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The Rationale for School Chaplaincy in
Ireland

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The Rationale for School Chaplaincy in Ireland

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of PhD, is entirely my own work, that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	i
ABSTRACT.....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
Codes for WSE/MLL Reports and Interviews participants	xiii
ABBREVIATIONS	xiv
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Chapter One	7
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
<i>1.1 Irish Literature</i>	8
<i>1.2 International Literature</i>	14
<i>1.3 Chapter Conclusion</i>	22
Chapter Two.....	25
CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEXTUAL ISSUES	25
SOCIAL, ECCLESIAL and INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS	25
<i>2.1 Socio-Religious Context</i>	25
2.1.1 Introduction to Religious Faith and Practice	26
2.1.1 (a) Religious Affiliation in Ireland.....	27
2.1.1 (b) Religious Practice in Ireland	28
2.1.2 Failure to embrace religious diversity	31

2.2 <i>International Context</i>	34
2.2.1 Malta	35
2.2.2 Australia	40
2.2.3 Israel.....	47
2.3 <i>Episcopal Context</i>	51
2.3.1 Canon Law	51
2.3.2 Definition of the Catholic Educator.....	54
2.3.3 Caring for the Faith of Catholic Students.....	55
2.3.4 Ecumenism and Interfaith Dialogue	58
2.4 <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	60
Chapter Three	64
CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEXTUAL ISSUES (2)	64
LEGAL DIMENSIONS	64
3.1. <i>Constitutional Law</i>	64
3.2 <i>Statute Law: Education Act 1998</i>	66
3.3 <i>Case Law: High Court and Supreme Court Rulings</i>	70
3.3.1 High Court Ruling	70
3.3.2. Supreme Court Ruling.....	73
3.4. <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	79
Chapter Four	82
CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEXTUAL ISSUES (3)	82
EDUCATIONAL DIMENSIONS	82
4.1. <i>History of School Chaplaincy</i>	82
4.2. <i>School Ownership and Management</i>	93

4.3. <i>Job Descriptions</i>	94
4.4 <i>Key Roles within the School</i>	96
4.4.1 Spiritual and Religious Role.....	96
4.4.2 Pastoral Care	101
4.4.3 Being Chaplain to Students of Other Faiths and None.....	107
4.4.4 School Development and the Chaplain	112
4.4.5 The Chaplain’s Collaboration with Members of the School Community	115
4.4.6 The Chaplain and School Ethos	118
4.5 <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	120
Chapter Five	123
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS USED	123
5.1. <i>The Author’s Ontological and Epistemological Stance</i>	124
5.2 <i>Methodology</i>	127
5.2.1 Objectivist and Constructivist Approaches to Grounded Theory Methodology.....	130
5.2.2 Constant Comparison and Memo Writing.....	132
5.2.3 Grounded Theory and the Reviewing of Literature.....	133
5.2.4 Substantive and Formal Theory.....	134
5.2.5 Criteria for Grounded Theory studies.....	135
5.2.6 Limitations of the Grounded Theory Methodology.....	136
5.3 <i>Data Collection and analysis in Grounded Theory</i>	138
5.3.1 Sampling.....	139
5.3.2 Historical Documents – WSE/MLL Reports.....	141
5.3.3 Interviews	143
5.3.3 (a) Development of Interview Questions	150
5.3.3 (b) Drawbacks of interviews	155
5.3.4 Focus Groups.....	156

5.4 <i>The Analytic Process</i>	162
5.4.1 <i>Coding Interviews as Part of the Analytic Process</i>	162
5.4.2 <i>Use of Data Analysis Software</i>	166
5.4.3 <i>Coding of Whole School Evaluations/Management, Leadership and Learning Reports</i> .	168
5.4.4 <i>Interview Coding</i>	169
5.4.5 <i>Abductive Reasoning</i>	172
5.5 <i>Accountability</i>	173
5.6 <i>Ethical Issues</i>	174
5.7 <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	176
Chapter Six	178
REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTARY: DES Reports	178
6.1 <i>Pastoral Care</i>	179
6.1.1. <i>The Provision of Care</i>	180
6.2 <i>Spiritual Guidance and Care</i>	182
6.3 <i>Liturgical Role</i>	185
6.4 <i>Promotion of the School Ethos</i>	187
6.5 <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	190
Chapter Seven	192
REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTARY	192
Lack of clear role identity in Irish School Chaplaincy	192
7.1 <i>Role Identity</i>	193
7.2 <i>The Employment Process</i>	195
7.2.1 <i>Role of the Principal in the Employment Process</i>	196

7.3 <i>Chaplaincy in the Voluntary Sector</i>	197
7.3.1 <i>Spiritual Development in the Absence of a Paid Chaplaincy Service</i>	200
7.4 <i>A Vision for the Future</i>	202
7.5 <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	206
Chapter Eight	208
REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTARY	208
The connection between School Chaplains and their Nominating Authority	208
8.1 <i>The sensitive issue of Nomination</i>	208
8.1.1 <i>The Overseer</i>	214
8.1.2 <i>Losing the Nomination</i>	217
8.1.3 <i>The Nomination and the Voluntary Secondary Schools</i>	219
8.2 <i>Relationship between the Chaplain and Other Church Ministers</i>	223
8.2.1 <i>Difficulties Faced with Building up a Relationship with the Local Parish</i>	225
8.3 <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	229
Chapter 9	232
Introduction to the Theory of School Chaplains as Meaning-Makers	232
9.1 <i>An overview of the core category</i>	232
9.2 <i>Transformative Learning Theory</i>	236
9.3 <i>The Chaplain and Transformative Learning Theory</i>	241
9.4 <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	247
Chapter 10	249
School Chaplains: Meaning-Makers of School Ethos	249
10.1 <i>Time to Reflect and Interpret Ethos</i>	252

10.2 <i>Meaning-Making: School Management and Ethos</i>	253
10.3 <i>Keeping Core Values to the Fore</i>	255
10.4 <i>Meaning-Making: Through Policies and Practices</i>	257
10.5 <i>The Meaning-Making Chaplain who Includes</i>	260
10.6 <i>Meaning-Making Leading to Exclusion</i>	262
10.7 <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	264
Chapter Eleven	267
School Chaplains: Meaning-Makers during Adolescent Development and at Times of Crisis and Bereavement	267
11.1 <i>A Counsellor or Not?</i>	268
11.1.1 <i>Counselling Services of the School Chaplain</i>	270
11.1.2 <i>Other Care Givers</i>	273
11.2 <i>Meaning-Makers during Adolescence</i>	275
11.3 <i>Meaning-Making with Parents</i>	277
11.4 <i>Meaning-Making at Times of Bereavement</i>	279
11.4.1 <i>Meaning-Making through Companionship</i>	281
11.4.2 <i>Meaning-Making through Liturgy and Ritual</i>	283
11.5 <i>Meaning-Makers: One Significant Adult</i>	286
11.5.1 <i>Building Positive Relationships</i>	287
11.5.2 <i>Meaning-Makers: Having time for students</i>	288
11.5.3 <i>One to One Meetings</i>	289
11.5.4 <i>School Advocates</i>	292
11.6 <i>Chapter Conclusion</i>	293
Chapter Twelve	296

Chaplains as Meaning-Maker for all Students	296
12.1 <i>Meaning-Making: Including all.....</i>	296
12.2 <i>Meaning-Making: One-to-One Encounters</i>	301
12.3 <i>Meaning-Making: Providing Religious Formation</i>	302
12.4 <i>Meaning-Making: Lack of inclusion in Liturgy.....</i>	303
12.5 <i>Chapter Conclusion.....</i>	306
Chapter Thirteen.....	308
Synthesis and Conclusion	308
13.1. <i>Overview of the Study</i>	308
13.2 <i>Evaluation of the Grounded Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning Maker</i>	309
13.2.1 The ‘Credibility’ of the Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker.....	310
13.2.2 The ‘Originality’ of the Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker.....	313
13.2.3 The ‘Resonance’ of the Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker	315
13.2.4 The ‘Usefulness’ of the Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker.....	319
13.3 <i>Evaluating the use of Transformative Learning Theory</i>	323
13.4 <i>Strengths and Limitations of this Study</i>	326
13.5 <i>Research Findings</i>	328
13.5.1. The Meaning-Maker who Provides Spiritual Pastoral Care	329
13.5.2 The Meaning-Maker who offers Experiences of Prayer and Ritual	330
13.5.3 The Meaning-Maker who Articulates and Embodies School Ethos	332
13.6 <i>Implications for Practice - Research Proposals and Recommendations</i>	335
13.6.1 School Chaplains are educators.....	336
13.6.2. Inspection of School Chaplains by DES inspectors.....	339
13.6.3. The Involvement of the Local Ordinary in the Nomination of School Chaplains and the Chaplain’s School Ethos Meaning-Making Role	341

13.6.4. A Pastoral Allocation for all schools.....	344
13.6.5. The Development of Local Chaplaincy Committees.....	346
13.6.6. The Development of Spiritual Pastoral Care Programmes for all schools	347
<i>13.7 Suggestions for Expanding the Project.....</i>	<i>349</i>
<i>13.8 Final Reflections.....</i>	<i>351</i>
APPENDICES	354
Bibliography	397

ABSTRACT

The Rationale for School Chaplaincy in Ireland

Áine Moran

This study seeks to outline a theory of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers in schools in response to the research question 'what is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland'. This question is asked within a context of an increasingly pluralist and secular society. The development of publicly-funded chaplaincy in some secondary school sectors, and its validation by the Courts, is examined. Several other contexts which impact on the efficacy of chaplaincy are also considered – the social context, the educational context, the ecclesial context, the social context and the international context.

Grounded Theory Methodology is used to analyse the evaluations of school chaplaincy by the inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills during whole-school inspections. This is followed by analysis of data based on the reflections and insights of key personnel in the Irish education system that were obtained through semi-structured interviews and analysed through coding and memo writing. Validation of findings is provided by a final Focus group with the executive of the School Chaplains Association.

Results of the research indicate that the school chaplain adds an important Meaning-Making dimension to education through the care provided to students and through facilitating young people to explore their spiritual dimension. The chaplain also adds an important dimension to school life by facilitating reflection on school ethos. Respondents, however, raised concerns regarding the appropriateness of the current model to meet the needs of students from other faiths and none, given the relationship of chaplains with their nominating authority. The inequalities in chaplaincy provision is also highlighted.

This thesis is dedicated with gratitude to my mother

Margaret Moran

mother, friend, teacher, chaplain.

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I am indebted to past and present colleagues in St. Aidan's Community School, Kildare Town Community School and Le Chéile Secondary School. It was a welcome break to go to work! Sincere thanks also to my neighbours Michelle and Tony Hamilton, to Michelle for sharing the research books and to Tony for feeding us both.

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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1 Composition of school types in Ireland in 2013 – 2014.....	92
Figure 5.1: Grounded Theory Process	138
Figure 5.2: Issues raised during Pilot Interviews	152
Figure 5.3: Themes for Interview Questions	154
Figure 5.4: Grounded Theory process of Coding Data and Generating Theory	165
Figure 5.7: Focused Codes	171
Figure 9.1: Chaplains as Meaning-Makers	234

Codes for WSE/MLL Reports and Interviews participants

C.....	Chaplain
P.....	Principal
T.....	Trust
M.....	Management Body
Pt.....	Parent
Ch.....	Church
CS.....	Community School
VS.....	Voluntary Secondary
COMP.....	Comprehensive School
ETBD.....	Designated ETB School
ETBND.....	Non-Designated ETB School
FP.....	Fee-Paying
NC.....	No Chaplain

ABBREVIATIONS

ACCS:	Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
AG:	Ad Gentes
BOM:	Board of Management
DEEWR:	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DES:	Department of Education and Skills
ERC	Educational Research Centre
ESS	European Social Survey
ETB:	Education and Training Board
ETBI:	Education and Training Boards Ireland
GDC:	General Directory for Catechesis
GE:	Gravissimum Educationis
GT:	Grounded Theory
GTM:	Grounded Theory Methodology
HC:	High Court
HCA:	High Court Australia
HSE:	Health Service Executive
IVEA:	Irish Vocational Education Association
JMB:	Joint Managerial Body

LCC:	Local Chaplaincy Committee
MLL:	Management, Leadership, Learning
NCCA:	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NEP:	National Emergency Plan
NSCP:	National School Chaplaincy Programme
NCSWP:	National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Programme
ODIHR:	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
RC	Religious Counsellor
RTE:	Raidió Teilifís Éireann
SC:	Supreme Court
SCA:	School Chaplains Association
SDP:	School Development Planning
TLT:	Transformative Learning Theory
UR	Unitatis Redintegratio
VEC:	Vocational Education Committee
WSE:	Whole School Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

This introduction outlines the aim of this thesis and explains my perspective on the research. It places the topic in the context of the current situation in post-primary schools in Ireland and outlines some of the reasons why the research is relevant at this time.

The primary research question is: *What is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland today?*

The aim of this thesis is to develop a theory that answers this question by considering the role that school chaplains play in schools. The study seeks to discover who is defining the role as it is currently being exercised and because this thesis is specifically about school chaplaincy it explores how the chaplain functions as an educator. It also seeks to investigate the relationship between the school chaplain and key stakeholders in the Irish education system in an effort to understand the rationale behind the role, tensions that may exist, why school chaplaincy has developed in a particular way over the years and what future the role might have.

I was prompted to engage in this research as a result of my own background in education. As a young teacher I taught in a Voluntary Secondary School that amalgamated with the local Vocational School to form a Community School. As a result of this amalgamation a school chaplain was employed. This was in the early 1990s and the local curate was appointed school chaplain without public advertisement. Although it was a role that I was curious about, and perhaps might have been interested in applying for had it been advertised, at that time it was not an option for a lay woman in a West of Ireland Diocese. Ten years later, in the early 2000s, I was teaching in a Voluntary Secondary School. At that time an out-reach post-graduate course to train lay chaplains was being offered locally. Again it was something I was interested in but by now I was working in the Voluntary Sector where school chaplains were not being paid by the State. Nonetheless, the seed of interest in the role of school chaplaincy had been planted. I could see in both the Community School sector and the Voluntary Sector the need for pastoral care and spiritual formation of young people as part of their education. As a teacher of Religion I knew I was struggling to teach the curriculum and provide practical experiences of prayer and pastoral outreach. In 2007 I finally applied for a position of co-ordinator of chaplaincy services without any formal training. I did not apply to a school but to the Archdiocese of Dublin, where I was interviewed and then informed as to which school I was being nominated to. By nomination I refer to the process by which the local Ordinary retains the right to propose a person for the role of the school chaplain in a school. Either the Bishop puts a name forward to the school as his nominee and the Board of Management (BOM) in a Community/Comprehensive or Designated Education and Training Board (ETB) school employs them, or the BOM interviews for the position of chaplain and before they can offer a job to the candidate

they must present the name of their preferred candidate to the Bishop and receive his nomination in this manner.

Later I found literature on what the chaplain does on a day to day basis, but no theory of school chaplaincy and little on the rationale for chaplaincy. I struggled to locate myself between school and church. Was I still an educator or had I become a Church minister? To whom was I answerable? Who could I turn to for support and advice? Not long after, I was appointed chairperson of the School Chaplains' Association and I found others were also asking similar questions about their liminal role, between Church and School. A sense of urgency for this research began to take hold. More recently I have moved into school management and from that perspective I am increasingly aware of what school leaders want from a chaplain, and the expectation of parents and patrons. Through my studies in Mater Dei Institute I realized there was a need for further investigation into the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland and I was fortunate to be granted a scholarship by the Institute to conduct this research.

Grounded Theory (GT) is the research methodology used in this study. The research data used are the analysis of Whole School Evaluations/Management, Leadership, Learning (WSE/MLL) inspector reports, semi-structured interviews with chaplains, school principals, parents, management bodies, Trustee representatives, and spokespersons from the Education Secretariat of Dublin Archdiocese, the Council for Education of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference and the General Synod Board of

Education and Education Officer for the Church of Ireland and a Focus group composed of the Executive Committee of the School Chaplains Association (SCA). The WSE/MLL reports went through one round of coding. The interviews were transcribed and the data collected went through three rounds of coding. A Focus group with the Executive of the School Chaplains Association was conducted as a theoretical sample to check the validity of the emerging theory. The analysis of all the data led to the formulation of a theory of school chaplaincy as Meaning-Makers in schools.

I realized early in the course of my research that even the word ‘chaplain’ is problematic. It derives from a legend told about St. Martin de Tours, a Roman soldier, who gave his cloak to a beggar. That night he dreamt that Christ was wearing his cloak so he became a Christian and devoted himself to the service of the Church. When he died, his cloak became a holy relic and was kept in a little shrine called the *capella*. Frankish kings carried the cloak into battle believing it would give them victory. The priests in charge of the cloak and the shrine for these fighting kings were called the *capellani*, and went anywhere the army travelled. In time all clergy in the military were called by this name, which became *chapelain* in French and then the familiar *chaplain* (see Stover, 2005, 232). According to Canon Law only an ordained priest can be a chaplain (Code 566, 1983). In Ireland the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools, the Teaching Council, The Department of Education and Skills and most of the Dioceses use the term ‘chaplain’ in their description and in legal documents. The Education and Training Board Ireland (ETBI) and the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) use both ‘chaplain’ and ‘Co-ordinator of Chaplaincy Services’

at the beginning of their draft norms and clarify that, thereafter, they will refer to the role as 'chaplain'. The Joint Managerial Body (JMB), in their draft Guidelines, refers to the 'Co-ordinator of Chaplaincy Services'. In this work I will use the term 'chaplain'.

The research question '*What is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland?*' prompts the following sub-questions:

- What is the role of school chaplains in Irish education today?
- Who defines the role of the school chaplain?
- Is there a tension between the chaplain's work for the school and for the nominating church?
- What is the future for school chaplaincy in Ireland?

These questions are asked in the context of an Irish education landscape which is changing, a distancing in relationships between Church and State, a movement towards an almost exclusively lay chaplaincy and a growing awareness of inequality between schools that have the services of a chaplain and those that do not.

The first four chapters set the scene for the research and contextualises school chaplaincy. Chapter One reviews a selection of literature available on school chaplaincy, Chapters Two, Three and Four look at the socio-religious, ecclesial, international, legal and educational contexts that shape the role of school chaplaincy.

Chapter Five outlines the research methodology used to conduct the research. Chapter Six presents the findings from the analysis of the WSE/MLL reports and Chapter Seven and Eight the initial findings from the interviews and Focus group. Chapters Nine, Ten, Eleven and Twelve present the substantive theory on school chaplaincy developed from this research. Finally Chapter Thirteen offers recommendations and looks to the future.

Chapter One

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chaplains have had a role in Irish schools since the opening of the first schools by religious orders in the 1800s. Chaplaincy was formalised somewhat in 1972 with the introduction of the Community School sector. Nonetheless there is a noticeable dearth of literature on the role as it is exercised in Ireland. In keeping with Grounded Theory the literature review was completed concurrently with the research. The literature did not directly influence the research question but given my recent completion of a Master's Degree in School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care at Mater Dei Institute I was aware of the literature on school chaplaincy up to 2009, particularly as it pertains to Irish education. The research question: 'What is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland?' was to the fore when approaching the literature. Because of the paucity of literature to answer this question the sub-questions were used as a way of exploring potential answers to the main research question contained in the literature. These sub-questions consider who defines the role of the school chaplain, any tensions that exist between the chaplain's work for the school and for the nominating church, and the future for school chaplaincy in Ireland. This literature review presents the seminal work which elucidates these question in Ireland and internationally, and which may support the emerging data.

1.1 Irish Literature

While all the literature referred to addresses chaplains in educational settings only one study was found in the published and unpublished matter reviewed which specifically addresses the rationale for school chaplaincy. In 1998 in *The Chaplain: A Faith Presence in the School* Luke Monahan and Caroline Renehan identify the key values behind the rationale for school chaplaincy as a rootedness in Christ that seeks to develop the whole person, including the spiritual and religious dimensions of human development (Monahan and Renehan, 1998, 10-15). Based on this rationale they define the chaplain as “a faith presence, committed to the values of Christ, and on behalf of the Church and the school communities, accompanies each person on the journey through life” (Monahan & Renehan, 1998, 13). This is one of the first comprehensive definitions of the role which expresses cognisance of an emerging lay chaplaincy and emphasises the chaplain’s ministry to all members of the school community.

In one sense this book has been seen over the years as offering the definitive guide to how to do school chaplaincy however, even within this book, there is acknowledgement that the role is often defined by the content of post-graduate courses on school chaplaincy and even more frequently defined by the personhood of those employed as chaplains. The one line from Monahan & Renehan (1998, 22) that is most often quoted describes the chaplain as “loitering with intent”. The benefit of having someone who is this reflective presence is a theme taken up by two of the contributors later in the book.

By taking on this reflective role in schools the chaplain is seen as being a significant adult to students in need (O'Donoghue, 1998, 117) and someone who can be a prophetic presence challenging teachers when injustice is being done and raising questions about the living out of school ethos (Monahan, 1998, 106). Being a reflective presence is not the only educational tool Monahan and Renehan see the chaplain as using. They are convinced of the chaplain's role in the provision of meaningful and Meaning-Making school liturgies as a link between personal development and education (Monahan & Renehan, 1998, 108). The collaborative nature of the role is also emphasised.

This book only briefly touches on potential conflict that might exist between the nominating Church and the work of the chaplain. Monahan and Renehan (1998, 14) believe that the Church and the school together give the chaplain a mandate to be "an identifiable facilitator for the spiritual welfare of students and related school personnel." They do, however, acknowledge that the school and the Church may have different values and approaches to ensuring the welfare of the young people in their care.

This book is written from the perspective that all chaplains are nominated by the Catholic Church and is mono-cultural in its tone. It does not root the chaplain in an educational theory. Ultimately it moves quickly from 'why' question of school chaplaincy into the 'what, as is the tendency in much of what is written on the subject.

Nonetheless it has proven to be a key text for students of school chaplaincy around the world.

Six years after the publication of the Monahan and Renchan book, James Norman edited a series of articles which sought to explore the connection between pastoral care in schools and the school chaplain's role entitled *At the Heart of Education: School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care* (2004). In this book, Norman (2004) categorises pastoral care into three dimensions – humanistic, programmatic and spiritual – and divides the book into sections accordingly. He acknowledges that the third type of pastoral care specifically addresses students search for meaning in life and that chaplains, because of their training in theology and spirituality, are well positioned to deliver this kind of care. Despite this acknowledgement only thirty per cent of the book focuses on this area. The book gives more emphasis to what the chaplain does as opposed to why they are in schools, thereby not addressing the rationale question of this thesis. Some contributors do engage somewhat with the rationale issue and when they do suggest that chaplains are in schools to animate the spiritual life of the school community (Byrne, 2004, 192) and to encourage a holistic education (Murray, J., 2004, 216). The formation of strong relationships with students is reported as a strong positive impact of chaplaincy and the benefit of such relationships is emphasised (Hall, 2004, 69).

The strongest contribution this book makes is the reflections it contains on the chaplain's role as a religious educator. The chaplain is seen as adding the extra-dimension to religious education by offering students experiences of prayer (King, 2004, 165). As will be explained in Chapter 3.3.2, this is consistent with the Supreme Court definition of the role of the chaplain. The chaplain's contribution to religious education is seen as adding to the 'spiritual capital' of a school and is perceived as honouring the affective and cognitive dimensions of religious education (King, 2004, 169). In the context of honouring the affective the value of a sacred space in a school is highlighted as giving students a place in which to be quiet and reflective (De Souza, 2004, 130; Murray, S., 2004, 203). Byrne (2004, 192) describes the chaplain as "being present to students and staff, encouraging them to tell their story...providing symbolic, ritual and prayerful support and at times reconnecting them with others and with their community." It is through their religious education function that the chaplain is seen as helping to create and sustain school ethos (King, 2004, 169). Two contributors raise the issue of the potential for worship in schools to become divisive and encourage sensitivity on the part of the chaplain coupled with prayer services and sacred spaces that are accessible to all regardless of their religious beliefs or backgrounds (Clifford, 2004, 227; DeSouza 2004, 129-130). John Murray (2004, 214) asserts that while sensitivity is necessary the chaplain ought to continue to identify with one faith tradition.

This book does not offer any new insights into who is defining the role in Irish education or offer any indicators about the future of the role. It does however suggest that the rationale for school chaplaincy is contained within the unique contribution chaplains can make to spiritual pastoral care and their enhancement of religious education through ritual and liturgy.

In 2008 the School Chaplain's Association established an Accreditation Committee to examine the possibility of developing new levels of membership related to the specific professional knowledge and experience of those who work in school chaplaincy. Part of the terms of reference of this group was to examine the nature of school chaplaincy today. The committee commissioned the School of Education Studies at Dublin City University to undertake research into the qualifications and activities of school chaplains. The research was carried out in two strands, administering an adaptation of the School Counsellors Activity Rating School (SCARS) to one hundred and fifty schools (of which there was a 55% response rate) and two focus groups carried out with school chaplains. In 2009 James O'Higgins-Norman and Paul King presented their findings in a *School Chaplaincy Activity Rating Study*. This study gives more recent insight into how chaplains view their role and the reasons for their presence in schools. It also highlights the way in which school chaplaincy in Ireland is now almost exclusively lay, with only ten percent of respondents describing themselves as belonging to the clergy (O'Higgins-Norman & King, 2009, 8). Irish chaplains are very highly

qualified, including having teaching qualifications yet they do not consider themselves religious educators, with only eight percent of school chaplains taking out membership in the Religion Teachers Association of Ireland (O'Higgins-Norman & King, 2009, 9). Despite this distancing from Religious Education all chaplains report being involved with liturgical activities within the school and spend a significant amount of time with small groups in the prayer room or oratory (O'Higgins-Norman & King, 2009, 14). They describe themselves as being more spiritual than religious yet, almost exclusively, follow the Christian Liturgical Calendar as a basis for ritual. Chaplains in the O'Higgins-Norman and King study report that they spend most of their time engaged in counselling.

While this study was never intended to be anything more than an activity listing, the activities that chaplains put emphasis gives an insight into how chaplains are defining the role within their own schools thereby indicating what they believe the rationale for school chaplaincy should be. It also highlights some of the confusion that exists for chaplains, e.g. describing themselves as spiritual yet following a religious calendar of one tradition and distancing themselves from the role of religious educator yet being heavily involved in liturgy with students.

These four researchers, Monahan and Renehan, Norman/O'Higgins-Norman and King, each have made significant contributions regarding the rationale for providing chaplains in Irish post-primary schools. These three documents make up the literature review from an Irish context. In each the focus moves from the 'why' to the 'how' and the 'who'. This review of their work demonstrates the need to further elucidate the rationale for school chaplaincy in an increasingly multicultural and secular society.

To widen the scope of study I shall also draw on three texts from the international context in this review. These studies are based on cultures that are more religiously diverse than Ireland and may provide insights into a future direction for school chaplaincy in Ireland.

1.2 International Literature

In 2004 the Roman Catholic Conference of Chaplains in Higher Education in the UK commissioned a qualitative study of life across a range of representative chaplaincies by Professor John Sullivan and Reverend Dr Peter McGrail. Subsequently this report was sent to a number of people drawn from the academy, university administration and chaplaincy who presented their explorations of the findings of the study at a colloquium. Later still these papers were discussed at an international ecumenical group meeting in 2006. Their book, *Dancing on the Edge: Chaplaincy, Church and Higher Education*, is

the result of all this preparation, dialogue, and reflection (McGrail & Sullivan, 2007). In this book chaplains are termed as 'psychologically self-employed' and because of this autonomy can define the role for themselves (Sullivan, 2007, 103). Unlike the Irish situation UK university chaplains report very little specific training, and apprentice-type training programmes for chaplains have largely failed, so the role is neither being influenced by training programmes or by advice from experienced chaplains (McGrail and Sullivan, 71, 76).

The UK university chaplains see their contribution to their educational institution as one of providing pastoral, spiritual and moral support to students and witness to Christian values within the work place (Sullivan, 94, 99). One of their main ways of impacting on the institution is, in the words of another contributor Kevin Egan (2007, 114) by "call[ing] the institutions to transformation." The chaplain's 'insider/outsider' position helps them to do this according to Robinson (2007, 171), who also contributes to the book. The students interviewed for the study understand the chaplain as creating community and supporting them through friendship (McGrail and Sullivan, 2007, 23). Because chaplains in the UK setting do not emphasise the spiritual aspect of their role in their interactions with students, they are considered to be in danger of losing their identity and, in the words of contributor Stephen Shakespeare (2007, 131), are being "sucked into the essentially secular 'social work' model of student care." Egan, Shakespeare and other contributors to the book note the educational dimension of the

chaplaincy is rooted in their Meaning-Making possibilities which stem from the spiritual (see Egan, 2007, 117). Pastorally chaplains help students to make sense of their lives and academically they assist colleagues and students to access religious traditions (see Egan, 2007, 117).

In seeking answers to the question of the future for school chaplaincy in Ireland it is important to observe how other countries approach diversity through their chaplaincy services. As universities in the UK become increasingly religiously diverse chaplains are seeking to remain inclusive by exploring spiritual themes with students “without getting bogged down in religious language” (Egan, 2007, 115-118). However, pastoral care delivered without any religious background, according to the contribution of Simon Robinson (2007, 161), can lead to the chaplain avoiding any attempt at moral guidance and can further erode the distinct role of the chaplain. Some chaplains report a fear among their university leaders of an outbreak of inter-ethnic conflict and this fear is leading to the institutions distancing themselves entirely from chaplaincy (McGrail and Sullivan, 2007, 61).

McGrail and Sullivan’s research does draw attention to some tensions that exist between the chaplain and their nominating authority. To begin with chaplains report being torn between a sense of professionalism and a sense of vocation (Sullivan, 2007, 102). The

tension is heightened by the lack of clarity about chaplains' responsibility and answerability to Church and Institution (McGrail and Sullivan, 2007, 72). The literature strongly encourages chaplains to facilitate a two-way flow of communication between the university and the faith community (Sullivan, 2007, 99) and create links between the university and the local parish so that students do not become isolated from their local faith community (McGrail and Sullivan, 2007, 82). Many chaplains, including ordained chaplains, report a difficulty in maintaining this link because of a perceived negativity towards them from parish clergy (Shakespeare, 2007, 126).

The way in which this book is constructed, based on individual reflections on the findings of a qualitative study means that the book gives much to consider. The thoughtfulness of the authors supports the probing of relationships with chaplaincy and other stakeholders and gives particular insight for my research into the tensions that exist between the chaplain, their institution and their nominating Church. It does not offer an educational theory for school chaplaincy or any clear rationale for the role.

In 2011 an article by Maureen Glackin, outlining the findings of her PhD Thesis on the work of school chaplains in Catholic Secondary Schools and Sixth Form Colleges in England and Wales, was published in *International Studies in Catholic Education* (2011, 3:1, 40-56). Glackin's research is similar to what is being conducted here, but

within the English and Welsh context. The composition of the interviewees is quite different as Glackin concentrates on the voice of students and teachers rather than the wider stakeholders in education. Glackin is also concerned with the difference between the priest chaplain and the lay chaplain. Given the figures from O'Higgins-Norman and King's study, in section 1.1 of this chapter, this comparison has little relevance to the Irish context. Glackin sees the role of the chaplain as reliant on personality and cites 'relationalability' as the most important disposition of the chaplain. To Glackin (2011, 41, 48) this 'relationalability' is more important than the liturgical function or any academic qualifications. Although she includes some very Catholic orientated points in her suitability for ministry criteria list she concludes that an ability to accept people where they are at on their life journey is ultimately more important than any theological or pastoral skills (Glackin, 2011, 49-50). She firmly locates the chaplain as part of the school community but acknowledges that the chaplain may well be the only contact students have with the institutional Church.

The personal relationship established by the chaplain with students witnesses to the Church but allows students to be where they are on their faith development journey. Glackin clearly interprets the rationale for school chaplaincy as having a person in the school who relates well to young people and accompanies them on their life journey. She does not locate the chaplain within an educational theory. While she compares the lay chaplain to the ordained chaplain she does not explore the tensions that may exist

between the chaplain and their nominating Church. Neither does she consider how the practice of school chaplaincy is affected when students come from different religious backgrounds. The latter two issues are examined in the present research.

Claire Escaffre's article '*Aumôneries de l'enseignement public, chemins de vie, chemins de foi*', in *Pour l'éducation et pour l'école. Des catholiques s'engagent* (Dagens, 2007) describes school chaplaincy from the French perspective. This article expands the conversation into the broader European context and is interesting as it is situated in the very secular context that is French education. Escaffre (2007, 154) understands the rationale for the presence of the chaplain as a school facilitating the awakening and growth of adolescents in all areas of their lives, but particularly the spiritual dimension. Chaplains can do this by providing a welcoming space, away from academic pressures where students can learn to think critically while being supported by a significant adult (Escaffre, 2007, 150-151). She emphasises the chaplain's role in spiritual development over any educational role.

Given the pluralist nature of French society Escaffre's interpretation of the rationale for school chaplaincy is particularly interesting. On this aspect of the role she asserts that young people are aware that the chaplaincy represents a link with Christ and that the chaplain works in the name of Christ (Escaffre, 2007, 151). While this sounds very

Christocentric she goes on to illustrate how the chaplaincy service does not seek to convert students but it can result in students who do not share a faith tradition developing at a personal level in ways that support their life journey and becoming more at ease with those who do have faith (Escaffre, 2007, 151). This article gives some insight into the rationale for school chaplaincy and how it operates in a pluralist society. Again it does not offer any educational theory for school chaplaincy, suggest who defines the role, or consider the tensions that may exist between the chaplain's work in the school and the nominating Church, which are matters addressed in this thesis.

The final book, *School Chaplaincy: An Introduction*, was published in Australia in 2013 and explores school chaplaincy there (Pohlmann, 2013). The content of Pohlmann's book proves a solid reference point for analysis of the data from the Irish context. Pohlmann (2013, 20) envisages the role of the school chaplain as one of listening, watching, responding to the needs of the school community and modeling Christianity. He offers five models of school chaplaincy which are summarised in Appendix A and considers the school type and the personality and training of the chaplain as key influences as to which model is used in any particular context. While not specifically addressing the rationale for school chaplaincy, these models offer a framework for possible future directions for school chaplaincy in Ireland.

When Pohlmann (2013, 17 & 58) addresses the educational function he considers the chaplain as having a role in the provision of a religious education that is holistic and contributes to developing personal meaning and even faith. Despite this broad interpretation of religious education many States in Australia now suggest that the chaplain provide support and guidance about ethics, values, relationships, spirituality and religious issues, but do not take on the role of religious educator (National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program Guidelines, 2012). Within the school community Pohlmann draws attention to the possibility of role ambiguity between the guidance counsellor and the chaplain and strongly advocates clear role delineation and the development of chaplaincy teams within schools, ideally including parents and the wider community.

Pohlmann (2013, 47) sees the chaplain as having a major role to play in building up relationships between clergy and key parish personnel. He sees potential here for the bringing together of different denominations. This is one way in which chaplains can ensure that they are inclusive of students from all faith backgrounds and none. Pohlmann (2013, 67) emphasises that while a chaplain needs to be able to demonstrate religious commitment they must at the same time show an understanding and sensitivity to other traditions, and have an ability to work with people from different cultures and religious backgrounds. Indeed for Pohlmann (2013, 25) it is an over commitment to one religious tradition which can lead to tension in the work of the chaplain. When

chaplains do not acknowledge school management as their line manger and refer rather to a representative of their denominational organization, this can lead to a withdrawal of support from the school. This book offers an insight into the way in which a State-funded chaplaincy service is developing in a society that is much more religiously diverse than Ireland and indicates that there is a rationale for chaplaincy even in such a setting.

These international researchers contribute to this research by illustrating the different emphases on the rationale for school chaplaincy in different educational, cultural and religious settings. The research in this thesis considers if the approaches taken in these contexts are transferable to the Irish context or whether a particularly Irish approach is to be more appropriate for changing times.

1.3 Chapter Conclusion

The literature considered here begins to answer the question “what is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland today?” An overview of the literature indicates that this rationale lies in the contribution the chaplain makes to pastoral care and education, linked to each other through the chaplain’s spiritual role, particularly in the provision of liturgies which help students and other stakeholders to make personal meaning out of difficult circumstances. The liturgical element of the work of the school chaplain gives a

holistic element to religious education and can be practiced from a spiritual perspective which includes students from all faiths and none. This inclusion on the part of the school chaplain can lead students to a deeper understanding of their personal journey and also to an understanding of the importance of faith in the lives of some individuals.

When the role of the chaplain is formally defined in the literature the emphasis is on the people-centred nature of the role. The importance of the chaplain as a significant adult in the lives of adolescents begins to emerge. The chaplain's ability to be a reflective presence not only impacts on the lives of individuals but also contributes to the corporate vision of the school. The type of school that the chaplain works in ought to impact on how the chaplaincy is carried out. The chaplain has a role both in connecting students who shared their religious background with their own faith community and also an ecumenical and inter-faith role by developing links with other religious traditions.

At the conclusion of this literature search, I was satisfied that the research question 'What is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland?' is an appropriate and timely area of investigation. There is no prior investigation that had chosen the clear focus and methodology type outlined in this study. This thesis fills a serious gap in the literature with specific reference to Ireland and the educational dimension of school chaplaincy. The findings from this research are also relevant in the international context.

As the literature on school chaplaincy is limited the next three chapters explore a broader range of sources to describe the development of the school chaplaincy role and the various contexts within which chaplains operate. Chapter Two examines the socio-religious, international and ecclesial contexts while Chapters Three and Four consider the legal and educational contexts of school chaplaincy.

Chapter Two

CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

SOCIAL, ECCLESIAL and INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS

In order to best answer the research question ‘what is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland?’ it is necessary to look at the contexts within which the chaplains operate. Ireland is becoming increasingly pluralist and this fact could have implications for the State funding of denominational chaplaincy. For these reasons the socio-religious context of Ireland in 2014 is considered. The Catholic Church has a strong tradition in education and this thesis looks at how the chaplain takes up this mission. The ecclesial context situates the chaplain within Canon Law and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Finally it is important to consider the experience of school chaplaincy in other countries. I have chosen to look at three very different countries to widen the discussion on what the rationale for school chaplains may be.

2.1 Socio-Religious Context

This context refers to the combination of social and religious factors that impact on school chaplaincy. In this section the changing demographics of Ireland are considered along with religious affiliation and practice among young people. Ireland’s

demographic makeup has changed significantly in the past fifteen years. The country's new multi-cultural status comes as a result of immigration during the Celtic tiger years which saw people settle in Ireland from Asia, the Middle East and Africa, as well as from Europe. Some of these people came as refugees and asylum seekers; many more freely chose Ireland as an alternative place to live their lives. The Republic of Ireland is now home to over 45 distinct nationalities (O'Mahony, 2012, 2–3). These different races bring with them a variety of languages, customs, practices, cultural beliefs and religious affiliations, all of which now impact on the role of the chaplain and bring into question the historical rationale for the role.

2.1.1 Introduction to Religious Faith and Practice

Religion is basically a cultural phenomenon; its norms and beliefs have to be transmitted to each new generation. Irish society has undeniably become more secular and the practice of faith, where it exists, increasingly privatised. Mac Gréil and Rhatigan (2009, 86), in their extensive study of the National Survey of Religious Attitudes and Practices in the Republic of Ireland, conducted in 2007 and 2008, find that the level of involvement with political, religious, social, community or cultural groups has greatly reduced. Nonetheless church attendance in Ireland remains relatively high compared to the rest of Europe (Mac Gréil and Rhatigan, 2009). The tension between fidelity to any particular group and a sustained religious practice is of importance when considering the rationale for school chaplains, any perceived responsibility the chaplain may have to

their nominating authority and tensions that may exist between school and church authorities.

2.1.1 (a) Religious Affiliation in Ireland

Recent statistics indicate that, while the majority of people still define themselves as belonging to one of the main Christian Churches (Roman Catholic or Church of Ireland), a growing number now define themselves as being of no belief or being of Islamic, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu or other belief (CSO, 2011). Between the census of 2006 and that of 2011 the percentage of people in Ireland describing themselves as Catholic fell by 2.8% from 87% to 84.2% but the actual number of Catholics increased. Of the 3.86 million Roman Catholics in Ireland, 7.3% are non-Irish nationals (Irelandafternama, 2012). The regional differences in the increases in the number of Catholics has implications for the kind of chaplaincy service needed in schools in these areas – Cavan (12.6%), Laois (15.8%) and Longford (11%) saw double digit growth in Catholics since 2006. Urban areas, in contrast, such as Dublin (1.7%) and Waterford City (2.8%), saw relatively small increases in the numbers of Catholics.

Apart from census results, and without the prompting of parents or guardians, the vast majority of Irish students (95%) report that they identify with a religion. Furthermore three quarters of all students in Ireland agree that religion is an important influence in

their lives (Cosgrove et al, 2009). This is affirming for the role and influence of the school chaplain but highlights the gap between religious belief and religious practice. While students may still identify with a religious group they may not be interested in any public expression of this identification.

The second most numerous grouping in the 2011 census is those who indicate that they have no religion. 6% of the population state that they have no religion representing a 45% increase on the 2006 figure. The 2011 census also reported a 51% increase in the number of Muslims in Ireland and 39.5% of the Muslims in Ireland are Irish nationals (Irelandafternama, 2012). There has also been a 117% increase in the number of Orthodox Christians (O'Mahony, 2012, 1–2). There is no humanist, Muslim or Orthodox Christian chaplain working in any school in Ireland in 2014.

2.1.1 (b) Religious Practice in Ireland

Recent data from Round Three of the European Social Survey (ESS) reports that weekly or more frequent Mass attendance in the Republic of Ireland stands at 56.4% of the Catholic population. A further 16.4% attend at least once per month and another one in ten Catholics in the Republic of Ireland attends only on special holy days. The figures for Mass attendance among young people are of particular interest to this study. Weekly only Mass attendance is just under 37% in the 15–24 year old age group (O'Mahoney,

2008). These attendance figures are lower in the eastern and urbanised areas of the country. Mac Gréil and Rhatigan (2009, 9) figures vary somewhat from the ESS data and they report that as few as 20% of younger people attend Mass weekly compared to their figure of 43% of the general population. The Educational Research Centre (ERC) report for Ireland includes students from all denominations and faiths. It found that attendance by students in Ireland at religious services is comparatively high, with 63% in this case reporting that they attend a service at least once a month (Cosgrove et al, 2009) perhaps indicating that young people who attend services other than Mass attend more regularly. It is also possible that attendance at school prayer services is taken into account in this figure. The lowest weekly Mass attendance is among past pupils of Community and Comprehensive Schools (Mac Gréil and Rhatigan, 2009, 31) – the only schools that have been guaranteed the services of a full time chaplain for the past forty years. Because this sector has only been in existence for the past forty years it is likely that those responding to the survey, who attended a Community or Comprehensive School, are younger than the general population. Surprisingly Smyth *et al*, in their 2013 study of 11 and 12 year olds, found that Catholic children attending Catholic schools are less likely to attend additional religious activities outside school, with the exception of one small group who acted as altar servers in their local parish (Smyth et al, 2013, 112).

O'Mahoney finds that three quarters of Catholics in Ireland have a personal prayer life and half the population prays every day (O'Mahoney, 2008). Mac Gréil and Rhatigan

(2009, viii) report that the decline in daily prayer is more acute among young people and that they are given increased authority to make up their own minds about faith. Smyth *et al* (2013, 114–115) finds that many parents want to give their children a religious grouping from which they could develop their own religious outlook. However, some parents believe that children have a fundamental role in the construction of their own religious/spiritual outlook and can do so without the guidance or influence of parents (Smyth *et al*, 2013, 114–115). This study also finds that, contrary to theories which place emphasis on parental transmission of faith, a sizeable number of children describe themselves as being in a faith group even though their parents have no religion. The majority of children in this study describe themselves as ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ religious (Smyth *et al*, 2013, 123). Students have a sense of the spiritual and some prayer experience. This affords chaplains a foundation on which to build.

Mac Gréil and Rhatigan (2009, 8) point out that, although the vast majority of people in Ireland still affiliate themselves with the Catholic Church, experience from other European countries shows that disaffiliation only takes place a generation after practice weakens or ceases. Studies from the UK highlight that the chain of religious memory is becoming harder to sustain as belief has become dis-embedded from communities and from the traditional authority of the Church (Collins-Mayo *et al*, 2010, 12). What is emerging though is the notion of ‘vicarious religion’ which describes the situation where religion is performed “by an active minority but on behalf of a much larger number, who

(implicitly at least) not only understand, but quite clearly, approve of what the minority is doing” (Davie, 2006, 22). Where vicarious religion is being practiced people still attend Church at key life moments, particularly for rites of passage. The majority expect Church leaders and Church goers (the minority) to believe on behalf of others, Church leaders and Church goers are expected to embody moral codes on behalf of others and Churches provide a “space for the vicarious debate of unresolved issues in modern societies” (Davie, 2006, 23). The chaplain may already hold this kind of role within the school community. The chaplain could also be a very positive agent of religious memory in schools and a key person in maintaining the link between the local faith community and young people. Irish society would appear to be at a critical affiliation junction and the choices made in the next few years will have very long term implications. Of course, chaplains cannot single-handedly preserve religious memory among young people.

2.1.2 Failure to embrace religious diversity

Research suggests that, although Ireland has become more multi-cultural, it has not become pluralistic religiously. According to the 2007–08 Survey of Religious Attitudes and Practices, notwithstanding that there is generally an absence of sectarianism in the Republic of Ireland the Irish people has coped with the challenge of increased social diversity with a certain indifference (Mac Gréil & Rhatigan, 2009, 25). Many newcomers find this indifference as difficult to handle as outright hostility or opposition.

It seems obvious that failure to embrace religious diversity is a missed opportunity. A diverse society, such as Ireland now is, is a potentially religiously and theologically enriched society (Ward, 2004, 26). There is an educational role for the chaplain in teaching students about the beliefs of other faiths, comparing and contrasting the different religious views of students in the school in a safe environment, teaching about inclusion and generally creating a school atmosphere which values and is interested in diversity. Smyth et al (2013, 122) finds that students in 5th and 6th class from all types of schools have two strategies for dealing with religious diversity among their peers. The first is to ignore differences and focus on commonalities across the group. The second strategy is to engage with those who are different in order to find out more about religious beliefs and practices. The students who most frequently use this strategy are attending Educate Together Primary Schools. The study reports that on rare occasions difference is the basis for teasing and bullying.

The importance of developing the role of chaplains in the area of encouraging respect for diversity is further highlighted by the research of Mac Gréil and Rhatigan (2009, 134) which shows that there has been a fall in support for Christian unity among young people and this age group displays the highest level of hostility towards members of the Muslim community. Mac Gréil and Rhatigan (2009, 135) go on to comment that it is erroneous to assume that if children of different Churches are raised together they will inevitably end up ecumenical. The more likely outcome of this approach, they say, is

that children would be assimilated into the religious values and norms of the most dominant denomination (Mac Gréil and Rhatigan, 2009, 148). Educational policy on inclusion will be discussed in Chapter Four and Church recommendations in this area are discussed in more detail in section 2.3 of this chapter.

The way in which the role of the school chaplain is fulfilled is influenced by youth culture. Research suggests that this youth culture is characterised by disaffiliation from the institutional Church, by relativism, undifferentiated pluralism and a deep suspicion of institutions (see Oliver Brennan, 2009, 9). Eight years earlier Brennan (2001, 163) had reported that the young people he interviewed prized diversity and tolerance for various points of view and ways of life, and they had little regard for those who judged others for being different. Of particular interest to the chaplain is the research which suggests that adolescents informally 'discuss' the theology underlying the diversity of beliefs around them, and they do this even if they do not study them at school (O'Grady, 2005, 11). Smyth *et al* (2013) found that older children often initiated conversations with their parents regarding religious matters. The fact that these conversations are happening offers an opportunity for the school chaplain to formalise these theological reflections. If this platform for formal conversation is not developed young people in schools can feel alienated because of their different religious or personal beliefs, bullying and teasing can be based on the perception of religious difference and both

participation in and withdrawal from religious education can be problematic for the young person (Lodge and Lynch, 2004).

So far the emphasis has been on the Irish context of school chaplaincy. Youth culture is similar throughout the world. There is much to be learnt from how school chaplaincy serves young people in other jurisdictions. The next section considers the international context.

2.2 International Context

A small number of States provide for chaplaincy services within or apart from their provision for religious education. Where chaplaincy does exist in places such as Newfoundland, France and the UK it is organised through Church provision. For the purpose of this study the approach of three countries – Malta, Australia and Israel – all of which have or had State funded school chaplains is examined. I have chosen these three countries for their diversity and the similarities to and differences between the Irish cultural and legal context. Each situation, and that country's approach to school chaplaincy, provide insights for chaplaincy in Irish schools.

2.2.1 Malta

In common with Ireland the predominant religion in Malta is Roman Catholicism. Vatican data for 2006 show that 93.89% of the Maltese population is Roman Catholic, making the nation one of the most Catholic countries in the world (Clerus, 2008). Unlike the situation in Ireland, however, the Constitution of Malta establishes Catholicism as the State religion. Article 2 of the Constitution of Malta (1964, 2) states that the religion of Malta is the 'Roman Catholic apostolic religion', that the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church have the duty and the right to teach which principles are right and wrong and that religious teaching of the Roman Catholic apostolic faith shall be provided in all state schools as part of compulsory education.

The concept of school chaplaincy has been present in Malta since the 1950s when in order to help the spiritual development of the students the role of spiritual director was created and fourteen priests were employed. Apart from celebrating the sacraments – primarily the Eucharist and Sacrament of Reconciliation – they provided guidance and counselling and helped in the personal and social development of students, including visiting homes. These priests were employed full-time by the Government until they reached the age of retirement, when they received a State pension.

Religious-political strife broke out between the Church and the Socialist Labour government in Malta in the 1980s. In 1983 there was industrial action and teachers went on strike. The spiritual directors participated in the strike and following the industrial action the government terminated their position in schools. A subsequent change in Government, along with an agreement reached between the Holy See and Malta, saw the role of spiritual directors reinstated in the educational system. The term to describe the role was changed from 'spiritual director' to 'religious counsellor' by the Maltese Government as it was felt that the term 'director' may suggest an effort to direct children's conscience (Roman Curia, 1989, 8.1). The fact that the Department of Education already had counselling services and religious counselling was seen as another equal service contributed towards a preference for the term 'religious counsellor'. Until very recently the incumbents of these positions in schools continued to be priests.

In the agreement reached over this matter, the Church of Malta offered to pay these Religious Counsellors and the Episcopal Conference retained the right to choose the Religious Counsellors to work in schools. The Government promised to give a nominal fee but this never materialised (Roman Curia, 1989, 8.1). Since 1998, with the introduction of the post of Coordinator of Religious Counsellors, great effort has been made to develop and enhance the role of the religious counsellor in Malta. Religious counsellors began meeting more regularly and deepening their links with the school

guidance and counselling services. By 2003 the Synod in the Archdiocese of Malta recommended investigating the possibility of lay persons and religious women working as religious counsellors in Maltese schools (Arcidiocesi ta' Malta, 2003).

In 2008 the Co-ordinator of Religious Counselling, in collaboration with the Office of Religious Education, was commissioned to prepare a policy document for Religious and Spiritual Counselling in Schools. One of the key functions of this policy document was to define the proper role of Religious Counselling. At this time too, the Church in Malta was called upon to establish an Office responsible for the spiritual formation of students, teachers and their families. This office would be expected to supervise and support individual schools and individual Religious Counsellors in the spiritual formation of the school community, offer formation to individual school pastoral teams, and offer specific activities such as para-liturgical celebrations and half day retreats for individual schools or same area schools (Pace, 2008, 41). At the same time there was at least one Religious Counsellor, working at least four hours a week, in every State, Church and Independent School in Malta. This provision, in light of the growing spiritual needs of young people and the diminishing numbers of available members of the clergy, was considered to be inadequate. The working paper of that year on Religious Education in Malta, drafted by the Archdiocese of Malta, suggested that the number of Religious Counsellors be reduced to a minimum of seven full-time ordained ministers and the number of lay people in the role be increased. It also recommended that the Diocese

encourage all Religious Counsellors to follow postgraduate courses in Spiritual Companionship (Pace, 2008, 42). In that year, for the first time, the University of Malta offered a masters of Arts in Spirituality with the aim of preparing individuals to work in this area (University of Malta, 2013).

