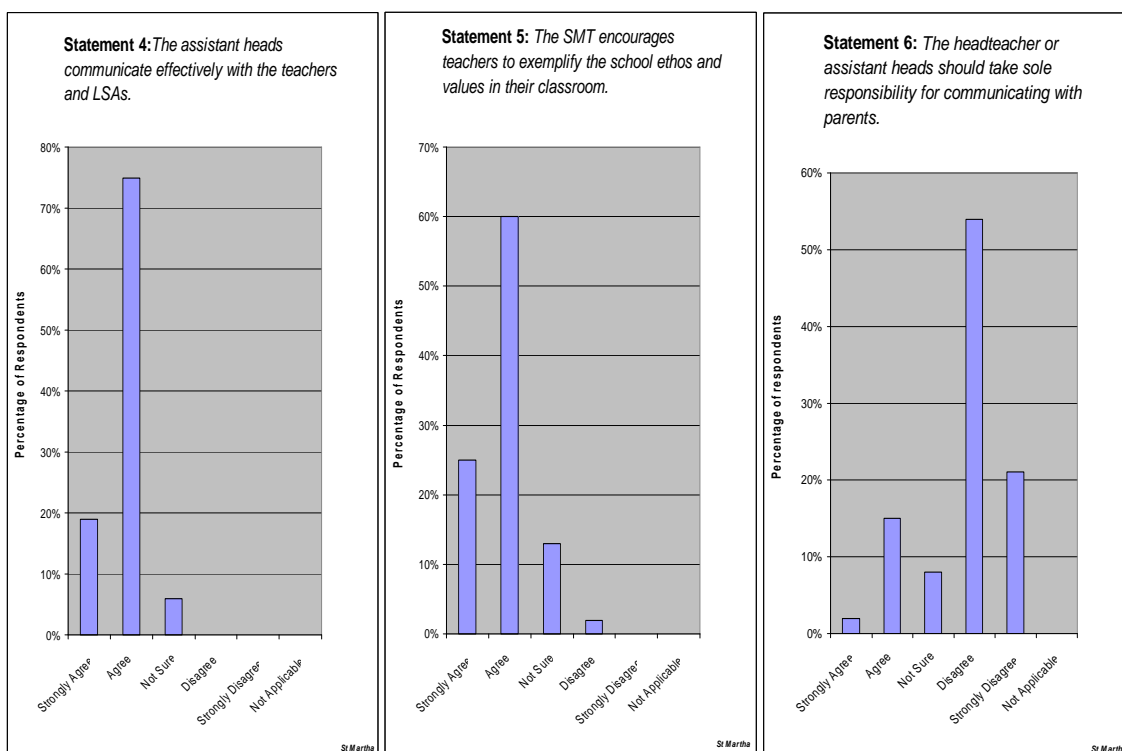
Statement 4:*The assistant heads communicate effectively with the teachers and LSAs.*

Statement 5: *The SMT encourages teachers to exemplify the school ethos and values in their classroom.*

Statement 6: *The headteacher or assistant heads should take sole responsibility for communicating with parents.*

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Statement 7:*As a Church school, the SMT emphasises prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	20	25	2	1	0	0
% Total	42%	52%	4%	2%	0%	0%

Statement 8: *There is mutual respect and trust between the SMT and the staff.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	16	26	5	1	0	0
% Total	33%	54%	10%	2%	0%	0%

Statement 9: *The SMT empowers teachers to use different teaching strategies to improve teaching and learning in class.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	9	27	9	2	1	0
% Total	19%	56%	19%	4%	2%	0%
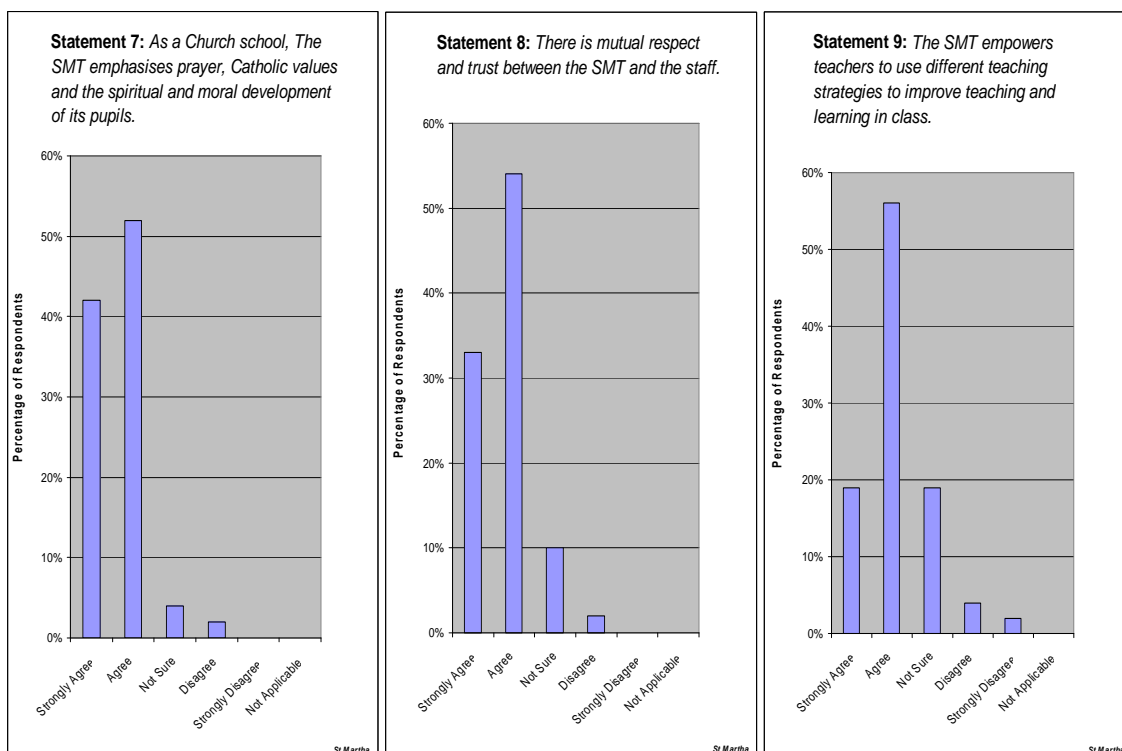
Statement 7: As a Church school, The SMT emphasises prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils.

Statement 8: There is mutual respect and trust between the SMT and the staff.

Statement 9: The SMT empowers teachers to use different teaching strategies to improve teaching and learning in class.

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Statement 10: *All teachers are leaders in the classroom.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	21	20	6	0	1	0
% Total	44%	42%	13%	0%	2%	0%

Statement 11: *There are opportunities for teachers to lead educational activities beyond the classroom.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	7	28	8	3	2	0
% Total	15%	58%	17%	6%	4%	0%

Statement 12: *Teachers are given opportunities for professional development that enhance student learning in their own subject area.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	9	25	10	3	1	0
% Total	19%	52%	21%	6%	2%	0%
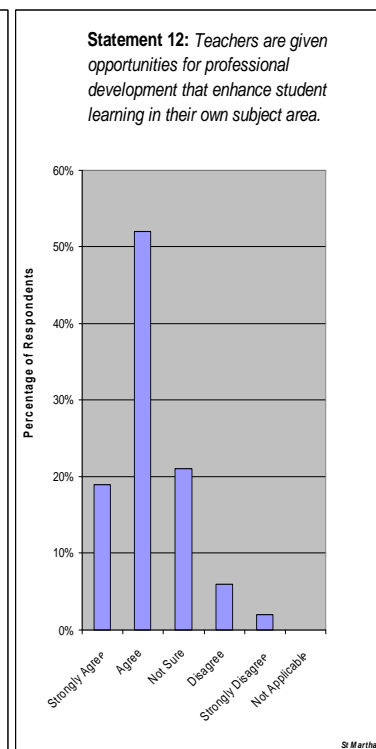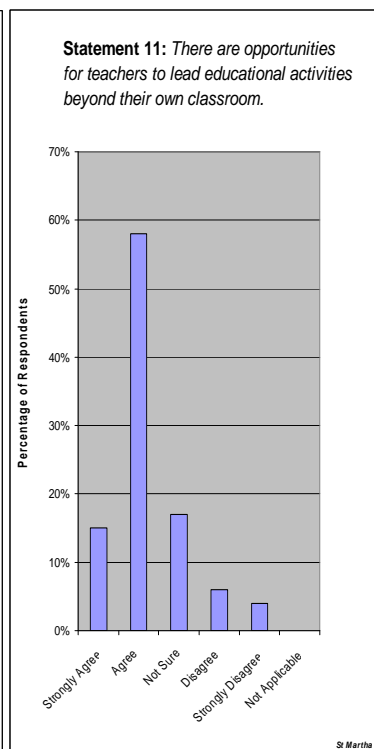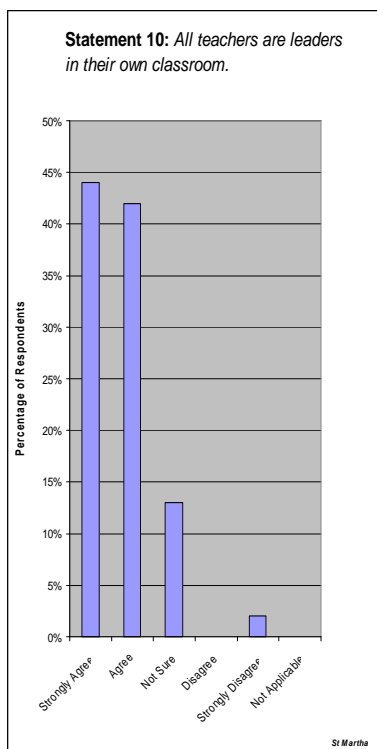
Statement 10: All teachers are leaders in their own classroom.

Statement 11: There are opportunities for teachers to lead educational activities beyond their own classroom.

Statement 12: Teachers are given opportunities for professional development that enhance student learning in their own subject area.

Statement 13: *Individual teachers take responsibility for communicating student progress and achievement to parents.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	2	32	11	2	1	0
% Total	4%	67%	23%	4%	2%	0%

Statement 14: *Teachers are given opportunities to chair meetings.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	1	11	26	9	1	0
% Total	2%	23%	54%	19%	2%	0%

Statement 15: *Teachers have opportunities to discuss their professional work with the SMT on an annual basis.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	10	25	10	3	0	0
% Total	21%	52%	21%	6%	0%	0%
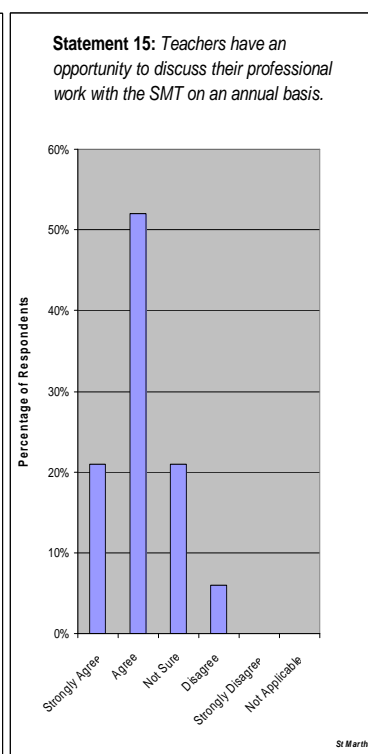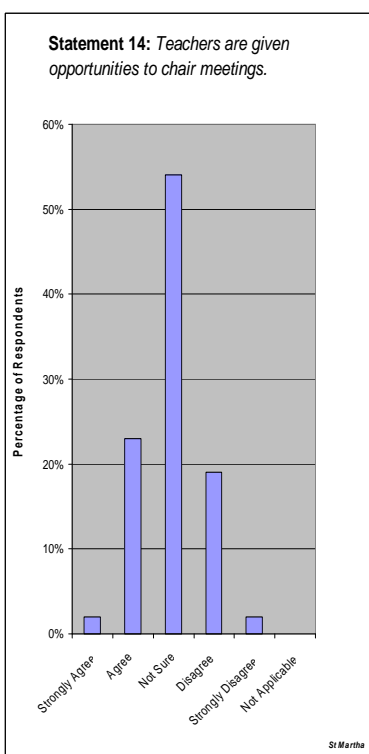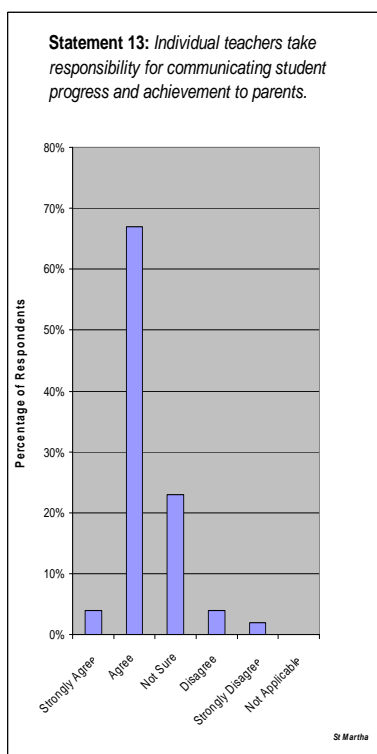
Statement 13: *Individual teachers take responsibility for communicating student progress and achievement to parents.*

Statement 14: *Teachers are given opportunities to chair meetings.*

Statement 15: *Teachers have an opportunity to discuss their professional work with the SMT on an annual basis.*

Statement 16: *Teachers and LSAs are encouraged by the SMT to try out new ideas.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	7	32	6	2	1	0
% Total	15%	67%	13%	4%	2%	0%

Statement 17: *All teachers and LSAs are involved in decisions which affect the whole school.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	7	22	5	12	2	0
% Total	15%	46%	10%	25%	4%	0%

