Catholic Schools: 'A Poor Service' – A Question or a Statement? A case study of a West London Catholic Primary School

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Abstract

In this dissertation a number of issues are researched and explored that are related to whether Catholic schools offer a good service to the poorest and most vulnerable members of our society as they are required to do by the Church. I believe this is an important issue. This dissertation sets out to develop a deeper understanding of the Catholic Church's views on the poor in education and discusses what schools can do to ensure that these children, far from being neglected, actually receive preferential treatment.

There are several definitions of the term 'poor.' The study examined three areas: financial poverty; emotional poverty and spiritual poverty. This study focuses on defining these terms. Varied sources of literature have been reviewed and are referred to throughout the study.

A reflective study in the school, where I hold the position of Assistant Head, is supported by a case study of work carried out, via a questionnaire, in June 2015. The objective of the questionnaire was to gather additional information from the leaders and the teaching staff about: the levels of awareness of the poor in the school; whether they think the poor are being catered for with regards to the curriculum or through extra-curricular activities; and to gain some idea of what they think are the main barriers in supporting these children. The findings show that, even though the school does many things to promote the preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, there are still areas which need to be looked at, especially the admissions policy. These have implications for the leaders within the school.

In conclusion, I make a series of recommendations that seek to raise the profile of the poor and vulnerable within the school.

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Content

Chapters

List of abbreviations

BBC- British Broadcasting Corporation

CAMHS- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

CBCEW- Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales

CES- Catholic Education Service

CCRS- Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies

DFE- Department for Education

EAL- English as an Additional Language

FSM- Free School Meals

GCSE- General Certificate of Secondary Education

IDACI- Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index

INSET- In Service Educational Training

KS1- Key Stage 1 (5-7 years old)

KS2- Key Stage 2 (7-11 years old)

LSAs- Learning Support Assistants

MA- Masters of the Arts

NQTs- Newly Qualified Teachers

NSS- National Secular Society

NUT- National Union of Teachers

Ofsted- Office for Standards in Education

OSA- Office of the Schools Adjudicator

PTA - Parents Teachers Association

RE- Religious Education

SATs- Statutory Assessment Tasks

SAFE- Supportive Action for Families in Ealing

SENCO- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

SEND- Special Educational Needs

SMSAs- School Meals Supervisory Assistants

SPAG- Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

TAs- Teaching Assistants

TLRs- Teaching and Learning Responsibilities

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore whether Catholic schools are still fulfilling their raison d'etre of being primarily a service to the poor. As stated in the Catholic handbook (2010:7):

> In Catholic education we are challenged by Christ 'to see his presence in our neighbour, especially the neighbour who suffers or who lacks what is essential to human flourishing.' That is why the poor and disadvantaged in financial, social, academic or spiritual terms, must be our primary concern, so that they can live their lives to the full.

It will examine the reasons why Catholic schools were principally established, by exploring Catholic social teaching in respect of the preferential option for the poor. What do we mean by the term 'poor' and how is it assessed?

In this investigation, I will look at the historical evidence to see the extent to which Catholic schools have exclusively served the poor.

It will discuss the challenges that current leaders in Catholic schools face. It will particularly focus on an Inner London Catholic Primary School as a case study and try to evaluate the extent to which it achieves the Catholic Church's stated goal of Catholic education being primarily a service to the poor. Is it doing enough to serve the poor? How does it deal with these issues? Does the school fulfil its service to the poor? If it doesn't what can the leadership within the school do to try to ensure that those aims are met and how, if at all, it could be improved?

1.2 Rationale

The reason for conducting this investigation is to examine the extent to which Catholic schools are fulfilling their stated aim of serving the poor:

> First and foremost the Church offers its educational service to the poor and… entreats pastors and all the faithful to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools fulfil their function in a continually more perfect way, and especially in caring for the needs of those who are poor in the goods of this world or who are deprived of the assistance and affection of a family or who are strangers to the gift of Faith.
>
> (Pope Paul VI; 1965: n9)

In recent years, with the increasing strains placed on schools with the demand for school places, particularly in London, Catholic schools and their admissions policies have come under great scrutiny, from the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA), the British Humanist Association, the Fair Admissions Campaign, the National Secular Society (NSS) 'The fewer religious schools there are, and the less privileges they have, the more socially just our education system will be, both for pupils and teachers.' (secularism.org.uk, 2015, Online: accessed 05/09/2015) National Union of Teachers (NUT) and the press. What all these groups have in common is that they feel that the pupils of faith schools do not truly represent or reflect the local population, especially the poor, and they are opposed to selective admissions. In 2007, the National Union of Teachers stated their views on admission policies which could be seen as discriminatory;

> The NUT is opposed to admissions policies which either privilege or discriminate against children on the basis of the beliefs, motivations or practices of their parents. It is vital that all schools have admissions practices which are inclusive and which respect the diversity of the community they are situated in.
>
> <div align="right">(NUT; 2007: para 50-51)</div>

This has been highlighted by the press in some high profile cases. Firstly, Tony Blair, who became Labour Prime Minister in the late 1990's, came under attack for his choice of secondary schools for his children:

> Tony Blair, defended his decision to choose such a (grant-maintained) school for his own son...Mr Blair and his wife, Cherie, have applied to send Euan, 10, to a grant-maintained Catholic comprehensive school, London Oratory, in Fulham, eight miles from their Islington home.
>
> Yesterday, Mr Blair said he did not want his choice to become a political football. He told BBC Breakfast News: "We want to get the best for our child from the schools for which the school he is at at the moment is a feeder school."
>
> Ministers were quick to exploit the Blair family's choice of school. Gillian Shephard, Secretary of State for Education, said the Blairs had passed up the chance to send Euan to 50 other schools nearer to their home.
>
> <div align="right">(Abrams and Davies, 1994, Online: accessed 10/09/2015)</div>

Tony Blair was criticised again about his choice of secondary school for his daughter. This led to the Blairs taking out a Press Complaint against the newspaper who published the story. The article suggested that parents were furious that the school had admitted his daughter while rejecting other local children. The article continued to suggest that the prime Minister had been given special treatment while rejecting other local children. This led to the suspicion, it said, that the school was operating an 'under-the-counter' selection policy. The Prime Minister and Mrs Blair were not poor, the leader commented, and could have paid for private education for their daughter instead (Press Complaints Commission, 1999, Online: accessed 10/09/2015). For the record, the complaint was upheld.

Even now the Blair's decision to send their children to these schools all those years ago is still coming under attack. One journalist even accused Tony Blair of abusing his power to ensure that his children attended 'superior, selective, church run schools.'(Mount, 2014, Online: accessed 28/08/2015). Nick Clegg, the former Deputy Prime Minister, has also been criticised by his choice of Catholic secondary school for his child, with one journalist commenting that it is great for him and his wife that they are able to pick a school for their child that achieves some of the best results in the country, 'It's just a pity more parents can't.' (Berliner, 2013, Online: accessed 10/09/2015)

Indeed even the Archdiocese of Westminster itself took one of its own schools to court in 2009, with the complaint being upheld, as they found that this school was operating a points-based admissions system that was against the law. The Fair Admissions Campaign reported that this particular school did, indeed, give priority to applicants based on what their parents did at their parish church. The Fair Admissions Campaign went on to state that:

> This case demonstrates primacy of Dioceses over their schools in the area of admissions, but also highlights existing concerns about how religiously selective policies can favour those from different ethnic and socio-economic groups over others
>
> (fairadmissions.org.uk -'Challenge existing schools', 2015, Online: accessed 29/08/2015)

It should be noted at this point that in January 2014:

> Catholic maintained schools in England educated almost exactly 10% of all pupils (774,121), with the same proportions at primary and secondary levels. In Westminster Diocese 90% of the children in each primary school are Catholics.
>
> (CES, 2014, 8 Online: accessed 10/09/2015)

Since league tables have been in existence, Catholic schools, across the country, have consistently been near the top of them and places in Catholic schools are highly sought after. The most recent figures show that:

- 83% of Catholic primary schools have Ofsted grades of good or outstanding (81% nationally).
- At age 11, Catholic schools outperform the national average English and Maths SATs scores by 5%.
- At GCSE, Catholic schools outperform the national average by 8%.

> (CES, Key Facts 3, 2014 Online:accessed 05/09/2015)

As Grace (2002) states:

> Catholic schools are filled to capacity and are, in fact, oversubscribed by parents who are attracted by the Catholic school's reputation for academic success and for taking spiritual and moral formation seriously.

This problem may have become exacerbated in recent years in London because of a variety of factors which will also be examined. These factors, although not directly caused by Catholic schools, need to be recognised and challenged otherwise they could have an effect upon the make-up and characteristics of Catholic schools.

Wendy Berliner, commenting again in the same article written about Nick Clegg's choice of school for his son, discusses how London is different to any other city in Britain; where parents can't easily get their children into the school of their choice:

> …as outstanding schools fill up quickly from an ever-smaller catchment area as people who can afford to move in fill them up. Faith schools like the

London Oratory, which are quickly oversubscribed, can use faith-based criteria for admission to decide who gets the places.

State schools in England end up reflective of their neighbourhood but London is one place where you could have very socially mixed schools because poverty and affluence butt up against one another, sometimes even in the same street.

Yet it rarely happens. London has more than double the national percentage of kids in independent schools and it is the brave middle-class parent who will opt for a school in special measures or one with vast numbers of children on free school meals, or not speaking English as their first language.

(Berliner, 2013, Online: accessed 10/09/2015)

It is vital that Catholic schools need to continue to serve the whole Catholic community, 'Since all Christians … have a right to a Christian education.' (Pope Paul VI 1965: n.2)

The common perception may well be that the poor in Catholic Schools have been marginalised.

This dissertation sets out to ascertain to what extent this has become reality or not.

1.3 School Description: The Case Study School

St George's Catholic Primary School[1] is an oversubscribed high achieving school, situated in a mixed demographic catchment, with a rich diversity of cultures. This two-form entry school is currently expanding to a three-form entry school- three forms of entry have currently reached Year Four (September 2014). To accommodate the expansion, the school is currently in the midst of a major building programme. The school is currently 100% Catholic.

There are 619 pupils on roll making St George's a larger than average primary school. The following statistics are based on the Autumn 2014 Census. Of these 619 pupils 12% are eligible for free school meals which is well below national average but an increase of 6% from last year. 8% of pupils are on the Special Needs Register,

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[1] For ethical reasons, a fictitious name has been used

3% at Early Action or School Action, 4% at School Action Plus and 0.3% have Statements of SEND; again these figures are well below national figures. 48% are recorded as having English as their first language with 19% recorded as having an Eastern European language as their first language. There are 19 different ethnic groupings recorded within school which is well above nationally.

In spring 2013 the school created a new Senior Management Structure comprising Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher, Upper and Lower Phase KS2 Leaders, KS1 Phase Leader, Foundation Stage Leader and SENCO. However for the academic year 2014-15, Deputy Head was on maternity leave since the end of October 2014 and the Assistant Head became acting Deputy Headteacher.

The Governing Body is pro-active and monitors all school improvement strategies and priorities. In September 2014 the Governing Body reconstituted itself, decreasing from 15 governors to 12. The Governing Body now comprises seven Foundation governors, two Parent governors, one Local Authority governor, one staff governor and the Headteacher. The Acting Deputy Headteacher is an observer at all Governing Body meetings.
.
There are currently 20 Class teachers (including nursery), 14 Teaching Assistants (TAs), three Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) and two part time staff working with children with English as an Additional Language (EAL). There are currently eight Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) holders. Six new teachers joined the school in September 2013; three of whom are Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs). One new teacher, an NQT, joined in September 2014.

The most recent Ofsted inspection (February 2011) judged the school to be 'Good' with 'Outstanding' features. And the most recent section 48 Inspection (May 2011) judged the school to be 'Outstanding'.

The school was opened in 1952 in an area that had been traditionally white working class. It is surrounded by an estate that was one of the first 'garden suburbs' built- social housing for the poor. This area was designated a conservation area in 1969

and, consequently, since then it has been an extremely desirable place to live, with houses now being sold for £700,000+. The small but dominant immigrant communities were Irish arriving in the 50's and 60's and, to a lesser extent, Poles who had come to this country after the Second World War. There is a Polish church in the Parish. In recent years the school has had an influx of Polish children, with a declining indigenous population in percentage terms. The latest figures for the school show that in Year 6 there were 52% White British/Irish (18% in the borough) and 14% White Eastern European (7% in the borough); in Reception the figures show 32% White British/Irish (18% in the borough)- a drop of 20%- and 29% White Eastern European (10% in the borough)- an increase of 15%. (Data from Ealing Schools Research and Statistics Team, 2013, Online: accessed 05/09/2015)

1.4 Methodology

In this study I intend to gather information by means of distributing questionnaires to staff and governors within the case study school. The analysis will involve an examination of the responses of participants within the case study school who took part in the questionnaire survey. This will encourage thoughtful reflection about the poor in this school with reference to any available research and data.

1.5 Summary

To summarise then, this dissertation will examine the challenges that modern Catholic schools and leaders face in trying to ensure that Catholic Schools are fulfilling their stated aims of catering for the poor.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this literature review I shall examine several themes that are relevant to this investigation. First, I shall look at what the contemporary definitions of poor are. Then, and most importantly, what the Gospel actually says about the poor and the message that Christ taught and the implications this has for Catholic schools. Then I will examine what the Church says about the poor and its position with regards to Catholic schools today. Finally, I will reflect on how modern day Catholic schools and their leaders are fulfilling this stated mission.

There has been much data produced on the financial poor in schools ranging from The Joseph Rowntree Foundation to The Catholic Education Service Census Digest. Grace has produced a lot of work; as has McLaughlin T, O'Keefe J and O'Keefe B in The Contemporary Catholic School: context, identity and diversity. Allen and Burgess (2011) wrote a paper on 'Evaluating the Provision of School Performance Information for School Choice', which partly examined the effects of publishing league tables on the poor. Along with these works and judging from previous research projects for the MA CSL, this is a perennial issue for Catholic schools that needs to be constantly addressed.