In 2010 for the first time three full-time lay people were appointed to work in secondary schools. They are responsible for coordinating the spiritual development of the students in each college with the help of the priest religious counsellors who work part time. It is envisaged that all colleges will have full time Religious Counsellors within the next few years. Pace (2008, 42) reflects that “the Church should initiate dialogue with Education authorities in order to restructure Religious Counselling in such a way that the work of many teachers is recognised and consolidated. Through the valuable contribution of all support structures, Religious Counselling may well develop into true and proper School Chaplaincies.” By October 2010, there were 37 Religious Counsellors working in Secondary state schools. How this number will develop will be in line with the Modes of Regulation on Catholic Religious Instruction and Education in State Schools, Malta 1989, 7.1.

The number of RC’s which the Ordinary of the respective diocese is to provide for service in State schools is to be fixed in proportion to the global number of Catholic students in State schools, and the possibilities of the Church in the Maltese Islands (Roman Curia, 1989, 7.1).

In most schools several teachers and other members of the staff, out of their concern for the spiritual and pastoral needs of the school population, cooperate with the Religious Counsellor and the administration in the organisation of liturgical celebrations and other activities of a spiritual/religious nature. Several schools have also set up a team for the spiritual/religious development of the school. In other schools the Religious Counsellor is regularly invited to participate in meetings of the School Pastoral Care Team, focused on areas such as students at risk, staff development and school development programmes, referral services and procedures, and bereavement support (Pace, 2008, 41). The overarching role of the Religious Counsellor remains the same - that of taking care of the spiritual and pastoral life of the school. Their presence in every school for the “religious animation and moral guidance of students” (Roman Curia, 1989, 8.1) is seen as an essential part of their Religious Education. According to the Modes of Regulation religious counsellors should be living witnesses of moral values and should give counselling on religious and moral problems. They should make classroom visits, celebrate sacraments and help the school staff with religious matters. It is recommended that the team approach to the role would allow for a holistic pastoral approach, promoting new methods of spiritual formation, moving away from an emphasis on sacramental practice towards a lived experience of God. Attention is now being placed on community building and loving service of the community (Pace, 2008, 42).

2.2.2 Australia

Australia remains predominantly Christian with 61.14% of the Australian population recording themselves as Christian in the 2011 Census. Within the Christian population just over half belong to a Protestant Church (56%) and the remaining 43% describe themselves as Catholic. Historically the percentage has been far higher and the religious landscape of Australia is diversifying, with multicultural immigration. Over one fifth of the population of Australia have no religious affiliation. The remaining population is a diverse group which includes Buddhist (2.46%), Islamic (2.21%), Hindu (1.28%) and Jewish (0.45%) communities (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). The Constitution of Australia (1901) prohibits the Commonwealth government from establishing a church or interfering with the freedom of religion.

There is a long history of school chaplaincy in Australia. The first chaplains in government schools were appointed in 1955. They operated under the auspices of the Council for Christian Education in Schools which had been set up to oversee religious instruction in State schools. Previous to this religious instruction had only been allowed outside of school hours. The first school chaplains were appointed in Queensland in the 1970s. In 1982, the first chaplains were appointed in Western Australia under the auspices of the Churches' Commission on Education. Western Australia's Education Act allowed for religious education as part of the mainstream curriculum and Special Religious Education which was denominational in nature. Because of the two types of

religious education it was decided from the outset to make pastoral care the primary role of school chaplains in government schools in Western Australia. In 1986 the Schools Ministry Group (SMG) was formed in South Australia and chaplaincy was initiated under the direction of the Heads of Christian Churches Chaplaincy Planning Group. Since 2006, State school chaplains employed by SMG are referred to as 'Christian pastoral support workers'. The term 'chaplain' is used in all other parts of Australia (Hughes & Sims, 2009, 3).

In 2004, there were 555 chaplains in Australia. Most chaplains were funded by a mixture of funding from local Churches and communities and the schools themselves. Many chaplains were involved in raising funds to maintain chaplaincy. In 2006, the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) was initiated by the Federal Government of Australia offering funding for school chaplains. This funding was considered to be a support towards the contribution chaplaincy makes to the spiritual and emotional wellbeing of school communities. A statement on the website of the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) explains the motivation behind the initiative:

As one of society's key institutions, schools are in a strong position to support the wellbeing, values and spirituality of young people. Chaplains already play a significant role in supporting many schools throughout Australia, including

government schools, and there have been calls for their services to be more broadly available to school communities (DEEWR, 2007).

Approximately 2,712 schools received funding, of which 1,915 were government schools and 797 were Catholic or independent schools (Hughes & Sims, 2009, 3). Under the NSCP, \$165 million was made available over three years (July 2006 to October 2009) for government and non-government schools to establish school chaplaincy services, or expand existing services. Schools were given six months to find a suitable chaplain after their funding was approved. A number of schools reported difficulties finding a suitable chaplain. For this reason, the Government decided to allow these schools to use an alternative support worker to do the same job if they could not locate a chaplain by July 2008. The support workers could include non-denominational pastoral care workers, youth workers or other secular support staff. However, only eight such people were appointed. Special funding for additional chaplains was made available in Australia to address specific crises – such as flooding – in 2009 and 2011. The NSCP was rebranded as the National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Programme (NSCSWP) from 2012 – 2014. This new programme allows for schools to choose secular support workers instead of chaplains if they so wish (Pohlmann, 2013, 13).

The qualifications that chaplains have in Australia vary from state to state. For example, in Victoria chaplains are required to have training in theology, education and/or pastoral care. In addition they are expected to undertake a course in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). On the other hand, South Australian chaplains are only required to have a first-aid certificate and a police check (Hill, 2007, 49–59). The majority of school chaplains in Australia come from the Evangelical and Pentecostal traditions and this has caused some tensions with the other Christian Churches. Mainline Churches are uncomfortable with a model of chaplaincy that emphasises evangelism, and would prefer a pastoral care model that would provide support and care for all students regardless of belief or religious affiliation (Anglican Archdiocese of Brisbane, 1995).

Local Chaplaincy Committees (LCCs) were established to oversee the effective management of school chaplaincy in Australia. The role of the LCC is designed as one of strategic planning, on-going management and evaluation, and guidance and support for the chaplain, including professional development. The LCC also has a major role in the selection of chaplains for positions and in raising financial support (Pohlmann, 2010, 7). It is composed of the school principal and representatives of religious groups, teachers, parents, students and the employing authority. Over time, however, it is felt that the LCCs have become relegated to the role of assisting and advising the principal, who has the ultimate authority and responsibility for all programmes within their school,

including chaplaincy (Department of Education, Training and the Arts, Queensland, 2006).

The focus of school chaplaincy tends to be on pastoral care with the chaplain assisting school counsellors and staff in the provision of welfare services, providing a caring presence on the school campus, offering low level counselling on issues of human relationships and support in cases of bereavement, family breakdown and other crisis and loss situations. They also provide on-going support for individual students and staff where necessary. The chaplain, in some states, also support students in exploring their spirituality, providing guidance on matters of religion, values and ethics, and facilitating access to helping agencies in the community (Clements, 2005; Reyner, Hawkins, Lush, 2005, Venning, 2005).

There is some strong criticism of the role of school chaplaincy in Australia. Because there is no compulsory religious education in State schools, school chaplains take on religious instruction and this can be strongly evangelical in nature. Students are also segregated into religious denominations for instruction (Byrne, 2014). Queensland Teachers' Union policy on state school chaplaincy states that chaplains are not "members of staff at schools because they are employed by a separate employer" and that their employment by "the evangelical Scripture Union" is problematic "in relation

to quality control, accountability, responsibilities, qualifications, professional relationships, etc.”(Queensland Teachers Union, 2006). It is the view of the teachers’ union that school needs such as counselling, behaviour management and family school liaison should be undertaken by Guidance Officers. The ‘Stop the National Schools Chaplaincy Program!’ campaign group puts forward a number of issues of concern about the programme, claiming that it is divisive, particularly for schools with students and parents from a range of diverse backgrounds. They suggest it is internally inconsistent as it requires chaplains to be religious, yet to put aside this religious aspect of their role in delivering services. The campaign group is concerned that chaplains are not required to have any compulsory educational qualification and/or experience of teaching. They propose that the programme is at odds with the Government’s own Values for Australian Schools and discredits the Commonwealth Government and the Department of Education, Science and Training by promoting religion (Stop the NSCP, 2013).

In 2012 an Australian parent took a case against school chaplains to the High Court, arguing that the Commonwealth bans funding for essentially religious positions. The judges rejected the religious argument but found that both the funding agreement and the payment of funding in relation to school chaplaincy in State schools were not supported by the Commonwealth’s executive power under section 61 of the Constitution (HCA, 2012, 23). After the ruling the Attorney General stated that the government

would continue funding the program, probably on a state by state basis and the federal parliament passed legislation accordingly in 2012. This decision was appealed and on June 19th 2014 Australia's high court ruled that payments by the federal government to chaplain provider Scripture Union Queensland was unlawful. It unanimously decided that the legislation passed by the federal parliament in 2012 was "invalid in its operation with respect to a funding agreement between the commonwealth and Scripture Union Queensland" (HCA, 2014).

Following the most recent court ruling the prime minister, Tony Abbott, said the government was "carefully studying" the judgment to determine an appropriate response, but he strongly signalled his determination to find a way to ensure the chaplaincy program continued. The government allocated an extra \$245m in its May 2014 budget to extend the national school chaplaincy program and also decided to remove the option for schools to appoint a non-religious welfare worker under the scheme. On June 19th 2014 the Department of Education offered to provide further information to schools, funding recipients and education authorities on the decision and its impact on the specific circumstances relating to each provider following further analysis of the decision (see <http://education.gov.au/news/national-school-chaplaincy-and-student-welfare-program-high-court-judgment>, accessed 19/6/2014).

2.2.3 Israel¹

Although formally a secular state religion in Israel is a central feature of the country and plays a major role in shaping Israeli culture and lifestyle. Israel is also the only country in the world where a majority of citizens are Jewish. According to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics the religious affiliation of the Israeli population as of 2011 was 75.4% Jewish, 16.9% Muslim, 2.1% Christian, and 1.7% Druze, with the remaining 4.0% not classified by religion. Israel has no entrenched constitution, but freedom of religion is anchored in law (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

The Israeli school system is divided into two sectors – State-Religious and State-Secular. Statistically about 50% of the student population attend State-Jewish secular schools, 20% attend State-Arab schools, 20% attend State-Jewish religious schools and 10% attend ultra-orthodox religious autonomous schools. The State-Secular and State-Religious schools run very similar curricula with some small differences in emphasis around culture, traditions and history. On the other hand, in ultra-orthodox religious schools the curriculum is significantly oriented towards religious studies with a minimum number of secular subjects being taught. Knowledge-based heritage and

¹ Very little is written on School Chaplaincy in Israel. I am indebted to Professor Yaacov Katz, School of Education, Bar-Ilan University, Israel, for answering my enquiries about school chaplaincy in Israel.

values education is taught in secular schools while faith-based religious studies and values education is taught in religious schools. All elementary schools and most junior and senior high schools employ educational counsellors. It is their task to enhance general well-being in schools, to monitor the psycho-social environment, and to assist parents and teachers of students who have learning or social problems. The school counsellor also helps the students themselves if they need particular attention.

Since 1977, as a result of an initiative by the former Minister of Education and Culture to intensify religious and moral education in schools, male chaplains can be appointed to all schools wishing to have them. The vast majority of chaplains, however, are to be found in the state-religious sector, with very few schools in the state-secular sector choosing to employ a chaplain. Katz estimates that about 75% of religious schools have a chaplain while as few as 5% – 10% of secular schools do. The appointment of chaplains is attributed to the demand by parents belonging to the orthodox sector of the population to appoint religious leaders who would be able to contribute significantly to the development of pupils' personalities during the schooling process (Katz, 2009). These chaplains, according to the directions of the Minister of Education and Culture, must be male ordained orthodox rabbis, graduates of national-religious theological colleges and trained teachers. They work full time in the school system. Katz suggests that, theoretically speaking, an experienced well-educated expert in religion can serve as a lay chaplain. He sees the major issue as being whether the chaplain has the knowledge

as well as the personality to promote religious feeling and knowledge. However, to the best of his knowledge there are 'none or very few' reform chaplains in the school system. There are a number of conservative chaplains who serve conservative private schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.

In elementary and junior high schools chaplains are paid by the State, as are all teachers in these schools. In senior high schools chaplains are paid by the local municipality or by the school network directorate who pay all teachers. At the senior high school level, many schools belong to societies that have established networks of schools throughout the country.

The role of the chaplain is modelled on that of the spiritual advisor found in theological seminaries (yeshivot). These spiritual advisors are responsible for the spiritual and psychological well-being of students in the seminaries. The role has been adapted for the school system. The responsibility of the chaplain in the Israeli system as outlined by Katz (2009) is divided into three areas. The first is the work the chaplain does for the teachers. He works towards deepening their religious knowledge, beliefs and convictions through on-going formal lessons. He acts as a resource person for dealing with religious, moral and ethical topics and he acts as a pastoral counsellor to the teaching staff, thereby enabling them to fulfil their duties more efficiently. The chaplain

also has a major responsibility, as one might expect, to the students in the school. He is expected to conduct personal pastoral interview sessions with individual students who need psychological support, he instructs the students on religious beliefs and practices and he organises informal educational and social programs for religious students in order to enhance their ability to come to terms with the real world. The third group the chaplain has a duty towards is parents. The chaplain is charged with organising lessons on religious topics for the parents, counselling parents on issues that relate to the gap between home and school and assisting parents in overcoming conflict with their children – particularly conflict which arises from religious-secular societal differences.

Katz (2009) highlights the similarity between the role of the school chaplain and that of the school counsellor. The counsellor in the Israeli system also promotes the psychological well-being of teachers, students and parents. Katz (2009) concludes that, if both roles are there to promote a healthy school learning and social climate, and both professionals are expected to have understanding personalities that provide them with the ability to relate warmly and empathetically, then the better financial solution would be that the chaplain would do the duties of both in the religious state schools. In order to make this approach viable the present chaplains would need to undergo in-service training during which educational counselling methods would be intensively studied (Katz, 2009, 40-41).

The final context considered is the Episcopal context. This will help to provide a background in answering the research question on tensions that might arise between the nominating authority and the school authority. As can be seen above Church authorities dominate the service in all three countries studied. This is also the case in Ireland.

2.3 Episcopal Context

The final context in which this study situates school chaplaincy is that of the Church. This section refers only to the Catholic Church as the vast majority of school chaplains in Ireland today are nominated by this denomination. This context is very important in our consideration of who defines the role of the chaplain. Section 4.1 outlines the historical influence the Church exerted on education in Ireland. The system of a State paid chaplaincy service is a legacy of this influence. In this section how the universal Church understands its place in education, and the consequences of this for a nominated chaplain, is explored.

2.3.1 Canon Law

The concept of a Catholic chaplain is defined, and his role explained, in *The Code of Canon Law* from Canons 564 to 572. The chaplain *is a priest to whom is entrusted in a stable manner the pastoral care, at least in part, of some community or special group of Christ's faithful, to be exercised in accordance with universal and particular law* (Code

of Canon Law, 1983). The chaplain will be appointed by the local Ordinary and the local Ordinary also reserves the right to appoint any chaplain who has been presented or elected. This ordained chaplain

has by virtue of his office the faculty to hear the confessions of the faithful entrusted to his care, to preach to them the word of God, to administer Viaticum and the anointing of the sick, and to confer the sacrament of confirmation when they are in danger of death (Code 566, 1983).

While the chaplain is responsible for the celebration or direction of liturgical functions he may not involve himself in the internal governance of the institute for which he works. Chaplains are to be appointed for those who, because of their condition of life, are not able to avail themselves of the ordinary care of parish priests, as for example, migrants, exiles, fugitives, nomads and sea-farers. In the exercise of his pastoral office a chaplain is to maintain the due relationship with the parish priest (See Canon 564–572, 1983).

The salient points about the school chaplain from these Canons are that, if the letter of Canon Law were to be maintained, all Catholic school chaplains would be ordained priests and therefore male. The school chaplain would be appointed by the local bishop. The chaplain would be there to provide pastoral care and the primary rationale for the role would be that the students of the school cannot avail of the care of the parish priest

in their area. The expectation under Canon Law is that the chaplain himself should maintain some relationship with the parish priest as he is considered to be taking care of members of a community who cannot avail of the services of their local parish. The chaplain is responsible for the celebration or direction of the liturgical function within the school but cannot involve himself in the internal governance of the school for which he works.

Some of the elements contained in the Code are present in school chaplaincy as it is currently practiced. The basic elements of pastoral care and a liturgical function are there. However, it is not difficult to see that the role has been interpreted quite differently in Irish schools and by the Irish Catholic Church. Over ninety percent of Catholic school chaplains are lay. Women outnumber men in the role (see O'Higgins-Norman and King, 2009, 4). Schools vary in their link with the local parishes and frequently the chaplain is the only link students have with the local Church, not because students cannot avail of the care of the parish priest but because they choose not to. Under Canon Law the chaplain cannot be involved in the internal governance of the school. This would preclude the chaplain from serving as Year Head, sitting on the Board of Management of the school, engaging in whole school planning or taking on any middle management role. When all this is considered, one can see that there is potential for tension between lay chaplains, school management and the Catholic Church.

It has already been noted that, according to Canon Law, the title ‘chaplain’ is reserved in the Catholic Church for an ordained priest. While the title ‘chaplain’ remains reserved for an ordained priest according to the law of the Church, much has changed in relation to the involvement of the laity since the Second Vatican Council. The Council opened the Church to a new set of influences which impact on school chaplaincy, including liturgical worship, new forms of involvement of the laity in key Church roles and new ways of thinking about the relationship the Catholic Church has with other Christian Churches, with other religions and even with those who do not believe. The role of the school chaplain in Ireland today is strongly influenced by the Church’s definition of education and its teaching on inclusion, ecumenism and interfaith dialogue.

2.3.2 Definition of the Catholic Educator

If the school chaplain is to be considered an educator the way in which the Church understands education is important when interpreting the rationale for school chaplaincy. *Gravissimum Educationis* contains the main teaching on education to come out of the Second Vatican Council. It presents the aim of true education as the harmonious formation of the whole human person through the development of their physical, moral, intellectual and social aspects (GE, 1965, 1) and it sees good education as leading to “the complete perfection of the human person, the good of earthly society and the building of a world that is more human” (GE, 1965, 3). The chaplain is involved in this kind of holistic education. Of particular relevance to the consideration of the

school chaplain's role as an educator is the document's broad definition of education as an action that prepares young people to contribute to the good of society and to become adults who pursue liberty, are capable of overcoming obstacles and have unwavering courage and perseverance (GE, 1965, 1). The pastoral role of the school chaplain focuses on building up these qualities in young people. Indeed contemporaneously in Ireland these aims correlate strongly with the Key Skills being promoted in the new Junior Cycle (NCCA, 2013) suggesting that the Catholic chaplain can be fulfilling their mission in the Church while at the same time be supporting the DES educational aims for all children.

2.3.3 Caring for the Faith of Catholic Students

Gravissimum Educationis (1965, 7) understands the Catholic teacher as having a mission of evangelisation. The document suggests that the main way of evangelising is through the living example of those who "teach and have charge of these children ... but especially by those priests and laymen [*sic.*] who teach them Christian doctrine ... and who provide them with spiritual help by means of various activities adapted to the requirements of time and circumstances." The importance of the school chaplain leading by example and being a person of integrity is highlighted here. The responsibility is also placed on the chaplain to be culturally alert and to adapt their approach to changing circumstances.

The chaplain has a particular role in bringing an added dimension to religious education (SC, 1998, 101). To this end the teachings of the Church on catechesis are particularly relevant. The General Directory for Catechesis (GDC) affirms the role of the Catholic religious educator as one of the most important ecclesial activities (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 29). As part of this affirmation the document also suggests that “Catechesis is intrinsically bound to every liturgical and sacramental action” (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 60). Given the importance attached to liturgical and sacramental celebrations in the job descriptions of the school chaplain, considered in detail in Chapter 4.3 of this thesis, this point in the Directory is particularly pertinent. However, the document goes on to point out that all too often the link between liturgy and catechetics is weak and fragmentary. It is the observation of the authors of the directory that limited attention is paid by catechists to liturgical symbols and rites, there is “scant use of the liturgical fonts”, catechetical courses have “little or no connection with the liturgical year” and there is a marginalisation of liturgical celebrations in catechetical programs (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 156). This is a challenge for the Catholic chaplain. O’Higgins-Norman and King (2009) highlight that chaplains do base their prayer services on the liturgical calendar. Many, however, try to be less religious and more spiritual in their delivery, in an effort to more inclusive. This is a possible area of tension between the chaplain’s work in the school and for the nominating authority.

On a more positive note the General Directory for Catechesis (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 156) gives a description of the catechist which offers insight into the role of the Catholic school chaplain. In the GDC the catechist is described as “essentially a mediator.” Their role is one of facilitating communication “between the people and the mystery of God, between subjects amongst themselves, as well as with the community”. The document looks for integrity in the person of the catechist such that their lifestyle, vision or social condition does not become an obstacle in the journey of faith of others. It purports that the catechist, and therefore the Catholic chaplain, root his or her life in prayer and develops a good personal relationship with those with whom he or she works (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 156).

The authors of the GDC are particularly cognisant of the challenges and reality of faith and practice for the young people and comment specifically on the period in a young person’s life immediately after receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. In Ireland this coincides with the transition into secondary school and for the vast majority of students their first encounter with the concept of a school chaplain. The GDC (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 181) acknowledges the ironic fact that while confirmation formally concludes the process of Christian initiation, it is also the point from which many young people abandon completely the practice of the faith. The authors of the GDC note that “this is a matter of serious concern which requires specific pastoral care, based on the formative resources of the journey of initiation itself.” They suggest that “youth

catechesis must be profoundly revised and revitalized.” Undoubtedly there is potential here for the development of the catechetical role of school chaplains towards students transitioning from primary to secondary school, in collaboration with the local parish. The chaplain already fulfils the suggestion in the GDC (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 184) that:

The most successful catechesis is that which is given in the context of the wider pastoral care of young people, especially when it addresses the problems affecting their lives. Hence, catechesis should be integrated with certain procedures, such as analysis of situations, attention to human sciences and education, the co-operation of the laity and of young people themselves.

The document also recommends spiritual direction as an important element in effective catechesis (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 184), alongside vocational discernment, involvement in missionary activity and formation of conscience (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 185). Taken together these elements of catechetical work add depth to the role of the school chaplain for Catholic students.

2.3.4 Ecumenism and Interfaith Dialogue

Vatican II opened up consideration of the missionary and pastoral consequences of dialogue with other religions in ways not previously contemplated in official Church documents. The Council document on missionary activity, *Ad Gentes* (AG) or the

Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church (1965, 12) was among the first to identify the role of Catholic schools as being bigger than that of forming Christians but as being a valuable public service that promotes human dignity, at all levels. *Unitatis Regintegration* (UR) or the *Decree on Ecumenism* (1964) calls for dialogue between the Christian Churches, declaring that division among Christian Churches “openly contradicts the will of Christ, provides a stumbling-block to the world and inflicts damage on ... the cause of proclaiming the good news.” (UR, 1964, 3) Furthermore the Church encourages its members to enter into dialogue with members of non-Christian religious communities, recognising that other religions “often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all.” (*Nostra Aetate*, 1965, 2, & *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, 92). These declarations, endorsed in subsequent Church statements, have far reaching implications for the way the Catholic chaplain might function in schools.

By 1982 the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education (1982, 42) was teaching that while Catholic educators teach doctrine in conformity with their own religious convictions and in accordance with the identity of the school, they must at the same time have the greatest respect for those students who are not Catholics. They should be open at all times to authentic dialogue, convinced that in these circumstances the best testimony that they can give of their own faith is a warm and sincere appreciation for anyone who is honestly seeking God according to his or her own conscience.

The Catholic chaplain who works in a multi-denominational school has a role to play in ensuring that this is the approach taken with students of other faiths and none. This document goes on to emphasise the importance of respecting the religious freedom and personal conscience of individual students and families while at the same time proclaiming the Gospel and offering a formation based on Christian values. The chaplain may proffer a formation to Catholic students, but it is strictly forbidden, by the Gospel and Church law, to impose Catholic teachings or practices on unwilling students and their parents (*Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education*, 1982, 6; 108). In the context of The GDC's (Congregation for the Clergy, 1997, 75) assertion that "students must have the right to learn with truth the religion to which they belong" the onus is on a chaplain to provide for this in whatever way possible.

2.4 Chapter Conclusion

When the socio-religious context is considered it becomes evident that the rationale for school chaplaincy is changing rapidly from its original intent of catechesis among a mono-faith student base. In the light of the socio-religious context chaplains now have a role to play in ensuring openness and understanding among students regarding religious difference. If school chaplaincy is to have a future the inclusion of chaplains from other faith backgrounds and none needs to be considered.

Religious memory is fading, yet students are spiritually aware and interested in finding an expression for this sense of religiosity. The rationale for the school chaplain may be as a keeper of religious memory and of safeguarding a link between schools and faith communities. The fact that young people in Ireland still consider religion important in their lives and discuss the theology underlying religious diversity gives considerable opportunity to a school chaplain. The chaplain can further develop their role as a facilitator of theological reflection.

The international context presents a number of key insights for this research. The rationale for school chaplaincy across all three countries places emphasis on the spiritual and emotional well-being of students and the whole school community. The chaplain is valued for their ability to help students and other members of the school community to come to terms with their lived reality. Given the overlap in role between Guidance Counsellors and Chaplains in Irish schools it is interesting to see the way this is being addressed in Israel. All three countries studied offer a certain oversight of school chaplains either by the organising religion or, as is the case in Australia, by the LCCs. This oversight is critical to the employment of chaplains who are suitable to the school environment to which they are appointed and recognises the need to match the school ethos with the particular gifts of the individual chaplain. This level of oversight is not formally available in Ireland.

The international context is also informative for the Irish situation vis-à-vis an increasingly pluralist society. The Australian situation particularly highlights tensions that might develop if the chaplain is appointed by one denomination but is expected to put their religious beliefs aside in order to perform a pastoral function to all students. The Australia notion of allowing secular pastoral workers to fulfill the same role as the school chaplain may be appropriate in certain types of Irish schools. It can also be seen from the international context that if a particular religious denomination wants a significant input into who is appointed as a school chaplain they are making some financial contribution to the service, as is the case in Malta.

The teaching of the Catholic Church enriches the discussion on the rationale for school chaplaincy. On the one hand the teaching is clear that a canonical chaplain is male, ordained and there to provide for the pastoral needs of the faithful of Christ who cannot avail of the services of their local parish. On the other hand documents of the Vatican Council and subsequent Church teachings have substantially enriched the role of the lay catechist in schools. The chaplain's role, as performed in Irish schools, fits comfortably within the description of religious educator and could be greatly enhanced by embracing the four pronged approach to catechesis - offering spiritual direction, exploring vocational options with young people, facilitating experiences of social outreach and supporting students in conscience formation and decision making - suggested in the GDC, strongly locating the work of the chaplain within the mission of the Church. In

this way the rationale for school chaplaincy from the perspective of one nominating church could be clearly defined and delineated from other roles in the school. This role is an appropriate role for the school chaplain to take in the school regardless of the faith of the students in their care, offering chaplains a way of supporting all students while being respectful of the different faith traditions students come from.

Having considered three of the wider contexts in which school chaplaincy operates the next chapter focuses on the legal situation within which schools must function. Legislation that is pertinent to school chaplains is examined in order to gain further insights into the rationale for school chaplaincy. Of particular relevance to this thesis is the ruling of the High Court and the Supreme Court on the payment of chaplains from State funds.

Chapter Three

CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEXTUAL ISSUES (2)

LEGAL DIMENSIONS

The law of the Republic of Ireland consists of Constitutional Law, Statute Law, and Common Law. Common law is the system of deciding cases based on precedent instead of statutory laws. Common law changes over time. It is also influenced by and must take cognisance of European Law and International Law. The rationale for school chaplaincy is shaped by all three elements of the legal system.

3.1. Constitutional Law

There are two Articles in *Bunreacht na hÉireann* that are particularly relevant to this thesis. These are Article 42 and Article 44. Article 42 is concerned with education and it identifies the family as the primary educator of the child. It guarantees to respect the right of the parents to provide for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children (See Appendix B for full text). It is in this Article that the State includes religious and moral education as part of the parents' educational enterprise. In the first instance they bestow the responsibility for this dimension of

education on parents and state that, if the parent cannot, for whatever reason, fulfill their responsibility to educate their child religious and morally then the State will seek to provide for a minimum moral education. It is interesting to note that the minimum provision suggested by the State includes moral and intellectual education but omits religious education. Article 42.3 confirms that no parent will be expected to send their child to a particular type of school, in violation of their conscience and lawful preference.

Article 44 is concerned with religion and originally the Constitution gave privileged status to the Catholic Church. In its original form Article 44.2 stated that the “State recognises the special position of the Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church as the guardian of the faith professed by the great majority of the citizens” (Mescal, 1957, 45). This special relationship was subsequently repealed. See Appendix C for the full text of Article 44.

Article 44 begins by acknowledging that the State shall ‘respect and honour religion’, but it shall not go as far as to ‘endow’ a religion. This is discussed in section 4.1. This undertaking by the State not to endow a religion is the basis for challenging the State funding of school chaplains. Justice Keane in *Campaign to Separate Church and State v. The Minister for Education* defined endowment as follows: “To enrich with property; to provide (by bequest or gift) a permanent income for (a person, a society or

institution)” (SC, 1998, 361). Furthermore the State shall not impose any disabilities or make any discrimination on the grounds of religious profession, belief or status. Under this Article no legislation should affect prejudicially the right of a child to attend any school receiving public money without attending “religious instruction” at that school.

It is clear that Article 44.2.4 intends that children be withdrawn from religious ‘instruction’. There has been much discussion about what constitutes ‘instruction’. It is difficult to see how the constitution can protect a child who attends a school with a religious ethos from being influenced by it, and the question arises whether this influence constitutes religious instruction. Under such an interpretation of religious instruction a chaplain’s interaction with students, and provision of experiences of prayer or meditation, may also be perceived as providing religious instruction contrary to the wishes of parents that their child be absented from such instruction. These matters are dealt with in the Supreme Court judgment.

3.2 Statute Law: Education Act 1998

Prior to 1998, although the State was the primary source of funds for the education system, the relationship between the various education partners was not codified in law and relied on contractual relationships and administrative arrangements. Glendenning

(1999, 10) described this informality as a “singular characteristic of the Irish system of education since 1922”.

The Education Act of 1998 was the first extensive piece of legislation on education since the withdrawal of the Irish Education Bill of 1920. The legislation brings clarity to some of the historical division in the Irish education system which is supported by public funds but is provided by private bodies. This division is never more obvious than when discussing school chaplaincy. The Education Act leaves each school to define its own particular ethos and character and to decide how this ethos will be reflected in the way the school is run. This ability to decide on how to allocate resources gives great freedom to schools but also challenges them to live up to the mission statement they declare.

The Education Act (Government of Ireland, 1998) obliges the school to promote the “moral, spiritual and personal development of the pupil” and one of the functions of the Board of Management, under this legislation, includes determining the moral and religious education of pupils. This obligation on the school to promote ‘moral, spiritual and personal development of the pupil’ is the clearest legislative mandate for the work of the school chaplain within the school as no other person within the school system is professionally trained for precisely such responsibility. The Act (Government of Ireland,

1998, 15.2(b)) also states that a school management board is required to uphold the “characteristic spirit” of the school as determined by its “cultural, educational, moral, religious, social linguistic and spiritual values and traditions.”

The Education Act gives schools a strong legal framework in which to address the provision of pastoral care of pupils. Pastoral care had been largely absent from any education policy documents until the report of the National Education Convention in 1995 and the White Paper on education that same year. The White Paper includes a chapter on the well-being of students. The provision for pastoral care has been further enhanced by the Education Welfare Act 2000. In 2003 the Department of Education and Science issued guidelines for School Self-Evaluation, reflecting the new legislation which had recently been enacted (Department of Education and Science, 2003). The section on pastoral care particularly mentions the school chaplain and advises schools to reflect on “the characteristic spirit of the school, the manner in which the spiritual development of students is addressed, with particular reference to provision for religious education and chaplaincy” (DES, 2003, 39). This document also suggests that part of school self-evaluation is to evaluate “the extent to which the chaplaincy dimension is integrated into the pastoral care policy and practice of the school” and “the extent to which staff members holding specific pastoral roles, such as class tutor, year head, and chaplain, are given access to appropriate professional development” (DES, 2003, 39–40). As one of the named primary givers of both pastoral and spiritual care in schools

the work of the chaplain is endorsed and strongly influenced by the Education Act 1998 and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

The term ethos is not referred to in the Education Act. It is a term that is used in the Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2008. The Education Act (1998, 15.2) rather speaks of the ‘characteristic spirit’ of the school and sees it as being determined by “the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic, and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.” On the one hand the Act promotes the right of patrons to maintain a particular ethos or characteristic spirit and on the other it upholds the principle of respect for the diversity of values, beliefs and traditions of all. Although the rights of parents to withdraw their children from lessons in any subject “which is contrary to the conscience of the parent” is protected in the legislation under Section 10, as it has been seen in the Constitution under Article 44.2.4, the question of how to ‘protect’ a child from religious influence if a religious ethos pervades the curriculum and all of school life remains. If the role of chaplain is interpreted as the warden of the ‘characteristic spirit’ then the person who takes on this role stands at the interface of this tension. This matter is considered in the Supreme Court ruling that is the subject of the next section.

Having considered how Constitutional Law and Statute law might affect the role of the school chaplain the next sections outlines the judgments of the High Court and the Supreme Court in two cases concerning school chaplaincy.

3.3 Case Law: High Court and Supreme Court Rulings

The Campaign to Separate Church and State v. The Minister for Education (HC, 1996, SC, 1998) concerns the constitutionality of the State funding the employment of school chaplains in community schools. The case was taken pursuant to Article 44.2.2 that prohibits the State from endowing any religion. It was contended by the plaintiffs that the State, in providing funding for the employment of chaplains in community schools, was in effect benefiting the Church and that this constituted endowment of religion.

3.3.1 High Court Ruling

The case was heard before the High Court in 1996 and was judged by Judge Declan Costello. He finds in favour of the State for a number of reasons, many of them relating to the historical context discussed in section 4.1 of this thesis. He finds that any endowment of religion would involve the direct payment for the purpose of advancing a religion. He believes that school chaplains are being paid for the service provided to the school and not for the purpose of advancing a religion. He argues that any endowment of religion would involve a direct payment for the advancing of that religion. He does

not see that school chaplains are partaking in such advancement on behalf of their nominating church.

Judge Costello interprets Article 44.4 of the Constitution as reflecting the historical understanding at the time of the drafting of the Constitution. The authors were clearly aware that the State had decided not to endow the Catholic religion and yet saw no conflict in aiding schools of different religious denominations. They did not understand this giving of aid as discriminating against the rights of those who had different religious beliefs. At the time the Constitution was being drafted religion was being taught in schools, mainly by Religious sisters and brothers. It is the contention of the Court that there was no ambiguity on the part of the State between paying these people for the service rendered to the school and the State's expressed desire to develop a nation which neither had an established religion nor endowed any particular religion. The judge also argues that the presence of many of these Religious on school staffs was not merely for the purpose of religious instruction but that they also offered a certain religious formation to their students by embodying the ethos of the particular order they belonged. This was done through the provision of prayer and sacraments and by the pastoral care that they offered to the young people in their care. None of this activity is seen as being contradictory to the aims of the State.

Judge Costello concludes that if such activity were permissible by the priests, brothers and sisters in Voluntary Secondary Schools since the foundation of the State, and teachers of religion in all post-primary schools paid out of State funds, then the payment of salaries to school chaplains from tax payers' money is merely in keeping with this established tradition and does not constitute the endowment of religion (HC, 1996, 241–242).

Judge Costello, once he has settled the endowment question, goes on to reflect on Article 42 of the Constitution which, as already stated, recognises that parents not only have the right to provide for the religious education of their children, but also have rights in the matter of their religious formation. Article 42.1 and Article 42.3 make a clear distinction between the parental right to provide for the religious education of their children and their rights in regard to religious formation. The Judge therefore finds it necessary to distinguish between religious education, concerning doctrine and apologetics, religious history and comparative religions and the kind of religious formation often provided by the school chaplain such as the provision of religious services and developing the spiritual and religious life of the child. From this argument the court rules that the “State by paying the salaries of Chaplains in community schools is having regard to the rights of parents vis-à-vis the religious formation of their children and enabling them to exercise their constitutionally recognised rights” (HC, 1996, 241–242).

In summary the ruling of the High Court concludes that the role of the school chaplain is based on providing a service to a school, offering a certain religious formation to students by embodying the ethos of a school and assisting parents in exercising their constitutional rights regarding the religious formation of their children.

This case was subsequently appealed to the Supreme Court, where the Judges also find in favour of the State. They offer a more extensive history of school chaplaincy and a more detailed account of why they uphold the decision of the High Court.

3.3.2. Supreme Court Ruling

The judgment of the Supreme Court delivered by Justice Barrington and Justice Keane, with Chief Justice Hamilton, Justice O’Flaherty and Justice Denham concurring, begins by examining Articles 44 and 42 and finds that the payment of salaries to school chaplains is a manifestation of the principles which are recognised and approved therein. The Judges offer two qualifications to their assertion that the State is entitled to provide aid to schools under the management of different religious denominations. The first is that the State when providing this aid must not discriminate between schools under the management of different religious denominations and the second is that it must respect the right of the child not to attend religious instruction in a school in receipt of public

funds (SC, 1998, 84). Justice Keane, with Chief Justice Hamilton and Justice O’Flaherty concurring, finds that Article 44.2.4 must be read in conjunction with Article 42.4 in order to gain a full understanding of the issue of endowment and State aid to denominational schools.

Reading these two articles together shows that the Constitution distinguishes between the terms religious ‘formation’ and religious ‘instruction’ – religious formation being the much wider term. Justice Barrington finds that students of community schools are “not obliged to settle merely for religious ‘instruction’.” The role of the chaplain is to help to provide this “extra dimension to the religious education of children” (SC, 1998, 101). A child who attends a denominational school different from his or her own may have a constitutional right not to attend religious instruction at that school but Justice Barrington finds that the Constitution cannot protect that student from being influenced, to some degree, by the religious ‘ethos’ of the school (SC, 1998, 101). Justice Barrington ruled that a “religious denomination is not obliged to change the general atmosphere of its school merely to accommodate a child of a different religious persuasion who wishes to attend that school” (SC, 1998, 101).

It can be concluded that, although the chaplain may be providing religious formation in keeping with the ethos of the school, it is constitutionally impermissible for the chaplain

to instruct the child in a religion other than his or her own without the knowledge and consent of her or his parents. If religious instruction and religious formation were not completely different activities then the chaplain's very presence in the school among students of different faiths could be interpreted as against the spirit of Article 44 of the Constitution, as the students of other faiths, in today's multi-faith society, have a constitutional right not to attend religious instruction in school (SC, 1998, 82). This does not, however, imply that they cannot avail of the services provided by the school chaplain given the broad nature of the religious formation that chaplains provide. Justice Barrington cautioned that "while it is right and proper that a chaplain should counsel and advise any child who may consult him (*sic*) about its problems it would be constitutionally impermissible for a chaplain to instruct a child in a religion other than its own without the knowledge and consent of its parents" (SC, 1998, 101). Justice Barrington, in his ruling, concedes that the Churches do benefit from the State payment of chaplains. He acknowledges that should the State cease to make these payments, the Churches may "feel obliged to raise the monies themselves and would thereby be at a loss" (SC, 1998, 100). Nonetheless he holds that the payment of salaries to school chaplains from State funds does not constitute endowment, as already discussed in the High Court Ruling.

Justice Keane, in delivering his judgment, is keenly aware that religious belief and practice are interwoven through the fabric of Irish society and comments that to avoid

people of faith entirely is not merely impossible but also unhelpful if full integration into a community is desired. In support of this point he says:

Even had Article 44.1, requiring the State to “respect and honour religion” never been enacted – and it had no counterpoint in the Constitution of the Irish Free State – there is little reason to doubt that Irish jurisprudence would have acknowledged, as it should in a democratic society, the importance of the part played by religion in the lives of so many people (SC, 1998, 83).

Justice Keane, deems that “the duties of the chaplain are, for the most part, pastoral or sacerdotal” (SC, 1998, 84), and “by no means confined to religious instruction in the sense in which that phrase is used in Article 44.2.4” (SC, 1998, 84). These pastoral or sacerdotal activities may include the celebration of Mass and hearing confession, in the case of the Catholic chaplain. The religious education which the chaplain offers is exercised through “personal contact with individual students, by class contact, through religious worship and by maintaining lively interest in recreational, cultural and apostolic activities” (SC, 1998, 93). Moreover, Justice Barrington found that, as the Community School model has evolved, the role of the chaplain has too. He has evidence to suggest that the role of the Chaplain is regarded by pupils, parents and other staff in the school as a most important one and that the chaplain’s help and counsel is constantly sought and given to young people in need of assistance, not just in spiritual matters but “in one or other of the many moral, social, educational, personal or family problems on

which young people may need assistance, guidance and counseling” (SC, 1998, 93). It is his understanding that the chaplain in a Community School is “called upon to play an increasing role in relation to welfare, other than the strictly spiritual welfare of the pupils” (SC, 1998, 92).

The Supreme Court expands on the point made in the High Court that the Irish post-primary schooling system has evolved from the schools established by many religious orders. The Judges explain that when the members of religious orders were members of school staffs their duties extended beyond the imparting of religious instruction: “they were also manifestly concerned, as are the chaplains of the present case, with ensuring that the children under their care conformed to the practices of the particular religion to which they belonged, whether through attendance at Mass or other religious services or in other respects” (SC, 1998, 88). In other words, they provided opportunities for lived experiences of religious practice and encouraged children to practice their own religion whatever faith or denomination they belonged to. With very few members of religious orders remaining in schools today, what was once their role now falls to the chaplain. The final point made by Judge Barrington (SC, 1998, 101) is worth quoting in full:

The community and comprehensive schools are an attempt to make post-primary education available to all the children of Ireland irrespective of their means. They involve a vast increase in the number of children receiving a post primary education and a corresponding increase in the number of post-

primary teachers most of whom are lay people. In community schools it is no longer practicable to combine religious and academic education in the way that a religious order might have done in the past. Nevertheless parents have the same right to have religious education provided in the schools which their children attend. They are not obliged to settle merely for religious instruction. The role of the chaplain is to help to provide this extra dimension to religious education of the children. The evidence establishes that, besides looking after the pastoral needs of the children, the chaplain helps them with counsel and advice about their day to day problems. It therefore appears to me that the present system whereby the salaries of chaplains in community schools are paid by the State, is merely a manifestation, under modern conditions, of principles which are recognised and approved by Articles 44 and 42 of the Constitution.

The court rules that if chaplains were not being paid by the State already, the State would be obliged to do so. This is deduced from the constitutional rights of parents to provide for the spiritual and moral formation of their children. The provision of school chaplains is one way the State has of enabling the parent to fulfil this right (SC, 1998, 88). The role of the chaplain is clearly stated as providing the extra dimension to religious education so that students do not have to settle for religious instruction.

3.4. Chapter Conclusion

The rationale for school chaplaincy is influenced by Articles 42 and 44 of the Constitution. The State will assist parents in their right to provide for a minimum moral education of their child and in some circumstances this provision is being met through the provision of a school chaplain. A chaplain can provide moral education through vocational discernment, spiritual direction and counselling of students. Chaplains bring an extra-dimension to religious education through the provision of rituals, one-to-one meetings with students and close involvement with students in social outreach, cultural and sporting activities.

The chaplain is also strongly mandated through legislation to develop the characteristic spirit of their school and to provide for the pastoral care of students. The legislative ability of the schools to decide on how to allocate resources in schools is important for school chaplaincy and would imply that schools who are not granted ex-quota school chaplains by the Department of Education and Skills could still opt to use their resources to employ a school chaplain who would assist the school in living up to its mission statement.

The High Court and the Supreme Court rulings that the payment of salaries to school chaplains does not amount to the endowment of religion as described in Article 44 of the

Constitution if the State does not discriminate between schools under the management of different religious denominations. At the moment exactly such discrimination is happening as chaplains are not State-financed in Voluntary Secondary Schools and non-designated ETB schools. The State, by its own unequal distribution of resources, could be construed as the paying of school chaplains in one sector as the endowing of religion. Under the endowment issue any permanent income to a Church minister would endow a religion. State-paid school chaplains therefore, regardless of their nominating authority, cannot be regarded as working for their Church as to do so would put the State in the position of endowing a religion and this is constitutionally impermissible.

The chaplain provides an extra dimension to Religious Education and can assist all students who struggle with life but cannot offer Religious Instruction while doing so. Chaplains are constitutionally obliged to respect the values and traditions of parents who may wish to withdraw their children from Religious Instruction but chaplains do not have to change how they present their message if their message is keeping with the characteristic spirit of the school.

The legislative context gives a further insight into the rationale for school chaplaincy and contributes towards clarifying the role of the school chaplain in general, and their role as an educator in particular. The educational context offers some insight into the

role of the chaplain as expressed on a day to day basis. It is this context which is addressed next.

Chapter Four

CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEXTUAL ISSUES (3)

EDUCATIONAL DIMENSIONS

The Irish Education system, in which school chaplains serve, has developed over the past two hundred years. It has been a slow and largely co-operative effort between the Churches and the State. The way in which the education systems developed gives insight into many aspects of school chaplaincy, particularly such areas as the relationship between the chaplains' nominating authority and the school authority. It is important to consider the three strands of education in Ireland, and how they came to be, in order to understand why there are State-paid chaplains in some strands but not in all and to begin to answer the question 'what is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland?' This chapter begins with a brief history of the Irish education system and the chaplains' place within that.

4.1. History of School Chaplaincy

The State's approach to Catholic Education prior to the 19th century has been described as hostile (Coolahan, 2006, 91) and the penal laws put many prohibitions on such education. As a consequence many upper and middle class Catholics sent their children

abroad to England or France to receive a Catholic education and this had an impact on the model of Catholic education in Ireland through the founding of religious orders by many who received such schooling. As chaplains are largely seen as replacing religious priests and sisters in schools, the model of education promulgated by these founding fathers, sisters and brothers is relevant to understanding the rationale behind school chaplaincy.

The new Irish religious orders of the 19th Century, such as the Christian Brothers, the Presentation Sisters, the Sisters of Mercy and the Loreto Sisters, adopted an educational mission explicitly focused on the education of young Irish Catholics in denominational schools. According to John Coolahan (2006, 93), the Churches viewed schooling at this time as an arena for denominational evangelization. The legacy of the denominational education instituted by the new religious orders and supported by the hierarchical Church, with limited State involvement, is still with us today and knowledge of its origins is important to the understanding of the rationale behind the payment of school chaplains by the State as discussed in section 3.3.

As previously mentioned, many of the founders and foundresses were influenced by the English public school system, often characterised as having a focus on good discipline and learning. They brought with them the structures of houses and deans of residences.

Much of the pastoral care found in Irish schools today finds its roots here. The new religious orders wanted to build schools that were not simply focused on the intellect but rather offered a holistic education by fostering community, encouraging their students to active citizenship and nurturing faith in the Catholic Church. Nearly two centuries later, when the religious rooted in this vision of education began to leave schools, they were replaced by school chaplains.

By 1871, despite the rapid expansion of many of the new religious orders, the census of that year indicated that the Catholic proportion of the population had only limited access to secondary education. While the religious orders offered an education, the cost was prohibitive for the majority of Catholics. This once again raised the issue of the need for State support for secondary schooling. The Intermediate Education Act of 1878 gave a limited role to the State in the form of State public examinations and schools were given State support based on exam results. This act also prohibited the examination of religion at secondary level. It included a conscience clause which governed all schools and gave parents the right to withdraw children from denominational religious instruction of which they did not approve [Intermediate Education (Ireland), 1878, c LXVI(7)]. This was a precursor to the Constitutional right of parents to withdraw their children from religious instruction as discussed in Chapter 3.1. This right to withdraw from religious instruction and the potential impossibility for a student to avoid the informal religious

instruction or religious education of the nuns and priests who ran the schools, and subsequently the school chaplain, is a theme that is returned to section 4.4.1.

In 1899, the State introduced legislation to establish the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, which was of landmark importance for technical education in Ireland. Unlike the funding for schools under the Intermediate Education Act, in this instance public funds were available on a capitation basis, in the light of inspectors' reports (Coolahan, 2006, 92). Through this legislation the Government was able to move into the 20th century finally having a foothold in Irish second level education. Of course, all was about to change again with Independence and the establishment of the Irish Republic.

Shortly before Independence, in 1919, the State drew up the Irish Education Bill. This was to be the most comprehensive attempt at education legislation in Ireland until the Education Act of 1998. The Bill was a wide-ranging reform measure which had strong support from teachers but would involve the Church rescinding some of the control it had in schools, such as the hiring of staff, to a new control agency and county committees. After bitter and sustained opposition to the Bill by the Catholic Church it was withdrawn in December 1920 (see Coolahan, 1979, 11–31). Had such a bill been

enacted the likelihood of the Catholic Church later having such a powerful role in the nomination of school chaplains would have been considerably weakened.

The Vocational Education Act 1930 saw the consolidation of the system of technical education that had been emerging up to this point. The new VECs were designed to provide technical and vocational education for all. In the establishing of these schools secret negotiations took place between the Minister for Education and the Irish Bishops. What emerged was a guarantee to the Irish Bishops that the vocational schools would not engage in liberal or humane studies and would be confined to practical and applied subjects (see O'Sullivan, 1930). Even in these new State schools, however, religion held a central place. The rules of the Department of Education for vocational schools endorsed a view of religion as an integral part of the cultural identity to be promoted in the school. The Department of Education memo v.40 1942 states that:

It is necessary not only that religious instruction be given at certain times, but also that the teaching of every other subject be permeated with Christian charity and that the whole organisation of the school, whether in work or recreation, be regulated by the same spirit (see Hyland & Milne, 1992, 232).

Presumably this memo was influential in the later decision to provide designated vocational schools and community colleges with a State paid school chaplain, the

chaplain perhaps now taking on a role in ensuring that a school is imbued with the spirit of Christian charity.

The distinction between the two tier education system began to break down in the 1960s with the establishment of Comprehensive Schools. Comprehensive Schools are open to all classes and levels of ability and offer a wide curriculum to match the aptitudes of their pupils. Comprehensive Schools are managed by committees representing the diocesan religious authority, the local ETB and the Minister for Education and Science. They are commonly called denominational schools as there are both Catholic and Protestant Comprehensive schools. For the first time in the history of the State chaplains were appointed to these schools by the religious authority concerned and their salaries were paid by the State.

The Comprehensive School model evolved through 1970s into what is now the Community School. These schools are wholly funded by the State, but are leased to trustees under a deed of trust for educational purposes. The Community Schools were proposed as an amalgamation of private denominational schools and the public vocational schools under VEC management. After a great deal of controversy in the 1970s, Deeds of Trust were finally agreed between the interested parties and these continue to provide the model for the management structures of these schools. These

Deeds of Trust include a provision for school chaplaincy and also provide for 'religious instruction' and worship to be provided in the school. Such Deeds of Trust are considered to be legally binding. While these schools are public they allow for substantial church influence; in fact they are effectively denominational as a result of the involvement of Catholic religious orders and dioceses in their management. All staff in these schools, including chaplains, are employed by boards of management. As in the case of the Comprehensive Schools the payment of the salaries of chaplains employed in these schools are authorised by the adoption by the Dáil of the annual departmental estimates and the authority to spend the sums so voted by the annual Appropriation Acts.

The collaboration on the part of the Church with the Department of Education and the then VECs in the setting up of the Community and Comprehensive schools fitted well with the call to partnership in Vatican II and the desire by religious orders to serve the poor and the marginalised. The strength of the Bishops and the Religious at the time is seen in the decision to appoint a school chaplain to uphold the Catholic ethos in these new denominational schools and in the fact that this decision was enshrined in the Deeds of Trust. Seamus O'Buachalla (1988, 232-233) comments:

Perhaps the major contribution of the Catholic Bishops to policy in the decade [1960s] lay not only in shaping the nature of the proposals coming forward, but in securing their acceptance of government policies by the Catholic managerial bodies, in the creation of an effective consultative infrastructure and in influencing the character of the comprehensive and community schools so that they approximated, as closely as possible, to the Catholic ideal in management, ownership and staffing.