Statement 18: *Decisions regarding whole-school policy are made essentially by the SMT.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	5	19	11	12	1	0
% Total	10%	40%	23%	25%	2%	0%
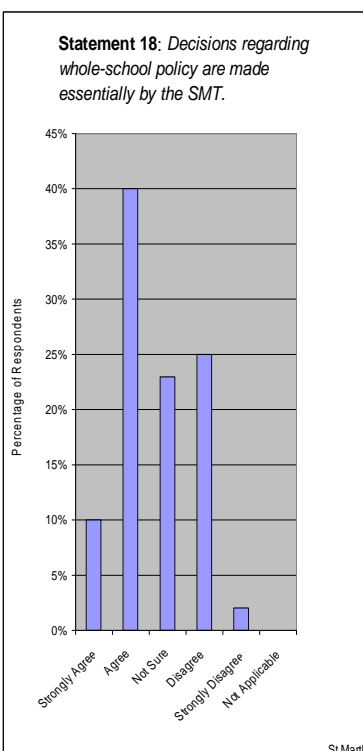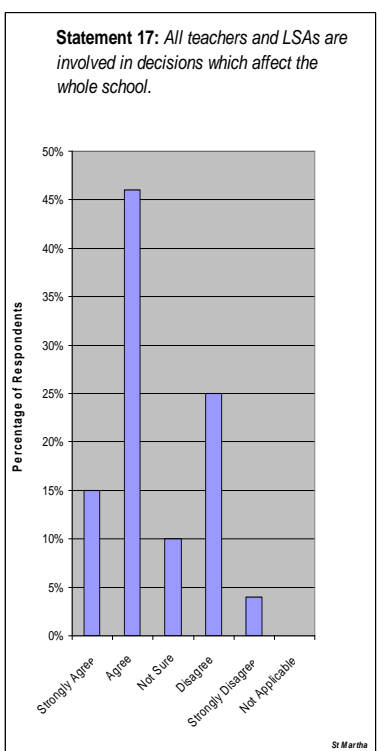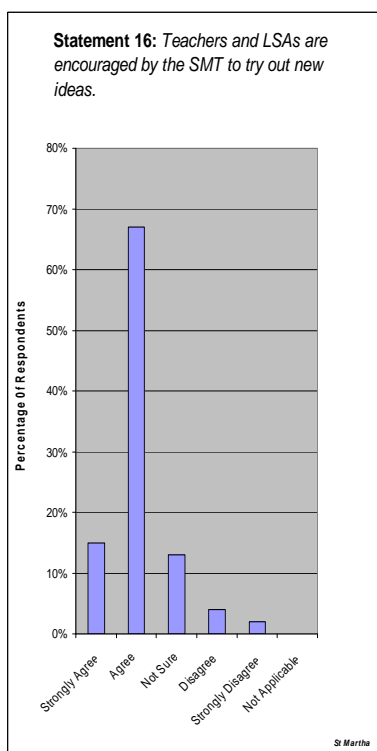
Statement 16: *Teachers and LSAs are encouraged by the SMT to try out new ideas.*

Statement 17: *All teachers and LSAs are involved in decisions which affect the whole school.*

Statement 18: *Decisions regarding whole-school policy are made essentially by the SMT.*

Statement 19: *When teachers and LSAs attend professional development courses, seminars or conferences they share their learning with colleagues.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	2	19	14	11	2	0
% Total	4%	40%	29%	23%	4%	0%

Statement 20: *I am not given the opportunity to show my potential as a leader.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	0	7	9	25	7	0
% Total	0%	15%	19%	52%	15%	0%

Statement 21: *I am not given the opportunity to involve my self in the work of the school.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	0	2	5	25	16	0
% Total	0%	4%	10%	52%	33%	0%
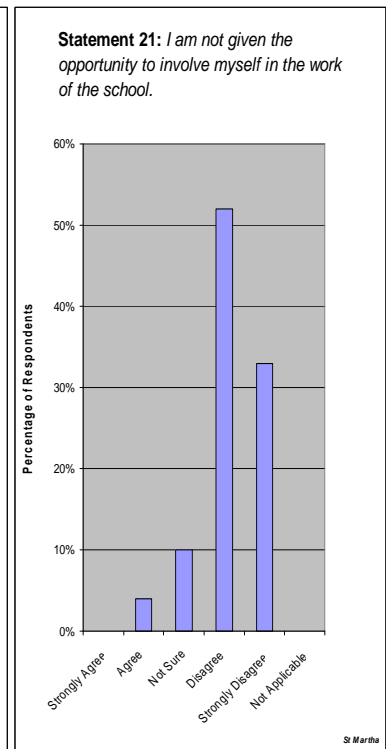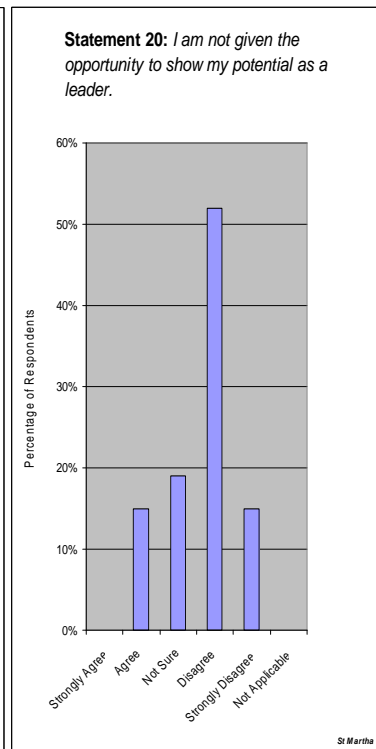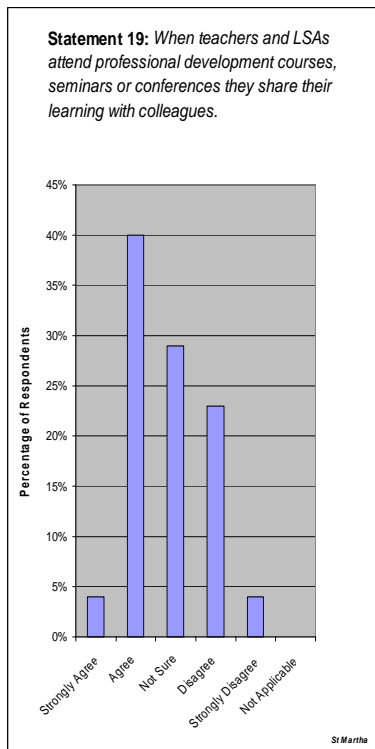
Statement 19: *When teachers and LSAs attend professional development courses, seminars or conferences they share their learning with colleagues.*

Statement 20: *I am not given the opportunity to show my potential as a leader.*

Statement 21: *I am not given the opportunity to involve myself in the work of the school.*

Statement 22: *The School listens to the 'Students' Voice.'*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	4	23	15	5	1	
% Total	8%	48%	31%	10%	2%	0%

Statement 23: *I feel that the school is a satisfying and fulfilling workplace for me.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	18	28	2	0	0	0
% Total	38%	58%	4%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 24: *All the staff contributes in the formation and implementation of the SDP.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	11	20	14	3	0	0
% Total	23%	42%	29%	6%	0%	0%
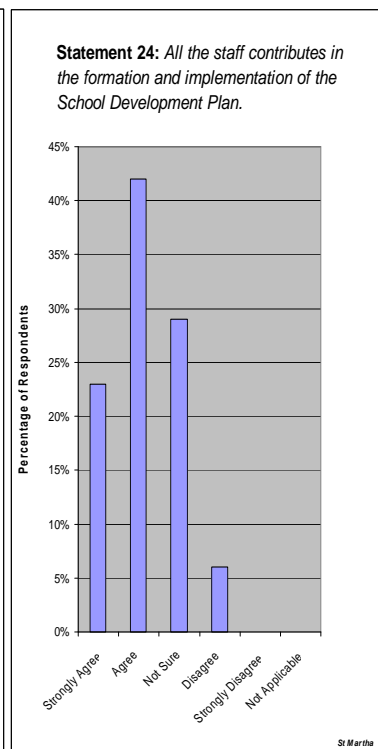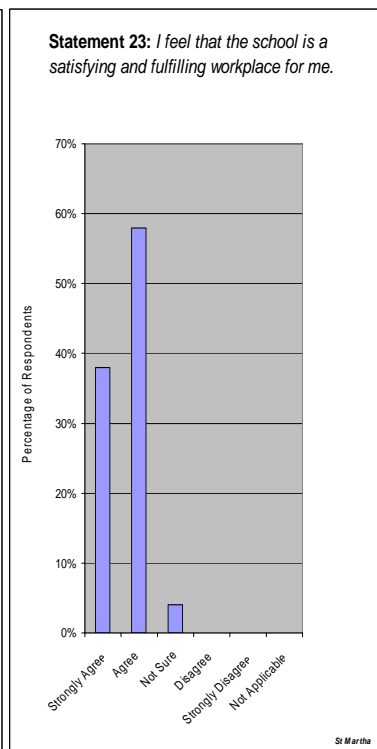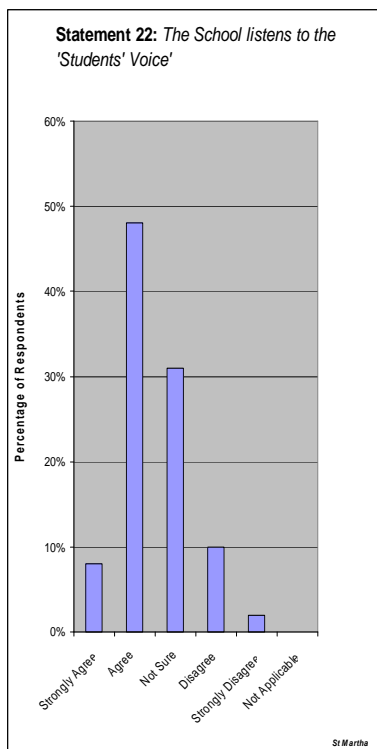
Statement 22: *The School listens to the 'Students' Voice'*

Statement 23: *I feel that the school is a satisfying and fulfilling workplace for me.*

Statement 24: *All the staff contributes in the formation and implementation of the School Development Plan.*

Statement 25: There is mutual respect and trust among the
staff.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	5	24	10	8	1	0
% Total	10%	50%	21%	17%	2%	0%

Statement 26: *Teachers appreciate the feedback they get after a lesson observation by the SMT.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	5	13	19	1	0	10
% Total	10%	27%	40%	2%	0%	21%

Statement 27: *Parents participate when they are asked to attend school activities.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	3	20	21	3	0	1
% Total	6%	42%	44%	6%	0%	2%
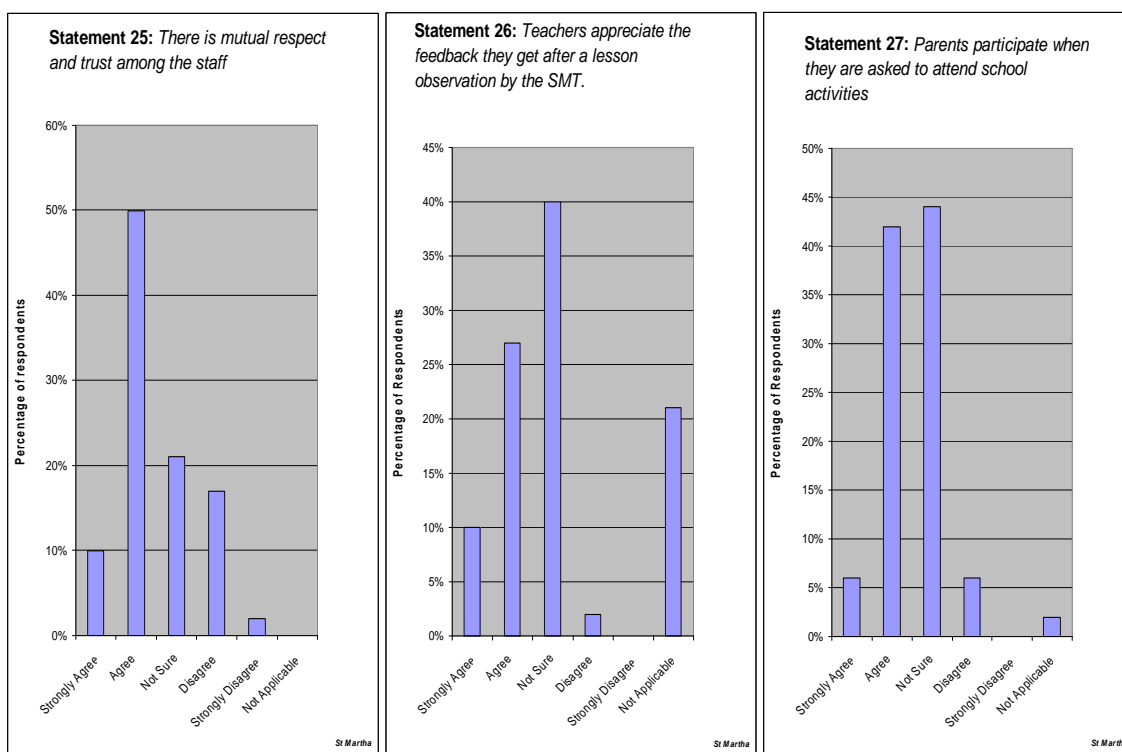
Statement 25: *There is mutual respect and trust among the staff*

Statement 26: *Teachers appreciate the feedback they get after a lesson observation by the SMT.*

Statement 27: *Parents participate when they are asked to attend school activities*

Statement 28: *There are structures and systems in place for parents to volunteer to help during the year.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	2	14	20	10	1	1
% Total	4%	29%	42%	21%	2%	2%

Statement 29: *The Parents Teachers Assocoation communicates effectively with the school.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	1	10	27	8	2	0
% Total	2%	21%	56%	17%	4%	0%