2.2 Definitions of Poor

The word 'poor' comes from the Latin word for pauper and means 'few means; poverty stricken'. The Oxford Popular Dictionary (second edition 1999) defines poor as 'having little money or means.' In the Bible Jesus could have used one of two New Testament Greek words for poor. They are 'ptochos' and 'penas'. The word, ptochos, means more than just being 'poor'. It has a number of other connotations that aren't necessarily captured in the English word. Ptochos conveys the idea that those who are poor lack security and those who are in a vulnerable position. Vulnerable comes from Latin word that means wound or wounded. Poverty can be defined and measured in various ways, but, for the purpose of this investigation, we will look at three types, financial poverty, spiritual poverty and emotional poverty.

I will first look at financial poverty. Financial poverty means a lack of money, or lack of means of subsistence, an incapacity to afford basic human needs. Being financially poor differs throughout the world. It is all relative. In some parts of the world it might actually mean not being able to afford to buy enough food to live on or even a loaf of bread. However, as this work is being written about Catholic schools in England then we need to look closer to home and how poverty is defined here.

One definition of poverty is 'Relative Income Poverty'. This is where each household's income, adjusted for family size, is compared to median income (the median is the 'middle income': half of people have more than the median and half have less). Those with less than 60% of median income are described as poor. This 'poverty line' is the agreed international measure used throughout the European Union. (Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation). Joseph Rowntree Foundation's definition of poverty is:

> When a person's resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs (including social participation).
>
> (Goulden and D'Arcy; 2014)

In England, the poor have been identified by the Catholic Bishops as:

> Those without sufficient means to take part in the life of the community…..excluded from the community, denied the rights of membership. Their choices are circumscribed; they have little personal freedom.
>
> (Catholic Bishops of England and Wales; 1996: n. 74)

With regards to education, poverty is defined by Pupil Premium. This is when a family is in receipt of any family allowance or if either parent receives one or more of the following benefits: Income Support; Income-based Jobseekers Allowance; The guaranteed part of State Pension Credit; Support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; Child Tax Credit; Working Tax Credit; or Universal Credit. If any of these apply then it would mean that the family (children) would then be entitled to Free School Meals (FSM).

Spiritual and emotional poverty, which can be harder to define, will be discussed in 2.6 below.

2.3 The Poor in the Bible

As already touched upon in 2.2, the Greeks had two words for poor: Penas and Ptochos. This is the language that the evangelists wrote in. When translating Jesus' words they chose to use the word Ptochos. This word, Ptochos, means more than just being "poor." To give a sense of the rich meaning of the word, in his Gospel (16:19-25), Luke writes about Lazarus. He was a poor man. He was so poor and diseased that he was looking for crumbs to fall from the rich man's table to the floor. He did not expect loaves or slices of bread - he was just hoping for crumbs. That is poor! He had absolutely nothing. In fact, the best sense of Ptochos is "being so poor that the person is a beggar (Source: -What does spiritually poor mean?2015, Online). Jesus first epitomised being a servant of the poor in the Beatitudes, which represents Jesus' Mission Statement: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' (Matthew 5:3) Jesus was the servant king. Catholic schools have a tradition derived from Jesus' ministry:

> Jesus took a little child and set him by His side and then said to them: 'Anyone who welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me and anyone who welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me. For the least among you all that is the one who is great'
>
> (Luke 9:47-48)

The above passage comes from Luke's Gospel which is referred to as the Gospel of the poor. Ronald Rolheiser, a specialist in the fields of spirituality and systematic theology and a regular columnist in the Catholic Herald, notes that:

> In the New Testament, every tenth line is a direct challenge to reach out to the poor. In Luke's gospel, we find this in every sixth line…The challenge to reach out to the poor and to level the distinction between rich and poor is an integral and non-negotiable part of being a Christian, commanded as strongly as any of the commandments.
>
> (Rolheiser, 2009, Online: accessed 05/09/15)

In Matthew, Jesus spoke about the Last Judgement and whether we are able to reach out to the vulnerable, including the poor hungry and sick. It is a call to see Christ in others:

> Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

> (Matthew 25:34-40)

All of Jesus' actions and teachings throughout his life show how he sympathised and sided with the poor and vulnerable, such as widows, children, orphans and foreigners. Jesus made a point of associating himself with these groups. He was criticised especially by Pharisees for associating with these groups of people, which led Jesus to tell the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Also the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (John 4: 1-10) not only was she a woman but a Samaritan!

Even through his choice of Disciples, e.g., when choosing Matthew the Tax Collector, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees who ask why he is eating with tax collectors and sinners and Jesus replies:

> Those who are well have no need of a physician. But those who are sick … I came not to call the righteous but the sinners.'
> (Matthew 9:12-13)

In fact, Jesus even started his earthly mission by quoting Isaiah:

> The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the captives, and

recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

<div align="right">(Luke 4:18)</div>

2.4 The Poor as Viewed by the Catholic Church

In 1891 Pope Leo XIII wrote an open letter to all Catholic Bishops addressing the condition of the working classes. This letter was entitled *Rerum Novarum*, from its first two words, which can be translated as 'of revolutionary change'. It has become the key work on how the Church views the poor. This work recognised that the poor have a special status in consideration of social issues and the notion that God is on the side of the poor. This has become the modern Catholic principle known as 'preferential option for the poor'.

In his writings, Pope Leo XIII let it be known that the favour of God seems to incline more toward the poor as a class (a.37). Equal treatment is preferable, but when general laws are not adequate to protect the poor and the vulnerable members of society, it is just to give them more help according to their need. His sympathy went out to the poor, who have a 'downcast heart' (a.37). Those, therefore, who favour the poor in attitude and action, are God-like.

In addition to this, Pope Paul VI during the Second Vatican Council wrote the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church entitled *Lumen Gentium* (1964). He stated that the Church has a duty to spread among all peoples, including the poor, the kingdom of Christ and of God 'to bring the light of Christ to all men' (*Lumen Gentium*, Chp 1 The Mystery of the Church).

In 1965 another document came from Vatican II. This was called *Gravissimum Educationis*, translated as 'Declaration on Christian Education'. This document suggests that Catholics have an obligation to ensure that there is education in

poverty-stricken areas of the world, and that education as well as feeding, clothing, and housing the poor, is a central duty to the poor we have as Christians:

> This Sacred Council of the Church earnestly entreats pastors and all the faithful to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools fulfil their function in a continually more perfect way, and especially in caring for the needs of those who are poor in the goods of this world or who are deprived of the assistance and affection of a family or who are strangers to the gift of Faith.
>
> (Pope Paul VI; 1965: n.9)

And:

> In some countries, because of local laws and economic conditions, the Catholic school runs the risk of giving counter-witness by admitting a majority of children from wealthier families. Schools may have done this because of their need to be financially self-supporting. This situation is of great concern to those responsible for Catholic education, because first and foremost the Church offers its educational service to "the poor or those who are deprived of family help and affection or those who are far from the faith "(22). Since education is an important means of improving the social and economic condition of the individual and of peoples, if the Catholic school were to turn its attention exclusively or predominantly to those from the wealthier social classes, it could be contributing towards maintaining their privileged position, and could thereby continue to favour a society which is unjust.
>
> (The Sacred Congregation of Catholic Education; 1977: Paragraph 58, Online: accessed 05/09/15)

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales picked up this theme in 1996 when they expressed their desire that education should be for everyone but particularly the poor and disadvantaged:

> People who are poor and vulnerable have a special place in Catholic teaching: this is what is meant by the 'preferential option for the poor'. Scripture tells us we will be judged by our response to the 'least of these', in which we see the suffering face of Christ himself.
>
> (CBCEW 1996, section 14)

It is clear from all of the above writings that Catholic schools have been given a duty of care to the poor. Is this duty of care reflected in their admissions criteria? What are the statistics with regards to poor in Catholic Schools and do they reflect this? The next section will examine these figures.

2.5 The Poor in Catholic Schools

The Catholic Church has always placed great importance on education and the school. When Catholic Schools were allowed after 1850, they were, by definition, for the poor. Catholics 'enjoyed' far less favourable employment conditions. They had been disenfranchised and were ostracised from the higher echelons of society. 'In this respect, mention must be made of the invaluable services of the Catholic School to the spiritual and material development of less fortunate peoples' (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium (1997):n5).

> In the sense that every child is a unique creation of God….The church firmly holds that it is the entitlement of every child to experience excellence in teaching and this underlines the school's responsibility to develop the potential of every pupil. The Catholic school must however recognise a special mission to those children who through disability, emotional or social need require greater support in their education.
>
> (CES; 1996: n10)

When Catholic schools were allowed in England and dioceses were being re-established by Pope Pius IX in 1850, it became the aim of the Church to provide a place for every Catholic child at a Catholic School. Indeed schools were built before churches.

> At great cost and sacrifice our forebears were inspired by the teaching of the Church to establish schools which enriched mankind and responded to the needs of time and place.
>
> (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education; 1977: n65)

It can be seen then that from their very beginnings the Catholic Church recognised the need to cater for both the financial and spiritual poor, as highlighted below:

> The Sacred Synod earnestly exhorts the pastors of the Church and all the faithful to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools to become increasingly effective, especially in caring for the poor, for those without the help and affection of family and those who do not have the faith.
>
> (Pope Paul VI; 1965: n. 9)

And:

> Another characteristic of the Catholic school has its root: it is a school for all, with special attention to those who are weakest…..and those who have lost all

sense of meaning in life and lack any type of inspiring ideal, those to whom no values are proposed and who do not know the beauty of faith, who come from families which are broken and incapable of love, often living in situations of material and spiritual poverty. To these new poor the Catholic school turns in a spirit of love.'

(The Congregation for Catholic Education; 1997: n15)

With all the above statements it is important to see whether the figures for Catholic schools actually reflect the rhetoric. The Catholic Education Service for England and Wales has done just that and have analysed the figures from the 2014 national data.

They make interesting reading and the main salient points are discussed below:

The national census for 2014 reported that in primary schools 29.5% of pupils were from minority ethnic origins, interpreted as those not in the White British category. In secondary schools the figure was 25.3%. Both figures were about 1% higher than in 2013. The figure for Catholic school, however, showed that they are more diverse: the proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups were 35.9% in primary schools and 31.4% in secondary schools. Also, the percentage of white British in Catholic schools throughout England is 64.6% yet the figure is 69.8% for other schools in England.

(Digest of Census Data for Schools Colleges
Catholic Education Service CES; 2014: 16)

This 2014 national census also showed that:

…the overall percentage of pupils known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals was 16.3%, down from 17.1% in 2013. The overall figure for Catholic schools was 13.9%, compared to 14.1% in 2013, showing that the gap between Catholic schools and the national average has narrowed from 3 percentage points to 2.4 percentage points. The national census reported that in primary schools the figure was 17.0, down from 18.1 in 2013. For secondary schools the figure was 14.6, compared to 15.1 in 2013. The percentage in Catholic primary schools decreased to 14.4 (14.8 in 2013) and in secondary schools rose very slightly to 13.2 (13.1 in 2013).

(Digest of Census Data for Schools Colleges
Catholic Education Service CES; 2014: 17)

The analysis went on to state that there is a big issue when it comes to these figures with regards to FSM. Recent data has shown that Catholic Schools have below average uptake of children who are eligible to receive Free School Meals:
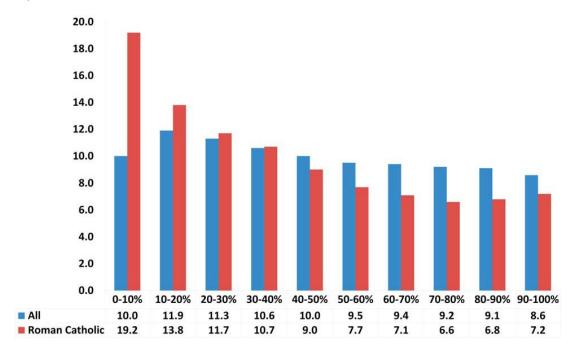
However, it remains problematic that the free school meal figures for Catholic schools are inconsistent with other measures of disadvantage such as

the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (see Appendix G or table below?), which appears to show that pupils in Catholic schools come disproportionately from more disadvantaged areas.

(Digest of Census Data for Schools Colleges
Catholic Education Service CES; 2014: 18)

The Catholic Education Service feel strongly about using FSM as the main indication of child poverty. They have gone as far to say that there is evidence to show that around 700,000 children who are living in poverty yet are not entitled to free school meals. With this in mind they prefer to use the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). This measure takes into account the levels of income deprivation in the areas where children live and can be used to chart the proportions of pupils coming from the most deprived 10% of areas, the 10% next most deprived, and so on. The index is widely used, for example by Local Authorities when allocating deprivation funding: in the financial year 2013-4 £3.5 billion was distributed to schools based on IDACI measures of deprivation and low prior attainment, in addition to the £2.5 billion allocated as pupil premium.

The graph on the next page, constructed from data provided by the DfE, compares primary Catholic schools with all primary schools in England. The horizontal axis represents the level of deprivation, starting with the most deprived 10% of areas on the left and continuing in deciles to the least deprived 10% on the right. The coloured blocks show what proportion of children lived in areas with each level of deprivation. More information about the Index can be found on the website of the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Distribution of Pupils by IDACI Decile in Primary Schools, January 2014

	0-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	50-60%	60-70%	70-80%	80-90%	90-100%
■ All	10.0	11.9	11.3	10.6	10.0	9.5	9.4	9.2	9.1	8.6
■ Roman Catholic	19.2	13.8	11.7	10.7	9.0	7.7	7.1	6.6	6.8	7.2

The first pair of columns shows that 10% of all primary school children lived in the most deprived 10% of areas, compared to 19.2% of children at Catholic primary schools. The second pair shows that 11.9% of all children lived in the next most deprived area, compared to 13.8% of children at Catholic schools, and so on. Fewer children in Catholic primary schools came from the more advantaged areas to the right of the graph.