Community and Comprehensive Schools are, *de facto*, run along denominational lines and there is little difference in this regard between them and the voluntary secondary schools which are directly under Church patronage. Perhaps more surprising is that some ETB schools, which are non-denominational under the Vocational Education Act 1930, were also granted permission in the 1970s to appoint a chaplain which would be paid for by the State. This continues to be the case in designated Community Colleges, which emerged as the ETBs' response to the development of Community Schools (Department of Education and Skills, 2013).

Little is written on the early days of school chaplaincy in Ireland but two articles from the 1970s outline the role of the chaplain as understood at that time. Both are to be found in issues of *The Clergy Review*. The first writes of the chaplain that: "He (*sic.*)

may be an organiser of liturgy and sacramental functionary, teacher of religion or pastoral counsellor” (Campbell, 1974, 518). The second gives a fuller description of the role in which the pastoral dimension is also present: “The overall role of the chaplain is to build community around the school. The community will be fully expressed in the Eucharist in the ‘liturgical’ work of the chaplain” (O’Keefe, 1978, 105).

As can be seen in this brief look at the development of the Irish second level education system all three strands – the voluntary secondary schools, the community and comprehensive schools and the non-designated and designated ETB schools and community colleges – came about as a result of varying goals and underlying values. Each of these types of school has a unique history and a different relationship with both the Churches and the State. In Voluntary Secondary Schools the dominant pattern has been of church ownership and management but with the state responsible for the bulk of both capital and current costs. The state also has a central control of curriculum and assessment. The other categories have different management structures but the vast majority of Voluntary/State partnership schools have Church representatives on their Board of Management. This makes them effectively denominational schools as the Church patron has a responsibility to uphold the ethos of the school and the schools are Christian in their intent. State schools are State owned and run by Education and Training Boards. Designated State schools have shared patronage with Church representatives. Voluntary/State Partnership Schools and Designated State Schools are

entitled to a full time State paid school chaplain. Chaplains in any other schools are there in a voluntary capacity, are privately funded or school management are diverting some of their teaching allocation into a chaplaincy service. Figure 4.1 illustrates the composition of school types in Ireland in 2013 – 2014 (Catholic Schools Partnership, 2014).

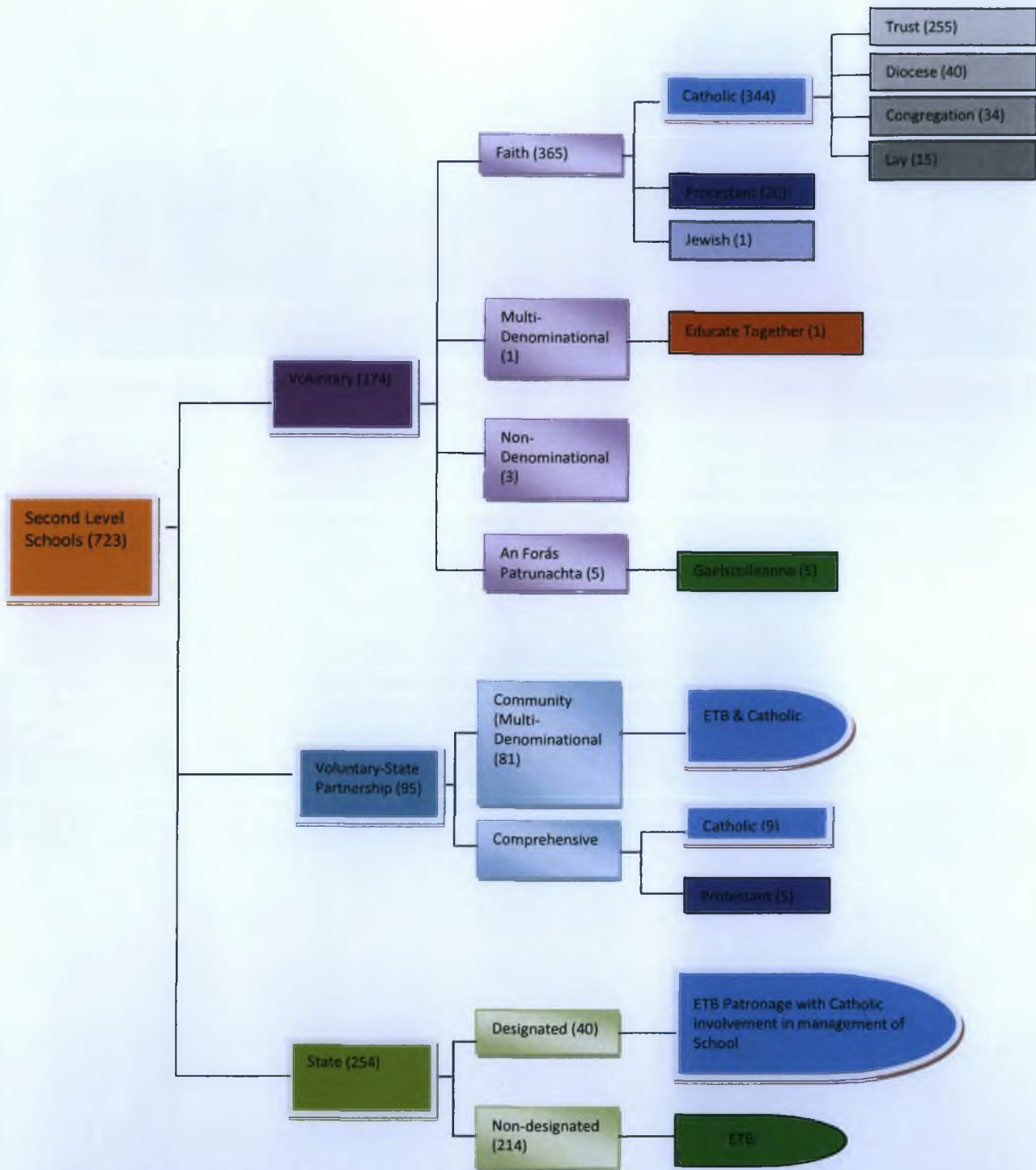


Figure 4.1 Composition of school types in Ireland in 2013 – 2014.

By the 21st Century despite having different founding visions all school types had come to look fundamentally alike. All, in one way or another, support the teaching of religion and many promote faith formation. Perhaps this will change with the opening of Educate Together Schools at post-primary level. Educate Together Schools have been involved in Primary Education since 1978. These schools are multi-denominational and have no religious patron (Educate Together, 2013). The first second level schools with an Educate Together patron are opening in 2014 in Drogheda and Dublin 15. The Deed of Trust of the Community School has been redrafted for Educate Together Community Schools in order to exclude the role of school chaplain.

4.2. School Ownership and Management

In most Irish schools the State provides core (Grant-in-Aid) funding and prescribes a minimum curriculum that should be followed by students. After this the Patrons and Boards of Management of schools are largely autonomous in the management of individual schools. This freedom to prioritise needs and allocate resources gives substantial influence and power to the Board of Management and senior management of a school. The exercise of this freedom has consequences for the presence of school chaplains in some types of schools and the roles ascribed to a school chaplain within an individual school community. It also has some implications for the tensions that might exist between the chaplain's work for the school and for the nominating authority. The Board of Management may be of the opinion that, as it is their school and they are the

employer, they should have the right to choose who the most suitable candidate to work in their school is. The competent Religious Authority, however, retains the right to decide on who the chaplain will be. The Religious Authority may also withdraw his nomination for just cause. In this situation the Board of Management may then be obliged to find a suitable teaching position for the deposed chaplain within their school, as the chaplain has a contract of indefinite duration with the Board of Management after one probationary year (DES, 2008). A contract of indefinite duration is *de facto* a permanent employment contract between the Board of Management and the school chaplain.

In order to explore further the chaplain as an educationalist the remainder of this chapter will consider the various roles of the chaplain as described in the job descriptions of the three management bodies.

4.3. Job Descriptions

A profile of what the management bodies envisage as the chaplain's role within the school can be established from the framework documents for chaplains published by the ETBI, ACCS and the JMB. The Protocol of Chaplaincy in Voluntary Secondary Schools suggests that "the role of a co-ordinator of Chaplaincy Services is to ensure that a pastorally caring, socially reflective, and religiously sensitive atmosphere permeates the

daily life of the school” (JMB, 2004). This role is identical to that put forward by the ACCS (Chaplains Overview). The ACCS and JMB documents are almost identical. They situate the chaplain as having an important role to play within the whole school community: students, staff and parents. They comment that the chaplain is a significant catalyst amongst others in enabling schools to address current urgent educational and pastoral challenges (ACCS, Chaplains Overview; JMB, 2004). With an eye to the future both managerial bodies draw attention to the “new awareness of the need to attend more formally and professionally to the human, social, ethical and spiritual development of the young people in the school environment” (ACCS, Chaplains Overview, JMB, 2004). Both also express concern that, unless the DES remains committed to the position of chaplain as an ex-quota post in the Community and Comprehensive Sector and recognises it as such in the voluntary sector, attention to these aspects of pupils’ lives will be merely aspirational.

All three bodies, despite operating in three different contexts, have identical documents when describing the role of the chaplain. This consensus suggests that there is substantial clarity about the role of the chaplain among management bodies. The documents of each of the three bodies begin by stating that the teaching and practice of the nominating Church are intrinsic to chaplaincy. The chaplain in all three sectors is expected to be a person of faith and committed to acting on behalf of their Church and the school community, while upholding the teaching and moral standards and practices

of their nominating authority, together with the characteristic spirit and founding intention of the school.

4.4 Key Roles within the School

Documents from the management bodies (ACCS, Chaplains Overview, JMB, 2004, IVEA 2010) advocate six key roles for the chaplain in an educational context:

1. The spiritual role of the chaplain.
2. The pastoral role of the chaplain.
3. The role of the chaplain to students belonging to other faiths and none.
4. The role of the chaplain in school development planning.
5. The role of the chaplain in relation to other staff members.
6. The chaplain's role in developing school ethos.

Each of these roles are now examined individually.

4.4.1 Spiritual and Religious Role

The primary role of the chaplain, as stated in the management documents, is to develop the moral, spiritual and religious capacities of students. The development of a spiritual identity during adolescence is an important developmental process. For this development to occur effectively students must be exposed to experiences of spirituality and religion. Chaplains as educators have a responsibility to create pedagogical opportunities for contact with lived experiences of religion.

The school chaplain has the time and the space, away from the curriculum, to engage students in experiences of spirituality and religion through liturgy, social outreach, conversation, poetry, music, the arts and other activities. The chaplain is expected to coordinate activities associated with the faith journey of students and to be aware of the importance of sacramental celebrations. An important element, therefore, of the role of the chaplain is to pray with students. This may be done through what is described in the documents as liturgical or para-liturgical celebrations in the school and the marking and celebrating of major feasts and the seasons of the Church year. All documents exhort the centrality of the Eucharist in liturgical celebrations – despite the fact that the ACCS document is intended as a document appropriate to any Christian denomination.

In fulfilment of this spiritual role chaplains need to be conscious of the guidance given by their management body in relation to religious worship and religious instruction. It is recommended in these documents that such school events be arranged in consultation with the Principal, the Religious Education/Catechetics team, members of staff and the priests of the local parishes. The National Directory for Catechesis, which is the document that Catholic Voluntary Secondary Schools use for direction on matters pertaining to religious education, recommends that:

all second-level schools ... should give significant time and space to support young people in developing the spiritual and moral dimension of their lives. Two

hours of Religious Education ... is the accepted minimum for all classes at second level (Irish Episcopal Conference, 2010, 156).

The Bishops' guidelines concur with this two hour recommendation, as does the Model Agreement for Community Schools and Designated Community Colleges (The Irish Catholic Bishops Conference, 1999; DES, 1970). It is possible that schools could interpret time spent with the chaplain as fulfilling some of this minimum requirement.

As already discussed in section 4.1 some ETB schools have designated status while others are non-designated. Designated ETB schools have a religious patron, non-designated schools do not. Only designated ETB schools are entitled to a full-time school chaplain paid by the State. The non-designated Community Colleges are required under Circular 73/74 (Department of Education, 1974, 10b) to provide two and a half hours for Religious Worship and Religious Instruction. Circular 73/74 (DES, 1974) commits the non-designated Community College to the provision of religious worship.

In exercising its general control over the curriculum and conduct of the school, the board shall ensure that there is religious worship and religious instruction in the school except for such pupils whose parents make a request in writing to the Principal that these pupils should be withdrawn from

religious worship or religious instruction or both religious worship and religious instruction.

It would appear from the time allocation of an extra half hour compared to the Community Schools and designated Community Colleges that it is the intention of the VECs that non-designated Community Colleges may allow a half an hour per week for religious worship. Circular 73/74 (DES, 1974) draws the distinction between religious worship and religious instruction and it seems clear that it provides for a student who wishes to take part in prayer but not in religious instruction and vice versa. This supports the possibility that the chaplain may be the only provider of a religious 'education' to such a child.

In contrast to the denominational approach to worship and religious practice in a non-designated Community College, a chaplain in a Catholic school is expected to put prayer and sacramental experience at the centre of the life of the school (Mullally, 2010, 8) in keeping with the aim of the Catholic school that Christian values would be integrated into school life. This approach also has consequences for the inclusion of students from other faiths and none as further explained in section 4.4.3.

The Religious Education role of the school chaplain was highlighted by the Supreme Court ruling, as already discussed in Chapter 3.3, when the judges describes the chaplain as adding an “extra dimension” to religious education. Perhaps the extra dimension that the chaplain brings to religious education is a spiritual education. Religious education as it is now taught under the current syllabus does not focus on experience. The syllabus and examinations are primarily focused on learning about religion. David Tacey (2004, 77), in his work on youth spirituality, finds that “the inward or spiritual approach to religion is deeper, based on personal experience, tolerant towards difference, compassionate towards those who make different life choices, and relatively free of ideological fanaticism.” For all these reasons he suggests that religious educators should explore the spiritual approach to the subject in order to more fully engage young people in the religious enterprise. Rahner (1981, 149) says we ought to stop ‘pumping’ religion into people’s lives, but rather begin drawing it out. The kind of religious education that leads young people to a more profound apprehension of their ordinary lives could indeed be the ‘extra dimension’ that chaplains offer.

Under the Irish Constitution, as discussed in Chapter 3.1, parents reserve the right to opt out of Religious Instruction on behalf of their children. In practice this is found to highlight the differences among students from minority faiths and other backgrounds (Devine, 2005, 14). Chaplains, as religious educators, tend to embed religious values into the day to day life of the school rather than present discrete religious classes. Such

whole-school practices can have the effect of excluding some children from a full sense of belonging to a school. In this situation ‘opting out’ is not really possible for either parents or students. On the other hand, Smyth et al (2013, 208) found that, regardless of the variety of forms religious education may take, children were found to be “broadly positive about having the space to explore important topics and ‘big ideas’ at school.”

The next section looks in more detail at how the work of the chaplain permeates the life of the school through pastoral care.

4.4.2 Pastoral Care

School chaplains have a key role to play in pastoral care. As referred to in section 4.1 Pastoral Care in Ireland has been greatly influenced by the British system. Peter Lang (1983, 61) traces its origin in that jurisdiction to the public schools of the 19th Century where teachers were responsible for the moral well-being and general welfare of their students. It is not difficult to see how school chaplaincy fits with this sense of responsibility. The formal development of pastoral care structures in Ireland coincided with the changes in education which took place at the end of the 1960s and the early 1970s. These changes, as described in the historical context, included the introduction of free education and the establishment of the community and comprehensive second level education sectors. The introduction of paid chaplains to these sectors coincided with an

increased emphasis being placed on formal pastoral care. Pastoral Care has been defined by the Department of Education and Skills (Marino Institute of Education, 1) as: “an approach to education which endeavours to value and develop each member of the school community. It promotes learning at every level of the student.”

Schools provide three types of pastoral responses to the changing needs of students in schools. The first is ‘reactive pastoral care’ where the school tries to respond to students who present problems of a personal, social, emotional or behavioural nature. Norman (2004, 13-14) calls this humanistic pastoral care and sees it as the concern of all stakeholders in the school. The second type is a ‘proactive pastoral care’ which encourages identifying critical times in an adolescent’s life and delivering programmes of learning experiences which equip students to cope when potential crises occur. This type of pastoral care is delivered by those who have some training in the use of appropriate teaching strategies. The third type of pastoral care is ‘developmental’ and specifically addresses students search for meaning in life. This type of pastoral care is considered the educational dimension of pastoral work and is holistic, developmental and forward looking (Best, 1999). Developmental pastoral care not only prepares young people for times of crisis but provides a pastoral curriculum just like the academic curriculum, consisting of concepts, facts, skills and attitudes which could be planned and provided by schools that are serious in their commitment to education in its fullest sense (Best, 1999, 19). School chaplains have a role in all three types of pastoral care

but perhaps can contribute most in formulating a pastoral curriculum through which all students can benefit. The pastoral curriculum could enable students to more fully engage with the academic curriculum. Norman (2002, 33) argues that the Irish educational system has been too overly reliant on “remedies that are rooted in the functionalist perspective”, or reactive pastoral care. He refers to an over-reliance on counselling when crises arise and not enough emphasis on supporting students to enable them have the necessary skills and emotional competencies to draw on when they encounter problems in life. He believes that the chaplain has a key role to play in providing an extra dimension to pastoral care that counsellors cannot.

The job description of chaplains places great emphasis on pastoral care, as did the Supreme Court ruling. Chaplains are expected to be available to the students for advice during school hours and outside of school hours as requested by the school principal. Chaplains are asked to make every effort to get to know each student personally and are expected to find opportunities to meet students individually, in small groups and in class groups by arrangement with the principal and the teachers involved. It is envisaged that the chaplain would take an active interest in recreational, cultural and outreach activities and liaise with other statutory and voluntary bodies on behalf of students (ACCS, 4.1–4.2, JMB, 2004, IVEA, 2010). Chaplains should also, according to their job description, make every effort to be present during the period of State examinations and at the time of issue of the results. Not surprisingly, therefore, the greatest percentage of the

chaplain's time in school is taken up with the pastoral care of their students. If the chaplain's work is organised through the formulating of a pastoral curriculum they are more likely to be effective and efficient in this work.

The pastoral care offered by chaplains is based on the spiritual origins of the role. Spiritual pastoral care allows the young person to search for meaning and to seek to explain their life situations through authentic relationships and spiritual definitions (Tuohy & Cairns, 2000). Norman (2002, 41) and O'Higgins-Norman and King (2009) found that when chaplains were asked to prioritise the key elements in their role, counselling and support of staff ranked before liturgy and liturgy was the only overtly spiritual or religious dimension ranked. Despite these findings it is worth noting that the management bodies do not consider the chaplain a counsellor:

The Chaplain is not a counsellor. While some Chaplains may have professional qualifications in counselling, such 'professional' counselling is not part of the Chaplaincy role. In the event of a professional counselling service being required by a student, the Chaplain should refer such case(s) to the principal for further reference to the relevant professionals (IVEA, 2010, 11(5)).

The shift in emphasis in the role over time from spiritual to pastoral has been noted in Australia. There, as in Ireland, when chaplains were first appointed, religious education was a major part of the role. Hughes and Sims (2009, 10) find that the focus in school chaplaincy has shifted from religious education to pastoral care. Nonetheless, their research emphasises that the contribution of chaplains to school welfare is different from that of other school welfare staff in several ways (Hughes and Sims, 2009, 6). They find the chaplain is more proactive in building relationship with students and in this way enhances their welfare. Students see the chaplain as different from other school staff, as 'neutral' or 'non-aligned', partly because they do not have teaching or disciplinary roles (Hughes & Sims, 2009, 6). Staff, in Hughes and Sims' study (2009, 6) notice that in many instances students take the initiative to seek out the chaplain. Teachers contrast discussions with the chaplain with going to see the school psychologist. They feel students see a stigma attached to attending the school psychologist while there is no stigma attached to seeing the chaplain. Indeed, many students regard time with the chaplain as positive. While psychologists provide a technical, clinical approach, which is helpful in dealing with specific behavioural problems, staff do not see them as contributing to the general welfare of the students to the same extent as the chaplain do. This would seem to indicate that chaplains operate from a spiritual pastoral care based on authentic relationships with students and work with students to seek meaning in life events.

In January 2013 the Government published the *Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion* (Department of Education and Skills, the Health Service Executive and the Department of Health, 2013). In this document it is suggested that the responsibility for mental health promotion and suicide prevention rests with all staff members in the school rather than with one individual. Despite at times referring to 'one caring person' being assigned to a child, who this caring person might be is not expanded upon. Much of what is described in the document as good practice in pastoral care depicts the work currently being carried out by the school chaplain. The guidelines include such suggestions as ensuring that young people be aware of the range of supports provided within the school as well as those offered by external agencies and that the school identifies the young people who are at risk of developing unhealthy patterns of behaviour or who are already showing early signs of mental health difficulties. The report recommends that, when concerns emerge about a young person's welfare and well-being, a number of actions may be taken, such as listening to and talking with the young person about the concerns identified, liaising with school management and relevant staff, consulting with parents/guardians to share detailed information about issues of concern and gathering information from health and/or social care professionals. The school is also advised to assign a supportive, approachable, and sensitive staff member who has a positive rapport with the young person. This list is very similar to the IVEA (2010) job description for school chaplains. This document does not name school chaplains as an example of a member of the school community who could implement these guidelines but it is apparent that some such person is needed in schools.

While pastoral care is an area where the chaplain can serve the whole school community regardless of their faith background, the next section considers aspects of the role of the school chaplain where cognisance of diversity among the student population is particularly important.

4.4.3 Being Chaplain to Students of Other Faiths and None

As a consequence of growing secularism and multiculturalism all schools in Ireland today cater for a growing number of students from other faith traditions and none. It is incumbent on the chaplain to be cognisant of these students during times of religious worship or religious conversation. In the Community, Comprehensive and Designated and Non-Designated school sectors, consistent with the model agreement and Circular 73/74, the chaplain is exhorted to respect such staff and pupils, and endeavour to make reasonable and suitable provision for them, where feasible and practicable. During liturgies which are school based, the chaplain is urged to seek to facilitate participation by students belonging to other faiths where such is desired and is appropriate, while following the norms of the Church which govern such matters.

In these matters the chaplain should be also be directed by the international document, *The Toledo Guiding Principles*. These principles are referenced in the national

document on *The Guidelines for the Inclusion of Students of Other Faiths in Catholic Secondary Schools* produced by the Joint Managerial Body and the Association of Management of Catholic Secondary Schools. Due awareness of the *Guidelines: Intercultural Education in the Post Primary School* issued by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment is also important.

The *Toledo Guiding Principles* were prepared by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Advisory Council of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief (2009), to address the issue of religious tensions arising from misunderstandings and negative stereotypes. It is widely believed that it is important that young people acquire a better understanding of the role played by religion in our pluralist world. The authors of the report assert that “although a deeper understanding of religions will not automatically lead to greater tolerance and respect, ignorance increases the likelihood of misunderstanding, stereotyping and conflict” (ODIHR Advisory Council of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief, 2007, Foreword).

Approaching chaplaincy from the stance of teaching some students ‘about’ religion allows the chaplain to engage fully with all students and supports the aim of the Junior Certificate Programme “to contribute to the moral and spiritual development of the young person and to develop a tolerance and respect for the values and beliefs of others

and to prepare the young person for the responsibilities of citizenship in the national context and in the context of the wider European and global communities". It also supports the aims of the Senior Cycle which states that "the fundamental purpose of senior cycle education is to enable and prepare people to live lives to the fullest potential within democratic society." (NCCA, 2003; 2005) The ethos of individual schools may also be upheld by reinforcing a sense of appreciation of the importance of respect for everyone's right to freedom of religion or belief.

The Irish Bishops encourage such an approach when they suggest that "the presence of children from other denominations is seen as an enrichment of the educational experience offered by the school and as a practical expression of the commitment to inclusivity" (O'Mahoney, 2008). The Guidelines on the Inclusion of Students of Other Faiths in Catholic Schools suggest that, at times of prayer, students who do not wish to participate should be encouraged to "pray quietly their own way." This appears to avoid singling out the child but may lack a certain understanding of a child who does not pray in any way and is in keeping with the findings of Maurice Ryan (2008, 23) that where the presence of students who are not Catholics is acknowledged in Catholic schools it is done weakly, without any real regard for their particular religious needs and interests or "they are seen as potential converts to Catholicism". This is a challenge for the future for school chaplains.

On a positive note the Guidelines on the Inclusion of Students of Other Faiths in Catholic Schools do suggest that the prayer space in a Catholic school could be a place of welcome for those of all faiths and also recommends inviting ministers or leaders from any faith community into the school, where the student cohort of that faith is large and the holding of an inter-religious ceremony instead of a Graduation Mass in such cases (Mullally, 2010, 14). The chaplain, by including all students regardless of faith or practice, can promote understanding of societal diversity and, at the same time, enhance the social cohesion with the school community (ODIHR Advisory Council of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief, 2007, 13). The weakness of this approach is that it can result in relativism, where everything is accorded equal time and status. In response to this criticism Donlevy (2006, 13) argues that “inclusion heightens and intensifies the reflectivity of Catholic students vis-à-vis both the commonality amongst the many Christian and non-Christian faiths in the experiential affective realm and the acceptance of fundamental humanistic values”. Ryan (2008, 26) suggests that a pluralist attitude to inclusion of students is the most positive approach. A pluralist Catholic chaplain would provide opportunities for students who are not Catholics to practice and observe their own religious forms. For example, the chaplain might organise times and places for prayer to be established in the school to allow for students to observe their own prayer rituals. Indeed the official guidance on ecumenical relations with Christian communities encourages Catholic school authorities to allow “clergy of other Communities” to use Catholic school and parish facilities “including the church or chapel” to provide

“spiritual and sacramental ministration of their own faithful” for Christian students in Catholic schools (*Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity*, 1993, 141).

It is crucial that school chaplains be trained to have an insight into cultural and religious diversity in society and develop pedagogies that facilitate useful teaching and learning opportunities among young people of different faiths and none. The *Guidelines on the Inclusion of Students of Other Faiths in Catholic Secondary Schools* provides some very useful background information on other religious traditions present in Ireland. With regard to a suitable pedagogy for the chaplain the *Toledo Guiding Principles* put forwards the merits of a student-centred pedagogy that sees the teacher taking the role of facilitator, allowing the students to partake in such activities as debates, doing research work and drama. Through these pedagogies students are encouraged to reflect upon their own beliefs, values and decisions (ODIHR Advisory Council of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief, 2007, 13). These pedagogies seem particularly appropriate to the chaplain as an educator.

The chaplain can ensure that these guidelines find their way into school policy by participating fully in School Development Planning. This aspect of school life and how it impacts on the role of the chaplain is considered in the next section.

4.4.4 School Development and the Chaplain

School Development Planning (SDP) is an on-going collaborative process undertaken by the whole school community to provide direction to the work of the school. The focus of SDP is on ensuring that all students receive a quality education appropriate to their needs in a changing world (DES, 1999, 12).

Chaplains play a unique role in SDP insofar as their contribution crosses all activities that occur within the school. They are considered neither management nor teaching staff, even though their duties have elements of both aspects of school life. The school chaplain, therefore, enjoys a unique vantage point and has a unique perspective to offer to SDP. It is important that the chaplain participates in all activities associated with school development such as school planning, school self-evaluation and continuous professional development (ACCS, Chaplains Overview; JMB, 2004; IVEA, 2010). Chaplains bring the eyes of faith to planning activities. The chaplain, operating from a liminal position described above, neither part of the teaching staff nor the management yet with a keen awareness of both contexts, may be the member of staff who constantly pulls management, staff, students and parents back to the school's core mission, vision and values during all stages of planning.

Specifically chaplains are involved in the drawing up of a number of key policies within the school. The first plan that all chaplains are included in is the Guidance Plan. School chaplains were invited to make submissions to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) when they were drawing up the Post-Primary Curriculum Framework for Guidance, but it is noted in the final report on consultation that chaplains did not do so (NCCA, 2007). Nevertheless, chaplains are included in the 'Guidance Wheel' produced by the NCCA at the same level as the Guidance Counsellors, the Principal and Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Tutors and the Home School Community Liaison. It is precisely through the Guidance Plan for schools that chaplains receive any feedback in school inspections. It could be perceived that chaplains either do not know their role in guidance in the school or they do not wish to formalise it.

There is an expectation on the part of the Department of Education and Skills that every school would have a Pastoral Care Policy in the context of overall school planning. During the drawing up of this policy the various pastoral roles, including definitions and responsibilities, are decided upon and pastoral procedures are established (Marino Institute, 2004). These decisions are fundamental to the effective functioning of the chaplain in relation to other key pastoral personnel such as the Guidance Counsellor, the Learning Support Co-ordinator and the Home School Community Liaison. This defining of duties and responsibilities would go some way to ensuring chaplains have increased clarity about their role within the school community.

The chaplain also has a recognised role in the response to critical incidences in the school and is considered one of the key personnel in the National Emergency Plan (NEP) document *Responding to Critical Incidents: Resource Materials for Schools* (DES, 2007). The chaplain has a contribution to make in the drafting of a school's critical incident policy.

There is no provision for a chaplaincy plan in DES documents although some schools include the role of the chaplain as part of their Religious Education Plan. O'Higgins-Norman and King (2009) report that 90% of chaplains have a comprehensive planned school chaplaincy programme. In the focus groups conducted by O'Higgins-Norman and King (2009, 10) chaplains explain that many of them produce an annual plan and an end of year report for the Board of Management or school principal and they regularly evaluate the programme they offer. These plans, reports and evaluations are not required by either the Department of Education & Skills inspectorate or by Church or school authorities. They are not sought during Department of Education and Skills school inspections, although many school principals and chaplains furnish them to highlight their promotion of ethos and/or pastoral care.

The absence of a definite programme for chaplaincy in the school, and the absence of discussion about and planning for chaplaincy among the whole staff, can lead to

misperceptions regarding the role of the chaplain by other members of the staff and over-personalisation of the role on the part of the chaplain. The lack of any concrete measuring instrument with which chaplains can assess their performance is a real difficulty with regard to whole school evaluation and school development planning. Unlike the subject teacher, chaplains have no solid evidence with which to assess or gauge progress made. This leads to the question as to how the chaplain relates to the wider school community.

4.4.5 The Chaplain's Collaboration with Members of the School Community

The chaplain is encouraged through the guidelines of the three management bodies to work in collaboration with all members of the school community. Particular attention is drawn to the chaplain's relationship with those members who hold designated pastoral responsibility – such as the guidance counsellor, members of the pastoral care team, the home school community liaison officer and the school principal and deputy principal (ACCS, Chaplains Overview; JMB 2004; IVEA, 2010). The chaplain is also expected to work in close co-operation with the Religious Education/Catechetics team and with other teachers as appropriate. There is brief mention made in O'Higgins-Norman and King (2009, 12) of chaplains' perception of their collaboration with other members of the school staff. 74% of the chaplains surveyed report that they frequently or routinely collaborate with other staff concerning student behaviour. 66% of the chaplains report

that they frequently or routinely consult with community and school agencies regarding individual students.

The roles of the school chaplain and the guidance counsellor in Irish schools are often compared and frequently identified as very similar. This is very evident since the cutting of the guidance allocation to schools in 2012. At that time Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin called on the Minister for Education to re-examine the payment of €9 million for a Chaplaincy Service in Community and Comprehensive Schools, arguing that, “in the context of guidance counsellors across the country re-iterating their valuable contribution to school life in parliamentary meetings last week, it is now arguably justifiable to discontinue this payment in order to protect other services” (Parliamentary Question, Uimhir: 186, 2012, Labour Party, 2012).

The National Guidance Counsellors do see themselves as having the primary responsibility for the delivery of the school guidance and counselling programme. They acknowledge that:

Other appropriately-qualified members of staff have important and worthwhile contributions to make to the planning and delivery of many aspects of the programme, including counselling and that in many schools there is collaboration between the guidance counsellor and

special educational needs co-ordinators, and with chaplains and with Home-School-Community Liaison Co-ordinators (Hayes & Morgan, 2011, 21).

Indeed Hughes and Sims (2009, 8) in their work suggest that the chaplain complements “existing school services provided by counsellors, youth workers and psychologists.” Burnham (1997, 19–26) is of the opinion that role confusion regarding the chaplain arises in the minds of colleagues as a result of a lack of understanding of the counselling process or insufficient knowledge about the skills of the chaplain and the counsellor. He puts the onus on both the chaplain and the guidance counsellor to better communicate with staff about their roles (Burnham, 1997, 19–26). Part of this clarification would involve differentiating between the types of one to-one-contact with students engaged in by the two parties. The chaplain is engaged in pastoral care which, from a Christian perspective, has a spiritual dimension and Gospel values are the source and inspiration of the care (see Chapter 2.3.2).

The management documents explain that the Chaplain is not to consider him or herself chaplain only to the students of the school but is also expected to be available to staff members and parents in a pastoral care role. The Protocol for Chaplaincy in Catholic Voluntary Secondary Schools echoes the recommendations from the ACCS and the

IVEA that the chaplain attend meetings for parents, be available during parent/teacher meetings and “exercise his or her role in relation to the home life of a student, in consultation with the Principal and with the Home School Community Liaison person, where such a post exists” (JMB, 2004). One of the impacts of this extended collaboration is the way in which the chaplain can encourage the living out of the school ethos by all members of the school community. The next section considers the chaplain’s role vis-à-vis school ethos.

4.4.6 The Chaplain and School Ethos

The management documents on school chaplains attribute a role to school chaplains to build and maintain the ethos of the school. *Charting our Education Future*, The White Paper on Education (DES, 1995) explains school ethos in the following way:

Every school has a tangible quality defined by its physical and organisational structures. However, it also has the critical, intangible character called ‘ethos’ which encompasses collective attitudes, beliefs, values, traditions, aspirations and goals. It is important to emphasise that the ethos of a school is an organic element arising, first and foremost, from the actual practices which are carried on in that school on a daily, weekly and yearly basis.

By the time the Education Act (Government of Ireland, 1998, 9(d)) was passed, the word ethos had been dropped. The enacted legislation refers rather to the ‘characteristic spirit of the school’, describing it as “determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.” This ‘characteristic spirit’ embraces the dynamic nature of ethos and invites the articulation of particular values and attitudes which inform school life. It is the role of the Board of Management of the school to consider how these values and traditions will inform the objectives and conduct of the school.

It is useful to note that *The Catholic School* (Roman Curia, 1977) suggests that the patrons/trustees cannot legislate for ‘spirit’. The writers of this document believe that spirit is something that can only be facilitated from within the life of the school. Williams (2000, 81–82) takes up this point when he makes the comment that “[a] school ethos must emerge from the genuinely held convictions and aspirations of parents and teachers and pupils. It cannot be imposed by legislative *fiat*.” As in any dynamic institution, the school needs to reflect constantly on how its traditions can best be interpreted in the light of the needs of today. This reflection will give rise to clarity of value definition.

The chaplain then is designated the responsibility of interpreting the lived expression of any statement of the 'characteristic spirit' so that it finds practical expression in faith formation as well as pastoral, liturgical, para-liturgical and outreach activities (ACCS, *School Chaplains in Community & Comprehensive Schools*, 1.5). This responsibility would indicate that a thorough familiarity with the mission statement and characteristic spirit of the school is fundamental to the work of any chaplain. The chaplain will also need to be able to read the values at work in the school. These values can be garnered from such places as interactions between staff, students and parents, methods of assessment, communication channels within the school, symbols around the school and curriculum and co-curricular choices and priorities.

4.5 Chapter Conclusion

The rationale for school chaplaincy and the way the role has evolved has been shaped by the strong historical control of the Catholic Church in education and the pastoral and holistic model of education embraced in Ireland. While history suggests that the role of the school chaplain was originally defined by the Churches the role is now being written out of future educational projects at the dictum of new patrons in second level schools.

Chaplaincy was introduced unevenly in Irish schools and is not based on the denomination of the school. Faith schools do not have a chaplain and only some multi-

denominational and non-denominational schools are entitled to a full-time State paid chaplain. This inequality of service undermines the significance of the legislative responsibility of all schools to provide for the spiritual development of students and to develop the school in accordance with the characteristic spirit. The fact that all the management bodies have clear descriptions of the rationale for chaplaincy makes the absence of a State-funded school chaplain in all school types all the more questionable.

This chapter highlights the power that Board of Managements have to ascribe roles to chaplains and to decide on how resources are to be utilised to best meet the needs of their schools. This point challenges the voluntary sector, to use their teacher allocation to provide some aspects of chaplaincy within their schools so that students may be offered a lived experience of religion. The educational context of school chaplaincy also highlights the need of school chaplains to provide pastoral care with an emphasis on the spiritual, thereby differentiating themselves from other pastoral care providers in schools.

Chapter Four outlines the rationale for school chaplaincy as providing for the spiritual pastoral care of students within a dynamic school that can clearly define its ethos. The chaplain described in this chapter collaborates with other care-givers in the school, conscious of how best to bring meaning to the lives of all students, regardless of their

faith background, doing so in accordance with Church teachings and international protocols.

Chapters One, Two and Three and Four have set a background for this research. They serve to begin to elucidate the rationale for school chaplaincy but more specific information from stakeholders on the ground is necessary in order to formulate a theory of school chaplaincy. The remainder of this thesis focuses on the field research and findings.

Chapter Five

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS USED

This chapter outlines the methodology and methods adopted for this thesis and the reasons for the choices made in the research design. Research methodology is concerned with the assembly of research tools and the application of appropriate research rules (Newby, 2004, 53). Charmaz' (2006) interpretation of Grounded Theory Methodology (GTM) is used to construct a theory for the rationale for school chaplains. Research methods are the research tools employed, in this case the theory is developed from data collected by interviewing various stakeholders in the Irish education system and from an analysis of WSE/MLLs conducted in Irish schools. This chapter begins by looking at how the author's ontological and epistemological stance and professional experience influences the choice of methodology. It then explains how the methodology was chosen and how it is consistent with the epistemology and professional purpose of the research. This is followed by a description of the data collection process and coding in general and then a description of how these techniques were applied to the research question of the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland today. Ethical issues are also considered here.

5.1. The Author's Ontological and Epistemological Stance

Ontology refers to the multiple beliefs and values by which people live and the process by which these beliefs and values are socially constructed, privileging some views of reality and under-representing others (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, 33). The purpose of this study is to clarify the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland as lived out in this subjective reality. This is an effort at drawing together the experience of many different parties involved with school chaplaincy and, from this, piecing together a theory of school chaplaincy for Irish schools today. The word theory as defined by Kerlinger (1970, 9) is used as “a set of interrelated constructs (concepts), definitions, and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena.” The author comes to this study with a certain view of school chaplaincy, having worked as one, having been Chairperson of the School Chaplaincy Association and as someone who currently manages a chaplain in her school. She is also a practising Catholic. The author began this study with an awareness of the beliefs and values that she has built up about school chaplaincy and a consciousness that the people interviewed have also built up a set of values and beliefs on the subject matter based on their own experience. Every effort is made to include many diverse views of reality but, given the limited nature of the research and the small circle that is Irish education, it is evitable that some views and experiences are not represented. This research has been supported by a scholarship from Mater Dei Institute. The remit of that scholarship was to concentrate on school

chaplains and the wider stakeholders. For this reason the voices of students are not included.

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge and knowing. It is a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of knowledge, its possibility, scope, general basis, and justification of belief (Honderich, 1995). The epistemological status of any work of research rests on identifying and justifying the kind of knowledge claims the research seeks to make. It is influenced by the communities in which the research is done and the relationship the researcher has with the community. Equality of power and esteem are important factors to be considered. In the case of this doctoral thesis, the author's epistemological stance as researcher has origins in Deweyan currents of thinking (Dewey, 1966; Dewey, 1997). This model of thinking puts emphasis on forms of educational activity which promote democratic learning practices and democratic environments of learning. Such sources link the author's work as a researcher to her years of experience as a teacher, a school chaplain and a senior school leader. Accordingly, in carrying out this research, the author acknowledges that the knowledge claims being made spring from a commitment to the educational, pastoral and spiritual role of school chaplaincy while conscious of democratic norms and principles. From a practical viewpoint, this commits the chaplain/school leader/researcher to exploring and advancing practices of spiritual and pastoral care and religious education in schools, continually seeking fresh insights that are open to review and critique and that embrace

the kinds of change that are likely to improve the experience of students and of other partners in education in such democratic and pluralistic contexts. Critically viewed, this is a constructivist stance as it places priority on the phenomenon of school chaplaincy and sees both the data and analysis as being created from the shared experiences and relationships of both the researcher and the participants in the study (Charmaz, 2006, 130).

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, the author worked as a Deputy Principal of a newly established Community School and was prompted to investigate the role of school chaplaincy because of this experience and her previous experience as a school chaplain. The research question, and sub-questions, began to take shape as a result of a period as chairperson of the School Chaplains' Association and a realisation that the role of chaplaincy was understood very differently by individuals and schools. By enquiring about the perceptions that other parties held about the role of chaplaincy, the author felt that her own work and that of the Association could be enhanced, to the benefit of all the parties involved in chaplaincy. This work could also inform pastoral care policy, religious formation policy and ecclesial ministry developments. The philosophy and educational values of the author influence the nature of the research. The author's belief in the value of the holistic development of adolescents and the breadth of religious education is also an influencing factor.

5.2 Methodology

The decision had to be made as to the most appropriate research methodology to investigate these questions. Because of the ‘people-centred’ nature of school chaplaincy, with interpersonal and intra-personal perspectives being of central importance, the author wanted to conduct her enquiry with a small number of key people so that the researcher and the participant could engage in a dialogue together. The type of qualitative research desired is based on a phenomenological position that, put simply, looks at how the researcher experiences the world rather than ideas and concepts about how the world really is (Newby, 2014, 39). A holistic approach that takes account of contexts within which chaplains work and the influences they have on various stakeholders and the influences stakeholders have on them is considered appropriate. The author is concerned with learning from particular instances or cases reported on through the WSE/MLLs and from the participants in the interviews.

Up to this point a mixed method approach or action research may have been appropriate methodologies to meet the above criterion. However the approach to the questioning of the rationale for school chaplaincy did not commence with a prior hypothesis to be tested and proved but with a focus of inquiry that takes an inductive approach to data analysis (Newby, 2014, 662). This inductive approach (subjecting the data set to various analyses in order to reveal order and pattern) is deemed appropriate for this research question as the rationale for school chaplaincy is something that is puzzled over and

often criticised without any strong basis for the criticism (for example see Section 4.4.5). The research findings are not broad generalisations but contextual findings.

In order to employ an inductive approach to the research the methodology adopted by this study is Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory is used to generate or discover a theory. Its focus is to obtain an abstract analytical schema of the phenomenon of school chaplaincy (Creswell, 1998). The researcher considers this the most appropriate methodology to use for this research project as Strauss and Corbin (1998) explicitly point out that the value of the grounded theory lies in its ability not only to generate the theory but also to ground that theory in data. Given the lack of theory on school chaplaincy it is imperative that any proposed theory would be well grounded in data. Grounded Theory Methodology is a useful tool to learn about individual perceptions and feelings regarding school chaplaincy. There are a number of characteristics which Grounded Theory Methodology shares with other qualitative methods, which are particularly pertinent to this research – it focuses on everyday life experiences, it values individual perspectives, it sees the enquiry as an interactive process between the researcher and the respondents and it is primarily descriptive and relies on people's own words (Marshall and Rossman, 2010). Grounded Theory was developed in the United States in the 1960s by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967) who were working in the fields of health and nursing studies. Their methodology advocates creating new theory consisting of interrelated concepts rather than testing

existing theories. As the parties being interviewed in this study all had a different perspective on school chaplaincy and as there is so little theory available on school chaplaincy in Ireland, this seemed particularly fitting.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994, 18) point out that “words are the way that most people come to understand their situations; we create our world with words; we explain ourselves with words; we defend and hide ourselves with words”. Thus, in any qualitative data analysis and presentation, and in Grounded Theory in particular, “the task of the researcher is to find patterns within those words and to present those patterns for others to inspect while at the same time staying as close to the construction of the world as the participants originally experienced.” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, 18). The decision to use Grounded Theory Methodology was based on an eagerness to focus on participants’ experiences and views of the role of school chaplaincy. The inductive approach was chosen to explore the subject through the participants’ eyes. The emphasis in this research is on theory generation rather than theory verification. In this method, the data used includes both transcribed interviews and reports (Böhm, 2004, 270). Data collection is based on the idea of theoretical sampling: “[I]n the early stages as many different people, situations and documents as possible are selected to obtain data covering the complete spectrum of the research question” (Ibid.). Reports were examined and interviews conducted until saturation point had been reached and a theory had emerged through the coding of the interviews. At that point a hypothesis would be

tested by using a Focus group made up of school chaplains. Saturation in Grounded Theory Methodology is the point at which no new relevant code emerges regarding a category and relationships between categories are established (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, 61; Creswell, 2002, 450). The merits of reports, interviews and focus groups as research methods are considered in Sections 5.3.2, 5.3.3 and 5.3.4. This approach of interviewing until saturation and checking the hypothesis with a focus group is consistent with the ontological and epistemological stance of the author and is a suitable means of finding an answer to the research question ‘what is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland?’

5.2.1 Objectivist and Constructivist Approaches to Grounded Theory

Methodology

Grounded Theory Methodology has evolved since it was first developed in the 1960s. The writings of Glaser, Strauss and Corbin and Charmaz have all had substantial influence on the development of the theory. The original work of Glaser and Strauss from 1967, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, suggested that the researcher should start collecting data with a ‘blank mind’, meaning without reviewing the existing literature in order to carry out a truly inductive study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, 33). Inductive means that a theory is built from observation and is based on the understanding that the theory is already contained in the data and only needs to be ‘discovered’ – as the title of Glaser and Strauss’ book suggests. This perspective assumes that every individual will see and understand the data from the same point of

view, will make the same observations, and will therefore come to similar conclusions. The researcher should take a passive stance and allow the theory to emerge from the development of codes, categories and finally a theory. This approach is typical of the objectivist or positivist paradigm (Charmax, 2000 & Bryant, 2003). Strauss and Glaser diverged in their views on this matter during the 1980s. Strauss, together with Juliet Corbin, took the view that researchers have to actively obtain theory from data. This alternative view in social science is known as the constructivist or interpretivist view. Constructivist Grounded Theory Methodology is also advocated by Charmaz (2006). This strand of Grounded Theory Methodology emphasises the research participants' experience and how they construct their view of reality. Knowledge, and therefore the Grounded Theory, is constructed by the experiences of both the researcher and the research participant and aims at interpreting the empirical evidence within the research context. Charmaz does not support the view that theories are discovered but believes that the studied world needs to be portrayed in an interpretive way because interviewee and researcher embark together on the process of constructing reality. This doctoral thesis has been inspired and guided by the interpretation of Strauss and Corbin and Charmaz of Grounded Theory. I respectfully disagree with Glaser's stance that reality is objective and neutral, particularly regarding the intangible and personal subject of faith and religious practice.

5.2.2 Constant Comparison and Memo Writing

Constant comparison is used while coding to draw together similar responses from interviewees or reports. It is the process of continually comparing like with like in the search for emerging patterns and themes across data sources (Spiggle, 1994; Goulding, 2000; Pettigrew, 2002). While coding each subsequent data source after the first, the researcher checks if any of the codes assigned to the first are applicable to the second and so on through the process. When codes overlap a new code is defined that contains all the data (Newby, 2014, 496). By drawing constant comparisons the data is considered in the light of the researcher's theoretical sensitivity and the emerging theoretical understanding of the context.

Memo writing is the second process that drives Grounded Theory forward. As the data is worked through any ideas that occur are recorded. These memos are informal, often general and are totally free and emergent (Glaser, 1998). Memo writing is used throughout the process as it supports the process of coding and developing categories. These memos are both analytic and self-reflective and serve to document and enrich the process of analysis. The memos usually consist of questions, musings and speculation about the data and emerging theory and take the form of typed memos within the NVivo software and handwritten notes. It is considered important to write the memo immediately when reading and coding the interview as initial thoughts can spark further ideas. At later stages in the research process, initial thoughts are represented

through memos and can be revisited, reflected upon and considered for the overall analysis. These two elements of the analysis help to remove some of the subjectivity from the process. An example of a memo is given in Appendix E.

5.2.3 Grounded Theory and the Reviewing of Literature

Grounded Theory scholars have different opinions about the most suitable time at which to review the literature. Glaser (1978) advocates waiting to conduct the literature review until initial findings have been made in order not to influence the researcher with preconceived ideas. Dunne (2010, 1–14) argues that expecting research to go ahead without any engagement with the literature is unrealistic. Charmaz (2006, 165) suggests that Glaser and Strauss (1967), in their original description of how to do Grounded Theory, may have overstated their position on the literature review. Certainly by 1990 Strauss, when writing with Corbin (1990, 48), was prepared to concede that “we all bring to the inquiry a considerable background in professional and disciplinary literature.” Later they describe the literature review as a foundation of professional knowledge and referred to it as literature sensitivity (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Cutcliffe (2000, 1476-1484) supports the stance of Strauss and Corbin when he acknowledges that no researcher is an empty vessel, with no history or background. While some knowledge of the literature is now expected in any Grounded Theory research it is also a basic principle that any review of literature before the qualitative research takes place should not bring about any hypotheses (Moghaddam, 2006, 52–66). Previous research

about the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland was identified prior to beginning the qualitative research. Some knowledge of the relevant literature also helped to satisfy the requirements of the college's research committee for the research proposal.

5.2.4 Substantive and Formal Theory

Grounded Theory differs from other approaches to social science research as its object is to generate theory from the data, rather than simply to order or make sense of the data (Newby, 2014, 491). The theory is derived inductively from the analysis of the data and reflection by the researcher on the analysis until the most plausible and reasonable explanation of the phenomenon under study is reached (Moghaddam, 2006). In this way any theory generated is *grounded* in real world data. Two types of theory are distinguished: substantive and formal theory. Substantive theories provide a theoretical interpretation or explanation in a specific setting. Formal theories, on the other hand, are more abstract and provide a theoretical dealing of a generic issue which can be applied to a wider example range of disciplinary concerns and problems (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A substantive theory can be about a limited area such as professional education while a formal theory might deal with the development of ideologies (Charmaz, 2006, 181). Charmaz (2006, 182) suggests combining and conceptualising the results from several substantive grounded theories to develop a more general formal theory. Charmaz (2006, 182) points out that most grounded theories are substantive theories as they focus on particular problems in a specific, substantive area.

This research has developed a substantive theory as the collection of data and its interpretation focuses on the explanation of a specific aspect of education, that is, the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland. This PhD thesis does not have the scope to raise the very specific, substantive theory to a formal theory that could be generalised across a wider area, such as the value placed on care in the Irish education system or the denominational Churches' role in Irish education. While this study will contribute to these wider issues, of itself it will not form a complete formal theory.

5.2.5 Criteria for Grounded Theory studies

Glaser, Strauss and Corbin all offer criteria for evaluating the theory generated (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, 237; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 252-256; Strauss & Corbin, 1994, 253-256). Charmaz (2006, 182) is more succinct in her criteria and includes the insights of Glaser, Strauss and Corbin. This is the criteria that the author was mindful of when constructing a theory on the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland:

Credibility: Are there strong links between the gathered data and argument? Is the data sufficient to merit claims? Do categories offer a wide range of empirical observations? Has the research provided enough evidence for the researcher's claims to allow the reader to form an independent assessment?

Originality: Do the categories offer new insights? What is the social and theoretical significance of this work? How does Grounded Theory challenge, extend, and refine current ideas, concepts and practices?

Resonance: Do categories portray fullness of studied experience? Does the Grounded Theory make sense to the participants? Does analysis offer them deeper insights about their lives and worlds?

Usefulness: Can the analysis spark further research in other substantive areas? How does the work contribute to knowledge? Does the analysis offer interpretations that people can use in their everyday lives/worlds?

These four evaluation criteria for Grounded Theory research will be revisited in the Chapter 13.2 and the way in which each criterion has been met by this study will be considered.