Statement 30: *Parents are informed regularly about the life and work of the school.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	6	20	18	4	0	0
% Total	13%	42%	38%	8%	0%	0%
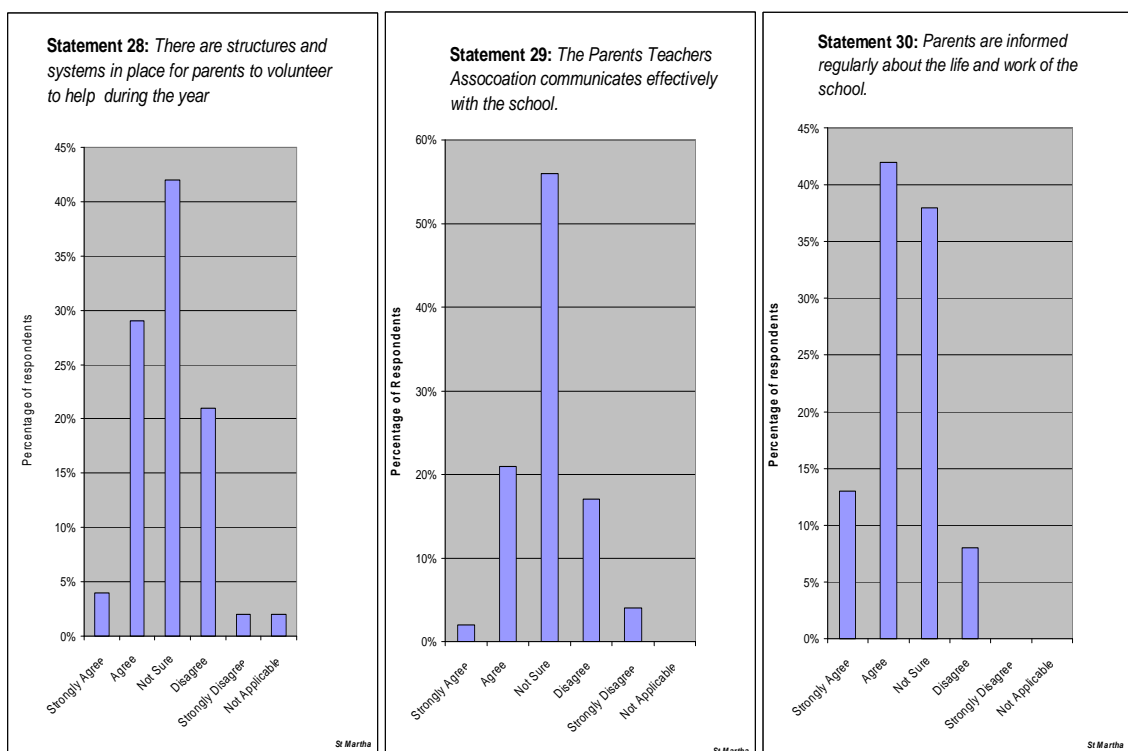
Statement 28: *There are structures and systems in place for parents to volunteer to help during the year*

Statement 29: *The Parents Teachers Assocoation communicates effectively with the school.*

Statement 30: *Parents are informed regularly about the life and work of the school.*

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Statement 31: *The School has channels where parents can voice their feedback.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	3	11	28	6	0	0
% Total	6%	23%	58%	13%	0%	0%

Statement 32:*The School takes the feedback of parents into account.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	2	14	31	1	0	0
% Total	4%	29%	65%	2%	0%	0%

Statement 33: *Students get an opportunity to make suggestions about their learning (e.g. subject choices, approaches to assessment, the learning environment)*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	7	12	9	17	2	1
% Total	15%	25%	19%	35%	4%	2%
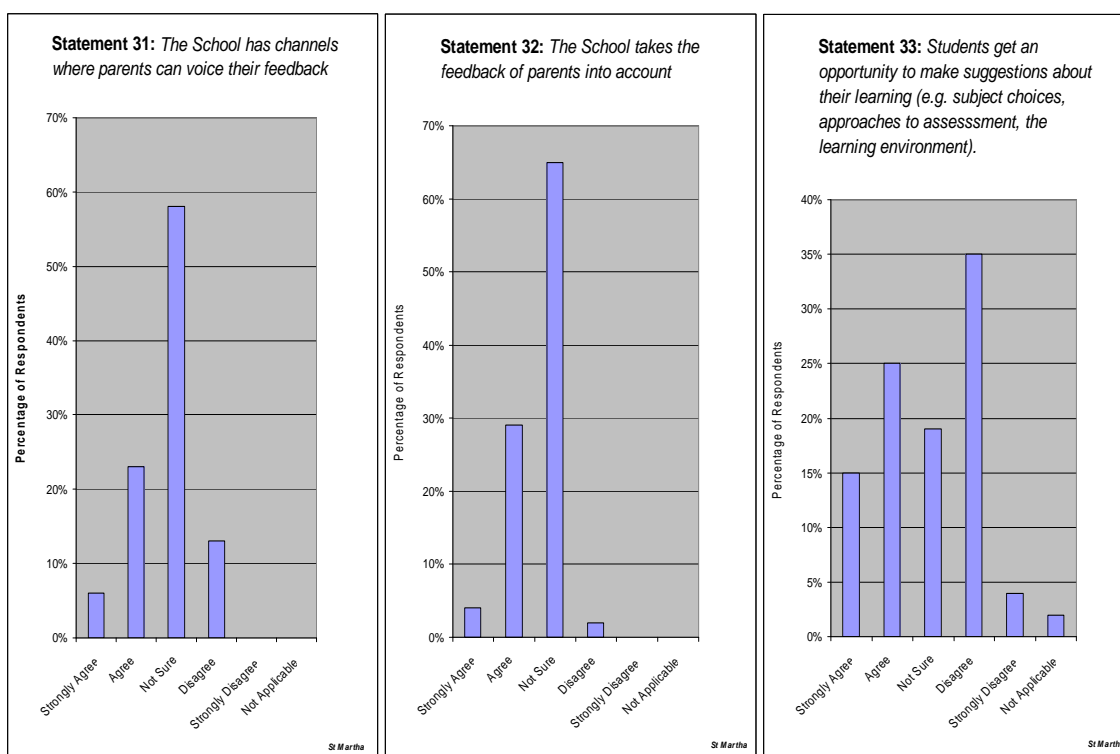
Statement 31: *The School has channels where parents can voice their feedback*

Statement 32: *The School takes the feedback of parents into account*

Statement 33: *Students get an opportunity to make suggestions about their learning (e.g. subject choices, approaches to assesssment, the learning environment).*

Statement 34: *Systems are in place which ensure that students are supported in their learning.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	4	36	4	4	0	0
% Total	8%	75%	8%	8%	0%	0%

Statement 35: *Students are empowered to assume responsibility, take risks and respond to change.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	1	19	15	8	5	0
% Total	2%	40%	31%	17%	10%	0%

Statement 36: *The School values and acts upon what the pupils tell.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	2	11	22	11	2	0
% Total	4%	23%	46%	23%	4%	0%
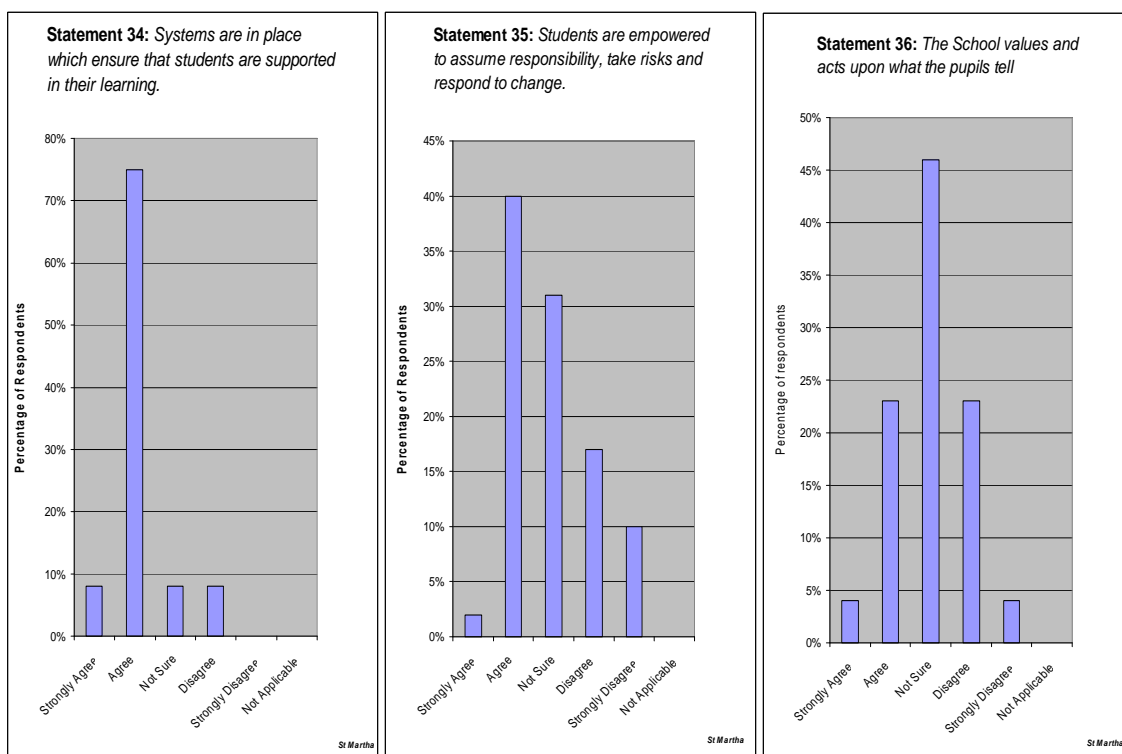
Statement 34: *Systems are in place which ensure that students are supported in their learning.*

Statement 35: *Students are empowered to assume responsibility, take risks and respond to change.*

Statement 36: *The School values and acts upon what the pupils tell*

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Statement 37: *The Code of Behaviour is based on the school's ethos and values.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	15	29	1	2	0	0
% Total	31%	60%	2%	4%	0%	0%

Statement 38: *We work together, as school community, to ensure that we are offering the best curricular opportunities for students.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	14	28	6	0	0	0
% Total	29%	58%	13%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 39: *New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at staff meetings.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	10	24	4	8	1	1
% Total	21%	50%	8%	17%	2%	2%
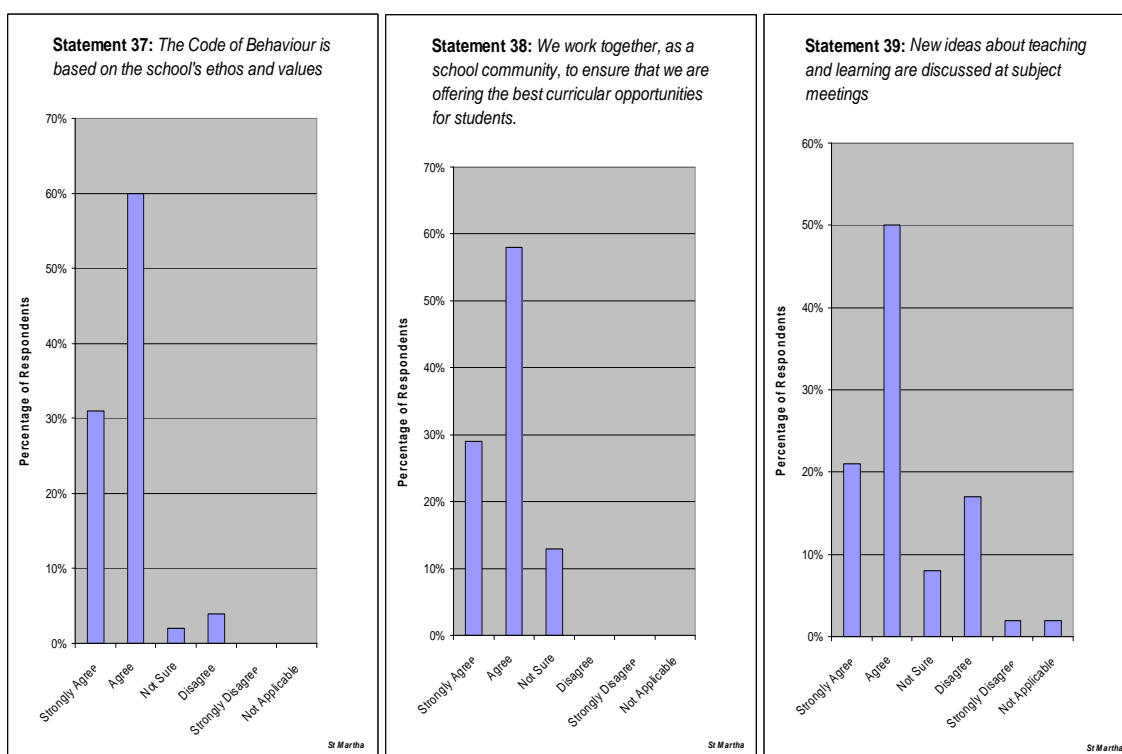
Statement 37: *The Code of Behaviour is based on the school's ethos and values*

Statement 38: *We work together, as a school community, to ensure that we are offering the best curricular opportunities for students.*

Statement 39: *New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at subject meetings*

Statement 40: *New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at subject meetings.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	9	25	10	2	0	2
% Total	19%	52%	21%	4%	0%	4%

Statement 41: *Every year the School strives to improve learning by prioritising specific actions.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	8	30	10	0	0	0
% Total	17%	62%	21%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 42: *The School has a clearly written mission statement.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	32	15	0	0	1	0
% Total	67%	31%	0%	0%	2%	0%

Statement 40: *New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at subject meetings*

Statement 41: *Every year the School strives to improve learning by prioritising specific actions.*