Please note that the findings for secondary schools are broadly similar to those for the primary sector, showing that pupils at Catholic secondary schools came disproportionately from more deprived areas as well. (All data from: Digest of Census Data for Schools Colleges Catholic Education Service CES; 2014: 40)

To emphasise the figures above; the Catholic Education Service printed some 'Key facts' from this survey and highlighted the statistics that:

- 36% of pupils in Catholic maintained primary schools are from ethnic minority backgrounds (30% nationally).

- 18% of pupils at Catholic maintained secondary schools live in the most deprived areas (12% nationally).
  (Digest of 2014 Census Data for Schools and Colleges Catholic Education Service CES Key facts for England; 2014: 1)

All of the figures suggest that Catholic schools are fulfilling their stated aims of providing a service for the most vulnerable in our society.

2.6 The 'New' Poor

Spiritual and emotional poverty are somewhat harder to quantify and might be described as a modern phenomenon. This 'new form' of poverty is to do with family and faith and is challenging Catholic Schools. These are those people who do not know Christ; the non-attenders at mass. This was highlighted in the document by the Vatican entitled Catholic Schools on the Threshold of the Third Millennium (1997). This document identified these areas as:

> … those who have lost all sense of meaning in life and lack any type of inspiring ideal, those to whom no values are proposed and who do not know the beauty of faith, who come from families which are broken and incapable of love, often living in situations of material and spiritual poverty, slaves to the new idols of a society, which, not infrequently, promises them only a future of unemployment and marginalization.
>
> (The Congregation for Catholic Education; 1997: n15)

Gerald Grace (2002) has picked up this theme and has spoken about the 'reformist view' of Catholic education. This is where the school has become the new church, in an increasingly secular society where church attendance is down.

Weekly Mass attendance, in England and Wales, fell between 30.7% between 1993 and 2010 as compared to corresponding falls of 10.9% in Catholic population (faith survey, 2015, Online: accessed 13/09/2015) – although recent mass migration to Britain from Christian countries, particularly Poland , have helped to stem the decline in church figures ((The Guardian, 2014, Online 13/09/2015). This is in contrast to the 'traditionalist view', as defined by Grace, which was seen as a 'golden age' where young people were

> … regular attenders at Sunday Mass and who (had) a good understanding of Catholic doctrine, liturgy and sacred symbolism
>
> (Grace; 2002: 439)

Pope John Paul II touched upon this when he described 'newer patterns' of poverty that affected affluent societies:

> The scenario of poverty can extend indefinitely, if in addition to its traditional forms we think of its newer patterns. These latter often affect financially affluent sectors and groups which are nevertheless threatened by despair at the lack of meaning in their lives, by drug addiction, by fear of abandonment in old age or sickness, by marginalization or social discrimination.
>
> (John Paul ll; 2001: n50)

And:

> We should add here that in today's world there are many other forms of poverty. For are there not certain privations or deprivations which deserve this name? … do these not impoverish the human person as much as, if not more than, the deprivation of material goods?
>
> In brief, modern underdevelopment is not only economic but also cultural, political and simply human, as was indicated twenty years ago by the Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*.
>
> (Pope John Paul II; 1987: n.15)

Pope Francis has recognised the problems that the Church is faced with today. He has consequently announced that 2016 will be the Jubilee Year of Mercy. The Holy Father entreats the Lord to make the Jubilee of Mercy a year of grace so that the Church, 'with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind' (Source; Vatican Radio, 2015, Online: accessed 26/08/2015).

2.7 The Wider National Picture – Academic Success of the Poor in Catholic schools

Along with the 'new poor 'there has also been many changes in education in recent years. The biggest and most important was the Education Reform Act of 1988. Amongst many things part of the Act allowed all schools to be taken out of the direct financial control of Local Authorities. Financial control would be handed to the headteacher and governors of a school. An element of choice was also introduced, where parents could specify which school was their preferred choice.

Additionally, the National Curriculum was established. This was the precursor to National Tests with published league tables. Putting all these together meant that schools become part of a 'competitive market culture' (Grace 1995: 18) where schools were pitted against each other. This competition between schools was strengthened in 1992 when, via the Education (Schools) Act, Ofsted inspections of schools and the consequent publishing of their findings began. This has continued to place increasing importance on Parents' (and pupils') voice. These Ofsted reports and league tables have come to epitomise the culture of the competitive consumer society

This new competition between schools has led to many issues for Catholic schools, who by their whole mission integrity should prioritise education in the faith along with service to the poor.

Those who argue for competition say that standards will inevitably rise:

> League tables are used widely by parents to compare the attainment of schools in their own areas. Proponents argue that the tables help drive up standards by increasing the accountability of schools and provide valuable information for parents as they choose schools for their children. Research published in 2011 by Bristol University (Leckie and Goldstein) claimed that the abolition of league tables in Wales had led to a drop in standards in the lowest 75% of schools.
>
> (BBC News Education, 2011, Online: accessed 10/09/2015)

Many disagree with this stating that publishing league tables does not fit in with the development of an inclusive education system that offers a good local school to any pupil:

> Opponents say league tables are too crude a measure of a school's character, quality and achievements and often end up saying more about the intake of a school than the teaching and learning that goes on there. They say the tables encourage competition rather than collaboration between schools in local areas and can lead to middle-class parents pushing to get their children into top schools, further driving down standards at less popular schools.
>
> (BBC News Education, 2011, Online: accessed 10/09/2015)

It has been argued that:

> … raw outcome 'league tables' mainly reflect school composition rather than teaching quality and so are uninformative of the likely outcome for any particular student. It has also been argued that performance rankings are so unstable that they provide no useful guide to the future (Kane and Staiger, 2002; Leckie and Goldstein, 2009).
>
> <div align="right">(Allen and Burgess; 2010: 24)</div>

Furthermore research suggests that 'children growing up in poverty and disadvantage are less likely to do well at school' (Experiences of poverty and educational disadvantage -Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Education and Poverty programme Donald Hirsch 2007). This has been reinforced by the study of Allen and Burgess (2010) who found that even though performance league tables can be useful tool for parents when making the choice for their children they are:

> …least useful for poor students and low ability students. This is particularly unfortunate because the variation in *ex post* pupil achievement within a choice set is much higher for lower ability students. This suggests that making a good choice may matter more for these pupils, but performance tables are not as informative for school choice as they are for other groups.
>
> <div align="right">(Allen and Burgess; 2010: 25)</div>

Finally, one unforeseen consequence of publishing league tables is that if a school is near the top, it has an affect on the composition of the school which consequently has an affect on the teachers who teach at that school, attracting high quality teachers thus ensuring that the cycle continues and that these schools continue to prosper:

> …it strongly influences the long-run sorting of teachers, headteachers, governing bodies, unpaid volunteers, teaching assistants, and other resources. Whilst clearly some high quality teachers and headteachers spend time in challenging schools, many of them may not stay there very long (Lankford et al., 2002; Dolton and Newsom, 2003; Rivkin et al., 2005). High teacher turnover is particularly a problem for urban schools if they are forced to replace experienced exiting teachers with new recruits to the profession who will take a few years to reach their highest productivity (Rivkin et al., 2005).
>
> <div align="right">(Allen and Burgess; 2010: 26)</div>

All of the above may lead to some schools being reluctant to admit certain children, for example SEN pupils or those who have behavioural problems, if they feel they might affect the school's position in the tables.

As schools become more selective in the struggle for results then some schools, particularly those in deprived areas and those who serve the poor will struggle to attract pupils and particularly those whose parents are more affluent. In a consultation on schools in poor urban areas the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW 1997: p.45) reported that 'parental choice and competition had led to urban flight' away from deprived areas:

> Poorest areas are usually at the greatest disadvantage….. The real problem was the absence of a 'level playing field'….Such schools are always in danger of slipping into a negative cycle……which leaves them less and less able to compete with more affluent schools.
>
> (CBCEW; 1997: 45-46)

2.8 A London Perspective and Potential Problem

Academic success in both primary and secondary Catholic schools across London has led to many Catholic schools being the desired choice for the upwardly mobile. Any glance at any league table for KS2 results or higher grades in the capital in recent years has seen the Catholic sector doing extremely well. Of the eight Catholic Primary Schools in the London Borough of Ealing, for example, the 2012 KS2 results showed that 4 were in the upper quartile for English and Maths test results for Level 4+, and only two were below the median. A Primary Catholic School tops the Ealing Borough Schools. Also in 2012, 17/32 of the top schools in each London borough were Catholic Primary Schools.

There may be a number of reasons why these schools achieve so well academically. With this success, however, these schools might have unwittingly created a 'problem' for themselves as this success has meant the more aware and affluent parents/upper working class/ middle class are increasingly attracted to these catchment areas/parishes. Children from 'poor' families still attend these schools, but may be getting marginalised, particularly as house prices rise throughout the capital.

Estate Agents have accentuated this by advertising that certain houses lie within a certain catchment area/parish of these successful schools, trying to entice people with children who can afford to buy these houses to move there with the hope of getting their children into the school of their choice. House prices in London continue to rise

and outstrip all other parts of the country. The figures from the Land Registry, which records property prices in England and Wales, show the average price of property in London is now £488,782. The average national price is £183,861.' (Source: Land Registry House Price Index, 2015, Online: accessed 09/09/2015). As house prices rise, the area can become gentrified as the more affluent move into an area; this can have an effect on the school's results which normally improve and increase the desirability of an area and school and so the cycle continues. As Catholic schools, both Primary and Secondary are amongst the most successful in London then house prices reflect this.

Another factor influencing the high demand for places in Catholic schools in London has been the big increase of the capital's population in the last few years. Indeed the population of London is now, with 8 million people, the highest it has ever been. One of the major reasons for this has been large scale immigration. This has had a direct impact on Catholic schools because in the last 12 years numbers of people coming to live in London from Eastern Europe (and Africa), has seen the Catholic population of London increase significantly. 'It seems numbers for the Catholic Church may have been boosted by an influx of immigrants - from Eastern Europe and Africa. While rural congregations have been dwindling, inner city churches have seen numbers rise.' (Source: BBC News Website, 2010, Online: accessed 26/08/2015)

This has put a strain on places and availability in London and although many Catholic schools have expanded there is still a need for school places amongst the Catholic population of London. Finally, some Catholic Secondary Schools in London, and, to a lesser extent, Primary Schools may have been guilty of creating new 'super schools' with stringent admissions criteria to the exclusion of the most vulnerable.

Catholic Schools and their leaders need to be aware of all the above factors and remain vigilant that poor families are not being marginalised or even excluded by default.

2.9 Leaders in Catholic Schools

Finally, it is important to write about the role played by the leaders in a Catholic school, particularly the Head. As Grace states, 'School leaders have a prime responsibility to guard and enhance the mission integrity of the school', particularly if we are to challenge the 'Doomsday Scenario' published by the Vatican in 1998 of the challenges faced by Catholic School leaders in the modern world; arising from 'loss of faith, moral relativism, consumer materialism, growing polarisation of rich and poor and the general breakdown in the quality of community and of family life' (Grace; 2002 p. 433). Catholic Schools should show humanity at its best- this is what we are striving for.

Catholic School leaders have a crucial role to play in ensuring that Catholic Schools maintain the Mission Integrity particularly in this era of League Tables, Performance Management and increasing secularisation. Gerald Grace highlights this in his work 'Contemporary Challenges for Catholic School Leaders', stating that it is the responsibility and the duty of the Leaders of our Catholic Schools to ensure this:

> It is not sufficient simply to develop the intelligence, talents and skills of young people on an individual or 'self-fulfilment' basis. This could lead to the creation of talented and clever but also self-centred and materially acquisitive individuals with no regard for any conception of a common good. The Catholic position……is that intelligence, talents and skills and command of knowledge are to be developed to the highest possible degree but always with a religious and moral understanding that such personal empowerment is used for the benefit of others. Academic education cannot be an end it
>
> (Grace; 2002: 431)

The principles behind Catholic Education that Leaders always need to pursue are:

> … to enable students to achieve their complete dignity as persons in a relationship with Christ. According to this view religion cannot be separated or divorced from the rest of the curriculum.
>
> (Arthur 2007: 10)

Consequently Catholic schools and their leaders should always view any government driven initiative in the curriculum with an eye to the principles of Catholic education. This is because they need to ensure that the distinctive nature of the Catholic education being offered will not be compromised by each new development. They

should always be looked at and developed with a view of enhancing the school whilst keeping Christ at the centre; which ultimately means service to the poor and finding 'the path that follows Jesus as one of His Disciples and bring children to see the face of Jesus.' (Weddel; 2012: 5).

Catholic school leaders need to remain vigilant to what the principles of Catholic education are. In 1996 the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales produced a document stating these principles. They identified five principles that Catholic Schools should be committed to:

1. The Search for Excellence: The search for excellence is seen as an integral part of the spiritual quest. Christians are called to seek perfection in all aspects of their lives. In Catholic education, pupils are therefore, given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.
2. The Uniqueness of the Individual: Within Catholic schools, each individual is seen as made in God's image and loved by Him. All pupils are, therefore, valued and respected as individuals so that they may be helped to fulfil their unique role in creation.
3. The Education of the Whole Person: Catholic education is based on the belief that the human and the divine are inseparable. In Catholic schools, management, organisation, academic and pastoral work, prayer and worship, all aim to prepare young people for their life as Christians in the community.
4. The Education of All: Their belief in the value of each individual leads Catholic schools to have the duty to care for the poor and to educate those who are socially, academically, physically or emotionally disadvantaged.
5. Moral Principles: Catholic education aims to offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values. In religious education in particular, the church aims to transmit to them the Catholic faith. Both through religious education and in the general life of the school, young people are prepared to serve as witnesses to moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

<div align="right">(Catholic Education Service; 1996: 3)</div>

Catholic school leaders should be aware that preferential option for the poor should supersede the quest to top league tables- important though that is. This view is supported by the Catholic bishops who have stated that, 'education is not a commodity to be offered for sale' (The Catholic Bishops' Conference for England and Wales; 1997: 13). They also encourage schools to promote the common good by, among other things, reviewing selection and admission procedures, which is

arguably the most important reason in determining whether a Catholic school is fulfilling the declared aims of being a service to the poor. Many Catholic schools have been taken to task over their selection procedures and some have even been taken to court. This was highlighted in one of the many test cases that have been taken against Catholic schools:

> Richy Thompson, of the British Humanist Association - which made the objection to the school's policy, said: "This state-funded school is one of the most socio-economically selective in the country, taking in under 20 per cent as many pupils requiring free school meals as live in the area in which it is based.. "The degree to which the school's admissions criteria enabled social engineering to take place was appalling and we are very pleased these parts must now all be removed."………The admissions code was brought in to try and outlaw schools covertly selecting pupils - by, amongst other things, interviewing parents and asking questions like "is there a suitable place in your home for your child to do homework?" - which was thought to rule out the children of parents living in poverty.'
>
> (Garner, 2013, Online: accessed 10/09/15)

All leaders who are involved in Catholic education need to remain vigilant.