5.2.6 Limitations of the Grounded Theory Methodology

Grounded Theory Methodology, like any other research methodology, has limitations. Some point out that Grounded Theory Methodology is very complex and time-consuming due to the tedious coding process and memo writing involved in the analysis (Bartlett & Payne, 1997, 173–195). In this study the lengthy process of coding was dealt with by using specialised software to help improve organisation and speed up the analysis of data. Another criticism of the methodology is that the use of Grounded

Theory Methodology to explain, predict a phenomenon or to build a theory is a subjective process which relies substantially on the ability of the researcher to remain faithful to the data gathered while reflecting on the content in order to draw out new meaning. Constant comparison and memo writing are very important in this process.

Others critics point out that some studies make use of the term Grounded Theory inappropriately and Bryant claims that the flexibility of the method can be used to provide a justification for studies lacking methodological strength (Bryant, 2002). Stern (see 1994) also criticizes some researchers for mixing methods such as ethnography and phenomenology and then using the label Grounded Theory to explain their analysis of the research findings. It is difficult to know whether another researcher who has gathered the same data would arrive at similar results and conclusions to those reported in this thesis, in view of the inevitable subjective influence of the researcher. However, given the specified aims, assumptions made during the analysis of the data informed by constant comparison and memoing, and methodology used, it seems likely that another researcher would arrive at similar conclusions. This study does not seek to achieve statistical generalisations but instead aims to explain and predict the phenomenon of school chaplaincy in Irish society today based on rich data (Charmaz, 2006, 14). Data collection in Grounded Theory Methodology typically encompasses in-depth interviews but may also include, as this study does, other sources of data such as existing research literature and historical documents (Strauss, 1987, 1). Grounded Theory Methodology

provides guidelines for data collection and analysis consisting of coding, comparisons between data, memo writing and theoretical sampling.

5.3 Data Collection and analysis in Grounded Theory

Figure 5.1 illustrates the iterative cycle of induction and deduction, consisting of collecting of data and constant comparison between results and new findings in order to guide further data collections (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Miles and Huberman, 1994) and arrive at a theory.

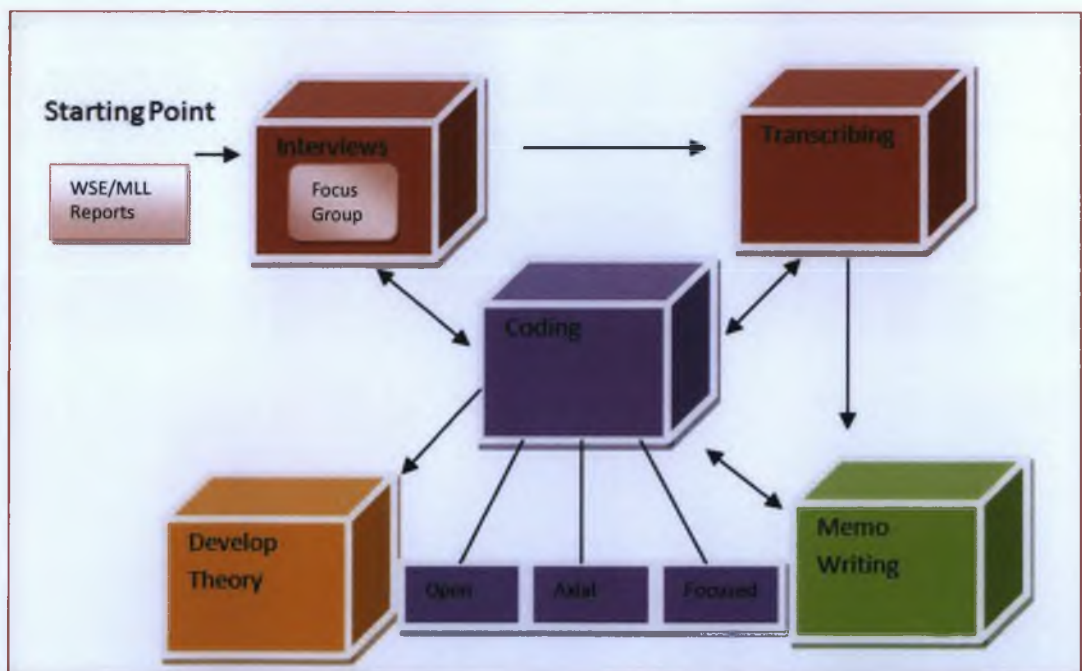


Figure 5.1: Grounded Theory Process

The following sections consider this process and how it was applied to develop a theory for the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland.

5.3.1 Sampling

A purposive sample of stakeholders in education is used for this study. This sample is purposive because all participants have considerable knowledge and experience of school chaplaincy but come to the subject with different perspectives (Newby, 2014, 667). As is the case for most qualitative research studies the emphasis is placed on the participants representing their own experience rather than presenting any generalisations on school chaplaincy. In addition to having a purposive sample an important consideration in Grounded Theory is theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling is an example of a sequential version of purposive sampling (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, 174). Charmaz (2006, 96) describes the purpose of theoretical sampling as “seeking pertinent data to develop your emerging theory” in order to “elaborate and refine the categories constituting your theory.” According to the principle of theoretical sampling, each additional case should serve specific purposes within the overall scope of enquiry. Three options are identified by Yin (1989, 53-54):

(a) choose a case to fill theoretical categories, to extend the emerging theory;
and/or,

(b) choose a case to *replicate* previous case(s) to *test* the emerging theory; or,

(c) choose a case that is a polar opposite to *extend* the emerging theory.

This implies that each additional case must be carefully selected so that it produces similar results (a literal replication - options (a) and (b) above); or, produces contrary results but for predictable reasons (a theoretical replication - option (c) above).

Theoretical sampling is not about increasing the statistical generalisability of the results but rather tightens the hermeneutical spiral so that the end theory matches the data (Charmaz, 2006, 101).

For Glaser and Strauss (1967, 45) the aim of data collection is theory generation and, as the theory begins to emerge it is hoped that the next step in the data collection process will suggest itself. In other words cases are selected that will yield greater insights into the theoretical issues. The sample needs to be large enough to saturate the categories created, such that new data will not cause the theory that has been generated to be modified. The end result should be that there is no 'left over' data which does not fit the theory. It is difficult to know in advance the sample size needed to achieve this aim. Glaser and Strauss suggest that the researcher should keep two questions in mind when using Grounded Theory: (1) which group does one turn to next for the data? and (2) for what theoretical purposes does one seek further data? (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, 49). Early analysis of data indicates issues that needed further exploration, such as how the

chaplain's involvement in counselling is perceived; hence the sampling process is guided by the on-going theory development.

In total fifty WSE/MLL reports were analysed, thirty four people were interviewed and one focus group was conducted in the theoretical sample for this thesis. The WSE/MLL analysis began the development of a theoretical framework. When saturation point was reached with the WSE/MLL reports the first two chaplains interviewed extended the emerging theory. The remaining chaplains interviewed replicated the previous cases to test the emerging theory, the principals interviewed and interviews with the other stakeholders served to further extend the emerging theory on the rationale for school chaplains.

5.3.2 Historical Documents – WSE/MLL Reports

The WSE/MLL reports published between January 2010 and December 2012 are the initial case (unit of data) in this study. As already established Grounded Theory research is the process of collecting data, analyzing the data, and repeating the process, which is the format called constant comparative method. The data can be obtained from several sources such as interviewing participants or witnesses, reviewing historical videotapes or records, observations while on-site (Creswell, 2003, 14). In this instance WSE/MLL

are reviewed as they are a historical record about school chaplaincy. Glaser and Strauss (1967, 53) encourage the use of historical documents as a unit of data in Grounded Theory and point out that “[t]heir use is perhaps more efficient, since the researcher is saved much time and trouble in his search for comparison groups, which are, after all, already concentrated in the library.” Strauss and Corbin (1990, 52) also support this approach and state:

Research publications often include quoted materials from interviews and field notes and these quotations can be used as secondary sources of data for your own purposes. The publications may also include descriptive materials concerning events, actions, settings, and actors' perspectives, that can be used as data using the methods described.

These documents provide a reliable secondary data source as they are being used to address an issue within the context in which they were drawn up, i.e. second level education in Ireland. As all reports are drawn from a twenty-four month period comparisons are considered realistic and, as all reports are carried out by the same group of DES inspectors, the presence of any bias is minimised. The fifty reports accounted for one fifth of the WSE/MLL which took place during this period. These were analysed for reference to the role of the school chaplain and the first set of codes on school chaplaincy arose from these documents. It was then possible to use the interviews to check the validity of these codes. These documents are considered an important

secondary data source as they have not previously been used as a source of information about the role of the school chaplain.

The only selection basis used for sampling was the date of publication. This resulted in there being thirteen Catholic Voluntary Secondary Schools (two fee-paying) in the sample, thirteen Community Schools (one with Church of Ireland patronage, twelve with Catholic patronage), three Comprehensive schools (two with Catholic patronage and one with Church of Ireland patronage), thirteen non-designated ETB schools and eight designated ETB schools. Twenty four of the schools in the study are therefore entitled to a state-funded chaplain as a Community, Comprehensive or designated ETB school. From the reports it is apparent that a further nine schools, in the voluntary secondary sector, have a chaplain in the school. An assumption is made by the author that all Community/Comprehensive and designated ETB have a full-time chaplain in line with their entitlement under their Deed of Trust.

5.3.3 Interviews

The principal source of data collection for my research was one to one semi-structured interviews. As theory is being drawn from the experiences and opinions that participants have of school chaplains this method of data collection was deemed the most suitable, in keeping with Charmaz (2006, 25) who sees interviews as facilitating “the eliciting of

each participant's interpretation of his or her experience." Interviews can provide insights that are not available to researchers working with large survey samples and are considered to be the most suitable approach when seeking rich data illuminating individuals' experiences and attitudes, as is the case in this research. All interviewees had some experience of school chaplaincy and could therefore be considered 'expert' interviewees: "a specific form of applying semi-structured interviews" (Meuser and Nagel, quoted in Flick, 1991, 91, quoted in McKinney, 176).

In Grounded Theory individual interviews allow the researcher to re-enter the field at different intervals to develop existing codes and identify concepts (Dearnley, 2005, 19–28). This research places priority on learning about individuals' experience of the role of the school chaplain; thus the interviews with participants could be said to be conversations with a purpose (Kvale, 2006, 480–500). Before the formal interview began I engaged in general conversation with the interviewee. This enabled a rapport to develop between the researcher and the participant and in this way a sense of trust and respect for the participant and for the information they were going to share was conveyed (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, 314–321). During this time the plain language statement and the issue of consent were also discussed (See section 5.6 of this chapter).

The interviews took place in three phases. Phase one was the piloting of the questions with two school chaplains, the second phase of interviews consisted of interviews with school chaplains, school principals and parent interviews. The third and last interview phase was the interviewing of the Management bodies, the Trust Boards and the Church authorities. The reason for conducting these interviews last was to allow time for the author to reflect on how chaplaincy is happening on the ground and to learn about chaplains', principals' and parents' lived experiences regarding school chaplaincy before having a conversation with the nominating authorities and those who are part of drawing up the contract and job description of school chaplaincy. As referenced earlier who needed to be interviewed next emerged through the analysis of the data.

In total nine school chaplains were interviewed including the two from the pilot interview. Eleven school principals and five parents of a student currently attending a school with the services of a school chaplain were also interviewed. After that I interviewed one representative from a number of key stakeholders in Irish education – one interviewee from each of three Trust Boards, an education spokesperson from the Church of Ireland and the Catholic Church, the Director of Education in the Archdiocese of Dublin and a spokesperson from each of the following: the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS), the Irish Vocational Education Authority (IVEA) – now the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) – and the Joint Managerial Body (JMB).

In keeping with purposive sampling it was important to interview a representative from each of the Management bodies as the conditions of employment of school chaplains in each of the sectors differ substantially. They also come at the pluralist and secular education question from different perspectives. Given the three arms of the second level system in Ireland and the nature of denominational schools I felt it was important to hear the voices of all three. The three Trusts were chosen for the spread of schools that they represent. Catholic Education, An Irish Schools Trust (CEIST) is the largest Trust in Ireland and represents over one hundred schools at second level. CEIST does not have an input in the community schools of which its member congregations are Trustees. The Le Chéile Schools Trust is currently responsible for seventy Voluntary Secondary Schools and is Trustee in seven Community Schools. It has also been chosen as the patron for a new voluntary secondary school to open in Tyrrelstown, Dublin 15 in 2014. The Loreto Trust is considerably smaller. In Ireland, there are over twenty schools under Loreto trusteeship. Of these, sixteen are Voluntary Secondary Schools and five are Primary/Junior schools, and two in Northern Ireland are Voluntary Grammar Schools. Loreto also shares trusteeship with others in five Community Schools. Of the sixteen Voluntary Secondary Schools four are fee-paying and three of these pay a full time chaplain. One of the non-fee-paying schools has a full time chaplain paid for by the Trust Board. Finally in this category I interviewed the Director of Education of the Archdiocese of Dublin. Dublin Archdiocese is patron of a large number of schools and

exerts considerable influence as the nominating authority for full-time chaplains paid by the State in Dublin. This interview was added to the interview schedule during coding as it became apparent that more information from patrons would be helpful.

The school chaplains and school principals were chosen at random to represent a cross section of the different types of schools in Ireland. Consideration was taken of fee-paying/non-fee-paying, full time chaplain/part time chaplain and a mix of Voluntary Secondary School/Comprehensive/Community School/College and Education and Training Board Schools, both designated and not. An urban/rural mix was also taken into account. Ultimately four of the school chaplains interviewed are working in the Community School sector; two in the Comprehensive sector – one with Church of Ireland patrons and one with a Catholic patron. Two are in the Community College sector – both designated – and one was from the VEC sector, non-designated. Finally, two of the chaplains are working in the voluntary sector – one fee-paying and one non-fee-paying. Six of the chaplains interviewed are female and three are male. Six chaplains work in an urban setting and three in rural schools, one is a religious and eight are lay school chaplains. Two chaplains work part time and the others have full time positions. I consider this to be a representative mix of the make-up of school chaplains in Ireland at the moment. Five of the nine school chaplains interviewed have been working as school chaplains for more than ten years. Participants were found through a general appeal to the School Chaplains' Association.

The Principals interviewed were found through an appeal at the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals Conference. Four of the principals interviewed are working in Community Schools, two are in Community Colleges – one designated and one non-designated, and five were in Voluntary Secondary Schools. Of these five principals four are from the Catholic faith tradition and one is an independent Voluntary Secondary School which, while broadly speaking understands itself as Christian, does not embrace any religious practice on a day to day basis. Two of the schools are fee-paying. Nine of the eleven schools have a school chaplain – seven full-time and two part-time. Seven of the school principals are male, four are female. Six of the schools are in an urban area and five are located in a rural setting. Interviews were usually about thirty minutes in length.

Five parents were interviewed. It proved impossible to secure an interview with a parent representative from any of the National Parents' Associations. Ultimately five parents recommended to me by principals I had interviewed for the thesis agreed to be interviewed. Four parents are associated with Community Schools with a full time chaplain and the other parent is involved with a Voluntary Secondary School which has the services of a part time priest chaplain. One of the parents interviewed from the Community School sector had recently experienced her child move from a Voluntary Secondary School where there was no chaplain to a Community School as a result of an

amalgamation process. Parental interviews were substantially shorter than other interviews as parents did not seem to be aware, to any great extent, of the role of the chaplain in their child's life. Interviews lasted for between ten and fifteen minutes.

The original list submitted to the ethics board included all of these stakeholders so that they would be available if it was deemed necessary. The right of the Bishop to nominate a person to the position of chaplain was an issue raised throughout the data collection. When all the school principals, chaplains, members of the Trust Boards and Church spokespersons had been interviewed new codes were still emerging on this issue. The researcher was unsure if all the relevant information had been collected. With this in mind a representative from the Dublin Diocese was added to the list of interviewees. This interview did not result in any new code so it was concluded that saturation had been reached. In developing a theory of the rationale for school chaplaincy a Focus Group made up of school chaplains completed the theoretical sample and enabled the researcher to check the theory emerging from the interviews.

These interviews can be considered expert interviews as they involved people who had considerable knowledge and experience of school chaplaincy. Expert interviews require considerable skill on the part of the interviewer. Meuser and Nagel, (quoted in Flick, 1999), list four main challenges that the interviewer may face. First, the expert status of an interviewee may have been undeserved. In this research the majority of the

interviewees provided expert insights into the research topic and themes but one principal and two of the parents did not have expertise the expected. Second, the expert may attempt to discuss 'ongoing conflict in the field' and his/her fieldwork rather than the topic of the interview. This kind of discussion did take place but the interviewer tried to ensure that a minimal amount of these discussions was included in the formal taped interviews. Third, the expert responds as a personal individual rather than as the expert and the interview becomes overly personalized. Despite the interviewer having long-standing professional relationships with a number of the interviewees, the interviews were all conducted in a formal manner and interviewees responded as experts. Fourthly, the expert may opt to lecture the interviewer rather to engage in the question and answer process of an interview. This did not happen during these interviews because the interviewer had considerable experience in the field. Power during interviews is discussed further in Section 5.3.3 (b).

5.3.3 (a) Development of Interview Questions

According to Charmaz (2006, 28) a Grounded Theory study requires open-ended, non-judgemental questions in order for unanticipated stories and statements to emerge. As part of the application for ethical approval a list of potential questions for discussion at interviews were developed (see appendix F). Owing to the progressive nature of the interviews, however, this list was not adhered to rigidly. It became apparent that some questions were unsuitable for some participants (e.g. some Trusts had very few

chaplains working for them so questions had to become more general). This adjustment was easily implemented because the semi-structured interview model affords the freedom to clarify people's understanding and to ask follow up questions (Newby, 2104, 356). The process of developing questions is outlined below.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two school chaplains in the pilot study. The purpose of the interviews was to pilot the interview questions which had been drawn up from my own experience of school chaplaincy and school management. The interview questions were exploratory in nature due to the small scale of this study and the early stage of the overall research project. The questions were designed to uncover patterns and common themes in the participants' accounts of school chaplaincy from their particular perspective. These interviews were coded using line-by-line coding and formed part of the constant comparison process of coding in Grounded Theory. The figure 5.2 gives an overview of the issues which the first two chaplains raised.



Figure 5.2: Issues raised during Pilot Interviews

The interview questions for interview phases two and three were based on findings from the pilot study. The questions were asked in as non-directive a manner as possible to meet the study’s principal aim of learning about the interviewees’ perceptions.

Figure 5.3 shows the themes which arose from the pilot interviews and were addressed in all interviews to a greater or lesser degree.

Theme	Note about question
Appointment Process	This process is changing and some of the management bodies have been negotiating with Church authorities, role of teaching council.

Chaplain's contribution to ethos	An element of the role of the chaplain which is part of the management documents and mentioned in inspectorate reports.
Relationship between management and chaplains	The Board of Management appoints the chaplain although they receive their nomination from elsewhere. Management bodies have clear descriptions of the role of school chaplains.
Relationship between chaplains and Church authorities	The Church authorities nominate the chaplains but have little involvement with the chaplain after that according to initial indicators during the pilot study. The chaplain is the representative of the Church in the school.
Relationship between chaplains and Trusts	Only the Trusts which are involved in the Community School sector have full time paid chaplains in their schools. Previously Trusts have sought to have State-paid chaplains in their schools but negotiations broke down around the issue of nomination.
Chaplains as educators	The Supreme Court justified paying school chaplains from state funds because of their educational role.
Continuous professional development in chaplaincy	All chaplains must now be registered with the teaching council and have the same responsibilities to continue their professional development as other teaching staff.
Day to day responsibilities of the chaplain	Insight as to what chaplains are actually doing compared to what various stakeholders expect them to do.

Changes and challenges to school chaplaincy	This gave opportunities for stakeholders to raise issues such as the threat of putting chaplains within allocation in schools, similar to what has happened to Guidance Counsellors, changing faith backgrounds of students, etc.
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Figure 5.3: Themes for Interview Questions

The interview questions changed and improved over time, influenced by codes and categories developed from previous interviews and consistent with Grounded Theory Methodology. For this reason, two sets of interview questions are shown in the appendices: Appendix F gives examples of the *Interview questions September 2011* and Appendix G gives an example of *Interview questions February 2012*. The second set of questions are guided by Charmaz' (2006, 31–33) approach to Grounded Theory Methodology, particularly her chapter on how to phrase interview questions to allow respondents to express their views without constraints. It can be seen how the number of questions reduced and became a lot less leading. The data collection and analysis for this project took place in alternating sequences and is guided by the Grounded Theory Methodology. This meant that the interviews were transcribed and coded immediately after they took place.

During the interviews it was important not to restrain the participants but to give them time to talk about how they understood and described their experience of school

chaplaincy. All interviews were recorded on an iPhone and transcribed by the author immediately after the event. Several participants commented that the interview process had afforded them the opportunity to reflect on their practice and attitude to school chaplaincy and that they found that helpful. Thus the interview facilitated a process of personal reflection for these participants.

5.3.3 (b) Drawbacks of interviews

The drawbacks of interviews are that they are very time-consuming to conduct and analyse (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, 409). They are open to interviewer bias. The researcher was aware of Oppenheim's (1992, 96-97) suggestions on the causes of bias in interviewing and was led by the theoretical sampling process. For this reason consistent coding of responses was very important and greatly facilitated by the use of Nvivo. The researcher has to maintain a neutral stance throughout the conversation and yet appear interested and engaged (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, 409) thereby ensuring there was a good rapport between the interviewer and interviewee. Although leading questions are useful in the interviewing process (Kvale, 1996, 158) and were used in this research, the interviewer was conscious of not 'putting words into the mouths' of interviewees (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, 205).

The issue of power is also significant during interviews. Scheurick (1995, 246) argues that, typically, more power resides with the interviewer. The majority of participants in this research are professionals in education and appeared at interview to be confident and open. The interviewer was particularly aware of power when interviewing parents and arranged to interview them outside of the school environment. There may have been some element of those who considered themselves more powerful than the interviewer being anxious to maintain their reputations and being guarded in their responses (Lee, 1993). This was evident at the beginning of interviews with some Church representatives. Because the interviewer was aware of how power affects interviews she did not allow it to distort the overall content. The same issues of power arise in Focus groups which are addressed in the next section. As all members of the focus group are chaplains, and know the interviewer in a professional capacity, issues of power did not seem to affect the working of the group.

5.3.4 Focus Groups

A Focus group is used as means of collecting data in the final stage of this research. The aim of the Focus group is to collaborate the data and the theory that is being developed. It is usual in Grounded Theory to pursue a theoretical sample to test the emerging theory and this was the manner in which members of the Focus group were selected and formed the third case for the theory development along with the WSE/MLL reports and the interviews. Although triangulation is not generally associated with Grounded

Theory, focus groups are recognised as a form of triangulation when used with interview and secondary data (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, 436). Triangulation addresses the issue of internal validity by using more than one method of data collection to answer the research question. Richardson (1991, 173-179) suggests that it is more helpful to conceive of complementary rather than competing perspectives and offers the term 'crystallisation' as an alternative to triangulation. This is the manner in which the Focus group was used to inform the theory development in this research. Samples at this stage in the research are not chosen for their representative nature; nor are they prescribed before the research project is undertaken, as may be the case with other sampling techniques (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This Focus group fulfilled the Grounded Theory Methodology requirement of being chosen for its characteristic nature which was directly related to the emergent Grounded Theory about school chaplaincy (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, 48).

Focus groups are considered a form of group interview that relies on the interaction within the group who discuss the topic supplied by the researcher (Morgan, 1988, 9). A Focus group was chosen at this stage because of the large volume of data which could be collected in a short time and the benefit of yielding a collective rather than an individual response which was appropriate at the latter stage of the research (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, 436). The group dimension of the Focus group also meant that issues and perspectives were discussed at a deeper level than they were during one

to one interviews. Morgan (1988, 43) suggests four to twelve people in a focus group while Fowler (2009, 117) favours six to eight people. In this research the Focus group was made up of nine people. All members of the Focus group have worked together on the Executive of the School Chaplains Association so the issue of homogeneity of background was addressed and in this way the risk of the discussion becoming unfocused was avoided (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, 437).

Due to their role on the executive of the SCA, all members of the Focus group were aware of chaplaincy issues both from the perspective of their own work and also from a national perspective through their representation of over one hundred chaplains who are members of SCA and through their engagement with both school and church authorities on behalf of their members. The group represented a mix of gender and school types in both urban and rural settings. One perceived weakness of the Focus group was their uniform status as school chaplains, but given their representation of over one hundred school chaplains at national level with both school and Church authorities the researcher considered them knowledgeable on all areas of the research. The Focus group was carried out in a hotel board room at the end of the Annual Conference of the SCA. This was considered a suitable neutral and comfortable venue. It also meant that the executive had just come from meeting the majority of their members and had spent the evening before in the company of representatives from the management bodies,

personnel from third level colleges involved in the training of chaplains and local Church representatives. The interviewer/researcher did not attend the conference.

The current executive committee of the SCA, which formed the Focus group, is composed of three men and six women. Seven members of the group are full time chaplains while two are part time – one working as a psychotherapist one day a week and the other being primarily involved in teaching Religious Education. Six are chaplains in the Community/Comprehensive sector and two are in the Voluntary Secondary School sector. One is employed between two schools in the same Trust and one is a part time chaplain in a non-designated ETB school. One of the chaplains in the Voluntary Secondary School sector is paid by the Trust Board of the school and the other is funded through the religious order involved with the school. One of the members of the executive is a priest-chaplain. As with the interviews, the purpose of the research was explained to each member of the Focus group prior to participants agreeing to take part. Permission was sought and granted from the Focus group to use a digital audio recorder (iphone) to record the session. The Focus group conversation was transcribed verbatim immediately after the event. The Focus group explored emerging categories from the data analysis:

- Chaplaincy adding to the learning experience of students
- Chaplains supporting the ethos of the school

- Chaplains providing a service to the nominating Church
- Inclusion and exclusivity – conflict at the heart of school chaplaincy
- Lack of clarity about the counselling role of the chaplain
- The role of the chaplain at times of bereavement and crisis
- Profile of the chaplain, past, present, future.

These categories were not mentioned during the Focus group; instead very general terms were used to spark conversation, e.g. the Interviewer said ‘The Chaplain in the school’. This approach was taken so as not to influence the refinement process. The researcher took a participant-observer role in the Focus group – tending towards being less actively involved. The Focus group was one hour long. When the analysis of data was completed and a draft chapter of the theory was written, in order to achieve respondent validation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, 181-183) the chapter was returned to each member of the Focus group for comment. Comments were positive and helped to clarify the core category of the theory.

The role of the moderator is deemed highly important in focus groups (Kreuger & Casey, 2009). In this case the researcher took on the role and was aware of the need to be neutral in the managing of the group and to inhibit any authority so that the

participants could own the interview space (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis, 2005, 887–907). Consideration was given to encouraging those who were reticent to speak, the testing of ideas, exploring implications of various viewpoints and summarising positions (Newby, 2014, 367).

Focus groups are criticised because the data collected can remain at surface level. The risk of this happening in this Focus group was substantially reduced as participants had worked closely with each other previously, they were coming out of a situation (i.e. the conference) in which they had been considering national issues and concerns of school chaplains and had recently been talking to other stakeholders about the issues in hand.

The data in this research consists of over fifteen hours of audiotapes, which documented thirty four individual interviews and one Focus group. All of the audiotapes were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. In addition fifty WSE/MLL reports are analysed. The data corpus consists of over nine hundred pages of transcriptions, field notes, memos and DES documents. The analytical process is based on immersion in the data and repeated sortings, codings, and comparisons that characterise the Grounded Theory approach. The amount of data collected might not support generalisation for the rest of the educational population but, given the selection method of the WSE/MLL reports, those interviewed, and the Focus group it was

possible to capture a wide range of views. I feel there is sufficient data to generate a range of insights and understandings that are useful to elucidate the research question. The next section considers how the collected data was analysed.

5.4 The Analytic Process

5.4.1 Coding Interviews as Part of the Analytic Process

Coding is the first step in moving beyond the concrete statements in the data to making analytic interpretations (Charmaz, 2006, 43). A code is a name or label that the researcher gives to a piece of text that contains an idea or piece of information. The same code is given to items of text which mean the same thing or is about the same thing (Gibbs, 2007, 38). Grounded Theory Methodology recommends using several coding techniques to examine the accounts of interviewees at different levels (Charmaz, 2006, 45). Initial coding can take the form of line-by-line coding or incident-by-incident coding. Line-by-line coding, is a good starting point to identify initial phenomena and produce a list of themes of importance to the interviewee (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 67-70). Conceptual labels are attached to each line in the interview transcript to capture what has been said. The detailed and meticulous process of line-by-line coding helps to open up the text and interpret the transcript in new and unfamiliar ways which also helps test the researcher's assumptions (Newby, 2014, 492). Incident-by incident coding takes larger sections of the data than line-by-line coding does (Charmaz, 2006, 53). This type of coding was considered more suitable for use with the WSE/MLL reports because of

the infrequent references to school chaplaincy or related matters. After coding several interview transcripts a researcher can identify many issues that are important to the respondents. These issues are also known in Grounded Theory Methodology as phenomena and are assigned a conceptual label to become a code (Creswell, 1998, 290)

The second phase of coding used is axial coding, defined by Strauss and Corbin (1998, 123) as “the act of relating categories to subcategories along the lines of their properties and dimensions.” Axial coding consists of identifying relationships among the open codes. The aim of axial coding is to add depth and structure to existing open codes by finding links between codes that will bind them to a core idea (Newby, 2014, 493). Axial coding shifts the analysis towards the identification of key components in the study (Denscombe, 2007, 115).

The final coding phase is more abstract than open and axial coding and is known as focused coding or theoretical coding. Focused coding is the integrative process of “selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships and filling in categories that need further refinement and development” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 97). Relationships are validated by searching for confirming and disconfirming examples. Codes are sorted, compared and contrasted at this stage until no new codes are produced and all the data has been accounted for in

the focused codes – in other words, saturation had occurred. Ultimately focused codes are more likely to be a statement rather than a word or phrase as they explain the relationship between the codes as variable (Newby, 2014, 494).

Core categories are discovered during focused coding, by comparing data to data using the constant comparison process already described. Using open codes as a starting point, and moving through axial codes, the process of focused coding helps to verify the adequacy of the initial concepts developed as the focused codes will be applied and therefore 'tested' on further interview transcripts and the Focus group. Morrow and Smith's criteria for core category status were applied in this study: (a) a category's centrality in relation to other categories, (b) frequency of a category's occurrence in the data, (c) its inclusiveness and the ease with which it related to other categories, (d) clarity of its implications for a more general theory, (e) its movement towards theoretical power as details of the category were worked out, and (f) its allowance for maximum variation in terms of dimensions, properties, conditions, consequences and strategies (Creswell, 2007, 290). Grounded Theory Methodology does not typically quantify data to obtain meaning. However, counting the frequency with which codes occur in interview transcripts can be useful to confirm their importance for the interviewees (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, 601). Core categories form the cornerstone for the generation of theory and "explain why things happen as they do"

(Denscombe, 2007, 115). These categories are an effort to answer the ‘why’ question of the research.

The author has drawn on Strauss and Corbin (1998) to illustrate the general process of how to code an interview and develop a theory.

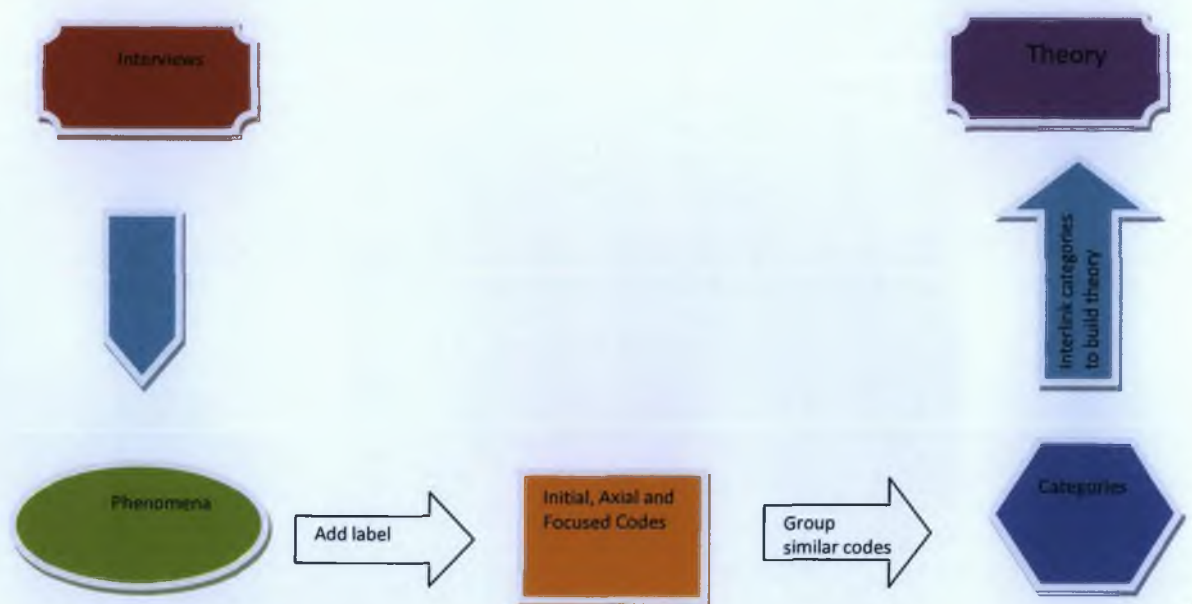


Figure 5.4: Grounded Theory process of Coding Data and Generating Theory

5.4.2 Use of Data Analysis Software

All coding of WSE/MLL reports, interviews (after the initial pen and paper coding of the pilot interviews) and the Focus group was done with the help of data analysis software NVivo. The researcher did not capitulate the hermeneutic task to the logic of the computer by using qualitative data analysis software; rather the computer was used as a tool for efficiency and not as a tool which in and of itself conducts analysis and draws conclusions. As Fielding and Lee (1998, 167) explain, qualitative researchers “want tools which support analysis, but leave the analyst firmly in charge.” I believe the importance of the software is that it serves as a tool for transparency and speeds up the coding process. The production of an audit trail is the most important criteria on which the trustworthiness and plausibility of a study can be established. Qualitative analysis software’s logging of data movements and coding patterns, and mapping of conceptual categories and thought progressions, render all stages of the analytical process traceable and transparent, facilitating the production of a more detailed and comprehensive audit trail than manual mapping of this complicated process can allow. Weitzman (2000, 805–806) advocates the following benefits of using software in research projects: writing up, editing, coding, storage, search and retrieval, data-linking, memoing, content analysis, data display and graphic mapping. He warns, however, against “false hopes and fears”, pointing out that no software will be able to actually carry out the analysis process for the researcher (Weitzman, 2000, 806). Software can support the research process but ideas and intellectual efforts have to come from the person doing the research and analysis.

For this study a word processor, Microsoft Word, and the qualitative analysis software NVivo were used to support the analysis and to help manage the interview data. The computer was utilised as efficiently as possible to reduce the amount of time spent on organising data and to increase the speed of tasks, resorting the material and redefining codes. Nvivo facilitated following potentially promising analytic routes but also enabled these routes to be discontinued with ease. Dynamic and real-time representation of the findings considerably assisted reflection on data and connections between the data and improved the organisation, rearrangement and management of the considerable amount of data. For example, after coding the interviews in NVivo, all passages assigned to a specific code could be viewed on screen and printed. In the same way, searches for specific text strings could be conducted across all interviews and relevant paragraphs containing the search string could be compared on screen or printed. Different sets of interviews could be assigned different colours in NVivo for easy distinction. An advantageous feature of NVivo is that the software keeps a log of all data that has been entered, which means that all codes and memos are automatically assigned a date and time stamp. This feature helps to trace the development of codes. After coding the interviews in NVivo, all passages assigned to a specific code can be viewed on screen and printed. In the same manner, searches for specific text strings can be conducted across all interview sets.

5.4.3 Coding of Whole School Evaluations/Management, Leadership and Learning Reports

The first part of the study involved analysing fifty Whole School Evaluations and Management, Leadership and Learning reports for mention and description of the role of the school chaplain in schools today. The qualitative data analysis software NVivo was used to perform one round of incident-by-incident coding on these reports and twenty six distinct codes were developed. The codes were not devised strictly microscopically; some codes are very close to the words used in the reports and others more abstract or conceptual. Other observations were recorded in memo form – for example incidences in Community and Comprehensive schools where no reference is made to the chaplain in the report. As the references to school chaplains were limited in the reports only three main categories of chaplaincy involvement in school emerged – the counselling role, the spiritual guidance role and the role on the care team. The grounded analysis of these first cases (the WSE/MLL reports) led to the generation of the initial theoretical framework of the rationale for school chaplaincy. Additional ('empirical') cases were then selected, one at a time, to test and extend this framework. A full analysis of findings is made in Chapter Six of this thesis. These initial codes were further developed during the coding of the interviews.

5.4.4 Interview Coding

The data from the interviews went through all three phases of coding, line-by-line, axial and focused. The first phase of analysing the interviews involved broad participant driven line-by-line coding of the chronological interview transcripts so as to deconstruct the data into initial codes. The codes were given clear labels and definitions and Glaser's suggestion to use gerunds was helpful in detecting processes and keeping a focus on the data (Charmaz, 2006, 136). An example of an open code using a gerund is "offering students something where they are at". The labels for some codes are drawn from the language of participants, known as *in vivo* codes (Charmaz, 2006, 55). The list of codes was revised continuously as more interviews were coded. The codes were modified and verified by being applied to further interview transcripts but stayed alike for the most part. Through the initial coding the key roles of the chaplain and the relationship between the chaplain and other stakeholders began to emerge. In total three hundred and sixty seven codes were generated during this initial coding phase (see appendix J).

The second phase of coding did not take place until after all the interviews had been completed. It involved re-ordering themes and codes identified in phase one into categories of themes by grouping related themes under these categories and organising them into a framework that made sense to further the analysis of the data. This phase also included distilling, re-labelling and merging common codes generated in phase one

to ensure that labels and rules for inclusion accurately reflected coded content. This phase is known as axial coding and is understood as putting data “back together in new ways by *making connections between a category and its subcategories*” (Italics in original) (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 97). At the end of the axial coding process twenty categories based on the strong analytical direction emerging from the initial coding had emerged. These codes were based on the most significant and frequent earlier codes and had more general labels than the initial line-by-line codes. This process involved going back and forth over the data and codes to ensure all data was included in a way that was insightful to the analytical process. Figure 5.6 below illustrates the Axial Codes developed:

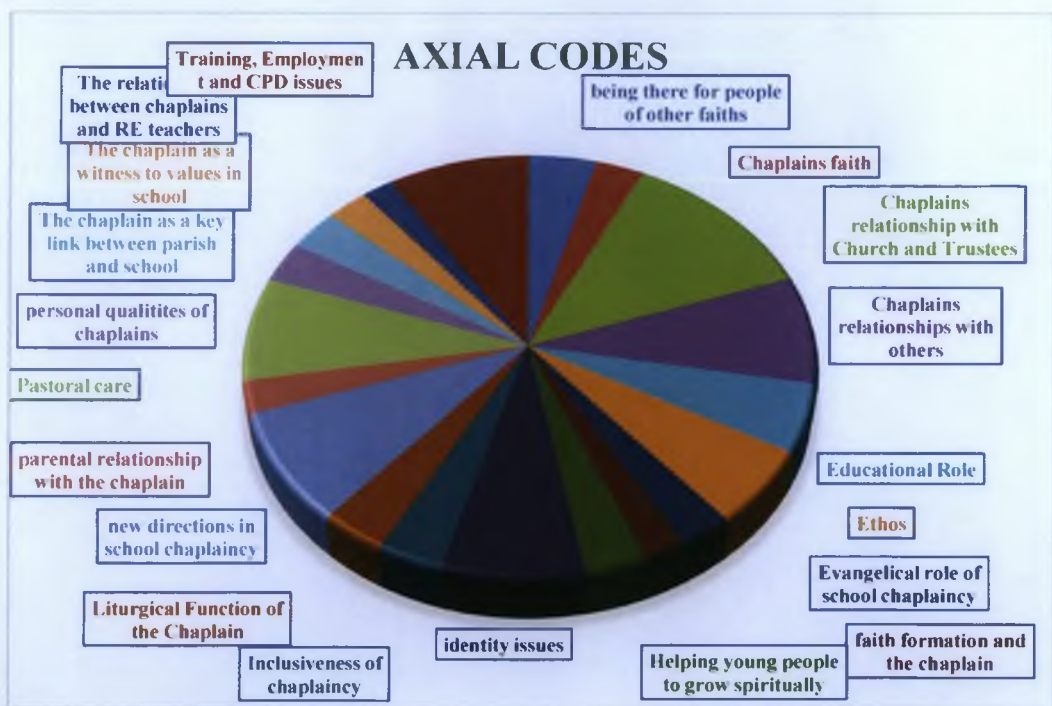


Figure 5.6: Axial Codes

Finally a round of focus coding took place. During this process axial codes were examined by the author, using the process of constant comparison, for their interrelationship. Field notes and memos kept throughout the research process by the researcher complete the data set. They formed part of the analysis as they aided reflection while the core categories were being developed. They served as a reminder of thoughts and ideas which had been sparked earlier by the data. The six focused codes that were developed from this coding process are shown in Figure 5.7:

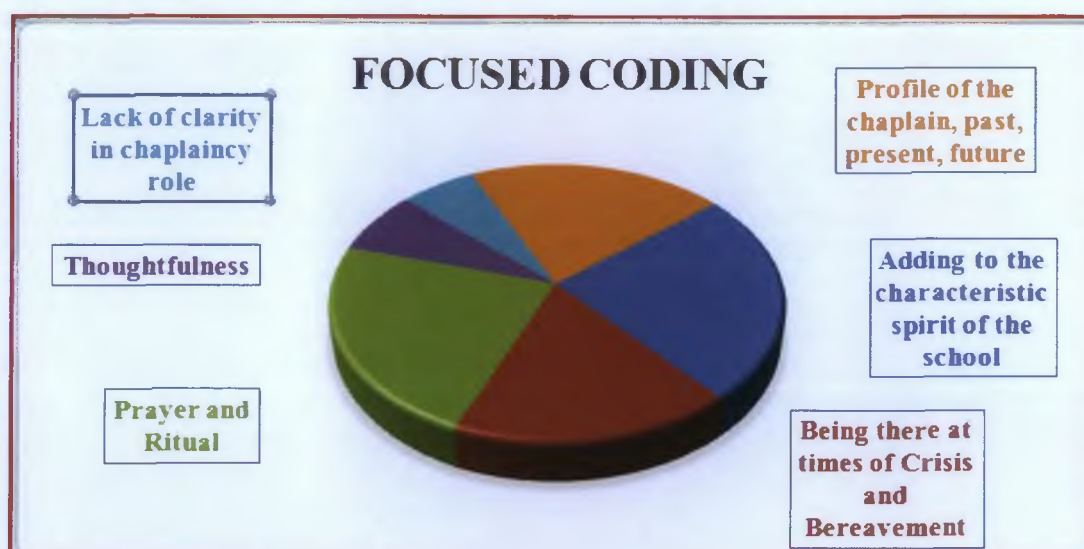


Figure 5.7: Focused Codes

5.4.5 Abductive Reasoning

During this process the core category for a theory of school chaplaincy emerged – the Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker. It became increasingly obvious as the data was analysed and pre-existing literature reflected upon that this concept of Meaning-Maker was the underlying understanding of participants as to why chaplains are present in schools. Whether participants were talking about school ethos, one-to-one counselling or times of crisis and bereavement in schools the role they attached to the chaplain was one of interpretation and transformative learning.

In what is known as a process of ‘abductive reasoning’ the data moved towards hypothesis formation (Charmaz, 2006, 103) where the Meaning-Making role of the chaplain focused particularly on Ethos and Crisis and Bereavement and the way in which prayer is used to make meaning in both categories. The interpretation of observed data to the best explanation helped to form the tentative theory, which then needed to be confirmed or disconfirmed with the help of further data collections and analysis. The data collected from the Focus group was used as a theoretical sample to check the validity of this core category of Meaning-Maker. The data collected through the analysis of the WSE/MLL reports was also compared to the emerging theory. This procedure was repeated until the best, the most plausible interpretation of data was found (Charmaz, 2006, Haig, 1995). The findings from empirical data were then compared to

the reviewed literature. This led to the conclusions which are presented in the next six chapters.

The final phase was the validation phase and it involved testing, validating and revising analytical memos so as to self-audit proposed findings by seeking evidence in the data beyond textual quotes to support the stated findings and seeking to expand on deeper meanings embedded in the data. This process involved interrogation of data and forcing the consideration of elements beyond the category itself, drawing on relationships across and between categories and cross tabulation with demographics, observations and literature. In the interest of rigour (see Krefting, 1991, 214-222) an active search was made during this phase for disconfirming evidence – data was combed to disconfirm any assertions made as a result of the analysis. This process has given rise to evidence based findings as each finding is validated by being rooted in the data itself.

5.5 Accountability

Accountability is achieved through ongoing consultation with participants and supervisors and by maintaining an audit trail that outlines the research process and the evolution of codes, categories and finally theory (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The audit trail consists of chronological narrative entries of research activities, including pre-entry conceptualisations, entry into the field, interviews, focus group, transcription, initial

coding efforts, analytic activities and the evolution of the chaplaincy rationale model. The audit trail also includes a complete list of the three hundred and ninety two codes that form the basis for the analysis. Accountability is also achieved by sending each interviewee a transcript of their interview and later a copy of the initial analysis of findings and giving each interviewee an opportunity to respond. Central to the credibility of qualitative research is the ability of informants to recognize their experiences in the research findings (Krefting, 1991, 219). By checking the data, the categories and the author's interpretations and conclusions with interviewees the accuracy of the theory was improved.

5.6 Ethical Issues

Ethical issues must be taken into consideration in all forms of research. Before commencing interviews an ethics application was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee of Mater Dei Institute of Education. Concerns that might be raised in the study regarding data collection, storage and use were addressed within this application.

Interviews have an ethical dimension because they concern interpersonal interactions and produce information about individuals (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, 2011, 442). Three main ethical issues can be identified for interviews: informed consent, confidentiality and the consequence of interviews (Kvale, 1996, 111–20). Consent is a primary consideration when conducting interviews or focus groups (Newby, 2014, 372).

Throughout the research the principle of “informed consent” was applied (See Appendix K). This refers to a freely given agreement on the part of the research participant to become a subject of the research process. After the initial agreement to take part in the study interview participants were contacted informally, which was followed up by an email explaining the study’s aims and the interview procedure. All interviewees were sent a plain language explanation of the study, an informed consent form and a copy of the interview questions a week before the interview. In addition to the informed consent form time was allowed at the beginning of each interview for participants to ask questions or make comments on the process and implications of participating in the research.

Before the interview took place I explained the anonymous nature of the interviews. While anonymity was guaranteed for principals, parents and chaplains, other participants were informed that their organisation would be named and this may result in their being identifiable. Permission was sought to record the interview and all participants signed an informed consent sheet, a copy of which is in appendix K. The interviews were recorded on an iphone and the files transferred to a PC for transcription.

When transcribing the interviews, participants’ names were replaced with code numbers. Participants of the pilot study were assigned self-explanatory codes such as P1VS, P2CS, C1COMP, C2VS – the letters indicating which sector of second level education

they came from, e.g. P1VS is a principal from a Voluntary Secondary School. The codes for respondents of the second and third interview phase followed the same system, e.g. T1, CH2, M3 indicating Trust 1, Church 2, Management Body 3. The same system of assigning codes was applied to the WSE/MLL reports. Contributions from the Focus group are simply referred to as FG as all participants are school chaplains. A full list of codes used is found on page xiii.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim into text form in preparation for further analysis. Completed transcripts were sent to interviewees to be checked and to give them the opportunity to correct and approve the transcripts. Anonymity and confidentiality was more difficult to guarantee at the Focus group. The confidential nature of the discussion was reinforced before the interview and all participants signed a non-disclosure agreement. Hard copies of the interview materials were stored in a filing cabinet and the information which linked names and numbers was stored separately in a secure location. All data will be destroyed after five years.

5.7 Chapter Conclusion

Grounded Theory is the most suitable research methodology for this research into school chaplaincy as there has been little theory developed heretofore in the area and it is a topic which deals with the subjective topics of holistic education, faith development and

religious belief. As a method it fits well with the author's ontological and epistemological stance and is sufficiently people-centred and constructivist to work well for the topic of school chaplaincy. The methods of analyses of historical document (WSE/MLL reports), semi-structured interviews and a Focus group were chosen as the best way to implement this methodology. By systematically following the coding procedure recommended in Grounded Theory and by using the constant comparison method and memo writing a theory of school chaplaincy emerged from the large amount of data collected by abductive reasoning. The benefits of using the software Nvivo to aid the analysis process is acknowledged. The author is confident that the theory reported on is well grounded in the data collected and is the most fitting conclusion given the information to hand.

A grounded theory report incorporates five aspects (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001): describing the research question (Introduction), literature review (Chapter 1 with the Contextualisation Chapters 2 to 4), and describing the methodology (Chapter 5) have now all been addressed. The following chapters will address data analysis from the three data collection phases, inspectorate reports, the interviews and the Focus group. and explain the theory. Chapter 13 will discuss the implications of the theory developed.

Chapter Six

REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTARY: DES Reports

The analysis of the WSE/MLL reports are used as a data source for this research, in keeping with the place of historical documents in grounded theory as discussed in Chapter Five, and are considered as the first case unit in this study. They are used to generate the initial theoretical framework on the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland. The analysis of the reports informs the selection of the other cases (i.e. interviewees and members of the Focus group), and later are used to test and extend the theory generated from the interviews and Focus group. The findings from the analysis of these reports have such a directional role in the formation of the theory on school chaplaincy it is discussed separately here. As described in Chapter Five fifty WSE/MLL reports were analysed for reference to the role of the school chaplain. Four roles for the chaplain emerged from this analysis:

1. Pastoral Care
2. Spiritual Guidance
3. Liturgical Role
4. Promotion of Ethos through the other three elements of the role.

The Pastoral Care role was the most strongly reported, with reference to the other aspects of the role being reported much less frequently.

6.1 Pastoral Care

The strongest feature to emerge from the study of the inspectorate reports that relates to school chaplaincy, is the emphasis that Irish schools, across all sectors, place on care. This emphasis begins with school mission statements. Seventeen of the fifty schools studied have specific mention of the importance of providing strong pastoral care in their mission statements. These schools are a cross section of school types – three Community Schools, five non-designated ETB schools, one designated ETB school, one Comprehensive School (with Church of Ireland patronage) and seven Voluntary Secondary Schools (one of which is fee-paying). Eleven of the schools that emphasise care in their mission statement have a school chaplain. The number of schools placing emphasis on care grows to thirty four when the schools in which particular reference to pastoral care is made elsewhere in the report are taken into account. There is a chaplain working in a little over half of this group. Again the schools that the DES acknowledges as paying particular attention to care come from all sectors with ten Voluntary Secondary Schools, eight Community Schools, three designated ETB schools, ten non-designated ETB schools and all three Comprehensive Schools. These figures would appear to indicate that less emphasis is placed on care in Community Schools and designated ETB schools despite there being a full time chaplain employed in these

schools. It raises the questions: if there is a full time chaplain, is the caring role delegated to this person and therefore less likely to permeate the life of the school? And if there is no chaplain what structures are in place to ensure pastoral care happens?