Statement 42: *The School has a clearly written statement.*
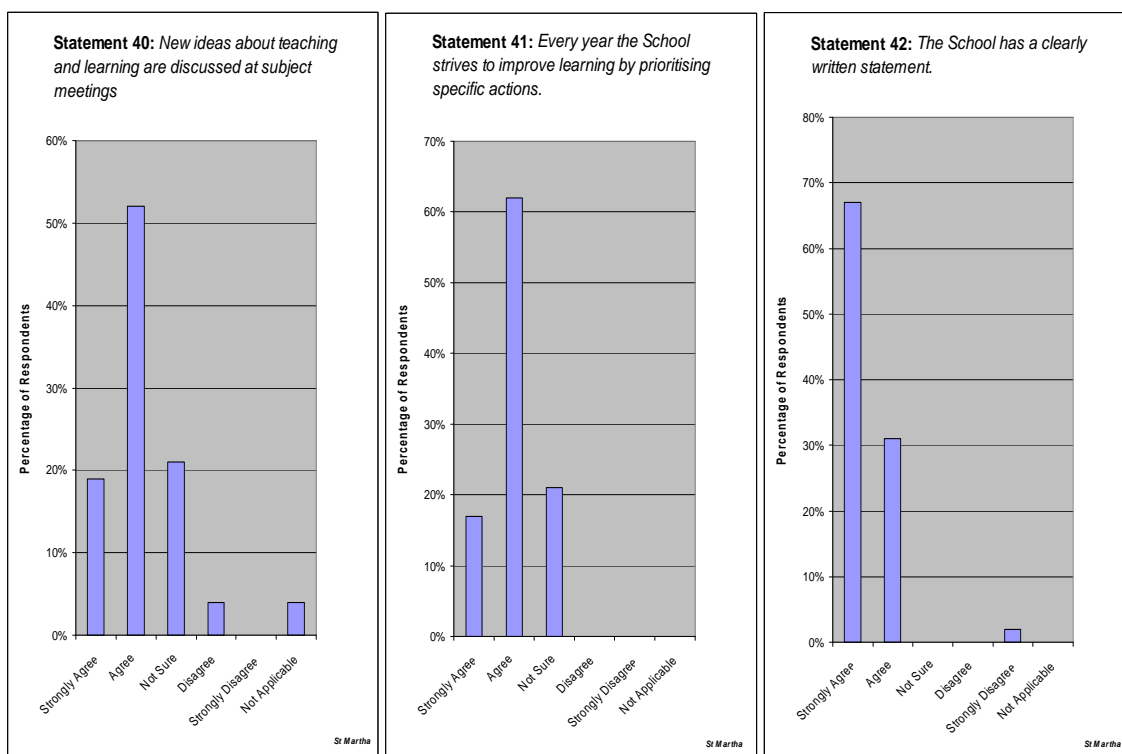
APPENDIX 5

Results of Teachers & LSAs Questionnaire

Statement 1:*Educational leadership is the job, primarily, of the headteacher and assistant head*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	8	14	4	8	4	0
% Total	21%	36%	11%	21%	11%	0%

Statement 2: *The SMT listens to the Teachers' Voices.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	16	20	1	1	0	0
% Total	42%	52%	3%	3%	0%	0%

Statement 3: *The headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	8	19	7	4	0	0
% Total	21%	50%	18%	11%	0%	0%
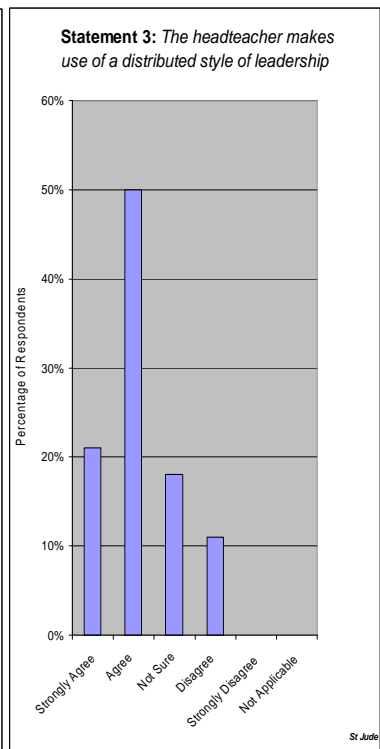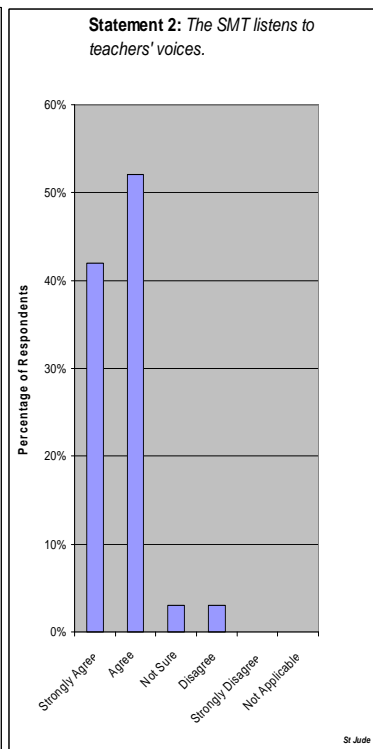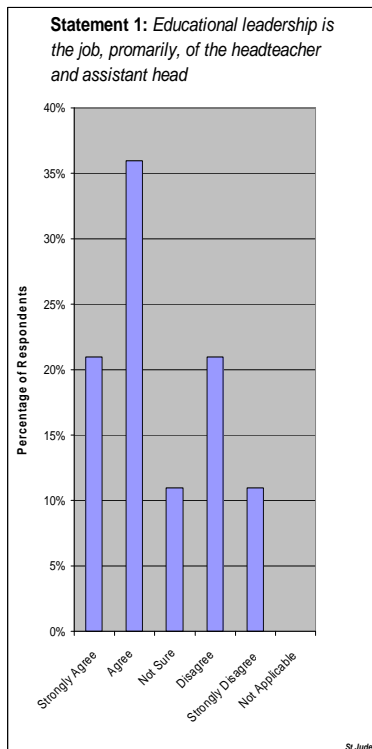
Statement 1: *Educational leadership is the job, promarily, of the headteacher and assistant head*

Statement 2: *The SMT listens to teachers' voices.*

Statement 3: *The headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership*

Statement 4: *The assistant heads communicate effectively with the teachers and LSAs.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	21	16	0	1	0	0
% Total	55%	42%	0%	3%	0%	0%

Statement 5: *The SMT encourages teachers to exemplify the school ethos and values in the classroom.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	21	17	0	0	0	0
% Total	55%	45%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 6: *The headteacher or assistant heads should take sole responsibility for communicating with parents.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	2	11	10	14	1	0
% Total	5%	29%	26%	37%	3%	0%
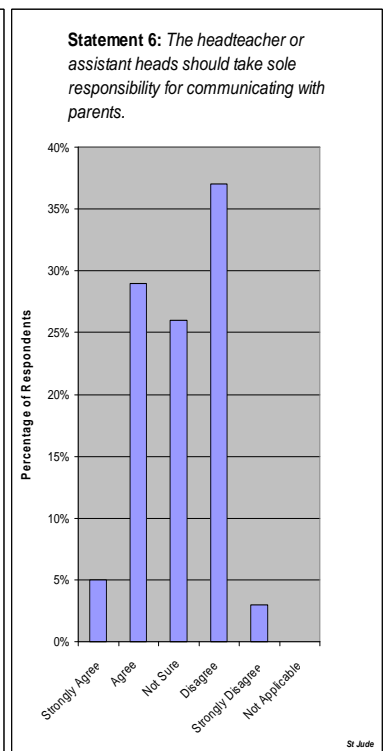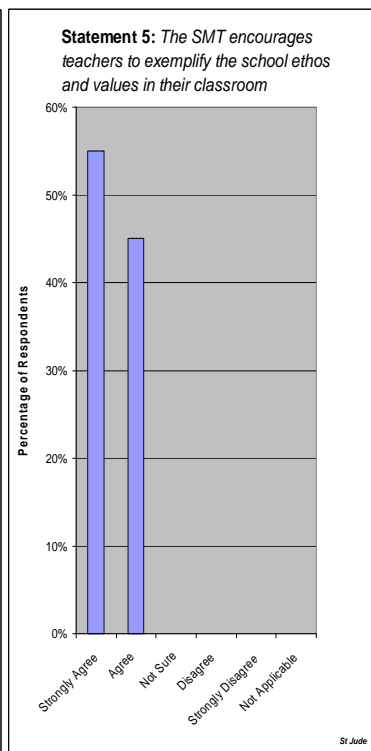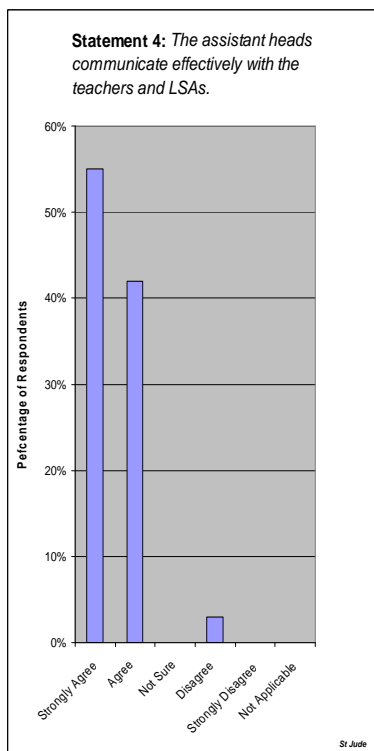
Statement 4: *The assistant heads communicate effectively with the teachers and LSAs.*

Statement 5: *The SMT encourages teachers to exemplify the school ethos and values in their classroom*

Statement 6: *The headteacher or assistant heads should take sole responsibility for communicating with parents.*

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Statement 7:*As a Church school, the SMT emphasises prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual & moral development of its pupils.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	27	11	0	0	0	0
% Total	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 8: *There is mutual respect and trust between the SMT and the staff.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	14	17	5	2	0	0
% Total	37%	45%	13%	5%	0%	0%

Statement 9: *The SMT empowers teachers to use different teaching strategies to improve teaching and learning in class.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	16	17	4	1	0	0
% Total	42%	45%	10%	3%	0%	0%
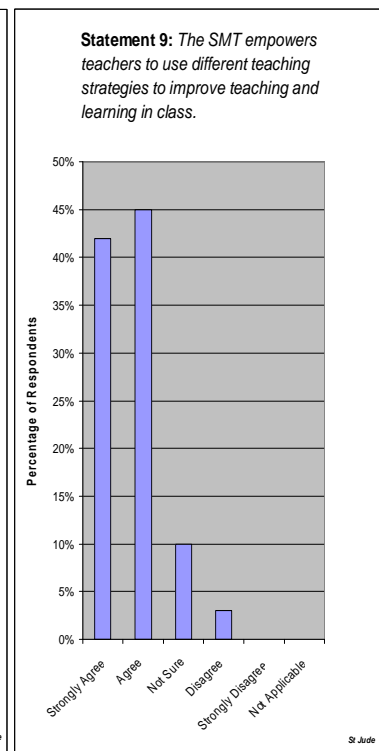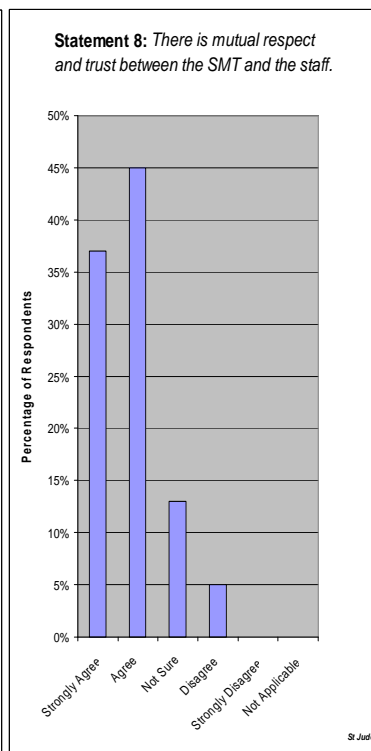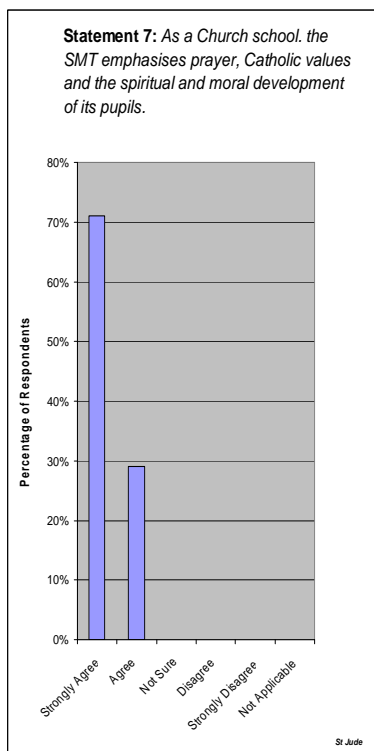
Statement 7: *As a Church school. the SMT emphasises prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils.*

Statement 8: *There is mutual respect and trust between the SMT and the staff.*

Statement 9: *The SMT empowers teachers to use different teaching strategies to improve teaching and learning in class.*

Statement 10: *All teachers are leaders in the classroom.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	15	16	3	4	0	0
% Total	39%	42%	8%	11%	0%	0%

Statement 11: *There are opportunities for teachers to lead educational activities beyond the classroom.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	12	20	4	2	0	0
% Total	32%	52%	11%	5%	0%	0%

Statement 12: *Teachers are given opportunities for professional development that enhance student learning in their own subject area.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	11	22	2	2	0	1
% Total	29%	58%	5%	5%	0%	3%
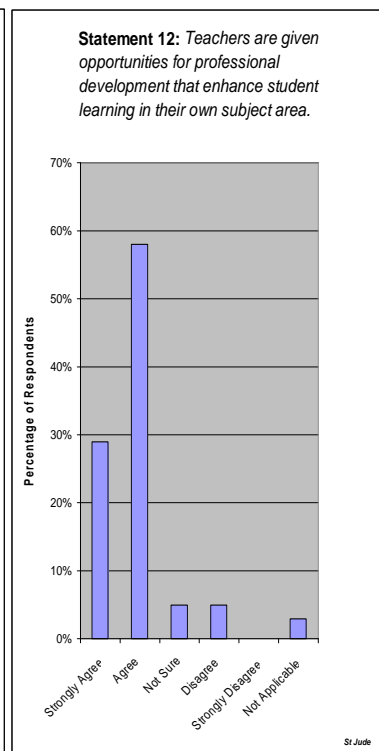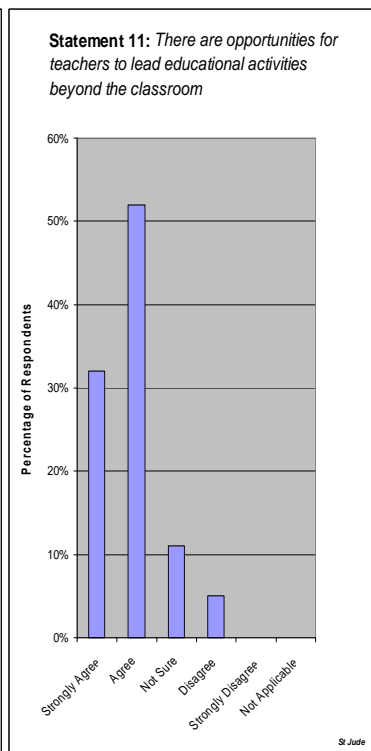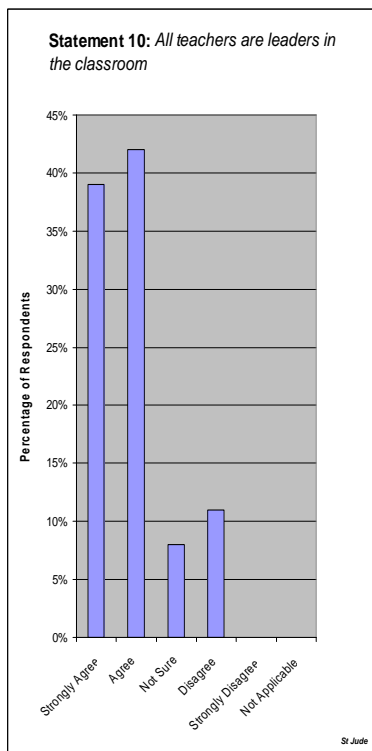
Statement 10: *All teachers are leaders in the classroom*