2.10 Summary

This review has explored how the Church views the poor in relation to education. It has also placed this in the modern context of education in Britain today with all the challenges this brings to the church, the schools and their leaders who are trying to ensure Catholic schools fulfil their true mission.

The next chapter will outline and justify the procedures that I adopted to carry out my investigation. It will also examine how I gathered the information that will be the basis of my analysis.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Research

3.1 Introduction

In the first chapter I pointed out that the aims and the objectives of this dissertation were to see whether Catholic Schools are fulfilling the stated goal set out by the church of being a service primarily for the poor. This was to be done by examining what happens at a Catholic Primary School in West London. In chapter two I looked at some of the relevant literature that has been published on this subject. This chapter will set the scene in the chosen research methods and discuss who was asked to take part and why.

Following this, I will look at the research design i.e the questions that were asked on the questionnaire and why I asked these particular questions. A consideration of the ethical issues of the research comes next, particularly regarding the two key areas of confidentiality and anonymity.

3.2 Research Methods

There are a wide range of research methods that are available to the researcher. These can be broadly categorised into two paradigms: quantitative methods and qualitative methods. One may be a facilitator of the other.

The purpose of quantitative research is to quantify data and generalise results. It measures the incidence of various views and opinions within a chosen sample in a structured way. It is sometimes followed by qualitative research which is used to explore some findings further. Quantitative research is usually a large number of respondents who have a vested interest. Data collection would normally involve questionnaires and short interviews. The data analysis would usually be descriptive in nature. The outcome of this research would be to recommend a final course of action.

The objective of qualitative research is to gain an understanding of underlying reasons and motivations. It also tries to provide insights into the setting of a problem and generates ideas and/or hypotheses for later quantitative research. The sample is usually very small and the data is collected by much more in depth interviews. The

data analysis is non-statistical and the outcomes are not conclusive and cannot be used to make generalisations but it is a basis for further decision making. It is a method of inquiry employed in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social sciences.

From this wide range of methods I have decided to adopt a case study approach that involves distributing questionnaires to a large number of people with a vested interest in Catholic education, where the data can be analysed but also where the respondent is able to make comments. Robert Yin (2003, Online: accessed 14/09/2015) sees this approach as a strength as the questionnaire is targeted and focused directly on the key people involved.

It is important to state that there are some potential drawbacks of this approach. Yin (2003, Online: accessed 14/09/ 2015) notes that these may include: bias due to poorly constructed questions; response bias; inaccuracies due to poor recall; and reflexivity- where the respondent gives an answer which they think the person carrying out the questionnaire wants to hear. Yin also mentions that there is a lack of rigour in this approach with little opportunity for scientific generalisations and that they can be time consuming.

3.3 Research Design

According to Munn and Drever (1990) a questionnaire should have certain characteristics some of which are to be: brief; easy to understand; and quick to complete. The questions should not be irritating or double barrelled. They should be clear and unambiguous. Leading questions have to be avoided. I also thought that it was important to include a section where people could write any further comments if they so wished. This would help to generate further discussion or 'pearls of wisdom'. To make collation easier I used the Likert Scale, which 'offers the researcher the freedom to fuse measurement with opinion, quality and quantity' (Cohen, Mannion and Morrison; 2007)

Within the questionnaire there are four themes and in each of these themes the leaders of the school play a crucial role in shaping and have the authority and influence to change them. These titles are crucial to the leaders within Catholic schools. These leaders try to serve people and children just as Jesus served and called his disciples to serve.

There are, however, some potential limitations of using questionnaires, which have already been touched upon in section 3.2. These may be some of the following:

- There is no way to tell how truthful a respondent is being.
- There is no way of telling how much thought a respondent has put in.
- The respondent may be forgetful or not thinking within the full context of the situation.
- People may read differently into each question and therefore reply based on their own interpretation of the question - i.e. what is 'good' to one person may be 'poor' to someone else. Therefore, there is a level of subjectivity that is not acknowledged.
- There is a level of researcher imposition. Thus, when developing the questionnaire, the researcher is making his/her own decisions and assumptions as to what is and is not important - therefore they may be missing something that is of importance.
(Source: advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires, University of Surrey, Online accessed 14/09/2015)

3.4 The Sample

Having decided how I would gather the information I then had to decide who would actually participate in this questionnaire and why. The content of the questions meant that certain people were in a better position to answer the questions than others. I also realised that some people would find some sections easier to answer than others. The first group of people that I asked were the Governors who serve on the admissions team. Even though they might not be able to answer some of the curriculum questions their expertise and knowledge of the school's admission's

policy would be crucial to the findings. The Chair of Governors and the Parish Priest also have an important part to play in this. The Headteacher completed the set of people who ultimately are responsible for what happens in their school. I felt that they would also be very well informed. The other main group that were asked were the teaching staff. These may not be able to discuss admissions although they may have a view to express; however, I believed that these would be best placed to articulate the sections on the curriculum; the Catholic life of the school; and their own professional needs.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Obviously I knew all the participants personally. Many of them had been aware for some time that I was completing a dissertation and part of that would include some form of research. When I had finished composing the questionnaire I then sent a letter explaining what I had been doing and the main thrust of the questionnaire (See Appendix A).

On handing out the letters to members of teaching staff and relevant members of the Governing body, I made it clear that it was entirely voluntary and only those that returned the slip would be given the questionnaire. I also included a 'not applicable/do not know' section in the questionnaire as I was aware that many of, if not all of, the teachers, would not be able to answer questions about the school's admissions policy and that the Governors would not be able to answer the questions about staff development within the school. Although they could provide comments about any of these sections if they so wished.

I reassured them that they could give their answers honestly and without any concerns regarding confidentiality and anonymity. I made it clear that I would 'protect the privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of participants in research' (Busher and James, in Briggs and Coleman; 2007: 108).
By following these guidelines, the participants could give their responses fully and in confidence, knowing that their anonymity would be preserved and that all information recorded in the questionnaire would be treated in the strictest

confidentiality. It was also communicated to them that any statistical information held on computer would be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act. The school was also given a fictitious name so that its identity would not be known by anyone but me.

3.6 Pilot Study

The questionnaire was tested out with the Headteacher of the case study school before it was distributed amongst the sample group. As a result of this pilot a couple of minor changes were made to the final questionnaire; for example, there were previously five questions to each section but this was reduced to three in each section with an additional comments box added so that each respondent could add any comments about the topic that they wished to. A final copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

3.7 Procedures

The questionnaires were handed out the week beginning 1st June 2015 and I asked if they could be returned by Friday 5th June 2015. I was aware of time constraints and even though I was hoping that further comments would be made by participants I understood that not everyone would complete this part.

Of the 26 I handed out I got back 22 within the time scale. This was a satisfactory return as it was at the time of year when teachers were doing reports etc so I did not chase the other four up as I felt that this was sufficient to be provide me with information as a basis for analysis of participants' perspectives on the poor.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the methodology used for my research. I realise that there is a wide range of research methods that could have been chosen, however, I was very aware of time constraints and the requirements of this dissertation.
In chapter four I will present an analysis of the data collected from the questionnaires.

Chapter 4 Analysis

4.1 Introduction

At the outset of this study I had a number of objectives in mind and these were to ascertain whether Catholic schools are still fulfilling their raison d'etre of being primarily a service to the poor and whether or not they are offering a good service to the poor. As stated in the Catholic handbook:

> In catholic education we are challenged by Christ 'to see his presence in our neighbour, especially the neighbour who suffers or who lacks what is essential to human flourishing.' That is why the poor and disadvantaged in financial, social, academic or spiritual terms- must be our primary concern, so that they can live their lives to the full.

(CES; 2010: 7)

For the purpose of this dissertation and as described in Chapter two, the poor have been broken down into three distinct groups: The financial poor; the spiritual poor and the emotional poor. From the Literature Review it is clear that the Vatican encourages special care and attention to not just the financially deprived but also to those who are emotionally and spiritually poor. The latter two areas are not easily quantifiable nor necessarily recognisable but still can be investigated as it is the holistic approach to education that produces fruitful results, these not necessarily being academic results.

In this chapter I will first present the results of my questionnaire survey and subsequently examine and analyse these results in the context of the Literature review and my own personal experience of working within Catholic schools and what they actually mean for the case study school.

4.2 Presentation of the Results

Below are the results of the questionnaire. 26 were handed out and there were 22 people who returned the questionnaire. It should be noted that the percentage numbers do not always add up to 100% as they have been rounded up or down to the

nearest percentage. One person is represented as 4.54%. Not everyone wrote a comment but all the comments that were written have been included. Each person who has written a comment for any of the sections is represented by a letter. People may only have written one comment; the written comments have been copied exactly as they were written.

Admissions

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable/ Do not know
2.1 Our admissions policy prioritises children from families who are financially poor.	1=5%	4=18%	3= 14%	7= 32%	2= 9%	5= 23%
2.2 Our admissions policy prioritises children from families who are spiritually poor.	1= 5%	1=5%	3=14%	8= 36%	5= 23%	4= 18%
2.3 Our admissions policy prioritises children from families who are emotionally poor.	2= 9%	1=5%	6=27%	8=36%	2= 9%	3=14%

If you have any further comments on these issues then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible.

a) The school is bound by the admission's Code of Practice to ensure that children are admitted to (name of school) are admitted freely and without prejudice. Whilst the school's admission criteria gives children from 'Looked After' families priority admission it cannot (by law) prioritise the financially, spiritually or emotionally poor. Indeed, on the last two, how would you apply a criteria and who would make that judgement?

b) Admissions based on practicing Catholicity, distance from school in catchment area, sibling, distance from school outside catchment, etc, etc. No reference to finances.

c) 2.1 By using a distance-based criteria by the very nature of the school catchment area, priority is given to more affluent members of (local area name given) Society. Governors need to discuss whether to give priority to children eligible for the pupil or service premium. Feel this could lead to a parental backlash if implemented. 2.2 Priest's references on mass attendance are always taken into account. 2.3 Our admissions policy would not highlight any emotional problems, unless highlighted by professional information.

d) Our criteria includes those children who are looked after first and in exceptional circumstances compelling evidence from 'outside agencies' may help a child to get a place, if we can offer the support they need.

e) I thought/think our school's policy is equal to all Catholic children? All of those who are in the catchment, baptised and have a letter from their priest. I wasn't aware poor in spirit or wealth came into it?

f) We specifically prioritise children who are practising Catholics i.e not possibly spiritually poor. However I do not believe financial wealth/emotional well-being are taken into consideration as our catchment area, although affluent, does include areas where people live in social housing.

g) Our admissions policy prioritises people who are able to get a priest's reference. These will be people who are the opposite of spiritually and emotionally poor as they have to be motivated enough to go to church every Sunday. As we are in an affluent area; the financially poor are discriminated against, not prioritised, due to distance criteria.

h) No written comment.

i) Staff sometimes express negative opinions on how the school is 'changing', particularly with regard to behaviours, religions, financial circumstances and poor parental involvement. Their opinions often do not take into account our Catholic duty to provide a universal and tolerant environment that welcomes all into our school.

j) I am not sure of instances where priority has been given to two of the above however I know in my class we gave a place to a boy whose father was extremely ill even though the class was 'full'.

k) No written comment.

l) No written comment.

m) This is something that could be shared with staff at the beginning of the year.

n) 'Looked after' children have priority which is fair otherwise you must be a baptised Catholic- however 3 form entry has widened intake to non-Catholics.

o) No written comment.

p) Although none of the listed categories are the <u>first</u> priority for admission, when there are more applications than the number of places available, places are offered to pupils with a statement of special educational needs/ Education, Health and care plan. This may include those children from families who are emotionally poor. First priority is given to children with a priest's reference, however non-Catholic children are also admitted to the school- who may come from families who are spiritually poor!

q) No written comment.

r) No written comment.

s) No written comment.

t) No written comment.

u) Despite working here for many years I have never really looked at the admissions policy.

v) No written comment.