6.1.1. The Provision of Care

In nineteen schools senior management are considered key personnel in ensuring students are cared for. The reports include comments such as “*the school’s management has a very hands-on approach to student care and given the school size are able to respond quickly on needs basis to issues as they arise*” (ETBND1) and “*the deputy principal plays a key role in the care and support of staff and students*” (CS4). In six of these schools there is a full time chaplain employed. The year head and tutor system is also heavily relied on in schools to provide pastoral care to students. Thirty one of the schools are reported as using these roles to implement pastoral care policy although some concerns are also raised. The reports acknowledge that tutors are providing care in a voluntary capacity and many schools report not having sufficient posts available to provide year heads to every year. Despite the erosion of posts of responsibility in recent times some schools are still prioritising pastoral care in their post structures. One report suggests that class tutors should be offered Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to help them clarify boundaries between their pastoral role and the discipline procedures of the school. Twenty one schools also highlight the role of the class teacher in the care structures. These schools are split almost evenly between those with

chaplains and those without. On the other hand the role of the guidance counsellor as a provider of pastoral care is emphasised in only eight reports. Six of these schools have chaplains and out of these six schools four chaplains are mentioned as working in collaboration with the Guidance Counsellor on care issues. This lack of inclusion of chaplains as a key person in pastoral care contrasts sharply with the 2013 Memo of the Department of Education and Skills (DES, 2013) which acknowledges the significant role chaplains play in this aspect of school life (See Appendix D). It is fair to conclude that the role of the chaplain as a professional pastoral carer goes largely unnoticed and unevaluated in WSE/MLL reports in contrast with the significant value placed on the role in other Department of Education and Skills documents.

Despite the lack of prominence of the chaplain in the general comments on care in the school, the chaplain is cited as being a member of the care team in the school. The care team has a very important place in the functioning of most schools and twenty eight of the fifty schools have mention made of it in their reports. The inspectorate regards having a care team as “*core to the effective operation of the school*” (CS13). It is in this setting that the involvement of the chaplain appears to be most valued and in some schools the chaplain leads the team. One comment went so far as to say “*respect was also strongly in evidence for the thoughts shared with the group by the school chaplain*” (COMP2). The role of the chaplain in counselling students is also strongly acknowledged. Seven out of the eleven schools with chaplains in this category

acknowledge the work of the chaplain in this area. The chaplain's role in counselling is seen in the context of offering spiritual advice and guidance and promoting Christian values. One reference appears to question the chaplain's role in this area commenting *"there is a programme of educational and vocational guidance in place and counselling is being provided by the school chaplain. Best practice would suggest that personal and social guidance should be provided by the school's guidance counsellor"* (ETBD2). Given that trained chaplains all have the same level of counselling qualifications as a school guidance counsellor this suggestion of 'best practice' could be seen as undermining the role of the chaplain with respect to personal and social guidance. The fact that some chaplains, in the same way as Guidance Counsellors, avail of personal supports such as supervision and professional development, is acknowledged. The inspectorate reports emphasise that any role the chaplain has in counselling should be in offering spiritual guidance. The spiritual aspect of the role is considered in the next section.

6.2 Spiritual Guidance and Care

According to the Education Act (Government of Ireland, 1998, 9d) schools are obliged to promote the "moral, spiritual and personal development of the pupil" and one of the functions of the Board of Management, under this legislation, includes determining the moral and religious education of pupils. Despite the enshrinement of this obligation in law, how this function of the Board is being carried out would appear to be rarely

evaluated during inspections. It is worth noting that this mandate is a legal obligation for all schools and not connected to a particular characteristic spirit.

The spiritual function of the chaplain dominates the job descriptions of the three management bodies, finds prominence in literature when seeking to define the role of the school chaplain and is highlighted in both Malta and Israel as the main role of the chaplain. One might expect, therefore, that if a chaplain is referenced at all in a WSE/MLL report, it would be in this context and that schools would draw on the resource of a school chaplain to meet some of their obligation in respect of Section 9(d) of the Education Act. In fact this responsibility of the chaplain was acknowledged in only five of the thirty two schools (16%) in the study that have a school chaplain. Two of these schools are Community Schools, one a Comprehensive School, one a Voluntary Secondary and one a designated ETB school.

In one Voluntary Secondary School the inspector comments that “*the spiritual care of students is well provided for in the school. The role of the school chaplain is significant in this regard*” (VS9). Other comments were more general: “*the school’s full-time chaplain seeks to respond to the spiritual and religious needs of the members of the school community*” and later on in the same report for that school some clarification is offered, the chaplain co-ordinates “*a number of activities associated with students’ faith*

journey” (CS3). Only one school specifically mentions that the chaplain is about promoting Christian values: “*the role of the chaplain encompasses the promotion of Christian values, pastoral care, and counselling support*” (COMP1).

A further three schools indicate how they are providing for the spiritual needs of their students without mentioning the chaplain’s involvement, giving a total of just 16% of schools which have been evaluated for this legal obligation. All three of these schools are Catholic Voluntary Secondary Schools; one has a school chaplain. One of the schools appears to be particularly proactive in this respect and in keeping with the advice of Monahan and Renehan (1998) is using a whole school approach to the provision of spiritual care. In this school the staff is engaged in CPD in order to draw up a faith development programme and they annually identify “*a clear set of goals to guide student formation*”. The report goes on to say that “*spiritual development is taken seriously in the school*” (VS12). No mention is made in this school of the spiritual formation as belonging to any religious tradition. Of the other two schools where efforts to promote moral, spiritual and personal development are highlighted one mentions that this was being done in the context of the Catholic tradition. It might be helpful if the evaluation of the way spiritual development is promoted in a school is separated from religious denominations as a matter of form by the DES inspectorate. If this approach was taken non-faith schools might begin to consider their legal mandate and place more value on the importance of spiritual development during adolescence.

6.3 Liturgical Role

The job description for school chaplain in the documents of the three managerial bodies for second level schools includes praying with students as part of the duties of the chaplain. They suggest that this may be done through what the documents describe as liturgical or para-liturgical celebrations in the school and the marking and celebrating of major feasts and the seasons of the Church year. All documents, despite the fact that all chaplains under their auspices are not Catholic, exhort the centrality of the Eucharist in liturgical celebrations. The sacerdotal role is also highlighted in the Court rulings. This function can be understood as a means of enabling students to reflect on key life events and interpret them through symbol, poetry and music. The courts held that the provision of such liturgical experiences was an important means of adding an 'extra dimension' to Religious Education. Indeed Monahan and Renehan (1998, 108) and Egan (2007, 117) suggest that the chaplain's role in the provision of meaningful and Meaning-Making school liturgies is the link between personal development and education.

Liturgy may well be the main pedagogical tool that the chaplain uses to teach but the analyses of these WSE/MLL reports suggest with some definitiveness that the quality of this teaching and learning is not being evaluated by school inspectors. Only four schools have the liturgical role of their school chaplain highlighted and none of them in an evaluative manner. All four schools have full-time State paid chaplains – two community schools, a comprehensive school and a designated ETB school. The

liturgical function, as acknowledged in the reports, consists of “*organising prayer services and Masses*” (CS1) and “*promoting activities including religious services and retreats*” (ETBD8). The inspectorate saw liturgies as a means through which “*social, spiritual and holistic development*” of students could be developed and their “*spiritual welfare ... promoted*” (ETBD5). In one report the chaplain’s work in maintaining the ‘sacred space’ is acknowledged and in another attention is drawn to the “*achievement*” of a student council in securing a ‘sacred space’ for the school (ETBND6).

The very low reporting of this role is alarming given the high percentage of time chaplains put into this aspect of their job. O’Higgins-Norman and King (2009) report that chaplains co-ordinate liturgical activities within the school, with eighty five percent doing so routinely. While some chaplains concentrate on the Christian liturgical calendar as the basis for the liturgies, others reported that, out of respect for students from other religious traditions and none, liturgies often had a more ‘spiritual’ than ‘religious’ tone. In these situations liturgies are used, as suggested by Renehan and Monahan (1998, 37), to mark transitions and as a means of helping students at times of and bereavement. Liturgies, used in this way, also help staff and parents. O’Higgins-Norman and King’s (2009, 14) report also highlights the significant amount of time chaplains spend with small groups of students, in the prayer room or oratory, practising meditation. The practice of meditation also contributes to a positive atmosphere in the

school and contributes to the well-being of students. None of these positive aspects of the liturgical work of the chaplain is reflected in the analysed WSE/MLL reports.

6.4 Promotion of the School Ethos

The Education Act (Government of Ireland, 1998, 15.2) states that a school management board is required to uphold the “characteristic spirit” of the school as determined by its “cultural, educational, moral, religious, social linguistic and spiritual values and traditions.” The 2002 School Development Planning: National Progress Report specifically mentions the school chaplain in this context, advising schools to reflect on “the characteristic spirit of the school and the manner in which the spiritual development of students is addressed, with particular reference to provision for religious education and chaplaincy.” Given the legal basis of this requirement on the Board, and the DES suggestion that the chaplain may be of help to the Board in fulfilling such a duty, the WSE/MLL reports were analysed for any such link. Eighteen out of the fifty reports contain a reference to the characteristic spirit of the school and a further eighteen schools have their ‘ethos’ acknowledged. These two terms are taken as used interchangeably giving a total of thirty six of schools in the sample being evaluated by the inspectorate for their interpretation of their characteristic spirit or ethos. Of these schools five were Voluntary Secondary Schools, ten were Community Schools, three were Comprehensive Schools, three designated ETB schools and nine non-designated ETB schools. Ethos has been defined as “the atmosphere which emerges from the

interaction of a number of aspects of school life including teaching and learning, management and leadership, the use of images and symbols, rituals and practices, as well as goals and expectations” (Norman, 2003). It is not difficult to imagine how a chaplain might have a contribution to make in this area.

These figures suggest that 70% of schools studied that have a full-time state paid school chaplain had reference made to their school spirit. Despite this high reference rate only two schools in the WSE/MLL reports analysed have the work of their chaplain in the area of promoting the characteristic spirit of the school acknowledged. This accounts for less than 9% of the schools with full-time chaplains in the study. One of these chaplains is in a comprehensive school and the other in a community school. For one school the high quality of care provided by the chaplain for students is seen as an embodiment of the ethos of the school (COMP1) and in the other the links established with the local community and involvement with charitable work is interpreted as reflecting “*the school’s ethos as a community school*” (CS13).

Any school claiming to provide a holistic education cannot ignore the spiritual and religious dimensions of life. The reports were examined to see if the school chaplain was acknowledged as making a contribution to school life in this respect. Eighteen out of the fifty schools in the sample do highlight their desire to provide a holistic education

or enhance the holistic development of their students. Again all school types are represented including seven Voluntary Secondary Schools (54%), five non-designated ETB schools (36%), one Comprehensive School (33%), four Community Schools (31%) and one designated ETB school. What contributes to holistic education, according to the reports, is interesting and very varied. Some schools provide for their students' holistic development through an 'in class approach' of broad curriculum, programmes and practices which enhance self-esteem, respect and tolerance, targeted interventions, PE, SPHE and co-curricular activities. No mention is made in this context of Religious Education. Other schools look beyond the classroom to the sports field, other extra-curricular activities, mentoring programmes, student council, pastoral care provided by tutors and the prefect system, immersion projects in developing countries and fostering a sense of community. Finally in three out of the eighteen schools the holistic development of students does indeed concentrate on the spiritual and religious dimensions of the person. These schools use religious services, liturgical celebrations, retreats and spiritual advice and guidance as ways of promoting the holistic development of their students. One is a Voluntary Secondary School, one a Comprehensive School and one a designated ETB school. All three acknowledge the chaplain's contribution to the holistic development of students. Other schools also acknowledge the chaplain's role in this area in more general terms as providing care to students. The Board of Management of one Voluntary Secondary School is said to show its strong commitment to providing a holistic education programme by employing a full-time chaplain. On the other hand one school, that actually has a chaplain for every year group (VSFP1) has the

resources it puts in to its “*well developed pastoral care system*” which is “*devoted to the holistic development of students*” acknowledged. Tutors, the care team and even the prefect system are recognised in this context but no reference whatsoever is made to the chaplaincy department.

6.5 Chapter Conclusion

Although the role of the chaplain is clearly supported by the two court judgements of the 1990s, and there is substantial validation of the role in the DES document on School Self-Evaluation, the evidence is that this does not translate into the role of the chaplain being actively evaluated or considered as part of a Whole School Evaluation/Management, Leadership and Learning. Despite the mandate of the Education Act (1998) to provide for the spiritual development of its students and the responsibility in legislation of the Board of Management to ensure the characteristic spirit of the school is being lived out, schools are simply not being inspected for their response to these legal obligations.

If these aspects of school life were to be evaluated by DES inspectors the rationale for school chaplains would come into clear focus. Furthermore chaplains would have a means of measuring their progress and contribution to school life. Chaplains could have a key role to play in setting goals for the spiritual development of students. Chaplains

are already using liturgy as an important pedagogical tool and yet this means of teaching and learning is being ignored by the inspectorate. This is a frustrating and unhelpful place for the school chaplain to find themselves in. A role in school that is never evaluated can easily become undervalued and misunderstood.

The coding of the WSE/MLL reports suggested the theoretical sample for interview purposes. The next chapter gives an overview of school chaplaincy from the perspective of those interviewed. These findings provide a fuller analysis of school chaplaincy when compared to the way in which chaplaincy is portrayed in the WSE/MLL reports and thus helps to formulate a more complete theory of school chaplaincy.

Chapter Seven

REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTARY

Lack of clear role identity in Irish School Chaplaincy

This chapter presents some overall findings on the practice of school chaplaincy in Ireland today and how practice contributes to a lack of a clear role identity. It, along with Chapters Six and Eight, explore the data from which the theory of school chaplaincy, that is presented in Chapters Nine to Thirteen, emerges. The findings are considered under four headings: role identity, the process of getting employed as a chaplain, the difference between chaplaincy in the Voluntary Sector and the Voluntary-State Partnership Sector and how the various stakeholders see the future of school chaplaincy. These headings are chosen because of the prevalence of these themes throughout the interviews. While of themselves they do not explain the rationale for school chaplaincy they do provide a picture of the reality in which the theory is practiced and indicates how the practice could be changed in order to clarify role identity.

7.1 Role Identity

Through the analysis of the data generated by the research for this thesis it is apparent that many of the stakeholders have concerns about the chaplain's sense of identity and/or claim that chaplains are not doing the job they were employed to do. This is consistent with concerns raised in other literature (e.g. Sullivan, 2007, 103). The M1 representative expresses the view:

I don't think the role for the individual is well enough defined ... I'm not even sure if the role were well defined, that the school would accept it as such. You know, I think if people had to read and re-read the deed and say well what this person is supposed to be doing here. I just don't think they do. I think a lot is assumed but maybe not going back to first principles (M1).

Three of the five parents interviewed feel strongly that they do not understand what the role of the chaplain is and their lack of understanding of the role is compounded by the fact that they rarely encounter the chaplain. One principal reports going to great lengths to write up a clear job description before employing a chaplain as he is aware of other principals trying to retrofit job descriptions in their own schools in order to resolve conflicts between the chaplain and other staff members. He went on to say that

one of the negative things that I do think has happened is that the vision of what chaplaincy is about or should be about, I think has been sort of lost ... I think

that they are much more comfortable dealing with the psychology of chaplaincy, the counselling side of chaplaincy than they are actually proclaiming faith (P1VSFP).

Another principal (P2CS) also reviews and negotiates the actual role of the chaplain on an annual basis but reports that she does so only within the context of the Guidance Plan and in this case the role of the chaplain is seen as one of counsellor. The Trusts also take up the issues of role clarity: *“the dangers that they are involved in so much that there isn’t any clarity around the role”* (T3). The tension and confusion is evident from these interviews. Principals want different things from their chaplains and are not necessarily looking to the job descriptions, as provided by the management bodies. Chaplains are largely invisible to parents and parents have no clear idea about what the role of the chaplain is within the school.

The confusion about identity begins with the employment process where very often chaplains are not sure who they are answerable to or who sets the parameters for their role. The confusion created by not having a clear line manager comes up in the literature review too. In the UK University context MacGrail and Sullivan (2009, 72) are aware of this problem. The next section considers the employment process.

7.2 The Employment Process

The spokesperson for the MI explains how until recently chaplains were ‘de facto’ appointed by the Bishops. A change is beginning to take place now where the nomination of the Bishop becomes *part* of the appointment process and schools advertise and interview for the position independently of the Diocese.

Chaplains appointed to Community and Comprehensive schools before 2010 all report being interviewed by a representative of the Bishop and being assigned to a school in this way. The earliest appointed lay chaplains frequently report casual conversations which led to them securing positions. In contrast, around the same time that these appointments were being made by the Catholic Church, a Church of Ireland chaplain reports meeting the Headmaster and Deputy Head of the school and then being interviewed by the Board of the School. In her appointment she points out that “*the school recommended me for the job and the Bishop had to okay it*” (C8COMP). The nomination of the Bishop draws attention to the lack of involvement of school management in the employment process. The next section considers the role of the principal in employing a school chaplain.

7.2.1 Role of the Principal in the Employment Process

Principals in the research report the passive role the school has had in the past in the appointments of chaplains. One principal of a Community School, who has had the same chaplain for over twenty years recalls that “*the _____ [naming Religious Order] provided the first three chaplains, and the Bishop provided the next one*” (P9CS). Indeed as recently as 2000 it was not unusual for religious orders to nominate a chaplain to the position of chaplain in a school in which they were joint patrons. Principal 8CS tells how he “*literally got a letter from Archbishop’s House nominating this lady as chaplain. So again, I didn’t know anything. I didn’t have an opportunity to interview her, or know what kind of person she was. It was a decision that was made*”.

Only one principal interviewed had a clear vision of what he hoped for from a chaplaincy services before he employed a chaplain. This would seem to indicate that whoever is determining the rationale for the role of the chaplain it is not school principals. M1 and the M3 both point out that in recent years efforts have been made to codify the process for advertising chaplaincy positions, selection committees, interview procedures and nominations. The issue of the nomination by the local Bishop will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight. When principals absent themselves from the employment process the chaplain’s role in the school is immediately compromised. He/she will take up the position without a clear vision coming from school management

and the chaplain will remain unclear as to who their line manager is. In this scenario any evaluation of the role becomes very difficult.

7.3 Chaplaincy in the Voluntary Sector

The situation of school chaplains in the Voluntary sector is considerably different than for the Community and Comprehensive sector. Three of the chaplains in the study spoke of their experience of getting a job in a Voluntary Secondary School. For two of them the job was publicly advertised and they were interviewed by the school authorities. The third chaplain volunteered her services as a part-time chaplain when she moved into a job sharing teaching position in her school. She had noticed the needs of students in her school to have someone to talk to and completed her training as a chaplain before offering her services to the school principal. None of these three chaplains receive a salary from the State.

School principals and chaplains express their frustration with the inequality of service provision in their sector. One principal voiced his delight that a staff member volunteered to do some chaplaincy work and thereby fulfilled a very important role in the school. While conscious of his good fortune he also articulated his concern that the chaplain is not resourced through the DES:

I think it is grossly unfair – the inequity is there because there is an assumption that because we are a Catholic school we have all the resources to help us in that regard from trustees that are religious, which couldn't be further from the truth. Religious are very thin on the ground. The voluntary secondary school probably needs a bit more than the others because we are making a declaration of faith in terms of what we are meant to be. So yeah, that's a bone of contention. That's something we would wish for. We are lucky we have _____ [naming Chaplain], if not for her we just wouldn't have a chaplain (P10VS).

Another principal of a secondary school who secured the limited service of a chaplain by reducing the teaching hours of one of her permanent teachers explains:

It doesn't make sense at all....As a body of voluntary sector schools we would do anything to change that around and bring equality among all the different secondary schools because particularly in today's world it is just vital. It is, as I say, the replacing of our religious. I know in community schools the chaplain would get to know every student because they would have time to do that. Fantastic – that's how it should be (P11VS).

Two chaplains working in the voluntary sector express how vulnerable they feel in their jobs. One has already lost a job in this sector. A chaplain in the Focus group confirms

the anxiety some chaplains feel about the insecure nature of their contracts. This chaplain speaks about continually adding to her own qualifications to make herself more attractive to the Order that is employing her on a year by year basis. She also explains how she is unable to move on with her life, in such areas as getting a mortgage, because of the insecure tenure of her employment (FG). T3, from the opposite perspective, clarifies that the Trust Board have to protect themselves from having to make redundancy payments and the care they take to ensure that chaplains in the kind of positions described above do not secure a Contract of Indefinite Duration. A contract of indefinite duration (CID) is similar to a permanent contract. If an employee is employed on two or more successive fixed term contracts in continuous employment for a period of four years then any attempt to give that employee a further fixed term contract is unlawful and void and the employee is entitled to a contract of indefinite duration. Trust Boards are breaking continuous employment contracts in order to avoid being tied in to a CID they may not be able to financially support in the future.

Because of the inequality of provision within the system the Voluntary Secondary Schools have considered various options to ensure they are fulfilling their legal mandate to promote spiritual development in their schools. This research was not able to find any examples of such provision being made in State Schools (i.e. Non-Designated Community Colleges). The next section considers how this mandate is being met without State-funded school chaplains.

7.3.1 Spiritual Development in the Absence of a Paid Chaplaincy Service

In the system, as it currently operates, the three Trust Boards interviewed each take different approaches to the chaplaincy issue and faith development within their schools. T2, with fifty-nine schools in its Trust at the time the interview was conducted, estimates that it has eight to ten schools with a chaplain. The usual way in which a limited chaplaincy service is provided is if the principal can free up a teacher, who may have a chaplaincy qualification, from her teaching duties to do some chaplaincy work. T2 comments that this was more likely to have happened before the recent changes to the pupil-teacher ratio. A number of schools belonging to this Trust have benefited in the past from individual congregations paying for the services of a chaplain but again the situation has deteriorated: *“Only one of our schools, one congregation is still doing that. The others for the most part have pulled back. It’s a financial thing. The congregations don’t have the money either. If they did they would probably still be willing to do it”* (T2).

T1 notes that schools frequently do not report if they are using some of their teacher allocation to fulfil some of the duties of chaplaincy as it would be seen as *“letting the department off the hook”* (T1). Both T1 and T2 admit that they have stepped back from the fight for equity of provision with the DES. When T1 was established in 2007 *“the consideration of chaplaincy was up there with a view of the parity of esteem. Now it has moved to the margins”* (T1). In fact the provision of chaplaincy services is a stated

objective of T1 but the Trust has decided that “*chaplaincy isn’t what we are going to fight for. The big thing from the point of view of the Trust is the whole area of recognition of a faith-based option*” (T1). T1 and T2 both conclude that in the current economic climate the argument with the DES for equity of provision of chaplaincy services is not an argument they are likely to win. As an alternative to having a school chaplain T1 have developed and rolled out programmes within their schools to try to equip all members of the school community to care for the faith development of students in their schools.

T3, as a Trust, have taken a different approach and have made chaplaincy provision in their schools a priority. Their spokesperson describes how they ensure this happens on the ground:

One of the objectives of the Trust with us is the whole care of the faith ... we state very clearly in Schedule Two of our Articles of Management that, where possible, chaplaincy services would be in place. So any Board of Management, or anybody going on to a Board of Management in any of our schools would know that it is a priority but we can’t dictate to a school in terms of funding because that is a statutory responsibility of the Board of Management (T3).

The vast majority of T3 schools do in fact have a chaplain, whether through the use of private funds, sisters or retired teachers fulfilling the role and being paid a stipend

by the school or using some hours from the teacher allocation. In the case of a DEIS school the chaplain is paid for by the Trust itself. The spokesperson for T4 and the spokesperson for M3, who is the management body for the majority of State schools, did not give any indication how the spiritual development of students is being address in their schools.

In light of the inequity of provision, amendments to the nomination process and changes in the socio-religious landscape of Ireland all stakeholders involved in chaplaincy are considering the future. The next section reports briefly on some concerns and hopes.

7.4 A Vision for the Future

The chaplains interviewed are concerned that funding may be withdrawn from chaplaincy services in future budgets or, like guidance counsellors, chaplains may be put within the school quota and in this way the time that chaplains spend in the classroom might be increased. The fact that all chaplains must now be registered with the teaching council suggests that the DES would like some flexibility as regards the use of chaplains in schools. Chaplains understand the vulnerability of the role both in these terms and also the societal shift away from religion as discussed in Chapter Three. Despite chaplains stressing the importance of having a strong personal faith in their day-to-day

work, perhaps in an effort to meet the pressing needs of students, they have increasingly become one of the counsellors and this compounds the likelihood that the role will be compared with that of professional therapists and social workers.

On the other hand those interviewed who are involved in negotiating with the DES in reviewing the Deeds of Trust of Community and Comprehensive Schools feel it is very unlikely that the Government would withdraw funding for chaplaincy: *“there’s no question actually, as far as I know, of the Department pushing that it would be removed”* (COI). The M1 believe the Deed of Trust protects chaplaincy and the religious patronage would react strongly to any threat to the service. T2 confirms this line of thinking:

The optics of taking chaplains out of schools would be completely anathema to our way of thinking because we believe whether you are practicing anything, religion plays a really important part in education and the chaplain really is central, or gives a hugely additional depth, to that aspect of education (T2)

When the Focus group reflected on the future for school chaplaincy they report on the influence that parents exert on schools. Members of the Focus group feel that schools provide what parents want and if this does not include chaplaincy then chaplaincy in schools is under real threat. While parents agree children should have access to pastoral

support they are not convinced this person needs to be a chaplain. Although the numbers of parents interviewed was small it appears from the interviews with other stakeholders that parents have a strong influence on how resources are allocated within schools.

One parent was adamant that somebody coming from a religious background was not the right person to have in the role of counsellor in a community school, and highlighted how the Church's teachings on moral issues may impact on a Catholic chaplain's ability to minister to some students:

I believe it would be better if it was a counsellor and he or she wasn't coming from a religious standpoint, because what I feel is that kids are going through a lot when they are teenagers and just say a child discovers they are gay or something like that I don't feel the chaplain is a person to whom that child could go ... I would see a chaplain as more appropriate in a Catholic school and some other version of a pastoral care person in a community school (PT5CS).

The M3 spokesperson suggested a similar approach to pastoral care in schools moving forward:

I could see a pastoral 'somebody' with a pastoral role, who isn't defined in terms of a specific faith ... maybe a different model. Maybe more the pastoral, advocate ... I'm not sure what term one might use and where every school would have access to this kind of support (M3).

Across all parties, when interviewees seek to point out what would be lost to schools if chaplaincy is cut the advantage of having someone who has availability features most strongly. Both the T2 and T4 outline a pilot scheme which is running in the Archdiocese of Dublin through the academic year 2013/14. Through this scheme a chaplain is shared between a number of Voluntary Secondary Schools. The cost of employing the chaplain is shared between the schools involved and the parishes where the schools are located. T2 helped pilot the scheme and their spokesperson described its development:

It was the parish suggested it a little while ago and it just took a little while for the logistics to be sorted out. It works out cheaply for the school because the parish agreed to pay 50%. But there are the four schools and fifty percent is paid for by the parish so between the four schools they only have to pay fifty percent. So it's a negligible amount of money for a school and if other parishes agreed to do similar it would be fantastic. Now it does mean that they are only getting a quarter of a chaplain each. However some of the services could be linked (T2).

T4 is also supportive of the pilot scheme. It may well be in this way that the delivery of chaplaincy services and pastoral care services in schools will finally gain a clarity regarding who delivers what where. Faith based schools may use some of their allocation for pastoral care to fund a chaplaincy service in conjunction with the local Church which would contribute to the service, both in terms of financial support and involvement, thus earning the right to nominate a chaplain and to oversee their message. In non-denominational schools the pastoral care allocation could be used to support counselling and advocacy services and spiritual, moral and personal development in a manner appropriate to their ethos without the involvement of any Church group.

7.5 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter highlights the identity confusion that exists for school chaplains across school sectors. This confusion begins with the uncertainty between stakeholders in the State-Voluntary sector regarding responsibility in the recruitment process. While the religious patron is dominant at the recruitment stage, the religious element of the role has been largely subsumed into a counselling/social care role on a day-to-day basis. This appears to be happening at the behest of school management and parents who prioritise pastoral counselling above spiritual accompaniment, suggesting that if left to school leaders to determine the rationale for school chaplaincy would be to provide counselling to students. The literature suggests that when chaplains do not emphasise

the spiritual aspect of the work they lose their identity. On the contrary this research indicates that where a chaplain is involved in the spiritual side of school life they are largely invisible to parents. This is strongly at variance with chaplaincy in Israel where chaplains have an active role in assisting parents with the spiritual formation of their children. If chaplaincy is to continue in Irish schools efforts will have to be made to include parents in some aspects of the role and to find a way of being spiritual that is supported by school management.

Identity confusion is further exacerbated by the failure of the State to pay a chaplain in all sectors. When the current pilot scheme in the Dublin Diocese is considered alongside the desire of the State sector to have a pastoral presence in their schools, a model for a type of chaplaincy service that would be matched to the ethos of the school begins to emerge. An outline of this model will be offered in Chapter 13. It is imperative that any rationale for school chaplaincy is informed by this confusion and lack of equality.

As indicated in this chapter much of the lack of clarity in the role of the chaplain stems from the complicated relationship between the nominating authority, the chaplain and school management. The next chapter explores the issues emerging from the nomination process in more detail.

Chapter Eight

REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTARY

The connection between School Chaplains and their Nominating Authority

No examination of the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland would be adequate without a thorough consideration of the relationship between chaplains, the school and their nominating authority. Brief mention is made of this in the previous chapter when the employment process is referred to. This chapter looks in detail at how the Churches perceive their responsibility to the chaplain and how the chaplain and school authorities see this relationship. This relationship is at the heart of the rationale for school chaplaincy, given the expectation that school chaplains implement the educational mission of their nominating Church in the context of their schools.

8.1 The sensitive issue of Nomination

When the Deed of Trust of the Community and Comprehensive Schools was first drawn it included an agreement between the Churches and the State that the competent religious authority would have the right to nominate a person to the position of school chaplaincy and that the salary of such a person would be paid by the State. The term ‘nominating’ implies that the competent religious authority has the right to propose a

person for the position of chaplain. The religious authority cannot appoint someone to the position as they are not the employer of the chaplain. The chaplain is appointed by the Board of Management of the school. The most recent DES memo regarding school chaplains states the chaplain is “appointed by the employer on the nomination of the competent Religious Authority and employed subject to the existing condition of the ongoing nomination of the competent religious authority” (DES, 2008). The spokesperson for the CH1 went to great lengths during his interview to explain why his Church considers the right to ongoing nomination so important. He believes that the nomination ensures that what an individual chaplain is doing in his or her school is in line with the teaching of the Church. CH1 sees the Bishop’s role as one of overseer:

It is about trying to reassure people that what is happening is in some way in line with what we believe in.... I see the role of the Bishop as hugely important ... it is not about the person themselves, but that there is some way we have of determining what is in line with Catholic faith and Catholic teaching and it is very much the role of the Bishop to ensure that (CH1).

The spokesperson for the T3 confirms this explanation and highlights that from the perspective of Canon law:

The Bishop in his Diocese has overall responsibility for Catholic education in that Diocese ... so you can't separate the mission of the Church from the educational experience. So I think it is to do with the contract that binds the

chaplain in their role in relation to the Catholic element of the school community and their responsibility in relation to this (T3).

Under this interpretation of a Church nomination a school chaplain is both an educator and a minister of the Church, nominated to a role in a school to ensure that the Church's educational mission is implemented. This is consistent with the court judgment where the chaplain is seen as an educator. Under this interpretation, however, the chaplain must represent the teachings of their nominating Church to the school community and moreover believe and follow the doctrines of the Church in their own lives. This could be construed as considerably narrowing the definition of the role of the school chaplain to sacramental practice, moral guidance and an assistant to the priests of the parish, perhaps less in keeping with the court judgment that sought to separate the role of the school chaplain from that of providing religious instruction in one faith tradition. More positively this definition of the role could also open up the role of the chaplain to advancing the social justice teachings of the Church, encouraging ecumenism and embracing lay ecclesial ministry in a way promoted by the Second Vatican Council and discussed in Chapter Two.

There seems to be little room for ambiguity in the explanation of the nomination given that the chaplain works for one Church denomination to fulfill their mission in a school.

The funding of this service by the State goes dangerously close to endowing a religion. The right of the Church to nominate was not explored in any detail during the Court rulings and none of the literature on school chaplaincy explores the implications of this aspect of the appointment of school chaplains. The nomination of the Bishop, if strictly adhered to, would see the school chaplain working only with Catholic students promoting Catholic teaching, no matter how positive. In the light of what has emerged from this research, from Church documents and the job description of school chaplains compiled by the management bodies, this does not seem to be the desired outcome of any of the parties. On the ground the way in which the nomination takes place is a lot more fluid and has been changing substantially in recent years.

Both the ACCS and ETBI have revised their documents relating to school chaplaincy as outlined in Chapter Four. Both revisions see changes to the way chaplains are interviewed and have implications for the nomination process. Each school now advertises its own vacancy for a school chaplain and candidates are shortlisted for interview by a selection committee. A recommendation is then made to the Bishop or the competent religious authority as to who should be appointed. The spokesperson for T2 raises the issue of the role of the DA in the appointment process. Under the new guidelines this role has been enhanced. In the opinion of T2 "*the Deed of Trust has given a veto, if you like, to what we now call the Diocesan Advisors*" (T2). She expresses concern about the ability of anyone to veto an appointment that has gone

through a legal process of appointment under employment legislation. She does, however, support the idea of having an expert on the selection committee who understands school chaplaincy and the needs of the nominating authority

If as a school principal I'm employing an Irish teacher and I don't have any Irish I would always make sure that part of the selection process tests their ability and confidence in the Irish language. If nobody on the interview board has that competency then we would refer them to a separate interview with one of our Irish teachers and it would be part of the selection procedure. I think there should be some mechanism for ensuring that the person who is going to play the role is competent to do so (T2).

Only one of the chaplains interviewed is particularly emphatic that the Bishop should have somebody on the selection committee. His conviction on this matter arises from a firmly held belief that the chaplain is representing a particular faith community and therefore the faith community has a responsibility to review the suitability of the person: *"if the diocese does not have an input into who is selected for this ministry then they are failing in their responsibility"* (C3CS). But despite all the new documentation seeking change in the way school chaplains are appointed ultimately the spokesperson for M1 concedes, *"even if I am advising people I am saying well it works differently in different dioceses"* (M1). It would seem that not all Dioceses are embracing change at the same

pace. T4 remains quite convinced that the final say on the appointment of a chaplain to a school in the Diocese rests with her:

If somebody wouldn't make a suitable chaplain they probably wouldn't be appointed. Yes, if I felt that there was somebody who would not be a good chaplain for the students I could not, on behalf of the patron recommend to the patron that that person be appointed (T4).

CH2 was altogether less exercised by the responsibility of nomination:

In my experience, in the Protestant schools ... the chaplain is recruited by the Board of Management in the school in the normal way and the patron signs off on that as a normal thing. I don't think there's a strong intervention by the patron at all (CH2).

The Church of Ireland will appoint lay people who are not members of the Church of Ireland as a chaplain in their schools. In one of their schools, because the student population is split Catholic and Church of Ireland, the chaplaincy hours are split accordingly. CH2 says “*the denomination thing isn't as strong or as important as it used to be. It's the witness that's important now so they would have to be a religious person to support that*” (CH2). Perhaps this openness might, in time, make its way into the nomination of chaplains by the Catholic Church too.

8.1.1 The Overseer

Given the importance attached to the nomination as part of the Episcopal role of the Bishop as overseer, the manner in which the Diocese monitors the work of the chaplain, their views and practices is explored in this research. While it seems like a reasonable expectation that the nominating authority would oversee the work of the person they have nominated, in this study neither chaplains nor principals report having any substantial relationship with the local bishop or any opportunity to communicate how the role of chaplain is being exercised in their school. For the most part schools assume that what they are doing is in accordance with the wishes and expectations of the Bishop because they are not hearing anything contrary from the Diocese.

The sentiment that the Bishop does not push an agenda with schools is echoed across all principals: *“The bishop is there in the background. The Bishop has very little input into it, to be fair ... if he visits he doesn’t push it on us that we have to have any particular thing whatsoever”* (P3CC). Chaplains are more frustrated by the lack of involvement by the Bishop: *“I have contact with our local bishop, the auxiliary bishop, sporadic contact ... I think he does have some appreciation of the work that we are doing but I don’t know if it is fully understood”* (C1CC) and: *“There is lip service paid ... it’s tough dealing with bureaucracy and an institution. I suppose it is a huge institution. And they forget the man on the ground”* (C6CS).

One chaplain openly calls for increased engagement between the Bishop and the chaplain:

There has to be a much stronger link between our chaplains in schools and our dioceses and our bishops. The bishop needs to know the chaplain. You need to be able to ring up the Bishop and say – I've a problem ... at the end of the day he nominates me on an annual basis because he trusts me to do a particular ministry and in that regard I am like any of his priests or his deacons in the Diocese. He has put me in a position to do work for the Gospel and therefore I have to have a relationship with him and it has to be a good relationship. If he doesn't trust me then he should get rid of me (C3CS).

A single chaplain interviewed, an ordained minister in the Church of Ireland tradition, has had the experience of her Bishop contacting her for advice: *“he would refer people to me on education issues because I have been twenty years in the job” (C8COMP).* Despite the fact that chaplains are nominated by their Bishop, and expected to represent the Bishop in their work, for the most part they are not consulted by their nominator as experts in their field nor do they have their work overseen by the Diocese in any real sense.

CH1 explains that Bishops do not have time to contact chaplains but this in no way weakens their support for the role. He does suggest that the Bishop delegate the role of overseeing what is happening on the ground to the DA. T4 appears to take on a role of overseeing how the school manages the chaplain rather than one of overseeing that the chaplain is living up to the tenets of the Catholic faith:

Any time a chaplain approaches us with a difficulty ... with a timetable sometimes, some people are given more than four hours teaching ... now I don't mind if someone has a few more hours but we had a situation where someone had twenty hours of teaching. We take that on board and we make sure this does not happen again (T4).

This further confuses the chaplain's position within the school. Unlike any other staff member who has a difficulty with his working conditions the chaplain can call on an outside agency to argue their contractual details for them. In so doing the chaplain aligns themselves more with their nominating authority than with their employer.

In conclusion, contrary to the expectation that the nomination leads to the Bishops keeping a watchful eye on their representatives in schools, the reality is that chaplains would welcome much more involvement and support from the Diocese. Sullivan (2007, 99) outlines a suggested criteria for professional status. One such criterion is that there would be some form of review and oversight by a line manager. The fact that Bishops

are not doing this, and their nomination prevents school management from doing so, undermines the professionalism of school chaplains.

8.1.2 Losing the Nomination

One of the arguments against the Church having the power to nominate someone to the role of chaplain is the counter-position that they can also withdraw the nomination consequently leave the chaplain in a vulnerable employment situation, perhaps not directly related to their ability to do the job. M1 points out that “*the CID [Contract of Indefinite Duration] stands or falls on the nomination of the Bishop. So technically and theoretically if the Bishop withdraws the nomination the CID falls. And that is in the regulations and that is in the Department circular*” (M1). M3 highlights a difficulty that might arise: “*I have seen situations where people were appointed by the Bishop and while they might have been committed to their religion initially they no longer believed after a period of years. What do you do there? It leaves a person in limbo*” (M3). CH1 was also conscious that such a situation could arise:

Suppose as a chaplain I'm appointed a chaplain of a school and I do it in good faith and I want to represent the Church as part of my job and then if something happens in my life there is an issue. I don't know if I subscribe to what the Church believes in – then there is an issue and I think that has to be looked at (CH1).

One chaplain interviewed found herself in precisely this situation when she went through a crisis of faith. She offered her resignation to her school principal, not to the Bishop. The principal judged her lack of belief as not impacting on her ability to do her job and urged her to stay on in the role. The approach taken by this principal is also the approach advocated in such a situation by T3:

Anyone can go through a faith struggle but I think once the upholding of the characteristic spirit continues to be possible that would be the criterion I would use. I would respect the struggle ... and even a degree of no faith possibly, but I think where the difficulty would arise for me would be anything that would blatantly or maybe not so blatantly contradict or act in contravention of the characteristic spirit. That would be a real difficulty (T3).

This is an important insight as it separates the faith and religious practice of the chaplain from their ability to do the job of maintaining the characteristic spirit of the school.

My research revealed no example of the Church withdrawing the nomination but there are a number of examples given by principals of their having gone to the Bishop to say they no longer wanted a particular person in the role of chaplain. So the Bishops retain

the right to nominate but there is no evidence to suggest they use it to restrict the work of the chaplain. In fact school principals are likely to be much more exacting managers.

The Bishops do not nominate chaplains to Voluntary Secondary Schools, even though many schools in this sector are faith based schools of their own denomination. The next section considers this contradiction.

8.1.3. The Nomination and the Voluntary Secondary Schools

The Trust Boards representatives interviewed for this research clearly understand why the Church would see it as part of their responsibility to nominate a chaplain to the Community and Comprehensive Schools. These Trust Boards also provide the Catholic education which the Catholic Bishops seek to protect through the nomination process. Nonetheless the Trust Boards and other patrons of Voluntary Secondary Schools have consistently refused to allow the Bishops to nominate a chaplain for their schools. M2 describes how in the early 2000s the DES was at the point of allowing State-paid chaplains to be appointed to the Voluntary Secondary School Sector:

There was commitment gained from government to support chaplaincy in the voluntary sector ... and there were various negotiations between the Episcopal Commission on Education, maybe CORI were involved, ourselves and the DES. At one point I know there was a commitment to commence with

twenty-five chaplains. My understanding is ... the negotiations became bogged down in terms of conditions for those chaplains (M2).

T1 elaborates a little further: *“the Department(DES) said they had no objection and then the Bishops’ requirement to sign off on the appointment within schools. Boards of Management and Congregations were not prepared to take that step”* (T1). So while the Community and Comprehensive Schools are prepared to take the passive role in the appointment of their chaplain and in this way ensure the continuity of the chaplaincy service in their schools, the Voluntary Sector are not prepared to accommodate the Church, whose mission they too subscribe to. During the interview T1 sought to justify this stance by comparing the appointment of a chaplain to that of a principal:

What if the Bishops had the right, or the final say, over the appointment of a Principal or Deputy Principal, because we would see the chaplain as central as that of leadership within the school. I think we probably are comfortable in knowing that you have to stand strong but knowing also that you have to cultivate trust and understanding as opposed to just suddenly having these bishops or an individual bishop in the diocese having a say over the schools (T1).

T1 also reflects on the way things have changed in this area since the establishment of the Trust Boards and the crisis within the Church and that ultimately it is schools and

their students who have lost out because of the power struggle between the religious orders and the Bishops:

If you were to go back now into that drawing board again and start setting out the stalls I think it mightn't be approached in the same way that it was some years back ... I don't think we would be as wedded to the power struggle that was there because we would be very focused on the ultimate beneficiaries – the schools and the students themselves (T1).

On the same topic T3 has no difficulty accepting the nomination of the Bishop in the case of a chaplain in a community school where her Trust Board shares patronage but would be less inclined to include the Bishop when employing a chaplain in one of their voluntary secondary schools:

I don't have an issue with the Bishop having a nominee on a selection committee because of the link with the mission of the Church.... In community schools where the nomination is there I think we have abided by that without difficulty. In the voluntary secondary schools we have ignored it only because we have done so in accordance with the articles of management (T3).

Only two of the chaplains interviewed are working in the Voluntary Sector. Both are very committed to the values of the Church as expressed through the spirit of the Order who run the school. Not having a nomination from the Bishop does not diminish their sense of working for the Church: *“part of that is obedience to the Church. I’m part of the Church so I would see myself as working for the Church. I don’t work for the Church in that I’m not contracted by them but I’m part of the Church”* (C7VSFP). T3 confirms that this is the position she would expect to find with anyone appointed as chaplain in one of their schools.

It seems the Catholic Church needs to offer more to the chaplain they nominate in terms of actual inclusion in the ministry of the Church or offer less and allow schools to appoint chaplains who best fit with the needs of their school. This would afford chaplains the freedom to grow and change and develop the role in a way which best matches the needs of a particular school community. In the meantime, the chaplain is fulfilling a ministerial role in the Church, nominated to do so by the local Church leader without the support from the Church the employment process might suggest. In this capacity it is important that the chaplain builds a good relationship with those who also work for the Church in the local area. The next section considers how these relationships can influence the role of the school chaplain.

8.2 Relationship between the Chaplain and Other Church Ministers

In Chapter 2.3.1 the responsibility under Canon law of the ordained chaplain to maintain some relationship with the parish priest was examined. This expectation is also present in the literature for the lay chaplain. It is widely held that the school chaplain has a role to play in interfacing between the local Church and the school authorities and also in helping the local Church to understand the religious and spiritual needs of young people. The only school to offer its job description for the school chaplain includes “*to liaise with the sacramental chaplain and to be a contact person for parishes*” as part of it.

This research indicates that principals value the relationship with the local church and try, whenever possible, to build on it. This effort to foster good relationships was not limited to the faith-based schools. A principal of a Catholic school is concerned with building up this connection because: “*I don’t think you could be divorced or removed from the structures of the local Church, I think you should be part of that ... so that we are all singing the hymns from the same hymn sheet*” (P10VS). Another principal of a Community School would like a stronger connection: “*we do what we can to build relationship with the parish, and we have a good relationship with the parish, but there is a distance there*” (P2CS). In both cases the chaplain is seen as the key person in building up this relationship. Chaplains themselves are also keen to cultivate connections with the parish.

While chaplains want to create links they are also realistic about difficulties encountered in doing so. For some chaplains the fact that priests get moved regularly to different parishes makes it difficult to maintain strong connections with parish personnel:

It varies from parish priest to parish priest depending on who we get. Last year's guy was superb – wanted to be with the kids all the time. This present guy is more reserved so there are limitations put on it. But I would always try to link in as much as possible (C6CS).

The chaplains see themselves in a continuous circle of building up relationships and understandings and then having to start again when a new priest arrived. Chaplains do not see any over-riding policy on the part of priests as to how they connect with the schools or young people. Many of the connections are dependent on the personality of the priest and his particular interest in youth ministry. Some chaplains see the role of parish pastoral workers as having the potential to strengthen the link between the school and the parish although this role too lacks stability. The movement of personnel within parishes often means that at times of bereavement the school chaplain is the person who can offer continuity and stability through the bereavement process: *“I know the priest in the parish. I see them [local clergy] at funerals but I can offer support later when the priests aren't there and it might be for the first couple of months, it might be for a year or two”* (C6CS). The findings of this research reflect what McGrail and Sullivan (2007) report in the UK university context. While some chaplains experience only awkwardness in maintaining continuity of relationships with parish personnel others

experience more deep seated problems in building connections ranging from apathy to hostility. These difficulties are considered in the next section.

8.2.1 Difficulties Faced with Building up a Relationship with the Local Parish

In this study the lack of connection between the school and the parish was noted by T4:

“Quite often in post-primary school there is no tie up between the school and parish ...

I’m trying to do something about that this year with the chaplain and the Head of the RE together with the pupils to prepare the liturgy in the parish just once a year” (T4). One

principal of a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School sees this expectation as unrealistic:

“We have students from thirty two parishes in this school so the idea that a chaplain could be a resource-person for those parishes – it just doesn’t work” (P1VSFP). Rather

than the school organising school-parish links this school encourages students independently to get involved in their own local parish. Another principal points out,

that students themselves are not anxious to get involved with their local church: *“I would say we are meeting anger and outrage at the Catholic Church. And apathy – you*

know they are just bored, they are not interested in it” (P11VS).

Chaplains wonder if this kind of forced initiatives to get young people to attend Sunday liturgies in the parish is simply a ploy on the part of the parish to make themselves look good:

We are seen as people who are going to take people to Mass and maybe put a good face on Church. I can put a good face on the Gospel Mass because I have kids that are reading, kids that are ministers of the Eucharist, and the Church can look good (C5CS).

The chaplains doubt the long term effect of such involvement if parishioners and priests do not reach out in a real way to young people. Chaplains are keenly aware of the hunger of students for the spiritual within school and are frustrated that this hunger is not being addressed in any substantial or sustainable way outside of school:

I could say I have a parish here of over 700 young people. And that is replicated all around the country. When I worked in the parish for three years I was breaking my back trying to find young people. I found them. They are here (C5CS).

Several chaplains in the Focus group expressed a hope that students be connected into their own parishes so that when they leave school they will have an outlet for religious expression and faith development. This is consistent with the research conducted by McGrail and Sullivan (2007, 82) that indicates that some lay chaplains are making efforts to build links with parishes so that students do not become increasingly isolated from parish life. These links also ensure continuity of sacramental provision upon the appointment of lay chaplains.

The Focus group members, when considering the connection between school chaplains and parish life, express fears that they are building students up to participate in meaningful liturgy and then sending them out into parishes where they might not have such an enriching experience:

We are an independent fiefdom within the school, basically we are a separate parish ... we have to be mindful that our kids are from parishes outside of our school where there could be phenomenal things happening, or nothing happening, or worse than nothing (CFG).

This echoes what other chaplains said at interview. Chaplains feel that priests are not facing up to the realities of the changing needs of their parishioners, including young people. One member of the Focus group in this research, reports the gulf of difference between what he perceives as best for the students and what the parish priest considers the best approach:

the most stressful part of my year is the opening Mass for the staff at the beginning of the year and the graduation Mass because of the local situation. The parish priest and myself I don't think we believe in the same God. We are just so different in our approach (CFG).

This mismatch between what students are experiencing at school and receiving in the parish in terms of liturgical experience is seen as something that is keeping young people away from parish life.

The reluctance of priests to get involved with the faith formation of young people in schools is a source of enormous frustration for school chaplains. Many of them, as coordinators of chaplaincy services, have the experience of trying to find priests to offer the sacraments in schools. The data suggest that frequently these efforts are unsuccessful and many chaplains have given up on having class Masses or offering the Sacrament of Reconciliation; for example one chaplain describes how difficult it is to get a priest to come in to the school: *“When I came here first I was trying to organise masses and confessions and it was really hard to do, because even at that stage it was hard to get a priest to come in to do it”* (C1CC). Members of the Focus group confirm this frustration: *“I had a priest that when I asked him if he would say the opening of the school year Mass he said ‘sorry the time for school Masses is no more’ ... where do you go from there?”* (FG). A priest chaplain in the Focus group finds that his fellow priests don’t always support him in his chaplaincy ministry either:

Basically, my brother priests in the surrounding parishes see that as my scene. You look after that, we will work away in the parishes ... I wonder what it is going to become like, or how it is for lay chaplains who may not be recognised or acknowledged at all by the neighbouring priest (CFG).

This lack of support reflects the findings of McGrail and Sullivan's study, where ordained ministers working in chaplaincy did not feel supported in their ministry by fellow priests and ministers.

Both T2 and T4 are hopeful about the positive effect that the new initiative in Voluntary Secondary Schools, as described in Section 7.4, might have on parish-school relationships. At the time of writing the first year of this pilot programme is under review. Initial findings suggest that while schools find it extremely helpful the hoped for parish links have not materialised and some parishes are reluctant to contribute financially to the scheme. It would appear that there is considerable work to be done to achieve a coherent approach to faith formation between school chaplains and parish personnel. The involvement of school chaplains at Deanery level and as part of the pastoral training programme for clerical students would be helpful.

8.3 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter helps to address the sub-questions regarding who the chaplain works for and any tension that may exist between school and the nominating authority. This research can find little evidence of supervision of the work of school chaplains on the part of the Diocese and no examples of a Bishop withdrawing a nomination. Chaplains calling on their nominating authority to take their part in contractual issues but having no other oversight by their nominating authority intensifies the confusion between who the chaplain works for. If chaplains require the support of the nominating authority on

such issues they must be prepared to be answerable as to how they are upholding the teaching of the Church in their chaplaincy ministry. There is little evidence that this is happening. It seems clear that the nominating authority and other stakeholders have very different ideas about the rationale for school chaplaincy.

The insight that chaplains who have lost their faith and may not be in a position to privately uphold the teachings of their nominating Church can still make good school chaplains is pivotal to the research. This clearly indicates that the school is defining the role as one of maintaining the characteristic spirit of the school and not as ministers of the Church within the school community. The literature reviewed tells of how chaplains feel torn between their sense of vocation and sense of professionalism (Sullivan, 2007, 102). For the most part in Ireland school chaplains do not feel their vocation to chaplaincy is acknowledged by their Church and leads them to over depend on their professionalism to the detriment of relationships with their dominating authority.

The way in which Church authorities view school chaplaincy needs to be addressed. Some work is necessary so that all Church ministers understand the role that each ministerial position plays in faith formation. A chaplain working in isolation from his/her local parish is unhelpful but equally it is unsatisfactory if there is tension and lack of understanding between the chaplain and local parish personnel. Input on the

work of school chaplaincy should form part of the training of priests and chaplains should be invited to Deanery meetings.

The first three chapters of findings have set the scene for the formulation of a theory on the Rationale for School Chaplains. This theory is presented over the next five chapters.