Statement 11: *There are opportunities for teachers to lead educational activities beyond the classroom*

Statement 12: *Teachers are given opportunities for professional development that enhance student learning in their own subject area.*

Statement 13: *Individual teachers take responsibility for communicating student progress and achievement to parents.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	7	15	12	4	0	0
% Total	18%	40%	32%	10%	0%	0%

Statement 14: *Teachers are given opportunities to chair meetings.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	0	14	16	6	0	2
% Total	0%	37%	42%	16%	0%	5%

Statement 15: *Teachers have opportunities to discuss their professional work with the SMT on an annual basis.*

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Not Sure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
Total	17	15	3	2	0	1
% Total	45%	39%	8%	5%	0%	3%
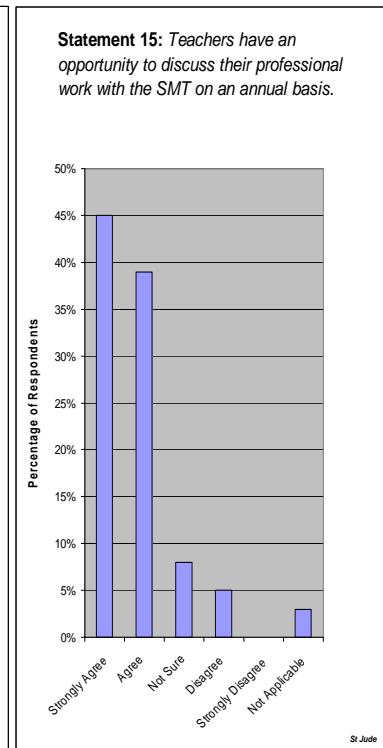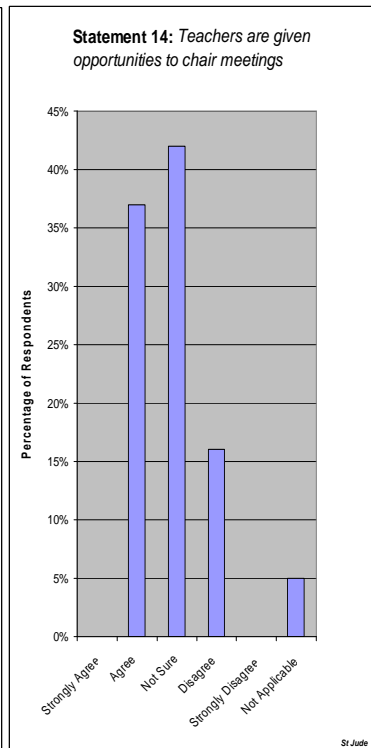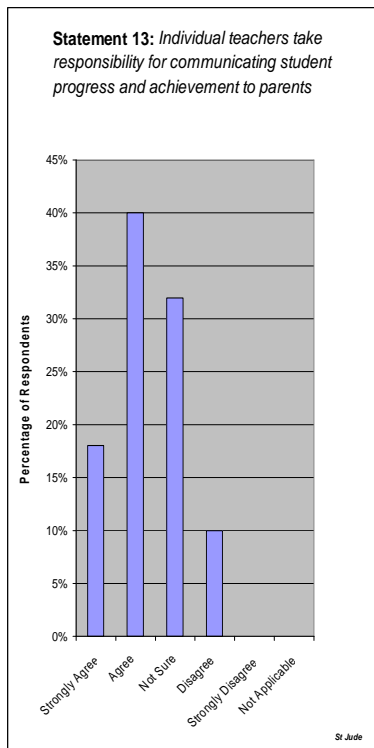
Statement 13: Individual teachers take responsibility for communicating student progress and achievement to parents

Statement 14: Teachers are given opportunities to chair meetings

Statement 15: Teachers have an opportunity to discuss their professional work with the SMT on an annual basis.

Statement 16: *Teachers and LSAs are encouraged by the SMT to try out new ideas.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	17	17	3	1	0	0
% Total	45%	45%	8%	2%	0%	0%

Statement 17: *All teachers and LSAs are involved in decisions which affect the whole school.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	10	16	9	2	1	0
% Total	26%	42%	24%	5%	3%	0%

Statement 18: *Decisions regarding whole-school policy are made essentially by the SMT.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	5	12	10	10	1	0
% Total	13%	32%	26%	26%	3%	0%
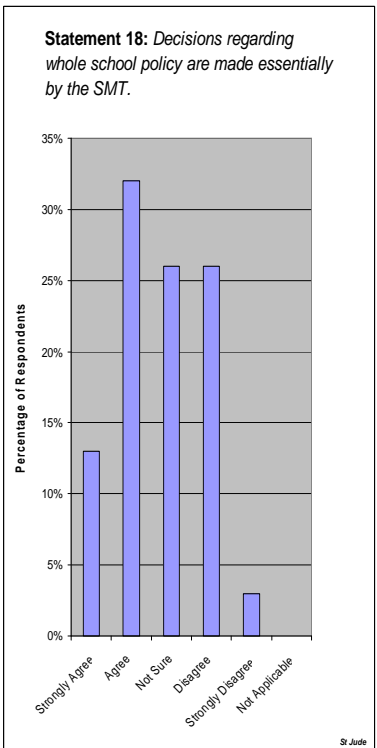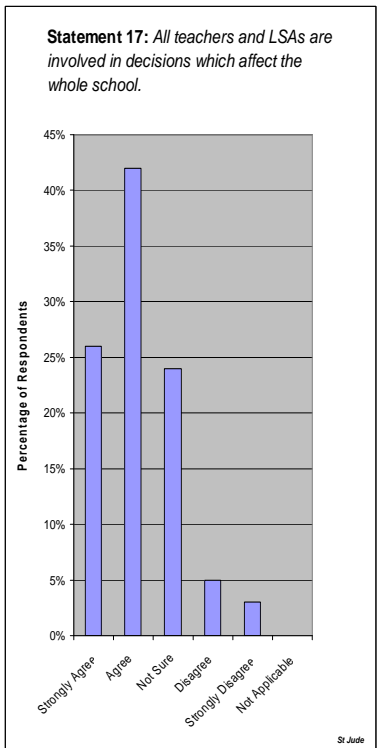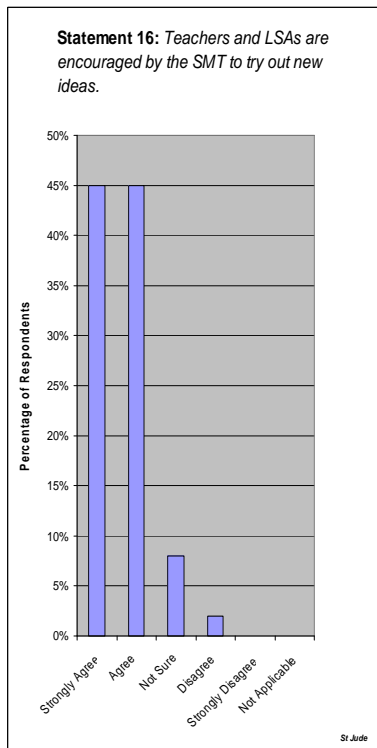
Statement 16: *Teachers and LSAs are encouraged by the SMT to try out new ideas.*

Statement 17: *All teachers and LSAs are involved in decisions which affect the whole school.*

Statement 18: *Decisions regarding whole school policy are made essentially by the SMT.*

Statement 19: *When teachers and LSAs attend professional development courses, seminars or conferences they share their learning with colleagues.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	2	11	14	11	0	0
% Total	5%	29%	37%	29%	0%	0%

Statement 20: *I am not given the opportunity to show my potential as a leader.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	1	5	8	18	6	0
% Total	3%	13%	21%	47%	16%	0%

Statement 21: *I am not given the opportunity to involve my self in the work of the school.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	1	4	1	19	12	1
% Total	3%	10%	3%	50%	31%	3%
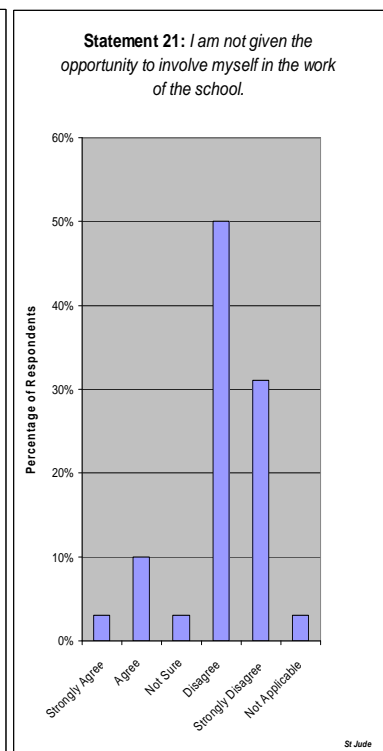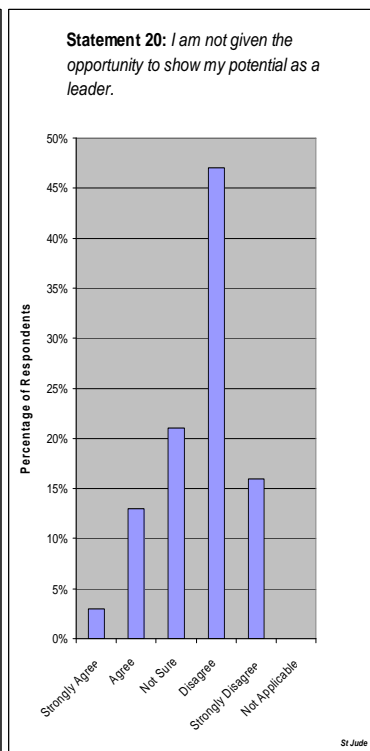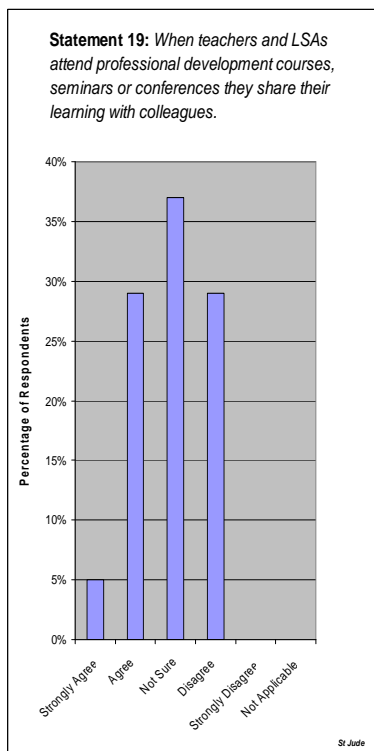
Statement 19: *When teachers and LSAs attend professional development courses, seminars or conferences they share their learning with colleagues.*

Statement 20: *I am not given the opportunity to show my potential as a leader.*

Statement 21: *I am not given the opportunity to involve myself in the work of the school.*

Statement 22: *The School listens to the 'Students' Voice.'*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	4	27	7	0	0	0
% Total	11%	71%	18%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 23: *I feel that the school is a satisfying and fulfilling workplace for me.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	14	18	4	2	0	0
% Total	37%	47%	11%	5%	0%	0%

Statement 24: *All the staff contributes in the formation and implementation of the SDP.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	13	17	4	3	1	0
% Total	34%	45%	10%	8%	3%	0%
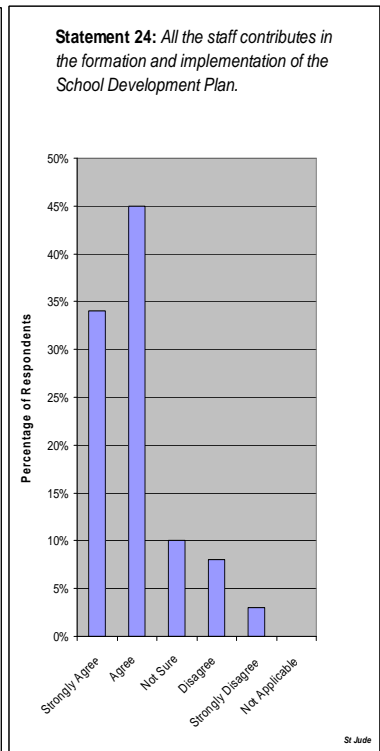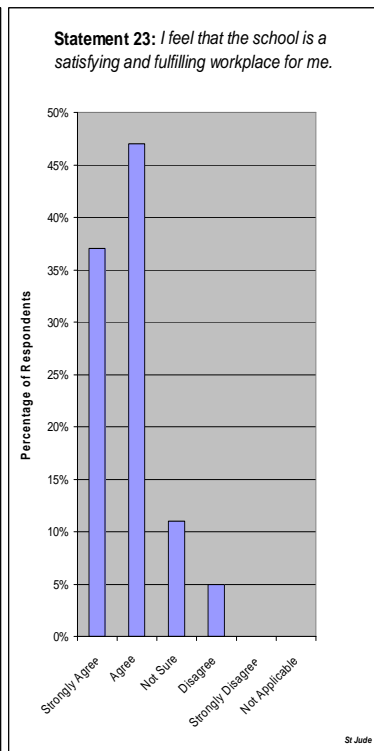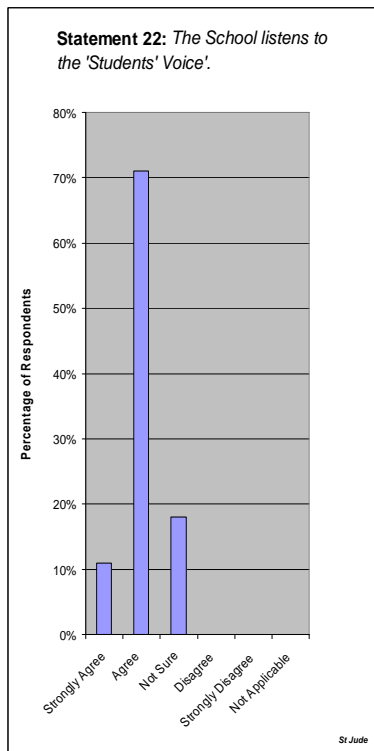
Statement 22: The School listens to the 'Students' Voice'.