The Curriculum

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable/ Do not know
3.1 The Curriculum in this school caters for children from families who are financially poor.	4=18%	12= 55%	3= 14%	1= 5%	0= 0%	2= 9%
3.2 The Curriculum in this school caters for children from families who are spiritually poor.	7= 32%	11= 50%	3= 14%	1= 5%	0= 0%	0= 0%
3.3 The Curriculum in this school caters for children from families who are emotionally poor.	6= 27%	7= 32%	7= 32%	2= 9%	0= 0%	0= 0%

If you have any further comments on these issues then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible.

a) The curriculum though broad and balanced has as its emphasis- RE (Religious Education) at the centre, and Christ at the centre of all we do. This ensures those pupils who we are concerned about spiritually have access to an ethos- a view of life that can give them spiritual security. PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) and RE- discussions and assistance from specialists help those pupils who we have concerns with their emotional developments or poverty of. All children have equal access to the curriculum whatever their financial circumstances.

b) School journeys/visits are the only instance I know of financial aid being offered.

c) The curriculum caters for children with all needs.

d) Children are able to participate in activities regardless of financial issues. The school will help financially if necessary. We provide opportunities to

develop spirituality of the children. We have a code for development of (name of school) Angels. We support children who are emotionally in need. Class teachers support them day to day and make sure there is communication about the child.

e) The Pastoral nature of our teaching means that we have responsibility to develop and support the children's emotional intelligence (PHSE in the curriculum). Pupil premium for financially poor. Catholic ethos and curriculum to develop spiritually poor.

f) 3.1 We support children who are low income families by funding children's access to clubs and trips/residentials- all contribute to their education. We also support them by offering free second hand uniforms, allowing children to fit in with peers, contributing to their readiness for learning. 3.2 As a faith school, spirituality is at the centre of learning and is nurtured throughout the school day and by all staff members. 3.3 I feel strongly that this is an area we need to develop as a school. We do have children who struggle emotionally but we do not have staff who are qualified to meet their needs. We can support children by referring families to outside agencies, however, we need support within the school.

g) It is not something I'd ever considered- which probably means that it doesn't actively cater for the financially, spiritually or emotionally poor. However it is assumed by some (not all teachers), that all our pupils come from church going, middle class families and certain things in class are planned with this in mind.

h) No written Comment.

i) 3.1 Great resources and generosity/ appropriate allocation of budget to give good quality equipment and out of class learning opportunities for all children. 3.2 Robust and challenging RE curriculum, bibles for each class, sense of religious community at mass, class masses and assemblies. 3.3 varies from class to class. Some offer nurturing opportunities, some don't although can depend on children's needs.

j) Lots of work goes into families who are emotionally poor in my experience. The safeguards in our school, I think are really good. Also

lessons are made to cater for the needs of children focussing on their emotions and spirituality.

k) We make good provision for those who are considered to be 'spiritually poor'. We strive to support children and their families who are emotionally poor- in particular EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage), families are included in their children's learning (academically, spiritually). The holistic development of a child is a priority

l) No written comment.

m) With PSHE not on the curriculum, teachers need to factor in time to cater to emotional/spiritual needs of children. Very good new RE curriculum for us to cater to spiritually poor children, but without full support/consistency at home children's spiritual needs are only met at school. This makes it less meaningful to the children. It's lovely that children go to Abbey mass regularly at school.

n) I have non-Catholics in my class and sometimes feel they need extra explanation of the Catholic faith. Should have more incentives for good behaviour especially aimed as goal for emotionally poor. More visits to Abbey for spiritually poor and visits from clergy for liturgies.

o) No written comment.

p) Children do not have to provide books or any materials themselves to be able to access the school curriculum. Financial support is available for children from families who are financially poor, for school trips, clubs and extra-curricular activities. Catholic education is provided for <u>all</u> our pupils. Vulnerable children are flagged up in the staffroom so <u>all</u> staff can support them. Rigorous pastoral records are kept for vulnerable children and their progress is tracked. Interventions are put in place to ensure progress.

q) No written comment.

r) No written comment.

s) I feel the FSM money should be utilised more with regards to intervention/resources/adult support of a year group of 90 children.

t) No written comment.

u) I think the school curriculum caters for these children in the way teachers adapt lessons for their children's needs. From nursery upwards teachers try

to build on the children's home experience to develop their spiritual and
emotional life e.g encouraging parents to come in, bringing things from
home, sending things home. Not being judgemental but holding high
expectations. Financial support is offered for trips (school uniform etc). Of
course we could always do more.

v) No written comment.

The Catholic Life of the School

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable/ Do not know
4.1 Extra-curricular activities cater for the needs of all pupils in the school.	11= 50%	3= 14%	5= 23%	0= 0%	2= 9%	1= 5%
4.2 School trips and clubs etc can be accessed by all pupils irrespective of background.	12= 55%	5= 23%	2= 9%	2= 9%	0= 0%	1= 5%
4.3 In my opinion this school has an inclusive approach to all pupils irrespective of background.	12= 55%	7= 32%	3= 14%	0= 0%	0= 0%	0= 0%

If you have any further comments on these issues then please provide them here.
Please be as specific as possible.

a) There is a broad range of sporting/creative/healthy extra-curricular
activities which benefit all pupils- infants and juniors. See section 3 re last
two points.

b) No Written comment.

c) 4.1 Feel research needs to be undertaken as to the number of pupils with SEN (Special Educational Needs)/EAL (English as an Additional Language) who actually participate in extra-curricular activities.

4.2 Again research could be done on pupils who actually participate.

4.3 Any non-inclusive approach would not be by deliberate and planned policy.

d) Support is given to all children to enable them to participate in extra-curricular activities.

e) There aren't any restrictions which stop people from accessing the above- to my knowledge.

f) 4.1 We offer a wide range of activities- there is definitely something for everyone! 4.2 I have to disagree due to the recent development of free school meals for all KS1 pupils. Parents are less inclined (despite encouragement in school newsletters) to register for FSM (Free School Meals)- therefore we do not have the pupil premium money to divert to potentially low income families to ensure that children do have access to clubs. Some parents in KS2 also refrain from their entitlement due to perceived discrimination. 4.3 Mostly agree, however, we recently have had a few non-catholic pupils join and some members of staff do feel that this is not appropriate- they may treat these children differently.

g) 4.1 A lot of extra-curricular activities have a fee that rules the club out for certain pupils. I believe FSM pupils are able to access a discretionary fund, but this does not benefit the many 'working poor' families who are not in receipt of any benefits. 4.2 as 4.1. The school, I believe, doesn't actively set out to exclude poor families but neither does it go out of its way to include these pupils.

h) 4.1 It depends which needs you are referring to.

i) 4.1 no visits to mosques, other places of worship etc. or community links with children in other communities.

j) The school does lots to cater for all with a strong focus on our Catholic background. We have a wide range of extra-curricular activities where we do not charge teachers or companies rent. As a result, clubs are cheaper meaning more can access them. The school, where appropriate, will pay for children to go on certain trips.

k) No written comment.

l) No written comment.

m) I really like the way the school is willing to assist any parents with financing school trips/workshops. Such a variety of clubs available for all children. I think diversity could be celebrated more so children feel proud of sharing their heritage in school.

n) No written comment.

o) 4.1 Think there is a fund to support lower income families but it's not clear who's eligible or how to access it.

p) No written comment.

q) No written comment.

r) No written comment.

s) There is an excellent and wide range of extra-curricular activities available for the children here.

t) No written comment.

u) You can always offer more extra-curricular activities!

v) Some of the after school clubs are fee based and therefore might not be accessible to children whose parents/carers are financially strapped

Staff

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable/ Do not know
5.1 The staff in this school are given support/training in how to help the children from families who are financially poor.	1= 5%	4= 18%	4= 18%	10= 45%	0= 0%	3= 14%
5.2 The staff in this school are given support/training in how to help the children from families who are spiritually poor.	3= 14%	5= 23%	5= 23%	7= 32%	1= 5%	1=5%
5.3 The staff in this school are given support/training in how to help the children from families who are emotionally poor.	6= 27%	5= 23%	3= 14%	7= 32%	0= 0%	1= 5%

If you have any further comments on these issues then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible.

a) Staff have pupils who are pupil premium identified, also where the school believes families to be suffering from financial hardship but not eligible for pupil premium- ways are found to support them. The ethos of the school, RE INSET (In Service Training) and general discussion all contribute to

helping those children whose spirituality may be less than would be wanted. PSHE /RE INSET contribute to helping those pupils with emotional concerns.

b) No written comment.

c) The school has a very positive ethos in respect of integrating pupils from all backgrounds and abilities.

d) We receive training about how we can support children spiritually through the curriculum, collective worship, prayer etc. We have had INSET on how to ensure 'safeguarding' of children.

e) We haven't been trained in the above- I've never seen training of this kind.

f) 5.1 I don't know that all staff are aware of how pupil premium can directly support a child i.e. through funding trips/clubs or resources to support learning etc. 5.2 I don't think this is something we have specifically discussed as a staff. 5.3 As SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) and other CP (Child Protection) leads. I support staff when CP issues arise, or changes at home etc. to know how to support their child in class e.g through a 'worry box' or discussing who they can speak to- named member of staff as a 'mentor'. All staff, including SMSAs, are informed if child needs additional support and care. I also support staff by helping them to access outside agencies such as the EP (Educational Psychologist)/ SAFE Team/ CAMHS etc. However staff have not had any formal training to know how to support our vulnerable children.

g) 5.1 I've had conservations with members of teaching staff who have been concerned that every child has to pay for their school trips, irrespective of their financial situation. Obviously I corrected the member

of staff, but it demonstrated a lack of awareness/training in supporting the financially poor. 5.2 and 5.3 I cannot remember ever receiving specific support or training in these areas. I am happy to be corrected! I think brief comments have been made about these things when discussing other matters, but I don't remember anything specific.

h) No written comment.

i) No written comment.

j) 5.3 We can ask for help in this area and as a result attend courses or have discussions with relevant people to help in this area.

k) 5.1 Staff generally use their own initiative to support those considered to be financially poor. It would be useful to point out in a whole staff meeting examples of how to support these children e.g providing additional uniform, contributions to school trips to reduce the parent cost etc.

l) No written comment.

m) Support given to staff who need help in all three areas (support from SMT (Senior Management Team) and SENCO. More training would help with these however. Children who come from 'spiritually poor' families- this is not often something we pay enough attention to.

n) Perhaps more counselling training. Increases social skills to aid children who are emotionally poor.

o) No written comment.

p) No written comment.

q) No written comment.

r) No written comment.

s) I feel further training on the issues of emotionally and financially poor children would greatly enhance teaching staff's CPD (Continual Professional Development) and confidence with these issues.

t) No written comment.

u) I don't remember having training about how to help children who are financially poor. The staff retreat in September was very helpful, it addressed our own spirituality and gave insights in how to help. I think we have better support and training when it comes to children with emotional needs.

v) No written comment.

4.3 Interpretation

The four themes explored through the questionnaire are classified thus:

1. Admissions

2. The Curriculum

3. The Catholic Life of the School

4. The Staff

These four themes were chosen for a variety of reasons and I wanted to seek the views and opinions of both Governors and Teaching Staff on all these matters.

Firstly, I believe that the admission policy is the most important factor that defines the composition of a school. Whether a school decides to prioritise the poor and vulnerable at this point will have a major impact on who attends that school. If a school is based in an area of deprivation then the impact might not be as great; but where schools are based in areas of wealth, which is where the Case Study School is located, if the poor and vulnerable are not prioritised, it can have a major impact.

Secondly, I felt that it was important to look at what the Case Study School actually does for these children when they are in the school, through both the curriculum and the extra-curricular activities

Lastly I wanted to find out the staff's thoughts; how does the school identify and help these poor and vulnerable children? Could it be doing more? How much do the staff actually understand about admissions? Do they feel they are receiving the appropriate training?

Ultimately I wanted to find out whether the people who are involved in the school-governors, senior leaders and teachers- feel that the school is fulfilling its duty of preferential options for the poor which was addressed in the literature review. Do the responses confirm or contradict the themes encountered in the literature review? Are the poor and disadvantaged the school's primary concern?

I will now analyse these results and interpret what they mean by taking each section at a time and compare and contrast the themes of the literary review with the questionnaire results.

(a) Admissions

It is clear by looking at section 2 that the people questioned feel that the school's admissions policy does not give priority to the financial, spiritual or emotional poor. 41% (9 people out of 22) disagreed with the statement that the school's admission's policy prioritised children from families who are financially poor. 9% (2 out of 22)

of these people disagreed strongly. Only 23% (5 out of 22) agreed with the statement- with 5% (1 out of 22) of these strongly agreeing. The number who disagreed with the statement that the school's admission's policy prioritised children from families who are spiritually poor were even higher on 59% (13 out of 22) - including 23% (5 out of 22) who disagreed strongly. Only 10% (2 out of 22) agreed that the school prioritises these children- with 5% (1 out of 22) of these strongly agreeing. The numbers who disagreed to the last statement (2.3) about prioritising children from families who are emotionally poor were also high on 45% (10 out of 22) -with 9% (2 out of 22) of these strongly disagreeing. Only 14% (3 out of 22) agreed with the statement- with 9% (2 out of 22) of these strongly agreeing.

However it was also clear that many of the respondents did not feel confident enough to be able to express an opinion or felt that it was applicable to them. 23% (5 out of 22) stated that they did not know whether the school's admissions policy prioritised children from families who are financially poor, this fell to 18% (4 out of 22) for those who are spiritually poor and 14% (3 out of 22) for those who are emotionally poor.

Looking at the comments it is clear that many people did not know enough about the school's admissions policy (Appendix C) to be able to make a comment about it- 36% (8 out of 22). This might be because the teaching staff have no reason to familiarise themselves with this policy, which is reviewed annually and often changed. Respondent (U) stated that 'despite working here for many years I have never really looked at the admissions policy'. Respondent (M) actually recommends that the admissions policy 'is something that could be shared with staff at the beginning of the year.'

Other respondents were better informed and were able to give comments. Five of the respondents ((B), (C), (E), (F) and (G) understood the fact that a priest reference is important for those children whose families are practising Catholic. This is defined in the policy as weekly family attendance at mass. One of these respondents went on to make a link between having a priest reference and being spiritually and emotionally

poor by suggesting that if all the children had a priest reference that these people

> …will be people who are the opposite of spiritually and emotionally poor as
> they have to be motivated enough to go to church every Sunday.

> (Respondent G)

With regard to the financial poor some of the respondents wrote that as the school is located in an affluent area and because one of the criteria is based on distance from the school that, by definition,

> priority is given to more affluent members of (local) society.

> (Respondent C)

> as we are in an affluent area, the financially poor are discriminated against,
> not prioritised, due to distance criteria.

> (Respondent G).

Respondent (F) disagreed with the previous two respondents stating that

> …our catchment area, although affluent, does include areas where people live
> in social housing.