Chapter 9

Introduction to the Theory of School Chaplains as Meaning-Makers

9.1 An overview of the core category

The previous three chapters present the data on the current situation for school chaplains in Ireland today as understood by the main stakeholders. This chapter begins to formulate a theory of school chaplaincy in response to the research question, ‘what is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland today?’ as it emerged from the study through the use of Grounded Theory Methodology. Chapter Five describes the process of coding through which categories and theory emerges in GTM. Appendices H-J contains the code book for this research and the progression from initial codes to categories. Through the induction and constructivism typical of Grounded Theory these categories are used to develop a theory of school chaplaincy.

During the analysis of the data and reflection by the researcher on the analysis the most plausible and reasonable explanation for the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland is that they are Meaning-Makers. The Meaning-Making motif incorporates the educational, spiritual, creative and relational aspects of school chaplaincy to emerge

from the coding process. The theory of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers in school is therefore *grounded* in real world data collected for this thesis. By developing the Meaning-Making role of the school chaplain the ambiguity and confusion around the purpose of the role dissipates. The Meaning-Making role allows the function of the school chaplain to be carried out in all school types, with or without the nomination of a local ordinary. The Meaning-Making rationale is in keeping with the literature reviewed where authors such as Egan and Shakespeare describe the education dimensions of chaplaincy as rooted in the Meaning-Making possibilities which stem from the spiritual elements of the work. Meaning-Making best marries the educational and spiritual function of the school chaplain.

Meaning-Making is the core category to emerge from the research and it includes the sub-categories: developing and maintaining school ethos and interpreter at times of crises and bereavements in school. The chaplain uses liturgy and ritual and attentive listening as important pedagogical tools in both these situations. The Meaning-Making role of the chaplain is not linear. The rotating cogs of ethos and crisis and bereavement being turned by ritual and thoughtfulness best captures the way in which the chaplain operates. Both the sub-categories have their own properties that emerged through the process of constant comparative analysis and these properties support the core category of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers. Although both sub-categories are examined separately, a certain amount of crossover exists, indicating the ongoing process of

Meaning-Making and the interconnectedness of school life. The school chaplain is a Meaning-Maker educator and his/her main pedagogical tools of prayer and ritual and ‘thoughtfulness’ encircle the core-category and the sub-categories (see Figure 9.1).



Figure 9.1: Chaplains as Meaning-Makers

The role of Meaning-Maker locates the chaplain within the spheres of education, faith formation, promoter of spiritual development, pastoral work and leadership in school. The chaplain’s role as a Meaning-Maker is part of the hidden curriculum of the school. The term ‘Meaning-Making’ is found in constructivist approaches to education, based

on the work of educators such as John Dewey, Maria Montessori, Jean Piaget and Jack Mezirow. When developing this theory of the school chaplain as a Meaning-Maker particular attention was paid to Dewey's philosophy of Experience and Education (1938). It became obvious that the school chaplain is focused on an education that enables students to make sense of their experience. Thomas Groome (1991) drew on Dewey's philosophy when developing his Shared Praxis Theory for Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry. The shared praxis model was explored extensively to see if it fitted with the emerging theory of school chaplaincy. While many aspects of the model fitted well, including students naming their present praxis and reflecting upon it, ultimately it was felt that the shared praxis model aligned the focus of the chaplain/educator too closely to religious education and the Christian story which may not always be suitable for the model of school chaplaincy this research seems to be demanding. Another theory closely based on Dewey's philosophy is Mezirow's theory of education known as Transformative Learning Theory. According to this theory Transformative Learning is the epistemology of how students learn to reason for themselves rather than act on the assimilated beliefs, values, feelings and judgments of others and thereby come to make new meanings out of life situations (Mezirow, 2009, 23). The chaplain facilitates students to learn in this way by providing space within the busy school day for one-to-one conversations, social action, ritual and liturgical experiences. Because these actions are reflected in the description of school chaplaincy found during this research, and resonate with the description of school chaplaincy in the literature, transformative learning theory is considered the most appropriate formal

educational theory within which to situate the substantive theory of the school chaplain as a Meaning-Maker.

Substantive and Formal theory are distinguished in Chapter 5.2.4. The substantive theory of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker provides a theoretical interpretation of the rationale for school chaplains in Ireland. The formal theory of Transformative Learning Theory is more abstract and provides a theoretical interpretation for teaching and learning which can be applied to a wider example range of educational disciplines. Situating a theory of school chaplaincy within an educational theory is a development on the educational rationale for school chaplains put forward by the Supreme Court ruling. As Transformative Learning Theory informs the theory of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers it is outlined briefly in the next section.

9.2 Transformative Learning Theory

The theory of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers sits well within the theory of Transformative Learning because of the way this formal theory recognizes the valuable life experiences students live through. These experiences are used as part of the teaching process to encourage inquiry, critical thinking and interaction with other learners. Transformative Learning Theory is usually associated with adult learning but is increasingly relevant as a theory for adolescents and young adults in keeping with the

key skills of the new Junior Cycle as referenced in this thesis (NCCA, 2013). The fact that chaplains are educators to the whole school community, including colleagues and parents also makes situating the chaplain within this formal theory appropriate. Mezirow (see 1991), in his development of Transformative Learning Theory, outlines the differences between transmissional, transactional and transformational education. Transformative Learning is about ‘why?’ issues while transmissional and transactional learning focuses on ‘how?’ and ‘what?’ questions. When educators, such as chaplains, adopt a transformative learning approach with students “they are seriously challenging students to assess their value system and worldview and are subsequently changed by the experience” (Quinnan, 1997, 42)

Transformative Learning Theory is influenced by Paulo Freire’s (1974) concept of ‘conscientization’. There are ten phases of learning that students move through during the transformative process. The process begins with a disorientating dilemma. The educator helps the student to critically assess their assumptions about this dilemma and begin to recognise the connection between their discontent and the process of transformation. Critical reflection refers to questioning the integrity of deeply held assumptions and beliefs based on prior experience (Taylor, 2009, 7). There are three forms of reflection in the transformation of meaning perspectives: content (reflecting on what we perceive, think, feel and act), process (reflecting on how we perform the function of perceiving), and premise (an awareness of why we perceive). Premise

reflection, the least common of the three and the basis of critical reflection, refers to examining the presuppositions underlying our knowledge of the world (Taylor, 2009, 8). Students need particular assistance to engage fully with this form of reflection and it is supported by dialogue with the self and with others. The theory of the school chaplain as a Meaning-Maker is particularly rooted in this aspect of Transformative Learning Theory.

Dialogue is the essential medium through which transformation is promoted and developed. In contrast to everyday discussions, dialogue is used in transformative learning “when we have reason to question the comprehensibility, truth, appropriateness (in relation to norms) or authenticity (in relation to feelings) of what is being asserted or to question the credibility of the person making the statement” (Mezirow, 1991, 77). Dialogue becomes the medium for critical reflection to be put into action, where experience is reflected on, assumptions and beliefs are questioned, and habits of mind are ultimately transformed. Dialogue is more than having an analytical conversation; it involves an acute awareness of learner’s attitudes, feelings, personalities, and preferences over time, and as signs of change and instability begin to emerge, educators can respond accordingly. It also means developing a sense of trust in the process of dialogue with others, creating a setting that helps learners live with some discomfort while on the edge of knowing, in the process of gaining new insights and understandings (Taylor, 2009, 10). The student may have to acquire new knowledge and skills in order

to implement their plan and try out new roles. Through this process the student grows in competence and self-confidence and moves on from the support of the teacher-chaplain when they are able to integrate their new perspective into their lives (Mezirow, 2009, 19).

Individual experience, the primary medium of transformative learning, consists of what each learner brings (prior experiences) and also what he or she experiences within the 'classroom' itself. It "constitutes a starting point for discourse leading to critical examination of normative assumptions underpinning the learner's ... value judgments or normative expectations" (Mezirow, 2000, 31). The educator can also stimulate and create experiences through classroom activities. A greater life experience provides a deeper well from which to draw on and react to as individuals engage in dialogue and reflection (Taylor, 2009, 6). The prior experiences of students are seen as "pedagogical entry points" by educators as they offer opportunities to engage a learner's personal dilemma as a potentially transformative experience (Lange, 2004, 129). Value-laden course content and intense experiential activities are seen as offering experiences that can be a catalyst for critical reflection, can provide an opportunity to promote transformative learning and can provoke and provide a process for facilitating change (Taylor, 2009, 6). Intense experiential activities can also help provoke Meaning-Making among participants by acting as triggers or disorientating dilemmas, prompting critical reflection, and facilitating transformative learning, allowing learners to experience

learning more directly and holistically (Taylor, 2009, 7). Pedagogies that are encouraged in Transformative Learning Theory are “engagement with music, all the plastic arts, dance, movement, and mime, as well as all forms of myth, fable, allegory, and drama” (Yorks and Kasl, 2006, 27). These activities encourage expressive ways of knowing which invite “‘the whole person’ into the classroom environment ... the person in fullness of being: as an affective, intuitive, thinking, physical, spiritual self” (Yorks and Kasl, 2006, 46). This holistic approach to education can be built on by engaging emotions in the classroom to provide “an opportunity for establishing a dialogue with those unconscious aspects of ourselves seeking expression through various images, feelings and behaviours within the learning setting”(Dirkx, 2006, 22). By exploring emotional issues with students, the educator can address the dynamics that contribute to resistance in learning, as well as potentially initiate a process of individuation – that of “a deeper understanding, realisation, and appreciation of who he or she is” (Dirkx, 2006, 18). The individuation process is particularly relevant during adolescence.

One of the key elements to Transformative Learning Theory is the ability of the teacher to foster a trusting relationship with the learner, thereby providing the safe environment in which learners can engage in critical reflection, and ultimately allow transformative learning to take place (Taylor, 2009, 4). Carter (2002, 55–91) identifies four categories of relationships as significant to learning at work: utilitarian relationships (acquiring skills and knowledge), love relationships (enhance self-image, friendship), memory

relationships (of former or deceased individuals) and imaginative relationships (inner dialogue, meditation). Love, memory and imaginative relationships are central to transformative learning. Once a trusting relationship has been developed learning can occur in one of four ways: by elaborating existing meaning schemes, learning new meaning schemes, transforming meaning schemes, and transforming meaning perspectives. A transformative learning experience requires that the learner make an informed and reflective decision to act or not to act. This decision may result in immediate action or delayed action, caused by situational constraints, or a reasoned reaffirmation of an existing pattern of action (Mezirow, 2009, 22).

The next section considers how the school chaplain might practice Transformative Learning Theory and by drawing on this theory of education become a Meaning-Maker for all members of the school community.

9.3 The Chaplain and Transformative Learning Theory

This holistic theory of education is particularly applicable for the school chaplain. The fact that Transformative Learning Theory is usually associated with adult learning provides a model for the school chaplains' work with the whole school community as mandated in management documents. The student, for a school chaplain, is not limited to the young people in classes but also includes parents, colleagues and school

management. Six of the eleven principals interviewed noted that the chaplain had a particular role to play in helping staff to Make-Meaning out of difficult events in their lives. This involvement with adult members of the school community is also supported by the management and trustee bodies interviewed.

In the management job descriptions and Church document discussed in Chapters Two and Four school chaplain are charged with integrating all the different dimensions of education: the spiritual, moral, social, personal, academic and physical development. This integration is the premise on which transformational learning is based. The chaplain works with the affective dimension of the student which may be pushed to the periphery by other educators given the pressure to produce examination results. Several of those interviewed, when describing the chaplain's educational role, spoke of the chaplain 'drawing out' the giftedness of students.

The chaplain fits naturally into the 'why?' dimension of education. It is noted in the Literature Review that the chaplain provides space for students to ask existential question which are fundamental to the practice of Transformational Learning Theory. One chaplain describes herself as "*a bit more of an educator of self and an educator of the dimensions of self*" (C4COMP) and another says: "*the spiritual life is to help students discover that for themselves and they have an experience and they say, yes, this*

is important. And I see that as education” (C7VS). Sullivan (2007, 95–96) also supports this position, arguing that chaplains have a role in “finding spaces and creating opportunities ... for students to consider their inner lives ... to ask existential questions that courses do not address, to see themselves in a wider context than ‘module fodder’ or as part of the intellectual production line.” The flexibility in the chaplain’s timetable facilitates this ability to provide spaces to colleagues and students within the busyness of school life. The religious background of school chaplains also suggests openness to existential questions and questions on the meaning of life. Pohlmann (2013, 17) notes that chaplains take a stance of committed impartiality in their interactions with students. This committed impartiality is very important if a chaplain is to practice Transformational Learning so that students can look at and evaluate various value stances and answers to their questions. The chaplains interviewed highlight how they take this stance of committed impartiality when working with students. One chaplain describes how he “*very much just walks with, and accompanies and points out some of the pit falls along the way and doesn’t stop somebody from making the mistakes but is there to help them if they do*” (C3CS). This is Transformational Learning Theory in action.

The Theory of Transformative Learning is seen as particularly suitable for school chaplaincy because of the listening role that chaplains have in schools. In the brief outline of the theory given above the importance of dialogue is emphasised. These

dialogues focus on the feelings of learners, personalities and attitudes and can take place in schools on such themes as ethos and its impact on school policy, and take on a particular significance at times of crisis and bereavement. While chaplains are not necessarily trained as counsellors they do have counselling skills. One important aspect of school chaplaincy that runs through this research and the literature, describes the chaplain as being available to listen to young people and as having the ability to piece together little fragments of information that the young person might share from time to time. One of the Church representatives interviewed describes the role of the chaplain within this listening framework: *“there is someone I can talk to about the issues that I have ...Young people are seeking to discover their identity. And one of the ways of discovering their identity is to process with somebody else”* (CH1).

When a student in crisis comes to talk to a school chaplain on a one-to-one basis this presents the chaplain with a pedagogical entry point. As educators with counselling skills chaplains are ideally positioned in the school community to engage in the kind of transformative learning dialogues that can help students make new meaning out of their disorientating dilemma. The chaplain’s unique position in the school community, largely outside of exam structures and discipline procedures, allows them to build up the kind of relationships necessary to implement transformative learning theory. These relationships are based on trust; the trust that students place in their school chaplain is evident in both the literature review and the research findings. The chaplain may also facilitate small

group dialogues for similar outcomes. On occasion the chaplain may stimulate discussion and conversation around a value laden subject, such as a moral dilemma. Such discussion encourages students to think critically and facilitates transformative learning. The chaplain can also stimulate dialogue on the meaning and practice of a schools ethos for both students and staff in a school. The chaplain's Meaning-Maker role in the area of school ethos is discussed in detail in Chapter Ten.

The chaplain's involvement with members of the school community during crises and bereavement is a significant pedagogical entry point. The ability of the chaplain to be a Meaning-Maker when faced with situations of grief and loss is highlighted in the data collected for this thesis and in the literature review. It is pointed out in the literature that a tragedy in a school is often an opportunity for deep meaningful ministry to students who, in the ordinary run of school, are rarely touched by the work of the chaplain (see Doyle, 2004, 89). The chaplain is not only involved in order to offer pastoral care but after the initial bereavement the chaplain can be there to help the young person or staff member to begin to make sense of their feelings of disorientation. In TLT memory relationships are very important. The chaplain uses their teaching skills to help students establish this relationship with their loved one who has died. When the chaplain facilitates meaningful dialogue with students at times of tragedy and stress it can change the value choices that students make. In the course of the interviews the chaplain is described as being a key person in guiding students back to mental wellbeing.

The chaplain facilitates memory and imaginative relationships in a particular way through prayer and ritual. During these times the spiritual dimension of the student is evoked. Prayer, meditation and ritual considered as an educational model opens up the experience to students from all faiths and none and supports Touhy and Cairns' assertion that exposure to these experiences allows the young person to search for meaning and to seek to explain their life situations through authentic relationships and spiritual definitions (Tuohy, 2000). Such rituals are described in the literature as the link between personal development and education (Cotter, 1998, 108; Egan, 2007, 117). This is particularly relevant given the Supreme Court ruling that chaplains bring an extra dimension to religious education. One principal describes how his desire to have a chaplain in his school was based on the need he noticed in the school community to have someone who could create Meaning-Making rituals:

there was a need for somebody to bring another dimension to it... to think out and have time to reflect on how best to address the needs of the particular student cohort we have at the moment and their culture, the way that's affecting them, and how to address that in terms of liturgy and creatively. I just couldn't see the RE-teachers having time to step back and to reflect and think about that question (P1VSFP).

The way in which chaplains include all the experiences students have in the Meaning-Making process confirms chaplaincy's theoretical position within the Transformative Learning Theory of education. In the words of one young chaplain:

School is school and, as I say to the young people, you don't just carry your school books to school, you carry everything with you in terms of the university of life and I think as chaplain it's important to promote that in terms of the ethos of school. That idea that we carry with us our school books but we also carry the books of life and the books that are going on each day. (C2CC)

9.4 Chapter Conclusion

The use of Grounded Theory Methodology led the researcher to conclude that the rationale for school chaplaincy is that chaplains are Meaning-Makers within the school community. Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory explains how the chaplain/educator can practice Meaning-Making within their school community particularly in the area of school ethos and at times of transition and crisis in schools by drawing on the pedagogical tools of ritual and thoughtfulness. By situating the substantive theory of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers within the formal theory of Transformative Learning Theory the role of the chaplain as an educator is verified and much of the confusion that surrounds the role identity of chaplains is eliminated. The chaplain as Meaning-Maker also removes the role from the restrictions of Church ministry, although it may include Meaning-Making within the teachings of the Church, and allows scope for the role of chaplain to be developed in keeping with the ethos of a particular school.

Transformative Learning Theory offers a theoretical framework for the chaplains' use of the categories of ritual, liturgy and thoughtfulness that emerged from the collected data. These categories take up the themes of relationality (e.g. Glackin, 2011) and personal development through the use of ritual (e.g. Cotter, 1998) present in the literature. It not only describes the rationale for school chaplaincy but presents an educational structure for the delivery of such a model of school chaplaincy.

In the next three chapters the rationale for school chaplains in Ireland is explained based on their responsibility as Meaning-Makers. Two areas of Meaning-Making are looked at: developing and maintaining school ethos and being an interpreter at times crises and bereavements in school. Both Meaning-Making sub-categories are supported by the chaplain organising rituals and by pedagogical thoughtfulness.

Chapter 10

School Chaplains: Meaning-Makers of School Ethos

The theory of school chaplaincy expounded here is that the chaplain makes meaning out of elements of school life and personal experience with members of the school community. They do this by drawing on Transformative Learning Theory to shape their educational practice. An important Meaning-Making sub-category that school chaplains facilitate is that of developing and maintaining school ethos and the chaplain's activities in this regard forms part of the answer to the research question: 'what is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland?'

The ethos-building role of the school chaplain, across both the State and the Voluntary school sectors, appears to be unique to the Irish and UK context. Research into the international context of school chaplaincy reveals no evidence of such a role being attributed to chaplains in Australia, Israel or Malta. Ireland differs from other countries in the way in which schools, even of the same religious denomination, differentiate themselves from one another on the basis of values. Because of the emphasis placed on differentiated school ethos it is plausible to suggest that Irish schools would need a dedicated staff member who can mediate and interpret this value system for other members of the school community. The concept of ethos or 'characteristic spirit', as

already outlined in Chapter Four, is enshrined in the Education Act 1998. Indeed the promotion of ethos is central to the evolution of the school chaplain in the Community and Comprehensive Schools, as described in Chapter 4.1. Although chaplains themselves describe ethos as “*the thing that happens*” (C3CS) in fact the research would indicate that chaplains play a very large role in progressing ‘the things that happen’ in schools. In this way chaplains educate colleagues and students in the area of characteristic spirit, ensuring that ethos becomes embedded into the day to day life of the school.

CH2 explains the relationship between the ethos and the chaplain well:

The role of the chaplain is allied to the ethos of the school and a manifestation of the ethos of the school ... the ethos is informed by the religious underpinnings of the school but it is more than simply being a faith ‘passer-oner’. It’s a developmental support to the child based on Gospel values. So regardless of whether the child is religious or not they’ll still get the sense of support in formation (CH2).

In this statement CH2 draws attention to the integrity needed in the person of the school chaplain and the way in which their personhood will influence the formation of the students with which they work. CH2 believes that having a chaplain in a school is the most direct way in which patrons can ensure that their vision of ethos can be supported

within the school community. Indeed in some Church of Ireland schools the chaplain is considered so integral to fostering the ethos of the school that they automatically become part of the management team of the school and are elected on to the Diocesan synod. The role of chaplain as a Meaning Maker in the context of ethos is strongly validated in this research, yet chaplains themselves do not appear to promote this aspect of their role or indeed fully understand it. The analysis of the WSE/MLL reports indicates that this aspect of the chaplain's role is not being evaluated and would therefore appear not to be valued.

M1 queries how conscientious schools are, at this time, about implementing their individual ethos:

my feeling would be that maybe these people [patrons] set up the ethos and put it on the bit of paper and it doesn't go much further than that. I believe the Catholic voluntary schools would make greater attempts at this and ask questions like how are we living this out? (M1).

This observation highlights that the kind of reflection being suggested by M1 as a role for the chaplain may not be happening in practice, particularly in the State-Voluntary and the State sectors. The next section considers how the school chaplain as a Meaning-Making educator could fulfill this role.

10.1 Time to Reflect and Interpret Ethos

In this research the stakeholders consistently recognise the chaplain as somebody who is a presence in the school, sometimes a spiritual presence and sometimes a person who simply has time to reflect on what is going on in the school. One principal uses the word ‘thoughtful’ to best express what the chaplain brings to the school: *“to be thoughtful, reflective, open to suggestions and to be thoughtful to others, to be kind”* (P4CS). The use of the word thoughtfulness captures the reflective nature of the role and the outreach to other that this reflection leads to. This is how an ethos is embodied. This thoughtfulness is one of the Meaning-Making tools at the disposal of the chaplain in schools.

The management bodies interviewed are particularly conscious of how busy school principals have become and how administrators simply do not have time for reflection on ethos –despite it being the foundation on which all other aspects of school life is built. One principal explains the benefit of having a staff member who is not rigidly tied to a timetable and is therefore available to reflect on the bigger issues: *“I think there is room for someone to be moving around, to be a directing influence, picking up on things. And having a sense of what is needed”* (P6CC). Taking this notion of having time to reflect a little further, T3 describes the key function of the chaplain in their schools as: *“nurturing the reflective and enabling the person to get in touch with their own inner being and their own spirituality”* (T3). This approach is also mirrored by the

school chaplain (C7VSFP) who spends time with students reflecting on their experience whenever they were involved in social justice activities and associates this activity with the building up of the mission statement of the school. There are very many concrete examples of Transformative Learning taking place through prayer and thoughtfulness with both staff and students going right through the interviews. The next section considers how the chaplain facilitates the Transformative Learning of school management on the subject of ethos.

10.2 Meaning-Making: School Management and Ethos

As schools move into second and third generation lay leadership the memory of the founding vision, that inspires the ethos of the school for many religious orders, may be becoming increasingly faint. For some new schools the task of formulating a vision for the school belongs to the patrons and is embedded in the school through the activities and actions of the school management. M3 suggests that an ability among school leadership to implement the vision for the school is critical:

School leadership more than anything determines the kind of school you have. And I don't think we have done anything near enough to ensure that the leaders have the appropriate skills and competencies and vision to lead their schools. That is a huge weakness of our system (M3).

This feeling of inadequacy for the task echoes through the interviews. M2 makes this observation:

The difficulty now is that the principals who are being appointed today, many of them wouldn't have had any experience of working in a school community where you had religious, members of the congregation available. So we have to ask ourselves where are they gaining their sense of a faith community from? (M2).

Frequently the leadership function of interpreting the characteristic spirit is being delegated to the school chaplain. One principal who does have a school chaplain in a voluntary secondary school explains how he feels he benefits from her presence: “*she [chaplain] is a huge support above all for myself in ensuring that the ethos of the school is protected ... Let's be fair I don't have any religious training*” (P10VS) and another in a relatively new school, who is still developing its sense of ethos says: “*you would be depending on the chaplain to make sure that it [characteristic spirit] was implemented and observed on a day to day basis*” (P4CS).

Other chaplains feel that they are taking on this leadership role themselves, without being given authority to do so by leadership because leadership is ignoring values in the mission statement. In one case the school is Catholic in its mission statement and in its patronage but management frequently frustrates the work of the chaplain in promoting

Christian values: “*I don’t think management see the school as being a Catholic school even though the patrons are the _____ [naming religious order]. Management wouldn’t be that way inclined. So I find I have to work against that. I have to work to promote Christian values*” (C6CS). Even with faith based schools T2 acknowledges that some principals do not prioritise implementation of ethos in their leadership role: “*the principal, it’s not that they’re against the ethos, they’re happy to support it but they don’t think about it. It’s not to the forefront of their minds*” (T2). It is clear that school management, in all sectors, would benefit from the support of someone who is trained in, and has time to reflect and interpret, school ethos. If management is unsure of how to embed the ethos of the school the chaplain may have a role in reminding them of the core values at the heart of the school ethos and in examining policies and practices to ensure they live up to these values. The Meaning-Making motif of Transformative Learning Theory is particularly well suited to such value-laden topics. The next section looks at how identified core values of a school can be upheld through the work of the chaplain.

10.3 Keeping Core Values to the Fore

When the chaplains interviewed describe how they support the ethos of a school they rarely express it as a religious or even a spiritual endeavour but rather portray themselves as highlighting values such as inclusivity, justice, love and respect. Chaplains understood themselves as modelling these values and in this way giving

meaning to the written words of a school mission statement. The majority of chaplains interviewed for this study indicate that they do not overtly refer to their values as Gospel values but rather promote the values of the school in a secular manner. One chaplain describes how she may have come to these values through a religious faith but whether they are presented as religious or secular values to young people is not something she concerns herself with. Another chaplain explains how she makes the ethos meaningful by modelling it:

I think it is just important in this school to be a presence every day to students and to be a role model and be someone who treats people the way you want to be treated. Then hopefully, something will give around respect, justice, fairness, love, equality (C2CC).

Principals also note that their chaplains are leading by example in the promotion of values that schools see as important:

In our school caring is very important and we look out for one another. It is important that students are aware of that and it is their responsibility as well as parents and staff. Our chaplain plays a key role in ensuring this value is in the minds of everyone (P11VS).

Another principal describes the chaplain as “a kind of living embodiment of what is the characteristic spirit” (P2CS). Parents also tend to see the chaplains as modelling values,

although they were more likely to describe the values in religious or spiritual terms. One of the ways in which the chaplain can keep the vision of the school to the fore is through policies and practices.

10.4 Meaning-Making: Through Policies and Practices

The importance of the ethos of the school permeating the every day practices of the school is emphasised by T3:

You can see it in action with some principals who would be very conscious of the ethos of the school. It permeates all their leadership activities and then it results in the teachers being aware of the ethos. You will hear things, when their making decisions, for example under the Code of Behaviour or a curricular decision, you will hear them saying that 'that's not in keeping with our ethos'. It permeates the whole school when it comes from the top, from the principal, when on a day to day basis the principal talks the talk and walks the walk. When they do that, the ethos, you can be assured, is not going to be forgotten (T3).

When principals are unable to fulfill this function in school it often falls to the chaplains to ensure that these core values find their way in to policies and decision-making processes within the school. One chaplain explained his Meaning-Making role in the following way: “Suddenly when it comes to writing documents they say, oh yeah, we do

that anyhow. We believe that, oh yeah, we can say that. The thing becomes a living presence, I think" (C3CS). This is consistent with other research that highlights ways in which the expertise of chaplains is drawn upon in this area. One author describes the chaplain as being central to the promotion of the college vision, structures and activities. This is often embodied through pastoral care for all the members of the institution (McGrail & Sullivan, 2007, 206). In practical ways it emerges in this research that chaplains remind other leaders in the school community of what they already do to embody their ethos. The literature describes this aspect of the work of the chaplain as the 'prophetic role'. Egan (2007, 114) writes of the chaplain's responsibility to help the school to critique the guiding myths and assumptions underlying decisions and policies in the school. He also describes the shadow side of institutions and the role the chaplain has in discerning this side of their institution (Egan, 2007, 114). The theory of the school chaplain as Meaning-Maker with regards to school ethos goes beyond any previous analysis of the prophetic role of the chaplain. The theory of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker is more encompassing and integrated than the term prophetic. The Meaning-Maker educates in a collaborative way while the prophet may simply highlight the problems.

The manner in which the chaplain is nominated and employed enables the chaplain to hold this insider/outsider role, as described in the literature (see Robinson, 2007, 171) in the school community. One chaplain expresses the benefit of this position: "*The*

chaplain is someone who is outside of management. Outside of the teachers. He is a support to both and you can only do that if you are not, sort of, in a line of authority" (C3CS). Principals also acknowledge the importance of this 'outsider' position in the school: *"the chaplain would be seen as somebody who is central to, yet separate from, so that is important"* (P2CS). If the nomination process was removed from the appointment of school chaplains this benefit may be lost. This may weaken the chaplain's ability to critique the manner in which school management implement school ethos.

The values underpinning the ethos of a school are often countercultural in nature. One chaplain (C3CS) explains how promoting a sense of community can often be seen as radical when a cult of individualism is all pervasive. This chaplain considers it appropriate to challenge decisions and practices which are contrary to the stated ethos: *"those who are appointed as chaplain have a unique role within a school and they need to be reminded of that. It might be easier to go along with the flow and just teach the classes"* (C3CS). A principal describes how his chaplain is very much involved in school planning and leadership and has a strong sense of what is right and wrong for their particular school

She would be looked on as being very much part of the holistic nature of what goes on within the school and therefore she would have a very strong sense and a very strong point of view to bring to the table when we are talking

about issues, school issues, so I would see her very much involved in that whole school aspect of what goes on in the school from a planning end and from a day to day running end of what we do (P5CS).

Another principal also acknowledges the service it is to her to have a chaplain who challenges her approach to certain matters: *“If she felt I was acting incorrectly or unjustly I know she would be in to tell me. And I don’t mean controversially. She would say ‘do you think maybe we need to look at that again?’”(P9CS).* In effect she is facilitating the kind of dialogue which leads to Transformative Learning.

If the chaplain is to be truly counter-cultural in the values they uphold then they must be the first to express the inclusive vision of schools. The next section considers the chaplain’s role in inclusion. Many schools aspire to inclusion in their mission statement and this can give rise to the fear that chaplains, given their nomination from a single religious authority, may be exclusive in their interpretation of the ethos.

10.5 The Meaning-Making Chaplain who Includes

It is evident from the interviews that chaplains are expected to be, and in fact are, inclusive of students from other faiths and none. In many ways the clear mandate towards inclusion in faith schools makes the work of the chaplain in these schools simpler. CH1 emphasises that the word ‘catholic’ means universal and therefore a

central value of any Catholic school should be inclusivity. It is his view that when a sense of community is well developed within schools even students with different religious beliefs will welcome opportunities to celebrate, even religiously, with their friends and school community. Most chaplains when discussing the way they give meaning to the ethos conclude that they do not build ethos on religious grounds but rather by highlighting community building and inclusion. *“From my angle, it would be I suppose the ethos of the school, it doesn’t highlight the spirituality – it highlights inclusivity”* (C1CC).

The use of ritual to make meaning of ethos can be very supportive of students who come from different traditions and may feel the values of the school do not represent them. When the chaplain uses the Transformative Learning Theory model of teaching to facilitate students uncover when they have met the school values in prior life experiences they enable all students to Make-Meaning of what the school is trying to achieve. This concurs with Escaffre’s description, in the literature review, of how chaplaincy in France includes students of other faiths and none, facilitating their personal development and increasing their openness to people who do believe.

10.6 Meaning-Making Leading to Exclusion

Issues of exclusion in schools are likely to be as a result of the failure of individual schools to identify any denominational bias inherent in their ethos. M1 highlights that all Community and Comprehensive Schools, according to the Deeds of Trust, are multi-denominational and that there is a need for all chaplains to be aware of this. The research highlights that not all chaplains, or indeed principals or Community and Comprehensive Schools fully acknowledge the multi-denominational status of their founding vision. Parents are particularly scathing of the ways in which they see an overtly Catholic ethos being implemented in multi-denominational schools. However, parents may well be confusing a multi-denominational outlook with a secular viewpoint. Parent Five is of the opinion that the chaplain in her child's school is promoting an ethos which is at variance with that which she is trying to promote in her home. It is her view that the chaplain is bringing a religious ethos to a school that should have a secular outlook:

it is not our ethos, that is not what our family believes in. We have different beliefs. So therefore the values I am trying to give him are being pitted against her values and potentially it could cause conflict. So that is why he just doesn't go to anything she does (Pt5CS).

She places the responsibility for the values being promoted in the school with the chaplain rather than the Board of Management who formulate the characteristic spirit.

If the chaplain has a particular responsibility to en-flesh and give meaning to the ethos of the school, and this ethos has a Christian dimension, the question arises as to whether the constitution would support withdrawing a child from any interaction with the chaplain. The crux of the matter lies in whether the chaplain is helping to give meaning to an ethos which happens to have a Christian dimension or is acting as an agent of the Church and is endeavouring to convert students to a particular religious viewpoint. The data indicates that chaplains are entrusted with a responsibility by school administration to Make-Meaning of the characteristic spirit for students, parents and staff, an ethos that has been decided upon by the Board of Management. The chaplain, in interpreting the ethos, does not appear to be acting on behalf of the Church, although some of the values espoused by the school may be Gospel values. This interpretation of what the chaplain is doing is supported by the comments of T3, reported in Chapter 8.1.2, who says it would be acceptable for a chaplain to continue in the role without faith or belonging to a religious denomination so long as they are able to continue to support the characteristic spirit of the school. Chaplains have a role to play in ensuring that parents have a voice regarding how the characteristic spirit of the school is implemented. If this kind of discussion was to be organised by the school chaplain, with the backing of school management, there would be less likelihood of a clash of values between home and school.

Another example of how the chaplain taking responsibility for Making-Meaning of the ethos could be construed as exclusive is put forward by T1. Members of this Trust are of the opinion that the responsibility for implementation of ethos is the responsibility of the whole staff and have invested resources in equipping schools to take this approach. In the words of T1 *“The charism and the sense of intentionality around the particular option within the school should be the responsibility of everybody. It is almost unfair to label one person with it”* (T1). Under their approach all staff are expected to model the spirit of the school but at the same time T1 acknowledges the difficulties inherent in this approach: *“We don’t expect people to buy into a charism or take responsibility for imbibing a particular spirit but we do expect people to respect the culture of the school”* (T1). In principle all ethos would be more deeply embedded in school life if all staff embraced and modeled it to the best of their ability; however, the analysis of data does clearly indicate that leadership is needed to effectively develop this aspect of school life. The chaplain, as a Meaning-Maker of Ethos needs to be inclusive of all members of the school when teaching this aspect of school life.

10.7 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter highlights the leadership role the school chaplain has in the area of school ethos as a part of the answer to the research question: what is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland? Norman (2003) defined ethos as the atmosphere which emerges from the interaction of aspects of school life including teaching and learning,

management and leadership as well as goals and the use the interactions of symbols and rituals. This chapter explains how the Meaning-Making chaplain knits together all these aspects of ethos using Transformational Learning pedagogies of ritual and symbols. The Meaning-Making chaplain has a strong leadership role within their school community and is also a teacher and a learner. As chaplains were originally appointed to schools to replace the members of religious orders who continued the educational vision of their founders and foundresses, now the chaplain must take this mantle of memory upon themselves.

Through the chaplain's Meaning-Making work a school can truly animate the spiritual life of the school (Byrne, 2004, 192) and the spiritual capital referred to by King (2004, 169) is enhanced. Chaplains have a duty to explore how they can best make meaning of their characteristic spirit for all members of the school community and it is an area in which the chaplain could encourage greater parental involvement.

The value of the outsider status that the Bishop's nomination confers on the chaplain can be appreciated in the context of facilitating Meaning-Making of the school ethos. If the chaplain lost this position they may not be as effective in challenging school management to uphold the values enshrined in mission statements. However, even

though the Churches nominate a chaplain to their role, the ethos Meaning-Making function clearly locates the chaplain as working for the school.

The chaplain's Meaning-Making role in the area of ethos is on-going and over-arching. The chaplain has a more specific Meaning-Making role for individuals at times of crisis and bereavement. The next chapter considers this aspect of the Meaning-Making role.

Chapter Eleven

School Chaplains: Meaning-Makers during Adolescent Development and at Times of Crisis and Bereavement

It became apparent through the coding process of Grounded Theory methodology that what chaplains bring to pastoral care in schools is the ability to enable students to make meaning of their life situation. The time that the chaplain has to reflect, as discussed in the previous chapter, also has implications for the way in which they do pastoral care. The chaplain's role in pastoral care is not usually a fire-fighting or acute service but a long running commitment to students to accompany them during this phase of their life journey. Previous literature on school chaplaincy has also emphasised the pastoral care element of the role but did not develop an educational theory for the school chaplain based on this aspect of the role, as is being put forward here.

The analysis of the data (See Codebook, Appendices H-J) led to the chaplain's role as a Meaning-Maker in pastoral care in schools being examined under the following headings:

- A counsellor or not?

- Meaning-Making during adolescence
- Meaning-Making with colleagues and parents
- Meaning-Making at times of crisis and bereavement
- One significant adult.

11.1 A Counsellor or Not?

All too often pastoral care has become synonymous with counselling in Irish schools. The close association of chaplaincy services with a counselling service is damaging the profile and identity of school chaplaincy and leading to it being incorrectly compared to other pastoral support services available in schools. Job descriptions for school chaplains favour the spiritual role over the pastoral and are strong in their assertion that while chaplains might have counselling skills they are not counsellors. The principal from a school with a job description for their chaplain is worth quoting extensively on this point:

I think as time went on a lot of chaplains became more comfortable in seeing themselves ... as wholly pastoral people in terms of counselling, maybe organising Rainbow programmes, doing the things that sometimes guidance counsellors might have done in schools ... my personal stance is that I have enough guidance counsellors ... that's not to say I don't want the chaplain to

be involved in a semi-counselling role because sometimes I do ... what I didn't want was a chaplain sitting in an office, counselling all day, every day ... I think they are much more comfortable dealing with the psychology of chaplaincy, the counselling side of chaplaincy than they are actually proclaiming faith ... I think an awful lot of time now in schools we are duplicating roles. I even know with the cutbacks in guidance I've heard some people saying 'sure we have the chaplains anyway, sure doesn't that cover that?' No it doesn't (P1VSFP).

It is timely to recall that the draft norms for School Chaplaincy produced by the ETBI are quite clear that a chaplain is not a counsellor (IVEA, 2010, 11(d)). McGrail and Sullivan (2007, 130) concur with this and propose that when chaplains get “sucked into the essentially secular ‘social work’ model of student care” the distinctiveness of what the chaplain has to offer is in real danger of being lost.

If chaplaincy services can be separated from the counselling role it is more likely that the work of the chaplain will complement existing school services provided by guidance counsellors, school completion project workers, home school community liaison officers and psychologists. In this way chaplains will be freed to develop their own identity. Chaplains add more to the life of the school by being a watchful presence that can “*keep an eye on the tidal effects on the school to see who it is being affected and how they can assist that*” (T4).

11.1.1 Counselling Services of the School Chaplain

Despite this criticism, and contrary to their job description, a large proportion of the chaplains interviewed for this study are spending most of their time counselling. Principals are aware that this is where the energy of the chaplain is going. Many principals also note that the need for counselling among students has increased dramatically. One principal in a Voluntary Secondary School expresses concern how the increased workload in the area of counselling is affecting the chaplain:

The number of students who are coming looking for counselling with our chaplain is just increasing. It's incredible and I can see that work load on her and I can see just the exhaustion of her at the end of it all (P11VS).

Three of the five parents express the view that chaplains are important as a person young people can turn to within the school and one specifically feels they can best support the student by providing counselling:

There is a huge need for counselling services in the school, school have guidance counsellors who are offering this but there is the whole resource issue again, the guidance counsellors are teaching and they have to take care of the actual career preparation and they're doing other things so you definitely need additional support in the school. I think the chaplain would work well at that level (Pt1CC).

T4 is keen that if chaplains do engage in counselling, and she appears to have no objection to them doing so, that they would have adequate and suitable supervision for their work. If chaplains are engaging in professional counselling then this type of supervision is essential in order to ensure students are receiving a good quality service and to protect the chaplain from burn out. If chaplains are not availing of professional supervision they simply should not be involved in counselling young people. Chaplains, unlike Guidance Counsellors, do not have supervision provided by the Department of Education and Skills. This may be because chaplains are not supposed to be counselling in schools, this is not the role that they are employed to fulfill. Many chaplains will argue that they have the same qualifications as Guidance Counsellors vis-à-vis counselling skills and therefore should be provided with supervision in the same way. Obviously there are many people employed in schools who have the same qualifications but they are employed to fill different positions making the chaplains argument about qualifications a moot point.

It is noticeable when analysing the interviews conducted for this research that those chaplains who are ten years or longer in school chaplaincy are more likely to consider themselves counsellors and have invested resources in getting additional qualifications in this area. Although they are employed as a chaplain and not as counsellor, the longer established chaplains are happy to let the two roles merge into one another. Wearing these dual caps leads to confusion as to what the chaplain is in the school for:

One chaplain interviewed who specifically undertook training in counselling after he had got the job of chaplain discovered that he enjoyed counselling and it is the area in which he concentrates his efforts in school. Younger chaplains report wanting to find a balance between spiritual and pastoral care. One chaplain explains: *“I think there should be a balance between the spiritual and the pastoral development of students and the one to one work that you would do with students. I don’t see myself as a full-time counsellor”* (C2CC). Another chaplain is quite clear: *“The chaplain is not a counsellor. The chaplaincy space, while you need to have the counselling skills or role in the school is not to counsel children ... we work in the context of being present to the struggle as opposed to fixing it”* (C7VSFP). A chaplain in the Focus group adds clarity to the discussion about counseling and cautions about the use the language:

I have studied counselling and trained in counselling but I am not a qualified graduate counsellor so I very specifically do not use the word. I talk about that I am there to give support ... but I am not clinically entitled to use the word counselling (FG).

There is some opposition too among non-chaplain interviewees to the idea of chaplains doing counselling work. One parent feels that the money spent on chaplaincy should be diverted into ensuring there are qualified counsellors in schools: *“so I think that €9 million could go into counsellors to deal with bullying or suicide which I think is a lot more of a major issue than the religious well-being of children”* (P5CS). M3 is

concerned that a school chaplain may not have the necessary skills to counsel student in some areas and that it may be preferable if schools employed professional therapists who did not have religious backgrounds

because I feel that kids are going through a lot when they are teenagers and just say a child discovers they are gay or something like that. I don't feel the chaplain is a person to whom that child could go because it is against a lot of religions to be homosexual or anything like that (M3).

Services to students may be better enhanced if schools could decide if they wished to utilise their pastoral care budget for counselling services or chaplaincy services. In this way chaplains who are currently fulfilling dual functions could have their roles separated by contract. The chaplain and the Guidance Counsellor, as emphasised in the WSE/MLL reports, are not the only care-givers in schools, however. The next section outlines who else those interviewed for this thesis saw as having a caring role in schools.

11.1.2 Other Care Givers

It is evident from the parent interviews that children accessed care from a variety of different people. Some go to the school counsellor while others find the deputy principal particularly supportive. The class tutors and year heads also have a clear pastoral function within school communities. This concurred with the data from the WSE/MLL

reports. One parent thinks that the chaplain picks up day-to-day issues with students while the Home School Community Liaison might deal with bigger issues. She also has experience of her children having been in a school without a chaplain and found that without the services of the chaplain students were more dependent on the principal, their tutor or even the school secretary. The many people highlighted in the study as being significant people for students as they go through school confirms that young people will seek out a caring adult to support them, whether or not one person is assigned this function in school or not. Pastoral care provided in this way is ad hoc and takes from the roles that these people are employed to fulfill. It is likely that a secretary, no matter how approachable, has no professional training in pastoral care. It is also worth recalling that in the Australian context research has shown that students prefer to talk to a chaplain about their problems over other staff members as they see them as non-aligned or neutral. Australian teachers reported students as being much more comfortable attending the chaplain for support as it lacked the stigma of going to the school counsellor (Hughes and Sims, 2009, 6).

In the section 11.6 the role of being the 'one significant adult' for teenagers will be examined. This role aligns with the peer mentor model of school chaplaincy (see Pohlmann, 2013 and appendix A) and with Norman's (2004, 13-14) Developmental pastoral care. Both are much more powerful use of the chaplain's sessions with young people than the one to one therapeutic situation. If all students had access to one

significant adult during their time in school fewer may find themselves in need of counselling. M2 points out that *“the whole thrust of a chaplain would be to try to avoid emergencies. Somebody who, you know, will give you time, will be able to comfort you and therefore the emergency issue will never arise”* (M2). If a school allows peer mentoring style chaplaincy to be called counselling both processes are undermined. The next section considers how the school chaplain could be a significant adult for students while moving away from the counselling function.

11.2 Meaning-Makers during Adolescence

Christian pastoral care is defined by Pohlmann (2013, 15) as “an expression of the school’s continuing concern for the individual’s integrity and welfare, its involvement in the development of his/her personality and talents, and its readiness to support him/her at all times and especially when his/her work is adversely affected by personal and domestic circumstances”. Adolescents are going through a period of huge change in their lives. They do not necessarily need counselling to negotiate this time effectively but they do need, as suggested by Martin (2004, 58), someone to offer positive assistance, give information and model positive values. The stakeholders interviewed for this study are conscious of their role in this regard: *“Young people are seeking to discover their identity. And one of the ways of discovering their identity is to process with somebody else. I think that is part of the role of the chaplain”* (CH1). This processing is part the Meaning-Making element of Transformative Learning exercised

by the chaplain who is an educator helping the young person to shift their perception on a disorientating dilemma. This concurs with Norman's (2004) suggestion that developmental pastoral care has an educational dimension and is holistic and forward looking (Best 1999).

Chaplains can help to Make-Meaning during adolescent development through the development of educational programmes. As was noted in Chapter 4.4.2 the Irish education system is arguably over-reliant on counselling when crises arise and does not place enough emphasis on equipping students with the necessary life skills and emotional competencies to draw on when they encounter problems in life. The chaplain can have a key role to play in providing an extra dimension to pastoral care that counsellors cannot. An efficient and effective way of doing this is through the development of pastoral programmes that can be delivered to targeted students. This approach is taken by the French chaplaincy. There, the chaplain puts in place projects that help students to grow in self-awareness and confidence (Escaffre, 2007, 152).

The management documents relating to school chaplaincy, discussed earlier in this thesis, confirm that the chaplain is chaplain to the whole school community, including parents. They have a role in helping teachers, other staff members and parents find meaning in the various situations that they find themselves in. This aspect of chaplaincy,

as referenced in Chapter Two, is also present in the Maltese, Israeli and Australian contexts.

11.3 Meaning-Making with Parents

The responsibility of the school chaplain to the parent body is well documented in the research data presented in this dissertation. Several principals point out this aspect of the role. They stress the importance of the chaplain being approachable and taking time to build up positive relationships with parents. One chaplain highlights attending meetings of the Parents Association as one way he can show parents his commitment to their children: *“parents need to see that you are there for the long haul ... they are giving you their most prized possession their child ... I have been on the parents association for twenty years ... that sort of thing is important”* (FG). Less positively, in another example of role duplication, a principal speaks about the chaplain fulfilling some of the functions of the HSCL. Of concern in this study is that three out of the five parents interviewed never encountered the chaplain in their child’s school on a one-to-one basis.

Both chaplains and principals feel that chaplains could have a role to play in making the school a more welcoming place for parents. Because the number of parents who report non-involvement with the chaplain is high, this aspect of the chaplain as a Meaning-

Maker was explored with the Focus group. One chaplain describes how parents were often uncomfortable with teachers because of their own experience of school:

In my school a lot of parents would have left school early, would have very negative experiences of school and a very negative opinion of authority. They are much more open to talking to a chaplain than they are to a teacher ... They feel teachers judge their child while they don't get that from chaplains (CFG).

Another chaplain in the Focus group includes parents when taking students on outings and finds in this kind of an environment parents open up to her:

I think my age has helped with my role with parents ... when I organise anything in relation to kids, a retreat or a trip I would bring parents with me ... when you sit down with parents they are so open, they tell you their story (FG).

Escaffre (2007, 159) comments that parents have been coming to the chaplains in the French system, not only looking for support and direction regarding educational matters, but increasingly looking for direction in their own lives. Several chaplains in this study report the same phenomenon. Nevertheless this research highlights that there is a need for chaplains to develop new ways of including parents in their Meaning-Making educational role. Examples of how this might be done arise from the literature review and the international context of this thesis. It would be helpful if parents were included as members a chaplaincy team, if chaplains worked with parents on the school ethos and

if chaplains developed spiritual pastoral care programmes for parents and their adolescent child as happens in Israel.

When the chaplain does the ground work with parents strong relationships can be built up which may in the long run lead to the school running more effectively and being more inclusive. Once the chaplain has built up the love and imaginative relationships, so central to Transformative Learning, they can support teachers, colleagues and students at times of bereavement and other crises, creating memory relationships that stretch from the deceased loved one into the life of the school. The next section considers this aspect of Meaning-Making.

11.4 Meaning-Making at Times of Bereavement

Death and loss are sadly quite common in schools. Over and over in the course of interviews chaplains and principals describe recent and often tragic deaths that have affected their school community. A chaplain points out during his interview that over twenty students have died in his school since he was appointed and this defines his role. When death and loss happen, many people who may not previously have thought of themselves as religious, begin asking eschatological questions. This is particularly true of young people. The chaplain, because of their theological training, often has something to offer at times like this which gives meaning to the grieving person. This

role in the Irish context is confirmed in the literature reviewed where reference is made to the fact that a tragedy in a school is often an opportunity for deep meaningful ministry to students who, in the ordinary run of school, are rarely touched by the work of the chaplain (Doyle, 2004, 89). When interviewees speak about the chaplain being involved in counselling it is most frequently associated with bereavement issues. Even the principal who was opposed to the chaplain being involved in counselling finds it acceptable in this situation. Principals clearly see the chaplain as having some expertise in this area.

The chaplain has, as described in Chapter 4.4.4, a recognised role in the response to critical incidences in the school and is considered one of the key personnel in the National Emergency Plan (NEP) document *Responding to Critical Incidents: Resource Materials for Schools* (DES, 2007). Both principals and chaplains report that chaplains are the first people that school management turn to when crises happen. Principals report that they turn to the chaplain at these times because they are capable of bringing order and meaning when everyone is in shock. Chaplains are there for students regardless of their faith background at times of bereavement. Some chaplains speak about being with students who do not believe in God at these times and the way in which students value the thoughtfulness of the chaplain even if they do not share their faith.

It should be noted that bereavement is not always caused by death. Some students are bereaved through changes in relationships and through family breakdown. One principal refers to the chaplain's work at these times in this way:

It's all bereavement counselling in some way. They are mourning the loss of their family and their place in the family. Their previous life if you like. So [naming chaplain] does a lot of that and it is not exclusively with the students sometimes it spills into the home (P9CS).

In these situations the chaplain works with the student to help them to work out their position in their new family and Make-Meaning of the pain they are going through. After the initial shock of loss, the Meaning-Making process facilitated by the chaplains continues through the following months.

11.4.1 Meaning-Making through Companionship

Chaplains have time to stay with students in the grieving process. For them the school support does not stop after a funeral, for example. They will continue to meet the student on a one to one basis and help them to continue with school after such an event. Principals are conscious that chaplains fulfil this role on behalf of the school community: *"If we have a funeral we can all turn up, we do the guard of honour and all that but there is the thing of letting the family know that we are here as a school and will look after the children"* (P6CC). This is very much part of the chaplains' education role

as emphasised in the Supreme Court judgement because they encourage the student to keep in touch with their studies and to rely on the routine of school when everything else is changing around them.

Chaplains feel their religious background helps them to stay in close contact with a person who is bereaved. They feel that the companionship they offer at this time is transformative for students. For chaplains this ability to be present is understood very much in terms of the Gospels:

I remember someone talking once about Mary standing at the foot of the cross and they said that Mary wasn't screaming. That somehow she was present, present in a way that was able to be with all the pain, and all the angst that was going on but trusting that God is working in and through her, and that there was transformation taking place and that what was happening was somehow okay (C5CS).