Statement 23: I feel that the school is a satisfying and fulfilling workplace for me.

Statement 24: All the staff contributes in the formation and implementation of the School Development Plan.

Statement 25: *There is mutual respect and trust among the staff.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	7	24	5	1	1	0
% Total	18%	63%	13%	3%	3%	0%

Statement 26: *Teachers appreciate the feedback they get after a lesson observation by the SMT.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	7	18	8	1	0	4
% Total	18%	47%	21%	3%	0%	11%

Statement 27: *Parents participate when they are asked to attend school activities.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	1	18	15	3	1	0
% Total	3%	47%	40%	8%	3%	0%
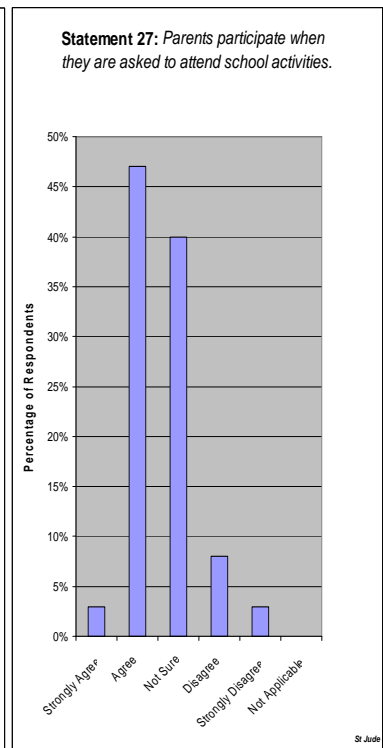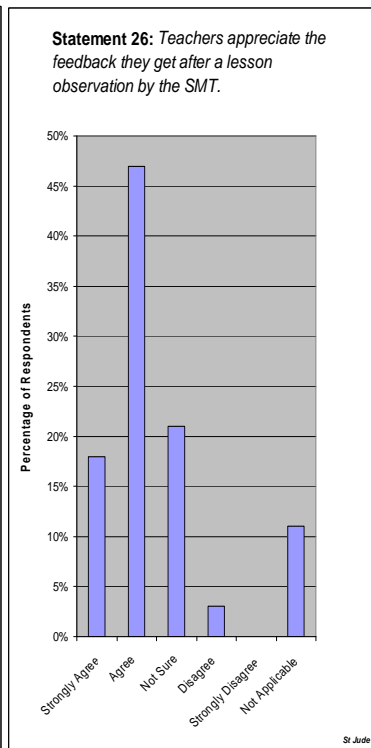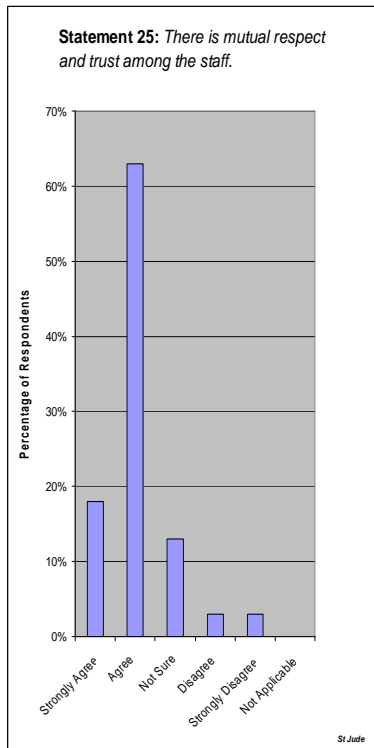
Statement 25: *There is mutual respect and trust among the staff.*

Statement 26: *Teachers appreciate the feedback they get after a lesson observation by the SMT.*

Statement 27: *Parents participate when they are asked to attend school activities.*

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Statement 28: *There are structures and systems in place for parents to volunteer to help during the year.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	5	16	12	5	0	0
% Total	13%	42%	32%	13%	0%	0%

Statement 29: *The Parents Teachers Association communicates effectively with the school.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	5	14	19	0	0	0
% Total	13%	37%	50%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 30: *Parents are informed regularly about the life and work of the school.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	20	15	3	0	0	0
% Total	52%	40%	8%	0%	0%	0%
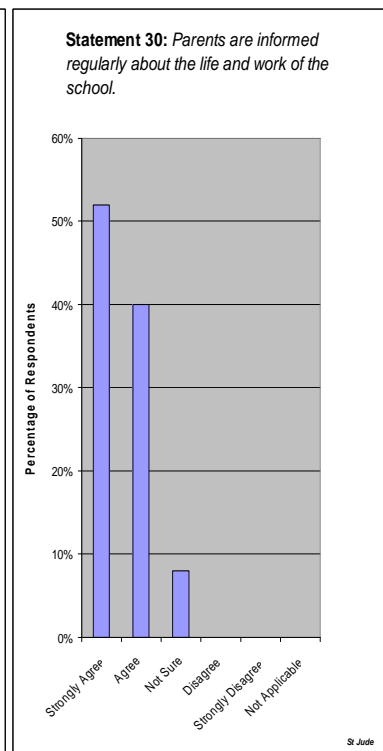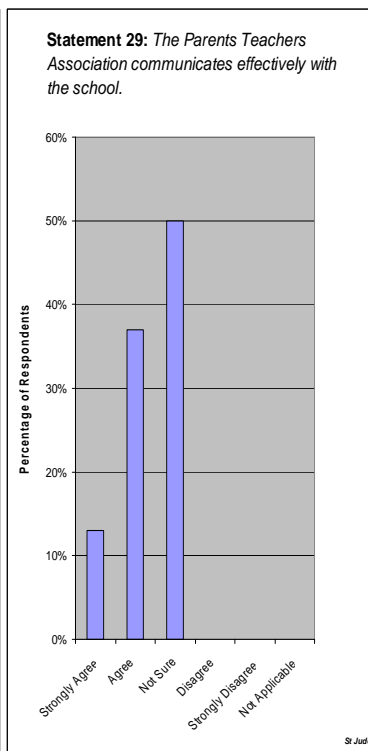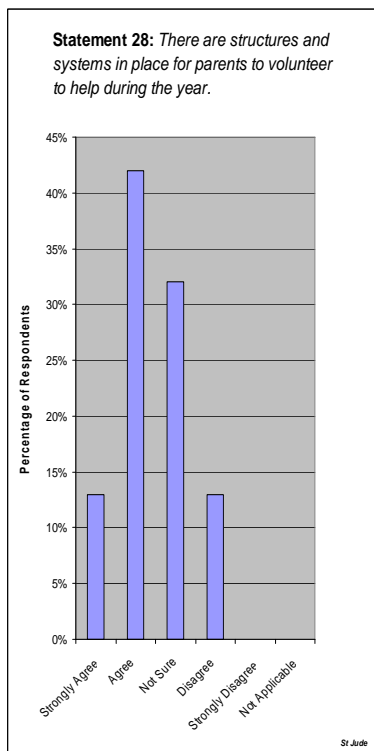
Statement 28: *There are structures and systems in place for parents to volunteer to help during the year.*

Statement 29: *The Parents Teachers Association communicates effectively with the school.*

Statement 30: *Parents are informed regularly about the life and work of the school.*

Statement 31: *The School has channels where parents can voice their feedback.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	9	13	10	6	0	0
% Total	24%	34%	26%	16%	0%	0%

Statement 32: *The School takes the feedback of parents into account.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	11	23	3	0	0	1
% Total	29%	60%	8%	0%	0%	3%

Statement 33: *Students get an opportunity to make suggestions about their learning (e.g. subject choices, approaches to assessment, the learning environment).*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	5	15	12	6	0	0
% Total	13%	39%	32%	16%	0%	0%
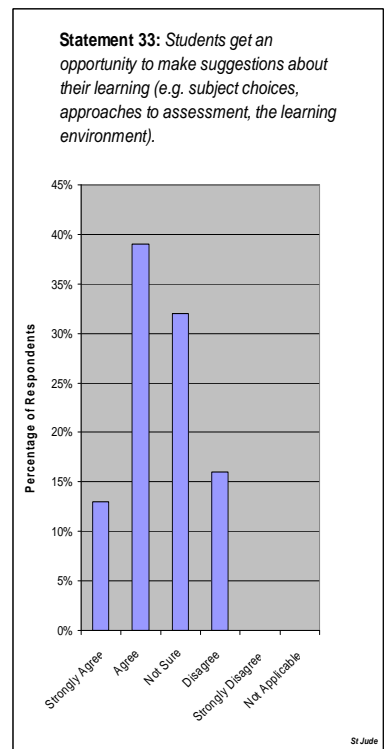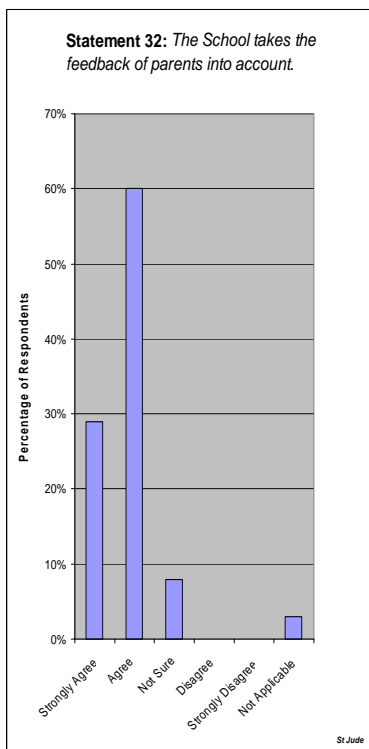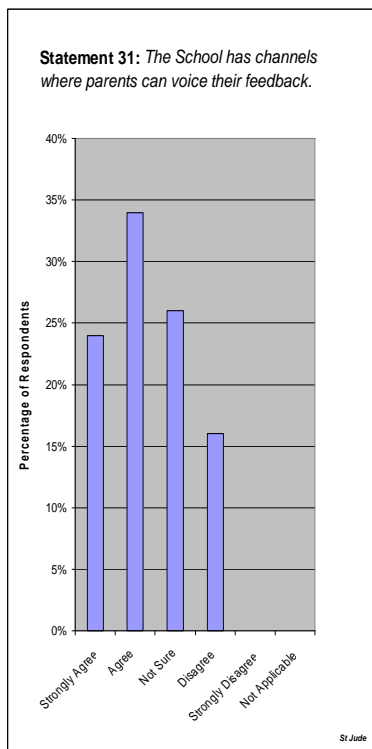
Statement 31: *The School has channels where parents can voice their feedback.*

Statement 32: *The School takes the feedback of parents into account.*

Statement 33: *Students get an opportunity to make suggestions about their learning (e.g. subject choices, approaches to assessment, the learning environment).*

Statement 34: *Systems are in place which ensure that students are supported in their learning.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	9	23	4	2	0	0
% Total	24%	61%	11%	5%	0%	0%

Statement 35: *Students are empowered to assume responsibility, take risks and respond to change.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	3	22	10	3	0	0
% Total	8%	58%	26%	8%	0%	0%

Statement 36: *The School values and acts upon what the pupils tell.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	5	20	12	1	0	0
% Total	13%	52%	32%	3%	0%	0%
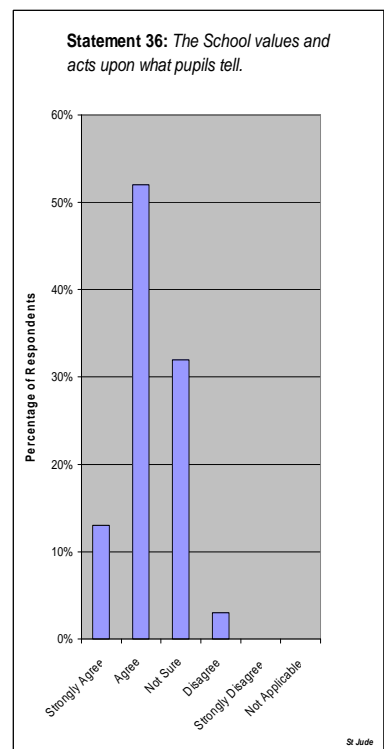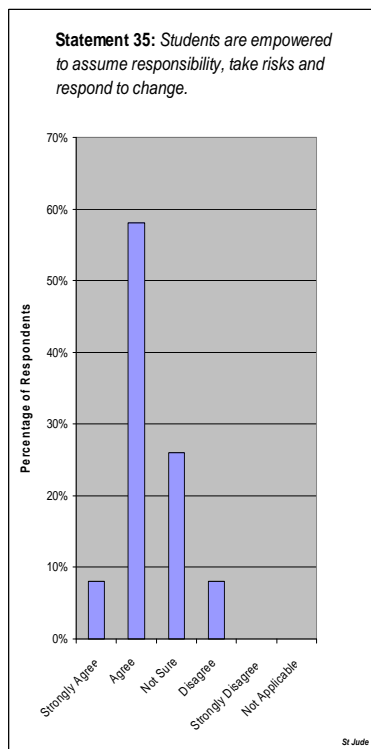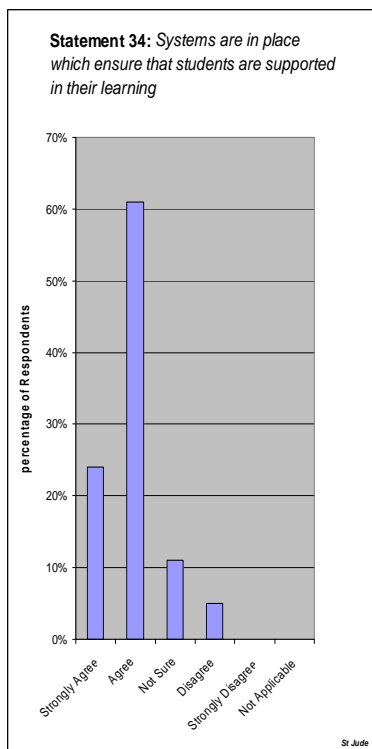
Statement 34: *Systems are in place which ensure that students are supported in their learning*