Only three respondents (A, D and N) correctly stated that 'Looked After' children were given the first priority.

What is the reality? As already stated in section 1.3, St George's has FSM and SEN figures that are well below local and national level. The following statistics, which are based on the Autumn 2014 Census, show that of the 619 pupils 12% are eligible for free school meals which is well below average locally (21.6% in 2013) and nationally, but an increase of 6% from the previous year of 2013. 8% of pupils are on the Special Needs Register (15.6% locally in 2013), 3% at Early Action or School Action, 4% at School Action Plus and 0.3% have Statements of SEND; again these are figures well below local and national levels. EAL figures are much higher for the school, 48% are recorded as having English as their first language with 19%

recorded as having an Eastern European language as their first language. These figures are much higher in KS1 and EYFS and are continuing to increase. There are 19 different ethnic groupings recorded within the school which is well above the national figures. The school still has one of the highest figures in the Borough for white British at 37.3% (fourth highest) with the Borough figure being 16.2% (Data from Ealing Schools Research and Statistics Team, 2013, Online). If white Irish was included in this figure as well it would rise to 44.1%, with the Borough figure being 17.3% (Data from Ealing Schools Research and Statistics Team, 2013, Online: accessed 05/09/2015).

When commenting about the spiritual or emotional poor, some of the respondents wrote about how difficult it would be to apply any spiritual and emotional criteria and asked who would actually do this (respondent (A). One respondent (J) highlighted a situation that had happened when the school had given a place to a child whose father was extremely ill even though the class was full.

It should be noted that, as a Parish school, the catchment area is much bigger than other schools in the area. In fact the last applicant to be offered a place for reception in 2014 lived 2.196 miles from the school (school records). The two neighbouring schools show that last applicant to be offered a place for their reception classes in 2013 lived a distance of 0.661 miles and 0.495 (primary school applications, 2015, Online). It might be argued that even though St. George's has an admissions policy primarily based on faith it is taking children in from a much wider- and less affluent - area. It should also be noted that within the parish is the oldest and biggest Polish church in the country. This has meant that the school has always taken Polish speaking children, with numbers increasing dramatically since 2004. There are now 90 places available each year. This has seen a widening of the net and we now have children coming from outside of the Parish, but this is only after all practising baptised Catholic children within the Parish have been accepted.

The negative figures in the questionnaire for admissions are the highest of all the four themes. Some potential reasons for this have already been discussed above but I believe another reason could be is that even though the school is seen as strong by the people who work there, they have no control over the admissions policy.

It would appear, then, that with regards to the poor and vulnerable the school does have far less children compared to locally and nationally. Is this a consequence of the location of the school or the admission policy? It is complicated and, I believe, a combination of the two. Maybe Catholic schools do have less emotional and spiritual poverty due to the longstanding traditions and values of the Church. Also if a school is located in an affluent area the chances are that you will have more affluent families in that school. The question should be: Should Catholic Schools, and St George's school in particular, be actively changing their policies to prioritise the financial poor? Should Catholic Schools follow the state schools guide to prioritise the financial poor? Should the Diocese come up with a set of criteria for the emotional and spiritual poor? After all, Schools take the lead from the Diocese, if they want to prioritise these children then have one admission policy for the Diocese and do not let each school make up their own one.

Another question this would raise is would this discriminate against the affluent and the spiritual, stable and emotionally rich who also have a right to attend a good Catholic school of their choice? As one of the respondents (C) noted when talking about the new directive from the Department for Education December 2014 which stated that: 'The School Admissions Code 2014 provides freedom for admission authorities of all schools, not just academies, to give admissions priority, within their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for a Pupil Premium;' Respondent C felt that

> …this could lead to a parental backlash if implemented.

(b) The Curriculum

The respondents clearly feel that the school's curriculum caters for children who are financially poor with 73% (16 out of 22) agreeing with this statement- with 18% (4 out of 22) of these strongly agreeing. Respondent A states that

> …all children have equal access to the curriculum whatever their financial circumstances.

Only one person out of 22 (5%) disagreed. This strong support rose even more when asked about the curriculum of the school catering for spiritual poor with 82% (18 out of 22) agreeing.

Respondent C feels that the spiritually poor are catered for and that

> …spirituality is at the centre of learning and is nurtured throughout the school day and by all staff members.

Again only one person disagreed with this statement.

With regards to whether or not the respondents feel that the curriculum within the school caters for the emotionally poor it was less strong but still showed that 59% (13 out of 22) agreed with this. There was a high number-32% (13 out of 22) who neither agreed nor disagreed that the curriculum within the school caters for the emotionally poor - again raising the question whether the respondents feel confident enough in being able to identify the emotional poor or understanding what the term actually means.

St George's is currently undergoing expansion and is aware of the demands, academically, that this may put on the School. The school has seen a dramatic increase in EAL children and the number of FSM has also increased. The SLT has made sure that the tracking of these vulnerable children is robust and also to refocus on the bottom 20%. Respondent P remarks that

> …rigorous pastoral records are kept for vulnerable children and their progress is tracked. Interventions are put in place to ensure progress.

St George's has developed a new format for SEN plans and provision maps with a focus on the bottom 20% attaining pupils and implemented a robust tracking system in order to improve progress of all groups of learners. Information has been collated then they have grouped them according to gender, FSM, SEN, first language, ethnicity, length in school and attendance. This information is then used to set these children targets in reading, writing and maths. There are regular target setting meetings to identify these vulnerable pupils. There are termly assessments and evaluations matched to targets with progress of different groups and vulnerable pupils tracked. As far as staffing is concerned the school is well resourced with 15 TAs and three LSAs, it also has two part time staff working with EAL children and a full time SENCO.

As well as having intervention groups on filling academic gaps, St George's also recognise the importance of having social intervention groups. If children suffer from low self-esteem or they find it difficult to work with their peers, tasks can be a lot more challenging. St George's believes that at the heart of why these vulnerable children have learning needs is that they lack confidence. The school has found that these interventions, which include talking boxes, chatterbox and teachers becoming mentors to these children, work well to promote confidence and this has seen children's results improve. The Key Stage 2 results for 2015 show that 97% (58 out of 60) of children achieved Level 4+ in reading, writing, SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar) and maths. The two children who did not achieve Level 4+ were not the same in each subject meaning that all children achieved at least three Level 4+. These results suggest academically, that the school is serving everyone well, including the poor and vulnerable.

With the new curriculum, St George's has been thinking about ways to bring Jesus to the Heart of the Curriculum. This has been championed by Fr. Chris Jamison OSB, who delivered a lecture at a local Catholic secondary school and was attended by all the staff of St George's. Fr. Chris believes that Catholic ethos is not, as usually stated by schools, 'hard to describe but simple to live out'. In fact, he argues that, 'it is simple to describe but hard to live out'. He advocates that Christ is at the centre of

every lesson, using the 'theory of knowledge curriculum', where every subject not just asks 'what?' but 'why?

St George's has adopted this, respondent A reflects this by stating

> …the curriculum, though broad and balanced, has as its emphasis RE at the centre and Christ at the centre of all we do.

The leaders of the school understand that the most important development and skill of any teacher in a Catholic school is to be able to awaken a child's love and faith in Jesus and get the children to know him. The leaders believe that it is, mainly, the duty of the school to make sure teachers get the time and opportunity to develop their own faith and be able to impart this on their cohorts. 'There is a world of difference between teachers who are happy to work in a Catholic school and teachers who see themselves as forming the faith of the student' (Jamison, C; 2011: 3). This development of the teacher, through INSET or courses like encouraging teachers to complete the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) in their own time can be hindered by time constraints.

St George's remembers the importance of Religious Education. It is placed at the heart of the curriculum and underpins other subjects and areas. St George's appears to manage the balance of competing in a secular world whilst still delivering an 'Evangelised Curriculum' (Dwyer, 1993).

St George's makes every effort to ensure Gospel Values are maintained and upheld at every opportunity. This can often become a challenge at times of assessments. It is at these times that leaders at St George's have to make a conscious effort to continue to maintain Christian values and principles, remembering that every child is unique and special and not a figure on a database. The fine line between 'the search for excellence, the uniqueness of the individual, the education of the whole person, the education of all and moral principles' (Catholic Bishops' of England and Wales; 1996) has to be maintained.

One of the ways in which the school supports the spiritually poor is that there is weekly communion. The staff also try to create an environment whereby teaching and learning are developed in an atmosphere that recognises the Gospel values that the school has at the heart of its existence. His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI in his address to the youth at St Mary's University in September 2010 said: 'what God wants most of all for each one of you is that you should become holy. He loves you very much, more than you could ever begin to imagine, and He wants the very best for you. And by far the best thing for you is to grow in holiness.'

One respondent (F) expressed concerns that the school needs to have more training on how to meet the needs of the emotional poor. Another respondent (M) felt that, although the RE curriculum that is being delivered in the school was very good in catering for the spiritually poor children, more support from parents is needed in this area and that

> without full support/consistency at home children's spiritual needs are only met at school.
>
> (Respondent M)

Gallagher explains how the Catholic School plays a secondary influence in the development of faith and religious life. 'The religious formation offered by the school is inevitably influenced by the home background and so it depends greatly on whether the home is cooperative or non-cooperative' (M. P. Gallagher et al., 1988, p88, quoted in J. Gallagher 2008, p58). This statement is true of St George's but it appears that the school aims to include families in the faith as much as possible. Weekly masses are shared in the Parish Church, class assemblies are open to families who are then invited in to the classroom for tea and biscuits so that they can have a look at their children's books and discuss matters with the class teacher and other parents. Mass on feast days is celebrated in the school hall and the Parish Church and Year 3 children have their own special First Holy Communion day at school where families are invited to. This challenge is difficult to monitor or resolve and the school

can only offer encouragement and support to families on their faith journey, but it must be remembered that:

> It is they…. who establish in their children the first sensitivity and responsiveness to the presence of God…. By their example in the home and in their participation in the Mass and other sacraments, the foundations of lifelong faith and discipleship in their children are laid down
> (Catholic Bishops' of England and Wales, 2000).

So whilst St George's aims to further the spiritual growth of its learners, the main responsibility for this must remain firmly with the parents.

(c) The Catholic Life of the School

This section of the questionnaire also showed strong agreement throughout that the school was fulfilling its duties to the poor. 64% (14 out of 22) agreed that extra-curricular activities in the school caters for the needs of all pupils- 50% (11 out of 22) of the respondents were in strong agreement with this statement. 9% (2 out of 22) strongly disagreed with this statement. The figures for agreement in 4.2 about whether all pupils irrespective of background can access clubs and school trips was even stronger with 78% (17 out of 22) in agreement- 55% (12 out of 22) in strong agreement. Again 2 respondents -9%- disagreed. The final question about the Catholic life of the school (4.3) saw the strongest agreement with 87% (19 out of 22) agreeing and 55% (12 out of 22) strongly agreeing that the school has an inclusive approach to all pupils irrespective of background. It is interesting to note that no one disagreed with this statement, perhaps reflecting the good work that the school does in this area.

Even though the figures looked positive for the school, some of the respondents felt that more research needs to be conducted by the school to find out whether all the extra-curricular activities that are run by the school are actually populated by the poor and vulnerable. Respondent (C) makes this point.

Another point that is raised is that even though the school offers support for the poor and vulnerable, some of the 'working poor,' as respondent G refers to them, may be excluded.

Not only are teachers expected to follow a 'national curriculum' to educate learners personally, socially and physically, they are also expected to follow an 'informal' programme which creates the schools 'ethos'. A Catholic school is called to nurture and foster students in their lifelong journey in faith and helps them to live and carry out the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their everyday lives. They are committed to fulfilling each and every child's individual potential and to develop the 'whole man' (*The Catholic School,* The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, para 35). In his booklet, *Centre for Research and Development in Catholic Education* (2007) Professor James Arthur states, 'The aim of a Catholic school is to enable students to achieve their complete dignity as persons in a relationship with Christ'.

St George's provides support for academic lessons, with good results for its poor and marginalised learners as well as other learners, and the Catholic ethos is evident in many ways; each classroom has a prayer area with artefacts, images and a religious display to enable pupils to have every opportunity to explore their faith. But not only the outward signs of faith are apparent, the school also aims to include, nurture, care and promote Gospel values; with the provision of support staff, interventions, nurture groups and a committed staff. However, this challenge remains an ongoing challenge and one that all Catholic schools face.

St George's also ensures that all pupil premium pupils are identified and clearly targeted. It also tries to ensure that the pupil premium funding is clearly signposted in its use in supporting these pupils.

The School helps out on the pastoral side with newsletters in Polish and has regular coffee mornings for EAL parents. The Parish Priest regularly comes in to the school and talks to parents about faith and the Church. There are support teams for parents who need help in parenting. The poorest families are supported by paying for any school trips from the School Trip Fund for those parents who need financial assistance; children on FSM receive this as a matter of course and others on request. There are many sporting opportunities for the children. The School enters every event in the Borough and participation is encouraged. Members of staff run

Lunchtime and After School Clubs, including a Homework Club. FSM and SEN pupils are encouraged to join and any fees involved are paid for them. The School is also a 'Bike School'; one of the benefits of this is that bikes can be loaned out to the poorest families so they can take part in the numerous training and activities that the School holds.

The leaders of the school help to maintain and develop partnerships with outside communities and local events. These all enrich the experiences of all the children in the school, with the poor and vulnerable encouraged to take an active part.

Respondent (I) feels that the school can be quite insular and needs to develop its links with other communities. Respondent (M) echoed this stating that

> …diversity could be celebrated more so children feel proud sharing their heritage in school.

All respondents appeared to be aware that the school offers a deal for children on FSM but there appeared to be some discrepancies in their answers. Clearly this is an issue for the leaders in the school.