At times of bereavement the chaplain draws on their thoughtfulness and their ability to create ritual to help Make-Meaning. The next section considers how religious ritual aids Meaning-Making.

11.4.2 Meaning-Making through Liturgy and Ritual

School management, Trust Boards and management bodies all speak about the importance of prayer during times of bereavement and crisis. The religious background of school chaplains makes rituals and prayer services a natural way for them to accompany staff and students in schools at times of loss. This is a service to the school community that is individual to the role of school chaplaincy and certainly a way of being with people who are grieving that would not be offered by a school counsellor or therapist. Chaplains are aware of the uniqueness of what they offer in this area: *“When it comes to things like somebody has died, bereavement, or like rainbows well then it has a faith element to it, a spiritual element to it, which other care givers wouldn't necessarily offer.”* (C8COMP). CH1 is of the view that this is a natural form of expression of support on the part of the school chaplain and has the potential to be very helpful:

In tragedies that you have in schools particularly, a major part of that is there is a faith element to it. The chaplain is going to be right in there in the middle of doing that ... no student is in a sense immune to a liturgy well done and particularly in difficult situations (CH1).

The chaplain also uses their understanding of liturgy and prayer services to help the family during the days immediately after a death. School chaplains often support the family with prayers in the home and offer help in preparing the funeral service. In many instances the chaplain helps the family in this regard regardless of the faith background

of students. In this practical way it can be seen that chaplains are there for students of all faiths and none. The role of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker to students of other faiths and none is discussed in more detail in Chapter Twelve.

In contrast to their involvement in the preparation of the liturgy with families who are not attending Church, two chaplains express their sadness at not having a liturgical function within the Catholic Church during these times. They feel excluded by local clergy even though they often know the families better than the priests and they continue to accompany the family after the funeral in a way that they don't see the parish community as doing.

After the event students often have a lot of questions and the chaplain meets them both formally and informally to support them in their questioning:

I feel the students have a huge need to question; they need a place to go to answer questions. And I feel if that is cut off in schools, the word I use 'link', it is the link with the sacred – to the spiritual world – I see that as important for the chaplain to facilitate (CTVSFP).

Chaplains also have an educational role, as per the Supreme Court judgement, in teaching students how to create their own liturgies and rituals. Sometimes it is through the creation of such liturgies that students begin to find meaning in their loss. These liturgies can be created by students long after the event when they have sufficient distance from it to be able to express their feelings about what has happened. The choice and use of symbolism during these rituals is important and in keeping with the model of chaplains as Transformative Learning practitioners. Chaplains in the Focus Group confirm the role of the chaplain at times of death and bereavement. They find that when students attend liturgies organised to mark deaths they often tap into feelings of loss in their own lives and this can be cathartic:

In my school bereavement is definitely a huge issue and they are so open to everything I have to say about that. And the liturgies that have been most powerful have been liturgies that have been – one where a teacher had lost three people in the past three months. A load of students came to the liturgy. It was like they made the connection between their pain and the prayer that was being offered (CFG).

This ability to express meaning gleaned from a crisis is an important element of Transformative Learning. Students are able to take their own life experiences and rather than be over-whelmed by them can learn more about who they are as a person through the crisis. This ability to reflect on one's life experience and learn from them fosters

resilience in young people. The chaplain as a Meaning-Maker is a key person in this process of reflection. The importance of young people having one significant adult in their life is expanded upon in the next section.

11.5 Meaning-Makers: One Significant Adult

In January 2013 the HSE and the Department of Health produced a report, referred to in Chapter Four, on Well-Being in the Post Primary School. The report advises that schools assign a supportive, approachable, and sensitive staff member who has a positive rapport with young people to accompany students (HSE and Department of Health, 2013). In the course of the research for this thesis it has become apparent that this is precisely the role that the school chaplain is fulfilling in secondary schools up and down the country: *“I am a significant adult, I am a person that young people trust and confide in. They look up to me”* (C2CC). CH2 echoes this sentiment:

I know, from my own experience, that young people lean on the chaplain when they need support and that is vitally important. We have guidelines on mental health and this, that and the other and pastoral support but there is nobody there to be the point of contact for young people and be that support (CH2).

This aspect of chaplaincy is mirrored in the international context. Escaffre (2007, 160) describes French chaplaincy as a meeting point between adults and young people. She

sees the benefit of young people having a well-meaning adult in their life, other than their parent, to ask questions of and to hear their point of view. Pohlmann (2013, 73), in the Australian context, reports the same dynamic with students feeling 'safe' speaking to the chaplain about matters they would not necessarily share with a teacher or even with their parents. Younger chaplains particularly feel they are in a strong position to offer this model of chaplaincy: "*we know what it's like to be in their shoes ... we bring an empathy and the other thing is we bring is an ability to be able to communicate with them more through their medium and engage them more through their medium*" (C2CC). A significant adult needs to build positive relationships, typical of Transformative Learning Theory, with students over time and chaplains show this long term commitment to their students.

11.5.1 Building Positive Relationships

Students are comfortable with the chaplain because they view the chaplain as 'neutral' within the education system. M2 sees the chaplain as building up these relationships in a more informal way than other school personnel in keeping with Transformative Learning Theory. Principals are confident that the building up of relationships with students is foundational to any future work. When such a relationship do not develop school principals are adamant that chaplains should have their nomination withdrawn. When good relationships are established students will naturally approach the chaplain at times of need.

11.5.2 Meaning-Makers: Having time for students

Schools are busy places and it is not unusual for students to feel that their worth as a person is less important than the work that they produce. Time spent with the chaplain can help students to overcome these feelings of isolation. In practice chaplains notice the need of young people to have someone to sit with and talk: *“the one thing young people in today’s world are craving is someone to just give them a little bit of attention”* (C2CC). To this end many chaplains operate an open door policy. This arrangement helps to move chaplains out of the counselling framework where students are limited to appointment times and this is an important distinction for chaplains to make in their own practice. A chaplain that functions on an appointment basis is less likely to be seen as a significant adult for students. Parents also acknowledge that students need this open door facility:

I think it is essential within a school to have a ‘go to’ person who can be available to deal with crises or students who are at risk and be able to respond to them quickly and be able to devote time and attention to them if they need it (Pt4CS).

The fact that chaplains do not have a heavy teaching timetable is seen by all interviewees as affording them this availability. The research indicates stakeholders in

schools regret the erosion of staff hours that remain un-timetabled. Staff with flexibility in their day, rather than being understood as wasteful of resources, are seen as people who have the ability to keep things running smoothly and effectively for students.

The importance of chaplains taking part in extra-curricular activities is emphasised in the research. This involvement is viewed as an opportunity for chaplains to get to know students better, in an informal setting. The chaplain's place of work is not seen as tucked away in an office, as may be the case for a counsellor, but rather on the sports field, in the prayer room and on the corridors.

11.5.3 One to One Meetings

One of the key findings from this research is that for the most part when chaplains meet students on a one-to-one basis they are not involved in the therapeutic process, despite describing the meetings as counselling. When the comments about these meetings are analysed using the coding methods of Grounded Theory Methodology what becomes apparent is that the chaplain is building up a positive rapport with the students in order to be of assistance to them as they accompany them during this phase of their lives. Chaplains often begin this process by meeting first years and new entrants to the school.

Principals, perhaps because they have a complete overview of the life of the school, seem to have a better understanding than the chaplains as to what is happening in these encounters. Through one to one meetings chaplains are reported as building up resilience, belonging and connectedness among students (DeSouza, 2004, 123). The building up of these skills in young people is of vital importance to the educational endeavour in light of the Supreme Court judgement.

During these one to one meetings chaplains are not counselling in the professional sense but are facilitating students telling their story so that they can find meaning in it. A principal described the process as teaching life skills:

I don't say she is trying to give people solutions and all that but she is trying to help our students develop skills to cope. You know, to develop skills to look at situations in a different way, putting things into perspective. She is teaching life skills (P9CS).

This principal's description of a chaplain's interaction with students is almost a perfect synopsis of Transformational Learning Theory where the teacher uses the life experience of the student to help them Make-Meaning out of their situation through dialogue. Another chaplain describes her role in a similar way:

Listening, listening, listening ... it is listening, supporting and encouraging ... giving them a leg up the ladder. You know, you are doing fine, and they just need

somebody to say you are doing fine, just keep doing it and know that there is support for you (C9VS).

In this way chaplains have a special 'loco parentis' role on behalf of the school community.

Over and over again in the course of these interviews the one to one encounters are described as "*a friendly ear, just someone to listen at that particular moment and then they go on their way and they are happy*" (P1VSFP) and walking with students: "*very much someone who walks with and accompanies and points out some of the pitfalls along the way and doesn't stop somebody from making the mistakes. But is there to help them if they do*" (C3CS). These meetings are about helping students to grow into themselves: "*to facilitate a space where children can explore themselves, so human development is as important as academic development*" (C7VSFP). This interpretation of the role of the chaplain is strongly endorsed by both Churches given the centrality of the concept of becoming fully oneself at the heart of the Christian message. It is perhaps the point at which the educational mission of the school and the Church meets the hope parents have for their children. Whether 'becoming oneself' is understood as self-actualisation or as finding one's vocation, the chaplain is a key teacher in the discovery process.

The chaplain as a Meaning-Maker during adolescence and at times of bereavement and crisis is clearly hugely beneficial to the students involved and to the school in general. All the way through this thesis the inequity in the provision of chaplaincy services is evident. Some schools have a school chaplain paid for by the State and others do not. For some the religious element of the role is a negative but they see the value to students of what the chaplain brings to school life. For these schools another model, incorporating the Meaning-Making motif is proposed in the next section.

11.5.4 School Advocates

M3, in line with other stakeholders, is fully appreciative of the role carried out by the chaplain with regard to being a significant adult:

There is a lot to be said for somebody who is kind and who is caring and who is considerate and who is not involved in the day to day running of the operation so that students don't end up having to keep going to management (M3).

He does however have reservations about a person with a religious affiliation performing the role in all school types.

He puts forward a strong suggestion for a model of school advocates that could be introduced across all school sectors. The idea draws on the best of what happens in

school chaplaincy without the tension of religious alignment. Such a model provides equal care provision for students in all second level schools. It is worth quoting him in some detail:

You could see them appointed as maybe advocates ... there might be a case for having somebody who is not drawn into the day to day discipline of children, who would ideally have counselling skills ... it is like the grandmother idea. Grandmother isn't at home in the hours so she can help the kid and be kind to the kid and support him. Whereas Dad and Mom have to ensure that there is some bit of order on the house, do you follow? I think it is that kind of approach that we need. But I think lay. We should be ensuring that those people have the skills beyond what my grandmother might have ... I could see a pastoral somebody, with a pastoral role, who isn't defined in terms of a specific faith (M3).

If chaplains had a clearly established identity as Meaning-Makers among the school community it would be likely that all school types would be interested in having some such person working in their schools.

11.6 Chapter Conclusion

Chaplains in schools tend to concentrate on the counselling element of pastoral care. The findings of this research indicate that this is a mistake as it leads to lack of clarity in the role and is not an honest representation of what chaplains are actually doing in

school. It also undermines the rationale for school chaplaincy focused, as they are, on Meaning-Making. The pastoral care the chaplain offers is a more long-term, reflective process than therapeutic counselling.

When one reflects on the data gathered for this thesis it is evident that the chaplain is fulfilling a role as a significant adult in school, a significant adult who is available to young people, parents and colleagues as a peer-mentor. Chaplains, having built love, memory and imaginative relationships with students use transformative learning theory to enable young people to make sense of their life journey and disorientating events. They can do this effectively both through one-to-one meetings and more structured pastoral care programmes.

A systematic approach to pastoral care through the development of programmes that offer students skills and competencies to cope with difficulties they encounter and the training of peer mentors among the student body would be a more efficient use for the chaplain's time and expertise as a Meaning-Maker. The use of ritual and symbols, particularly at times of crisis and bereavement is an area that the chaplain has significant skills in and through their use can make a unique contribution to student education and development.

A model of chaplaincy that would be acceptable in all school types puts emphasis on the availability of one significant adult. The chaplain is ideally positioned to build up strong relationships and to meet this need in schools. Pastoral care in schools would be stronger, and personnel used more effectively, if schools were given a pastoral care allowance in their teacher allocation and were allowed to use this allowance, in accordance with their particular characteristic spirit, for chaplaincy hours, therapeutic counselling hours, guidance and home school community liaison hours.

Chapter Twelve

Chaplains as Meaning-Maker for all Students

For the theory of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers to be valid across all school sectors the chaplaincy service offered within schools must provide a secular or spiritual, rather than religious, Meaning-Making approach for students from other faith traditions and none. It is impermissible, according to the judgement of the Supreme Court, for a chaplain acting as a Meaning-Maker to “instruct a child in a religion other than its own”. In order to test the validity of the proposed theory this chapter considers how the educational mission of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker holds up when the chaplain is working with students of other faiths and none.

12.1 Meaning-Making: Including all

This research indicates that respect for all students regardless of religious background, called for in such documents as *The Toledo Guiding Principles*, *The Guidelines for the Inclusion of Students of Other Faiths in Catholic Secondary Schools*, the *Guidelines: Intercultural Education in the Post Primary School* and *Ad Gente*, is to the forefront of the mind of chaplains when carry out their role within a school. Chaplains actively try to include all students in any activities they are doing “*making sure everyone is included, welcomed no matter who they are*” (C1CC). Clearly chaplains see themselves

as helping all students to make meaning out of life events regardless of whether they do so in a context of faith or not.

One chaplain describes the role of the chaplain as being ‘always unfaithful’ because they spend so much time teaching about other faiths and act out of a place of impartiality, in keeping with Pohlmann’s recommendation (2013,17):

as a chaplain you will know about other faiths and it is important that you acknowledged them and support the students who believe in them, because they have the right to make their own choice in life irrespective of what I think or believe. I am not there to proselytise. I’m there to open doors (C3CS).

Chaplains not only feel they have a role in supporting students of other faiths but also in nurturing their faith formation. Escaffre found that French students of no faith who engaged with the chaplaincy service grew in their own personal development and also became more accepting of people of faith and the same appears to be happening in the Irish context. Ultimately this is the goal of the Toledo Guiding Principle as described in Chapter Four. However despite the positive view chaplains present of how they include students from other traditions, other stakeholders are not so convinced. The spokesperson for the ETB notes that:

from what I see of chaplains they would not disrespect other people's views. But I think they need to manifestly respect it. So for that reason I am saying maybe the idea of the chaplain that has a direct commitment on paper to a particular religious view, maybe that isn't the way to go (ETBI).

Parents, in particular, are concerned that chaplains might not be respectful towards students from other traditions. One parent highlights how this lack of respect might manifest itself in the way in which First years are welcomed into a school:

I approached the chaplain about when the school has a 'welcome-in' for first years and it is a Catholic Mass. Not even a multi-faith or a blessing or non-denominational. No it is a Catholic Mass. So therefore I think it is straight away discriminatory against children who are atheist or agnostic or anything like that, even children who are of a different faith. So that is the welcome. You are not basically welcomed in (Pt5).

In this example the chaplain is facilitating the first year students in their Meaning-Making of the transition from primary to secondary school through liturgy and is conveying a sense of welcome to the new students on the part of the school. Inadvertently the chaplain is causing some students, by their pedagogical approach, to feel unwelcome.

A Catholic parent interviewed comes across as feeling advantaged by 'being on the same side' as the school chaplain:

Because I'm a Catholic I like that aspect of it...now I know there would be people who wouldn't like that end of it...they would say 'why is she here? I thought this wasn't a religious school.' I've definitely heard that. But there are just one or two parents who bring it up (Pt3CS).

Another parent who is not practicing any religion also felt chaplaincy is there for the religious students and the best she can do is to not take offence. Obviously there is an issue about the way chaplaincy is being exercised if four out of the five parents interviewed feel chaplains are biased towards the Catholic students. The only parent who did not comment about the inclusive or exclusive nature of school chaplaincy has chosen a Catholic school for her child and this school has a part-time priest chaplain. The four parents who commented on the exclusive nature of school chaplaincy have children in schools that are multi-denominational and have a full-time State paid chaplain. On the other hand the perception about school chaplaincy on the part of parents could come from their own bias, as none of the parents were exactly sure what the school chaplain does on a day to day basis.

The spokesperson for T3 feels that this bias towards Catholicism may not always originate with the chaplain but may come from the school's interpretation of their

denominational position and their ethos. The chaplain may simply be seeking to support this interpretation, in keeping with the chaplain's Meaning-Making function regarding ethos as discussed in Chapter Ten. A lot of what the chaplain can do in schools is down to the schools attitude towards inclusion. One principal recognises that the way the chaplain operates will be strongly influenced by the direction decided on by the Trustees and the BOM. Indeed he suggests if the patrons and management of a school placed more emphasis on the multi-denominational position of a school then the chaplain need not necessarily come from one religious tradition:

if you were in a context where you had a multi-faith school and there was a recognition by the trustees and the management that everybody has a desire for God and a need for God and a yearning for God and we need somebody who is professional, who can address that need for God, whoever their God might be. Then I think what you are looking for in a chaplain is somebody who has a deep spirituality and doesn't necessarily, in my view, have to be part of any one faith tradition (P1VSFP).

Such a chaplain is less likely to be in a position of going against the ruling of the Supreme Court by instructing a child in a religious tradition other than their own. Chaplains are already acknowledging that they are distancing themselves from their nominating church in order to be seen as more inclusive: *"I suppose because of the*

school set up that I'm in I'm not necessarily acting for the Church. If I did I would be excluding an awful lot of students" (C1CC), so a chaplain who is not nominated by any religious authority might be the natural next step.

12. 2 Meaning-Making: One-to-One Encounters

Most stakeholders interviewed report that the chaplain pastorally supports all students regardless of their background. CH2 expressed the view that the chaplain would be failing in their responsibility to their nominating authority if they did not pastorally care for all students:

Just because you don't believe in God, it doesn't mean you're not going to have some emotional, psychological or pastoral difficulty in your life.... So obviously somebody who has no faith, or is from a background of no faith themselves, that doesn't really change the fact that they would need a pastoral support. I think the Church would see it as part of a chaplain's role and mission of outreach to help anybody who finds themselves in difficulty; and in general to be that accompaniment on life's journeys. (CH2).

This is consistent with the teachings of the Church as outlined in Chapter Two. One principal confirms this approach saying that while the chaplain might belong to one faith tradition *"in real life our chaplain looks after everybody. She doesn't ask what religion*

are you?” (P9CS). While this openness is commendable not having an awareness of the religious background of students could lead the chaplain to inadvertently provide religious instruction to a child who belongs to another faith tradition. This is impermissible under the Supreme Court ruling.

An area of concern raised by a parent is the ability of a Catholic chaplain to help a student Make-Meaning of issues on which the Catholic Church has strong moral teachings. M3 also raised this concern. The evidence collected for this study suggests that chaplains do support students through all kinds of moral dilemmas and identity issues. Helping students to make decisions on moral issues and formation is at the heart of being a Catholic Educator (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, 42). The State is also constitutionally obliged to offer a minimum moral education to all its citizens under Article 42.2 of the Constitution. Further investigation into this area was beyond the scope of this research but would be very worthwhile in the future.

12.3 Meaning-Making: Providing Religious Formation

The spokesperson for M1 emphasises how the Deeds of Trust of community and comprehensive schools bestows a responsibility on these schools to provide for both religious education and religious formation. It is his view that at the moment the *“religious formation element of it is quite neglected particularly for non-Catholics*

attending community schools” (M1). One principal is aware of the school’s obligation under the Deed of Trust but feels they do not have adequate resources to fulfill this responsibility:

we are very conscious that we should be providing instruction for other religions but do we have the time? Do we have the resources? But in terms of if there was a need for support there, not necessarily spiritual support, those children would have the exact same access to the chaplain (P2CS).

No chaplain specifically comments on this obligation or their limitations in this regard under the Constitution although some acknowledge inviting other religious leaders into the school on occasion. This is an area in which it would appear that chaplains need more training.

12.4 Meaning-Making: Lack of inclusion in Liturgy

Another area in which the Meaning-Making chaplain is clearly exclusive is that of liturgical celebrations. Over and over again chaplains and principals report celebrations of Mass and other Catholic sacraments in schools. The principals of multi-denominational schools describe their schools as Catholic by virtue of the faith backgrounds of the majority of their students and thereby feel justified in celebrating key moments in school life, such as the opening of the school year and graduation, with Mass.

There was a general sense, throughout the interviews, that principals do not understand that a Catholic Mass is an exclusive form of liturgical celebration. A few schools make more of concerted effort to balance the nature of prayer services being offered. One, a Catholic Voluntary Secondary, while acknowledging its own tradition describes how it tries, at times, to include students from other backgrounds. Another chaplain in a Community College did not organise any Masses for the school community rather concentrating on offering ritual celebrations which she describes as para-liturgies:

In having a para-liturgy in school you are not being specific to one particular faith. You can open it up and you can invite them to bring their prayers or their reflections or their thoughts or whatever in, and you're still praying to the same God (C2CC).

One school is adamant that it is completely inclusive “*anything we do here is flexible. It does make allowances for the fact that there may be students who are non-Christian, non-Catholic or non-Faith*” (P4CS). How it manages this is by offering no prayer experience at all to students. Perhaps the effect of trying to be inclusive of everyone is that no one gets any Meaning-Making ritual experiences. The literature review encourages chaplains to create ceremonies and sacred spaces that are that are accessible to all regardless of their religious beliefs or backgrounds (Clifford, 2004, 227; DeSouza 2004, 129-130) It would be a great shame if chaplains gave up on the pedagogical tool

of ritual because they could not find a way to offer meaningful services which are also inclusive.

Schools report very low incidences of students being withdrawn from liturgical celebrations, in keeping with parents' constitutional right to withdraw children from religious instruction, regardless of how Catholic the focus of the liturgy is. C8COMP is the only chaplain who reports taking a hard line with such students and forcing all students to attend denominational prayer services. She does this in the belief that as a nominee of the Archbishop she is obliged to ensure that all students attend Church of Ireland services.

This would be an unusual stance for a school chaplain to take. In this case the chaplain's position could be seen as contravening the Supreme Court ruling by giving religious instruction to students from a different faith tradition. Schools describe the community building aspect of prayer as important and for this reason are anxious that all students would partake in such celebrations regardless of their background. The ethos of the school and the forms of prayer celebrations are tightly intertwined, further illustrating the important Meaning-Making role the chaplain has in both aspects of school life.

This research would suggest that school chaplains see themselves as being inclusive of other faiths in the care they offer to all students. Where the respect breaks down is in the area of liturgical celebrations which remains overwhelmingly Catholic in Irish schools. This liturgical orientation seems to be strongly supported by school management. As long as chaplains continue to organise denominational services exclusively they are acting outside of the teachings of the Church and failing to live up to the civil and Church guidelines available in this country. The findings of this research challenge lay chaplains to be more creative in the organisation of school liturgies. Liturgies, other than Mass, may have a stronger Meaning-Making dimension for students and would include students from other faith traditions and none. Chaplains in the study highlighted how difficult it is to find a priest who is willing to come into schools yet they appear to be over-reliant on the parish for the provision of Mass for key events in the life of the school.

12.5 Chapter Conclusion

Considerable work is required in schools before the Meaning-Maker rationale for school chaplain can be applied to all students. While chaplains undoubtedly believe they support students in the Meaning-Making function through one to one encounters the commitment of chaplains to one faith tradition is a stumbling block for students and parent from other traditions. Chaplains need to work closely with school management to articulate the denominational position of a school and to implement policies and

practices that reflect this position. The chaplain who completely separates him/herself from any religious background is in danger of avoiding any attempt at moral guidance (Robinson, 2007, 161), yet a chaplaincy too closely aligned to one denomination risks charges of divisiveness, such as are put forward against school chaplaincy in Australia (Chapter 2.2.2) and acting outside of Church teachings as outlined by the Congregation for the Clergy (1997, 185). It is not enough to simply not disrespect the beliefs of another, the Catholic educator is obliged to overtly show respect for the value system of others. Church documents recommend this respect be shown through an openness to dialogue – very much in keeping with Transformative Learning Theory.

The pedagogical tool of liturgy is the most powerful educational tool at the disposal of the chaplain yet they are less likely to use this tool effectively with students who do not share their religious tradition. There is a lack of understanding in schools as to what an inclusive liturgical celebration might be and this must be addressed through initial chaplaincy training programmes and in-school CPD. A chaplaincy team that includes people from other faith traditions and Christian denominations could also help to address this weakness in the school chaplaincy service. Learning from the French, Australian and Maltese experience particularly, and using Transformational Learning Theory, the chaplain can afford children of other faiths and none opportunities to develop at a personal level in ways that would support their life and journey and help them to become more at ease with those who do have faith.

Chapter Thirteen

Synthesis and Conclusion

The main strands of the study are woven together in this concluding chapter. It begins with an overview of the total project. This is followed by an evaluation of the use of Grounded Theory Methodology and the use of Transformative Learning Theory, synthesis of the research findings, and outlining key findings and recommendations. Suggestions for expanding the project are identified together with areas for future research. Some final reflections conclude this study.

13.1. Overview of the Study

The research question that prompted this study is ‘What is the rationale for school chaplains in Ireland today?’ Grounded Theory Methodology was used as a means of finding an answer to this question in order to ensure that any emerging theory would be grounded in the experience of the main stakeholders in education in Ireland. The approach to the research is inductive and the findings contextual. The methods of data collection are the examination of fifty WSE/MLL reports, thirty four semi-structured interviews with a wide range of stakeholders in Irish education and a Focus group composed of nine members of the Executive of the School Chaplains Association.

As this study uses Grounded Theory Methodology the literature review was carried out during and after the conduct of the research. The literature review was used to probe and support the findings that emerged from the research and has been integrated into the theory of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker. Chapters Two, Three and Four consider others contexts, educational, legal, socio-religious and ecclesial, all of which have an influence on how the role of school chaplaincy is currently being conducted in Irish schools. The core category to emerge from the coding of the expert witnesses and the historical documents is the category of the Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker. This is supported by the related categories of the Chaplain as an interpreter at times of Crisis and Bereavement and the Chaplain as a key person within a school community who develops and maintains school ethos. The core and related categories offer theoretical completeness and conceptual integration as they are drawn from the series of coding that is central to Grounded Theory, using the constant comparison process and reflection on memos.

13.2 Evaluation of the Grounded Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning Maker

The new insights offered in the Chapters Nine, Ten, Eleven and Twelve partly establish the worth of the theory of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker. This chapter continues to evaluate the possible contribution the theory can make to knowledge by assessing the theory according to a number of evaluative criteria. The evaluating of the theory

developed using Grounded Theory Methodology leads naturally to the evaluating the usefulness of GTM itself for a research project such as this. This evaluation is done by considering the strengths and limitations of the Theory of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker. These strengths and limitations are discussed later in this chapter, where avenues for further scholarly inquiry and recommendations for practice are also given. Evaluation of the theory is a means of demonstrating how it can be of value to both researchers and those in the researched area. In Chapter 5.2.5 an argument was made for the decision to employ Grounded Theory evaluative criteria rather than more generic qualitative research criteria. These criteria of the methodology are now explored individually.

13.2.1 The 'Credibility' of the Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker

An important measure of a good grounded theory is how well it reflects the way or ways a main concern in a substantive area is acted upon. Charmaz (2006, 182) suggests that a theory is credible if strong link can be made between the gathered data and the argument being made. In this thesis the relatively large number of inspectorate reports examined and in-depth interviews conducted ensure this strong link. The rigorous analysis of the data using NVivo, and the accompanying codebook and memo samples also supports the veridicality of the data. The extensive quoting of interviews and WSE/MLL reports and the availability of the full code book allows the reader to form an independent

assessment of the data. Through the processes of constant comparison, open coding, and theoretical memoing, the chaplain as Meaning-Maker was identified as the main explanation by stakeholders of the rationale for school chaplaincy. Further use of these analytical tools helped to refine the sub-categories of developing and maintaining school ethos and being an interpreter at times of crisis and bereavement. These sub-categories are the ways in which chaplains practice their Meaning-Making function using the pedagogical tools of prayer and ritual and thoughtfulness. Figure 9.1 illustrates how these categories inter-relate.

Grounded Theory Methodology works well for this research because the theoretical categories reflect what is going on in the world in which people live. Grounded Theory allows the theory of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers to emerge through the careful and competent application of methodological processes that foster the conceptualising of patterns in the data. The logical process facilitates the development of theory in a way that I do not believe could have happened through any other research methodology. The memoing, selective coding and theoretical sampling involved in this comparative analysis each helped in the ongoing process of 'fitting' and 're-fitting' the concepts emerging about school chaplaincy to data. The description of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker is reflected across the varied accounts of stakeholders and inspectorate reports reported on in Chapters Six to Twelve. This contextualizing of the theory illustrates a diversity of contexts and experience that all point to the same theory. For

instance, one WSE report explains that the chaplain is significant in providing for the spiritual care of the students (adding to the characteristic spirit of the school, prayer and ritual, thoughtfulness, there at times of crisis and bereavement), and a principal describes turning to the chaplain for advice on policy making (adding to the characteristic spirit of the school, thoughtfulness). In Chapter Twelve, the categories from which these actions were conceptualised are seen again when the chaplain as Meaning-Maker was offered as a means of interpreting how the chaplain can support the education of students from other faiths and none (e.g. creating liturgies that are inclusive, being there at times of crisis and bereavement). The categories of developing and maintaining school ethos and interpreter at times of crisis and bereavement have significant breadth and are accounted for through multiple constituent concepts.

How well the categories of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker fit the data is difficult to convey, and to some degree the final judgement upon this is left to the reader to compare to their own experience of school chaplaincy. However Chapter Five is intended to indicate how the researcher approached the processes of the methodology in order to express how credibility would be reached through extended critical discussion of the analytical processes. However an understanding of the process does not necessarily equate to good application and for this reason the coding and examples of memoing are included in the appendices. These convey the development of some of the categories within the theory which underwent significant alterations when striving for a

good fit (see Appendix H-J). The core process of Grounded Theory is constant comparison and the reflections on this process when writing about the comparisons at a conceptual level. These writings are continually sharpened as comparing goes on. Thus the work in the appendices may be considered as one moment within the analyses of working towards a credible fit between the writing and the data, before which the fit was less good and after which the fit improved some more. The chaplain as Meaning-Maker slowly emerged as the best 'fit' for the data. The literature reviewed and the contextual chapters also support the credibility of the theory of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker. The theory brings the disparate views of educational policy, Church teaching and the social and international context into coherent dialogue.

13.2.2 The 'Originality' of the Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker

This theory is original as it offers a new insight into the rationale for school chaplaincy. Chaplains have not heretofore been understood as Meaning-Makers and by framing the data in this way a fresh insight into the role of the chaplain is presented. Some of the literature reviewed describes the work of the chaplain as having a Meaning-Making element (see Renehan & Monahan, 1998; O'Sullivan, 2007) but the originality of linking the Meaning-Maker function to the educational theory of Transformative Learning Theory confirms the school chaplain as an educator, extending and refining the way the role has been described heretofore.

The development of this theory moves the reflection on school chaplaincy away from what the chaplain does to why they are needed in an education system. The valuable and necessary work of the chaplain comes through very strongly in the data collected during the interviews. The data from the interviews challenges the limited description of the school chaplain found in the WSE/MLL reports. Reflecting on these juxtapositions contributes to the development of categories such as ‘adding to the characteristic spirit of the school’ and ‘lack of clarity in chaplaincy role’ and these in turn, through the memoing and refitting of data led to the emergence of the theory of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker. Heretofore, because the role of the chaplain was considered to vary from school to school, and from person to person, the divergent descriptions led to confusion and avoidance of evaluation. Now the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker is broad enough to include all chaplains and yet specific enough to evaluate. This is very original and makes a significant contribution to the future of school chaplaincy.

The chaplain’s role in relation to school ethos emerged through the Grounded Theory process. The literature review and the contextualisation chapters show clearly that the concept of a school having a unique character is distinctive to the Irish and UK education system. The role of the chaplain in school ethos was previously understood as simply fostering religious practice, now the theory of school chaplain as a Meaning-Maker re-imagines this role as an educational practice set within an educational theory. This is important because all schools in Ireland are mandated by law to live out their

characteristic spirit. The chaplain as a Meaning-Maker of school ethos therefore has a role in all schools, not limited, as previously understood, to those schools with a religious ethos. An original model and rationale for extending the services of a chaplain to all schools has been developed and presented in Section 13.5 of this chapter.

13.2.3 The 'Resonance' of the Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker

Resonance deals with the main concerns of the participants involved. Resonance, or relevance as described by Glaser (1998, 18), evokes instant 'grab'.

Grounded theory puts into relief... what people think they know already, virtually as they hear it. But they only know it casually as incidents, mostly with no methodological, conceptual pickup. This conceptual pickup is a natural, but waiting to happen for these people. ... The fact that people recognise bits and pieces of grounded theory methodology shows its naturalness and legitimises it through sensitive recognition. "Sounds right," I often hear. (Glaser, 1998, p. 62)

Building on credibility, a good grounded theory must also resonate with interested parties. This is arguably the most crucial criterion in a Grounded Theory study, and means that concepts must relate to actions within a substantive area making them relevant to the individuals perpetuating them, and thus others who are also interested in

this group (i.e., researchers or other relevant professionals). This is where the 'grab' of a theory comes from. Resonance, then, entails the concepts of the Chaplain as Meaning-Maker 'sounding right' to stakeholders in second-level education.

The chaplain as a Meaning-Maker, or parts of this theory, may not have immediate resonance with an individual partly because of the mundanity of some actions that contribute to the theory. For instance, persons may not recognise that the chaplain's casual conversations on the corridors with teachers about how they are implementing the code of behaviour is adding to the characteristic spirit of the school or that a prayer service offered for deceased members of staff can help shift a child's perspective on some of their own losses. 'Grab' may also be hampered as a result of the conceptualising process, where how it is for one person is but one variation within a concept. So C3CS, who is there for students when they make mistakes, may not immediately make the connection between his genuine care for individual students and the more inclusive but abstract Meaning-Maker motif. This is partially addressed by the naming of concepts of ethos and times of crisis and bereavement, ensuring they bear a strong resemblance to the data in an evocative way, and in this way they can be more easily received by individuals. The intention is that the naming of a concept such as 'times of crisis and bereavement' would enable an individual like C3CS to recognise actions such as his care for the individual student who has made a mistake as facilitating

Meaning-Making in the life of the student, and so he may then also perceive other situations where he may have similarly expedited Meaning-Making.

The naming of parts of the theory of the chaplain as Meaning-Maker is an important task to attend to, where relevance is sought through resonance. The naming of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker and the way in which the Meaning-Maker chaplain draws on Transformative Learning Theory is discussed in Chapter Nine, with further discussion in Chapters Ten to Twelve. From these discussions and the illustrative accounts across the analysis chapters it should be clear that Meaning-Making was partly chosen because of the strong accounts by many stakeholder of how the chaplain shifted things in the life of students in particular and also in the life of the school as a whole. Transformative Learning Theory outlines the teaching steps participants describe that are used by chaplains to facilitate Meaning-Making. This is something many of the authors in the literature review also highlight about the role of the chaplain (Monahan & Renehan, 1998, 108; Byrne, 2004, 192; Egan, 2007, 114; Escraffre, 2007, 150-151). In the present study, many participants express a desire for the chaplain to move away from the counselling of individuals to a role where they were more deeply inserted in the life of the whole school as a Meaning-Maker. The chaplain as Meaning-Maker also includes those who do not feel a religious presence is appropriate in State schools. It allows for the function of the chaplain, as desired by this cohort of people, to be available to the students and leaders of such schools to develop and maintain the

characteristic spirit of such schools and also to support members of these school communities through times of crisis and bereavement. In this way, the chaplain as Meaning-Maker is intended to be identifiable by persons in a range of school types, maximising its resonance. Furthermore, the theory and the constituent concepts of the theory do not have a forced or loose fit with the literature as it incorporates aspects of school chaplaincy, educational developments in Ireland, youth culture and church teachings. When studies describe various activities of the school chaplain such as ‘conscience formation’, ‘counselling’, or the chaplain’s role as being part of the care team, it is now clear how these fit and can be informed by the theory of the chaplain as Meaning-Maker – how they map on to concepts within the theory and how the theory of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker may provide an underlying motive for these actions.

A further feature of a grounded theory that has resonance involves extending the appeal of a theory beyond those directly engaged in the substantive area (see Glaser, 2004; Gynnild, 2014). Accordingly then, the Chaplain as Meaning-Maker is intended to appeal to wide range of researchers and other relevant professionals. In Chapter Eight, the chaplain as Meaning-Maker is put forward as a lay ecclesial ministry within the Catholic Church. Discussion on the overseer role of the Bishop includes the school chaplain in the mission of the Church. The Meaning-Making motif offers novel insights into how the church can minister to young people, how clergy can include others in their ministry and how the parish boundaries can become more permeable.

13.2.4 The 'Usefulness' of the Theory of the School Chaplain as a Meaning-Maker

The theory of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers is useful because it gives school principals and chaplains a practical model that can be used to improve the functioning of the chaplaincy service for the benefit of the whole school community. The two sub-categories of Meaning-Maker of school ethos and Meaning-Maker at times of bereavement are very concrete ways in which the work of the chaplain is useful to the whole school community regardless of the school type. The theory is useful, therefore, because it allows all schools to argue for the service of a school chaplain. A theory of school chaplaincy also lays the ground work for evaluation of school chaplaincy, a process which can only hone and improve the detail of the theory offered here.

The usefulness of the Theory of School Chaplains as Meaning-Makers means that individuals should also be able to perceive other possibilities – they can relate to patterns that vary and see how these variations are relevant for them in particular contexts. A relevant Grounded Theory should also extend then beyond recognition of a person's own actions to enabling individuals to see their particular variation as one of a number, and so enhance awareness of possibilities. The theory of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker does this by presenting a range of situations through which the chaplain fulfils their Meaning-Making function. This is illustrated in the way in which, for example, some chaplains follow the Christian liturgical calendar exclusively when praying with students despite how it excludes some students compared to other chaplains who do not offer any prayer experiences at all even though they are nominated

by the same Church authority. Another example is the way in which a Trust body holds that a chaplain should remain in their position even if they have lost their faith, so long as they can maintain the ethos of the school contrasting with a principal who feels that a chaplain should lose their position if they cannot relate well to young people. These examples indicate the different possibilities for action for an individual locating themselves within the theory and then recognising alternatives. All these chaplains are Meaning-Makers using the pedagogical tools of prayer and thoughtfulness, which draw on Transformative Learning Theory, to enhance the life of their students and of their school. They approach how they do this in very different ways. Possibilities begin to open up to some stakeholders who were previously against the concept of school chaplaincy when they consider the particular of what the school chaplain can bring to the school community.

Naming the sub-categories within the Theory of the Chaplain as Meaning-Maker conveys a sense of the acts happening, such as a prayer service used to help students express their feeling during a time of bereavement or careful listening to a colleague as they strive to teach in a way that is most in keeping with the stated vision of the school. In this way the patterns that capture the essence of the action are named and therefore give an evocative sense of Meaning-Making occurring in various ways. By emphasising some of the lived action of school chaplaincy, concepts become more compelling on

sight as well as in their elaborations. This emphasis on concrete acts increases the likelihood that those involved with school chaplaincy will find the theory useful.

Discovering ‘action options’ is also particularly relevant given examples from the international context discussed in Chapter Two. Much tension surrounds Australian school chaplaincy because it has become overly evangelical in nature, which is threatening the State-funding of chaplaincy services. Although the alternative of support workers is offered to Australia schools (Pohlmann, 2013, 13), the strong influence of one providing church - in this case Scripture Union - is a stumbling block to other alternatives models and practices developing. On the other hand a strong Catholic chaplaincy, in Catholic schools, would allow the school chaplain to further the educational mission of the Church as described in the Ecclesial Context section of Chapter Two. The theory of the school chaplain as a Meaning-Maker gives room for alternative models to develop in Ireland that takes account of various school types.

Furthermore, a fundamental quality about the chaplain as Meaning-Maker is that it moves the work of the chaplain out of the therapeutic setting back into an educational one and thereby brings clarity to the role and challenges school, church and educational leaders to find ways to evaluate the work of the chaplain in this context. As discussed in Chapter Eleven this challenge could form the basis for the development of a variation on

the role, known as a student advocate. This is not to suggest that Church leaders have no further role to play in the nomination of school chaplains but it does suggest that there can be variations to the way candidates are selected for the role, depending on the ethos of the school.

This evaluation of the Grounded Theory of school chaplaincy as Meaning-Makers illustrates that the theory stands up to the criteria for Grounded Theory studies as put forward by Charmaz (2006). It also shows how Grounded Theory allows the researcher to move away from simply reporting on the data collected to interpreting it using a systematic process that affords checks and balances. Because no substantive theory on school chaplaincy previously existed Grounded Theory was the only credible methodology for this project.

The theory of school chaplaincy firmly locates all the work of the chaplain within the educational theory of Transformative Learning Theory, and in particular within the Meaning-Making element of this formal theory. As a further testing of the criteria for Grounded Theory the use of Transformative Learning Theory, as the formal theory within which the substantive theory is located, is now evaluated.

13.3 Evaluating the use of Transformative Learning Theory

Transformative Learning Theory is a suitable formal theory in which to locate the substantive theory of the chaplain as Meaning-Maker because it takes account of the experiential nature of how the chaplain educates. The chaplain's work directly impacts on the lives of students because it uses the lives and experiences of students as learning material. This is in keeping with the literature which suggests that chaplains encourage staff and students to tell their story and in so doing become reconnected to themselves and their community (Byrne, 2004, 192). This research confirms that the kind of teaching that chaplains engage in does not belong to the 'banking' mode of teaching. Rather chaplains empower students to take control of their lives and become proactive in decision-making, discerning in their value system and in the ritualising of life events. Chaplains encourage students to take greater initiative and self-direction in their learning. The classroom activities of chaplains are likely to be spontaneous and varied making teaching and learning less threatening and more fun. Indeed, because of this spontaneity and variety, chaplains are often not considered to be teaching at all. The literature review reports that only 8% of school chaplains are members of the Religion Teachers Association (O'Higgins-Norman & King, 2009, 9), even within the group of chaplains interviewed many prefer to distance themselves from the teaching endeavour. This is likely to be because of their association of teaching with the banking model and preparation for formal exams. Many chaplains spoke about how they are 'teachers of life'. For this reason it is particularly important that this thesis establishes the chaplain as an educator who draws on Transformative Learning Theory.

This research confirms that relationships are at the heart of school chaplaincy. This is in keeping with the literature review where the need for young people to have 'one good adult' in their life is acknowledged (O'Donoghue, 1998, 117) and elsewhere in the literature where chaplaincy is characterized by strong relationships with students (Hall, 2004, 69; Glackin, 2011, 41,48). Transformative Learning Theory affords educators the opportunity to build relationships with students that can result in friendships or critical activism. The chaplain-teacher becomes a co-learner with students and is therefore a life-long learner. Many of those interviewed alluded to the way in which chaplain's see students' lives change, either through conversations with the chaplain or through insights during rituals and liturgies. The opportunity to witness students gaining insights they never saw before is typical of Transformative Learning Theory. This notion of accompanying young people on their journey through life is a very important aspect of the role of the Meaning-Making chaplain and is reflected through the interviews and in the literature (Escaffre, 2007, 150-151).

The difficulty for chaplains who use Transformative Learning Theory is that they are forever committed to not resorting to lecture style teaching. The non-lecturing, non-banking style of Transformative Learning Theory frees the chaplain from the fear of being pigeonholed into teaching methodologies that other teachers may be using. It may also help to protect the chaplain from the formal timetabling process, thus leaving chaplains time to reflect. This is in keeping with the 'loitering with intent' or reflective

presence rationale for chaplaincy advocated by Monahan and Renehan in 1998. Teaching for critical reflective thought requires hard work and creativity - both of which is abundantly present in the chaplains interviewed.

Chaplains who teach using TLT give up their power and control over the learning process. This can be quite worrisome, particularly if the chaplain is anxious that students would learn particular tenets of faith which they hold dear. Such a chaplain may see collaboration in the classroom as empowering students at their expense. The fear that chaplains may feel their status, as distributors and guardians of the teachings of the Church, is being eroded comes through in the literature (e.g. Murray, 2004) but is in contrast to the inclusiveness and openness of the chaplains interviewed. Transformational Learning Theory is traditionally associated with adult learning. This is very appropriate for the school chaplain as they are not only chaplain to students in school but also to the wider adult school community. Becoming experts as Transformational Learning Theory practitioners will improve the engagement by chaplains with parents.

The situating of the Theory of the school chaplain as Meaning-Maker within the Theory of Transformative Learning Theory works as it gives a framework for practice, it ensures that the Theory has resonance across educational sectors and it addresses the

key issues such as evaluation of the work of the chaplain, the use of prayer and ritual and the necessity of the school chaplain having time to reflect. The next section considers the strengths and limitations of this study, and draws together the implications for practice and avenues for future research.

13.4 Strengths and Limitations of this Study

The key strength of this project is the development of a novel and relevant theory in the area of school chaplaincy. This is the first theory to be produced specifically about school chaplaincy and one which clearly links chaplaincy to an educational theory.

A core concern identified in this study was the identity confusion which has built up around school chaplaincy among chaplains themselves and school leaders. This theory goes some way to establishing a clear identity and direction for school chaplaincy into the future. The theory is argued to resonate with chaplains as they identify with the categories of the theory and perceive how their own variation is captured within it. In doing so, individuals are also afforded 'action options', or recognition of other possibilities which may have implications for an appraisal of their own situation. Furthermore, discovering more about the patterns of school chaplaincy and the desire of all schools to support their students and strengthen their characteristic spirit addresses a critical information need that has heretofore been missing from the literature. The theory

is also of importance to researchers who are interested in learning more about school chaplaincy, through understanding the main pedagogical tools of chaplaincy and the varied ways these tools are used in schools.

There are also some limitations to this study that must be considered. In particular, developing theory through analyses of data from a limited number of stakeholders means that ultimately the applicability of the theory to school chaplains in general remains to be verified. This is a caveat found in many forms of qualitative inquiry that use relatively small sample sizes, but the diversity of individuals involved in this study suggests that the theory is relevant to schools in general. A further verification study exploring the hypotheses of the study in a larger sample of stakeholders could address questions of generalisability. The limits of the methodology also invariably dictate how a theory will develop. For example, it could be speculated that sampling from parents who are willing to be interviewed could have contributed to a more positive view of school chaplaincy than is necessarily the general case. There is also a limitation to the study because students were not involved. A similar study that looks specifically at the rationale for school chaplaincy from the point of view of the nominating Church could also yield further insights. At the least, the theory of the school chaplain as a Meaning Maker may be of lesser relevance in these contexts, and this would be an interesting avenue for further study where more data can only help elaborate the theory and contribute to developing a deeper understanding of school chaplaincy. Furthermore,

stakeholders were sampled and theoretically sampled, but in each case these were people who appeared to have something they wanted to say. Such sampling overlooks the individuals who specifically do not put themselves forward to be interviewed. For individuals who are unhappy in school chaplaincy or are negative about the role and therefore less willing to engage with research, the theory of the school chaplain as a Meaning Maker may be less relevant. Further sampling from a clinical population therefore presents a possibility for additional exploration to see whether these individuals are similarly engaged with the theory of the chaplain as a Meaning Maker.

13.5 Research Findings

A theory of school chaplaincy as Meaning-Makers has been developed by presenting and specifying the relationship between the inter-related concepts of prayer and ritual, ethos and spiritual pastoral care with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomenon of school chaplaincy. The rationale for school chaplaincy, according to this theory, is to provide the school with a Meaning-Maker. All stakeholders involved in the study, while not naming the role as such, clearly identify that this is what the chaplain is doing in the school community and that this is desirable and needed. So strong is the sentiment that this is the rationale for the role, if chaplains fail in these responsibilities it is likely that their school management will seek the withdrawal of their nomination from the local Ordinary. The Theory of School Chaplaincy as a

Meaning-Maker can be categorised three ways. Each of these categories is discussed now.

13.5.1. The Meaning-Maker who Provides Spiritual Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care and Liturgical Models of school chaplaincy appear to be the most prevalent models being used by Irish chaplains (see Pohlmann, 2013 and Appendix A). The use of these two models together is evidence of the struggle chaplains' encounter in trying to divide their time between the two elements of the role. In fact these two elements are not separate in the role of the chaplain. When merged together the chaplain becomes a spiritual pastoral care giver addressing students', colleagues' and parents' search for meaning in life. Norman (2004) has previously suggested this is the direction in which chaplaincy should be developed but offered no clear road map as to how they could get there. The theory of the school chaplain as Meaning-Maker does not so much suggest that chaplains change what they are doing, but rather that they reframe why they are doing what they do.

Some chaplains are forsaking the broader interpretation of their pastoral function by becoming full-time Counsellors. This is clearly acting against their job description and contracts and is highly criticised by some Management Bodies and Principals. This concentration on counselling is interpreted by stakeholders as the chaplain's fear of

delving into the spiritual side of life with students. The data shows that when chaplains concentrate on the spiritual needs of students the tension of others demanding a counselling service falls away and the chaplains are authentically acting as Meaning-Makers as they facilitate young people to develop their personal sense of identity. Developing a sense of identity is a spiritual act when it is considered within the context of Church teachings (see Chapter 2.3.2), it is an educational act when viewed as part of implementing the Key Skills of Junior Cycle using TLT (see Chapter 9.2) and it is a pastoral act when practiced within the remit of the chaplain in the NCCA's Guidance Wheel (see Chapter 4.4.4).

13.5.2 The Meaning-Maker who offers Experiences of Prayer and Ritual

Schools have a legal requirement to promote moral, spiritual and personal development of students, although leadership in this aspect of school life is largely overlooked by the DES inspectorate. One of the ways in which this legal requirement can be met is by exposing young people to various ways of encountering the Transcendent through prayer, meditation and ritual. The Supreme Court ruling emphasizes how the chaplain can add an extra dimension to religious education through experiences of prayer. Using Transformational Learning Theory pedagogies such as art, drama and reflection time firmly positions chaplains as educators and affords them the opportunity to complement and enrich the experience of religious education. The data collected for this thesis links prayer with personal development and education (see e.g. Literature Review,

Cotter 1998, Egan, 2007; Contextual Chapters, GE, 1965, Education Act 1998, Tuohy, 2000). Liturgical celebrations, religious services, spiritual advice and retreats are all understood by DES inspectors as promoting holistic education. The WSE/MLL reports also acknowledge the importance of a sacred space in schools. Parents have a constitutional right to have their children educated both religiously and morally. The Education Act 1998 charges schools with a responsibility to promote the spiritual development of students. But inequality of provision across all school types is highlighted in this research. The Court ruled that if chaplains were not already being paid in schools to fulfill this obligation the State would be obliged to do so. In reality less than 20% of Irish parents have this right enunciated in the Supreme Court judgement fulfilled by school chaplains. It is apparent from the DES inspectorate reports that non-faith based schools are not being evaluated for their efforts at promoting moral and spiritual development, and thereby the evaluations neglect obligations on schools under both the Constitution and the Education Act, 1998.

Chaplains belonging to a particular faith tradition, have a role to play in the faith development of students who also belong to this denomination. In schools with a Catholic ethos it is reasonable to expect that the chaplain would have a role to play in continuing the religious formation of young people after Confirmation, which is traditionally received by students immediately before they leave primary school (see Chapter 2.3). The chaplain can facilitate a young person, from any faith tradition, further

exploring their commitment to one tradition and can support them in finding ways of expressing their faith within and outside of the school community (see Chapter 4.4.1). The chaplain helps the student with vocational discernment and conscience formation, both key aspects of adolescent development. The literature review and contextual chapters indicate that young people remain open to religious experience and particularly value religious rituals at times of transition and loss. This openness to prayer and ritual crosses denominational divisions. Indeed it became apparent during interviews that chaplains are often more involved in helping families who do not belong to any faith community in planning rituals at times of death than they are with families who belong to a definite faith tradition. Chaplains speak about being asked by families to help them create rituals to mark the life of the deceased when they opt not to have religious service in a church. This highlights that the Meaning-Making role of chaplains' is applicable to all members of the school community, regardless of faith background and they are understood as educators in this regard.