Statement 35: *Students are empowered to assume responsibility, take risks and respond to change.*

Statement 36: *The School values and acts upon what pupils tell.*

Statement 37: *The Code of Behaviour is based on the school's ethos and values.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	20	17	1	0	0	0
% Total	52%	45%	3%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 38: *We work together, as school community, to ensure that we are offering the best curricular opportunities for students.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	20	16	1	1	0	0
% Total	52%	42%	3%	3%	0%	0%

Statement 39: *New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at staff meetings.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	16	16	4	2	0	0
% Total	42%	42%	11%	5%	0%	0%
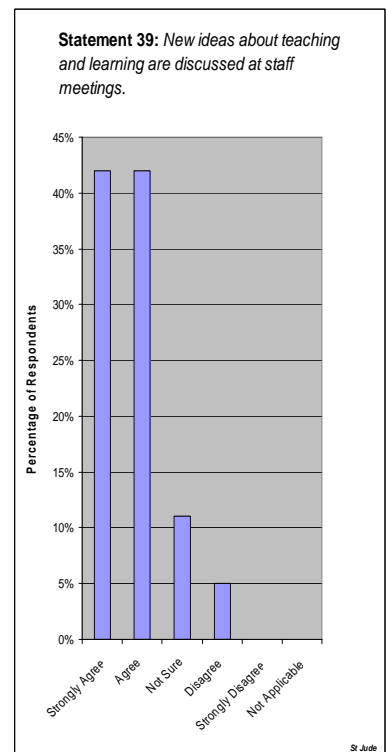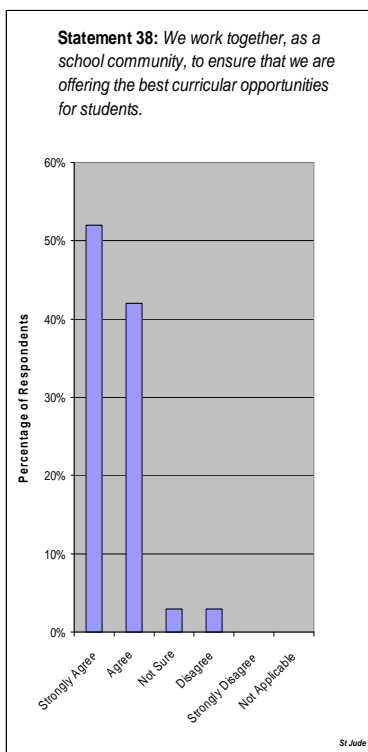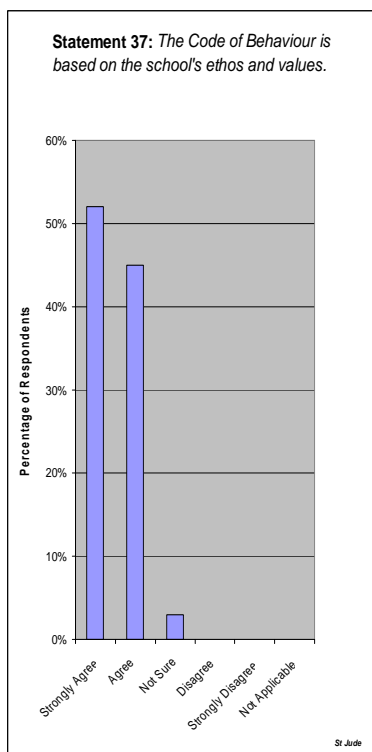
Statement 37: *The Code of Behaviour is based on the school's ethos and values.*

Statement 38: *We work together, as a school community, to ensure that we are offering the best curricular opportunities for students.*

Statement 39: *New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at staff meetings.*

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Statement 40: *New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at subject meetings.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	15	14	6	1	0	2
% Total	39%	37%	16%	3%	0%	5%

Statement 41: *Every year the School strives to improve learning by prioritising specific actions.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	14	15	7	1	0	1
% Total	37%	39%	18%	3%	0%	3%

Statement 42: *The School has a clearly written mission statement.*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Total	24	13	1	0	0	0
% Total	63%	34%	3%	0%	0%	0%

Statement 40: *New ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at subject meetings.*

Statement 41: *Every year the School strives to improve learning by prioritising specific actions.*

Statement 42: *The School has a clearly written mission statement.*

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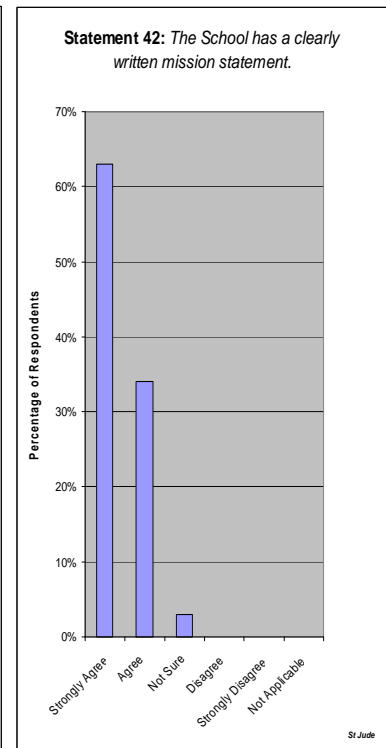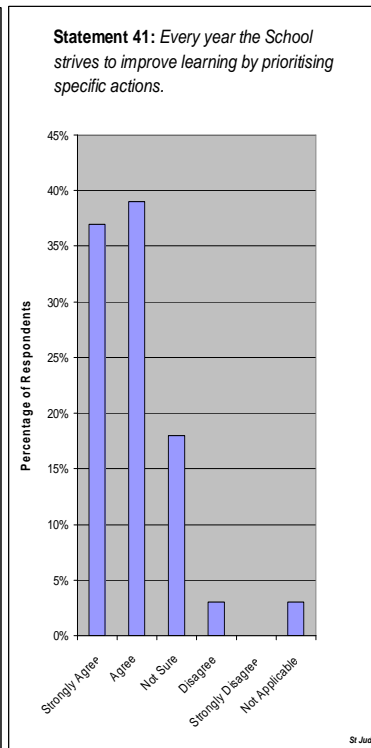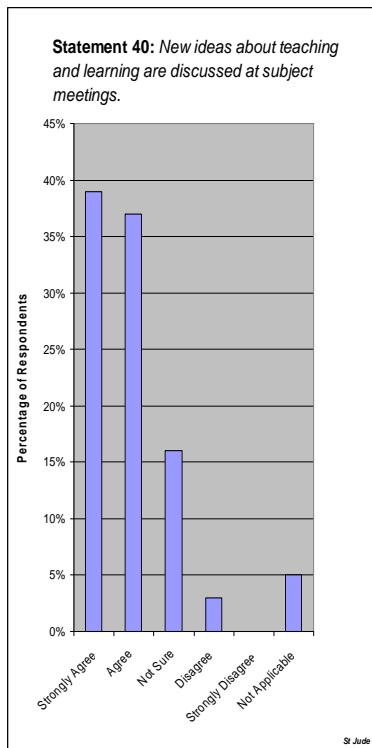
APPENDIX 6

QUESTION 1: *What factors enable you to do your job well?*

	Trusted	Availability of Resources	Co-operation	Environment	Autonomy	Good Leadership	Other
Respondent 1			1				1
Respondent 2			1	1			1
Respondent 3							1
Respondent 4	1						1
Respondent 5	1	1					1
Respondent 6	1		1				
Respondent 7		1	1				
Respondent 8		1	1				
Respondent 9			1				1
Respondent 10			1				1
Respondent 11			1	1			1
Respondent 12			1	1			
Respondent 13			1				1
Respondent 14		1	1	1			1
Respondent 15			1	1	1		
Respondent 16					1		
Respondent 17	1						
Respondent 18			1			1	
Respondent 19							1
Respondent 20	1					1	
Respondent 21		1					1
Respondent 22			1		1		
Respondent 23		1	1				
Respondent 24	1	1		1			1
Respondent 25	1	1					
Respondent 26	1		1		1		1
Respondent 27		1		1		1	1
Respondent 28			1	1			
Respondent 29		1	1	1		1	
Respondent 30	1		1				
Respondent 31	1						
Respondent 32							1
Respondent 33			1				1
Respondent 34		1		1			
Respondent 35							1
Respondent 36	1		1	1			
Respondent 37							1
Respondent 38			1				
Respondent 39	1		1		1	1	
Respondent 40	1		1				1
Respondent 41	1		1				
Respondent 42							1
Respondent 43	1		1			1	
Respondent 44		1	1				
Respondent 45	1	1					1
Respondent 46							1
Respondent 47							1
Respondent 48	1	1					
Total	17	14	27	11	5	6	24
Percentage	35%	29%	56%	23%	10%	16%	50%

QUESTION 1: *What factors enable you to do your job well?*

	Trusted by colleagues	Trusted, by SMT	Co-operation in staffroom	Friendly environment	Autonomy at work	Communication with SMT	Other
Respondent 1	1		1			1	1
Respondent 2							1
Respondent 3				1			1
Respondent 4						1	
Respondent 5			1		1	1	1
Respondent 6			1			1	1
Respondent 7		1		1		1	
Respondent 8		1			1		1
Respondent 9				1			
Respondent 10	1	1					
Respondent 11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 12			1	1		1	
Respondent 13						1	1
Respondent 14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 16			1				1
Respondent 17				1		1	1
Respondent 18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 20							1
Respondent 21	1				1		1
Respondent 22			1	1			
Respondent 23	1	1					1
Respondent 24			1			1	1
Respondent 25					1		1
Respondent 26	1	1		1			
Respondent 27				1			1
Respondent 28							1
Respondent 29			1			1	1
Respondent 30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 31							1
Respondent 32	1	1					
Respondent 33		1					1
Respondent 34							1
Respondent 35	1	1					
Respondent 36		1				1	
Respondent 37	1		1	1			
Respondent 38			1		1		
Total	14	15	16	15	11	17	26
Percentage	36.80%	39.50%	42%	39.50%	28.90%	44.70%	68.40%

QUESTION 2: *What factors unhibit you from doing your job well?*

	Missing lessons	Heavy workload	Overpopulated classrooms	Non conformity in applying rules	Lack of appreciation	Work better distributed	Other
Respondent 1	1						1
Respondent 2							1
Respondent 3					1		1
Respondent 4							1
Respondent 5							1
Respondent 6					1		
Respondent 7							1
Respondent 8							1
Respondent 9	1						
Respondent 10			1	1			1
Respondent 11		1					
Respondent 12		1	1				
Respondent 13			1				
Respondent 14		1					
Respondent 15					1		1
Respondent 16	1	1					
Respondent 17							1
Respondent 18							1
Respondent 19					1		
Respondent 20	1						1
Respondent 21							1
Respondent 22							1
Respondent 23			1				1
Respondent 24					1	1	
Respondent 25	1						
Respondent 26		1					
Respondent 27						1	
Respondent 28							1
Respondent 29							1
Respondent 30							1
Respondent 31							1
Respondent 32							1
Respondent 33		1					
Respondent 34		1					
Respondent 35							1
Respondent 36		1					
Respondent 37							1
Respondent 38							1
Respondent 39				1			1
Respondent 40	1	1					1
Respondent 41							1
Respondent 42							1
Respondent 43							1
Respondent 44					1		
Respondent 45		1			1		
Respondent 46	1						
Respondent 47					1		
Respondent 48	1						
Total	8	10	4	2	8	2	28
Percentage	16.70%	20.80%	8.30%	4.20%	16.70%	4.20%	58.30%

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QUESTION 2: *What factors unhibit you from doing your job well?*

	Missing lessons	Heavy workload	Lack of space	Time constraints	Limited resources	Other
Respondent 1						1
Respondent 2					1	1
Respondent 3				1		
Respondent 4						1
Respondent 5						1
Respondent 6	1					
Respondent 7		1		1		
Respondent 8				1		
Respondent 9						1
Respondent 10						1
Respondent 11	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 12						1
Respondent 13				1		
Respondent 14	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 15	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 16			1			
Respondent 17				1		
Respondent 18	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 19	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 20			1	1		
Respondent 21			1		1	
Respondent 22						1
Respondent 23			1	1	1	
Respondent 24						1
Respondent 25		1				1
Respondent 26						1
Respondent 27					1	
Respondent 28				1	1	
Respondent 29	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 30	0	0	0	0	0	0
Respondent 31					1	
Respondent 32						1
Respondent 33		1				1
Respondent 34		1				
Respondent 35				1	1	
Respondent 36			1		1	1
Respondent 37		1	1	1	1	
Respondent 38			1			1
Total	8	12	14	17	16	22
Percentage	2.60%	13.20%	18.40%	26.30%	23.70%	39.50%

APPENDIX 7

St Martha

- 50% agree that educational leadership is the job, primarily of the headteacher and assistant heads; 21% disagree: 21% are not sure.

- 76% agree that the SMT listens to teachers' voices; 4% disagree: 21% are not sure.