(d) Staff

Section five of the questionnaire provoked some interesting comments. Only 23% (5 out of 22) of respondents felt that staff received support and training in how to help children who are financially poor- only one person felt strongly that they had received this. 45% (10 out of 22) disagreed that they had been given support. The figures for whether support or training had been given to help children from families who are spiritually poor (5.2) and emotionally poor (5.3) were quite similar. 37% (8 out of 22) agreed that support or training had been given in how to help children from families who are spiritually poor and 50% (11 out of 22) for those who are from families that are emotionally poor. For both these groups 32% (7 out of 22) disagreed with the statements- in fact a further 5% (1 out of 22) strongly disagreed that

support/training had been given in how to help children from families who are spiritually poor.

It would be fair to conclude from the comments that staff feel they need more training in this area. One respondent (D) did state that there has been INSET on safeguarding of children, and another respondent (F) was keen to state that in her role as SENCO that she supports staff when child protection issues arise, but even she recognises the need for more formal training of staff in how to support vulnerable children. Respondents were quite forthright in their comments about the lack of training and their desire to have it so that the vulnerable in the school can be more easily identified and helped. This is an area that the leaders within the school need to address and ensure that the staff have the tools to be able to deal with the issues. A school cannot function effectively without a committed and dedicated staff. A Catholic school requires a staff that will endeavour to promote the Gospel values and ensure that Religious Education is at the core of the curriculum. Teachers and leaders in schools are faced with pressures and challenges. Leaders need to ensure strong Catholic educational principles are sustained whilst leading the school to produce quality teaching and results that compete with secular schools. Catholic school leaders need to ensure staff work together to endorse a strong, clear vision.

St George's has a very committed staff and a leadership team who encourage, support and promote a good work ethos. The leadership team lead by example; ensuring strong Catholic educational principles are sustained. Members of the team are always present and involved at Abbey mass on a Friday in the Parish Church and they promote Gospel values and a Christian ethos throughout the school. However, following discussions with teaching assistants at St George's, there appears to be a general feeling amongst these staff that they are not included in professional conversations as much as they would like to be and they sometimes feel undervalued.

Permanent teaching staff at St. George's are nearly all Catholic but supply teachers are often from different faiths. Recently it has become more difficult to recruit teaching staff at all, yet alone Catholic teaching staff which is still the preference.

The core purpose of a headteacher is to provide leadership for a school which ensures a high quality education for all its pupils; to maintain standards and where each individual child is nurtured and fostered. Ensuring Christian principles are upheld is equally important in a Catholic school. Though we need effective leaders, it should not be at the expense of Christian values. The CES argue the importance of appointing practising Catholics to promote the faith and distinctiveness of the school. In the Bishops' *Memorandum on Appointment of Teachers to Catholic Schools* (CES; 2014: 2 Online: accessed 10/09/2015), it highlights that school leaders should be baptised and practising Catholics and that leaders should try to find 'Catholic teachers who combine personal conviction and practice of the faith with the required professional qualifications and experience,' otherwise, they believe, it can affect their ability to contribute towards developing and sustaining the Catholicity of the school.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter I have critically examined the results of that I elicited from the survey that I carried out. I have provided an interpretation of the results the salient point of which are as follows:

- The respondents feel that the case study school's admissions policy does not prioritise the financially poor.
- There is a lack of understanding of most respondents as to what St George's admissions policy states.
- Lack of awareness as to the current statistics relating to the intake of St George's compared to other local schools.
- The respondents feel that St George's is providing a curriculum that is supporting the poor and vulnerable.
- The respondents feel that the Catholic life of the school generally caters for the needs of the poor and vulnerable.
- There is a misunderstanding of Pupil Premium and what the school offers to the poor and vulnerable.

- The respondents feel that more training and support for the staff is required so that the poor and vulnerable in the school can be more easily identified and helped.

In the next chapter I will consider the implications of these findings for leadership in Catholic schools and will provide recommendations to improve preferential options for the poor and vulnerable at St George's.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

In the last chapter I analysed and discussed the main findings from the study. In this chapter I will look at the implications of these findings for the school and its leaders. I will then discuss what I believe to be the limitations of the study and, finally, I will propose some recommendations for the school and its leaders that I feel would enhance the opportunities and well-being of the poor and vulnerable within St George's.

5.2 Implications for Leadership in Catholic Schools

(a) Admissions

The admissions policies of Catholic schools have become an extremely contentious issue; with an increasingly vociferous group of people who see Catholic schools as being elitist and not representative of modern Britain. This is a major issue and one that even threatens the very existence of Catholic schools. It is vital that leaders in Catholic schools are aware of this. They need to be proactive and be prepared to look at their admissions policy with a view to changing and adapting it to meet these challenges head on. Even though the statistics currently show that Catholic schools actually admit more children from deprived families than their counterparts in non-faith schools (see section 2.5), Catholic leaders must not be complacent.

This pressure to change will increase, especially now that state schools are being asked to prioritise children who are eligible for pupil Premium and have this as the first criteria of any school. This New School Admissions Code came into force on 19th December 2014 and stated that:

> All state funded schools to give priority in their admissions arrangements to children eligible for pupil premium or service premium funding (para 1.39A). The code also allows all admissions authorities of primary schools to give priority in their admission arrangements to children eligible for the early years

> pupil premium or service premium who attend a nursery which is established and run by the school
>
> (Dept. for Education Dec; 2014: para 1.39B)

Catholic schools and its leaders are in danger of being unable to justify current admissions policies if they do not change. I believe the threat to Catholic schools is very real.

The leaders at St George's need to reconsider their admissions policy. If one looks at Appendix C, even though 'looked after' children and Catholic adopted children are number one on the criteria (of which St George's does not currently have any), the remainder of the school's admissions policy makes no mention of poor or vulnerable children.

The Admissions Policy at St George's is discussed and ratified every year by the governors, who always seek and take guidance from the diocese. If St George's was to adopt prioritising Catholic school children who are eligible for Pupil Premium it would need this guidance and support from the diocese. I recognise that it would also need the support of the whole Governing Body- including parent governors, who might take the view that children from stable, middle-class, families also have right to attend a Catholic school. Of course, I understand that the main criteria for a Catholic school should remain one of faith, so I am not suggesting that it should include all children (although one could set a quota of non-catholic poor children!).

If the Catholic Church is serious about giving preferential options for the poor, then this is something that has to be looked at, as I believe the admissions policy in a school is the major factor in determining the make-up of a school, irrespective of location.

I believe that the leaders of St George's needs to give preferential treatment to poor and vulnerable Catholic children through its admissions policy. This bold step would, undoubtedly, have consequences, but by doing this St George's would be fulfilling the primary motive, of being a service to the poor.

(b) Curriculum

The leaders at St. George's face similar challenges to the leaders in all Catholic schools. The main challenges are trying to maintain a balance between Catholic distinctiveness and school effectiveness. Catholic schools still have to compete academically in a secular world whilst trying to maintain and develop a Catholic and Christian ethos throughout their learners. St George's aims to uphold Gospel values throughout its teachings whilst still competing with its secular counterparts. Members of staff at St George's have commented on the fact that quite often parental support is lacking for the Catholic faith and the responsibility has been placed in to the hands of the school. Learners who are 'strangers to the gift of Faith' (Pope Paul VI; 1965:9) are those who need us to guide them in their faith journey.

As Catholic leaders, we can promote Gospel values and human flourishing, by leading as Jesus led. We can help to deepen and enrich children's knowledge and understanding of their Faith and its relevance in their everyday lives. Grace, in *mission integrity: contemporary challenges for Catholic school leaders* (2002; 439), writes about this new role of the school playing the role of the Church as mass attendance figures decline. Grace contrasts this new 'reformist' view to the old 'traditionalist' view when there was far more regular church attendance.

The leaders at St George's need to ensure that the Gospel teachings of Jesus, the Mission Integrity or the Mission Statement is mentioned in each lesson. This would mean them giving time to subject leaders to create a Catholic Curriculum for their subject. As the new National Curriculum (2014), only started last year, St George's now has the perfect opportunity to do this.

(c) Catholic Life of the School

The leaders of St. George's have tried to ensure that all of its pupils have a broad and balanced curriculum whilst maintaining a Catholic ethos. The staff at St. George's are encouraged to provide an inclusive community and curriculum, catering for all abilities and needs.

Pope Paul VI (1965:9) wrote of people who are deprived of the 'affection of a family'. As Catholic educators, we need to be aware of children in our care who have difficult home backgrounds and family situations and where possible, we need to strive to cater for their needs. For some, school may be the only safe, secure and welcoming place for a child.

The leaders at St George's understand this and ensure that a wide variety of before school, lunchtime and after school clubs- 23 at the last count, with approximately half of these being provided free by a member of staff. This is a vast number of clubs, but there is no central register that shows who are actually participating in these clubs. The school leaders needs to know that the poor and vulnerable are members of these clubs and ensure that they are not being excluded for any reason. The poor and vulnerable need to be given preferential treatment, through financial assistance and quotas, and be encouraged to join these clubs. There are obvious financial implications with this approach. This money, however, could be found through Pupil Premium; another avenue of finance is to approach the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) to see if they could help out with a hardship fund. Finally, none of the leaders who run the clubs that charge are asked to pay towards rent of the premises, so the leaders of St George's could approach the people who run these clubs and ask them to take a quota of poor and vulnerable children free of charge.

(d) Staff

Despite the fact that the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures have been recognised locally as an area of strength, it is clear that the staff of St George's feel the need for more training in the area of supporting the poor and vulnerable children of the school. There are still aspects that could be developed. Local authority courses need to be promoted, together with related INSETs. This could all form part of teachers' continual professional development. This would have cost implications for the school, which the leaders would have to budget for.

5.3 Limitations

As already stated in 4.1 emotional and spiritual poverty are very hard to define and the respondents in the survey needed an explanation and definition before they completed it.

The questionnaire itself also needed more written comments to really try to ascertain what the respondents were thinking. In retrospect I should have interviewed the key players e.g, SENCO, RE Co-ordinator, Headteacher, the Parish Priest and a member of the Admissions Committee. Despite the fact I had many informal discussions with them and I was aware of some of their views, a formal interview would have been able to provide the opportunity to probe their opinions and understanding to a much greater depth.

I should also have widened the questionnaire and asked all staff members to complete it which would have included TAs and SMSAs. This would have given me a much wider range of views and experiences, especially as some of these members of staff also have children who attend the school.

Another issue was when the questionnaire was actually conducted. It was completed by the respondents at a very busy time of the year as it was report writing time and, perhaps, because of this there were not as many written comments as I had hoped for, especially from the teaching staff.

As already mentioned in sections 3.2 and 3.3, there are drawbacks to conducting a questionnaire. The lack of written comments may suggest that these respondents did not put as much thought into their answers as other respondents. Even though anonymity was assured some respondents may have thought that they could be identified and therefore their answers may not be completely honest. Also one person's version of good may not be the same as another person's

Overall, however, I feel that, by setting out the questions like this I would elicit similar responses from similar people if it was replicated again; and that the

responses were reliable. I believe that the research measured what it set out to measure

5.4 Recommendations

Even though there is a focus on the poor and vulnerable at St George's I believe that the following recommendations would develop, strengthen and add to the existing success of these pupils and enhance the Catholic life of the school:

(a) Admissions

- To recommend to the governing body's admissions' committee that, in light of the new directive from the government that is urging state schools to prioritise children who are eligible for Pupil Premium, that they seek advice from the diocese and have a full and frank discussion about whether St George's school should give priority to catholic children who are eligible for Pupil Premium.

(b) Curriculum

- To ask subject leaders to revisit the policies that incorporate the 2014 National Curriculum, and try to create a Catholic curriculum, with Jesus at the heart. All policies to include a section on how this is to be fulfilled.

(c) Catholic Life of the School

- To ensure that every club that is run in the school gives priority to the poor and vulnerable. This could be done by having an agreed quota of poor and vulnerable children. To keep a list of children attending these clubs to ensure

that this is happening. To ensure that parents aware of this through letters and discreet conversations.

- To further develop interventions and support for poor and vulnerable learners focusing on those falling below age related expectations. Include these children in target setting and link it to performance management, thus raising their profile

- To create a dedicated and specific member of staff responsible for pastoral issues and counselling to further develop the well-being and inclusion of all learners within the school.

(d) Staff

- Devise a continuous professional development based on the identification of the poor and vulnerable in the school's community so that all staff have a common understanding and have a clear link to the Catholic tradition of upholding the preferred option for the poor.

5.5 Final Reflections

This dissertation has contributed to the debate on the poor and vulnerable in Catholic schools issues and that this may be taken up elsewhere.

There are considerable difficulties which hinder the activities of the Catholic school, when trying to fulfil their stated aims of being schools for everyone, in spite of their (the pupils') financial, spiritual and academic well-being:

> …difficulties which can prevent them from extending their service to all social and economic classes and compel them to give the false impression of

providing schools simply for the rich.

> (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education: The
> Catholic School; 1977 n:65, Online: accessed 05/09/15)

Catholic Schools need to be aware of these difficulties particularly with the emphasis on performance and League Tables:

> There is no denying the challenge to Catholic schools to welcome the children of their community who have special needs. The pressures of published performance figures and the limitation of school budgets should not be paramount in this matter……The purpose of Catholic education is frustrated if those with the greatest need are neglected.
>
> (CES; 1996: n10)

After all, as Mr J. P. Morrison, Director of Education for the Archdiocese of Westminster, reminded everyone present at the Primary Deputy Headteacher's Conference in Brighton (10/6/15), how important it is to demonstrate preferential options for the poor and vulnerable, by stating that: 'Catholic schools should not be about value added but values added'.

These factors both within and without their control means that Catholic schools need to work even harder to ensure that they reach out to the poorest and fulfil the historical aim of Catholic Schools which 'is a school for all, with special attention to those who are weakest.' (The Congregation for Catholic Education; 1997: n15)

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Appendices

Appendix A

The Participants' Letter

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms/X

As part of my Masters Degree in Catholic School Leadership, I am conducting a survey about whether or not Catholic schools prioritise the poor. From the admissions criteria through to how the school actually meets the needs of these students. I will be looking at both financial and spiritual poverty. I feel that your role in the school means that you are in a great position to answer these questions and that your answers would be extremely relevant.