13.5.3 The Meaning-Maker who Articulates and Embodies School Ethos

All schools are legally bound under the Education Act 1998 to articulate their individual characteristic spirit. The characteristic spirit/ethos of a school provides developmental support to students in schools based on values. School mission statements have become very generic in Ireland across all sectors and the data here suggest that one reason for

this is the absence of a member of staff tasked with reflecting on the lived values of the school and incorporating these values into school life. The findings show that principals report not having the time or the skills necessary to do justice to this responsibility. Chaplains, on the other hand, are well positioned for such a task. The ‘thoughtfulness’ aspect of the Meaning-Maker chaplain not only encapsulates the chaplain’s training in reflection and discernment but also highlights the need for the chaplain to be given sufficient time and space for this reflection. It is imperative that this reflection time is not misunderstood as being unproductive in a time when people’s worth is measured in output.

For most schools care and holistic education is at the heart of their characteristic spirit. The WSE/MLL reports describe chaplains as the embodiment of this kind of education in schools. Chaplains give life to a holistic vision of education, associated with Transformative Learning Theory, through their links with local community, charitable outreach, immersion projects and fostering a sense of community and the way to facilitate the school community to explore their value systems. Management of schools places such a high value on the way the chaplain brings meaning to ethos that they judge it more important that the chaplain maintains the characteristic spirit than necessarily having any personal belief in a religion.

The data confirm that school chaplains in Ireland are embracing the prophetic aspect of Meaning-Making, highlighted in the literature review (see Egan, 2007) by calling the school back to the core values expressed in its mission statement and in so doing may challenge the status quo. The chaplain's outsider position helps him/her to do this, and from this perspective, the nomination to chaplaincy by the local Ordinary is advantageous to the chaplain and the school community because it serves to distinguish the role of the chaplain from that of teachers and management who are employed by the Board of Management of a school without an outside nomination. The time that chaplains have to reflect is very important in order to do justice to this aspect of the role. By over-burdening chaplains with teaching responsibilities or one-to-one meetings schools forgo the long-term benefits of strategic reflection that impact on the whole school community in favour of short term gains for a few.

The chaplain who embeds the values of the school is less likely to be accused of enjoying religious endowment, as discussed in Chapter 3.1 and 3.3, because they are overtly acting on behalf of the school rather than promoting the values of one religious tradition. This research reveals that chaplains' define themselves as working for the school rather than their nominating authority. This is at odds with the way in which the Church representatives see the role and challenges the viability of the on-going nomination to chaplaincy by the local Ordinary.

The role of chaplain as a Meaning Maker in the area of school ethos can be made difficult by the recruitment process for school chaplains. When chaplains are interviewed for their posts without school representatives being on the selection panel, a person who is deeply committed to the faith of the nominating authority may be nominated to the position but may not necessarily be the best fit for the particular ethos of the school. In such cases the chaplain may over-emphasise the spiritual and pastoral aims of the nominating authority rather than specifically trying to get to the heart of how this particular school seeks to express its mission. Such chaplains are in danger of excluding some members of the school community. It would be unusual, of course, if the values a school is trying to promote are much at variance with Gospel values; nonetheless a school has a right to have their particular stance on values to the fore.

In order to address these findings in practice the following recommendations and proposals are offered.

13.6 Implications for Practice - Research Proposals and Recommendations

A theory of school chaplaincy as Meaning-Makers has been developed by presenting and specifying the relationship between the interrelated concepts of prayer and ritual, ethos, spiritual pastoral care for all students and the importance of having a named

person in a school community who has the time and skills required to be a thoughtful reflective presence. This thesis endeavours to define the role of the school chaplain with enough flexibility to allow individual schools and chaplains to make their own of the role, while offering a unified voice to the profession. This section outlines the proposals and recommendations for the Department of Education and Skills, school management, Church authorities and school chaplains who concur that the rationale for school chaplains is as Meaning-Makers in Irish schools.

13.6.1 School Chaplains are educators

The results of this research, firmly locates the school chaplain within the education system. The Supreme Court judgement describes the school chaplain as bringing an extra dimension to religious education and this is so. However, the chaplain also brings an extra dimension to education in general, within the school community. The chaplain is part of the hidden curriculum, and by helping students to make meaning out of their lives during the adolescent years, they enable students to better engage with the formal curriculum.

The contribution to education, and the manner in which chaplains teach, as described by the participants in this research and the literature examined, clearly places the chaplain in the milieu of the constructivist approach to education. This positioning of the school

chaplain clarifies what is happening when students meet the school chaplain for one to one meetings. Using Transformative Learning Theory the chaplain facilitates the student in examining disorientating life experiences and helps them to make meaning out of their circumstances and values. This is not counselling. It is an educational process during which the teacher-chaplain uses the pedagogical tools of dialogue and love, memory and imaginative relationships. It has been suggested in earlier literature that the chaplain links personal development and education in schools (Cotter, 1998). Now we can see clearly how this happens.

The chaplain as an educator expands the role, no longer limiting it to a purely religious function. Set within the framework of TLT the chaplain continues to work with the spiritual dimension of students but drawing on the theory presented here does not necessarily have to belong to any particular religious group in order to fulfil the educational function of the chaplain. This presents an honest appraisal of what is currently happening in schools. In order to fully embrace their educational functions chaplains may need to grow in confidence regarding their particular pedagogies such as ritual, music, drama, allegory and fables.

Chaplains have shied away from describing themselves as educators, have not engaged to the level that would be appropriate with national initiatives, such as the Guidance

Wheel, are not members of the Religion Teachers Association and yet the Department of Education have consistently included the chaplain in their planning (if not their evaluation). This acknowledgement of the chaplain as educator is particularly evident by the inclusion of school chaplains under the remit of the Teaching Council. This can only be interpreted to mean that the role of chaplain can and ought to be present in all school types, in keeping with the mandate of all schools to care for the spiritual development of students.

The chaplain as an educator can make a valuable contribution to current developments in the Irish education system. The key skills of the Junior Cycle are clearly rooted in the constructivist approach to education and as long established practitioners of this model of education the chaplain can share their expertise within their school and at a national level with other teachers who are beginning to integrate this approach into their teaching practice. It is the recommendation of this thesis that chaplains, as educators, connect with other national educational agencies who are involved in similar work. It strikes the researcher that school chaplains are not involved with such groups as the Catholic Schools Partnership (CSP), the Religion Teachers Association of Ireland (RTAI) or the Irish Centre for Religious Education (ICRE). As a group of people with particular expertise in spiritual and faith development among young people, and who are described by the courts as bringing an extra dimension to religious education, it seems that the resource that is the school chaplain is not being fully valued within education circles.

If, as is being asserted here, the chaplain is an educator within the school community it is very important that their work is evaluated and inspected. The next section puts forward how the chaplain might be involved in WSE/MLL inspections.

13.6.2. Inspection of School Chaplains by DES inspectors

This research emphasises the need for chaplains to be accountable in their work. Accountability would bring a greater professionalism to the service and could contribute to increased clarity of role for both school chaplains and school management. This lack of accountability is noted in the literature review and is an international problem (see McGrail and Sullivan, 2007 & Pohlmann, 2013). In Ireland the lack of accountability within school chaplaincy seems to be largely connected to the nomination process. Although the chaplain in community schools and designated community colleges are employed by the Board of Management of the school and paid by the Department of Education and Skills neither of these bodies are actively involved in assessing or evaluating the work of the school chaplain. The Bishops understand their role of nomination as giving them a responsibility to ‘oversee’ the work of the chaplain and have delegated this function to the Diocesan Advisor. No document exist to suggest that the Diocesan Advisors have been mandated to actually assess or evaluate the work of the chaplain and certainly this research did not find that individual chaplains have ever

had their work within their school formally monitored and reported on to either their local ordinary or school management.

The thesis of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker provides the basis on which the work of the chaplain could be examined as part of a whole school inspection or indeed as part of the subject inspection of Religious Education. It is very possible from an educational perspective to examine the pedagogies employed by the school chaplain to fulfil their function within the school. The inspection of the school chaplain within the school ought not to be limited to their contribution to the care team, although this is one of ways in which they fulfil their Meaning-Making role. The DES also need to examine how the chaplain fulfil this function with regard to the characteristic spirit of the school, the spiritual and moral development of the young people in the school and the extra-dimension the chaplain brings to religious education. It is the recommendation of this thesis that management bodies and the School Chaplains Association discuss with the inspectorate how school chaplains can be brought within the inspection process in Irish schools.

Within the Voluntary Secondary Schools, where chaplains are not currently being paid from State funds, it seems necessary that individual Trust Boards or school management on a case by case basis, find a way of carrying out regular evaluation of the work of the

chaplain. An evaluation process could be developed for the pilot scheme in the Dublin Archdiocese before it is fully rolled out involving personnel from school management, the Trust Boards and Church representatives. A recommendation is made in Section 13.6.5 that schools develop chaplaincy teams. These teams could also have an evaluative propose within schools.

13.6.3. The Involvement of the Local Ordinary in the Nomination of School Chaplains and the Chaplain's School Ethos Meaning-Making Role

This thesis finds that the Meaning-Making role of the chaplain with regards to school ethos has developed largely in isolation from Church authorities. In 1998 Monahan and Renehan, when describing the rationale for school chaplaincy, described a dual mandate for the chaplain from both the Church and the school. Today chaplains see themselves very clearly as working for their school and increasingly describe themselves as 'spiritual' rather than 'religious' (O'Higgins-Norman & King, 2009, 14). School management also view chaplains as working for the school but the nominating authority and parents understand the chaplain as working for the Church. Parents are particularly uncomfortable with chaplains working in a Meaning-Making capacity with students on moral matters where they feel that the chaplain will impose Church values on their child. Of course, where chaplains use transformative learning theory as a way of

working with students they will not allow their personal values to influence the Meaning-Making process of the young person.

The Church's stance on who the school chaplains works for is muddled by the fact that they do not recognise the chaplain as having any ministerial role within the Church but wish to maintain a right to oversee the work of the chaplain, even if they do not exercise this right, as outlined in section 13.5.2. It is clear from this research that the Trust Boards suspect that the chaplain would be working for the Church if they allowed the local ordinary to nominate a chaplain to their school sector. This is unacceptable to the Trust Boards as above all they see chaplains as being critical contributors to en-fleshing the ethos of their schools.

The nomination has both a positive and a negative impact on the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker. On the one hand, because the chaplain has been appointed to the school in a slightly different manner than other members of the school community they can observe the functioning of the school from a different perspective. From this vantage point they can, on occasion, see where the actions been taken and decisions being made are at odds with the stated aim and mission of the school. The chaplain can use their Meaning-Making function to call the school back to its aims and objectives. On a practical level the time that chaplains have to reflect is very important in order to do justice to this

aspect of the role. It is the recommendation of this thesis that school management do not over-burden chaplains with teaching responsibilities or one-to-one meetings schools thereby forgoing the long-term benefits of strategic reflection that impact on the whole school community. The nomination of the Bishop on occasion has served to protect the chaplain from management using them to fill teaching duties.

On the other hand the role of chaplain as Meaning-Maker in the area of school ethos can be made difficult by the recruitment process for school chaplains. As referred to in Section 13.5.3 problems can arise when chaplains are interviewed for their posts without school representatives being on the selection panel. Strengthening the role of the chaplain in the area of ethos would make the role acceptable across all school sectors. All schools have an ethos in need of nurturing and embodying with no one appointed within schools to do this job.

This thesis recommends that chaplains no longer be nominated to chaplaincy positions by a local ordinary for positions in the Community/Comprehensive and Designated ETB schools. A selection committee could be established made up of Local Chaplaincy Committee members, representatives of the Board of Management and school management and an expert in school chaplaincy. It is suggested that the local ordinary be involved in the appointment of chaplains to faith-based Voluntary Secondary Schools

as these schools are invested in forwarding the Church's vision for education. It is also recommended that the local Churches find more creative ways to holistically involve the school chaplain in the mission of the Church, as appropriate to each school's context. This would take away the confusion of who the chaplain is answerable to and allow the Church to engage in a new way with those who work with young people on faith and spiritual issues. It would be a positive interim step if instead of nominating the school chaplain a representative of the local churches were part of the Local Chaplaincy Committees as described in Section 13.6.5 and in this way have an input into the appointment of school chaplains.

13.6.4. A Pastoral Allocation for all schools

The inequity in the delivery of a pastoral care service across all school sectors is evident throughout this study. The chaplain's Meaning-Making role in pastoral care is to the fore both through the interviews with stakeholders and also in the study of the WSE/MLL reports. These interviews and historical documents also highlight the way in which the role of the chaplain in pastoral care overlaps with other caring roles within the school such as the Guidance Counsellor, the HSCL teacher, school counselling services, school completion project workers, class tutors, etc. All schools in Ireland get a teacher allocation based on their enrolment numbers. A number of positions in schools are allocated on an ex-quota basis, i.e. they are not dependent on increased enrolment. Currently chaplains in community/comprehensive schools and designated community

colleges are allocated on this ex-quota basis. Previous to recent cutbacks any schools with an enrolment of over five hundred students also had a full time guidance counsellor allocated on this basis. Until 2013 it was possible for schools to pay for counselling services through their teaching allocation. Due to changes in teacher registration requirements this is no longer possible and has resulted in schools being unable to afford such a service. For all these reasons voluntary secondary schools and non-designated ETB schools currently have no allocation for pastoral care. In contrast all schools are given a high incident special educational learning needs allocation regardless of the number of children presenting with such needs.

It is a recommendation of this thesis that the DES consider granting a pastoral care budget or teacher allocation to schools, in much the same way as a teacher allocation is given for high incident learning needs. This budget could be used in schools, across all sectors, in a manner that is in keeping with their particular characteristic spirit. This allocation would bring equality across all school sectors and would allow Boards of Management the freedom to use their allocation in a way that would best serve their school. I would envisage some of the allocation being used for the Meaning-Making activities of the school chaplain in the area of ethos and bereavement, some used for guidance on career choice, some on guidance on moral and vocational issues and some for more therapeutic services such as psychotherapy, art or music therapy. In non-faith

schools the role of advocates could be considered as a way of addressing the need for 'one significant adult' in a school.

13.6.5. The Development of Local Chaplaincy Committees

This thesis recommends the adoption of Local Chaplaincy Committees based on the Australian model (Pohlmann, 2013). The Local Chaplaincy Committees (LCCs) would be made up of the school principals, school chaplains, the employing authority (the ETB, the Board of Management or a Trust Body), parent representatives and members of the various religious groups represented in the local school community.

The LCCs would be involved in the strategic planning for the role of school chaplains as Meaning-Makers and they would fulfil the evaluative function currently so neglected. The LCCs would also offer guidance to individual schools and chaplains as issues arose. They would actively promote professional development for chaplains and liaise closely with the School Chaplains Association and colleges involved in the training of school chaplains. The presence of parents on the LCCs would go some way to improving the visibility of chaplains to parents. This thesis highlights how most parents do not see or understand the Meaning-Making work chaplains do in schools. Parents may also propose ways in which the role of the chaplain could be broadened to increase the responsibility of the chaplain towards parents, as is the case in Israel. The chaplain who

uses the TLT model is well placed to be involved in the adult education that parents may need.

LCCs would also have a role in the selection of chaplains. Using these committees in the recruitment process would ensure that both employers and the local Church bodies have an input into who is being employed as a chaplain. The selection criteria could be adjusted locally to reflect the needs of individual schools. This aspect of the role of the LCC would become particularly relevant if the current nomination process is changed.

13.6.6. The Development of Spiritual Pastoral Care Programmes for all schools

As discussed in Section 13.5.1 the Pastoral Care and Liturgical Models of school chaplaincy appear to be the most prevalent models employed by Irish chaplains. This thesis recommends the development of Spiritual Pastoral Care Programmes for all schools. These programmes could be developed under the auspices of the School Chaplains Association. This is the kind of pastoral care advocated by Norman in 2004, a type of pastoral care he felt chaplains were particularly well placed to deliver given their background in theology and spirituality.

This thesis strongly recommends that chaplains move away from defining themselves as counsellors and re-position themselves within the school Guidance Plan as Meaning-Makers who educate the school community on how to cope with change and loss, teaching young people to be aware of the ways in which values influence actions. It is a matter of urgency that the rationale for school chaplaincy is clearly and definitely reframed away from counselling and into spiritual direction and Meaning-Making. Love, memory and imaginative relationship models of Transformative Learning Theory can then take centre place in the work of the chaplain. This educational model is in keeping with the 'managing myself' and 'staying well' Key Skills of Junior Cycle (NCCA, 2013). The chaplain alone within the school community has the training to use ritual as a means of Meaning-Making. The use of this pedagogy is central in the delivery of any Spiritual Pastoral Care Programme and is very much in keeping with Transformative Learning Theory. As society moves away from formal religions it is increasingly important that all members of the school community are taught how to ritualise life events in a meaningful way. The literature (e.g. see Monahan & Renehan, 1998; De Souza, 2004; Murray, 2004; King, 2004) and this current research all highlight the chaplain as the person who can provide services and spaces that can facilitate young people in their exploration of life events.

Chaplains can extend this role by formulating a pastoral care curriculum in schools. This systematic approach to pastoral care would reap better long-term results for more

students than the current focus on one-to-one meetings. It would give students skills and competencies to deal with difficult situations as they arise, and decrease the need for therapy. If students were given the opportunities to reflect on issues in a group setting more in-depth dialogue could take place, thereby increasing student exposure to different value stances. In this systematic approach the chaplain could involve students in peer-mentoring programmes and increase parental involvement in the provision of care in schools. The introduction of a Spiritual Pastoral Care Team in schools, to include chaplains, students, school management, parents, local community members and Church representatives would improve the collaborative nature of chaplains' work and could be linked into the LCCs as described above. The chaplain simply cannot continue to work in isolation if they are committed to the Meaning-Making rationale for the role.

13.7 Suggestions for Expanding the Project

Rather than 'findings', the result of a Grounded Theory is a set of interrelated conceptual hypotheses – a theory. So while careful adherence to the procedures of the methodology ensures a theory grounded in the data, the actual verificational 'proving' of these hypotheses, i.e., confirming the 'empirical accuracy' of the chaplain as Meaning-Maker or the features of a Meaning-Maker chaplain in school, is a direction for further research: "That is all, the yield ... is just hypotheses!" (Glaser, 1992, 16). Thus one immediate avenue for further inquiry is identified – the testing of the hypotheses of the chaplain as a Meaning-Maker.

It is possible to envisage testing these hypotheses, such as looking at the rituals created by chaplains and assessing whether and to what extent chaplains draw on Transformative Learning Theory to teach young people or by assessing the extent of influence chaplains have in shaping policy development within schools. The theory is also capable of being abstracted from the area of school chaplaincy, though doing so is beyond the scope and objectives of the present study. The potential does exist to investigate the possibility of applying the concept of Meaning-Maker to areas beyond school chaplaincy. One step towards formal theory yet close to school chaplaincy is to consider the theory of Meaning Making with regards to others providing pastoral care in schools, the use of Transformative Learning Theory at second level education or Meaning Making as a motif for lay ecclesial ministry within the Church. The extent or ways in which persons are Meaning Makers within these areas would be interesting in itself, but also has potential for drawing out differences between these areas and school chaplaincy via constant comparison.

The remit by Mater Dei Institute when providing funding for this research asked that the study concentrate on chaplains and adult stakeholders in education. This means that the voices of students are not included in the data. It would be a positive step to further this research by exploring the need of young people to have a significant adult in school, who can assist them in Meaning-Making. A significant amount of data was collected in the course of this study on how schools try to ensure that students who belong to other

faiths and none are supported by the school chaplain. By interviewing non-Christian students the relevance of the Meaning-Making role of the chaplain for students of other faiths and none could be established. A very small number of parents were interviewed. It would enhance the study if the voice of more parents were heard.

It has become very apparent during the course of this study that the relationship between the school chaplain and Church authorities needs to be explored in much more detail. There are obvious tensions between the chaplain and priests in many parishes. Chaplains are not managing to keep students connected to their local parishes and in many places priests do not visit schools or engage with the student body in any meaningful way. In order for chaplains to establish where they fit in the Church, in terms of lay ecclesial ministry, further study is needed in this area.

13.8 Final Reflections

The study set out to explore the world of the school chaplain and to answer the question:

What is the rationale for school chaplaincy in Ireland today?

I have concluded this study by outlining a theory of the school chaplain as a Meaning-Maker within the school community and in this concluding chapter I have put forward

detailed proposals and recommendations on how this Meaning-Maker motif can be used to enhance and extend the service offered by the chaplain within the Irish education system. I have shown how this theory of the school chaplain as a Meaning-Maker has emerged from a synthesis of the themes within the new data generated and analysed using grounded theory methods, from my personal reflection and analysis, and how the theory generated finds support and resonance within the literature review.

The Meaning-Making school chaplain is an educator who draws on Transformative Learning Theory to teach members of the school community how to grow into the particular characteristic spirit of their school and how to grow from challenging situations that arise in life. The Meaning-Making school chaplain uses such pedagogies as reflective practices, ritual making and attentive listening to bring their students to a new understanding of themselves when faced with disorientating dilemmas. This theory of school chaplaincy can be applied to all school types and is not dependent on a chaplain having a Church nomination or a school having a religious ethos.

The practice of chaplaincy began over 1,600 years ago when a man gave his cloak to a beggar. This significance of this simple act of love and outreach has served to bring meaning into the lives of many, through the most difficult of circumstances down through the centuries. Today, in Ireland, school chaplains continue to offer the

protective cloak of Meaning-Making to the school community. A willingness to love and serve, while being a professional, skilled educator, remains at the heart of school chaplaincy.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Pohlmann's Models of School Chaplaincy

Pastoral Care Model/ Community Development Model	Liturgical Model	Educational Model	Peer Support Model	Evangelical Model
Attending a variety of school activities and getting to know members of the school community	Leading services in chapel/prayer room	Co-ordinating the RE programme	Attending school tours	
Conducting groups that provide fellowship and support for students, staff, and/or family members	Celebrating sacraments.	Advising teachers on Curriculum matters that relate to RE, ethics, morality and philosophy	Coaching a sports team	
Formal counselling with students, staff and/or family members	Facilitating staff, students or family prayer or worship times	Teaching SPHE	Getting involved in a variety of student activities (such as debating, school plays, etc) as a participant or a	Preaching (during assemblies, thought for the day, etc.)

			mentor	
Referral of students, staff, and/or family members to other professionals within or outside the school community	Leading or participating in funeral or memorial services	Teaching RE	Hanging around to talk to students during breaks	Teaching Catechetics rather than RE
Talking with students, staff and/or family members informally	Speaking or praying at official events, e.g. speech nights, assemblies, formals, etc.	Training RE teachers.	Serving at the school tuck-shop	Conducting elective groups such as John Paul II
Visiting members of the school community in times of sickness, crisis or grief			Teaching guitar during the lunch break	One-on-one faith discussions
Visiting sick bay or behaviour support units				Apologetics and the exploration of spiritual questions.

Working on staff groups with heads of departments, year head coordinators, behaviour support teams or pastoral care teams.				
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Article 42 Bunreacht na hEireann

The State acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the Family and guarantees to respect the inalienable right and duty of parents to provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children.

Parents shall be free to provide this education in their homes or in private schools or in schools recognised or established by the State.

1° The State shall not oblige parents in violation of their conscience and lawful preference to send their children to schools established by the State, or to any particular type of school designated by the State.

2° The State shall, however, as guardian of the common good, require in view of actual conditions that the children receive a certain minimum education, moral, intellectual and social.

The State shall provide for free primary education and shall endeavour to supplement and give reasonable aid to private and corporate educational initiative, and, when the public good requires it, provide other educational facilities or institutions with due regard, however, for the rights of parents, especially in the matter of religious and moral formation.

In exceptional cases, where the parents for physical or moral reasons fail in their duty towards their children, the State as guardian of the common good, by appropriate means shall endeavour to supply the place of the parents, but always with due regard for the natural and imprescriptible rights of the child.

Article 44 Bunreacht na hEireann

1. The State acknowledges that the homage of public worship is due to Almighty God. It shall hold His Name in reverence, and shall respect and honour religion.

2. 1° Freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion are, subject to public order and morality, guaranteed to every citizen.

2° The State guarantees not to endow any religion.

3° The State shall not impose any disabilities or make any discrimination on the ground of religious profession, belief or status.

4° Legislation providing State aid for schools shall not discriminate between schools under the management of different religious denominations, nor be such as to affect prejudicially the right of any child to attend a school receiving public money without attending religious instruction at that school.

5° Every religious denomination shall have the right to manage its own affairs, own, acquire and administer property, movable and immovable, and maintain institutions for religious or charitable purposes.

6° The property of any religious denomination or any educational institution shall not be diverted save for necessary works of public utility and on payment of compensation.

Appendix D

Department of Education and Skills Memo 0025/2013 outlining the requirement that teachers in recognised schools have to be registered with the Teaching Council. Section 5.5 of this memo deals specifically with school chaplaincy. It states that:

In the case of school chaplains paid by the State, these posts are regarded as teaching posts and therefore, those appointed to them should be registered teachers. However, it is also recognised that the most significant aspect to the role and time of a chaplain is not teaching but the provision of pastoral care in recognised schools. Having regard to that objective, any school chaplain currently in employment who cannot gain registration with the Teaching Council will be permitted to continue in his or her primary role in pastoral care but will be prohibited from teaching. New appointees to chaplain positions must be registered teachers.

An example of a memo

The question strikes me 'is the rationale for school chaplaincy from a church's perspective very different than that of the DES or indeed school management?' One is looking for a spiritual presence that will do counselling and the other? What is the Church looking for in the chaplain? To keep the party line? They never check. Control? They are involvement at the beginning and hardly at all again. The chaplain is a church leader in their school community and have hardly any recognition in their faith community.

Potential Questions for Interviews as submitted to the Ethics Committee

Questions for representative of:

- Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS)
- Irish Vocational Education Authority (IVEA)
- 4. Joint Managerial Body (JMB)

Name of Management Body _____

Number of full-time Chaplains employed in these schools: _____

Number of part-time, paid Chaplains employed in these schools: _____

Number of voluntary Chaplains in these schools: _____

(As this information does not name individuals it may be sought in compliance with the Data Protection Act)

1. The different types of second level schools in Ireland have different arrangements for the employment of school chaplains. Describe the arrangement in your sector and how this arrangement came about?
2. Do you see this situation as sustainable into the future? Why/Why not?
3. As a management body what role have you had to play in the way Chaplaincy has evolved in your sector?
4. In the schools where there are school chaplains what process is used for the appointment of the chaplain? Who advertises the position? who interviews for the post? who appoints?
5. Do you see the chaplain as an educator in schools? Describe how you see this in practice.
6. Describe any other role you see the chaplain as fulfilling in a school.
7. In Whole School Evaluation-Management Leadership and Learning (WSE-MLL) Write reports the Chaplain is frequently mentioned as contributing to the characteristic spirit of the school. What role do you see school chaplain in your sector having in the building up of your particular ethos or spirit?

8. What five words would you use to describe the role of chaplain in Irish schools today?
9. In your opinion does the school chaplain work for the school, or for the Church?
How have you come to this opinion?
10. In the light of the current debate on the use of resources in Second Level Schools do you believe there is a role for school chaplains in the future in Irish Education?
Why? Why not?

Trust Board Questions

Name of Trust:

Number of Schools in Trust:

Number of full-time Chaplains employed in these schools:

Number of part-time, paid Chaplains employed in these schools:

Number of voluntary Chaplains in these schools:

(As this information does not name individuals it may be sought in compliance with the Data Protection Act)

- Is the presence of school chaplains in your schools a stated objective of your Trust?
- In what way does your Trust encourage school chaplaincy in your schools?
- Do you see this situation as sustainable into the future? Why/Why not?
- In the schools where there are school chaplains what process is used for the appointment of the chaplain? Who advertises the position? Who interviews for the post? Who appoints?
- Do you see the chaplain as an educator in schools? Can you describe how you see this in practice?
- Describe any other role you see the chaplain as fulfilling in a school.
- In WSE and MLL reports the Chaplain is frequently mentioned as contributing to the characteristic spirit of the school. What role do you see school chaplain in your sector having in the building up of your particular ethos or spirit?
- What five words would you use to describe the role of chaplain in Irish schools today?
- Do you understand the school chaplain as working for the school, for the Trust or for the Church?
- What contribution do you see school chaplains as making to your Trust?

School Chaplain Interview

Type of School:

Length of time in current position _____

- Describe how you came to work as a school chaplain.
- Outline the process by which you were appointed as a school chaplain.
- What is your understanding of the role of the school chaplain in Ireland today?
- What do you see as the main role of the school chaplain in your school?
- How is your professional development supported?
- Describe the main challenges facing school chaplains in Ireland today.
- In WSE and MLL reports the Chaplain is frequently mentioned as contributing to the characteristic spirit of the school. What role, if any, do you see school chaplains having in the building up a particular ethos or spirit? What facilitates school chaplains in this regard? What obstacles do they face?
- What five words would you use to describe the role of chaplain in Irish schools today?
- Would you describe yourself as an educator? If yes, why? If no, why not?
- In your experience has the role of chaplain changed in recent years?
- Do you understand the school chaplain as working for the school or for the Church? Explain.
- What is your relationship with the local Bishop?
- What is your relationship with your management body and Trust?

School Principal Interview.

Type of School:

Length of time current Chaplain in position _____

- Were you involved in the appointment of your school Chaplain? If yes, describe your involvement.
- Does your school have a job description for the role of school chaplain? Is it a written description? What does it contain?
- What do you see as the main duty of the school chaplain in your school?
- In WSE and MLL reports the Chaplain is frequently mentioned as contributing to the characteristic spirit of the school. What role, if any, do you see school chaplains having in the building up a particular ethos or spirit? What facilitates school chaplains in this regard? What obstacles do they face?
- What five words would you use to describe the role of chaplain in Irish schools today?
- Would you describe a chaplain as an educator? If yes, why? If no, why not?
- In your experience has the role of chaplain changed in recent years?
- Do you understand the school chaplain as working for the school or for the Church? Explain.

Interview Questions for The Executive Secretary to the Education Commission of the Irish Catholic Episcopal Conference and Representative of the Education Department of the Church of Ireland.

- Would you describe someone engaged in the provision of chaplaincy services in a second level school as being involved in ministry, as simply part of the staff or in some other way? Explain.
- What contribution, if any, do you see school Chaplains as making to your Church?
- What contribution, if any, do you see school chaplains as making to education in Ireland?
- What role does your Church play in the appointment of school chaplains?
- How do you see school chaplains as meeting the needs of people from other faiths and none?
- What five words would you use to describe the role of chaplain in Irish schools today?

Questions for representative from Representative from the National Parents Council
Post Primary Ireland (NPCpp) and from the Irish Second Level Students' Union (ISSU)

1. What is your own experience of school chaplaincy in your role of parent/student in Irish schools?
2. Do you see the school chaplain as part of the teaching staff in the school or as having some other role? Explain.
3. What, in your opinion, is the main contribution that a chaplain makes to school life?
4. What five words would you use to describe the role of chaplain in Irish schools today?
5. In your experience has the role of chaplain changed in recent years?
6. Do you understand the school chaplain as working for the school or for the Church? Explain.
7. Do you support the role of school chaplain? Why? Why not?

Sample set of Interview Questions, February 2012

Questions for Parents

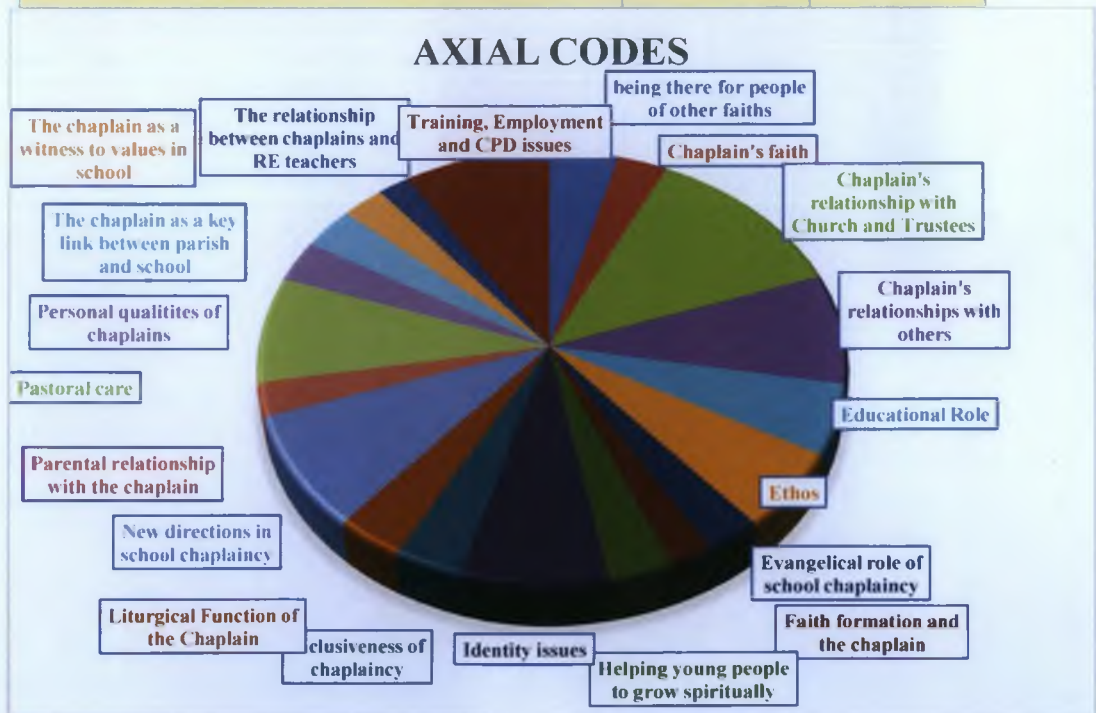
1. Could you describe your experiences with the school chaplain in the school your child is in?
2. Tell me about your thoughts and feelings when you hear the word chaplain.
3. What positive things happen in schools because of the Chaplain? What negative things happen because of the chaplain?
4. Is there anything else you think I should know to understand your thinking on school chaplaincy better?

Appendix H

Axial Codes

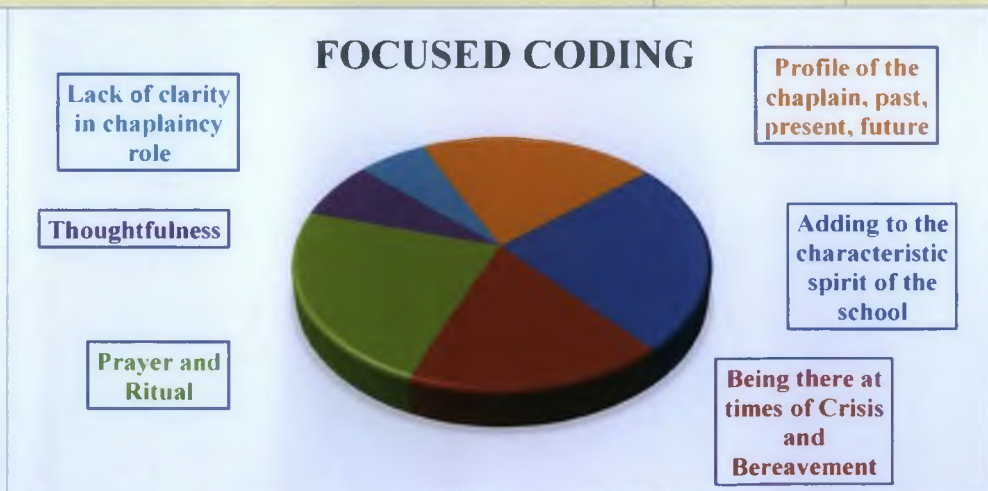
Appendix H Axial Codes		
Axial Codes	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Being there for people of other faiths	30	116
Chaplain's faith	25	83
Chaplain's relationship with Church and Trustees	34	344
Chaplain's relationships with others	34	229
Educational Role	33	145
Ethos	33	162
Evangelical role of school chaplaincy	28	76
Faith formation and the chaplain	26	60
Helping young people to grow spiritually	25	90
Identity issues	32	206
Inclusiveness of chaplaincy	28	97

Liturgical Function of the Chaplain	33	95
New directions in school chaplaincy	32	236
Parental relationship with the chaplain	25	69
Pastoral care	32	218
Personal qualities of chaplains	25	87
The chaplain as a key link between parish and school	25	88
The chaplain as a witness to values in school	27	72
The relationship between chaplains and RE teachers	24	54
Training, Employment and CPD issues	32	248



Focus Codes

Appendix L Focused Coding		
Focused Coding	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Adding to the characteristic spirit of the school	36	788
Being there at times of Crisis and Bereavement	36	564
Prayer and Ritual	35	737
Thoughtfulness	34	237
Lack of clarity in chaplaincy role	33	199
Profile of the chaplain, past, present, future	34	665



Appendix J Initial Codes

Appendix J		
Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
A school without a chaplain not having anyone for care	2	2
A sense of enthusiasm at being part of church	3	5
A sense of vocation or call	4	9
Accompanying students	6	9
Actively going out and researching importance of chaplain	2	2
Allowing students to opt out	4	5
Anger at the way Church views women	1	1
Applying directly to a school for job	3	3
Approach to chaplaincy	1	1
Are we just Christian social workers	1	1
Arrangement in ETB schools for chaplaincy	1	1
Asked to present schools view on inclusion	1	1
Availability of the chaplain	14	17
Balancing spiritual and pastoral care	11	14
Becoming an ordained chaplain	1	2

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Becoming freer	1	1
Being a chaplain doesn't affect my relationship with bishop	2	2
Being a faith presence	2	2
Being a friend to students	5	6
Being a pastoral worker as part of chaplaincy job	1	1
Being a presence	10	14
being a religious presence in a secular environment	2	2
Being a sign of the kingdom of God	1	2
Being a young chaplain	7	7
Being able to dialogue about other religious traditions	2	2
Being called on in a crisis	3	4
Being chaplain in different kinds of schools	2	2
Being chaplain to colleagues	13	14
Being chaplain to unchurched students	3	3
Being counter-cultural	1	1
being friends with school principal	1	1
being in spiritual direction	1	1

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Being interviewed	11	16
Being less committed to Catholicism	2	2
Being unfaithful	2	2
Belonging to one tradition and being respectful of others	7	9
Belonging to professional bodies	1	1
Bishop has ability to terminate employment	7	8
Bishop having a role on selection panel	13	22
Building a relationship with the principal	8	9
Calling on schools to invest in the spiritual side of chaplaincy	2	2
Came from RE teaching	8	8
Care is being provided by other staff members	5	6
Care needs in schools are being inadequately addressed across all sectors	1	2
Change in my own belief in Church	3	3
Changing approach to converting	3	3
Changing profile of students	1	3
Changing role of the chaplain	2	2

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Chaplain as a quiet presence	2	2
Chaplain gives presentation at open night	1	1
Chaplain having a responsibility for SPHE	2	3
Chaplain important to ethos in a community school	1	1
Chaplain is not a counsellor	1	2
Chaplain not contributing to ethos	1	1
Chaplain not needing to be Catholic	3	3
Chaplain not working out	2	3
Chaplain seen as working primarily for the school	17	30
Chaplain sharing their introversion	1	1
Chaplain should be living faith	1	1
Chaplain taking on a child protection role	1	1
Chaplaincy contracts	3	3
Chaplaincy is valuable to people who are religious	1	1
Chaplaincy needs to be about proclaiming faith	1	2
Chaplain's faith	1	1
Chaplains have a broader role than the teaching staff	1	1

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Chaplains have lost a sense of what they are about	2	4
Chaplains having a new role with exam RE	1	1
Chaplains offer something other teachers don't	1	1
Chaplain's place in school policies	2	2
Chaplains presenting as more comfortable with counselling role	1	2
Chaplains represent the value set of Christianity	2	2
Chaplain's role at time of crisis	6	6
Chaplain's role in supporting school management	11	16
Chaplains without religious belief	12	21
Chaplains working together	6	7
Church funding chaplaincy	1	1
Church still has role in rewriting of deeds	1	1
Church supporting the role of chaplain	2	4
Church's attitude to lay ministry of chaplaincy	6	15
Church's role to supervise and oversee	3	3
Cluster Groups providing CPD	1	1
Community schools should be providing RE and religious	1	1

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
formation of all		
Complimentary roles of RE and Chaplaincy	1	1
Conflict around role when boundaries blurred	6	9
Consider it teaching	1	1
Constantly teaching	3	3
Counselling at times of bereavement	9	14
Counselling not what chaplain is there for	1	2
Counselling training	4	6
CPD	2	2
CPD provided by Diocese	4	5
CPD to recognise what counselling role really is	1	1
Creating a liturgical role for the chaplain	1	1
Creating a praying community	2	2
Creating liturgies that are relevant to young people's lives	1	3
Crisis in vocation	1	1
DA only contact with diocese	5	5
defender of the faith	8	11

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Developing an interest in Theology	1	1
Developing special classroom modules	1	1
Development of lay chaplaincy	11	20
Difference between being a chaplain in school and parish ministry	2	2
Difference between COI and Catholic	1	2
Difference between the voluntary secondary sector and CS	7	19
Difficulties faced with parish links	3	3
Difficulty in being all things to all people	3	3
Direct contact with bishop to get job	4	8
Doing prayer services	16	21
Doing spirituality rather than religion	5	6
Drawing out - educare	5	7
Educating about liturgy	2	2
Educating about self	2	2
Educating for life	4	5
Educating the spiritual dimension of students	4	4
Education about religion	3	5

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Efforts at defining the role	7	7
Encouraging faith development of students from other faiths	1	1
Ensuring chaplains have the proper skill sets	2	2
Ensuring other faiths are included in any mission statement	1	1
Entering a discernment process	4	4
Equalisation of resources	2	3
Ethos	15	24
Ethos being focused on the student	1	1
Ethos is determined by school leadership	2	2
Ethos is influenced by the students attending	1	1
Evangelical role of the chaplain	2	3
Experience of an inter-denominational school	1	2
Expertise in spiritual care	2	2
Expressing an awareness of unique role of chaplain	1	1
Facilitating faith development	4	4
Failure of church to recognise change that is happening	2	7
Faith	2	3

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Faith formation	8	9
Family attachment to Catholicism	1	1
Family ethos in conflict with school ethos	2	3
Feel that I work for the school	1	1
Feeling chaplaincy not respected	1	1
Feeling excluded by church	1	1
Feeling frustrated due to lack of jobs	1	1
Feeling supported by the Church	5	8
Feeling supported in role by school	12	19
Feeling working for church might alienate students	1	1
Freedom in the role	5	8
Frustration at not providing enough prayer opportunities	1	1
Fundraising	2	2
Getting chaplaincy job with interview	2	2
Getting involved in extra-curricular activities	9	10
Getting on with colleagues	4	5
Getting on with local bishop	13	20

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Getting professional development	4	6
Giving priority to the majority	1	1
Giving students a choice	3	3
Giving students the opportunity to explore religion as part of life	1	1
Giving time to care of students from other faiths	11	16
Giving times of silence	5	7
Having a personal faith as a chaplain	6	10
Having a sense of flexibility and inclusion in prayer services	5	6
Helping students in their exploration of faith	7	9
Helping students think about life	1	1
Helping students to develop holistically	6	9
Holistic education	7	7
Hurt at being left out of bereavement	3	3
Impart knowledge about other faiths	3	3
Implementing the ethos on a day to day basis	3	4
Importance of being consulted	1	1
Importance of being part of the care team	13	16

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Importance of referral	1	1
Importance of the nomination from the bishop	5	13
Including chaplains from other denominations and faiths	4	7
Including everyone	3	3
Investment by a religious order into chaplaincy	2	2
Job expanding	1	1
Just loving students	1	1
Lack of accommodation for people who are not believers	7	7
Lack of permanency	1	1
Lay chaplain better able to respond to being multi-denominational	1	1
Leadership role in school	4	4
Leading staff in prayer	1	1
Leaving out the spiritual element	2	2
Limits to the counselling offered	1	1
Link between teachers and students	6	6
Linking School and parish	14	30
Liturgical function	5	5

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Loitering with intent	1	1
Looking after one's own spiritual life	6	9
Loosing job because of lack of funding	3	4
Main element of job	3	4
Marking the liturgical year	13	17
Mediating	1	1
Meditation without religious element	1	1
Meeting parents	10	19
Meeting sceptism about religion	2	2
Meeting the school principal	9	12
Middle management gone leaving less people to care	1	2
Ministering	4	4
Missing being part of a prayer group	1	1
Models of ministry	4	4
Morning assembly	1	1
Motivation helping people	1	1
Moving from parish work	2	3

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Need for integrity - be living the message you preach	2	2
Need to be registered with the teaching council	1	3
Need to define the role more for selection and interviewing	3	5
Needing a change of career	1	1
Needing one significant adult	7	9
Negative views of church	7	11
Networking with others for support	3	7
New Deed of Trust for Educate Together School	1	1
New initiative in chaplaincy	1	3
New school - experiencing chaplaincy for the first time	2	3
No conflict	7	7
No faith	8	10
Not allowed to be public	1	1
Not being allowed to preach	2	2
Not being freed up for CPD	1	1
Not offering masses	3	4
Not time watching	1	1

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Not undermining church	1	1
Not wanting to be a teacher	5	6
Nothing to do with education	1	1
Nurturing faith	3	3
Offering faith experiences to young people	4	7
Offering meditation	1	2
Offering mindfulness in schools	1	1
Offering something different to pastoral workers	1	1
Offering students something where they are at	10	15
One to one meetings	7	8
Open to including other faiths as patrons	1	2
Other faiths expected to attend Catholic ceremonies	4	6
Other faiths often know more about their faiths than Catholics	1	1
Others suggesting chaplaincy as a career move	2	2
Others suggesting chaplaincy as a helping profession	1	1
Outsider role of chaplain	3	3
Parent unfamiliar with work of chaplain	3	7

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Parenting in school	2	2
parents actively choosing a school with a particular ethos	2	6
Pastoral Care	12	23
Pastoral Care roles	6	8
Personal qualities of chaplain	9	16
Prayer dimension to religious education	7	7
Prayer guide training	1	1
Prayer services at times of bereavement	3	3
Praying	1	1
Presenting Christianity in an acceptable way	3	3
Pressures young people are under	5	5
Priest chaplain celebrating mass	5	5
Priest chaplains	12	19
Privately funded	7	17
Professional counsellor fulfilling role of chaplain	1	1
Professional role of the chaplain in addressing spiritual needs of students	2	2

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Promoting community	8	10
Promoting morality rather than spirituality	2	2
Promoting values	6	6
Prospect of chaplaincy going	15	21
Providing a sacred space	6	9
Providing counselling	8	17
Providing experiences of spirituality	1	1
Providing opportunities for students to imbibe ethos	3	6
Providing spiritual guidance	6	8
Providing spiritual input	6	6
Providing support	14	23
Provision of retreats	3	5
Public advertisement to recruit chaplain	2	2
Putting teacher in to do some part time chaplaincy	1	1
RE and school chaplaincy	1	2
RE teachers academic Chaplains doing faith formation	4	5
RE teachers support ethos	3	4

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
RE team involved in the recruitment of the chaplain	1	1
Re-writing of the deeds	1	3
Recognising the good in other religions	3	3
Recognising the uniqueness of students	2	2
Relating chaplaincy to RE	3	4
Relating to management body	3	3
Relating to the guidance counsellor and home school liaison	20	37
Religious symbols and signs	1	1
Religious presence in school	2	2
Religious are gone from schools	2	3
Representing the perspective of Church on school development	2	3
Resenting chaplain being in the school	1	1
Resourcing the RE team	10	11
Responsibility of management body towards chaplain	1	1
Responsibility of trustees for religious element of ethos	2	2
Responsibility to offer faith experiences	1	1
Risking burnout	4	6

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Running mentoring programmes with 6th years and 1st years	3	3
Same duties and responsibilities as other staff	2	2
SCA	1	1
School facilitating CPD	3	4
School lacking power in relation to chaplains	2	2
School mirrors a small parish	4	5
School planning role	1	1
Schools not highlighting spirituality in ethos	4	5
Secularism making chaplaincy difficult	4	5
Seeing chaplaincy as a vocation	6	10
Seeing the needs of students	3	5
Seeking opportunities to education students differently	2	2
Sense of identity of chaplain	5	7
Sensing colleagues misunderstand the role	4	6
Short listing	3	8
Social justice	4	5
Soul searching	2	2

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Spiritual leadership	4	8
Splitting a full time position between two people	1	1
Stage of faith development of students	2	2
Standing firm in representing one denomination	8	10
Starting out untrained	6	8
State difficulty with funding chaplaincy in denominational schools	1	1
Struggling to understand place of the chaplain in church	1	2
Student faith and practice	1	3
Students are searching and open	1	1
Students attending religious ceremonies	3	3
Students attitude towards working for the church	1	1
Students believing or not	2	2
Students evolving into better people	1	1
Students interest in pilgrimage	3	5
Students involvement with evangelical churches	1	1
Students lacking spiritual input	1	1
Students notice the spirituality of chaplain even if not for them	1	1

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Students openness to the spiritual	3	4
Students positive response to immersion projects	1	1
Supervision	3	4
Supporting the ethos in approach to the role	3	3
Tapping into souls	1	1
Teaching about decision making	1	1
Teaching hours	20	28
Teaching pastoral care skills to students	1	1
Teaching RE	7	11
Teaching the Gospel	1	1
Teaching values	2	2
Temporary contracts	4	4
Tension between the congregations and the bishops	2	7
The bigness of God	1	1
The chaplain as a reflective, thoughtful presence	4	5
The chaplain has a role that extends beyond school	2	2
The chaplain having a grounding in faith	6	6

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
The chaplain is a person to reflect on ethos	1	1
The mission of the church to provide care	2	2
The need for a chaplain to be creative	1	1
The requirement to be a teacher and registered with the Teaching Council	2	3
The spiritual element of the role needing to be the priority	1	2
The teaching role of picking up on things as they are happening	1	1
Thought chaplaincy was for ordained people	1	1
Title of chaplain is off-putting	2	2
Training in counselling	3	3
Training of chaplains	10	13
Trust Board providing CPD	1	2
Trust Board resourcing the chaplain	5	9
Trust students place in chaplains	2	4
Trust Board supportive of the idea of chaplain	7	11
Trusting that the chaplain is doing their job	2	2
Trying not to duplicate roles in school with chaplain	2	2

Appendix J

Initial Coding - line by line	Interviews Coded	Citations Coded
Trying to convert students	1	1
Trying to develop small groups of committed people in school	1	2
Voluntary secondary school no relationship with bishop	3	5
Volunteering and developing a spirituality	1	1
Volunteering as a chaplain	6	9
Wanting to have a denominational chaplain recognises that excludes	5	5
Whole school approach to faith development	2	4
Witnessing to students value of church	4	7
Witnessing to values	15	21
Working as part of a chaplaincy team	3	6
Working for the Church	13	25
Working in a team with others who are in caring roles	1	1
Working on inclusion and being actively welcoming	1	2
Young people craving attention	1	1
Young people needing to believe in something bigger	1	1
Young people struggling with life	14	19

Informed Consent

Mater Dei Institute of Education

Research Ethics Committee

Research Study Title	School Chaplaincy in Ireland today
School / Department	Education
Principal investigator	Aine Moran
Other investigators	Dr. Kevin Williams
Statement of the Purpose of the Research	The purpose of this research is investigate the role school chaplains play in the various types of second level school in Ireland today, as educationalist, in fostering the characteristic spirit of the school and in pastoral care. It will consider the expectation of school leaders - in-school management, Trusts, ACCS, IVEA, JMB and of the and Nominating Authorities. It will explore tensions that may exist in this role between Church and State.
Statement of Participation Activities	Participants will be involved in semi-structured interviews.
Other Relevant Details	<i>As the number participating in this study is small and there is a limited number of key players in the education scene in Ireland some participants may be identifiable as from particular groups.</i>

Statement of Informed Consent

Name of Intended Participant	
Address (optional)	
Name of parent or legal guardian (if under 18 years of age)	
Declaration of informed consent	<p><i>I have read the Plain Language Statement and I have been made fully aware of the implications of participation in the above named research project.</i></p> <p><i>I agree to take part in the above named research study.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p><i>I consent to taking part in the above named research study.</i></p> <p>Signature</p> <p>Date</p> <p>Witness</p>

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