- 31% agree that the headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership; 15% disagree; 44% are not sure.

- 94% agree that the assistant heads communicate effectively with the teachers and LSAs; nobody disagrees; 6% are not sure.

- 75% agree that the SMT encourages teachers to exemplify the school ethos and values in the classroom; 2% disagree: 13% are not sure.

- 17% agree that the headteacher or assistant heads should take sole responsibility for communicating with parents; 54% disagree; 8% are not sure.

- 94% agree that, as a Church school, the SMT emphasises prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils; 2% disagree; 4% are not sure.

- 87% agree that there is mutual respect and trust between the SMT and the staff; 2% disagree; 10% are not sure.

- 75% agree that the SMT empowers teachers to use different teaching strategies to improve teaching and learning in class; 6% disagree; 19% are not sure.

- 86% agree that all teachers are leaders in their own classroom; 2% disagree; 13% are not sure.

- 73% agree that there are opportunities for teachers to lead educational activities beyond their own classroom; 10% disagree; 17% are not sure.

- 71% agree that teachers are given opportunities for professional development that enhance student learning in their own subject area; 8% disagree; 21% are not sure.

- 71% agree that individual teachers take responsibility for communicating student progress and achievement to parents; 6% disagree; 23% are not sure.

- 25% agree that teachers are given opportunities to chair meetings; 21% disagree; 54% are not sure.

- 73% agree that teachers have opportunities to discuss their professional work with the SMT on an annual basis; 6% disagree; 21% are not sure.

- 82% agree that teachers and LSAs are encouraged by the SMT to try out new ideas; 6% disagree; 13% are not sure.

- 61% agree that all teachers and LSAs are involved in decisions which affect the whole school; 29% disagree; 10% are not sure.

- 50% agree that decisions regarding whole-school policy are made essentially by the SMT; 27% disagree; 23% are not sure.

- 44% agree that when teachers and LSAs attend professional development courses, seminars or conferences they share their learning with colleagues; 27% disagree; 29% are not sure.

- 15% agree that they are not given the opportunity to show their potential as a leader; 67% disagree; 19% are not sure.

- 4% agree that they are not given the opportunity to involve themselves in the work of the school; 85% disagree; 10% are not sure.

- 56% agree that the School listens to the 'Students' Voice'; 12% disagree; 31% are not sure.

- 96% agree that they feel the School is a satisfying and fulfilling workplace for me; nobody disagrees; 4% are not sure.

- 65% agree that all the staff contributes in the formation and implementation of the SDP; 6% disagree; 29% are not sure.

- 60% agree that there is mutual respect and trust among the staff; 19% disagree; 21% are not sure.

- 37% agree that teachers appreciate the feedback they get after a lesson observation by the SMT; 2% disagree; 40% are not sure.

- 48% agree that parents participate when they are asked to attend school activities; 6% disagree; 44% are not sure.

- 33% agree that there are structures and systems in place for parents to volunteer to help during the year; 23% disagree; 42% are not sure.

- 23% agree that the Parents Teachers Association communicates effectively with the school; 21% disagree; 56% are not sure.

- 55% agree that parents are informed regularly about the life and work of the school; 8% disagree; 38% are not sure.

- 29% agree that the School has channels where parents can voice their feedback; 13% disagree; 58% are not sure.

- 33% agree that the School takes the feedback of parents into account; 2% disagree; 65% are not sure.

- 40% agree that students get an opportunity to make suggestions about their learning (e.g. subject choices, approaches to assessment, the learning environment); 39% disagree; 19% are not sure.

- 83% agree that systems are in place which ensure that students are supported in their learning; 8% disagree; 8% are unsure.

- 42% agree that students are empowered to assume responsibility, take risks and respond to change; 27% disagree; 31% are not sure.

- 27% agree that the School values and acts upon what pupils tell; 27% disagree; 46% are not sure.

- 91% agree that the Code of Behaviour is based on the school's ethos and values; 4% disagree; 2% are not sure.

- 87% agree that we work together, as a school community, to ensure that we are offering the best curricular opportunities for students; nobody disagrees; 13% are not sure.

- 71% agree that new ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at staff meetings; 19% disagree; 8% are not sure.

- 71% agree that new ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at subject meetings; 4% disagree; 21% are not sure.

- 79% agree that every year the School strives to improve learning by prioritising specific actions; nobody disagrees; 21% are not sure.

- 98% agree that the School has a clearly written mission statement; 2% disagree.

APPENDIX 8

<u>**St Jude**</u>

- 57% agree that educational leadership is the job, primarily, of the headteacher and assistant head; 32% disagree; 11% are not sure.

- 94% agree that the SMT listens to the teachers' voices; 3% disagree; 3% are not sure.

- 71% agree that the headteacher makes use of a distributed style of leadership; 11% disagree; 18% are not sure.

- 97% agree that the assistant heads communicate effectively with the teachers and LSAs; 3%

- 100% agree that the SMT encourages teachers to exemplify the school ethos and values in the classroom.

- 34% agree that the headteacher or assistant heads should take sole responsibility for communicating with parents; 37% disagree; 26% are not sure.

- 100% agree that, as a Church school, the SMT emphasises prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils; 2% disagree; 4% are not sure.

- 82% agree that there is mutual respect and trust between the SMT and the staff; 5% disagree; 13% are not sure.

- 87% agree that the SMT empowers teachers to use different teaching strategies to improve teaching and learning in class; 3% disagree; 10% are not sure.

- 81% agree that all teachers are leaders in the classroom; 11% disagree; 8% are not sure.

- 84% agree that there are opportunities for teachers to lead educational activities beyond their own classroom; 5% disagree; 11% are not sure.

- 87% agree that teachers are given opportunities for professional development that enhance student learning in their own subject area; 5% disagree; 5% are not sure.

- 58% agree that individual teachers take responsibility for communicating student progress and achievement to parents; 10% disagree; 32% are not sure.

- 37% agree that teachers are given opportunities to chair meetings; 16% disagree; 42% are not sure.

- 84% agree that teachers have opportunities to discuss their professional work with the SMT on an annual basis; 5% disagree; 8% are not sure.

- 90% agree that teachers and LSAs are encouraged by the SMT to try out new ideas; 2% disagree; 8% are not sure.

- 68% agree that all teachers and LSAs are involved in decisions which affect the whole school; 8% disagree; 24% are not sure.

- 45% agree that decisions regarding whole-school policy are made essentially by the SMT; 29% disagree; 26% are not sure.

- 34% agree that when teachers and LSAs attend professional development courses, seminars or conferences they share their learning with colleagues; 29% disagree; 37% are not sure.

- 16% agree that they are not given the opportunity to show their potential as a leader; 63% disagree; 21% are not sure.

- 13% agree that they are not given the opportunity to involve themselves in the work of the school; 81% disagree; 3% are not sure.

- 82% agree that the School listens to the 'Students' Voice'; 18% are not sure.

- 84% agree that they feel the School is a satisfying and fulfilling workplace for me; 5% disagree; 11% are not sure.

- 79% agree that all the staff contributes in the formation and implementation of the SDP; 11% disagree; 10% are not sure.

- 81% agree that there is mutual respect and trust among the staff; 6% disagree; 13% are not sure.

- 65% agree that teachers appreciate the feedback they get after a lesson observation by the SMT; 3% disagree; 21% are not sure.

- 50% agree that parents participate when they are asked to attend school activities; 11% disagree; 40% are not sure.

- 55% agree that there are structures and systems in place for parents to volunteer to help during the year; 13% disagree; 32% are not sure.

- 50% agree that the Parents Teachers Association communicates effectively with the school; 50% are not sure.

- 92% agree that parents are informed regularly about the life and work of the school; 8% are not sure.

- 58% agree that the School has channels where parents can voice their feedback; 16% disagree; 26% are not sure.

- 89% agree that the School takes the feedback of parents into account; 8% are not sure.

- 52% agree that students get an opportunity to make suggestions about their learning (e.g. subject choices, approaches to assessment, the learning environment); 16% disagree; 19% are not sure.

- 85% agree that systems are in place which ensure that students are supported in their learning; 5% disagree; 11% are unsure.

- 66% agree that students are empowered to assume responsibility, take risks and respond to change; 8% disagree; 26% are not sure.

- 65% agree that the School values and acts upon what pupils tell; 3% disagree; 32% are not sure.

- 97% agree that the Code of Behaviour is based on the school's ethos and values; 3% are not sure.

- 94% agree that we work together, as a school community, to ensure that we are offering the best curricular opportunities for students; 3% disagree; 3% are not sure.

- 84% agree that new ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at staff meetings; 5% disagree; 11% are not sure.

- 76% agree that new ideas about teaching and learning are discussed at subject meetings; 3% disagree; 16% are not sure.

- 76% agree that every year the School strives to improve learning by prioritising specific actions; 3% disagrees; 18% are not sure.

- 97% agree that the School has a clearly written mission statement; 3% are not sure.

Appendix 9

Questions for a simple research about teachers' general perceptions of the 'spiritual health' of the school

I would greatly appreciate your help with some research I am carrying out for an MA assignment. All individual responses will be treated in the strictest confidence – no names are required. When a choice of answers is given please TICK the response box that best expresses your view and if you wish you may add a comment.

1. Can you list three reasons why you work in a Church school?

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

2. Can you share three impressions that you have regarding the religious orientation and practices of the school?

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

3. How familiar are you with the mission statement of our school?

Very Familiar	Fairly Familiar	Not Familiar

Comment?

4. Can you share three ways in which you believe your daily actions influence the successful realization of this mission?

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

5.   How familiar do you think the students are with the mission statement of the school?

Very Familiar	Fairly Familiar	Not Familiar

Comment?

6. How important do you believe it is that the students see you participate in school liturgical events and community service projects like morning assemblies?

Very Important	Fairly Important	Not Important

Comment?

7. How comfortable are you expressing your faith convictions to your students and colleagues?

Very Comfortable	Fairly Comfortable	Fairly Uncomfortable	Very Uncomfortable

Comment?

8. How comfortable are you praying with your students?

Very Comfortable	Fairly Comfortable	Fairly Uncomfortable	Very Uncomfortable

Comment?

9. Do you integrate Catholic Social teachings, e.g. commitment to the poor & marginalised, in your curriculum units?

Yes, it is a priority	I give it some thought	Unsure what is meant by Catholic Social teaching	Not relevant in my subject

Can you give one example?

10. Would you like to share any other thoughts or perceptions you have about the 'spiritual health' of our school community?

**Once you complete the questionnaire you can put it on my desk in the staffroom.**

Thank you for giving your precious time in support of my work.

Isabelle

Appendix 10

QUESTION 1: *Can you list three reasons why you work in a Church school?*

	Environment	Small school	Convenient hours	Discipline	Catholic values	Other
Respondent 1	1				1	
Respondent 2		1	1		1	
Respondent 3	1	1			1	
Respondent 4		1	1		1	
Respondent 5		1			1	
Respondent 6		1			1	
Respondent 7						1
Respondent 8	1				1	
Respondent 9		1			1	
Respondent 10					1	
Respondent 11		1		1	1	
Respondent 12		1				1
Respondent 13	1			1		1
Respondent 14	1	1				1
Respondent 15		1	1	1		
Respondent 16						1
Respondent 17	1					1
Respondent 18			1			1
Respondent 19					1	
Respondent 20				1	1	1
Respondent 21				1	1	1
Respondent 22				1	1	
Total	6	10	4	6	14	9
Percentage	27%	45%	18%	27%	64%	41%
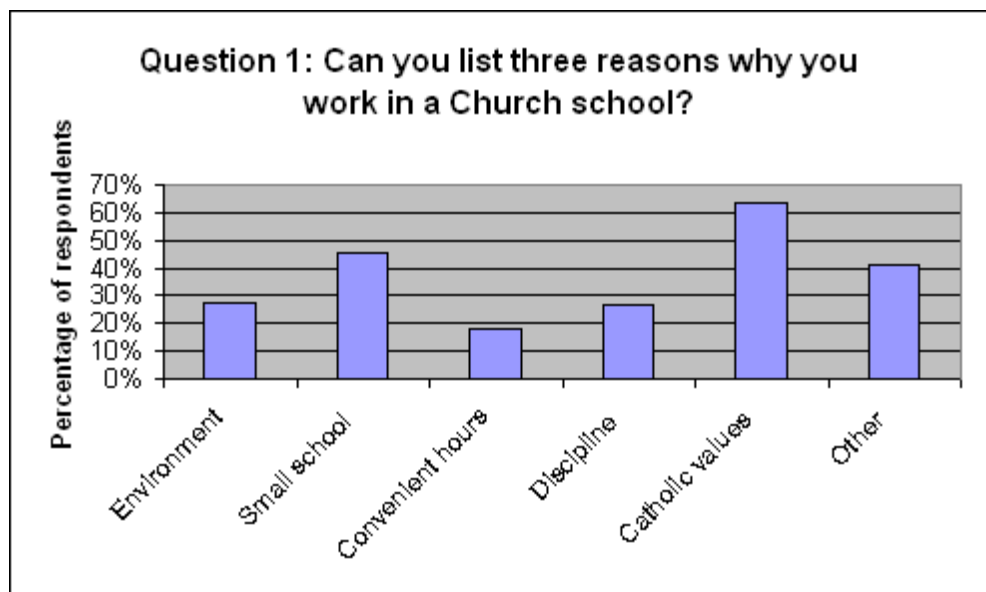
APPENDIX 11

PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

	Kindly mark ✓in the column that most closely approximates your feelings.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
1	I am informed regularly about the life and work of the school.						
2	The School has channels where I can voice my feedback.						
3	The School takes my feedback into account.						
4	The School values and acts upon what the pupils tell.						
5	I am able to participate when I am asked to attend school activities.						
6	The School gives me opportunities to involve myself in the work of the school.						
7	I am satisfied on how the School emphasises prayer, Catholic values and the spiritual and moral development of its pupils.						
8	I am satisfied on how the Senior Management Team distributes leadership in the school.						

Open ended questions

1. What do you like best in the school?

2. What would you like to change in the school?

3. How might we listen to our pupils more effectively?