I understand that you have enormous demands on your time so the questionnaire will not be too time consuming- half an hour should be ample.

Participation in this enquiry is entirely voluntary. If you do not want to take part or if you do not wish to answer some of the questions, please feel free to do so- you do not need to give a reason.

However, if you do share your views with me, you can be assured that the questionnaire is both anonymous and confidential. Any information that could identify you as an individual will not be disclosed to anyone else under any circumstances. Statistical information held on computer will be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

If you would like further information about the survey or have any questions related to it please do contact me. My e-mail address is xxxxxxxxxxx or my mobile phone is 000000000.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Danny Gristwood

Appendix B

The Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire. Your help is very much appreciated.

There are five sections. Please complete them as honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers – just your own views. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be used for anything other than for the purposes of the research

Section One- About You

1.1   Male □   Female □

1.2   Age: Under 30 □   30-39 □   40-49 □   50-59 □   60+ □

1.3 How long have you been working at the school?

Less than 5 years □   6-10 years □   More than 10 years □

1.4 Please indicate your present role in the school:

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………..

Section Two – Admissions

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable/ Do not know
2.1 Our admissions policy prioritises children from families who are financially poor.						
2.2 Our admissions policy prioritises children from families who are spiritually poor.						
2.3 Our admissions policy prioritises children from families who are emotionally poor.						

If you have any further comments on these issues then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

Section Three – The Curriculum

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable/ Do not know
3.1 The Curriculum in this school caters for children from families who are financially poor.						
3.2 The Curriculum in this school caters for children from families who are spiritually poor.						
3.3 The Curriculum in this school caters for children from families who are emotionally poor.						

If you have any further comments on these issues then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

Section Four – The Catholic Life of the School

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable/ Do not know
4.1 Extra-curricular activities cater for the needs of all pupils in the school.						
4.2 School trips and clubs etc can be accessed by all pupils irrespective of background.						
4.3 In my opinion this school has an inclusive approach to all pupils irrespective of background.						

If you have any further comments on these issues then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

Section Five – Staff

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable/ Do not know
5.1 The staff in this school are given support/training in how to help the children from families who are financially poor.						
5.2 The staff in this school are given support/training in how to help the children from families who are spiritually poor.						
5.3 The staff in this school are given support/training in how to help the children from families who are emotionally poor.						

If you have any further comments on these issues then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

Appendix C

Case Study School's Admission Policy 2014-15

Criterion 1 Catholic Looked After children and Catholic children who have been adopted (or made subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately having been looked after. **(A 'Looked After' child is one who is in the care of the local authority within the meaning of S.22 of the Children Act 1989.)**

Criterion 2 Baptised children of practising Catholic parents/guardians who live in the parish of St Benedict at time of application (according to attached map) and whose regular worship is fully endorsed by the priest's reference form. N.B. Equal consideration will be given to the baptised children of practising Catholic families, who live within the parish of St Benedict's, but who regularly worship at their own Catholic National Church, (e.g. Italian, Polish etc.,) or their own Eastern Rite Uniate Catholic Church. Any application received giving evidence of intended residence will be considered as a late application. **(Regular worship means weekly attendance at Saturday evening/ Sunday Mass, unless there are exceptional circumstances, fully supported by the Priest's letter).**

Criterion 3 Baptised children of practising Catholic families who live outside the parish of St Benedict, and whose regular worship is fully endorsed by the priest's reference form.. **(Regular worship means weekly attendance at Saturday evening/ Sunday Mass, unless there are exceptional circumstances, which are fully supported by the Priest's letter).**

Criterion 4 Other baptised Catholic children.

Criterion 5 Other looked after children and children who have been adopted (or made subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately having been looked after. **(A 'Looked After' child is one who is in the care of the local authority within the meaning of S.22 of the Children Act 1989.)**

Criterion 6 Catechumens and members of the Eastern Christian Churches.

Criterion 7 Christians of other denominations whose application is supported by their Minister of Religion.

Criterion 8 Children of other faiths whose application is supported by their Religious Leader.

Criterion 9 Any other children.

Appendix D

Application for Ethical Approval Form

Ethics Application Form

1) Name of proposer(s)	Daniel Gristwood
2) St Mary's email address	danielgristwood@yahoo.co.uk
3) Name of supervisor	David Fincham

4) Title of project A Poor Service?

5) School or service	Education, Theology & Leadership
6) Programme (if undergraduate, postgraduate taught or postgraduate research)	MA CSL
7) Type of activity/research (staff / undergraduate student research / postgraduate student)	Postgraduate

8) Confidentiality	
	YES

Will all information remain confidential in line with the Data Protection Act 1998	

9) Consent	
Will written informed consent be obtained from all participants / participants' representatives?	YES

10) Pre-approved protocol	
Has the protocol been approved by the Ethics Sub-Committee under a generic application?	YES/NO/ **Not applicable** Date of approval:

11) Approval from another Ethics Committee	
a) Will the research require approval by an ethics committee external to St Mary's University?	YES/NO/ **Not applicable**
b) Are you working with persons under 18 years of age or vulnerable adults?	NO

12) Identifiable risks	
a) Is there significant potential for physical or psychological discomfort, harm, stress or burden to participants?	NO
b) Are participants over 65 years of age?	NO

c)	Do participants have limited ability to give voluntary consent? This could include cognitively impaired persons, prisoners, persons with a chronic physical or mental condition, or those who live in or are connected to an institutional environment.	NO
d)	Are any invasive techniques involved? And/or the collection of body fluids or tissue?	NO
e)	Is an extensive degree of exercise or physical exertion involved?	NO
f)	Is there manipulation of cognitive or affective human responses which could cause stress or anxiety?	NO
g)	Are drugs or other substances (including liquid and food additives) to be administered?	NO
h)	Will deception of participants be used in a way which might cause distress, or might reasonably affect their willingness to participate in the research? For example, misleading participants on the purpose of the research, by giving them false information.	NO
i)	Will highly personal, intimate or other private and confidential information be sought? For example sexual preferences.	NO
j)	Will payment be made to participants? This can include costs for expenses or time.	NO
k)	Could the relationship between the researcher/ supervisor and the participant be such that a participant might feel pressurised to take part?	NO

13) Proposed start and completion date: 1st June 2015- 5th June 2015

Please indicate:

- When the study is due to commence.
- Timetable for data collection.
- The expected date of completion.

Please ensure that your start date is at least 3 weeks after the submission deadline for the Ethics Sub-Committee meeting.

The study will commence the week beginning 1st June. It will comprise of a questionnaire to be completed by up to eleven people. The expected completion date will be 5th June.

14)Sponsors/Collaborators

Please give names and details of sponsors or collaborators on the project. This does not include you supervisor(s) or St Mary's University.

- Sponsor: An individual or organisation who provides financial resources or some other support for a project.

- Collaborator: An individual or organisation who works on the project as a recognised contributor by providing advice, data or another form of support.

None

15. Other Research Ethics Committee Approval

- Please indicate whether additional approval is required or has already been obtained (e.g. the NHS Research Ethics Committee).
- Please also note which code of practice / professional body you have consulted for your project
- Whether approval has previously been given for any element of this research by the University Ethics Sub-Committee.

No additional approval is required or has been obtained. I will be asking 3 Governors, the Headteacher and 5 members of the Senior Management Team. I would also want to ask our Chair of Governors and the School Parish Priest. No approval has previously been given for any element of this research by the University Ethics Sub-Committee

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16. Purpose of the study

In lay language, please provide a brief introduction to the background and rationale for your study.

- Be clear about the concepts / factors / performances you will measure / assess/ observe and (if applicable), the context within which this will be done.
- Please state if there are likely to be any direct benefits, e.g. to participants, other groups or organisations.

Through a questionnaire I intend to ask the 3 Governors who form our school's admissions committee to what extent they think the school I work in prioritises children from poor families as part of our admissions policy; and to what extent they think we could/ should do more. I will also ask them their views as to whether we need to be doing more.

I will ask my Head, the Chair of Governors and Parish Priest and the SMT the same questions.

I will also ask the Head and the SMT what they feel we are doing to help children who have financial poverty; and also those children who also experience spiritual poverty.

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17. Study Design/Methodology

In lay language, please provide details of:
   a) The design of the study (qualitative/quantitative questionnaires etc.)
   b) The proposed methods of data collection (what you will do, how you will do this and the nature of tests).
   c) You should also include details regarding the requirement of the participant i.e. the extent of their commitment and the length of time they will be required to attend testing.
   d) Please include details of where the testing will take place.
   e) Please state whether the materials/procedures you are using are original, or the intellectual property of a third party. If the materials/procedures are original, please describe any pre-testing you have done or will do to ensure that they are effective.

Survey- Questionnaire

18. Participants

Please mention:
a) The number of participants you are recruiting and why. For example, because of their specific age or sex.
b) How they will be recruited and chosen.
c) The inclusion / exclusion criteria's.
d) For internet studies please clarify how you will verify the age of the participants.
e) If the research is taking place in a school or organisation then please include their written agreement for the research to be undertaken.

As stated above I intend to question 11 people. All of these people play a central role in the school from the Parish Priest, Governing Body, Headteacher and the Senior Management Team.

The research will take place at the school and I have attached their written agreement for research to be undertaken on the premises.

19. Consent

If you have any exclusion criteria, please ensure that your Consent Form and Participant Information Sheet clearly makes participants aware that their data may or may not be used.

a) Are there any incentives/pressures which may make it difficult for participants to refuse to take part? If so, explain and clarify why this needs to be done

b) Will any of the participants be from any of the following groups?

   ➢ Children under 18
   ➢ Participants with learning disabilities
   ➢ Participants suffering from dementia
   ➢ Other vulnerable groups.

c) If any of the above apply, does the researcher/investigator hold a current DBS certificate? A copy of the DBS must be included with the application.

d) How will consent be obtained? This includes consent from all necessary persons i.e. participants and parents.

a) There are no incentives/pressures which might make it difficult for participants to refuse to take part.

b) There will be no children, people with learning disabilities, people suffering from dementia or any other vulnerable groups taking part in the survey.

c) Consent will be obtained through a letter with a reply slip stating that they consent to take part in the questionnaire.

20. Risks and benefits of research/ activity

a) Are there any potential risks or adverse effects (e.g. injury, pain, discomfort, distress, changes to lifestyle) associated with this study? If so please provide details, including information on how these will be minimised.

b) Please explain where the risks / effects may arise from (and why), so that it is clear why the risks / effects will be difficult to completely eliminate or minimise.

c) Does the study involve any invasive procedures? If so, please confirm that the researchers or collaborators have appropriate training and are competent to deliver these procedures. Please note that invasive procedures also include the use of deceptive procedures in order to obtain information.

d) Will individual/group interviews/questionnaires include anything that may be sensitive or upsetting? If so, please clarify why this information is necessary (and if applicable, any prior use of the questionnaire/interview).

e) Please describe how you would deal with any adverse reactions participants might experience. Discuss any adverse reaction that might occur and the actions that will be taken in response by you, your supervisor or some third party (explain why a third party is being used for this purpose).

f) Are there any benefits to the participant or for the organisation taking part in the research (e.g. gain knowledge of their fitness)?

a) There are no potential risks in taking part in this questionnaire.

b) I do not envisage any risks to participants in the conduct of this research.

c) The survey does not involve any invasive procedures.

d) The individual questionnaire will not include anything that may be sensitive or upsetting.

e) I cannot foresee any adverse reactions that participants might experience. Participants may withdraw at any time if they so wish.

f) There are no benefits to the participants in taking part in this research but the results will be disseminated when the dissertation has been completed.

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21. Confidentiality, privacy and data protection

a) What steps will be taken to ensure participant's confidentiality?

- Describe how data, particularly personal information, will be stored.
- Consider how you will identify participants who request their data be withdrawn, such that you can still maintain the confidentiality of theirs and others data.

b) *Describe how you manage data using a data a management plan.*

- *You should show how you plan to store the data securely and select the data that will be made publically available once the project has ended.*
- *You should also show how you will take account of the relevant legislation including that relating data protection, freedom of information and intellectual property.*

c) Who will have access to the data? Please identify all persons who will have access to the data (normally yourself and your supervisor).

d) Will the data results include information which may identify people or places?

- Explain what information will be identifiable.
- Whether the persons or places (e.g. organisations) are aware of this.
- Consent forms should state what information will be identifiable and any likely outputs which will use the information e.g. dissertations, theses and any future publications/presentations.

a) I will ensure participants confidentiality by not including names. The data will be stored on a PC with password protection. A fictitious name will be used for the school involved and all participants will be anonymised.

b) Data will be stored on my computer at home, which is password protected.

c) Only myself and the supervisor will have access to the data.

d) Data results will not include any information that might identify people or places. The consent form/letter will state that participation in the survey is entirely voluntary. That if they do not wish to participate or if they do not wish to answer some of the questions then they do not need to give a reason. It will inform them that if they do share their views with me that they can be assured that the survey is both anonymous and confidential. Also that any information that could identify them as an individual will not be disclosed to anyone under any circumstances. Finally that any statistical information held on computer will be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act

22. Feedback to participants

Please give details of how feedback will be given to participants:

- As a minimum, it would normally be expected for feedback to be offered to participants in an acceptable to format, e.g. a summary of findings appropriate written.
- Please state whether you intend to provide feedback to any other individual(s) or organisation(s) and what form this would take.

I will give all the participants a summary of the findings. A completed dissertation will be submitted to the Library at St Mary's University.

The proposer recognises their responsibility in carrying out the project in accordance with the University's Ethical Guidelines and will ensure that any person(s) assisting in the research/ teaching are also bound by these. The Ethics Sub-Committee must be notified of, and approve, any deviation from the information provided on this form.

Signature of Proposer(s) Daniel Gristwood	Date: 1/5/15
Signature of Supervisor (for student research projects)	Date: